MINUTES

221st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2014
PART I
JOURNAL

Published by the Office of the General Assembly
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202-1396
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Including Reports of Assembly Committees

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the Office of the General Assembly, Permanent and Special Committees,
the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Board of Pensions, the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation,
the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Overtures, and Commissioners’ Resolutions

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OFFICERS

Two Hundred and Twenty-first General Assembly (2014)
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Moderator
RULING ELDER HEATH K. RADA

Vice-Moderator
TEACHING ELDER LARISSA KWONG ABAZIA

Stated Clerk
TEACHING ELDER GRADYE PARSONS

Associate Stated Clerks
RULING ELDER LOYDA PUIG AJA
TEACHING ELDER SUE DAVIS KRUMMEL
TEACHING ELDER TOM HAY
TEACHING ELDER JOYCE LIEBERMAN
RULING ELDER KERRY RICE
TEACHING ELDER ROBINA WINBUSH

Assistant Stated Clerks
TEACHING ELDER SANDAWNA G. ASHLEY
TEACHING ELDER TIMOTHY CARGAL
TEACHING ELDER MOLLY CASTEEL
DEBORAH DAVIES
TEACHING ELDER MELISSA G. DAVIS
RULING ELDER C. LAURIE GRIFFITH
RULING ELDER MARTHA MILLER
KAY MOORE
RULING ELDER CHRIS NICHOLAS
THE REVEREND TOYA RICHARDS
RULING ELDER VALERIE SMALL
KRIS VALERIUS
TERESA WAGGENER
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Changes made by the 220th General Assembly (2012) to overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, communications, recommendations, and resolutions of General Assembly entities appear as text enclosed in brackets. Bracketed text that is underlined was added by the assembly to the original text; bracketed text that is stricken was original text deleted by the assembly. Bracketed text with a gray screen background indicates changes made by plenary.

This format serves to ensure a complete historic record of the actions of the General Assembly by noting both the original recommendation sent to the assembly and the revised text approved by the assembly.
SECTION ONE

Proceedings of the
220th General Assembly (2012)
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Including
Reports of Assembly Committees

The World Wide Web

http://www.pcusa.org/ga221

Many of the reports of the General Assembly and the minutes can be found on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site: http://oga.pcusa.org/section/ga/ga/publications/
BUSINESS MEETING I

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was convened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan. Preceding this first business meeting, the assembly convened in Hall D at 11:00 a.m. with a service of opening worship. Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), preached on “Pilgrims’ Pitstops.”

COMMISSIONING OF COMMISSIONERS AND ADVISORY DELEGATES

During opening worship, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons and Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, led the assembly in a service of Commissioning for Commissioners and Advisory Delegates, which included a commitment to faithful fulfillment of their service as commissioners and a charge to commissioners.

QUORUM AND ENROLLMENT

Moderator Presa recognized Stated Clerk Parsons, who advised the Moderator that G-3.0503 of the Book of Order establishes that the “quorum of the General Assembly shall be one hundred commissioners, fifty of whom shall be ruling elders and fifty teaching elders, representing presbyteries of at least one fourth of its synods.”

Stated Clerk Parsons advised the Moderator that Standing Rule D.2. permitted the roll to be established by registration. Stated Clerk Parsons recommended that the roll of the 221st General Assembly (2014) be established by the list of those who had registered or would register. Based on preregistration with General Assembly Meeting Services, there would be present at this assembly:

- 656 commissioners from 172 presbyteries
- 172 young adult advisory delegates
- 25 theological student advisory delegates
- 8 missionary advisory delegates
- 15 ecumenical advisory delegates

The assembly approved that the roll of the 221st General Assembly (2014) be established by the list of those who had registered or would register.

THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The roll of the General Assembly can be found on page 1037 of the electronic version.

SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

Stated Clerk Parsons announced that, in accordance with Standing Rule B.3, corresponding members were designated and present at the General Assembly. The list of corresponding members can be found starting on page 1043 of the electronic version.

Moderator Presa welcomed the corresponding members.

YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEER ANNIVERSARY

Moderator Presa announced that this year marked the 20th anniversary of the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program. To help celebrate and recognize those who have served as young adult volunteers throughout the years, a current or former young adult volunteer will open each plenary session with prayer. Moderator Presa recognized Emily Brewer, YAV alumna who served in Guatemala, and Kori Phillips, YAV alumna who served in Peru, who opened the plenary with prayer.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

The report of the Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA) of the Presbytery of Detroit was presented by Moderator Peter Smith, who introduced Vice-Moderator Sue Melrose, and various representatives of COLA. Participating in the presentation were Susan Peters, Renee Roederer, Isaac Chung, and Solo Brooks, as well as other representatives of COLA.

COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

Moderator Presa recognized Vince Thomas, moderator, and the Reverend Marcia Mount Shoop, vice-moderator, of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), who led the plenary in the first part of the Conversations on Race.
REPORT OF THE MODERATOR

Moderator Presa called upon Tom Trinidad, Vice-Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), to assume the chair. Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), Neal Presa.

Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), reported on the work of the Moderator during the last two years. At the conclusion of the report, Moderator Presa assumed the chair, and Vice-Moderator Tom Trinidad reported on the work of the Vice-Moderator during the last two years.

COMMISSIONER ORIENTATION

Moderator Presa recognized Lee Han Tan and Carol McDonald from the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies, who provided the commissioner orientation. As part of the orientation, Assembly Assistant Glen Alberto Guenther reviewed the social media policy; Susan Orr, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, reviewed the committee process; Assembly Assistant Ken Hockenberry explained the use of the microphones on the floor.

Associate Stated Clerk Tom Hay explained the new web voting process and asked commissioners to sign into the voting website. Many commissioners and advisory delegates reported problems getting onto and using the voting website, and these problems persisted throughout the practice votes.

Glen Bell, moderator of the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies, led the assembly in a responsive prayer. Moderator Presa explained the use of consensus decision-making cards.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Warner R. Durnell, moderator, and Tully Fletcher, vice-moderator, of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), who described the process by which the GANC places names in nomination and the procedure for making nominations from the floor.

REPORT ON BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Vice-Moderator Trinidad called upon Earline Williams, deputy executive director and chief financial officer of Shared Services, Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), who described the process to be used in identifying items with budget implications and how that process can inform decisions made during the assembly.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FOR THE ASSEMBLY

Vice-Moderator Trinidad called on Stated Clerk Parsons to recommend a committee structure for the assembly, according to Standing Rule C.1.a.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) voted to approve Item 00-01 (approved). [See p. 87.]

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRAL

Vice-Moderator Trinidad recognized Susan Orr, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, for a report from the committee, assisted by Raul Santiago, vice-moderator of the committee. The assembly approved Item 01-01, the proposed docket. The assembly approved Item 01-02 with amendment to pull Item I.B from the consent agenda and refer to 12 Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, and Foundation, as Item 12-12. (See p. 919.) The assembly approved Item 01-04. The assembly approved Item 01-03 as amended by 01-04.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Business Referral

Item 01-01. Proposed Docket of the General Assembly
Approved. [See p. 111.]

Item 01-02. Referrals in Progress and Final Responses to Referrals
Approved with amendment. [See p. 113.]

Item 01-03. Referrals of Business
Approved with amendment. [See p. 156.]
Item 01-04. Suspend Standing Rule A.2.a.

Approved. [See p. 162.]

At the conclusion of the report, Moderator Neal Presa assumed the chair.

**Presbyterian Mission Agency Presentation**

Moderator Presa recognized Linda Valentine, Executive Director; Matthew Schramm, chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board; and Roger Dermody, Deputy Executive Director for Mission, to report on the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA).

**Spirit of GA Video**

Moderator Presa announced that each day in plenary, the General Assembly Communications Center would show a video from the *Spirit of GA* video series. On days the assembly does not meet in plenary, the video will be online.

**Announcements**

Stated Clerk Parsons made several announcements, including a reminder that the deadline for business to be submitted to the assembly was Sunday, June 15, at 1:30 p.m.

**Closing Prayer**

Moderator Presa called upon Sabrina Slater, theological student advisor delegate from Princeton Theological Seminary, who offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

**Recess**

The assembly recessed at 6:03 p.m.

**Saturday, June 14, 2014, 7:37 p.m.**

**Business Meeting II**

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Neal Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly (2012), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Young Adult Volunteers Michelle Muñiz Vega, currently serving in Miami, and T.J. Piccolo, who served in Northern Ireland, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

**Ecumenical and Interfaith Greetings**

Moderator Presa recognized the Reverend Mienda Uriarte who introduced representatives from the PC(USA)’s ecumenical partners in Asia: The Reverend Sayam Muangsak of the Church of Christ in Thailand; the Reverend Lo, Jen-Kuei, of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan; Bishop Reuel Marigza of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines; the Reverend Park Dong Il of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea; the Reverend Cheng, Yin-Er of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan; and the Reverend Sudu Tada of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. The Reverend Saman Perera, minister-in-charge, brought greetings from the Presbyterian Church of Sri Lanka.

**Update on Voting Procedures**

Moderator Presa recognized Associate Stated Clerk Tom Hay who announced that due to problems with the voting website, keypads would be used during plenary for voting; commissioners and advisory delegates were instructed on voting procedures.

**1001 Worshipping Communities Video Competition**

Moderator Presa recognized Philip Lotspeich, coordinator for Church Growth in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, who introduced the 1001 Worshipping Communities video competition. The assembly viewed the top five videos.

**Voting Procedures**

Moderator Presa guided commissioners and advisory delegates through three trial runs of the keypad voting system. None were successful.
RECOGNITION OF HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

Moderator Presa announced that the amendment process had been successfully completed and the common translation of the Heidelberg Catechism would now be added to the PC(USA)’s Book of Confessions. Moderator Presa then led the assembly in the affirmation of faithfulness from the Heidelberg Catechism. See pages 72, 75, 391.

1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES VIDEO COMPETITION

Moderator Press instructed commissioners and advisory delegates to use the keypad voting system to choose their top three videos. After the vote, Philip Lotspeich announced that Composing Community, the video from New Hope Presbyterian Church in Orange, California (Los Ranchos Presbytery), garnered the most votes.

ELECTION OF THE MODERATOR

Moderator Presa called for the election of the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as required by Book of Order, G-3.0501, and Standing Rule H.

Moderator Presa recognized Elder Vince Thomas, the moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, who reported on Moderator candidate expenses.

Stated Clerk Parsons described the procedure for the election.

Moderator Presa asked all nominees to come to the area at the back of the platform and meet with Assembly Assistant Conrad Rocha and Landon Whitsitt, Vice Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010).

Moderator Presa announced that three candidates had declared their intention to stand for election. There were no nominations from the floor.

Three candidates were placed in nomination. John Wilkinson, Presbytery of Genesee Valley, was nominated by Robin Lyn Valdez of the Presbytery of Grace and Emily Stevens of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley. Heath Rada, Presbytery of Western North Carolina, was nominated by Trip McKinnon of the Presbytery of Savannah. Kelly Allen, Presbytery of Mission, was nominated by Drew Harrison of the Presbytery of Mission.

Each candidate was afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for five minutes.

Stated Clerk Parsons then explained the use of the speaker-recognition system, and the candidates responded to questions from the floor for forty-five minutes. At the expiration of the time allotted for this process, the candidates met former Vice-Moderator Landon Whitsitt backstage at the docket coordinator’s desk.

Stated Clerk Parsons called for a test of the keypad voting system for commissioners only. Because the total number of votes did not equal the number of keypads that had been distributed to commissioners at the start of the plenary (630), Stated Clerk Parsons declared that commissioners would vote for Moderator using paper ballots. Moderator Presa first asked advisory delegates to show their preferences for Moderator by holding up large red cards. Then, paper ballots were distributed to commissioners.

Heath Rada was elected Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the first ballot, receiving a total of 331 votes. Of the total votes cast John Wilkinson received 157 and Kelly Allen received 143.

Moderator Presa declared that Heath Rada was duly elected to the office of Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014).

RECOGNITION OF FORMER MODERATORS

Moderator Presa welcomed the following former moderators to the platform:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>G.A.</th>
<th>Church</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herbert D. Valentine</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>203rd</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John M. Fife</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>204th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David L. Dobler</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>205th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John M. Buchanan</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>208th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia G. Brown</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>209th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syngman Rhee</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>212th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Rogers</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>213th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fahed Abu-Akel</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>214th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan R. Andrews</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>215th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rick Ufford-Chase</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>216th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Reyes Chow</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>218th</td>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
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After being escorted back into the hall by former Vice-Moderator Landon Whitsitt, Moderator-elect Rada was accompanied to the platform by family members and friends.

**INSTALLATION OF NEWLY ELECTED MODERATOR**

Stated Clerk Parsons and Retiring Moderator Presa installed Heath Rada to the office of Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014). Retiring Moderator Presa presented Moderator Rada with the moderatorial stole, and with Celtic crosses that have been worn by all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) moderators since 1983.

The Reverend Mark Ramsey led the assembly in prayer for the Moderator.

Moderator Rada addressed the assembly briefly.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION FROM THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Sue Melrose, vice chair of the Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA), presented retiring Moderator Presa and retiring Vice-Moderator Trinidad with framed tiles of Celtic crosses; she then presented Moderator Rada and Vice-Moderator Larissa Kwong Abazia with gavels and laptop bags.

**PRESENTATION TO RETIRING MODERATOR**

Moderator Rada recognized Stated Clerk Parsons for a special presentation. Stated Clerk Parsons presented retiring Moderator Presa with a replica of the Celtic crosses that have been worn by all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Moderators since 1983.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Moderator Rada offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

**RECESS**

The assembly recessed at 11:04 p.m.

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**Sunday, June 15, 2014, 2:30 P.M.**

**BUSINESS MEETING III**

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Moderator Heath Rada in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

**COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVERSATIONS ON RACE**

Moderator Rada recognized Jerrod Belton Lowry and Eileen Lindner, members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), to lead the assembly in the continuation of the conversation on race. They introduced the Reverend James Reese who reflected on the words of Stated Clerk Eugene Carson Blake at the March on Washington, fifty-one years ago. Jerrod Lowry then led the assembly in a responsive prayer of confession.

**UPDATE ON TECHNOLOGY**

Moderator Rada recognized Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons for an update on the technology problems experienced at the plenaries on Saturday, June 14.

**GLORY TO GOD ANNOUNCEMENT**

Moderator Rada recognized David Eicher, editor of *Glory to God*, who announced the presentation of a special edition of the hymnal to the commissioners from the Committee on Congregational Song and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

**CONFIRMATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE VICE-MODERATOR**

Moderator Heath Rada introduced Larissa Kwong Abazia, teaching elder commissioner from the Presbytery of New York City, whom he had chosen for Vice-Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014). The assembly voted to confirm Kwong Abazia as Vice-Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014). Larissa Kwong Abazia was installed into the position of Vice-Moderator by Moderator Rada and Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons.
UPDATE ON TECHNOLOGY

Moderator Rada recognized Stated Clerk Parsons for another update on the technology problems experienced at the plenaries on Saturday June 14. In order to test PC-biz, Stated Clerk Parsons requested that commissioners and advisory delegates connect to PC-biz and let one of the student assistants know if they had any problems.

COMMISSIONING OF NEW MISSIONARIES

Moderator Rada recognized Hunter Farrell, Linda Valentine, and Roger Dermody of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, who recognized missionaries who have served for twenty years or more. Roger Dermody led the assembly in a service for the commissioning of new mission personnel. The blessing for new missionaries was given by the Reverend Lo, Jen-Kuei, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan.

Frank Dimmock, poverty alleviation catalyst for Presbyterian World Mission, spoke on eliminating world hunger and poverty. He introduced the Reverend Dr. Tim Hart-Andersen of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Minneapolis, who reported on his congregation’s involvement in education and peace building work in South Sudan and announced a partnership with Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago and Second Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis to pledge $1.65 million to South Sudan mission work. The Reverend Hart-Andersen urged other congregations to support South Sudan projects as well.

FLOOR MOTION ON ADVISORY VOTES FROM PRESBYTERY EXECUTIVES

Moderator Rada recognized Ruling Elder Commissioner Ann Hardy of the Presbytery of New Covenant, who moved: that the General Assembly respectfully request the Moderator poll the presbytery executive from each presbytery for advisory votes in plenary for this 221st General Assembly (2014). In case the executive presbyter was not present at the time of a vote, it was recommended that the stated clerk offer a vote on the matter at hand. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bonnie Holcomb of National Capital Presbytery. The motion passed.

REPORT FROM THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ON THE CONFESSION OF BELHAR

Moderator Rada recognized Co-Moderators Clifton Kirkpatrick and Matilde Moros for the report from the General Assembly Special Commission on the Confession of Belhar. They reported that the special commission had recommended unanimously that the PC(USA) approve the Belhar Confession. The assembly heard remarks from the Reverend Dr. Mary-Anne Plaatjies van Huffel, moderator of the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa.

FLOOR MOTION ON ADVISORY VOTES FROM PRESBYTERY EXECUTIVES

Moderator Rada recognized Ruling Elder Commissioner Neil Zampella from the Presbytery of Redstone, who questioned the legality of the floor motion calling for an advisory vote from presbytery executives. Stated Clerk Parsons said he believed it was within the right of this assembly to seek whatever advice they chose on matters before the body. Commissioner Zampella then called for a division of the house on the previous motion. Moderator Rada ruled that the vote would be taken at a plenary session on Wednesday.

REPORT FROM MID COUNCIL COMMISSION II

Moderator Rada recognized Co-Moderators Ariel Mink and Byron Wade for the report of the Mid Council Commission II. They reported that the commission believed synods remain a useful structure for church life, and it was recommending a process that would restructure the synods into no more than eight larger regional bodies.

REPORT FROM THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY AND STANDARD ORDINATION EXAMS

Moderator Rada recognized the Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry and Standard Ordination Exams. Moderator Diana Barber and committee members Ruben Armendáriz, Susan Niesen, and Nicholas Yoda reported on the twelve recommendations from the special committee.

REPORT FROM THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW BIENNIAL ASSEMBLIES

Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia assumed the chair. Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized the Reverend Rhonda Kruse and the Reverend Theresa Cho for the report from the Special Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies. They focused on the committee’s recommendation to review and revise the Standing Rules, which have been in place since 1983.

REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL RACIAL ETHNIC MINISTRIES TASK FORCE

Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized the Reverend Paul Junggap Huh, chairperson, and the Reverend Ruth-Aimée Belonni-Rosario for a presentation on the three recommendations from the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force.
SPIRIT OF GA VIDEO
Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia introduced the Spirit of GA video.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized Associate Stated Clerk Tom Hay for announcements.

CLOSING PRAYER
Samantha Gonzalez-Block, theological seminary advisory delegate from Auburn Seminary, offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

RECESS
The assembly recessed at 5:06 p.m.

Sunday, June 15, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Monday, June 16, 2014, 7:00 a.m.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for the General Assembly Breakfast and morning worship with speaker Lillian Daniel, senior minister, First Congregational Church, Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

Monday, June 16, 2014, 9:30 a.m.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 9:30 a.m. until noon; from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.; and from 7:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, June 17, 2014, 8:30 a.m.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for morning worship. The Reverend Mark Labberton, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, was the preacher.

The assembly met in assigned committees from 9:30 a.m. until noon and from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 18, 2014, 8:30 a.m.

Commissioners, advisory delegates, and other participants gathered for the Ecumenical Service of Worship. The Right Reverend Mark L. MacDonald, president of the World Council of Churches and National Indigenous Anglican Bishop in the Anglican Church of Canada, preached the sermon, titled “The Living Word of God in History and Creation.”

The Report Presentation Briefing I met from 10:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, June 18, 2014, 2:00 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING IV
The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

The Reverend Christine Coy-Fohr, young adult volunteer alumna who served in Northern Ireland, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

Moderator Rada asked the assembly to recognize and thank former candidates for Moderator and Vice-Moderator: the Reverend Kelly Allen, the Reverend John Wilkinson, the Reverend Leslie A. King, and the Reverend MaryAnn McKibben Dana.

SPEAK-OUT
Moderator Rada recognized Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons to explain the format for the “Speak-out” session. For fifteen minutes, commissioners, advisory delegates, and corresponding members had the opportunity to speak for one minute each from microphones two and three. Speakers could not make motions during this time.
Moderator Rada called on participants, who made prayer requests and offered comments about their General Assembly experience during the speak-out.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Rada recognized Susan Orr, moderator, and Raul Santiago-Rivera, vice-moderator, of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Moderator Orr reported on Report One (Item 02-01, see p. 163) that detailed the committee referrals for commissioners’ resolutions and the final action referral for the Heidelberg Catechism.

Vice-Moderator Santiago-Rivera presented Report Two [02-Rpt 2] that included Item 02-02 (proposed docket). The assembly approved Item 02-02. Moderator Orr reported that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures examined the minutes of the General Assembly from the time of its convening on Saturday afternoon, June 14, through the end of Business Meeting III on Sunday, June 15, and found them in order. The committee also reviewed and found in order the minutes of the Mid Council Commission and the Mid Council Commission II.

Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures

I. For Plenary Action

The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures recommends Item 02-02, including the order of committee reports, as an adjustment to the docket approved on Saturday. [See p. 164.]

221st General Assembly (2014)
Detroit, Michigan

Wednesday, June 18:
8:30 a.m. Ecumenical Worship Service

Report Reading Time: Pay particular attention to Item 02-WCA

Lunch Break
2:00 p.m. Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 4

• Speak-out
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Stated Clerk’s Orientation II
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Consent agenda, Item 02-WCA: Items receiving a super majority vote in assembly committee meetings
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, and Foundation (12)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03)

Announcements
5:30 p.m. Closing Prayer
Recess
Group Dinner
7:00 p.m. Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 5

• Speak-out
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions Report (13)
• Memorial Minute: Sara B. Moseley
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry (06)

Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess

Thursday, June 19:
8:30 a.m. BUSINESS MEETING 6
Opening Prayer
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Special Order: Council discussion of recommendations concerning Middle East and Marriage (90 minutes)
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination (08)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality (14)

11:15 a.m. Worship
Recess
Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 7
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Mid Council Issues (05)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (09)
Announcements
Closing Prayer

5:30 p.m. Recess
Dinner Break

7:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 8
• Speak-out
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Memorial Minute: Cynthia Bolbach
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues (15)
Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess

Friday, June 20:

8:30 a.m. BUSINESS MEETING 9
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• GANC Report
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues (10)

11:15 a.m. Worship
Recess
12:00 noon Group Lunch

1:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 10
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (07)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues (04)
Announcements
Closing Prayer

5:30 p.m. Recess
Group Dinner

7:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 11
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11)
Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess

Saturday, June 21:
9:00 a.m. Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 12
• Memorial Minute: Albert Winn
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Introduction of Presbytery of the Cascades Committee on Local Arrangements

11:00 a.m. Closing Worship in Plenary

II. For Information

A. In accordance with the Standing Rules, the minutes of the 221st General Assembly (2014) for Saturday, June 14, 2014, through Sunday, June 15, 2014, have been reviewed and found to be in order. These minutes are posted on PC-biz under the business for Committee 2 (Bills and Overtures), Items 02-03 and 02-04, and two copies are posted on the bulletin boards near the registration booths.

B. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures has reviewed and found in order the minutes of the Mid Council Commission and the Mid Council Commission II (02-Info). (See p. 166.)

ECUMENICAL GREETINGS

Moderator Rada recognized the Reverend Dr. Setri Nyomi, general secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches; the Reverend Dr. John Gibaut, representative of the general secretary of the World Council of Churches; and James Winkler, general secretary and president of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., who brought greetings to the assembly.

STATED CLERK’S ORIENTATION II

Moderator Rada recognized Stated Clerk Parsons for an update on voting procedures. Stated Clerk Parsons announced that electronic voting would be conducted using keypads or “clickers,” and he explained how to use the keypads. Moderator Rada called for a test vote to calibrate the voting system.

Moderator Rada called on Stated Clerk Parsons to explain how the assembly would respond to the request from Business Meeting III for a division of the house on the vote to poll presbytery executives for advisory votes. Moderator Rada then called for the vote. The motion was defeated.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Rada recognized Gene McEvoy, moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on the financial implications on the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Moderator McEvoy presented a per capita apportionment of $7.02 for 2015 and $7.02 for 2016 (the same per capita apportionment as 2014) and announced that the total financial implications of actions recommended by assembly committees amounts to: $14,800 for 2014; $146,065 for 2015 ($.08 additional per capita); and $80,725 for 2016 ($.05 additional per capita). On Saturday morning, the committee will present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budget for 2015 and 2016.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Moderator Rada recognized Linda Scholl, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Scholl reported the total financial implications of actions under considerations by the assembly for the mission budgets were: $276,619 for 2015, and $68,418 for 2016. On Saturday morning, the committee will present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the mission budget for 2015 and 2016.

NOMINATIONS INFORMATION

Moderator Rada recognized Stated Clerk Parsons who reported there have been no challenges to the nominees of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) found in Item 00-02; therefore, per the Standing Rules, these unchallenged nominations in Item 00-02 are now included in the consent agenda. Additional nominations have been made and are listed in Moderator’s Report, Item 00-03, and GANC report, Item 00-04. Floor nominations for these positions are due Thursday, June 19, 2014, by 2:00 p.m.
Moderator Rada introduced the Wednesday Consent Agenda, titled in PC-biz as 02-WCA (for Wednesday Consent Agenda). The Wednesday Consent Agenda includes recommendations from committees that have been approved by 75 percent or more of the committee members. Items that were approved by less than 75 percent will be voted on individually in plenary. When the consent agenda is presented to the body for a vote, the assembly will be voting for all the items included, without any alterations, in a single vote.

Moderator Rada recognized Susan Orr, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, and Raul Santiago-Rivera, Vice-Moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Moderator Rada announced that all commissioners have the right to remove an item from the consent agenda for any reason. He said it is good to keep in mind that the process was put in place by the last General Assembly as a way to streamline procedural work and to allow time for discussion and discernment on the more complex issues before the church.

On behalf of the committee, Susan Orr moved that items listed in Item 02-05 (items that had met criteria for inclusion on the consent agenda) be exempt from the Standing Rules so that they could be acted upon later in the assembly. The motion was approved.

