

Report C.001
Spirituality & Discipleship Goal Area Committee
General Assembly Council
February 14, 2008

The Spirituality & Discipleship Goal Area Committee met on Thursday, February 14, 2008, in Louisville, KY and forwards the following to the General Assembly Council:

I. For Consent

1. Approve the Theology Worship and Education portion of the General Assembly Council report to the 218th GA (2008) (responses to referrals from previous General Assemblies) Attachment 1.

II. For Action

1. There are no action items to report.

III. For Information

1. The Spirituality and Discipleship Committee appointed a subcommittee, Rhashell Hunter, Beneva Bibbs, Tom Gillespie, and Catreliia Hunter to develop and propose a case statement that will govern the use of the remaining funds of the proceeds of the sale of the Mary Holmes College property in West Point, Mississippi. This responds to an action by the 217th General Assembly (2006) to create a fund to help support Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions. The Subcommittee will report back to the General Assembly Council Executive Committee in April 2008.
2. The Spirituality and Discipleship Committee and Stewardship and Mission Support Committee received the Stony Point Center Business Plan dated February 2008 and a balanced budget for 2008. Quarterly reports from the Stony Point Board will be provided to both committees for the next twelve months.
2. The Committee heard a report from Mike Kruse on the 2009-2012 Mission Work Plan.
3. The Committee elected Tom Gillespie as chair and Mary Lynn Walters as vice-chair for the year 2008-2009.
4. The Committee approved the minutes of the September 2007 meeting of the Spirituality and Discipleship Goal Area Committee.
5. The committee agreed to send a delegation including Rhashell Hunter, Beneva Bibbs, and an elected member to Sheldon Jackson College and Cook School for Christian Leadership. The delegation will return to this Committee in April with a recommendation concerning Christmas Joy Offering disbursements.
6. The Committee heard a very decent and orderly presentation on the 500th anniversary of John Calvin's birth.

Spirituality and Discipleship Attachment 1

Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) - Item C.102

Recommendation:

That the GAC approve the Theology Worship and Education portion of the General Assembly Council report to the 218th GA (2008).

I. Referrals in Progress

1. *2002 Referral: Item 09-03. Recommendation to Delay Implementation of Overture 01-55. On Directing CMD to Develop Study Materials to Provide Guidance on the Relationship of the Finding of the Sciences to the Affirmation of God as Creator of the Universe—From the Presbytery of National Capital (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 38, 467–86) Until Sufficient New Funding Is Provided—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 45, 493).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

2. *2003 Referral: Item 10-06. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Urge the General Assembly Council, Congregational Ministries Division, to Develop and Produce Processes and Materials for the Incorporation and Reception of New Adult Members Based on The Study Catechism (Full Version)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 22, 565).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

3. *2004 Referral: Item 06-09. On Re-Examining the Relationship Between Christians and Jews and the Implications for Our Evangelism and New Church Development—From the Presbytery of Hudson River (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 20, 440).*

Response: The Offices charged with this mandate request additional time to complete the work, in order to be able to facilitate an exchange of views among Presbyterians on evangelism among Jews, and to draw together the findings and insights of this study process into a draft document. **The final report will come to the 219th General Assembly (2010).**

The 216th General Assembly voted to “direct the Office of Theology and Worship, the Office of Interfaith Relations, and the Office of Evangelism to ‘reexamine and strengthen the relationship between Christians and Jews and the implications of this relationship for our evangelism and new church development in continuing response to the 211th General Assembly (1999) mandate to guide the church in “bearing witness to Jesus Christ in a pluralistic age.”

In addition to the activity reported to the 217th General Assembly, two more consultations were held between rabbis representing Jewish organizations and Presbyterian ministers, seminary professors and staff from the Offices of Theology and Worship, Interfaith Relations, and Evangelism. The first focused on “Land and Israel” and the second on “The Jews and Christian Evangelism.” In addition to mutual enrichment and deepened understanding, specific steps have been taken in response to the General Assembly mandate.

The consultation on “Land and Israel” was held at Columbia Theological Seminary in May 2006. Dr. Eugene March of Louisville Seminary gave a Presbyterian perspective (with a response from Rabbi Vernon Kurtz, Synagogue Beth-El, Chicago), and Rabbi Reuven Hammer, New London Synagogue presented a Jewish perspective (with a response from Dr. Rebecca Weaver, Union-PSCE).