Having added and removed items as requested, the assembly approved 02-WCA, which included:

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item A. Advisory Committee on the Constitution. [See p. 91.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item B. Advisory Committee on Litigation. [See p. 92.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item C. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. [See p. 92.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item D. Advocacy Committee for Rational Ethnic Concerns. [See p. 93.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item E. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns. [See p. 94.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item F. Audit Committee. [See p. 95.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item K. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation. [See p. 98.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item J. Educator Certification Committee. [See pp. 97–98.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item Z. Review Committee on the Presbyterian Mission Agency. [See p. 107.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item W. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. [See pp. 104–106.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item P. Mission Development Resources Committee. [See p. 101.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item Q. Presbyterian Men. [See p. 101.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item R. Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee. [See pp. 101–102.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item Y. Review Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. [See p. 107.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item AA. Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. [See p. 108.]**

**Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item S. Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examinations. [See p. 102.]**
Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item O. General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. [See p. 100.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item T. Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel. [See p. 103.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item U. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. [See p. 103–104.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item V. Presbyterian Hunger Program. [See p. 104.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item X. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. [See p. 106.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item BB. National Committee on the Self Development of People. [See p. 108.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item G. Board of Pensions. [See p. 95]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item H. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. [See p. 96.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item I. Committee on Theological Education. [See p. 97.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item L. Finance Committee. [See pp. 98–99.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item M. General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations. [See p. 99.]

Item 00-02: General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations Item N. General Assembly Committee on Representation. [See pp. 99–100.]

Item 03-03: On Amending G-3.0501 and G-3.0503 to Give YAAD’s Voice and Vote and to Rename Them as “Young Adult Commissioners”—From the Synod of the Covenant. [See p. 170.]


Item 03-04: Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). Item Recommendation 3.b. [See p. 177.]

Item 03-04: Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). Item Recommendation 3.c. [See p. 177.]


Item 03-04: Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). Item Recommendation 7.e. [See p. 184.]


Item 03-05: Joint COGA/PMA Budget Proposals for General Assembly Per Capita Budgets 2014–2016. Item Recommendation 1, 2.a, 3, 4. [See pp. 191–92.]

Item 03-06: A Resolution to Support Hotel and Hospitality Workers Through the Adoption of Just Policies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC). [See p. 193.]

Item 03-07: Amendment to Standing Rule H.1.b.(3) (Moderatorial Election Expenses)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA). [See pp. 197–98.]

Item 03-08: Confirmation of Class of 2018 for the Presbyterian Historical Society Board—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. [See p. 198.]

Item 03-10: Approve Appointment and Terms of Associate Stated Clerks—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. [See p. 201.]

Item 03-11: Recommendation for Site and Date of 224th General Assembly (2020)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. [See p. 202.]


Item 04-06: On Affirming Occupation-Free Investment in Palestine—From the Presbytery of Mackinac. [See pp. 271–72.]

Item 04-09: Resolution on Equal Rights for All Inhabitants of Israel and Palestine and on Conversations with Prophetic Voices. [See pp. 292–93.]


Item 04-11: Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Tragedy at Tent of Nations. [See pp. 298–99.]

Item 04-13: Commissioners’ Resolution. On a Commitment to Prayer for Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation in Israel and Palestine. [See p. 306.]

Item 05-03: On Transferring Han Yang Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of San Fernando. [See p. 318.]

Item 05-05: On Forming a Task Force to Study How Korean-Speaking Churches Can Develop into Healthy Members of the PC(USA)—From Midwest Hanmi Presbytery. [See pp. 349–50.]

Item 05-08: On Transferring Coudersport Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Northumberland to the Presbytery of Lake Erie—From the Synod of the Trinity. [See p. 352.]

Item 05-09: Commissioners’ Resolution. On Studying the Effectiveness of Mid Council to Mid Council Reference Checks and Clearance Procedures. [See p. 353.]

Item 05-A: Review of Synod Minutes. [See p. 354.]
Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 1. [See p. 376.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 2. [See p. 377.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 3. [See p. 377.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 4. [See p. 377.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 5. [See p. 377.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 6. [See p. 378.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 7. [See p. 378.]

Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 8. [See p. 378.]


Item 06-12: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams. Item Recommendation 10. [See p. 379.]


Item 07-04: Invitation to Ecumenical Delegates to the 222nd General Assembly. [See p. 456.]

Item 07-05: The Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Dialogue. [See pp. 456–57.]

Item 07-06: World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly Delegation Report. [See p. 459.]

Item 07-07: Seventh Day Adventists Dialogue. [See p. 462.]


Item 08-01: On Support for the Institut Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) Endowment and the Endowment Concept—From the Presbytery of New Castle. [See p. 475.]


Item 08-04: Revision to the PMA Manual of Operations. [See p. 486.]

Item 08-05: A Resolution to Define and Interpret Standards for PC(USA) Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns. [See p. 489.]

Item 08-06: A Resolution to Develop a Churchwide Antiracism Policy—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns. [See p. 491.]

Item 08-07: Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals. [See p. 495.]

Item 08-10: Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—PMA. [See p. 518.]

Item 08-11: Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions. [See p. 522.]

Item 08-12: The Institutional Relationship Agreement between Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. and the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). [See p. 526.]
Item 08-15: Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church Item Recommendation A.1. [See pp. 532–33.]

Item 08-15: Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church Item Recommendation B. [See p. 534.]

Item 08-15: Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church Item Recommendation C.1. [See p. 534.]

Item 08-15: Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church Item Recommendation C.2. [See p. 534.]

Item 09-04: Regarding a National Moratorium on the Imposition of the Death Penalty—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. [See p. 628.]

Item 09-06: On Advocating for Financial and Political Reform—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe. [See p. 635.]

Item 09-09: On Food Sovereignty for All—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. [See p. 643.]

Item 09-10: On a Study of End-of-Life Issues—From the Synod of the Covenant. [See pp. 647–48.]

Item 09-11: Affirming the Importance of Maternal and Child Nutrition over 1000 Days—From the Presbytery of National Capital. [See p. 649.]

Item 09-12: On Providing a Trauma Crisis Counseling Consultation to Train in Best Practices in Caring for Survivors of Homicide Victims—From the Presbytery of Nevada. [See p. 650.]


Item 09-15: A Resolution to Educate Against and Help Prevent Voter Suppression—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns. [See pp. 659–60.]

Item 09-17: The Self-Study Report of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the 221st General Assembly (2014). [See pp. 696–97.]

Item 09-18: Membership of GA Committee on Representation. [See p. 735.]

Item 09-19: Standard Definition of Supplier Diversity. [See pp. 735–36.]

Item 09-20: Commissioner Resolution. On the Global Crisis for LGBT People and Their Families: A Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Response. [See p. 737.]

Item 09-22: Commissioners’ Resolution. On Encouraging Parental Leave Policy. [See p. 740.]

Item 09-23: Commissioners’ Resolution. On Requesting the Release from Prison of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera. [See p. 742.]

Item 11-08: Western Sahara: Occupied, Non-Self-Governing Territory, and Test Case for International Law. [See p. 840.]

Item 11-12: On Helping to Remedy the Tragc Conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—From the Presbytery of Boston. [See pp. 887–88.]


Item 11-15: On Encouraging Use of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation—From the Presbytery of New York City. [See p. 897.]


Item 11-17: Commissioners’ Resolution. On Iran. [See p. 903.]


221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
Item 12-01: On Amending G-2.0504b to Require Participation in the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas. [See p. 913.]

Item 12-02: On Directing the Board of Pensions in the Distribution of Pension Benefits of Church Leaders and Administrators of Churches Leaving the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Tropical Florida. [See p. 914.]

Item 12-03: On Publishing the Current List of Churches Certified as Relief of Conscience Churches—From the Presbytery of National Capital. [See p. 915.]

Item 12-05: Confirm Election of Individuals to the PILP Board of Directors. [See p. 917.]

Item 12-08: Confirm Directors to the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A. [See p. 918.]

Item 12-09: Churchwide Gifts Program. [See p. 918.]

Item 12-12: Item 01-02: I.B., Pulled From Consent Agenda. [See pp. 919–20.]

Item 12-NB: New Business. [See p. 920.]

Item 13-02: Draft of Proposed Directory for Worship to Church for Study and Comment—PMA. [See p. 956.]

Item 13-03: Approve President of Princeton Theological Seminary. [See p. 976.]

Item 13-04: Grant Permission to Theological Seminaries to Celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. [See p. 977.]

Item 13-05: Trustees of Theological Institutions. [See pp. 977–78.]

Item 13-06: Approval of List of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Related Schools, Colleges and Universities. [See pp. 978–79.]

Item 13-07: Report of the Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions. [See p. 979.]

Item 13-09: Commissioners’ Resolution. On Endorsing a Clergy Letter Project and Evolution Sunday. [See p. 983.]

Item 14-03: Living Missionally. [See pp. 998–99.]


Item 15-04: On Recognizing the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative to Affirm and Promote the Civil and Human Rights of Immigrants in Our Communities—From the Presbytery of Central Florida. [See p. 1030.]

LIVING MISSIONALLY

Moderator Rada recognized Roger Dermody, Deputy Executive Director for Mission of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, to talk about Living Missionally.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BOP, PILP, PPC, AND PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION

Moderator Rada recognized Jack Shelver, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and Presbyterian Foundation. Mr. Shelver called on Thomas C. Paisley Jr., outgoing chair of the Board of Directors of the Board of Pensions. Mr. Paisley recognized the service of Robert W. Maggs Jr., retiring president and chief executive of the Board of Pensions. The assembly approved Item 12-11, the election of Frank C. Spencer as president and chief executive of the Board of Pensions. Frank Spencer briefly addressed the assembly.

Monica Hall, vice-moderator of the Committee on Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and Presbyterian Foundation, called on the Reverend David Davis, chair of the Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Foundation. Rev. Davis outlined the qualifications of the Reverend Dr. Thomas F. Taylor, president and CEO of the Presbyterian Foundation. The assembly approved Item 12-07, the reelection of Rev. Taylor as president and CEO of the Presbyterian Foundation. Rev. Taylor briefly addressed the assembly.

Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, and Foundation

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

There are no items recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.
I. Plenary Action

*Item 12-01. On Amending G-2.0504b to Require Participation in the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas.

Disapproved. [See p. 913.]

*Item 12-02. On Directing the Board of Pensions in the Distribution of Pension Benefits of Church Leaders and Administrators of Churches Leaving the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Tropical Florida.

Disapproved. [See p. 914.]

*Item 12-03. On Publishing the Current List of Churches Certified as Relief of Conscience Churches—From the Presbytery of National Capital.

Approved. [See p. 915.]

Item 12-04. [Concurrence withdrawn. Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]

*Item 12-05. Confirm Election of Individuals to the PILP Board of Directors.

Approved. [See p. 917.]

Item 12-06. [There is no Item 12-06.]

Item 12-07. Reelection of Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer.

Approved. [See p. 917.]

*Item 12-08. Confirm Directors to the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.

Approved. [See p. 918.]

*Item 12-09. Churchwide Gifts Program.

Approved. [See p. 918.]

Item 12-10. [There is no Item 12-10.]

Item 12-11. Confirm the Election of the President of the Board of Pensions.

Approved. [See p. 919.]

*Item 12-12. Item 01-02: I.B., Pulled From Consent Agenda.

Approved with comment. [See pp. 919–20.]

Comment: The Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, and Foundation recommends that the 221st General Assembly approve Item 12-12 with the following supportive comment: We, as the 221st General Assembly (2014), deeply appreciate the faithful work of the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the Board of Pensions on this matter and respectfully request the Board of Pensions provide an interim progress report to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on this issue of the relief of conscience following their next board meeting.

*Item 12-NB. New Business.

Approved. [See p. 920.]

The Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, & Foundation (12) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. Endorse the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation’s work;

2. Urge congregations and individual Presbyterians to use the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation for investments, financial advice, charitable gifts of liquid and illiquid assets, and growing generosity;
3. Explore and cultivate the growing number of national and worldwide ecumenical and business relationships consistent with the mission and witness of the PC(USA) to further advance the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation’s & New Covenant Trust Company’s (NCTC’s) work to serve the church in ministry and mission.

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.

Item 12-A. General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions.
Approved. [See p. 920.]

Item 12-B. General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.
Approved. [See p. 926.]

Item 12-C. Benefits Plan Amendments Report—From the Board of Pensions.
Approved. [See p. 939.]

Item 12-D. Minutes, Board of Pensions.
Approved. [See p. 941.]

Item 12-E. Minutes, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.
Approved. [See p. 941.]

Item 12-F. Minutes, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.
Approved. [See p. 941.]

Item 12-G. Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.
Approved. [See p. 941.]

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Rada recognized Commissioner Gene McEvoy, moderator, and Gung Ho Lee, vice-moderator, of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures.

The assembly took the following actions: Item 03-01 was disapproved. Item 03-02 was disapproved with comment. Item 03-04, Recommendation 4.a., was approved with amendment. Item 03-09 was approved with amendment. Item 03-13 was referred, with comment, to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016). Item 03-14 was disapproved.

Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

There are no items recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

I. Plenary Action

Item 03-01. On Issuing a Request to Teaching Elders to Participate in the Administrative Costs of the Church by Paying Per Capita—From the Presbytery of Albany.
Disapproved. [See p. 167.]

Item 03-02. On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Limit Payments of Per Capita—From the Presbytery of Detroit.
Disapproved with comment. [See p. 167.]

Comment: We respectfully remind presbyteries of the flexibility available under the 1999 authoritative interpretation. We also respectfully remind sessions of their respective covenantal responsibilities to both the presbytery and General Assembly.
Item 03-03. On Amending G-3.0501 and G-3.0503 to Give YAAD’s Voice and Vote and to Rename Them as “Young Adult Commissioners”—From the Synod of the Covenant.

Disapproved with comment. [See p. 170.]

Comment: While the committee recognizes the value of the YAAD program, the input these advisors give us, the perspective they bring to our discussions, and the experiences it gives our emerging church leaders, we recommend Item 03-03 not be approved for the following reasons: 1) There is flexibility within the current Book of Order for this intent to happen. 2) The overturing actually could work counter to the intent of the overture in that there would be no prior vote for advice; their voice would be blended with all other votes with no distinctions as to how the younger commissioners were thinking. 3) We also wish to honor and respect the advice of COGA and the ACC that offer serious considerations on how to include young adults in the whole life of the church. 4) The 221st General Assembly (2014) encourages the COGA to continue the discussion of how to include young adults in all levels of the life and ministry of the PC(USA) including the encouragement of sessions and presbyteries to affirm the call of young adults to the office of ruling elder, while encouraging persons who have served as YAADs as well as other advisory delegates to the 221st General Assembly (2014) to be included in this discussion and discernment.

Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 1.–2.].

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 173–76.]

Amend the second paragraph of Recommendation 2.d. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“(4) Each presbytery or synod that submits an overture shall notify the Stated Clerk of the name of a commissioner or some other person in attendance at the General Assembly who has been designated as the advocate for the overture. The an overture advocate who shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.) Each council who submits an overture or concurrence may appoint only one overture advocate [who shall be a teaching or ruling elder from that council]. (See Standing Rules A.3.[c](6) and E.2.)”

Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 3.a.].

Approved. [See p. 176.]

Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 3.b.].

Approved. [See p. 177.]

Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 3.c.].

Approved. [See p. 177.]

Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 3.d.–f.].

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 178–80.]

Amend Recommendation 3.d. by striking the current text and inserting new text to read as follows: [This goes back to the original text of Standing Rule B.2.e., with the exception of changing “120 days” to “180 days” in three places.]

“(d. Amend Standing Rule B.2.e.(1)–(3) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates ...“

“(1) Each theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate three students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. Two of these students shall be designated by the institution as delegates and the other student shall be designated as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Educa-
tion. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the names of the two students to be delegates to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

“(2) Each theological institution in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. One of these students shall be designated by the institution as the delegate and the other student as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

“(3) All non-Presbyterian theological schools represented by corresponding members on the Committee on Theological Education and one additional non-Presbyterian theological seminary shall be asked to nominate one theological student advisory delegate and one alternate. The additional non-Presbyterian seminary shall be chosen on a rotating basis, descending alphabetically, from those that have at least twelve Presbyterian enrollees (either inquirers or candidates under the care of a presbytery) as of October 1 in the year preceding the assembly. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.”

Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 4.a.]

Approved with amendment. [See p. 180.]

Amend Recommendation 4.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“a. Amend Standing Rule C.1.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“c. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall appoint a commissioner to be moderator and a second to be vice moderator to each committee. The moderator positions are filled by commissioners [from the next] [to the upcoming] General Assembly or may be from an assembly within the last six years. All vice moderator positions shall be filled by commissioners to the upcoming General Assembly. Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusively mandated in the Book of Order, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be ruling elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. The moderators of at least two-thirds of the assembly committees shall be current commissioners. No more than one person from any one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods shall be equitably represented.”

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 4.b.]*

Approved. [See p. 180.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 5.–6.a.]*

Approved. [See pp. 180–81.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 6.b.]*

Approved. [See pp. 181–82.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 6.c.]*

Approved. [See p. 183.]
*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 7.a.].

Approved. [See p. 183.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 7.b.].

Approved. [See p. 183.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 7.c.].

Approved. [See p. 184.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 7.d.].

Approved. [See p. 184.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 7.e.].

Approved. [See p. 184.]

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 8.].

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 184–87.]

Amend the eleventh paragraph of Recommendation 8 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“(6) (7) The Moderator[ ] [and the Vice Moderator (when filled)] shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.”

*Item 03-04. Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014), [Recommendation 9.].

Approved. [See pp. 187–89.]

*Item 03-05. Joint COGA/PMA Budget Proposals for General Assembly Per Capita Budgets 2014–2016 [Recommendation 1, 2.a, 3, 4].

Approved. [See pp. 191–92.]

*Item 03-06. A Resolution to Support Hotel and Hospitality Workers Through the Adoption of Just Policies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

Approved with amendment. [See p. 193.]

Amend Recommendations 2. and 3. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of General Assembly to adopt a policy that gives preference to hotels where [workers are organized] [workers’ rights are protected either by organization, or through the fair practices of their employers] and commits to honoring and upholding boycotts that are directly related to workers’ wages and working conditions.

“3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter, to be distributed electronically, to every presbytery and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) interest group, encouraging adoption of a similar policy that includes incorporating protective language in every hotel contract, giving preference to hotels where [workers are organized] [workers’ rights are protected either by organization, or through the fair practices of their employers] and committing to honoring and upholding boycotts that are directly related to workers’ wages and working conditions.”
*Item 03-07. Amendment to Standing Rule H.1.b.(3) (Moderatorial Election Expenses)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

   Approved. [See pp. 197–98.]

*Item 03-08. Confirmation of Class of 2018 for the Presbyterian Historical Society Board—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

   Approved. [See p. 198.]

Item 03-09. Standards of Ethics for Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

   Approved with amendment. [See p. 198.]

   Amend “Standards of Ethics for Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly,” Sections “a. Definition” and “b. Potential Compromises of Independent Judgment” to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “2. Independent Judgment. All commissioners and advisory delegates shall avoid actually or potentially compromising the exercise of their independent judgment in seeking to discern the will of Christ in the decisions made by the General Assembly, and situations that give even the appearance of compromising the exercise of their independent judgment.

   “a. Definition. ‘Compromising independent judgment’ means any situation in which the commissioner or advisory delegate may be influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making by any motive or desire for personal advantage or obligation to others with an interest in the decisions of the General Assembly. [Such situations can arise not only during the meeting of the General Assembly, but at any time after an individual has been selected as a commissioner or advisory delegate. Accordingly, any commissioner asked to serve in a committee leadership position shall disclose prior to accepting such an appointment any matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of compromising his or her independent judgment.] Personal advantage means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether present or potential, whether direct or indirect. [When in doubt, the commissioner or advisory delegate is to assume there might be at least the appearance of a compromise of his or her independent judgment, and should raise the question pursuant to these standards.] [Such situations can arise not only during the meeting of the General Assembly, but at any time after an individual has been selected as a commissioner or advisory delegate.]

   “b. Potential Compromises of Independent Judgment. [Any commissioner asked to serve in a committee leadership position shall disclose prior to accepting such an appointment any matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of compromising his or her independent judgment.] All commissioners or advisory delegates are likewise to disclose promptly, in writing, matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of compromising his or her independent judgment in the business before the General Assembly. Examples include, but are not limited to, financial interests in a decision of the assembly, acceptance of gifts or trips provided by those with an interest in or who are advocating for or against a recommendation or overture before the assembly. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures. [When in doubt, the commissioner or advisory delegate is to assume there might be at least the appearance of a compromise of his or her independent judgment, and should raise the question pursuant to these standards.]”

*Item 03-10. Approve Appointment and Terms of Associate Stated Clerks—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

   Approved. [See p. 201.]

*Item 03-11. Recommendation for Site and Date of 224th General Assembly (2020)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

   Approved. [See p. 202.]


   Approved. [See pp. 202–203.]

Referred with comment. [See p. 203.]

Comment: Refer Item 03-13 to COGA to be reported to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Disapproved. [See pp. 204–05.]

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 03-A. Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

Approved with comment. [See p. 205.]

Comment: Approved with minor typographical corrections that were submitted.

Item 03-B. Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society

Approved with comment. [See p. 205.]

Comment: Approve with minor typographical corrections that were submitted.

SPIRIT OF GA VIDEO

Moderator Rada introduced the Spirit of GA video.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moderator Rada called on Stated Clerk Parsons for announcements.

CLOSING PRAYER

Young Adult Advisory Delegate Co-Moderators Bryce McAteer, Los Ranchos Presbytery, and Erica Clark, Lake Huron Presbytery offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

RECESS

The assembly recessed at 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday, June 18, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING V

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Ali Wood, young adult volunteer from Tucson, Arizona, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

SPEAKOUT

Moderator Rada reminded the assembly of the format for the “Speakout” session. For fifteen minutes, commissioners, advisory delegates, and corresponding members may speak for one minute each from microphones two and three. Speakers may not make motions during this time.

ECUMENICAL GREETING

Christine Hong, PC(USA) associate for interfaith relations, introduced Sapreet Kaur of the Sikh Coalition, Sister Basimah Abdullah Shaheed of the Community in Association with Imam W.D. Mohammad, and Rabbi Rick Jacobs of the Union for Reformed Judaism, who brought greetings to the assembly.
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS

Moderator Rada recognized Quinn Fox, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions.

The assembly took the following actions: Item 13-01 was approved with amendment. Item 13-08 was approved with amendment.

David Gambrell, associate for theology in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, made a presentation on the Draft of the Proposed Directory for Worship (Item 13-02), which was approved as part of the consent agenda.

The Reverend Kathy Wolf Reed, chair of the Committee on Theological Education (COTE), reported on the work of COTE and introduced Dr. Brian Blount, president of Union Presbyterian Seminary, who spoke about the 100th Anniversary of the Assembly’s Training School and Presbyterian School of Christian Education.

Rev. Wolf Reed reported that the assembly had approved Dr. M. Craig Barnes as the new president of Princeton Theological Seminary as part of the consent agenda (Item 13-03), and Dr. Barnes spoke briefly to the assembly.

Rev. Wolf Reed announced the two recipients of Excellence in Theological Education awards. Dr. Ted Wardlaw, of Austin Theological Seminary, along with Moderator Rada, presented the award to the Reverend Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell who then addressed the assembly. The Reverend Dr. Jim McDonald, of San Francisco Theological Seminary, along with Moderator Rada, presented the award to the Reverend Dr. Jack B. Rogers, who also addressed the assembly.

Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions and CE

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

There are no items recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

I. Plenary Action

Item 13-01. Report and Recommendations from the General Assembly Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar to the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Approved with amendment. [See p. 947.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The General Assembly Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar unanimously recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

“Shall the Confession of Belhar be included in the Book of Confessions. [Explanatory notes: (a) Text for the Confession of Belhar can be found as Attachment 1., (b) Biblical citations should be listed in the margins by the relevant text as is shown in Attachment 1, and (c) While not of constitutional character, whenever the Confession of Belhar is printed in the Book of Confessions, it should be accompanied by the original Accompanying Letter from Belhar to explain the context of the confession. This letter is Attachment 2.]

2. Approve ‘The Accompanying Letter to the Confession of Belhar from the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’ as a statement reflecting the confession, conviction, and rationale of the [PC(USA) Special Committee] based on the implications of this confession for our life and ministry as a Reformed and Presbyterian community in 21st century North America and commend it to our congregations and presbyteries as they deliberate adding the Confession of Belhar to our Book of Confessions. [Like with the original Accompanying Letter, while not of constitutional character, whenever the Confession of Belhar is printed in the Book of Confessions, it should be accompanied by the Accompanying Letter from the 221st General Assembly (2014) to explain the context of the confession for the PC(USA). This Accompanying Letter for the PC(USA) can be found in Attachment 3.]

3. Call upon all congregations, councils, seminaries, and denominational conferences to engage in serious and prayerful study of the Confession of Belhar and the [two] accompanying Letters of Belhar during the next twelve months, making use of the variety of resources produced by the special committee and others, which can be found at www.pcusa.org/belhar.
“[4.][3.]. Dismiss the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar with thanks and request that members of the special committee who are willing be available as speakers and resource persons for congregations, councils, and special conferences (noted in Recommendation [3.][2.]).”

*Item 13-02. Draft of Proposed Directory for Worship to Church for Study and Comment—PMA.

Approved. [See p. 956.]

*Item 13-03. Approve President of Princeton Theological Seminary.

Approved. [See p. 976.]

*Item 13-04. Grant Permission to Theological Seminaries to Celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 977.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through.]

“The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) grant permission to the following theological institutions to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper in 2015–2016: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary,[] [in cooperation with the Interdenominational Theological Center and] Union Presbyterian Seminary, Seminario Evangelio de Puerto Rico, and Auburn Theological Seminary.”

*Item 13-05. Trustees of Theological Institutions.

Approved. [See pp. 977–78.]

*Item 13-06. Approval of List of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Related Schools, Colleges and Universities.

Approved. [See p. 978–79.]


Approved. [See p. 979.]


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 981–82.]

Amend Recommendations 2.–4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[2. Direct the whole church to plan root-searching events through fasting, prayer, Bible study, and spiritual gathering to realign the church to God’s purpose for the broken world.]”

“[3.][2.]. Encourage all councils and congregations to create special activities in reaffirmation of Presbyterian faith as expressed in the confessions, to inspire each other to cultivate [a] deeper [prayer life] [spiritual disciplines such as fasting, prayer, Bible study, spiritual gatherings, and acts of service], and to encourage all to witness [to] the Presbyterian heritage through community-oriented events.

“[3. Encourage congregations to celebrate intentionally the faithful witness of John Knox on Sunday, October 26, 2014 (Reformation Sunday).]

“4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to develop and disseminate worship aids, including public prayers and resource materials for the month.”


Disapproved. [See p. 983.]

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2014

Item 13-A. Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Assembly Training School.

   Approved. [See p. 985.]

Item 13-B. Award for Excellence in Theological Education.

   Approved. [See pp. 985–86.]

Item 13-C. Minutes, Committee on Theological Education.

   Approved with comment. [See p. 987.]

Comment: We recommend a process be developed that allows the task force to submit initial comments and suggestions regarding COTE minutes to the moderator of the Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions (or the committee to which it is referred) at least one week before the start of General Assembly. This process would allow COTE to make any needed corrections prior to the start of the committee.

MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR SARA B. MOSELEY

Moderator Rada recognized Dan Klein who presented the memorial minute to celebrate the life of Sara B. Moseley.

Sara Bernice Honea (“HOE nee”) was born August 9, 1917, in Anson, Texas. She joined the Church Triumphant on July 18, 2013. And she was a Presbyterian every day of her life. In 1936, at a Synod of Texas youth conference, Sara Bernice met John D. Moseley. They soon married and spent the rest of the twentieth century at the center of the life of the Presbyterian Church and Church-Related Higher Education.

Sara Bernice served the Presbyterian church through Presbyterian Women and at the presbytery, synod, and General Assembly levels. In 1978, she became the first woman to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

She later served as co-chair of Friends for Reunion and as the ecumenical delegate from the PCUS to the 1982 United Presbyterian Church General Assembly that approved the Plan for Reunion. After the reunion in 1983, Mrs. Moseley served as the first chair of the PC(USA) General Assembly Council.

She had an unmatched resume as a Presbyterian leader. But that resume doesn’t begin to describe her. To use a biblical image: As much as anyone we will ever know, Sara Bernice Moseley was Mary and Martha. All of us who knew her knew that she was always both as gracious as Martha and as devoted as Mary. Her graciousness was legendary. Austin College—where she served as First Lady from 1953 to 1978—and Grace Presbytery are full of stories about her hospitality and warmth. Sara Bernice was every bit as gracious and genuinely concerned about others as Martha in Luke 10. And—unlike Martha—she did it all without whining.

She was also every bit as devoted as Mary. All the way through last Spring, just a few months before she died, remember at age 97, Sara Bernice attended most of the cultural, academic, and religious events on the Austin College campus. She faithfully read every issue of Presbyterian Outlook, Presbyterians Today, and Christian Century. She maintained correspondence with friends throughout the church and hosted numerous General Assembly Moderators (including Neal Presa in March of 2013). She did this because she was devoted to her beloved Presbyterian church and to Austin College (especially Austin College students). Like Mary who “sat at the Lord’s feet and listened,” Sara Bernice was devoted to the things that mattered most to her. Sara Bernice used the adjective “grand” in normal conversation more than anyone else I have ever known. She talked about “grand days,” “grand circumstances,” “grand holidays,” “grand performances,” “grand friends,” “grand times,” and “grand surprises.”

As we pause today to remember and give thanks to God for the grand life and grand legacy of this grand woman, the best way for us to honor Sara Bernice Mosley is to strive—in our individual lives and in our life together—to follow her example:

- to be as grand as we can;
- to live fearlessly (and without complaint) in the face of obstacles;
- to devote ourselves to the people and communities that matter most to us; and
- to live each day with unfailing graciousness.

Like the other former Moderators we remember this week, Sara Bernice Moseley was an amazing gift and blessing to us and to our whole denomination.

She will be missed.
She will be remembered.
She should be celebrated.
She should be emulated.
Thanks be to God for Sara Bernice Moseley.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY AND ORDERED MINISTRY

Vice-Moderator Larissa Kwong Abazia assumed the chair and recognized Moderator Judy Ferguson and Vice-Moderator Kathy Stoner Lasala of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry. The work of the Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry and Ordination Exams was recognized.

Item 06-12 [Recommendation 11] and Item 06-12 [Recommendation 12] were approved. Item 06-13 was approved. Item 06-01 was disapproved. Item 06-02 was disapproved. Item 06-10 was disapproved. Item 06-08 was disapproved.

Motion to disapprove Item 06-05 failed. Motion made and seconded to approve Item 06-05. Discussion followed, and one amendment to Item 06-05 was approved:

“Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a [judicial proceeding] [disciplinary proceeding as the accused], that former teaching elder shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

The assembly then approved a motion to postpone action on Item 06-05 and Item 06-03 until Thursday, June 19, 2014.

The assembly discussed Item 06-04 and then approved a motion to postpone action until Thursday, June 19, 2014.

A motion to arrest the report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry was approved. [For the rest of the report, see p. 72.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Parsons made several announcements.

CLOSING PRAYER

Missionary Advisory Delegate Elmarie Parker offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

RECESS

The assembly recessed at 10:07 p.m.

Thursday, June 19, 2014, 8:30 A.M.

BUSINESS MEETING VI

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Alex Haney, Libby McDermott, Kathleen Murphy, and Audrey Holt, young adult volunteers currently serving in Boston, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Susan Orr and Vice-Moderator Raul Santiago-Rivera of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Moderator Orr proposed that the Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality report be moved to the afternoon session. It was approved.

ECUMENICAL GREETING

Maria Arroyo, area coordinator for Latin America, introduced the Reverend Harold S. Reyes, who brought greetings to the assembly from the Moravian Church of Nicaragua. Rev. Reyes presented a gift to Moderator Rada.
Moderator Rada recognized Gun Ho Lee, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications on the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Lee announced that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly amount to: $14,040 for 2014; $53,255 for 2015, representing an increase in $.03 per capita; and $36,215 for 2016, representing $.02 increase in per capita. Implications of pending actions recommended by assembly committees amount to: $760 for 2014; $89,810 for 2015, representing $.05 increase in per capita; and $44,510 for 2016, representing $.03 increase in per capita. On Saturday morning, the committee is scheduled to present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budget for 2015 and 2016.

Moderator Heath Rada recognized David Ealy, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Ealy reported the total financial implications of actions taken so far by the assembly amount to $170,751 for 2015 and $22,810 for 2016. Items still under consideration by the assembly for the mission budget totaled $105,868 for 2015, and $45,608 for 2016.

Moderator Rada recognized Susan Andrews, Moderator of the 215th General Assembly (2003), to set the stage for discussion of two of the issues before this assembly. Moderator Rada recognized Jeff Bridgeman, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues, and Rebecca Tollefson, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues, to present information about the committee’s recommendations. The assembly then participated in a time of sharing and discussion in small groups regarding the recommendations of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues. At the end of this time, Moderator Rada prayed.

Moderator Rada recognized Stephen Choi, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues, and Ginny Sheets, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues, to present information about the committee’s recommendations. Moderator Rada then recognized Rifat Kassis, ecumenical advisory delegate from the Lutheran Church in the Holy Land, who addressed the assembly. Moderator Rada then recognized Rabbi Rick Jacobs, interfaith representative from the Union of Reform Judaism, who addressed the assembly. The assembly then participated in a time of sharing and discussion in small groups regarding the recommendations of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues. Moderator Rada concluded this time by asking the assembly to pray in small groups.

Moderator Rada introduced a Minute for Mission video from the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Moderator Rada recognized Linda Scholl, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination. Moderator Scholl introduced David Ealy, vice-moderator of the Committee on Mission Coordination. Scholl introduced Matt Schramm, chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, who addressed the assembly and recommended the confirmation of Linda Valentine as Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Item 08-16 was approved. At Scholl’s request, Moderator Rada recognized Linda Valentine who briefly addressed the assembly.

Susan Orr, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, moved that the report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination be arrested. It was approved. [For the rest of the report, see p. 40.]

Moderator Rada announced that after the worship service, the assembly would be recessed until 1:30 pm.

The Reverend Anne Zaki of the Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt, was the preacher.

The assembly recessed at 12:15 p.m.
BUSINESS MEETING VII

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Colleen Earp, young adult volunteer currently serving in New Orleans, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

ECUMENICAL GREETING

Debbie Braaksma, area coordinator for Africa, introduced the Reverend Dr. Timothy Nyasulu, moderator of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, who brought greetings to the assembly.

MINUTE FOR MISSION VIDEO

Moderator Rada introduced the Minute for Mission video from the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES

Moderator Rada recognized Jeffrey Bridgeman, Moderator of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues for a report from the committee.

Moderator Bridgeman moved Item 10-07. A minority report was introduced. The minority report was perfected. The main motion was declared perfected. Moderator Rada put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated.

A motion to limit commissioners and advisory delegates speaking on items before the assembly to one minute was approved.

Item 10-07 was disapproved.

Moderator Bridgeman called upon Vice-Moderator Rebecca Tollefson to introduce Item 10-01. Item 10-01 was disapproved.

Moderator Bridgeman moved Item 10-03. Item 10-03 was approved with amendment.

Assembly approved answering Item 10-04 and Item 10-06 with the action on Item 10-03.

Item 10-02 was amended to add the following recommendation:

“[3. Amend Paragraph 3 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strikethrough; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]]

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.”

Item 10-02 was approved as amended.

Assembly approved answering Item 10-05 with the action on Item 10-02.

Item 10-NB was approved.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

There are no items recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

I. Plenary Action

10-01. On Amending W-4.9000 Concerning the Church’s Role in Legal Marriage and Services of Christian Covenant—From the Presbytery of Lehigh.

Disapproved. [See p. 777.]

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 780–81.]

1. Amend Paragraph 5 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract. A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the teaching elder, who [shall] [may] agree to the couple’s request only if, in the judgment of the teaching elder, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.”

2. Add a new paragraph at the end to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[Nothing herein shall compel a teaching elder to perform nor compel a session to authorize the use of church property for a marriage service that the teaching elder or the session believes is contrary to the teaching elder’s or the session’s discernment of the Holy Spirit and their understanding of the Word of God.]”

3. Amend Paragraph 3 to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.”

10-03. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Affirm Pastoral Discretion in Performing Marriage Ceremonies—From the Presbytery of Heartland.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 796–97.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Heartland overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to issue the following authoritative interpretation of the Book of Order, W-4.9000:

“Worship is a central element of the pastoral care of the people of God (W-6.3001, W-6.3010) in which a teaching elder’s discernment of the leading of the Holy Spirit is indispensable. The necessity of ensuring the exercise of freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture (G-2.0105) in the planning and leadership of worship has deep roots in our Reformed tradition and theology. Because a service of marriage is one form of such worship, when a couple requests the involvement of the church in solemnizing their marriage as permitted by the laws [of the civil jurisdiction in which the marriage is to take place] [of the place where the couple seek to be married], teaching elders* have the pastoral responsibility to assess the capabilities, intentions, and readiness of the couple to be married (W-4.9002), and the freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture (G-2.0105) to participate in any such marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.

“Exercising such discretion and freedom of conscience under the prayerful guidance of Scripture, teaching elders may conduct a marriage service for any such couple in the place where the community gathers for worship, [if] [so long as it is] approved by the session; or in such other place as may be suitable for a service of Christian worship. In no case shall any teaching elder’s conscience be bound to conduct any marriage service for any couple except by his or her understanding of the Word, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The authoritative interpretation of this section by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) (Minutes, 1991, Part I, p. 395, paragraphs 21.124–128), and the subsequent authoritative interpretations of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission relying upon it, are withdrawn and replaced with this authoritative interpretation.’

“*As in other places in the Directory for Worship, the use of “teaching elders” in this paragraph should be understood to include ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service.”
10-04. On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Affirm Pastoral Discretion in Performing Marriage Ceremonies—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.

Answered with action on Item 10-03. [See p. 813.]


Answered with action on Item 10-02. [See p. 814.]

10-06. On Rescinding the 1991 Authoritative Interpretation Concerning Teaching Elders Performing Marriages for Same-Gender Couples and Sessions Permitting Such Ceremonies in their Facilities—From the Presbytery of New Castle.

Answered with action on Item 10-03. [See p. 816.]

10-07. On Creating a Task Force to Identify Common Ground and Reconcilable Differences with Respect to Same-Gender Marriage—From Eastern Korean Presbytery.

Disapproved. [See pp. 817–18.]

10-08. Commissioner Resolution. On Theological Diversity Concerning the Definition of Marriage.

[Determined to be out of order in accordance with Standing Rule A.8.d.]

10-NB. New Business. Recommend the 221st General Assembly (2014) direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to establish a way to bring reconciliation to the church that would involve visiting each presbytery and serving as a resource for each presbytery’s discussion of these actions in congregations and the presbytery at-large and present voices of reconciliation for the unity of the church.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 55, 819.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with gray highlight (denotes plenary action), with brackets, and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with gray highlight(denotes plenary action), with brackets, and with an underline.]

“Recommend that the 221st General Assembly (2014) direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to establish a way to bring reconciliation to the church that would involve] [engage in the process of working together with churches in the task of reconciliation, starting with] visiting each presbytery and serving as a resource for each presbytery’s discussion of these actions in congregations and the presbytery at large and present voices of reconciliation for the unity of the church.”

Dissent

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-01 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Bob Song, Midwest-Hanmi Presbytery.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-02 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Earl Bland, Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; Samuel J. Dechter, and Kristine A. Bottino of the Presbytery of Central Washington; Richard Kampa and William A. Norton of the Presbytery of de Cristo; Jennifer A. Jennings, Presbytery of East Iowa; Amos Mendez Gutierrez and Lucia Soto Alma of the Presbiterio del Noroeste; Paul Thwaite, Presbytery of Detroit; James D. Miller and F. Russell Cook of the Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Kenneth J. Macari, Presbytery of Elizabeth; E. Jones Doughton, Presbytery of Flint River; William Ward, Presbytery of the Inland Northwest; Richard K. Zeigler, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee; Bob Song, Midwest-Hanmi Presbytery; Bruce A. Jones, Presbytery of Milwaukee; Donald G. Davis Jr., Presbytery of Mission; Andrew Gerhart, Presbytery of Muskingum Valley; Forbes Baker, Presbytery of New Covenant; Glen Hallead, Presbytery of Northumberland; James W. Wallace, Presbytery of Palo Duro; Frank M. Stratiff, Thomas R. Wilson, Chris Weichman, and James N. Latta of the Presbytery of Shenango; and David C. Mauldin, Presbytery of South Alabama.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-03 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Earl Bland, Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; Samuel J. Dechter, and Kristine A. Bottino of the Presbytery of Central Washington; Richard Kampa and William A. Norton of the Presbytery of de Cristo; Amos Mendez Gutierrez and Lucia Soto Alma of the Presbiterio del Noroeste; Chris Thomas, Presbytery of Detroit; Jennifer A. Jennings, Presbytery of East Iowa; Kenneth J. Macari, Presbytery of Elizabeth; E. Jones Doughton, Presbytery of Flint River; William Ward, Presbytery of the Inland Northwest; Richard K. Zeigler, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee; Bob Song, Midwest-Hanmi Presbytery; Andrew Gerhart, Presbytery of Muskingum Valley; Jim Houston-Hencken, Presbytery of Nevada; Forbes Baker
and Jody Harrington of the Presbytery of New Covenant; Glen Hallead, Presbytery of Northumberland; JoAnn Thetford, Presbytery of Palo Duro; Randy Moody, Presbytery of Peace River; Louise Schoppe, Paul E. Roberts, Robert J. Dressing, and Carolyn Cranston of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Neil Zampella, Presbytery of Redstone; Joan Johnson, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Thomas R. Wilson, Chris Weichman, and James N. Latta of the Presbytery of Shenango; David C. Mauldin, Presbytery of South Alabama; and J. Ben Sloan, Presbytery of Trinity.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-04 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Allison T. Bauer, Maurice Smith, Eva-Marie Barr, and R. Mark Plumb of the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler; Richard Kampa, Presbytery of de Cristo; Jennifer A. Jennings, Presbytery of East Iowa; Paul Thwaite, Presbytery of Detroit; Bob Song, Midwest-Hanmi Presbytery; Bruce A. Jones, Presbytery of Milwaukee; Louise Schoppe, Paul E. Roberts, Robert J. Dressing, and Carolyn Cranston of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; and Mouris Yousef, Presbytery of West Jersey.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-05 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Richard Kampa, Presbytery of de Cristo; Jennifer A. Jennings, Presbytery of East Iowa; and Bob Song, Midwest-Hanmi Presbytery.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-06 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Bob Song, Presbytery of Midwest-Hanmi.

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 10-07 of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues: Richard Kampa, Presbytery of de Cristo; and Jennifer A. Jennings, Presbytery of East Iowa.

**REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES**

Vice-Moderator Larissa Kwong Abazia assumed the chair and recognized Moderator Dan Ponder and Vice-Moderator Gloria Young of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues for a report from the committee.

Moderator Ponder moved Item 09-07, which was approved with amendment and with comment. The assembly answered Item 09-01 and Item 09-21 by the action on 09-07.

Item 09-16 was approved.

Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia proclaimed that the report would then be arrested. [For the rest of the report, see p. 35.]

**SPIRIT OF GA VIDEO**

Moderator Kwong Abazia introduced the Spirit of GA video.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Tacoma Monroe, young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Giddings Lovejoy, and David Smith, young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

**RECESS**

The assembly recessed at 5:27 p.m.

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**BUSINESS MEETING VIII**

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

The Reverend Wendy Neff, young adult volunteer alum who served in Northern Ireland, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

**1001 WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES VIDEO**

Moderator Rada introduced a video about the 1001 Worshipping Communities initiative.
Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Susan Orr and Vice-Moderator Raul Santiago-Rivera of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Moderator Orr recommended that the “Speakout” be eliminated from the evening docket given the number of assembly committees that still have not reported; she also recommended changes to the evening docket. The assembly approved both recommendations.

RECONSIDERATION OF ITEM 10-NB

Moderator Rada recognized Commissioner Ryan Landino, who moved for reconsideration of Item 10-NB. The assembly approved the motion, and Moderator Rada said the item would be reconsidered at a later time. [See p. 55.]

MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR CYNTHIA J. BOLBACH

Moderator Rada recognized Teri Thomas, teaching elder and pastor of Northminster Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, who presented the memorial minute to celebrate the life of Cynthia J. Bolbach.

Ruling Elder Cynthia J. Bolbach began her service as Moderator of the 219th General Assembly (2010) by telling a story from the Gospels. It was the story of a person who was bedridden, sick, paralyzed, in need of healing. Jesus was in town but the crowd prevented anyone from getting to him. So a group of this invalid’s friends carried his cot to the place where Jesus was staying. They hoisted him onto the housetop, cut a hole in the roof, and lowered him down into the presence of his Lord.

I cannot hear this story without thinking of Cindy. She saw herself as one of those faithful friends, carrying the church she loved to a place of wholeness, healing, and health. She challenged each of us to join the faithful in that task. She said it this way.

“The Gospel tells us: we have to rely on others to help us. We have to rely on those who we know and on those who we don’t know. We have to rely on those with whom we agree, and on those with whom we don’t agree. We have to rely on anyone who is committed to following Jesus and who can think creatively, like those in the Gospel story, to help us see Jesus….Our challenge, our calling, is to get our paralyzed denomination to Jesus so that Jesus can start the healing. Let’s do just that. Let’s break through this roof. Let’s see Jesus.”

I will also never be able to sing the hymn—"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”—without thinking of Cindy. I have never liked that hymn, but it was her favorite and I can certainly see why.

Cindy was a fortress for so many during her life. The way she cared for family and friends was powerful. She had strength and gentleness, determination and commitment, reliability and loyalty that never wavered.

Born and raised a devout Lutheran, Cindy had deep appreciation for the reformed tradition. She eventually became a Presbyterian in part, I believe, because she liked the notion that ruling ELDERS RULE.

She loved the polity of our church enough to lead the task force charged with reforming it. She could lead. She could listen. She could learn. She could bend. But the mighty fortress and never failing bulwark were forever at her core.

I will never hear the song Kum ba Yah without laughing with Cindy. This was all it took to bring out her utter disdain for anything syrupy or schmaltzy. She had a ferocious sense of humor and a brilliant wit. They sometimes overshadowed her deep compassion and her unfailing generosity.

So whenever you look up and see a hole in the roof, I invite you to remember Cindy and her vision for our church. Look for the friends gathered, trying to help—the young and the old, gay and straight, men and women, the teaching and the ruling elders.

Cindy did not ask us to fix holes. She challenged us to make them, so we could bring others to Jesus, to heal them and to heal the church.

In the end the healing story took a turn Cindy had not predicted. She became the one in the bed and she found herself being lifted by the church she loved into the presence of her Lord. She left a hole so we can continue to bring others to Jesus. She left the hole to remind us that we too will be lifted up to join her and all the saints in the inclusive, diverse, loving, awesome realm of God.

Thanks be to God for the life and ministry of Cynthia Jean Bolbach, a true ruling elder.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS

Vice-Moderator Larissa Kwong Abazia assumed the chair and recognized Ji hyun Oh, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. Moderator Oh introduced John Vest, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.
THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2014

The assembly heard a presentation on Item 07-07, the Seventh Day Adventists Dialogue, which was approved on the consent agenda.

Vice-Moderator Vest presented Item 07-02, which was approved with amendment. Item 07-01 was disapproved with comment.

The assembly heard a presentation on Item 07-06, the World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly Delegation Report, which was approved on the consent agenda.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. A summary of the report is as follows:

**Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations**

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

There are no items recommendations contained in this report that have financial implications.

**I. Plenary Action**


Disapproved with comment. [See p. 441.]

Comment: Though the committee voted not to approve Item 07-01, we take the matter of language, and specifically the tension around the use of the term “Israel,” very seriously. We hope the discussion and education about the use of language continues.

Item 07-02. The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 444–45.]

1. Amend the third paragraph of Recommendation 2. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks new opportunities for conversation and understanding respectful dialogue and mutual relationships with non-Christian entities from other religious traditions and persons outside the Christian tradition. It does this in the faith that the church of Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is a sign and means of God’s intention for the wholeness of all humankind and all creation.”

2. Amend Recommendations 3.–4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “3. [Affirm the commitment of] Confessing the history of Christian domination and supremacy over other religions, which included forced conversions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms a commitment to work for the common good in society together with people of other faiths and interreligious bodies at all levels; and direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to appropriately support emerging partnerships for this purpose.

   “4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate and work toward meeting human needs, seeking justice and reconciliation, and pursuing peace through interreligious peacemaking, disaster assistance, and solidarity efforts that attend to respectful interactions with persons of different cultural and religious traditions in both the United States and international contexts; and encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels to do the same.”

3. Amend Recommendations 6.–7. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to build capacity for strong and mutual interreligious relationships throughout its ministry areas, to develop and promote resources that support the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels in the church’s efforts to build and strengthen those relationships, and facilitate cooperative efforts with other religious traditions for social justice, recognizing that not all people of a particular faith tradition share the same positions on social issues, and endeavor to include as many positions and voices as possible from those faith traditions. With humility, recognize that people from traditions other than ours, and Christians
from other parts of the world can also be our teachers for this work. Among these new resources would be “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and an accompanying study guide.

“7. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to cooperate with youth and young adults in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in their interreligious engagements that support the larger efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in respectful and mutual interreligious relationships on behalf of justice, peace, reconciliation, and the common good.”

*Item 07-03. Review of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A.

Approved. [See pp. 453–54.]

*Item 07-04. Invitation to Ecumenical Delegates to the 222nd General Assembly.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 456.]

Amend the second paragraph as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with underline.]

“International: Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa, Church of Bangladesh, [Church partner in] [National Christian Church of] Sri Lanka, Methodist Church in Bolivia, Guyana Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in Grenada, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia and Other States, and Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt (Synod of the Nile).”

*Item 07-05. The Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Dialogue.

Approved. [See pp. 456–57.]

*Item 07-06. World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly Delegation Report.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 459.]

Amend Recommendations 5. and 6. as follows [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]:

“5. Encourage PC(USA) congregations and members to continue to pray for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. [In addition, we encourage the PC(USA) to pray for the Christians in North Korea currently imprisoned for proclaiming the gospel of Christ and to advocate for their release.]

“6. [Commend to the PC(USA) the] [Encourage congregations and members to study the PC(USA)] policy statement on climate change[,] which was approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) (http://www.pcusa.org/resources/power-change-us-energy-policy-global-warming).”


Approved. [See p. 462.]

*Item 07-08. Review of National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

Approved. [See pp. 467–68.]

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The item listed below was acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

*Item 07-A. Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.

Approved. [See p. 472.]

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized Dan Ponder, Moderator of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues, to resume the report from the committee. [See p. 32 for first part of the report.]

Moderator Ponder presented Item 09-02 which was disapproved. Item 09-13 was approved with amendment. Item 09-05 was approved.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:
Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.
Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

I. Plenary Action


Answered with action on taken on Item 09-07. [See p. 623.]

Item 09-02. On Entering a Two-Year Season of Reflection on the Plight of Unwanted Children, and Appointing a Special Committee on Abortion Review—From the Presbytery of South Alabama.

Disapproved. [See pp. 624–25.]

Item 09-03. [Item 09-03 became Item 11-15. There is no Item 09-03.]


Approved. [See p. 628.]

$Item 09-05. On a Two-Year Study to Discern How to Advocate for Effective Drug Policies—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.

Approved. [See pp. 630–32.]


*Item 09-06. On Advocating for Financial and Political Reform—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 635.]

[Text to be deleted is show with a strike-through; test to be added or inserted is shown with an underline.]

“[The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures] the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct[s] the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for [the following:]

“[1. Financial and political reform[s][.]] [(a) aimed at eliminating and/or regulating closely the practices of the financial sector, which caused the Great Recession; such as support for the full implementation of Dodd-Frank financial reform, the implementation of the Volcker Rule, and the restoration of Glass-Steagall (aimed at separating commercial banks from securities firms); and (b) affirmative efforts by the Department of Treasury, Securities and Exchange Commission, and other regulatory bodies to protect ordinary citizens, particularly consumers, borrowers, and investors of modest means, to revise bankruptcy laws to protect borrowers and those holding ‘underwater’ mortgages, and to enable national, state, and local efforts to provide refinancing through repurchasing and restructuring mortgages and public capital projects.]