The consultation on “The Jews and Christian Evangelism” was held in Philadelphia in October 2006. Participants were addressed by Rev. Rob Weingartner of The Outreach Foundation (response: Rabbi Richard Hirsh of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association) and Rabbi David Berger of Brooklyn College (response: Leanne van Dyk, Western Theological Seminary). During that meeting, a public event was held at Media Presbyterian Church. At the event Rabbi Shira Lander, University of Maryland, Baltimore, and Rev. Charles Wiley of the Office of Theology and Worship led a text study of Isaiah 42 with group discussion. The Rev. Joseph Small, the Rev. William Borrer, and Rabbi Gil Rosenthal, Director of the National Council of Synagogues spoke on the progress of the dialogue between the PCUSA and the Jewish Community.

The papers from both of these consultations, along with those of the first consultation on the theme of “Covenant” in Princeton in 2005 are being published by Witherspoon Press.

4. *2006 Referral: Item 07-06, Recommendation 1.d., That the General Assembly Council’s Office of Theology and Worship Consider Drafting a Report on Reformed Theology and Economic Justice, Especially Dealing with the Theological Language Appropriate to Address Social and Economic Justice—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Delegation to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches General Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 16, 575–79).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

5. *2006 Referral: Item 13-03. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Authorize the Office of Theology and Worship to Undertake a Study of “Salvation and Sin,” and Report the Results of Its Study to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1101).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010). Due to significant reorganization within the General Assembly Council staff, staff resources were not sufficient to carry out this referral.

6. *2006 Referral: Item 13-04. Recommendation 4. That the 217th General Assembly (2006) Authorize the Office of Theology and Worship to Gather Learnings, Insights, and Experiences, from Churches that Engage in This Discipline (Practices that Deepen Baptismal Life and Discipleship), and to Submit a Final Report to the 219th General Assembly (2010)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1102).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

7. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing. Recommendation 5. Encourage the Office of Theology and Worship to Work with Congregational Ministries Publishing and/or Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Make Available Liturgical Resources Based on “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing”—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

8. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing. Recommendation 6. Encourage the Office of Theology and Worship to Work with Congregational Ministries Publishing and/or Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to Make Available the Historical Resources on Prayer and Worship That Underlie "The Trinity: God's Love Overflowing"—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

9. *2006 Referral: Item 13-10. On the Development of a Denominational E-Hymnal—From the Presbytery of Miami (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1141–42).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

10. *2003 Referral: Item 10-07. Recommendation 3. That the General Assembly Instruct the Congregational Ministries Division, Office of Theology and Worship, to Report Annually the Number of Presbyteries That Participate in "Celebrating the Lord's Supper Each Lord's Day"—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 22, 566).*

Response: Item 10-07 calls on the Office of Theology and Worship to provide resources for celebrating the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day within presbyteries. By June 2008 the Office of Theology and Worship will have resources produced for this purpose and will begin reporting the number of presbyteries participating by the 219th General Assembly (2010).

11. *2006 Referral: Item 10-05. On Teen Suicide and Self-Injury—From the Presbytery of St. Augustine (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 49, 50, 916–19).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

12. *Alternate Resolution to 2004 Referral: Item 04-12. Recommendation 2. That the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council Office of Theology and Worship Undertake an Analysis of the Directory of Worship with the Goal of Evaluating Its Influence and Effectiveness in Guiding Sessions, Pastors, and Higher Governing Bodies in Planning and Conducting Worship That Is Authentically Reformed and Culturally Appropriate—From the 216th General Assembly (2004) (Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 86).*

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010). A staff team from the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Theology and Worship worked together on the revision of the Directory for Worship. After consultation with governing body leaders and the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, it became clear that it was not wise to present a revision of the Directory for Worship at the same time as the revision of the Form of Government was being considered. Therefore, the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council's Office of Theology and Worship request an extension of two years in order to consult widely with church leaders in light of actions the 217th General Assembly takes on the Form of Government.

13. *2004 Referral: Item 06-06. Report, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Understanding of the 16th and 17th Century Condemnation of Other Churches in The Book of Confessions, Recommendation 4. That the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Theology and Worship Be Requested to Initiate Conversations with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Seeking a WARC Statement on the Issue*

and Report Results of These Conversations to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 21, 424).

Response: Final report will be made to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

II. Final Response to Referrals

1. *2002 Referral: Item 07-07. Overture 02-32. On Instructing the Office of Theology and Worship to Develop a Theological Statement of Our Faith—From the Presbytery of the James (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 39, 432).*

Response: Item 07-07 was referred to the Office of Theology and Worship as “guidance.” Over the past five years the Office of Theology and Worship has engaged in a variety of work to express the church’s faith in a contemporary world. This has included “Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ,” the book *Conversations with the Confessions* (Geneva Press), work on the French Confession of 1559, and a study guide to the Belhar Confession.