“[2. Appropriate investigations and prosecutions of individuals, companies, and industries engaged in fraudulent behaviors, regardless of position or size, that justice may be applied equally to all.] This will include advocating for strategies that address the lack of prosecution of the individuals and financial institutions responsible for the 2008 meltdown of the U.S. economy.

“[3. Campaign finance reform and other efforts to reduce the influence of special interest money in politics (including that of the financial sector, the gun lobby, the oil industry, etc.).]”

Item 09-07. On Gun Violence Prevention—From the Presbytery of Hudson River.

Approved with amendment and comment. [See pp. 638–40.]

Amend Recommendation 4 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“4. Direct the [Presbyterian Mission Agency to urge state and local Presbyterian leaders] [PC(USA) and its constituent parts to recommit itself to work with federal, state, and local legislators] to:

“a. [Text remains unchanged.]"
“b. [Text remains unchanged.]

c. oppose ‘stand your ground’ and other legislation that may entitle gun owners to shoot before taking alternative measures (such as relying on law enforcement and/or other de-escalation techniques) in perceived defense of persons or property; [and]

d. oppose legislation designed to permit and encourage the carrying of weapons in all areas of life, including houses of worship, noting that those in possession of guns are four times more likely to experience gun violence[.][;]

[e. support legislation to require licensing, registration, and waiting periods to allow comprehensive background checks, and cooling-off periods;]

[f. support legislation to close the ‘gun show loophole’ by requiring background checks for all gun buyers;]

[g. support legislation to ban semiautomatic assault weapons, armor piercing handgun ammunition, and .50 caliber sniper rifles;]

[h. support legislation to advocate for new technologies to aid law-enforcement agencies to trace crime guns and promote public safety;]

[i. support legislation to raise the age for handgun ownership to the age of twenty-one;]

[j. following the recommendation of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, support laws to require judges and law enforcement to remove guns from situations of domestic violence, as well as from people whose adjudicated mental illness, drug use, or previous criminal record suggests the possibility of violence,’ and to increase police training in nonviolent proactive intervention;]

[k. advocate that federal and state governments enact legislation to regulate ammunition, guided by Gun Violence Gospel Values, as approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010);]

[l. Support the development, promotion, and use of ‘smart gun’ and ‘smart ammunition’ technologies that will help to prevent unintended and accidental shootings and aid law enforcement in reducing gun violence.]’

Comment: Process Rationale: This text is an integration of Overtures 09-01 from the Presbytery of National Capital, and Item 09-21 (commissioners’ resolution) into Item 09-07.

Item 09-08. [Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]

*Item 09-09. On Food Sovereignty for All—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 643.]

Amend Recommendation 6 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through.]

“6. Join with Presbyterians, PC(USA) partners, and interfaith and secular groups and coalitions working to end large-scale land grabs [and return unfairly obtained land to communities,] and to implement genuine agrarian and aquatic reform programs and base national and international governance structures on the ‘Voluntary Guidelines for Land and Natural Resources Tenure’ from the Committee on World Food Security in order to provide secure access to land, forestry, and fisheries for communities.”

*Item 09-10. On a Study of End-of-Life Issues—From the Synod of the Covenant.

Approved with amendment and with comment. [See pp. 647–48.]

Amend Recommendation 1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to convene a 7–8 person team of Presbyterian ethicists[.], theologians, pastors[,] and physicians, including one or more drafters, to produce a pastoral and educational booklet giving guidance on”

Comment: Action via Agenda: Wednesday Consent Agenda. A church in Detroit Presbytery has offered to host the task force and provide housing for members of the task force to help reduce financial implications.


Approved. [See p. 649.]

*Item 09-12. On Providing a Trauma Crisis Counseling Consultation to Train in Best Practices in Caring for Survivors of Homicide Victims—From the Presbytery of Nevada.

Approved. [See p. 650.]


Approved with amendment. [See p. 652.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Direct the Presbytery Mission Agency (PMA) to reestablish and fill the position of associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment, or an appropriate alternative.

2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, in consultation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) and the other five PC(USA) agencies (Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.), to create a database comprised of businesses that qualify under the Supplier Diversity standards reviewed by GACOR, which all of the six agencies and other PC(USA) bodies (e.g., mid councils: presbyteries and synods) should use as a source for supplies and services.

3. Direct ACREC to have discussions with legal counsel of the PC(USA), GACOR, and other relevant church entities about policy and/or strategies that address the General Assembly’s concern and directive to:

   a. Include persons with disabilities as part of the ‘diversity of the church’s membership’ and provide such persons with a supportive work environment.

   b. Collect data and monitor diversity efforts pertaining to Middle Eastern communities.”


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 655–56.]

Amend Recommendation 3. by adding a new section “g.” to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“f. Representatives from the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA)[.]”

“g. A report will be submitted to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) on these matters.”


*Item 09-15. A Resolution to Educate Against and Help Prevent Voter Suppression—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 659–60.]

Amend Recommendation 4.a. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“a. educating congregations and mid councils on the impacts of voter suppression and the effects of not having federal oversight on voting rights, as of June 2013; and”
Item 09-16. Tax Justice: A Christian Response to a New Gilded Age—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

Approved. [See pp. 663–70.]

*Item 09-17. The Self-Study Report of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 696–97.]

Amend Item 09-17 by striking Recommendation 6. and renumbering Recommendation 7. as “6.” as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to comply with the current (November 2013) Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual in maintaining the dual-member relationship with ACWC, in accordance with the instruction that the advocacy committees “shall” have a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, and in light of the particular nature of the advocacy committee’s mandate to “advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of women’s concerns” and to “monitor the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns.”]

“[7.]

[Text remains unchanged.]”

*Item 09-18. Membership of GA Committee on Representation.

Approved. [See p. 735.]


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 735–36.]

Amend Recommendation 2. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. Direct the six agencies of the PC(USA) (PMA, Office of the General Assembly [OGA], Presbyterian Publishing Corporation [PPC], Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. [PILP], Foundations [FDN], and Board of Pensions [BOP]) to

“[a.]

provide annual status reports on supplier diversity (all strata) to GACOR.

“[b.]

provide annual status reports on representation of women, persons of color, and persons with disability in its employment (all strata) to GACOR.]”


Approved. [See p. 737.]

[Financial Implications: $9,726 (2015) PMA]


Answered with action on Item 09-07. [See p. 739.]


Approved with amendment. [See p. 740.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) encourages presbyteries and denominational agencies to adopt parental leave policies with minimum terms of six weeks at 100 percent of prorated annual salary [that does not require the employee to exhaust other types of paid leave] and full housing allowance. Parental leave is negotiated when a teaching elder/employee of an agency or partner is to give birth or is to adopt a child.”
*Item 09-23. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Requesting the Release from Prison of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera.

Approved with amendment to refer. [See p. 742.]

Amend the recommendation by striking the existing text and inserting new text to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to petition, on behalf of the General Assembly, President Barack Obama for the release of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera. [Whereas the 221st General Assembly (2014) has received Item 09-23, commissioners’ resolution, on requesting the release from prison of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera.]

“[Whereas the committee believes it may not have sufficient information for the 221st General Assembly (2014) to add its voice to efforts to secure release of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera from prison;]

“[Therefore, the committee asks the 221st General Assembly (2014) to refer Item 09-23 to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the Stated Clerk for further study and discernment and, if appropriate, take timely action.]”

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The item listed below was acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 09-A. Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation.

Approved with comment. [See p. 743.]

Comment: We recommend the minutes of GACOR be approved with the following exceptions: pages are not sequentially numbered, a slash was not inserted from the final sentence to the bottom of partially filled pages, acronyms should be explained, close with prayer (Minutes of February 8 – 11, 2012), charts & graphs should be in color or have data in legend.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized Linda Scholl, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, to continue the report of the committee. [See p. 28 for first part of the report.] Moderator Scholl introduced David Ealy, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination.

Moderator Scholl introduced Item 08-14, which was approved with amendment. Item 08-08 was referred to the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) with comment.

Vice-Moderator Ealy introduced Item 08-09, which was approved. Item 08-13 was approved with amendment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

I. Plenary Action

*Item 08-01. On Support for the Institut Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) Endowment and the Endowment Concept—From the Presbytery of New Castle.

Approved. [See p. 475.]

Item 08-02. [Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]


Referred with comment. [See p. 476.]
Comment: Refer Item 08-03 back to Presbyterian Mission Agency, with the following comment: Consult with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

*Item 08-04. Revision to the PMA Manual of Operations.

Approved. [See p. 486.]

*Item 08-05. A Resolution to Define and Interpret Standards for PC(USA) Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

Referred with comment. [See p. 489.]

Comment: To refer to the already established Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Task Force. The committee would like the task force to have at least six (6) people.

*Item 08-06. A Resolution to Develop a Churchwide Antiracism Policy—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 491.]

Amend Recommendations 1.–4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency[], using existing racial ethnic ministries, consultation with the Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force, the Advocacy Committee for Racial-Ethnic Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and engagement with experienced practitioners as appropriate[,] to [develop-a] [update and revise] churchwide antiracism [policy] [policies and develop implementing procedures] similar to the existing antidiscrimination policies [and procedures].

“2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop [procedures and evaluation criteria for the implementation of-a] [and implement criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of current] churchwide antiracism training program[s] [The Presbyterian Mission Agency will] [and to] report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) regarding [its findings and any corrective] actions taken [or proposed] and results achieved.

“3. Consistent with the 220th General Assembly (2012) mandate regarding mandatory antiracism training (Climate for Change Task Force Report[2]), recommend that all mid-level councils and congregations provide antiracism training and dialogue.

“[3. Recommend that mid councils provide antiracism training and dialogue for staff, teaching elders, committee members, and congregations.]

“[4. Recommend that congregations provide antiracism training and dialogue for staff and members, to strengthen evangelism and mission, to increase awareness of racial justice issues in their communities, and to discern racial justice issues in their own staffing.]

“[4.] [5.] Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop tools, assessment instruments, and training materials for the presbyteries and congregations in order to develop clear and effective understanding of systemic racism, including white privilege, power, and prejudice in relation to race.”

[Financial Implications: $26,000 (2015) PMA—Revised.]

*Item 08-07. Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 495.]

Amend the recommendation section as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“In light of the downward trends in compensation for many in an increasingly unequal society [and as a result of its written response to the referral from the 220th General Assembly (2012) (such response herein referred to as ‘this Report’)], the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

“1. request the Presbyterian Mission Agency to review churchwide ministerial salary data as context for its review of Presbyterian Mission Agency salaries;
“2. encourage mid council staff and elected leaders to review this report [and the recommendations found at the end of the first section] to assess the benefits of intervention and term call structure for declining congregations; and

“3. direct the Office of the General Assembly’s church leadership office to post this report among its resources.”

Item 08-08. The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing the Church’s Urban Vision.

Referred with comment. [See pp. 503–04.]

Comment: To refer Item 08-08 to the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to convene an urban ministry roundtable with groups and individuals engaged in urban ministry including, but not limited to, ACSWP, ACWC, ACREC, and racial ethnic caucuses for the purpose of developing a method of fulfilling the goals of Item 08-08 and to report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Item 08-09. For-Profit Prisons, Jails, and/or Detention Centers Be Added to the List of Companies for Divestment and/or Proscription of Investment Ownership—PMA.

Approved. [See p. 516.]

*Item 08-10. Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—PMA.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 518.]

2. Amend Recommendation 3. As follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. [Direct] [Urge and resource] mid councils to provide training and education on cultural competency, antiracism, and antisexism to its committees on ministry and committees on preparation with an expectation that issues which are addressed in this training will be disseminated throughout the presbytery at least once every three years beginning in 2015.”

2. Amend Recommendation 5. As follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“5. [Direct] [Urge and resource] mid councils to promote gathering opportunities for women of color within synods and presbyteries for prayer, study, fellowship, and networking by providing financial, technological, space, and other support.”


*Item 08-11. Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions.

Approved. [See p. 522.]

*Item 08-12. The Institutional Relationship Agreement between Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. and the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Approved. [See p. 526.]


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 528–29.]

Amend Recommendation 3.b.(2) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“(2) Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to designate gifts from established Peacemaking Offering donors for current peacemaking efforts through 2016 and designate gifts from new donors to collaborative efforts in the area of peace and global witness. Beyond 2016, the offering will be devoted to ministries [that specifically include peacemaking, as well as] [of peace and] global witness.”

Item 08-14. A Resolution to Address Child/Youth Protection Policies and Resources in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 531–32.]

Amend Recommendation 2. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send [the following] proposed amendment[s] [to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes] [to the Book of Order regarding the requirement of all councils of the PC(USA) to adopt and implement a child/youth protection policy [to be determined by the 221st General Assembly (2014)] to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes.]

“[Amend the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

[‘All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child protection policy.’]”

[Financial Implications: $2,500 (2015), $2,500 (2016) PMA]

*Item 08-15. Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church [Recommendation A.1.].

Approved. [See pp. 532–33.]

Item 08-15. Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church [Recommendation A.2.].

[This item will be considered on Saturday morning, June 21, 2014.] [See pp. 82, 533.]

Item 08-15. Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church [Recommendation A.3.].

[This item will be considered on Saturday morning, June 21, 2014.] [See pp. 82, 533.]

*Item 08-15. Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church [Recommendation B.].

Approved. [See p. 534.]

*Item 08-15. Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church [Recommendation C.1.].

Approved. [See p. 534.]

*Item 08-15. Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church [Recommendation C.2.].

Approved. [See p. 534.]

Item 08-16. Confirmation of Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director.

Approved. [See p. 535.]

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

Item 08-A. Minutes, Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Approved. [See p. 536.]

Item 08-B. Audit.

Approved. [See p. 536.]

Item 08-C. Minutes, PC(USA), A Corp.

Approved. [See p. 536.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized Stated Clerk Parsons who made several announcements.
Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized Robin Lyn Valdez, moderator of the Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality. Moderator Valdez introduced Veronica Cannon, vice-moderator of the Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality.

Vice-Moderator Cannon introduced Item 14-02, which was approved with amendment. Moderator Valdez introduced Item 14-04, which the assembly approved. Item 14-01 was approved with comment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

I. Plenary Action

14-01. 1001 New Worshiping Communities—PMA.

Approved with comment. [See p. 995.]

Comment:

These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:


The 1001 New Worshiping Communities movement has the potential to make new disciples and revitalize the whole of the church; this has become one of the key directional goals of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The strategies for accomplishing the goal are outlined below and the progress to date is summarized. The recommendations summarized above will enhance the denomination’s commitment to the initiative and widen the base of participation. The 1001 New Worshiping Communities movement is a grassroots movement that is best implemented on a regional basis. Therefore, widespread understanding of and commitment to the movement is desirable. Local commitment can be cultivated if each presbytery and synod participates in planning an event tailored to its specific regional culture.

New worshiping communities are local and contextual. They will differ in style and strategy depending on the location. They are best planned, nurtured, and sustained at a local level. Starting something brand new has the potential to transform the entire body of Christ, including traditional congregations and councils. The possibility for transformation multiplies to the extent that it reaches each corner of the denomination. The goal is for every presbytery to experience firsthand the impact of new growth and missional ministry.

Strategies:

• Communicate the vision through producing videos and writing stories about innovative, creative communities.
• Employ a variety of communication tools such as Facebook, website, Twitter, newsletters, and YouTube to cast the vision.
• Recruit potential leaders for New Worshiping Communities (NWC) through visits to seminaries, presbyteries, conferences, colleges, and gatherings, meeting with potential leaders, helping them to discern a call to NWC leadership.
• Support NWC leaders with training, coaching, internships, and assessments through Presbyterian Centers for New Church Innovation.
• Continue to add regional Centers for New Church Innovation until there are six regional centers with national impact (currently two are fully functional and another two are in formative stages).
• Resource mid councils by visiting presbytery and synod meetings and presenting workshops at national conferences such as Big Tent, Triennium, New Wilmington Mission Conference, Wee Kirk, and Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant conferences.
• Present “Get in the Game” (vision casting) events at presbyteries, seminaries, conferences, and other gatherings.
• Provide resources such as Starting New Worshiping Communities to help leadership teams get started with solid theological and strategic foundations.
• Provide training and assessment for leaders.
• Provide some financial support for NWCs through Mission Development Resource Committee grants.
• Train prospective NWC leaders through offering internships for college and seminary students.

The initiative was launched during the 220th General Assembly (2012), and as of December 2013 the following milestones have been reached:

• Number of New Worshiping Communities launched to date: 173.
• Presbyteries with at least one new worshiping community: 89.
• Seed Grants given by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to encourage innovation: 73.
14-02. Educate a Child, Transform the World—PMA.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 996–97.]

Amend the recommendation by adding a new Recommendation 7. to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[7. Urge those developing this initiative and its metrics to build upon values, traditions, and analysis embodied in previous General Assembly policy on public education and the impacts of poverty, and to consider ways that this initiative continues the work of child advocacy approved by previous assemblies.]”

*14-03. Living Missionally—PMA.

Approved with comment. [See pp. 998–99.]

Comment:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a historical commitment to joining Christ’s mission in local and global communities and many have discussed and written about the concept of the missional church in recent years. The Presbyterian Mission Agency, in its 2013–2016 Mission Work Plan, has made engaging young adults through mission and volunteer service a priority and believes shaping multigenerational, faith-based relationships dedicated to service in local communities and the world will help the church better follow Christ’s mission.

For nearly 200 years, the Presbyterian church has served as one of the greatest forces for mission in the world. The church is called to minister to the immediate needs and hurts of people. The Book of Order states: “In the life of the congregation, individual believers are equipped for the ministry of witness to the love and grace of God in and for the world. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship to offer care and nurture to God’s children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, and to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world” (G-1.0101).

Presbyterians have sought to be a mission-centered church from their inception and have a strong, unwavering belief that there is no other way truly to be the church. Many have discussed and written about the concept of the missional church in recent years. One Presbyterian scholar, Darrell Guder, has written on this vital topic for the church today. In his book, Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America, Guder and his colleagues provide key insights into the recent missional church movement.

Guder and his colleagues discuss three themes that are important to this proposal: the shift the church must make, the purpose of the church, and the role of denominational structures. Guder argues that to be missional the church must “move from church with mission to mission church.” Most churches articulate a commitment to mission and have a mission program. If they are large enough, they likely will have a specific pastor devoted to mission. Many churches support several overseas missionaries and are probably contributing money and service to a local mission, homeless shelter, or food bank. In this construct, mission is seen as one of the many activities and programs of the church. The purpose of the local church is not to be what Guder calls “vendors of religious services and goods,” with mission merely being one of a myriad of programs. Rather, doing mission is central to what it means to be the church. This is the shift that the church must make.

The second major theme in Guder’s work challenges the very definition of what it means to be the church. Guder argues that it is “a new understanding of the church as a body of people sent on a mission.” The church is thus not only a body that gathers for a worship service. The church is also a group of people organizing together so they can serve the community around them most effectively. The purpose of gathering is to be sent. Guder states, “The public worship of the mission community always leads to the pivotal act of sending. The community that is called together is the community that is sent. Every occasion of public worship is a sending event.” To be a missional church, worship is driven more by what must happen after the service.

What it truly means to be the church, according to Guder, is “the people of God who are called and sent to re-present the reign of God. This vocation is rooted in the good news, the gospel: in Jesus Christ the reign of God is at hand and is now breaking in.” For Guder, the focus of the staff and the commitment of the resources are directed toward helping people to re-present Christ to their neighbors in their everyday lives. They do this through normal, day-to-day interactions with friends, family members, and colleagues. The activities of the church should model these forms of everyday interactions. Guder writes: “The ecclesial practices are never exotic or supernatural but involve ordinary human behavior: joining and sharing, eating and drinking, listening and caring, testing and deciding, welcoming and befriending.” To do this effectively, the church must know its neighbors and understand what things they care about, so as to cultivate authentic, genuine friendships.
This initiative seeks to inspire Presbyterian congregations to reach out to their communities through acts of service that lead to connectivity with local communities and demonstrates the love of Christ to their neighbors such as:

- Every congregation would determine a number of volunteers and volunteer hours they would commit to their community and fulfill that commitment for the year.
- Adopt a community in need of refurbishing in the U.S.
- Actively engage youth and young adults in volunteer opportunities.
- Support young adults and others called to serve in God’s mission in the U.S. and abroad.
- “Re-presenting” Christ in their everyday lives through normal, day-to-day interactions with friends, family members, and colleagues.
- Support the Living Missionally initiative in prayer.
- Actively engaging at least 1,000 PC(USA) congregations each year (2014–2016) to focus on becoming “Missional Churches” through acts of service in communities around the world.

Endnotes
3. Ibid., 81.
6. Inagrace T. Dietterich, “Missional Community: Cultivating Communities of the Holy Spirit,” in *Missional Church*, 181. (Rationale from Item 14-03. See pp. 999–1000.)

S14-04. Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth Consultation Committee Report—PMA.

Approved with comment. [See p. 1000.]

Comment:

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2012 Referral: Item 16-06, Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation. Recommendation. Direct the GAMC (Office of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW, the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) and the Office of the General Assembly to Hold a National Consultation to Develop Strategies and Policies to Support Racial Ethnic, Multicultural, and New Immigrant Church Growth in the PC(USA)—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 48, 49, 1454–62 of the CD; p. 291 of the print copy).

This report and its recommendations address the four areas to which the 220th General Assembly (2012) requested response: (1) Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial, ethnic, and new immigrants into the church; (2) Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth; (3) Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregational levels; and, (4) include a strategy to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in the *Book of Order*, G-2.0505a(1).

The consultation upon which these recommendations are based concluded that our efforts have borne fruit when we have recognized the racial and cultural shifts in society and have sought to embrace them. We have also seen fruitful efforts when we have gone directly to the people affected by our efforts and sought to work alongside them. Thus, our recommendations are premised upon the belief that we can become an even more fruitful denomination if we learn to live more fully into these cultural shifts, as in that way our life together becomes more relevant and faithful. Rather than seeking ways to assimilate our racial ethnic and new immigrant sisters and brothers into the PC(USA) we must learn to embrace and embody, the diversity of which we are a part.

REPORT

**Biblical and Theological Foundations**

*All Scripture references are New Revised Standard Version

God is diverse and communal by nature. The triune God is Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, three persons, distinct, yet equal in substance (*Book of Confessions*, The Scots Confession, 3.01). Consistent with God’s nature, God creates a world of diversity and calls it good (Genesis 1). Our Brief Statement of Faith states, “In sovereign love, God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community” (*Book of Confessions*, 10.3, lines 29–32). Presbyterians make a commitment to racial ethnic diversity as a good and faithful response to God’s affirmation of diversity revealed in the triune God and mirrored in creation.

The call to diversity is not only underlined in God’s very being and inherent in creation, but affirmed in the ministry of the Old Testament prophets. The prophets taught Israel to “love the alien as yourself” (Lev. 19:34, Deut. 10:19, Exodus 22:21; 23:9), and to consider “foreigners” as “citizen[s] among you” (Lev. 19:34). Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the law of the prophets, preaching the kingdom of God and calling us to observe the kingdom in our brothers and sisters. Boldly practicing a ministry of inclusion, Jesus broke down the barriers of exclusivity, as he shared life with diverse persons and challenged systems of economic, racial, and gender segregation. In the inauguration of his public ministry, Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to announce his mission to proclaim good news to those who are poor, imprisoned, and suffering oppression (Isa. 61:1–2, Lk. 4:18–19). A first century Palestinian Jew, Jesus ministered to a Roman officer (Mt. 8:5–13), a Canaanite woman (Mt. 15:21–28), and a Samaritan woman (Jn. 4:7–30), in addition to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt. 10:6). In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus challenged the long-standing enmity between Jews and Samaritans when he calls the Samaritan “good,” in appreciation for the Samaritan’s benevolence towards a Jewish neighbor (Lk. 10:25–37). Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he commissioned his followers to go and “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 28:19, emphasis added). Baptism is the invitation to all who would become part of the body of Christ. Likewise, in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, Christ offers the invitation to commune to all who trust in him.
“By the indwelling of the Holy Spirit all believers ... [are] united to Christ ... [and] united one to another in the Church (Book of Confessions, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.054). On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were gathered in one place when suddenly, they were filled with the Holy Spirit who enabled them to speak in various languages (Acts 2:4). When people from diverse multinational and multilingual backgrounds heard the preaching of the gospel in their own languages, they responded and three thousand people were baptized.

Presbyterians seek to be faithful to what God affirms, what Jesus’ ministry exemplifies, and what the Holy Spirit empowers—that is, unity in diversity. Yet, we struggle to be a community that reflects the diversity God desires. Sunday morning still remains a largely segregated hour. Our denomination has opportunity to be a more faithful witness of the body of Christ with its diverse parts (1 Corinthians 12). Informed by the witness of Scripture and our confessions, we seek to be obedient to the will of God when we embrace difference, intentionally build diverse communities of faith, and humbly and faithfully pray for the Holy Spirit to empower us. To this end, we make a commitment to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA).

The Process

In response to the directive from the 220th General Assembly (2012) that a consultation be held for the purpose of developing strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA), the Presbyterian Mission Agency, through the office of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women convened a small group for the purpose of devising such a consultation.

The group charged with designing the consultation had two purposes: (1) to convene a consultation that would respond to the issues that the General Assembly wanted addressed; and, (2) to identify the persons who should attend such a consultation, keeping in mind that such a gathering should include representatives of specific offices within the General Assembly, experienced leaders in racial ethnic and new immigrant churches, and mid council executives. To that end, thirty persons were invited (see Appendix 1, List of Attendees to the Consultation). In addition, the agenda of the consultation was fashioned in such a way as to produce responses to Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 of the action of the General Assembly in response to the report from the 219th General Assembly’s (2010) Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth: Appendix 2, Item 16-06, Minutes, 220th General Assembly (2012).

The agenda of the consultation began with worship at the Presbyterian Center Chapel in celebration of Pentecost, followed by opening remarks, a panel discussion on “Fulfilling the Promise and Hope of Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Ministries,” and a description of what our ecumenical partners are doing in this area. The core of the consultation was fashioned around the attendees entering into conversations related to: (1) Signs of Hope; (2) Measures of Success; (3) Resources; (4) Challenges; and (5) Strategies. (See Appendix 3, Learning/Sharing Process, Leaders’ Guide). These conversations began with generating ideas around those five topics, and then moved to sorting and summarizing those ideas.