2. *2002 Referral: Item 07-09. Overture 02-38. On Formulating a New PC(USA) Confession of Faith for the 21st Century—From the Presbytery of South Alabama (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 39, 434–35).*

Response: Item 07-09 was referred to the Office of Theology and Worship as “advice and counsel.” Over the past five years the Office of Theology and Worship has engaged in a variety of work to express the church’s faith in a contemporary world. This has included “Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ,” the book *Conversations with the Confessions* (Geneva Press), work on the French Confession of 1559, and a study guide to the Belhar Confession.

3. *Alternate Resolution to 2002 Referral: Item 13-07. Recommendation That the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, Implement Commissioners’ Resolution 01-22. On a Churchwide Dialogue on End-of-Life Issues (Minutes, 2001, Part I, pp. 49, 498)—From the 214th General Assembly (2002) (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 71, 654).*

Response: The Office of Theology and Worship, in conjunction with the Office of National Health Ministries and the Duke Institute on Care at the End of Life, held a church-wide conference, “In Life and in Death We Belong to God,” at Duke University in the Spring of 2007. This conference focused on palliative care and congregational ministry. A follow-up study guide will be available by June of 2008.

4. *2003 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 1. That the General Assembly Approve Participation in the Seventh Round of Reform/Catholic Dialogue and Requests a Report to the 218th General Assembly (2008)—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 13, 339–40).*

Response: A report on the Reformed/Catholic Dialogue will come before the 218th General Assembly through the report of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

5. *2003 Referral: Item 06-11. Commissioners’ Resolution 03-10. On Reaffirming Spiritual Formation as an Important Priority at All Levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Minutes, 2003, Part I, pp. 44, 406-7).*

Response: Spiritual formation is integral to the General Assembly Council's Mission Work Plan. The Theology Worship and Education Ministry Area includes an Office of Christian Formation, which in turn includes an associate for spiritual formation. Numerous publications and programs ensure that spiritual formation is not an isolated program, but rather an enduring element of all ministries within Theology Worship and Education.

6. *2004 Referral: Item 06-06. Report, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Understanding of the 16th and 17th Century Condemnation of Other Churches in The Book of Confessions, Recommendation 5. That the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Theology and Worship Be Requested to Initiate Conversations with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Seeking a Joint Catholic-Presbyterian Statement on the 16th and 17th Century Condemnations and Characterizations and Report Results of These Conversations to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 21, 424).*

Response: The current five year round of the Catholic-Reformed Dialogue has focused attention on sacraments in the faith and life of the churches. Significant results have issued from the Dialogue, including an agreement on the mutual recognition of Baptism. The matter of 16th and 17th century condemnations will have to await a future round of the Dialogue.

7. *2004 Referral: Item 10-03. Report of the Task Force to Study Reparations, Recommendation 4.d., That the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, Office of Theology and Worship, Receive Responses, Prepare a Summary, and Report Results to the 218th General Assembly (2008), Together with Possible Recommendations for Further Engagement with the Belhar Confession—From the General Assembly Council Task Force to Study Reparations (Minutes, 2004, Part I, pp. 57, 701).*

Response: The Office of Theology and Worship has produced an in-depth study guide for the Belhar Confession available electronically on the PCUSA website. A print version available for order will be available in Spring 2008.

8. *2006 Referral: Item 04-05. On Commending Study of the Definitive Guidance of 1978—From the Presbytery of Stockton (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 33–34, 338–39).*

Response: The study guide was produced and posted on the PCUSA website in January 2008.

9. *2006 Referral: Item 06-07. On Making Resources Available to Aid in the Implementation of the Report of the Theological Task Force—From the Presbytery of Albany (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 28–29, 539–40).*

Response: Numerous resources from several sources were made available via electronic and print media, as well as events in presbyteries and conferences.

10. *2006 Referral: Item 12-01. On Creating the Office of Minister of Christian Education—From the Presbytery of Mission (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1027–49).*

11. *2006 Referral: Item 12-02. On Amending the Book of Order to Create a Fourth Office to Be Known as Education Elder—From the Presbytery of Shenandoah (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1049–60).*

Response: See Report in Section III Recommendations.

12. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.a.(1). That the General Assembly Council, through Congregational Ministries Publishing, Develop a Series of Resources on Spirituality and Aging; Authorize the Office of Older Adult Ministries to Review, Update, and Republish Existing Resources in Older Adult Ministry as Needed; and Offer Distance Learning Opportunities Such as On-Line Courses, Teleconferences, and Web-Casts to Increase Leadership Skills in Aging Issues—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069).*

Response: Although a designated office for Older Adult Ministries was eliminated in May 2006, ministering to older adults continues to be an important issue for congregations. In this regard, other ministry areas of the General Assembly Council, such as the office of Christian education, national health ministries, and the office of vocation, continue to address questions that congregations may have about older adult ministries by networking across the denomination for recommended information, tools, and resources.

Resources available from Congregational Ministries Publishing:

Dimensions of Older Adult Ministry: A Handbook

Edited by Richard L. Morgan

This handbook takes up common issues surrounding the aging process, including learning in later life, nursing homes, retirement community living, elder abuse, late-life depression, Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia that plague older adults. There are also chapters on aging from both the Jewish and Islamic perspectives. This resource is a practical guide for caregivers and faith communities seeking help in overcoming barriers to ministering to older adults.

PDS #1571530592

\$15.95

Older Adult Ministry: A Guide for the Presbytery Committee

by Jack and Sue Angerman

This manual is designed to help presbyteries initiate ministries with older adults. It outlines how to proceed with this ministry on the presbytery level. Can be used by congregations.

PDS #090300

\$9.95

Older Adult Ministry: A Resource for Program Development

This helpful manual, made up of articles by experts in the field of Older Adult Ministry, provides strategies, program plans, and theological reflections for churches seeking resources for older adult ministry.

PDS #085429

\$5.95

Older Adult Ministry: A Guide for the Session and Congregations

revised and edited by Miriam Dunson

This manual has been fully revised and updated and is designed to help the congregation start an intentional older adult ministry. It illustrates how to set up a committee, how to educate the committee,

and how to do a needs and skills assessment among older adults. It also provides many program ideas for use by congregations.

PDS # 7025000711

\$10.00

ideas! For Church Leaders magazine.

There are many references to articles about older adults in past issues. Archives for ideas! magazine may be found at our website: <http://www.pcusa.org/ideas/>

13. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.d.(1). That the General Assembly Council, Through the Office of Theology and Worship, Encourage Congregations to Provide Large-Print Bibles, Hymnals, and Bulletins; Accessible, Safe Facilities; and Hearing Devices—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1070).*

Response: An article titled "What is your congregation's HQ (Hospitality Quotient)?" encouraging congregations to provide large-print Bibles, hymnals, bulletins, accessible facilities and hearing devices, will be published in the Summer 2008 issue of ideas! Magazine and posted to the PCUSA website at www.pcusa.org/ideas.

14. *2006 Referral: Item 12-12. Report, Older Adult Ministries Task Force, Recommendation 2.b. That the General Council Support and Promote the Work of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network and the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors as Collaborators in Joint Endeavors, Involving New Partners That Enhance and Expand Older Adult Ministries, and Do Items (a) through (d)—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14–15, 1069–70).*

Response: For the General Assembly Council coordinated response to Item 12-12, and all recommendations in 12-12 see Evangelism and Church Growth General Assembly Report Final Response number 1.

Recommendations

1. *2006 Referral: Item 12-01. On Creating the Office of Minister of Christian Education—From the Presbytery of Mission (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1027–49).*

2. *2006 Referral: Item 12-02. On Amending the Book of Order to Create a Fourth Office to Be Known as Education Elder—From the Presbytery of Shenandoah (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1049–60).*

Response: Recommendation: That the 218th General Assembly (2008) answer overtures from the presbyteries of Mission and Shenandoah by the following comment:

The place of Christian educators within Presbyterian polity has been a matter of discussion for decades. From time to time, proposals have been made to create a fourth ordained office – in addition to deacons, elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. These proposals have not been adopted by the church. Instead, a process for certification of Christian educators has provided the means to prepare and recognize persons for service as educators in congregations and middle governing bodies (G-14.0130, 14.0710-.0732).

The two overtures sent to the 217th General Assembly (2007) were referred to the Office of Theology and Worship for study and response.

The overtures from the presbyteries of Mission and Shenandoah each propose an ordination process for Christian educators, but they differ in their understanding of the nature of a fourth office: Mission Presbytery proposes the creation of the office of “Minister of Christian Education” (12-01), while Shenandoah Presbytery proposes the creation of the office of “Educating Elder” (12-02). Mission Presbytery’s “Minister of Christian Education” proposal stipulates the same preparation process as that for minister of the Word and Sacrament, with minor changes to recognize the specialized nature of education ministry. Shenandoah Presbytery’s “Educating Elder” proposal sets forth a process for certified Christian elders to be ordained as elders, with session and presbytery membership.