The final step led the group in discerning the most important insights from those conversations. The attendees self-selected into smaller groups that could address, more deeply, one of the five topics. Each group was charged with discussing the key ideas presented, summarizing the wisdom of the group, filling in any gaps, adding new ideas, and preparing a statement for consideration by the entire body in plenary. Each group then reported their work results and responded to comments and questions.

The group then discussed the best way to fashion a final report of the consultation, and determined that a writing team would be given the task of putting all these pieces together in a cohesive and cogent report; a draft would then be circulated to the consultation attendees for additional comment, before finalizing the report for submission to the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Following the consultation, four individuals and one staff were identified to draft the initial report. This “writing team” subsequently met over a two-day period to discuss what had been written, heard, and said during the consultation and to begin the process of actually drafting the report. The report addresses these four particular areas raised by the 220th General Assembly (2012): (1) Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial, ethnic, and new immigrants into the church; (2) Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth; (3) Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregational levels; (4) Include a strategy to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1).

Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial, ethnic, and new immigrants into the church.

It is clear that there have been many instances of effective programs and initiatives that bear celebration—1001 New Worshiping Communities; New Beginnings, Engage, and Triennium to name a few. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these church programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) is a relatively simple task. We identify those programs and initiatives, review their stated goals, and determine their effectiveness. In pursuing that task, however, it becomes abundantly clear that nothing we do as a church can be particularly effective unless and until we change the language we use to measure the efficacy and effectiveness of our programs and initiatives. Changing the language certainly means changing ourselves, as well.

In making such an assessment, however—and given that our efforts have borne fruit in numerous instances—the larger question is this: Why have we been unable to meet our goals for increasing the percentage of racial ethnic persons within our denomination? That question looms even larger at a time when the society around us has itself changed so dramatically over the past decade or more. Stated differently, the question is and should be: What in those initiatives and programs has spurred fruitfulness? The consultation concluded that our efforts have borne fruit when we have recognized the racial and cultural shifts in society and have sought to embrace them. Thus, an initiative such as the 1001 New Worshiping Communities bears fruit because it recognizes the need to use new language and new approaches as it exhibits the Kingdom of God to people outside our church walls. Likewise, new immigrant fellowships are fruitful when they recognize and address the actual needs of those whom they seek to reach. Rather than deciding from “on high” how to approach future congregants, they have, instead, gone directly to the people, asking, “How can we work alongside you?”

The instances of bearing fruit in our efforts to exhibit the Kingdom are, for the most part, the result of local initiatives; those realities deserve to be acknowledged and celebrated! Yet we believe that we would become even more fruitful as a denomination if we learn to live more fully into these cultural shifts; in that way, our life together becomes more relevant and faithful as well. We need to relinquish our customary habit of asking, “How do we assimilate our racial ethnic and new immigrant sisters and brothers into the PC(USA)?” Rather, the PC(USA) must ask, “How do we become a community that embodies the diversity God desires?” Implicit in that question are other questions such as “What do we need to learn about being faithful from our sisters and brothers outside the PC(USA)?” and “How can we enter more fully into their lives and circumstances?” and “How do we need to change the dominant culture so that there are places in the community of faith for everyone?”

In Tucson, Arizona, a Middle East Presbyterian Fellowship is composed of persons who share a common language, Arabic; though the group includes Muslims as well as Christians, they come together each week to worship the living God. So, too, a new worshiping community in a southern California trailer park has begun to witness to the love of Jesus Christ among transient, broken, lonely people. A newly ordained
pastor in Colorado Springs serves as an evangelist to unchurched young people there. Even though we have built much of our denominational identity on chartered congregations, these fellowships may well never fit that mold; even so, if we fail to embrace them as part of our fold, we fail to exhibit the Kingdom of God to the world—a fundamental and essential part of our calling as a church.

We have 1001 New Worshipping Communities. We have the Middle East Presbyterian Fellowship. We have myriad other stories of sowing seeds for the Kingdom, and seeing them begin to grow up around us. Now we must find the language and the will to embrace them and to build on their fruitfulness. We must find a way for our dominant racial and cultural membership—the 91 percent—to learn how to embrace our changing context. We need to do this not as a way merely to increase our numbers. More importantly, we need to do it in response to Christ’s great commission. We are called to “go and make disciples”—not to go and make clones.

As we reach out to our brothers and sisters in the racial ethnic and new immigrant communities—and indeed to all our sisters and brothers in this world—we may well risk our corporate life. As we engage those instances of fruitfulness, we need to know that doing so will surely be at the cost of our comfortable identity and familiar life as the PC(USA). For many of us that will feel like a death; so we can expect resistance—sometimes very powerful resistance.

As a resurrection people, however, we have the powerful promise that God’s love has conquered death. That is why our Book of Order can acknowledge that we are called “to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life” (F-1.0301). That promise frees us and empowers us to engage the risks and to embrace the new life that will surely come to us as we welcome, encourage, and join in the lives and the faith of our racial ethnic and new immigrant sisters and brothers in Christ.

Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth. If our church is to be faithful to the calling to participate in God’s work of transforming the world around us, then we must first be open to the Spirit transforming us. The church has said repeatedly that it wants genuine and sustainable growth in ministries with racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant groups; likewise it has stated a desire for full inclusion of such other underrepresented populations as young adults and persons with disabilities. The first key to full inclusion of each of these constituencies is transformation of the church’s own corporate culture.

Such transformative changes will in turn necessitate changes in our customary, habitual means of numerical measurement, e.g., membership rolls, monetary contributions, operational and benevolence budgets, Sunday school enrollment, average attendance at Sunday morning worship. Instead, we will need to learn how to recognize and measure indicators of faithfulness and fruitfulness, rather than signs of success.

In that regard, the consultation offers the following four goals for consideration, along with strategies and key questions, as indicators of our faithfulness to God’s call that we be transformed:

**GOAL ONE: MAKING DISCIPLES**

Is the focus more on discipleship and less on formal membership? Are we sustaining the current emphasis on creating new worshipping communities, as distinct from establishing chartered congregations? Are we raising up—and equally importantly supporting—leaders who embody new understandings of what ordination does and should mean? How have we aligned our preparation-for-ministry process with that reformed understanding?

Since poverty is a reality of life, either present or imminent, for a great many racial ethnic and new immigrant communities, as it is for a majority of persons with disabilities, how is our educational tradition preparing, and expecting, ordained church leaders to live and work among the realities of poverty? What new things do the church need to do to prepare leaders for standing among persons and communities in poverty?

**GOAL TWO: TRANSFORMING CHURCH CULTURE**

Are we transforming the church’s culture from regulatory to relational, from directional to collaborative? Are we able to allow the still new Form of Government to create possibilities rather than restrictions?

Are we able to avoid returning to the comfortable habit of endlessly amending the Book of Order?

Are we moving from institutional maintenance towards community relevance? Are we being faithful stewards of God’s resources within God’s world?

**GOAL THREE: REFORMING STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

How have we reformed our understanding of what ordination does and should mean? How have we aligned our preparation-for-ministry process with that reformed understanding?

Are we able to reform theological education to include a focus on missional, racial ethnic, and multicultural contexts? Have we struck a healthy balance in theological education between technical proficiency and creative imagination?

Have we created programs for developing lay ministry that bridge the leadership gap for racial ethnic and new immigrant communities?

**GOAL FOUR: BEARING EVANGELICAL WITNESS**

Are we bearing witness to the power of the Gospel, as distinct from bearing witness to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)? Are we establishing ministries of reconciliation, such as interfaith dialogue, doing racial justice, advocating for the excluded, the oppressed, the marginalized, and the vulnerable? How open are we to the Spirit doing really new things among us?

Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregational levels.

The consultation’s vision for the church is colorful and friendly. Led by authentic leaders reflecting the changing demographic of America, worship participants also reflect a diverse America. Everyone is welcome. The church embodies radical hospitality to everyone: racial and ethnic minorities, new worshipping communities, people with disabilities. New forms of worship and mission are valued. To morph from the culture of the current church with its strong history of technically proficient leaders, to the radically imaginative, open, and accepting nature of the envisioned church will require comprehensive changes to the church body at all levels: from local congregational levels though the presbyteries, and at the General Assembly and our seminaries.

The consultation had wide-ranging discussions around the roles of local congregations, presbyteries, synods, the General Assembly, and those involved in theological education regarding how they might best support enhanced racial ethnic and new immigrant outreach:
Local congregations

- Form full partnerships with racial and ethnic ministries and new worshipping communities where the gifts and talents of each group have equal weight. Rethink the use of church buildings so that they are open, attractive beacons in the community used daily and fully for ministry by diverse groups.
- Expand the role and empower formalized lay ministries.

Presbyteries and Synods

- Clarify their own vision of faithful mission, particularly as it relates to inclusive ministries.
- Create a network of coaches and peer mentors to clarify and implement the vision for inclusive ministries.
- Create lay leadership programs, including internships, coaches and peer mentors, to prepare culturally sensitive and theologically grounded leaders for new inclusive ministries.

The General Assembly

- Identify funds that can be utilized to support a variety of inclusive ministries.
- Commit as a corporate body to the distribution of all official documents in culturally sensitive language.
- Lead the church in the important work of engaging in conversations and in making opportunities available for discussing white privilege and racial prejudice in the church.
- Investigate new methods of developing and nurturing leadership for more inclusive ministries.

Those Involved in Theological Education

- Establish a perpetual dialogue with the entire theological education community, focusing on ministry in diverse contexts.
- Identify those functions, historically carried out by synods, e.g., first call programs and early ministry initiatives that might need to be included within initial and continuing theological education settings.
- Cultivate the innovative ministry skills demanded by a changing context within teaching communities that focus on continuing education and lifelong learning.
- Investigate new methods of developing and nurturing leadership for more inclusive ministries.
- Develop specific skill sets for working with persons living in poverty and integrate those skills into theological education.
- Develop alternative, practical forms of education such as internships, coaching teams, and peer mentors to provide emerging leaders with hands-on training and support, so that they can relate effectively to their particular church family and context, as well as to the broader denomination.

The time is now to commit to developing strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA), to embody unity in diversity and to be a church for all people.

Include a strategy to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1). Along with the approval of the 1001 New Worshipping Communities initiative, the language of G-2.0505a(1) presents a new opportunity for expanding the reach of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and celebrating our diversity. Section G-2.0505a(1) is a tool for presbyteries hoping to encourage and nurture new worshipping communities under their jurisdiction, permitting presbyteries to receive teaching elders who have been ordained by other denominations into membership of the presbytery. The most qualified leader for a new immigrant community possesses cultural and language fluency as well as theological training. Finding a qualified teaching elder of the PC(USA) able to communicate in the language of a new immigrant congregation may be difficult or impractical. Each partner denomination throughout the world determines its requirements for ordination. Many of our new immigrant leaders have been educated and have served faithfully in the denomination of their ordination and have been called by God and by the congregation to be the pastor for the community.

Section G-2.0505a(1) gives authority to a presbytery to accept qualified leaders to be received as teaching elders when the mission of the presbytery requires it. The language of “may” is meant to provide options, not to make requirements that would overstep a presbytery’s authority to make mission decisions. The following questions are designed to provide a presbytery with some guidance in applying the authority granted to it. Each situation needs to be considered on its own merits. There is no formula for inclusion.

The questions below are provided to stimulate appropriate conversations.

Some considerations:

Does the new immigrant ministry fit into the mission plan for evangelism and ministry of the presbytery? Who provides oversight and guidance to this new ministry? Is there a relationship of nurture and accountability with the presbytery or with a congregation of the presbytery?

Is the leader ordained as a teaching elder (or equivalent)? What is the denomination of membership? Does this denomination have any historic relationship to the PC(USA)? Denominations in correspondence with the PC(USA) can be found at http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/ecumenical-relations/list-churches-correspondence/. The presbytery may ask the candidate to provide proof of ordination such as an ordination certificate or a letter from the denomination of membership.

What kind of education or training for ministry has the candidate received? The presbytery may ask the candidate to provide transcripts, diploma, or other confirmation of the training.

What ministry experience has the candidate had? The presbytery may ask the candidate to provide a resume or personal information form and letters of reference.

Does the candidate demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and competence in areas of study that the presbytery deems relevant to faithful ministry? Areas may include: theology, church history, worship and sacraments, polity, Bible content, exegesis, or others.

Has the presbytery had opportunity to get to know and to examine the candidate? The presbytery may require further training or mentoring as a condition for reception into the presbytery.
Note on immigration status: A religious worker visa allows mid councils and churches to call religious workers who are not residents of the U.S. to serve the church. The Office of Immigration in the PC(USA) can help explore eligibility and guide petitioners through the process of application.

In all cases the attitude toward the leaders of new worshiping communities ought to be one of warm hospitality and collegiality.

Study the successes of other denominations.

The desire of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be intentional about developing racial/ethnic and new immigrant church growth resonates with several of the denominations in the United States. The United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ, for example, both have longstanding Hispanic/Latino, African American, and Asian ministries that, like PC(USA), are in the discernment and goal setting stage of racial/ethnic and immigrant church growth.

The United Methodist embraced the important role the racial/ethnic and immigrant community will play in the future of the church, and the more cross-cultural ministries are emerging. In response, the Unified National Plans for Strengthening Ethnic/Racial Ministries was initiated within the United Methodist structure. The five racial/ethnic/immigrant national plans include: Hispanic and Latino, African American, Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islanders. The primary goals are: (1) leadership development that will cultivate disciple who can reach a racially diverse mission field, (2) foster growth in membership and worship attendance, and (3) ensure the presence of a younger generation.

Appendix I

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Appendix 2
Item 16-06 from the 220th General Assembly (2012)

Item 16-06
[The assembly approved Item 16-06 with amendment. See pp. 48, 49.]

Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth

The General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the General Assembly Mission Council (specifically, the Office of Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women and the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) and the Office of the General Assembly (specifically, the Mid Council Commission in the Office of the Stated Clerk) to hold a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA). This consultation shall bring together representatives of these offices, experienced leaders in racial ethnic and new immigrant churches, and mid council executives. [The consultation shall be held in coordination with the African American Church Growth Strategy consultation.] The consultation shall:

1. Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial ethnic and new immigrants into the church.
2. Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth.
3. Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregation levels.
4. [Designate a monitoring group to assess progress toward these goals that shall report at each General Assembly.] [Designate the GAMC to monitor and report on the progress toward these goals at each General Assembly.]
5. Include in its strategies a plan to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1).
7. Study the successes of other denominations.

Appendix 3: Learning/Sharing Process, Leaders’ Guide
Racial Ethnic/New Immigrant Convocation (RE/NI)
Learning/Sharing Process
Leaders’ Guide

Conversation Questions:
- Signs of Hope: Where do you see signs of life/hope in RE/NI ministry? Where is RE/NI ministry happening effectively? What specific success stories can you identify? What programs are working effectively?
- Measures of Success: What do we mean by “success” in RE/NI ministry? How will we know if we are effectively growing and making disciples? What measurements/benchmarks would indicate success?
- Resources: What resources do we currently have to support RE/NI ministries? How helpful are they? What do we need?
- Challenges: What are the challenges ahead? What are the obstacles to growth and sustainability?
- Strategy: What is your vision for the future? What does the denomination need to do to nurture growth and health in RE/NI ministry? What do presbyteries and synods need to do? What do congregations need to do?

Process

Part I—Generating Ideas

Ideas and Inspiration: Each person will spend ten minutes at each of five tables participating in brainstorming sessions around the five topics. Ideas will be written on sticky notes and added to a piece of newsprint. A leader will time the event and move people from table to table. A process will be devised to make sure the groups are mixed up at each table.

Leader’s Task: Table leaders will stay at the table same table throughout this part of the exercise instead of moving around to other tables. Encourage participants to stay on task. Ask follow-up questions using the suggestions above. Ask for input from quiet or reserved participants.
Sorting and Summarizing: At the final table the group will sort and summarize the comments at that table by combining the comments that are similar, removing repeats, and eliminating responses that are not relevant. At the end of this time the newsprint sheets will be hung on the walls.

Leader’s Task: Try to consolidate the suggestions without losing valuable input. Perhaps 2 or 3 responses can be combined into one.

Discerning and Voting: After a time of silence and listening to the Spirit, each person will be given 10 dots or stars which they can place on any ideas or comments that they think are particularly important to the conversation.

Part II—Going Deeper

Small Group Work: Each person will elect to be part of one of the five groups, each addressing one of the Conversation Questions. The group will be given the newsprint sheets generated during Part I. During Part II, the group will attempt to come up with a statement in which they summarize what the whole team has brainstormed and use that information as the basis for going deeper. Each small group will come up with a statement that can be presented to the whole group for review and comments. The goal of each team will be to contribute to a denomination-wide strategy for the long-term health and growth and sustainability of RE/NI ministry. The process followed by each small group will be:

- Discuss the key issues presented
- Summarize the wisdom of the group
- Fill in the gaps
- Add new ideas
- Prepare a statement

Leader’s Task: Help the group go beyond just summarizing the input from the brainstorming process. This is an opportunity to think deeply about significant issues. Encourage one participant to take notes. Lead the group to make a decision about how they will report to the whole gathering.

Reporting: Each group will have 15–20 minutes to report to the whole group and respond to questions and comments.

Part III—Recommending

Summarizing: The whole body will do this section. Leader will ask: What message do we have for the denomination? What strategies, resources, and benchmarks will result in health and sustainability? What do we expect the denomination and its constituent organizations to do as a result of our work? There should be a focus on new behaviors.

Leader’s Task: Review the purpose of the consultation. Are all the assigned tasks being addressed? Will the suggestions make a real difference in the life of the PC(USA)? (Rationale from Item 14-04. See pp. 1000–1008.)


II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The items listed below were acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

14-A. Women of Faith Award Nominees to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Approved. [See p. 1009.]

14-B. Sam and Helen Walton Awards.

Approved. [See pp. 1010–1011.]

CLOSING PRAYER

Moderator Rada resumed the chair and introduced Kevin Henderson, theological student advisory delegate from Austin Theological Seminary, who offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

RECESS

The assembly recessed at 9:53 p.m. The assembly tossed red “1001 Worshipping Communities” beach balls after recess.

Friday, June 20, 2014, 8:30 A.M.

BUSINESS MEETING IX

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Ashley McFaul, young adult volunteer alum who served in Nashville, led the assembly in the convening prayer.
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Susan Orr and Vice-Moderator Raul Santiago-Rivera of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Moderator Orr presented an adjusted docket, which was approved by the assembly. The minutes of the 221st General Assembly (2014) for Wednesday, June 18, have been reviewed and found to be in order.

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Moderator Rada introduced the Minute for Mission video.

ECUMENICAL GREETING

Amgad Biblawi, area coordinator for Middle East, Central Asia, and Europe, introduced Mr. Rifat Kassis, Lutheran Church in the Holy Land, who brought greetings to the assembly.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Rada recognized Gene McEvoy, moderator, Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures, for a report on financial implications on the per capita budget of actions taken at this assembly. Moderator McEvoy announced that the total financial implications of actions approved by the assembly amount to: $14,420 for 2014; $85,495 for 2015, representing an increase in $.05 per capita; and $49,965 for 2016, representing $.03 increase to per capita. Implications of pending actions recommended by assembly committees amount to: $8,210 for 2014; $50,760 for 2015, representing $.03 increase to per capita; and $18,080 for 2016, representing $.01 increase to per capita. On Saturday morning, the committee is scheduled to present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the per capita budget for 2015 and 2016.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS UPDATE:
REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Moderator Rada recognized Linda Scholl, moderator, Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination, for a report on financial implications to the mission budget of actions taken at this assembly. Scholl reported the total financial implications of actions taken so far by the assembly amount to $276,619 for 2015 and $68,418 for 2016. Items still under consideration by the assembly for the mission budget totaled $18,500 for 2015; and $0 for 2016. On Saturday morning, the committee is scheduled to present to the assembly its final recommendation for balancing the mission budget for 2015 and 2016.

NOMINATION REPORT

Moderator Rada recognized Ruling Elder Lita Simpson, a member of the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), who reported that the committee had received no challenging floor nominations to Item 00-04. Ms. Simpson moved the election of nominees listed in Item 00-04. The assembly approved Item 00-04. (See p. 109.)

Ms. Simpson then moved the election of nominees listed in Item 00-03. These nominations for the GANC were submitted by Neal Presa, Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), in accordance with the Standing Rules. The assembly approved Item 00-03. (See pp. 108–109.)

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MID COUNCILS ISSUES

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Courtenay Willcox, who introduced Vice-Moderator Don Frankland, both of the Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Issues, for a report from the committee.

Moderator Willcox presented Item 05-04. A minority report was introduced.

A motion to allow speakers who have English as a second language two minutes rather than one minute to speak was approved by the assembly.

The minority report on Item 05-04 was perfected. The main motion was perfected. Moderator Rada put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated.

Item 05-04 was approved with amendment.

Moderator Willcox presented Item 05-01 and requested that it be answered with the action taken on Item 05-04. It was approved.

Vice-Moderator Don Frankland presented Item 05-02. It was approved.

Moderator Willcox introduced Item 05-07. It was approved with comment.
Moderator Willcox introduced Item 05-05. It was disapproved.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Issues

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

I. Plenary Action

05-01. On Consultation Before Possible Reorganization of Synod or Presbytery Boundaries—From the Presbytery of Homestead.

Answer with the action taken on Item 05-04. [See p. 315.]

05-02. On the Reconfiguration of Synod Boundaries—From the Synod of Puerto Rico.

Approved. [See p. 316.]

*05-03. On Transferring Han Yang Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of San Fernando.

Approved. [See p. 318.]


Approved with amendment. [See p. 319.]

Amend Recommendation 1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Direct that a new configuration of synod boundaries be established [based on an emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call] through a collaborative process between the synods and presbyteries resulting in no more than [eight larger regional] [10–12] synods, each with an emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call. The synods shall report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).”

Amend Recommendation 3.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“b. To recommend to the 223rd General Assembly (2018) the boundary changes necessary to achieve a total of no more than [eight] [10–12] synods, if there remain synods and presbyteries that have been unable or unwilling to engage in a collaborative process of reconfiguration.”

Amend Recommendation 5.a. to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“a. Pursuant to G-3.0502d, to organize new synods, or divide, unite, or otherwise combine previously existing synods or portions of synods [upon request of the synods]; and”


*05-05. On Delaying the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii’s Overture Requesting Dissolution of Hanmi Presbytery, and Creating a New Administrative Commission—From the Hanmi Presbytery.

Disapproved. [See p. 348.]

*$05-06. On Forming a Task Force to Study How Korean-Speaking Churches Can Develop into Healthy Members of the PC(USA)—From Midwest Hanmi Presbytery.

Approved with amendment and with comment. [See pp. 349–50.]

Amend the recommendation section as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Midwest Hanmi Presbytery overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to form a task force for the purpose of a study as to how Korean-speaking churches can grow and develop into whole and healthy members of PC(USA). The task force should be formed with the leaders from Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), Office of the General Assembly (OGA), presbyteries, synods, nongeographic presbyteries (Korean), and second-generation
Koreans,] [will be comprised of eight members appointed by the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014), in consultation with Korean American church leaders, to meet in two face-to-face meetings, over two years, with a consultant,] and it should report its study to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).”

Comment: The cost is estimated at $20,000, 1/4th of which has been pledged by the nongeographic Korean presbyteries.

[Financial Implication: Per Capita—$580 (2014); $9,735 (2015); $10,725 (2016)]

05-07. On the Dissolution of the Hanmi Presbytery—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

Approved with comment. [See pp. 350–51.]

Comment: The Assembly Committee on Mid Council Issues (5) gives thanks for and celebrates the historic and ongoing witness of the churches of Hanmi Presbytery and their important role in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We regret that the recent work of the Administrative Commission has not been successful in resolving long-standing concerns, and we share the grief, the disappointment, and the loss with the congregations, the presbytery, the Administrative Commission, and the synod that this action has been taken. We look forward to discovering new ways of welcoming the Korean congregations into the life of the Synod and presbyteries, to the greater ministry of the church of the future. We recommend this action, aware that it presents the presbyteries with an important opportunity to welcome the congregations and gratefully to receive their contributions to the life and ministry of the PC(USA).

*05-08. On Transferring Coudersport Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Northumberland to the Presbytery of Lake Erie—From the Synod of the Trinity.

Approved. [See p. 352.]


Referred with comment. [See p. 353.]

Comment: Refer to COGA.

[Financial Implications: Per Capita $4,000 (2015); Per Capita $0 (2015)—Revised.]

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The item listed below was acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

*05-A. Review of Synod Minutes.

Approved with amendment and with comment. [See p. 354.]

“[The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to have the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) name three stated clerks to work with the Synod of Alaska-Northwest to correct the minutes and recommend that compassionate care be demonstrated in equipping them with good counsel to train the synod for orderly record keeping.]”

Comment: We report that 05 Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Issues approved the reading of minutes for fifteen of the sixteen synods.

RECONSIDERATION OF ITEM 10-NB

Moderator Rada recognized Commissioner Ryan Landino, who moved an amendment to Item 10-NB. The amendment to Item 10-NB was approved. Item 10-NB was then approved as amended.

“Recommend that the 221st General Assembly (2014) direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to [establish a way to bring reconciliation to the church that would involve] [engage in the process of working together with churches in the task of reconciliation starting with] visiting each presbytery and serving as a resource for each presbytery’s discussion of these actions in congregations and the presbytery at large and present voices of reconciliation for the unity of the church.”

SERVICE OF DAILY WORSHIP

The Reverend Luke Powery, dean of the chapel, Duke University, preached on “What Should We Do?”
Recess

The assembly recessed at 12:08 p.m.

Friday, June 20, 2014, 1:30 P.M.

Business Meeting X

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

The Reverend Brenton Thompson, young adult volunteer alumnus who served in Northern Ireland and Hungary, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

1001 Worshiping Communities Video

Moderator Rada introduced a video on the 1001 Worshiping Communities initiative.

Ecumenical Greeting

Moderator Rada recognized Robina Winbush, associate for ecumenical relations in the Office of the General Assembly, who introduced Bishop Jonathan Keaton of the Michigan area United Methodist Church, who brought greetings to the assembly.

Moderator Rada recognized the Reverend David Won of Hanmi Presbytery. Rev. Won thanked the PC(USA) and the Hanmi Administrative Commission, and he asked for prayers during the journey of transition for the congregations in the now-dissolved Hanmi Presbytery.

Presbyterian Mission Agency Office of Public Witness Presentation


Report of the Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Don Choi and Vice-Moderator Stephanie Anthony of the Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues for a report from the committee.

Item 15-02 was approved with amendment.