Both overtures find rationale for a “fourth office” in John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Calvin mentions both pastors and teachers: “There is, I believe, this difference between them: teachers are not put in charge of discipline, or administering the sacraments, or warnings and exhortations, but only of Scriptural interpretation – to keep doctrine whole and pure among believers. But the pastoral office includes these functions within itself” (*Institutes*, 4.3.4). Calvin’s “teachers” were more akin to professors than to Christian educators in congregations, however. Most Reformed churches have not adopted Calvin’s distinction, noting instead that “the pastoral office includes [teaching] functions within itself.” Historically, Presbyterian ministers have been called “teaching elders,” a designation that is emphasized in the proposed revision to the Form of Government in order to accentuate the crucial teaching function of the pastoral office.

Biblical, historical, theological, ecclesial, and ecumenical considerations point to the conclusion that **creation of a fourth ordered ministry, whether minister of Christian education or educating elder is not warranted**. However, the concerns of Mission and Shenandoah presbyteries for the place of certified Christian educators in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are significant, both for educators and the denomination they serve. Many of the practical considerations that lead to ordination proposals are valid, and should be addressed by the church.

The *Book of Order* provides that “Persons called to particular service in the church may be certified by recognized agencies affiliated with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as having achieved proficiency in their field of expertise” (G-14.0130). Certification processes are currently in place for Christian educators, church musicians, administrative personnel, and church business administrators. The *Book of Order* makes formal provisions for certified Christian educators, including their relationship to the presbytery:

Certified Christian educators are given privilege of the floor at meetings of the presbytery, with vote as well as voice to those who are elders (G-14.0730c).

Presbyteries must set minimum requirements for certified Christian educator compensation and benefits, and grant access to the committee on ministry (G-14.0703a).

Certified Christian educators have a duty to report knowledge of abuse, neglect or molestation (G-14.0732).

There are further provisions for certified Christian educators that should be considered by the church, however. The following are the central questions to be addressed:

1. Should the call to service in a congregation include three parties – the session, the certified Christian educator, and the presbytery, with terms of call and dissolution of call subject to agreement by all three? [This appears to be a logical extension of current provisions for minimum compensation and access to the committee on ministry.]

2. Should certified Christian educators who are not ministers or elders be ordained as ruling elders, either by the congregation in which they serve or by the presbytery? [This would not constitute a “fourth office,” but would recognize the appropriate inclusion of certified Christian educators in the office of ruling elder (note responsibilities of elders in G-6.0304). Ordination as elder without a term of service on a session would be consistent with the provision in G-6.0403b for deacons to be ordained and commissioned to service individually rather than as members of a board of deacons.]
3. Should certified Christian educators be given membership in the presbytery within whose bounds they serve? [Many certified Christian educators are barred from membership in the congregations they serve, and thus hold membership in distant congregations within the bounds of other presbyteries. These educators are without an ecclesial home.]
4. Should certified Christian educators be seated in session meetings, with voice but not vote? [This would be consistent with the provisions for participation in the presbytery. Certified Christian educators can be particularly helpful as sessions fulfill their responsibilities in G-10.0102a,c,e,f,k,l,p.]

These are important matters for certified Christian educators, congregations, presbyteries, and the whole church. The proposed revisions to the Form of Government may provide flexibility that will enable presbyteries and congregations to make some changes without specific, detailed amendments to the *Book of Order*. Other changes may require standardized churchwide practice. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will benefit from thoughtful consideration of the four central questions.

3. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing. Recommendation 3. Instruct the Office of Theology and Worship, and Congregational Ministries Publishing and Christian Education, to Prepare Study Materials for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing”—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

4. *2006 Referral: Item 13-05. Report, The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing. Recommendation 4. Instruct the Office of Theology and Worship to Make “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing” Available to the Church, with Study Guide, in Both Print and Electronic Forms—From the General Assembly Council (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 11–12, 1108).*

Response: Recommendation: That the 218th General Assembly (2008) commend for study in PCUSA congregations a study guide and accompanying DVD for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing”.

The reception and commendation for study of “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing” by the 217th General Assembly (2006) caused concerns in some parts of the Presbyterian Church USA. Therefore, the Office of Theology and Worship developed a more robust study process than might ordinarily be used. The Office of Theology and Worship has made available a video resource as a general introduction to the Trinity with a comprehensive study guide for “The Trinity: God’s Love Overflowing” to assist churches in deepening their understanding of and practices in response to the Trinity.

Reports

None.