Moderator Choi presented Item 15-01. A minority report was introduced. Moderator Rada declared that the main motion was perfected. The minority report was perfected. Moderator Rada put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated. Item 15-01 was referred to the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) with comment.

This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

Plenary Action

Item 15-01. On Divestment from Fossil Fuel Companies—From the Presbytery of Boston.

Referred with comment. [See p. 1013.]

Comment: Request the 221st General Assembly (2014) to refer the subject matter of this overture to the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) for action and discernment in accordance with its longstanding and detailed procedures to engage with individual corporations to advance their actions in support of important social policy issues. MRTI is asked to make a report to 222nd General Assembly (2016). The Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues (15), is deeply concerned about both the need for action and the need to remain in dialogue with companies that are in the fossil fuel industry.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 1021.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Southern New England overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to affirm the vital importance of sustainable development [through faithful stewardship of natural resources] and the Precautionary Principle.1 [It is] [Such methods of preventing irreversible ecological impacts are part of] the basis for [a] responsible, moral, and [scientifically-informed human flourishing,] [ethical means of working and being. It affirms] [affirming] the sacred in societal and creation care, [and] protecting the earth for future generations. Additionally, [we ask that the PC(USA)] [the General Assembly directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to] commission a study group [of three to five persons] to

“[1.] review [this] [the precautionary or prevention] principle [in relation to emerging biotechnical developments and existing Presbyterian social witness policy on environmental ethics.] and

“[2.] prepare a study paper [and resources for social media, with appropriate recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016),] for use by congregations throughout the denomination, enabling congregations to advocate for reform.”


Approved with amendment. [See p. 1027.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Seattle overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to affirm the decision of [state concerns related to the ongoing and expanding extraction and export of fossil fuels, particularly coal, from the U.S. for use in Asia, and approve the following measures for public health and climate stewardship:]

“[1. Urges] civil authorities to conduct [promptly] a full, programmatic review and assessment of the impact of expanded coal export projects in Washington and Oregon on human health and the well-being of communities along the Northwest rail lines. [This should include full Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the studies should be conducted at multiple locations along the proposed expansion route so as to assess the impact on vulnerable communities.]

“[2. Commends the Washington State Department of Environmental Quality (WA DEQ) for its decision to conduct a full EIS along the route within its jurisdiction and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this approval to WA DEQ.]

“[3. Recognizes that regional issues of extraction, pollution, transportation, and export have interstate, national, and global implications, both for environmental justice concerns and for global climate disruption/change. Such impacts range from coal dust pollution, diesel particulates, potential for derailments, negative impacts on real estate, and public health and safety concerns, to global climate change, sea level rise, acidification of oceans, severe weather events, and the ethical dilemma of profiting from the export of coal and other fossil fuels for use in countries whose environmental and pollution restrictions are less stringent.

“[4. Affirms that civil authorities are called upon to require full disclosure and consideration of the combined effect of all coal export projects taken together on the poorest and most vulnerable communities, locally and globally. The General Assembly further affirms that the evaluation of coal export involves moral choices, in which key considerations are caring for the creation that God has made and with careful stewardship and justice for those who depend on a stable climate and water supply for survival.

“[5. Directs the Stated Clerk to write to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the EPA, and the governors and congressional delegation of Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho, urging comprehensive Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) along proposed routes for expanded export of fossil fuels, including analysis from the National Transportation Safety Board and other bodies as necessary.
“[6. Commends the presbyteries of Seattle, Cascades, and North Puget Sound for their environmental awareness and advocacy, and encourages other Presbyterians and councils of the church to consider the impact of resource extraction, transportation, and use in their regions and to work with state and national ecumenical bodies and the Office of Public Witness of the Presbyterian Mission Agency in addressing concerns.]”

*15-04. On Recognizing the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative to Affirm and Promote the Civil and Human Rights of Immigrants in Our Communities—From the Presbytery of Central Florida.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 1030.]

Amend Item 15-04 by adding a fourth bulleted item to read as follows:

“[• We ask the 221st General Assembly (2014) of PC(USA) to instruct the Office of the General Assembly to immediately fill the vacancy of the position of coordinator of immigration issues in the Office of Immigration Issues. This position will help facilitate the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative. This staff person should be multilingual, have theological and legal training, community organizing experience, and a passion for justice for all the people of God but especially those who find themselves marginalized and discriminated against by unjust immigration policies.]”

Item 15-05. [Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]

Item 15-06. [Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Stephen Choi of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues for a report from the committee. Mr. Choi introduced Elizabeth Terry Dunning, chair the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), who explained the work of MRTI.

Item 04-01 was approved. Item 04-03 was disapproved.

Moderator Choi presented Item 04-04. A minority report was introduced. Moderator Rada declared the main motion perfected as follows:

[Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline; gray-shaded text indicates changes made in plenary.]

“The Presbytery of New Covenant overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to:

[The PC(USA) has a long standing commitment to peace in Israel and Palestine. We recognize the complexity of the issues, the decades-long struggle, and the pain suffered and inflicted by policies and practices of both the Israeli government and Palestinian entities. We further acknowledge and confess our own complicity in both the historic and current suffering of Israeli and Palestinian. Yearning for justice and reconciliation, the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommends the following:]

“[1. Reaffirm Israel’s right to exist as a sovereign nation within secure and internationally recognized borders in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.]

“[2. Declare its commitment to a [negotiated] two-state solution [two states for two peoples] in which a secure and universally recognized State of Israel lives alongside a free, viable, and secure state for the Palestinian people.]

“[3. Reject any proposed divestment and economic sanctions against the state of Israel or any application of the PC(USA)’s corporate engagement policies toward such ends.] [Instruct the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA), to divest from Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, in accord with our church’s decades-long socially responsible investment (SRI) history, and not to reinvest in these companies until the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) is fully satisfied that product sales and services by these companies are no longer in conflict with our church investment policy. This action on divestment is not to be construed or represented by any organization of the PC(USA) as divestment from the State of Israel, or as alignment with or endorsement] [does not mean an alignment with the overall strategy] of the global BDS (Boycott, Divest and Sanctions) movement.]

“[4. Call] [Reaffirm PC(USA)’s commitment to interfaith dialogue and partnerships with American Jewish and Muslim friends and Palestinian Christians, and call] for all presbyteries and congregations within the PC(USA) to include interfaith dialogue and relationship-building as part of their own engagement in working for a just peace.
“[4.][5.] Call for all foreign aid given by the U.S. government—including aid to Israel and the Palestinian Authority—to be comprehensively and transparently accounted to the American people and held to the same standards of compliance with all applicable laws.

“[5.][6.] Call for church advocacy for foreign-aid accountability to be directed toward its universal adherence rather than targeted for selective application to some recipients and not others.

“[6.][7.] Encourage Presbyterians to travel to the Holy Land, and give broad support to the Christian[, Jewish, and Muslim] communities throughout the Middle East.

“[7.][8.] Affirm the importance of economic measures and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians that support and advance a negotiated two-state solution. [To that end, the 221st General Assembly (2014) does not endorse boycotts of Israeli or Palestinian products.]

“[8.][9.] Urge all church institutions to give careful consideration to possible investments in Israel-Palestine that advance peace and improve the lives of Palestinians and Israelis.”

The minority report for Item 04-04 was perfected. Moderator Rada put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was defeated. Moderator Rada then declared that the remainder of the report would be arrested, and he led the assembly in prayer. [For the rest of the report, see p. 60.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons reminded commissioners to complete their evaluations online. The link to the form will be sent by PC(USA) Research Services shortly after commissioners return home.

The offering collected during opening worship was $13,459.08. The offering for the Ecumenical Service will be used to support the World Council of Churches Indigenous Peoples’ Consultancy Program. The COLA Gift Project Work Group has received more than thirty boxes filled with notebooks, pencils, crayons, calculators, and backpacks, along with almost $500 to purchase additional supplies.

CLOSING PRAYER

Debbie Blane, missionary advisory delegate serving in South Sudan, offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

RECESS

The assembly recessed at 5:50 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING XI

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan. Young Adult Volunteer alum David Gambrell, associate for worship in the Office of Theology and Worship in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, led the assembly in the convening prayer.

MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR AL WINN
MODERATOR OF THE 119TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1979), PCUS

Moderator Rada recognized Sid Batts from Salem Presbytery who presented the memorial minute to celebrate the life of Al Winn.

I am Sid Batts, pastor of First Presbyterian in Greensboro, North Carolina, and a commissioner from Salem Presbytery. I have the privilege to say a word about Al Winn, Moderator of the General Assembly of the PCUS in 1979.

It would be hard to overstate the influence that Al Winn had on Presbyterians and the Presbyterian church in the second half of the 20th century. He was the author of eight books, taught systematic theology at Louisville Seminary, and then became its president. His journey included being valedictorian at Davidson College, and he earned degrees at Princeton Seminary and Union Seminary in Virginia. In addition to Louisville, he taught at Davidson and Stillman College and was a visiting professor at Columbia Seminary and Union, Virginia. At the end of World War II, he was a Navy chaplain. He served as pastor of the Potomac Rural Parrish, of Second Presbyterian in Richmond and North Decatur Presbyterian in Atlanta. Al died in July of 2012 at the age of 91, his wife of fifty-five years, Grace Neely Walker, having preceded him in death by a dozen years. They were the parents of four children. Al’s life was his witness. He was a humble hero, teaching as a Bible professor
at the “historically Black” Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in the 1950s, and throughout his ministry embodied scholarship, leadership, and a spiritually rooted social activism. He was an advocate for peace and justice in the church and in the world. He worked for civil rights, equal opportunity for women, and the full inclusion of gay and lesbian Presbyterians. People loved and respected Al, not only for his leadership but for his demeanor, which was welcoming and affirming. One of Al’s significant contributions to the church was his work as chair of the committee that produced “A Declaration of Faith” for the PCUS in 1976. Though it was never officially adopted, many think it is the most widely used Reformed Confession for worship in the Presbyterian church today. And we also hope that one day it will be included in our Book of Confessions. Al Winn’s influence of humility, faith, and hope (intertwined with his Reformed perspective) is seen all through this extraordinary document. I will conclude with words from Chapter 8 of The Declaration of Faith.

God sends the church into the world.

God has not taken his people out of the world, but has sent them into the world to worship him there and serve all humankind.

We worship God in the world by standing before the Lord in behalf of all people. Our cries for help and our songs of praise are never for ourselves alone. Worship is no retreat from the world; it is part of our mission.

We give thanks to God for such a humble hero who consistently showed Presbyterians a faithful way of being the church.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Stephen Choi of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues to continue the report from the committee. [See pp. 58–59 for first part of the report.] The assembly approved Item 04-04 as amended. Moderator Choi requested that Items 04-08, 04-07, and 04-02 be answered with the action taken on Item 04-04. It was approved by the assembly. Moderator Stephen Choi presented Item 04-05. It was disapproved by the assembly.

Vice-Moderator Ginny Sheets of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues introduced Item 04-12. It was approved as amended in plenary. Vice-Moderator Ginny Sheets introduced Item 04-14. A motion to amend Item 04-14 was approved. However, the assembly voted against approval of Item 04-14. It was moved from the floor to disapprove Item 04-14. It was approved to disapprove Item 04-14. Moderator Choi thanked the committee and led the assembly in prayer. This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

Plenary Action

$04-01. On Reviewing General Assembly Policy Regarding the Two-State Solution in Israel Palestine—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.

Approved. [See p. 227.]

[Financial Implication: Per Capita—$19,200 (2015), $5,460 (2016)]

04-02. On Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.

Answered with the action taken on Item 04-04. [See pp. 234–35.]

04-03. On Engaging Presbyterians to Witness for Palestinian Human Rights and for Ending the Occupation of Palestine—From the Presbytery of Grace.

Disapproved. [See pp. 246–47.]

04-04. On Supporting Middle East Peacemaking—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 260–61.]
Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline; gray-shaded text indicates changes made in plenary.]

“The Presbytery of New Covenant overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to:

“(The PC(USA) has a long standing commitment to peace in Israel and Palestine. We recognize the complexity of the issues, the decades-long struggle, and the pain suffered and inflicted by policies and practices of both the Israeli government and Palestinian entities. We further acknowledge and confess our own complicity in both the historic and current suffering of Israeli and Palestinian. Yearning for justice and reconciliation, the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommends the following:]

“[1. Reaffirm Israel’s right to exist as a sovereign nation within secure and internationally recognized borders in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.]

“[2.][3.] Declare its commitment to a [negotiated] two-state solution [(two states for two peoples)] in which a secure and universally recognized State of Israel lives alongside a free, viable, and secure state for the Palestinian people.

“[2.][3.] Reject any proposed divestment and economic sanctions against the state of Israel or any application of the PC(USA)’s corporate engagement policies toward such ends. [Instruct the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA), to divest from Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, in accord with our church’s decades-long socially responsible investment (SRI) history, and not to reinvest in these companies until the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) is fully satisfied that product sales and services by these companies are no longer in conflict with our church investment policy. This action on divestment [is not to be construed or represented by any organization of the PC(USA) as divestment from the State of Israel, or as alignment with or endorsement] [does not mean an alignment with the overall strategy of the global BDS (Boycott, Divest and Sanctions) movement.]

“[3.][4.] Call [Reaffirm PC(USA)’s commitment to interfaith dialogue and partnerships with American Jewish and Muslim friends and Palestinian Christians, and call] for all presbyteries and congregations within the PC(USA) to include interfaith dialogue and relationship-building as part of their own engagement in working for a just peace.

“[4.][5.] Call for all foreign aid given by the U.S. government—including aid to Israel and the Palestinian Authority—to be comprehensively and transparently accounted to the American people and held to the same standards of compliance with all applicable laws.

“[5.][6.] Call for church advocacy for foreign-aid accountability to be directed toward its universal adherence rather than targeted for selective application to some recipients and not others.

“[6.][7.] Encourage Presbyterians to travel to the Holy Land, and give broad support to the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities throughout the Middle East.

“[7.][8.] Affirm the importance of economic measures and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians that support and advance a negotiated two-state solution. [To that end, the 221st General Assembly (2014) does not endorse boycotts of Israeli or Palestinian products.]

“[8.][9.] Urge all church institutions to give careful consideration to possible investments in Israel-Palestine that advance peace and improve the lives of Palestinians and Israelis.”

04-05. On Calling for a Boycott of All Hewlett-Packard Products—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

Disapproved. [See p. 267.]

*04-06. On Affirming Occupation-Free Investment in Palestine—From the Presbytery of Mackinac.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 271–72.]

Amend Recommendation 3. and strike Recommendation 4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“3. [Affirm and commend to all the work of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF) in establishing an Occupation Free Fund, so that individuals, congregations, presbyteries, and other entities can make gifts to PPF that will be invested in enterprises that do not benefit financially from the work of occupation, including the expansion of settlements.] The General Assembly further commends other investment vehicles that prohibit investments in corporations that profit from and normalize the economic disadvantaging and dispossession of Christian and
Muslim Palestinians denied full citizenship rights. [One example of such an approach is the Occupation Free Fund of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF), which excludes any investment in enterprises that benefit financially from the operations of the occupation, including the expansion of settlements. Investment entities are encouraged to use the terms, ‘occupation-free,’ ‘transformational,’ or Palestinian ‘development investment,’ to indicate the care taken for investment placements to benefit Palestinians directly, and congregations, presbyteries, and individuals are encouraged to consider such investment.]

“[4. Affirm support of long-standing denominational procedures of corporate engagement with companies that contribute to or benefit financially from the work of occupation, including the expansion of settlements. To the extent that such procedures of corporate engagement do not produce satisfactory results, we affirm the denomination’s commitment to pursue prudent steps to withdraw any funding currently invested in such companies.]”


Answered with the action taken on Item 04-04. [See p. 275.]


Answered with the action taken on Item 04-04. [See pp. 277–78.]

*04-09. Resolution on Equal Rights for All Inhabitants of Israel and Palestine and on Conversations with Prophetic Voices.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 292–93.]

Amend Recommendation B.3. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through.]

“3. Recommends the inclusion of a full range of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian viewpoints in conversations, including the increasing number of prophetic voices committed to nonviolence and equal rights [such as Jewish Voice for Peace, Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, Kairos Palestine U.S., Friends of Sabeel North America, Muslims for Progressive Values, and coalitions like the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation];”

[Financial Implication: Per Capita - $4,000 (2015)]


Approved with amendment. [See p. 296.]

Amend the recommendation as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) declares that Zionism Unsettled does not represent the views of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [and directs all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) entities to express this statement in all future catalogs, print or online resources] [and directs the staff of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to no longer distribute Zionism Unsettled and have the document removed from the church web store immediately].”


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 298–99.]

Add a new Recommend 4. to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[4. Endorses legal efforts at redress and protection of the ‘Tent of Nations’ and invites Presbyterians and others of good will to help this family preserve and rebuild upon their ancestral land.]”


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 300–302.]

Strike the existing recommendations and insert new text to read as follows:

“[The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)]"
"[1. Reaffirms the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the human rights of all children, particularly the children of Palestine and Israel.

2. Reaffirms the support of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as expressed by the 202nd General Assembly (1990), and affirms its support for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement on children in armed conflict.

3. Calls upon the United States Senate to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this call to members of the Senate and encourages the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA) to promote the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in its advocacy with the United States Senate.

4. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency[, in cooperation with the Israel Palestine Mission Network,] to engage in advocacy and public witness for the human rights of children in Palestine and Israel in relation to widespread and systematic patterns of ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system, including physical violence, psychological intimidation, and violent night arrests;

5. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency[, in cooperation with the Israel Palestine Mission Network,] to create information documents, study guides, or other educational materials using information, research, and statistics from the Palestinian Authority and the State of Israel, United Nations agencies, including OCHA and UNICEF, and other human rights or nongovernmental organizations, such as B’Tselem, Defense for Children International Palestine, and Amnesty International to be made available through digital download at the PC(USA) website, as well as links to materials and research from other organizations]."

"[Heeding the call of Christ to care for the welfare and safety of children, truly "the least of these," and to advocate for them in situations of crisis or abuse, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Israel Palestine Mission Network, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to do the following:

1. Appoint a team to conduct a study of the history and current situation of violence against children in Palestine and Israel, including widespread and systematic patterns of ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system, including physical violence, psychological intimidation, and violent night arrests;

2. Study a broad range of reports and information related to violence against children in Israel and Palestine, and ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system, including any relevant statistics of the Palestinian Authority and the State of Israel;"

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“[• any research produced by United Nations agencies and international bodies, including OCHA and UNICEF;

“[• any other human rights or nongovernmental organizations, such as B’Tselem, Defense for Children International Palestine, and Amnesty International.

“[3. Enable the study team to meet through electronic media.

“[4. Create information documents, study guides, or other educational materials to be made available through digital download at the PC(USA) website, as well as links to materials and research from other organizations.

“[5. Design and recommend to the PC(USA) an advocacy approach based on the team’s findings.

“[6. Request the Israel Palestine Mission Network and other organizations grants for the creation of study materials for use in the PC(USA) related to violence against children in Israel and Palestine, and ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system.


“[9. Call upon the United States Senate to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this call to members of the Senate and encourages the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA) to promote the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in its advocacy with the United States Senate.”

[Financial Implication: Per Capita $13,130 (2015); Per Capita $7,000 (2015)—Revised]

*04-13. Commissioners’ Resolution. On a Commitment to Prayer for Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation in Israel and Palestine.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 306.]

1. Amend Recommendation 1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “1. [Along with the actions of this General Assembly on Israel and Palestine.] [They] the Stated Clerk shall [invite persons from within American Jewish and Palestinian communities (both Christian and Muslim) who represent broad perspectives and concerns regarding conflict between people in Israel and Palestine, to gather for a common day of call on the diverse interfaith community and PC(USA) partners for a season of prayer for justice and peace in Israel/Palestine, encouraging gatherings on regional and congregational levels that may include off-the-record discussions] [Prayer will be followed by a time of listening for the purpose of deeper understanding of one another. Guests are invited to a closed-door conversation to share their hopes and concerns for peace in Israel/Palestine, the [pain] [feelings] they [may] have experienced in [relation to] the conflict, and their understanding of what makes for peace in the region. [This time of listening shall close with a time of prayer.]”

2. Strike Recommendation 5. as follows:

   “[5. Presbyteries shall be urged to send a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) to share what has taken place within the presbytery to promote such prayer gatherings.]”


Disapproved. [See p. 308.]

Dissent

The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 04-02 of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues: Ronald L. Hawkins, Presbytery of Grand Canyon; Samuel P. Warner, Presbytery of Western North Carolina; and Stephen C. Blonder Adams, Presbytery of the Western Reserve.
The following commissioners filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 04-04 of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues: Daryl R. Wilson, Presbytery of Boise; Laura Walters Basket and John Vick of the Presbytery of Central Florida; Earl Bland, Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic; Kenneth J. Macari, Presbytery of Elizabeth; E. James Doughton, Presbytery of Flint River; Susan S. Sawers, Michael K. Friz, Michael C. Gizzi, and Richard Johnson of the Presbytery of Great Rivers; Robert T. Carlson Jr., Presbytery of Lake Michigan; Alison W. Bennett, Presbytery of National Capital; C. Louise Schoppe, Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Sharon M. Latour, Presbytery of The Redwoods; Joan Johnson, Presbytery of Santa Barbara; Trip McKinnon, Presbytery of Savannah; Frank M. Stratiff, Thomas R. Wilson, and James N. Latta of the Presbytery of Shenango; Samuel P. Warner, Presbytery of Western North Carolina; Stephen C. Blonder Adams, Eric Muller-Girard, and C. Susan Vlcek of the Presbytery of Western Reserve.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 04-05 of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues: Kenneth J. Macari, Presbytery of Elizabeth.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 04-07 of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues: Samuel P. Warner, Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 04-08 of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues: Samuel P. Warner, Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PEACEMAKING AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Vice-Moderator Larissa Kwong Abazia assumed the chair and recognized Moderator Jesus R. Sanchez-Reyes of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues for a report from the committee.

Moderator Reyes presented Item 11-07. Item 11-07 was approved with amendment.

Moderator Reyes presented Item 11-02. A minority report was introduced. The main motion was perfected. The minority report was perfected. Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia put the question to the assembly, “Shall the minority report become the main motion?” The minority report was approved and became the main motion and was then approved by the assembly.

Vice-Moderator Karen Breckenridge of the Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues moved Item 11-05. It was approved. Vice-Moderator Breckenridge moved Item 11-03. It was approved with amendment.

Vice-Moderator Breckenridge moved Item 11-06. A motion was made from the floor to refer Item 11-06 back to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Cuba Partners Network. The motion to answer Item 11-06 with this referral was approved.

Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-09. It was approved with amendment.

Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-14. It was approved with amendment.

Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-11. It was approved with amendment.

Moderator Reyes moved that Item 11-01 be answered with the action taken on Item 11-11. It was approved. Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-10 (Recommendation A). It was approved with amendment. Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-10 (Recommendation B). It was approved with amendment. Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-10 (Recommendation C). It was approved with amendment. Moderator Reyes moved Item 11-10 (Recommendation D). It was approved with amendment. Moderator Reyes moved that Item 11-04 be answered with the action taken on Items 11-10 (Recommendations A, B, C, and D). It was approved. This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

Plenary Action

Item 11-01. On Peace Discernment—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.

Answered by the action taken on Item 11-11. [See p. 821.]

Item 11-02. On Turning Attention to the Plight of the Church That Is Suffering Due to Sectarian Violence and Persecution in Egypt and Other Parts of the World—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 823.]

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Amend Item 11-02 as shown below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct our attention to the plight of the church of Jesus Christ that is suffering due to [maltreatment,] sectarian violence, and persecution in Egypt, [Iraq, Syria, Iran, Palestine, Israel, N. Korea, Pakistan, India, Central African Republic, Sri Lanka,] and other parts of the world. In [so] directing [such] attention to this plight, we call upon the PC(USA) to be a catalyst that calls all Christians [in the United States and] across the globe to unite in support and prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering.

“This support should be reflected in direct interaction with the persecuted [and beleaguered] church[es] through means not limited to but inclusive of:

[•] [1.] [Refuge and] [Showing] hospitality [to Christian brothers and sisters who have come to the United States as refugees];

[•] [2.] Mediation with civil authorities and local governmental representatives [for adequate services to all refugees in the United States];

[•] [3.] Sharing information and coordinating concern with other churches through ecumenical bodies, in consultation with partners in the Middle East and other areas of sectarian tension;

[•] [4.] Directing the Office for Public Witness and the Presbyterian Office at the United Nations to inform and equip Presbyterians to advocate for just peace throughout the Middle East.

[•] Mobilizing the global Christian community to defend, encourage, and protect;

[•] [5.] [Leadership development and consultation] [Directing Presbyterian World Mission and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to consult with mission partners in the Middle East, and seek increased financial support through church-wide appeals to support mission partners’ efforts to provide relief for Christian refugees in/from the region;]

[•] [6.] Calling on the government of the United States to examine its role in the Middle East, to seek to ensure that future involvements in the region be consistent with the promotion of justice and freedom for all, including religious liberty, and ‘to ensure that military intervention of any kind is undertaken as a ‘last resort’ and reflects a high consensus among democratic nations that it may serve a ‘just peace.’

[• Financial aid;]

[•] [7.] [Pervasive] [P]rayer [without ceasing for our sisters and brothers in Christ who suffer for the sake of the Gospel.]

[Financial Implication: Presbyterian Mission Agency—$18,500 (2015)]

Item 11-03. On Removing Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism—From the Presbytery of Long Island.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 826.]

Amend Recommendation 1. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Petition the [p][P]resident of the United States and the U.S. Department of State to remove Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism as soon as possible.”

Item 11-04. On the Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones)—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

Answered by the action taken on Item 11-10. [See pp. 827–28.]

Item 11-05. On Lifting All Travel Restrictions for U.S. Citizens Traveling to Cuba—From the Presbytery of St. Augustine.

Approved. [See pp. 830–31.]

Item 11-06. On Authorizing a Consultative Process to Provide Guidance for the Church’s Response to the Dramatic Changes Taking Place in Cuba—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

Referred with comment. [See p. 832.]
Item 11-07. On Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide—From the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 835–36.]

1. Amend Recommendation 3.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “3. Directs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to

   “a. call upon [the] [P]resident [Obama] and the Congress of the United States of America to recognize and condemn the deaths and expulsion of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire during the period from 1915–1923, as a genocide, and to communicate this resolution for that purpose;”

2. Amend Recommendation 4.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “4. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency to

   “a. encourage appropriate observance of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, [designating Sunday, April 26, 2015, as the 100 year anniversary commemoration day in Presbyterian churches] including the preparation of educational and liturgical resources, drawing on the witness of prior assemblies and other historical records, and participation in travel, conferences, and other memorials [to be made available on the web at least two months prior to 4/26/2015];”

Item 11-08. Western Sahara: Occupied, Non-Self-Governing Territory, and Test Case for International Law.

Approved. [See p. 840.]

Item 11-09. A Resolution on Behalf of Dominicans of Haitian Descent and any Others Impacted by the Decision 168/13 of the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 846.]

Amend Recommendation 2.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “c. its impact in our local congregations that have Dominican members [who’s] [whose] legal status in the U.S.A. may be jeopardized by this decision,”

Item 11-10. Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance (Recommendation A).

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 847–48.]

Amend the first paragraph of Recommendation A. as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “Drones used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and United States Armed Forces for national security can easily penetrate enemy lines and linger to conduct surveillance, which enables them to isolate and identify targets more accurately, choose blast trajectories, and use lower-yield weapons. Because they can attack with less collateral damage than other weapons and without jeopardizing the lives of U.S. military personnel, military officers and civilian leaders are tempted to use them frequently, sometimes in ways that violate national sovereignty and human and constitutional rights. Because they arouse resentment among local populations, even when used sparingly, military drones may undermine strategic objectives (such as winning support of a population facing an insurgency). Because drone programs have been secret, they cripple the capacity of citizens to interpret the ‘blow-back’ they arouse and to exercise democratic oversight over foreign policy. And because they are already receiving substantial research and development funding in the U.S. and elsewhere, they are increasingly ‘the new face of war.’”

2. Amend Recommendation A.2. through A.4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]
“2. Opposes in principle the targeted killing or assassination of suspects [without warrant or due process outside of the context of declared military engagement or observed terror activity] and grieves the [collateral] deaths [of civilians that are inevitable, if less than with some other weapons, and the deaths of our enemies themselves] [these weapons facilitate].

“3. Urges the United States Congress to pass legislation governing military drones. These laws should articulate procedures that put checks on executive power and establish civilian oversight. The goal is to ensure that in any justification of targeting human beings that the [Constitutional rights of U.S. citizens] [fundamental rights of all humans] are protected, international law upheld, noncombatants safeguarded, [U.S. strategic goals served], and the larger goal of peace and justice advanced. To these ends, the Central Intelligence Agency should not run any part of the weaponized drone program and should focus on intelligence collection as its primary mandate.

“4. Urges the U.S. to make public and submit its rules for military drones to institutions of the international legal community for analysis and evaluation[,] [so that, t]ogether with other nations, we may develop international conventions governing their use and prevent a ‘drone race.’ Under the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), the United States and other nations should be held responsible for drone uses that violate the rules of war or human rights such as acts of terrorism; assassination (killing without due process); destruction of natural resources, habitat, and infrastructure; and other crimes.”

Item 11-10. Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance (Recommendation B).

Approved with amendment. [See p. 848.]

Amend Recommendation B.2. as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“2. Recommends that the United States Congress[, other Federal, state, and/or local agencies, as appropriate,] pass legislation [and/or regulations] governing the use of domestic drones so that Constitutional rights are upheld.”

Item 11-10. Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance (Recommendation C).

Approved with amendment. [See p. 849.]

Amend the second paragraph of Recommendation C. to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“In the development of cyber warfare capability and use, we urge full consideration of the civilian and other collateral consequences of attacks on military or nuclear computer systems and electronic/communications infrastructure, and affirm that such covert warfare [be subject to the same considerations as in Recommendation A above] [respect the rights of humans and the responsibilities of Christians to respect the lives and freedoms of sovereign peoples].”

Item 11-10. Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance (Recommendation D).

Approved with amendment. [See p. 849.]

Amend Recommendation D. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“D. Affirm the following statement [and approve] as follows:

“The church’s emphasis on spiritual freedom of conscience and the work of the Holy Spirit in community lead us to maintain that congregational life is protected from governmental and commercial intrusion. In order to uphold both privacy rights and the separation of church and state, we regard all spaces of worship as surveillance-free zones. Aware of the potential for abuse by both government agencies and criminal enterprises, surveillance of individuals should only intrude into congregational life under extraordinary circumstances and in each case should require a warrant or court order. [Recognizing the role of technology in facilitating overreaching surveillance, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) encourages the church to examine its own technological choices and, where feasible, use hardware and software, such as Free and Open Source software, that allows us to avoid participation in this surveillance except under extraordinary circumstances with a warrant or court order.]”


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 860–61.]
Amend the “Process of Discernment for Presbyteries section, Recommendations 1.–5. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“Process of Discernment for Presbyteries: As the next stage in a six-year process of discernment, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Stated Clerk to send to each presbytery, electronically and in print, the following five affirmations and supporting rationale with the request that they discuss and take an advisory vote on each affirmation and send the results of those votes, along with a summary of the floor discussion, back to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy [by July 1, 2015] to help guide the preparation of a report on peacemaking directions for the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

“The affirmations for churchwide discussion and advisory vote:

1. We affirm that peacemaking is essential to our faith in God’s reconciling work in Jesus Christ, whose love and justice challenge hatred and conflict, and whose call gives our church a mission to present alternatives to violence[,] fear, [unjustified force,] and misused power.

2. We confess our complicity in the world’s violence even as we pray for the Spirit’s courage to ‘unmask idolatries,’ to speak truth about war and oppression, and to stand with those who suffer[,] and to respond to acts and threats of violence with ministries of justice, healing, and reconciliation.

3. We reclaim [the power and authority of] Jesus [Christ,] as Prince of Peace, [Christ the] [and] Reconciler[,] who proclaims God’s reign, who inspires the prophetic church, forgiving, healing, and undoing violence, and who overcomes evil through the cross and resurrection.

4. We seek to understand the nonviolent revolutions and armed struggles of our time [through the Gospel of Peace] by drawing on the traditions of [Christian pacifism,] just war, just peacemaking and active nonviolence, and by cultivating moral imagination through prayer, study, and engagement with friends and enemies. [Even as we actively engage in a peace discernment process, we affirm our responsibility of continuing the long tradition of support by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for our sisters and brothers who serve in the U.S. military, veterans, and their families.]

5. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves [to work first for nonviolent change in our personal and communal lives,] [earnestly to seek and promote loving, nonviolent responses to conflict in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our world, and] to risk calling our nation back from the practices of empire to the highest ideals of our heritage, and to practice boldly the things that make for peace.”

*Item 11-12. On Helping to Remedy the Tragic Conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—From the Presbytery of Boston.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 887–88.]

Amend 1.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“b. halt the recruitment of child soldiers (i.e., any person under the age of [sixteen] [eighteen]) and bring to justice military or paramilitary leaders responsible for such recruitment;”

[Financial Implications: $2,500 (2015), $2,500 (2016) PMA]


Approved. [See p. 890.]


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 892–93.]

1. Amend Recommendation 1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]
1. Support efforts of Presbyterian and other military chaplains to provide pastoral care and advocacy for members of the military who have experienced any form of abuse, including sexual harassment, assault, and rape.

2. Amend Recommendation 2.d. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “d. Reform of the Veterans Administration (VA) system in relation to treatment of service men and women who have suffered military sexual trauma;”

3. Amend Recommendation 3. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency [and Office of Public Witness, and encourage the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel, to urge legislative and military leaders involved in developing policies to eliminate sexual violence within the armed services by:] [and encourage Presbyterians generally to support the development of preventive, restorative, and where necessary punitive measures to end the problem of sexual abuse in the U.S. military.]

   “[a. providing transfer of victims of sexual violence to a different chain of command upon request of the victim, with a comparable rank and potential for advancement.

   “[b. creating a ‘firewall’ between the victim and alleged perpetrator in duty assignment and residence.

   “[c. changing ‘status of forces’ agreements with host countries to ensure adequate protection from sexual assault for civilian populations near military bases, including mechanisms for proper prosecutions of alleged perpetrators and proper care of civilian victims.]”


   Approved with amendment. [See p. 897.]

   Amend Recommendation 4. as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to maintain current information on the status of companies that have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism and to continue to partner with and support ECPAT-USA.”

   [Financial Implications: $1,500 (2015) PMA]


   Approved with amendment. [See pp. 900–901.]

   1. Amend Recommendation 4. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “4. Calls upon the government of Syria, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, as well as all other groups to end their savage confrontation, beginning with an immediate cease-fire.”

   2. Amend Recommendations 5. through 6. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “5. Calls upon all parties involved in the conflict to cease the use of deadly and debilitating industrial gases, such as chlorine, as arms not covered by the chemical weapons agreement.

   “6. Calls upon the Syrian government to cease the use of ‘barrel bombs’ and other weapons designed specifically to kill and maim massively and indiscriminately in ways that surpass any tactical military goal.”

   3. Amend Recommendations 8. through 9. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “8. Commends those engaged in the conflict for reported acts of reconciliation that have reduced the level of conflict in some locations, and urges all outside powers to look for ways to help Syrians to sit together to negotiate, reconcile, and cooperate in building a better future together.
“Taking note that our Christian partners in the Middle East, including Syria, have sought to remain neutral in the struggle going on about them [denounced all outside interference that is fueling the conflict in Syria], and noting that they oppose foreign military intervention, overt or covert, in support of any of the participants in the conflict [fighting] in Syria, including the provision of weapons, intelligence, combat training, or financial or diplomatic support, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

“9. Calls upon the government of the United States to avoid all military interference in the region. Our government should also avoid participating in the ‘proxy war’ by supporting the armed opposition. All foreign interference, including that of our government, has been counterproductive, if not directly contributing to increase of the violence and [that threatens further] destruction of Syria [and regional stability].”

4. Amend Recommendation 12. as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“12. Calls upon our own members and congregations to pray for the 6.5 million displaced persons within Syria and the 2.6 million others who are now refugees in surrounding countries, to pray for their healing, for their safety, for their sustenance, and for the strength to overcome the psychological traumas that so often accompany such massive social upheaval; to pray also for the congregations and members of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and all Christian denominations, as they mount efforts to meet the human need that surrounds them whether in Syrian cities and villages or in host families and refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and other countries offering refuge.”

*Item 11-17. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Iran.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 903.]

Amend Recommendation 8. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“8. Directs the Stated Clerk to convey these decisions to the president of the United States; the secretary of state and the secretary of defense; all members of the U.S. Congress; appropriate officials of countries involved in the nuclear nonproliferation negotiations, including the government of Iran; and the congregations of the PC(USA), all with the advice of appropriate officials in the PMA.”


Approved with amendment. [See pp. 905–06.]

Amend the recommendation section as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“In light of the devastation of prolonged civil and proxy war in Syria and Iraq, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

 “[In the immediate context of suffering in Syria, Iraq, and among the refugees from those countries;]

 “1. Encourages congregations and members to pray for the peoples of Syria and Iraq suffering horrific human rights abuses amidst bloody civil wars[.][that have been expanded by the provision of weapons and fighters from outside countries using these conflicts as proxies for larger power and religious interests;]

 “2. Stands with our Reformed, and ecumenical, and interfaith partners in Syria and Iraq who are caught in those conflicts[.][.]

 “3. Commends the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and other agencies, working in partnership with Middle Eastern churches, to bring relief to refugees and internally displaced persons from the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts, and urges congregations and members to give generous support to that work[.][.]

 “4. [Asks][Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency and other Presbyterians and congregations to advocate for] the United States and other governments to do what is possible to mediate a just and peaceful settlement of those conflicts.”

II. Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

[The item listed below was acted upon and approved by the assembly committee. No further action is needed, and is here for information only.]

11-A. Minutes, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

Approved with comment. [See p. 908.]

Comment: The minutes were approved with minor typographical corrections.
Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia recognized Moderator Judy Ferguson and Vice-Moderator Kathy Stoner Lasala of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry to continue the committee’s report. [See p. 27 for first part of the report.]

Moderator Ferguson introduced a motion to reconsider Item 06-12 (Recommendation 12) because some language was inadvertently left out of some versions of the committee’s report. The motion to reconsider was approved. Item 06-12 (Recommendation 12) was approved as amended (with the language omitted highlighted in gray below):

“12. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

“Shall G-2.0610 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italic.]

“G-2.0610 Exceptions Accommodations to Particular Circumstances

“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an inquirer or candidate [individual seeking ordination] it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

Moderator Ferguson introduced Item 06-04. It was disapproved with comment. Moderator Ferguson introduced Item 06-05 as amended in Business Meeting V. [See p. 27.] It was approved as amended.

A motion was made to disapprove all remaining items that the committee had recommended to disapprove: Items 06-07, 06-09, and 06-11. This motion was approved and then the assembly voted to disapprove all three items.

Moderator Ferguson moved that Item 06-03 be answered with the action taken on Item 06-05. It was approved. Vice-Moderator Lasala introduced Item 06-06. It was approved with amendment. Moderator Ferguson introduced Item 06-15. It was approved. This concluded the report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry. A summary of the report is as follows:

Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry

Wednesday Consent Agenda items indicated by an asterisk.

Recommendations with financial implications indicated with a “$” sign.

Plenary Action

Item 06-01. On Amending G-2.0104b by Replacing “Guided by” with “Obedient to” in Reference to Scripture and the Confessions—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

Disapproved. [See p. 355.]

Item 06-02. On Amending G-4.0206a Regarding the Sale or Encumbrance of Property Given to a Local Congregation as a Gift—From the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

Disapproved. [See p. 356.]

Item 06-03. On Amending G-2.0509, Renunciation of Jurisdiction—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

Answered with action on Item 06-05. [See p. 358.]

Item 06-04. On Amending G-2.0803, the Call Process and Background Checks—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

Disapproved with comment. [See pp. 358–59.]

Comment: We strongly urge presbyteries to mandate criminal background checks for all presbytery staff, all teaching elders in validated ministries, all commissioned ruling elders, and others as deemed necessary.
Item 06-05. On Amending G-2.0509, Renunciation of Jurisdiction—From the Presbytery of the Western Reserve.

Approved with amendment. [See p. 360.]

Amend the third paragraph as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through and shading; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline and shading.]

"Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a judicial proceeding as the accused, that former teaching elder shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)."

Item 06-06. On Amending G-3.0301 Regarding the Minimum Number of Operating Sessions and Teaching Elders in Presbytery—From the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon.

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 361–62.]

Amend the third paragraph as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

"The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten teaching elders, unless an exception is approved by the synod and the General Assembly giving consideration to the responsibilities assigned to presbyteries in G-3-01 and G-3.03.

Item 06-07. On Amending D-10.0103—Referral to Investigating Committee—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

Disapproved. [See p. 363.]

Item 06-08. On Amending G-2.0401 to Allow Presbyteries to Elect and Ordain Persons as Commissioned Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of San Diego.

Disapproved. [See pp. 366–67.]

Item 06-09. On Amending F-2.05, G-2.0105 and W-4.4003c to Clarify What is Meant by Essentials of the Reformed Faith—From the Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley.

Disapproved. [See pp. 369–70.]

Item 06-10. On Amending G-1.0403, Affiliate Congregational Membership for Teaching Elders—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

Disapproved. [See p. 372.]

Item 06-11. On Amending G-3.0403(c) to Allow Churches to Realign with Other Established Presbyteries within the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.

Disapproved. [See p. 374.]

Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams


*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 1.].

Approved with amendment. [See p. 376.]

Amend Recommendation 1.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with an underline; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

"c. [Directing] [Encouraging] the General Assembly Nominating Committee to increase the number of racial ethnic nominees to the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) who are presented to the General Assembly for election."

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 2.].

Approved. [See p. 377.]
*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 3.].

Approved. [See p. 377.]

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 4.].

Approved. [See p. 377.]

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 5.].

Approved. [See p. 377.]

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 6.].

Approved. [See p. 378.]

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 7.].

Approved with amendment. [See p. 378.]

Amend the first paragraph of Recommendation 7. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“7. [Direct that] [Encourage] the presbyteries, in consultation with sessions and seminaries, to address with persons under care the contemporary challenges of the ministry of teaching elder as well as the realities of financial debt incurred from education and other sources. Such conversations would consider”

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 8.].

Approved with amendment. [See p. 378.]

Amend Recommendation 8. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“8. [Direct that] [Encourage] presbyteries, through whatever structure they have in place to guide the preparation of persons for ordered ministry as a teaching elder, make full use of the flexibility provided by the Form of Government in G-2.06, particularly G-2.0610, to respond to the unique needs of individual inquirers and candidates, especially those from immigrant and underserved communities.”

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 9.].

Approved. [See pp. 378–79.]

*Item 06-12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 10.].

Approved with amendment. [See p. 379.]

Amend Recommendation 10. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“10. Direct [that through creation of a special task force or direction to the Mid Council Ministries Area of the Office of General Assembly[, the General Assembly] [and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to] review the programs and procedures used by, or available to, presbyteries to prepare, equip, credential, and deploy pastoral leadership for congregations other than the preparation process for those seeking ordination to the ordered ministry of teaching elder, with a report to be submitted to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).]"
Item 06–12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 11.].

Approved. [See p. 379.]

Item 06–12. Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams [Recommendation 12.].

Approved with amendment. [See pp. 379–80.]

Amend the fourth paragraph as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline and shading.]

“...By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an inquirer or candidate [individual seeking ordination] it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

Item 06–13. Request for Constitutional Interpretation of G-2.1001, Functions of Commissions Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

Approved. [See p. 389.]

Item 06–14. Request for Constitutional Interpretation of G-3.0403c—From the Synod Council, Synod of South Atlantic.

Approved. [See p. 390.]

Item 06–15. The Heidelberg Catechism.

Approved. [See p. 391.]


Approved with comment. [See p. 391.]

Comment: To receive and commend the commission for its work.

DISSENT

The following commissioner filed a dissent from the action taken on Item 06-05 of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry: Sandra Stogsdill, Presbytery of Heartland.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Associate Stated Clerk Tom Hay made several announcements.

CLOSING PRAYER

Mary Katherine Robinson, teaching elder commissioner from Presbytery of Providence, offered the closing prayer for this session of the General Assembly.

RECESS

The assembly recessed at 11:59 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING XII

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was reconvened by Heath Rada, Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014), in Hall D of the COBO Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Jeff Moles, young adult volunteer alumna who served in Nashville, led the assembly in the convening prayer.
Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Susan Orr and Vice-Moderator Raul Santiago-Rivera of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures for a report from the committee.

Moderator Orr reported that minutes of business meetings from Thursday June 19 and Friday morning, June 20, had been reviewed and found in order. It was announced that minutes of business meetings from Friday afternoon, Friday evening, and Saturday morning would be approved by a subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures after adjournment.

Moderator Orr reported that the committee had discussed abstaining votes and recommended continuing the practice of not taking time to ask for and record abstaining votes during assembly business meetings.

Protests found to be in decorous language are recorded in the Minutes as follows:

Protest regarding MRTI’s groundwork/introduction prior to vote on Item 04-04—From Katherine Nyberg, commissioner from the Presbytery of Detroit: “I respectfully file this protest regarding the groundwork/introduction offered by MRTI prior to the vote on divestment.

“We all know that visuals convey both conscious and subconscious messages.

“The choice of visuals was decidedly one-sided, as each frame was composed of Israeli military power.

“Where were the visuals of the families of the three Israeli children recently kidnapped? Or of the families grieving their loved ones riding the bus recently blown up?

“The choice was emotionally biased and manipulative.”


“Our constitution contains two parts: The Book of Confessions and the Book of Order. The Book of Order acknowledges that “while the confessional standards are subordinate to Scripture, they are, nonetheless, standards. They may not be ignored or dismissed” (F-2.02). Moreover the process for changing the confessions of the church is deliberately demanding, requiring a high degree of consensus across the church. If then it can be shown that the Confessions speak with uniformity and in multiple places on the nature of marriage, then constitutionally a high degree of consensus should be required. (See below.) Also, the definition of marriage is not a matter of polity primarily but secondarily. It belongs to the realm of ethics and theology and thus the Book of Order should reflect the teaching of the Book of Confessions.

“The Book of Order states that business of the church shall be carried out in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order (G-3.0105). Robert’s Rules of Order states that any motion that is in conflict with an organization’s constitution is out of order (Chapter 5, P. 111, 11th edition).

“This amendment that changes the definition of marriage from a man and a woman to two persons rejects the clear teaching in the Book of Confessions. Some of our confessions do differ in some areas. However, it speaks with a singular, united voice on the issue of marriage. This amendment is out of order. It violates the Book of Confessions, The Book of Order, and Robert’s Rules of Order.

“In adopting this amendment the General Assembly has rejected the clear teaching of Scripture, the plain and unified voice of the Book of Confessions, our own Book of Order which looks to the confessions for its standards, and its own adopted processes for making decisions decently and in order.

“Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation’ (Barmen, 8.11–12).

“WC 6.050/HC 4.031 Christ governs our hearts by his word and Spirit.

“WC 6.109 ‘God alone is Lord of the conscience, and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word ...’

“BOC ref on marriage • Westminster 6.133 ‘Marriage is a union between one man and one woman ...’ • Westminster 7.249 ‘sins forbidden ... sodomy ... dispensing with unlawful marriages ...’ • 1967 9.47 ‘a man and [a] woman are enabled to marry ...’


“Our constitution contains two parts: The Book of Confessions and the Book of Order. The Book of Order acknowledges that while the confessional standards are subordinate to Scripture, they are, nonetheless, standards. They may not be ignored or dismissed (F-2.02).
“The Book of Order states that business of the church shall be carried out in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order (G-3.0105). Robert’s Rules of Order states that any motion that is in conflict with an organization’s constitution is out of order (Chapter 5, P. 111, 11th edition).

“This amendment that changes the definition of marriage from a man and a woman to two persons rejects the clear teaching in the Book of Confessions. Some of our confessions do differ in some areas. However, it speaks with a singular, united voice on the issue of marriage. This amendment is out of order. It violates the Book of Confessions, The Book of Order, and Robert’s Rules of Order.

“In adopting this amendment the General Assembly has rejected the clear teaching of Scripture, the plain and unified voice of the Book of Confessions, our own Book of Order which looks to the confessions for its standards, and its own adopted processes for making decisions decently and in order.

“The General Assembly cannot adopt motions that defy its own constitution. To do so is anarchy and madness. Adopting this change means that we are no longer confessional and constitutional. We have set aside all historic confessions of the faith of the church."

“Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation” (Barmen, 8.11–12).”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-02—From Joseph Bettridge, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast; Kristine Bottino, commissioner from the Presbytery of Central Washington; F. Russell Cook, commissioner from the Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Carolyn Cranston, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Samuel J. Dechter, commissioner from the Presbytery of Central Washington; Robert J. Dressing, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Edward P. Fedor, commissioner from the Presbytery of Sacramento; Jody Harrington, commissioner from the Presbytery of New Covenant; Randy Hess, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Pacific; Jim Houston-Hencken, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; Richard Hultman, commissioner from the Presbytery of Washington; Richard Kampa, commissioner from the Presbytery of de Christo; Andrew Krater, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; James D. Miller, commissioner from the Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; William A. Norton, Presbytery of de Cristo; Louise Schoppe, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Ben Sloan, commissioner from the Presbytery of Trinity; Jo Ann Thetford, commissioner from the Presbytery of Palo Duro; Neil Zampella, commissioner from the Presbytery of Redstone: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly changing the Book of Order’s definition of marriage, W-4.9000.

“Our constitution contains two parts: The Book of Confessions and the Book of Order. The Book of Order acknowledges that while the confessional standards are subordinate to Scripture, they are, nonetheless, standards. They may not be ignored or dismissed (F-2.02).

“The Book of Order states that business of the church shall be carried out in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order (G-3.0105). Robert’s Rules of Order states that any motion that is in conflict with an organization’s constitution is out of order (Chapter 5, P. 111, 11th edition).

“This amendment that changes the definition of marriage from a man and a woman to two persons rejects the clear teaching in the Book of Confessions. Some of our confessions do differ in some areas. However, it speaks with a singular, united voice on the issue of marriage. This amendment is out of order. It violates the Book of Confessions, The Book of Order, and Robert’s Rules of Order.

“In adopting this amendment the General Assembly has rejected the clear teaching of Scripture, the plain and unified voice of the Book of Confessions, our own Book of Order which looks to the confessions for its standards, and its own adopted processes for making decisions decently and in order.

“The General Assembly cannot adopt motions that defy its own constitution. To do so is anarchy and madness. Adopting this change means that we are no longer confessional and constitutional. We no longer are constituted as a denomination of the church and we have set aside all historic confessions of the faith of the church. We have ceased being any part of the true church of Jesus Christ.

“Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation” (Barmen, 8.11–12).”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Ronald L. Hawkins, commissioner from the Presbytery of Grand Canyon: “The Authoritative Interpretation of 10-03 seems to be, from my humble perspective, unwise and uncaring at best, and unethical and out of order at worst. To interject meaning that changes the clear intent of the original language does not seem appropriate for an A.I. The original intent of ‘man and woman’ means just that. ‘A couple’ clearly is meant to change the ‘man and woman’ to allow for ‘man and man’ or ‘woman and woman.’ Something that is clearly different from the original intent.”
Protest on assembly action on authoritative interpretation, [Item 10-03]—From Eva-Maria Barr, commissioner from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler: “Authoritative Interpretation is in conflict with the Constitution.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03 and Item 10-02—From Earl A. Bland, commissioner from the Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic: “10-03 AI was unconstitutional in approving it. 10-02 was against the Constitution, Book of Confessions and the Holy Scriptures.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03 [10-03]—From Andrew Gerhart, commissioner from the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley: “My protest concerns the ruling, and subsequent action on 10-04 [10-03] that an Authoritative Interpretation can change substantially the plain and ordinary meaning of a word—especially in 10-04 [10-03]. I think the action was out of order and the result will be confusion as to the meaning of W-4.9000.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Bruce A. Jones, commissioner from the Presbytery of Milwaukee: “On Item 10-03 the assembly approved a new authoritative Interpretation on the Book of Order definition of marriage. The current W-4.9000 is clear and unambiguous. An AI is to give clarity. This AI changes the Book of Order is a grievous error and an inappropriate action. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution ruled in materially to the assembly this AI out of order. Their verbal comments to the floor changed this understanding. This AI is out of order and not done decently.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Maurice Smith, commissioner from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler: “I believe the vote on this Authoritative Interpretation was unconstitutional.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Jeffrey Kintner, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Dakota: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

“To call this an interpretation is to permit the changing of the Book of Order in an unconstitutional way. This is not an interpretation; it is a change. For the General Assembly to deceive the church in this way is a grievous error and an illegitimate way to change our church’s position on marriage. Our own foundational principles of order and government say clearly that no opinion can either be more pernicious or more absurd than that which would make truth and falsehood equal and make it seem that it does not matter what man’s opinions are. Instead there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it (F-3.0104).

“This Authoritative Interpretation changes the meaning of the clear definition of marriage into something it can never say.

“By adopting this Authoritative Interpretation, the General Assembly violates the plain meaning of the Book of Order, it ignores the standards set out in the Book of Confessions and it openly rejects the teaching of Scripture.

“If such an interpretation is allowed to stand as if it were legitimate, this action nullifies constitutional governance in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Because we love this Church and because we are loyal to the God who gives us his Word Written in Scripture and authoritatively interpreted by the Confessions, we do hereby protest in the strongest possible terms.

“‘Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation’ (Barmen, 8.11–12).’”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From William Ward, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation permits teaching elders to participate ‘in any such marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that the limits for marriage is between a man and a woman as God designed it. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

“To call this an interpretation is to permit a drastic change in the application of our constitution without a change in the text of our constitution, without the consensus of the Presbyteries (the changing of the Book of Order in an unconstitutional way). This is not an interpretation; it is a change. This is an illegitimate way to change our church’s position on marriage. (Our own foundational principles of order and government say clearly that no opinion can either be more pernicious or more absurd than that which would make truth and falsehood equal and make it seem that it does not matter what man’s opinions are. Instead there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it (F-3.0104).)

“This Authoritative Interpretation contradicts the description of marriage rather than interpreting or clarifying it. This is an incorrect use of an Authoritative Interpretation.
By adopting this Authoritative Interpretation, the General Assembly violates the plain meaning of the Book of Order, it ignores the standards set out in the Book of Confessions and it openly rejects the teaching of Scripture.

If such an interpretation is allowed to stand as if it were legitimate, this action nullifies the confessional nature of (constitutional governance in) the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and usurps the right and responsibility of the larger body in constitutional change. Because we love this Church and because we are loyal to the God who gives us his Word Written in Scripture and authoritatively interpreted by the Confessions, we do hereby protest in the strongest possible terms.

‘The church comes under the judgment of God and invites the rejection [of] man when it fails to lead men and women into the full meaning of life together, or withholds the compassion of Christ from those caught in the moral confusion of our time’ (1967, 9.47).

‘Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation’ (Barmen, 8.11–12).’

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Chris Nelson, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pueblo: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

“To call this an interpretation is to permit the changing of the Book of Order in an unconstitutional way. This is not an interpretation; it is a change.

“This Authoritative Interpretation changes the meaning of the clear definition of marriage into something it can never say.

“By adopting this Authoritative Interpretation, the General Assembly violates the plain meaning of the Book of Order, it ignores the standards set out in the Book of Confessions and it openly rejects the teaching of Scripture.

“If such an interpretation is allowed to stand as if it were legitimate, this action nullifies constitutional governance in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Because we love this Church and because we are loyal to the God who gives us his Word Written in Scripture and authoritatively interpreted by the Confessions, we do hereby protest in the strongest possible terms.

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From David Markwalder, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pueblo: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

“To call this an interpretation is to permit the changing of the Book of Order in an unconstitutional way. This is not an interpretation; it is a change. For the General Assembly to deceive the church in this way is a grievous error and an illegitimate way to change our church’s position on marriage. Our own foundational principles of order and government say clearly that no opinion can either be more pernicious or more absurd than that which would make truth and falsehood equal and make it seem that it does not matter what man’s opinions are. Instead there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it (F-3.0104).

“This Authoritative Interpretation changes the meaning of the clear definition of marriage into something it can never say.

“By adopting this Authoritative Interpretation, the General Assembly violates the plain meaning of the Book of Order, it ignores the standards set out in the Book of Confessions and it openly rejects the teaching of Scripture.

“If such an interpretation is allowed to stand as if it were legitimate, this action nullifies constitutional governance in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Because we love this Church and because we are loyal to the God who gives us his Word Written in Scripture and authoritatively interpreted by the Confessions, we do hereby protest in the strongest possible terms.

‘Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation’ (Barmen, 8.11–12).’

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From E. Jones Doughton, commissioner from the Presbytery of Flint River: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.
“To call this an interpretation is to permit the changing of the Book of Order in an unconstitutional way. This is not an interpretation; it is a change. For the General Assembly to deceive the church in this way is a grievous error and an illegitimate way to change our church’s position on marriage. Our own foundational principles of order and government say clearly that no opinion can either be more pernicious or more absurd than that which would make truth and falsehood equal and make it seem that it does not matter what man’s opinions are. Instead there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it (F-3.0104).

“This Authoritative Interpretation changes the meaning of the clear definition of marriage into something it can never say.

‘‘The church comes under the judgment of God and invites the rejection [of] man when it fails to lead men and women into the full meaning of life together, or withholds the compassion of Christ from those caught in the moral confusion of our time’ (9.47).

“By adopting this Authoritative Interpretation, the General Assembly violates the plain meaning of the Book of Order, it ignores the standards set out in the Book of Confessions and it openly rejects the teaching of Scripture.

“An ‘AI’ should clarify a position. It should not make a position. We have channels in our Book of Order to do that.

“If such an interpretation is allowed to stand as if it were legitimate, this action nullifies constitutional governance in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Because we love this Church and because we are loyal to the God who gives us his Word Written in Scripture and authoritatively interpreted by the Confessions, we do hereby protest in the strongest possible terms.

“‘Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death. We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God’s revelation” (Barmen, 8.11–12).”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From James D. Miller, commissioner from the Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma: “I consider myself a moderate, but the A.I. vote is a simple, obvious, and flagrant violation of our constitution. The Action will only fuel the perception that GA dances to a golden calf of its own making. This Action was shameful.

“I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman as God designed it. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

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Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Neil Zampella, commissioner from the Presbytery of Redstone: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman as God designed it. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

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“In addition, it totally violates Robert’s Rules of Order chp 5, pg 111, 11th Ed. That any motion in conflict with an organization’s constitution is out of order. If adopted it is null and void pg 343.”

Protest on assembly action on Item 10-03—From Robert Austell, commissioner from the Presbytery of Charlotte; Joseph Bettridge, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast; Kristine Bottino, commissioner from the Presbytery of Central Washington; F. Russell Cook, commissioner from the Presbytery of Eastern Oklahoma; Carolyn Cranston, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast; Samuel J. Dechter, commissioner from the Presbytery of Central Washington; Robert J. Dressing, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Edward P. Fedor, commissioner from the Presbytery of Sacramento; Jody Harrington, commissioner from the Presbytery of New Covenant; Randy Hess, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Pacific; Jim Houston-Hencken, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; Richard Hultman, commissioner from the Presbytery of Washington; Richard Kampa, commissioner from the Presbytery of de Cristo; Andrew Krater, commissioner from the Presbytery of Nevada; David C. Mauldin, commissioner from the Presbytery of South Alabama; William A. Norton, Presbytery of de Cristo; Louise Schoppe, commissioner from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh; Jo Ann Thetford, commissioner from the Presbytery of Palu Duro; Barry Tucker, commissioner from the Presbytery of the Peaks: “I formally protest the action of the General Assembly to approve a new Authoritative Interpretation (Item 10-03) of the Book of Order definition of marriage, W-4.9000. If it stands, this new Authoritative Interpretation ‘permits teaching elders to participate in any such legal marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.’ W-4.9000 is clear that its limits on marriage is between a man and a woman as God designed it. Because these statements are clear and unambiguous they cannot be interpreted in a manner that rejects their plain and ordinary meaning.

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SPIRIT OF GA VIDEO

Moderator Rada introduced the Spirit of GA video.
SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2014

FINAL REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

Moderator Rada recognized Moderator Linda Scholl and Vice-Moderator David Ealy of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination for the final report of the committee.

Moderator Scholl reported that the total financial implications to the mission budget of actions approved by the assembly were $295,119 for 2015 and $68,418 for 2016.

Moderator Scholl introduced Item 08-15 (Recommendation A.3.), the total mission budget: $73,671,744 for 2015 and $78,226,389 for 2016. Item 08-15 (Recommendation A.3) was approved. (See page 533.)

Vice-Moderator David Ealy recognized Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) Executive Director Linda Valentine and PMA Board Chair Matt Schramm. Valentine thanked Schramm for his service as board chair. Schramm presented incoming Board Chair Marilyn Gamm with a stole and cross. Gamm briefly addressed the assembly.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

Moderator Rada called on Moderator Gene McEvoy and Vice-Moderator Gun Ho Lee of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures for the committee’s final report.

Moderator McEvoy reported that the total financial implications to the per capita budget of actions approved by the assembly were $14,800 for 2014; $124,945 for 2015 (approximately $.07 of per capita); and $61,165 for 2016 (approximately $.04 of per capita).

Vice-Moderator Lee introduced Item 03-05 (Recommendation 2.b), the total per capita budget: $12,404,048 for 2015 and $12,324,063 for 2016. Item 03-05 (Recommendation 2.b) was approved with amendment. (See p. 192.)

Vice-Moderator Lee introduced Item 03-05 (Recommendation 2.c), the proposed increases in per capita: for 2015, an increase of $.05 to $7.07; and in 2016, an increase of $.05 to $7.12. Item 03-05 (Recommendation 2.c) was approved with amendment. (See p. 192.)

Young adult advisory delegates from the committee performed a skit to thank the Detroit Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA). Young Adult Advisory Delegate Fayette Kaledzi from the Presbytery of Newark gave a spoken word performance on the city of Detroit.

EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Moderator Rada recognized Assistant Stated Clerk Deborah Davies and Associate Stated Clerk Thomas Hay who thanked the Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA) from the Presbytery of Detroit and presented a plaque to the committee.

COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (COGA)

Moderator Rada recognized Vince Thomas, outgoing moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA). Thomas thanked members of COGA, the 221st General Assembly (2014), and the wider PC(USA), and he introduced Margaret Elliott as the incoming moderator of COGA. Elliott briefly addressed the assembly.

Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons offered thanks and appreciation for the COGA leadership of Vince Thomas.

‘GOSPEL FROM DETROIT’ REPRESENTATIVES

Moderator Rada thanked the assembly for the good work done in Detroit in urban mission. This assembly received the report “Gospel from Detroit,” and Moderator Rada invited the assembly to join him in thanking two representatives of that report, the Reverend Kevin Johnson of Calvary Presbyterian Church and Dr. Gloria Albrecht.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF CASCADES COMMITTEE ON LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Moderator Rada introduced Beth Neel, co-chair of the Presbytery of the Cascades Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA), who introduced a video welcoming the church to Portland, Oregon, host city for the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

THANKS TO STAFF

Moderator Rada called upon Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons who expressed his appreciation to OGA staff, volunteers, and others.

Moderator Rada thanked the 221st General Assembly (2014) and Vice-Moderator Larissa Kwong Abazia.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moderator Rada called upon Stated Clerk Parsons for announcements on various topics, including that there was time for a “Speak-out” session prior to worship.

SPEAK-OUT

Moderator Rada and Vice-Moderator Kwong Abazia moderated the speak-out session.

ADJOURNMENT

The assembly was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. with worship, to be dissolved upon the convening of the 222nd General Assembly (2016) on June 18, 2016, in Portland, Oregon.

At the closing worship service, Dr. Martha Moore-Keish of Columbia Theological Seminary, preached on “Bound for the Promised Land.”
SECTION TWO

Assembly Committee Reports Containing All Reports, Referrals, and Recommendations of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Office of the General Assembly, Permanent and Special Committees, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Board of Pensions, the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Overtures, and Commissioners’ Resolutions
Item 00-01

[The assembly approved Item 00-01. See p. 2.]

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the following assembly committee structure [a brief list of the business to be referred to that committee follows the committee title]:

01 BUSINESS REFERRAL

02 BILLS AND OVERTURES
Docket of the assembly and referrals of business to assembly committees after commencement of General Assembly (Standing Rules C.4.b.); appeal of persons denied the right to speak at a public hearing (Standing Rule E.5.b.); review requests for distribution of material to commissioners (Standing Rule E.6.c.); review requests from agencies to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings during assembly meeting (Standing Rule E.6.d.); recommend approval of time limits on debate (Standing Rule F.1.b.); review and recommend approval of General Assembly Minutes (Standing Rule F.1.c.); requests for presentations to the assembly (Standing Rule F.1.d.); review protests, determine if entered in the Minutes, prepare response if needed (Standing Rule F.1.e.); report on assembly committee requests for establishment of special committees or commissions (Standing Rule K.1.a.–b.).

03 GA PROCEDURES
Consider matters related to: meetings of the assembly and the report of the Biennial Review Committee; per capita budget; standing rule amendments; operation of the Office of the General Assembly; statistics; publishing of reports; General Assembly Nominating Committee process; special committees; commissioners and advisory delegates credentials/leaves of absence.

04 MIDDLE EAST ISSUES
Consider matters related to: The Middle East including MRTI recommendations concerning Middle East nations.

05 MID COUNCILS ISSUES
Consider matters related to: mid council boundaries; mid council-related referrals; the report of the Mid Council Commission

06 CHURCH POLITY AND ORDERED MINISTRY
Consider matters related to: amendments to Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (chapters 1 and 3), Form of Government Chapters I, III–IV, VI (except as covered by the Mid Council Issues Committee) with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; amendments to the Rules of Discipline with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice. Amendments to Chapter II of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; recruiting, enlistment of persons to service of church. Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

07 ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS
Consider matters related to: amendments to Chapter V of the Form of Government with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; requests for interpretation; matters dealing with relationships with, and attitudes toward, other religious movements or bodies; conversations with other Presbyterian denominations; nominations for ecumenical advisory delegates; nominations for delegations to corresponding churches; reports of corresponding bodies.

08 MISSION COORDINATION
Consider matters related to: Mission programs authorized by General Assembly; PC(USA) vision and mission goals; Organization for Mission and Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations; mission budget; audits; churchwide compensation.

09 SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES
Consider matters related to: Concerns of church in national affairs; national military matters; health, managed care and abortions; and matters relating to righteousness and justice of persons/organizations. General Assembly Committee on Representation. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

10 CIVIL UNION AND MARRIAGE ISSUES
Consider matters related to: Amendments to the Form of Government, Rules of Discipline and Directory for Worship related to marriage and civil unions; referrals defining marriage.

11 PEACEMAKING AND INT. ISSUES
Consider matters related to: Peacemaking, international military affairs, and the arms race; international matters excepting those involving the Middle East; human rights; plight of refugees worldwide; international economic justice; global evangelism and education.

12 BOP, PILP, PPC AND FOUNDATION
Consider matters related to: Review and activities of the Board of Pensions (and other pension, annuity and medical plans, private or governmental), Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Presbyterian Foundation; report of the Agency Review Committees of the Board of Pensions and of the Presbyterian Foundation.
13 **THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS**  
*Consider matters related to:* Amendments to the *Book of Confessions* and Chapter II of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity with Advisory Committee on the Constitution advice; authority and interpretation of Scripture; theological institutions; celebration of Lord’s Supper requests.

14 **CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY**  
*Consider matters related to:* Presbyterian Mission Agency initiatives on education, missional living, and 1001 worship communities; Christian educators.

15 **IMMIGRATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**  
*Consider matters related to:* the church’s response to U.S. immigration policies and related issues and matters related to carbon fuels, food sovereignty, and the environment.

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**Item 00-02**

[The assembly approved Item 00-02. See pp. 2, 11–12.]

*General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations*

The General Assembly Nominating Committee recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) elect the following nominees:

Commissioners to the 221st General Assembly (2014) will vote to elect many people to positions on the various entities of the General Assembly. In accordance with the *Book of Order*, G-3.0111, and to ensure careful nominations of members to these entities, the General Assembly Nominating Committee proposes a slate of nominees for election. Positions to be filled are listed on the attached pages.

*Biographical Information:* A short descriptive paragraph for each nominee being presented by the General Assembly Nominating Committee can be found by May 23 on the GA Nominations website—[www.pcusa.org/nominations](http://www.pcusa.org/nominations).

*Inclusive Representation:* The nominations made by the General Assembly Nominating Committee are responsive to and reflective of the principles of participation and representation expressed in the *Book of Order*, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. This report provides diversity information following the name of each nominee as well as a chart describing inclusiveness information for each committee to which the General Assembly is electing members.

*Nominations Process:* The process for nominations proposed to the General Assembly is a long and thorough one. As of April 25, the General Assembly Nominating Committee has on file approximately 260 Application for Nomination forms. The names of these persons were gathered through

- self-nomination
- suggestions from sessions, presbyteries, and synods
- and other Presbyterians who suggested the nominations of persons they knew or with whom they’ve worshipped and worked

Application for Nomination forms are received by the General Assembly Nominations office and a copy of each form is shared with all members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee. In addition a copy of the application is sent to the committee or entity itself.

Each applicant is asked to solicit references from three persons of their choosing. In response to the action of the 208th General Assembly (1996) an appraisal is also solicited from the applicant’s council of membership—presbytery for teaching elders and session for ruling elders and church members. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will not nominate a person unless it has received three appraisals, one of which must be an appraisal from the applicant’s council of membership.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation has encouraged persons, particularly those in underrepresented categories, to consider serving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on General Assembly entities and to submit an application for nomination form for the General Assembly Nominating Committee consideration. The General Assembly Committee on Representation has reviewed this report.

Although the majority of nominations are proposed for “at-large” positions, some people are nominated as representatives of specific presbyteries or synods to a particular entity. Entities that have such representational positions include the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People. In these cases, the General Assembly Nominating Committee requests presbyteries and synods to send the names of no less than three persons for consideration. The General Assembly Nominating Committee may select only from the pool suggested by the synod or presbytery—through its regular nominating process—when filling a mid council representation slot in these instances.
This report lists the names of persons being proposed for nomination and distinguishes between those positions that are at-large (AL), those that are synod (S) or presbytery (P) representation slots, etc. and those that are filled by representatives from other General Assembly agencies or ecumenical bodies.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee also needs to take into account the inclusiveness requirements outlined in the Book of Order or mandated by the General Assembly: racial ethnic, geographic, physical, theological, and age diversity. The committee is also sensitive to the needs for expertise expressed by the entities themselves. It is a balancing act that the General Assembly Nominating Committee takes seriously and faithfully as it attempts to discern the call of Presbyterians to service on committees at the General Assembly level.

Persons who are elected to service on General Assembly committees and entities are, in most cases, eligible to be reelected to a second term. The 219th General Assembly urged “General Assembly entities to consider renominations as the exception, rather than the rule and applied only to those members whose continued service is clearly beneficial to on-going or projected work in order to assist the GANC in making its careful nominations.” However, many of the persons who are proposed in the report are renominations.

Descriptions for each committee have been developed by the entity and adapted from the Entity Lists and Descriptions page of the General Assembly nominations website. Nomination information for the 2014–2016 cycle are available at the General Assembly Nominating Committee booth in the exhibit area.

This report has been submitted to the office of the Stated Clerk by the 45-day deadline.

Procedure for Nominations from the Floor: The procedure for nominations from the floor is described in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, F. General Assembly Plenary Meeting, 6.c. Nominating from the Floor:

When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly, with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented, as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the “Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk. The availability of the pertinent information provided by the person challenging the nominating committee’s nominee shall be announced to the assembly at least twenty-four hours in advance of the nomination being made from the floor.

“Nomination by Commissioner Forms” are available at the Assembly Information Center—Atrium (First Floor) in the Cobo Center.

The name of the specific person being challenged must be stated on the “Nomination by Commissioner” form. Please return this form, completed in full on all sides, to the ASSEMBLY INFORMATION CENTER located in the Atrium of the Cobo Center no later than 1:30 p.m. on Monday, June 16, 2014, so that it may be verified for eligibility and the Stated Clerk may prepare for a ballot. Thank you.

This report containing the General Assembly Nominating Committee “Proposed Nominees” will be reported for action on Friday, June 20. Commissioners and advisory delegates will need the following pages for action at that time.

Key for the General Assembly Nominating Committee Report

| Mariana Pardo  (D) (YA) HFR 26-35 Milwaukee LAK AL NEW |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3               | 4               | 1               | 5               |
| 6               | 7               | 8               | 9               |

means

Mariana Pardo (person living with a disability) (Young Adult) Hispanic/Latina, Female, Ruling Elder, 26–35 years old, Milwaukee Presbytery, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, At-large position, New (first term) nomination.

Key:

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<th>Gender and Ordination designation:</th>
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<tr>
<td>FT—Female Teaching, Minister of the Word and Sacrament</td>
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<td>FR—Female Ruling Elder</td>
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<td>FL—Female Church Member</td>
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<td>FD—Female Deacon</td>
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<td>FC—Female Minister (non-Presbyterian)</td>
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<td>MD—Male Deacon</td>
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<td>MC—Male Minister (non-Presbyterian)</td>
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Racial/Ethnic designation:
A—Asian American  
B—African American  
H—Hispanic/Latina/Latino  
M—Middle Eastern  
N—Native American  
O—Other  
W—Caucasian
Combination of letter codes may be used when applicant indicates more than one racial/ethnic category (bi-racial or multi-racial) i.e. B/N = African American and Native American.

Person living with disability designation:
D—Disability (persons with self-identified disability)

Youth/Young Adult designation:
YA—Young Adult (35 years and younger when nominated)

Age Range:
25+ (25 years old and younger); 26+ =26–35 years old; 36+ =36–45 years old; 46+ =46–55 years old; 56+ =56–65 years old; 66+ = 66–75 years old; and 75+ = over 75 years old

Presbytery

Synod:
ANW—Alaska Northwest; BPR—Borinquen en Puerto Rico | Puerto Rico; COV—Covenant; LAK—Lakes and Prairies; LIN—Lincoln Trails; LW—Living Waters; MAM—Mid-America; MAT—Mid-Atlantic; NE—Northeast; PAC—Pacific; ROC—Rocky Mountains; SA—South Atlantic; SCH—Southern California and Hawaii; SUN—Sun; SW—Southwest; TRI—Trinity

Membership:
AA =Asian American At-Large  
AC =Asian American Caucus  
ACE =Associate Pastor of Christian Education  
AL =At-Large  
BA =African American At-large  
COGA =Committee on the Office of the General Assembly  
COMM =Commissioner  
DCE =Director of Christian Education  
ELCA =Evangelical Lutheran Church of America  
FND =Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation  
HC =Hispanic/Latina/Latino Caucus  
MA =Middle Eastern At-Large  
MC =Middle Eastern Caucus  
NC =Native American Caucus  
P =Presbytery  
PMAB =Presbyterian Mission Agency Board  
RE Comm =Ruling Elder Commissioner  
S =Synod  
TE Comm =Teaching Elder Commissioner  
UCC =United Church of Christ  
WCL =Woman Church Lay Employee

Nomination Category:
NEW =New Nomination  
REN =Re-nominated  
† =Appointed by General Assembly Moderator

Diversity Chart

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Female Ruling Elder
Male Ruling Elder
Female Teaching Elder
Male Teaching Elder
A. Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The *Book of Order* at G-6.02 provides for the establishment of an Advisory Committee on the Constitution. The committee is composed of nine (9) voting members, teaching elders and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The General Assembly provides its own rule for the qualifications of members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The *Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),* IV.C.3.a., states the qualifications of members:

The committee is composed of nine (9) voting members who shall be stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, polity professors, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church.

All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the *Book of Order*, including items of new business related to the *Book of Order*, but with the exception of those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission, are referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. The advisory committee reports its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations and proposals for constitutional change.

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly refers all timely filed proposals to amend the *Book of Order* to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which examines the proposed amendments for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution. At least sixty days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee reports its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the committee.

Skills & Expertise Needed:

- Experience and knowledge of polity and history of the church, including experience interpreting the Constitution within the councils of the church
- Good writing and computer skills
- Interest and ability to conduct extensive research
- Ability to communicate effectively and make oral presentations
- Ability to put in long work days
- Ability to use electronic communications and access the Internet
- Demonstrated willingness to work collegially and work through disagreements

Time Requirements: The workload varies over a two-year cycle. During the year following a meeting of the General Assembly, the time requirements are light, and the work can be accomplished in a couple of conference calls, which may take from 2 to 5 hours each.

During the year leading up to the adjournment of the next General Assembly, the time commitments are moderate and some work will be done in conference calls during this year. During this year the committee requires about sixteen long days of work. The fall meeting during the year before a General Assembly is typically accomplished over a weekend. The spring meeting before a General Assembly lasts six days to consider proposed constitutional amendments and requests for interpretation of the Constitution. In addition, all members are ordinarily expected to be present through the session of the General Assembly to advise the assembly and its Moderator on constitutional questions. General Assembly attendance requires an eight-day time commitment.

In addition to attendance at meetings, the work of the committee includes extensive preparation in the form of research and writing of draft responses to proposed constitutional amendments and requests for interpretation by the General Assembly. Assignments need to be completed and submitted before each meeting.

Class of 2016

1. Steven W. Plank  WMT  56–65  Cayuga-Syracuse  NE  AL  NEW†

Class of 2020

2. Alyson Janke  WFR  56–65  John Knox  LAK  AL  NEW
3. Moon Lee  AMR  66–75  Eastern Korean  NE  AL  NEW
4. Michael E. Williams  WMR  56–65  San Diego  SCH  AL  NEW
B. Advisory Committee on Litigation

This committee advises the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly regarding participation as an amicus party (friend of the court) in secular litigation related to matters of civil and religious liberty, relations between church and state, and any other matters arising out of the mission and interest of the church.

Skills & Expertise Needed: The members of the committee, ordinarily, shall be lawyers, and the members shall be experienced in fields related to issues that may be the subject of legal proceedings in which the church is or may become involved. Experience and practice in federal constitutional law helpful, especially first amendment law.

Meets at call of committee moderator. The committee ordinarily carries out its work by teleconference calls, with one face-to-face meeting every two years.

Nominated by GANC: 6 At-Large—For a six year term.

Class of 2020
1. Robin W. Hadfield WFR 56–65 Homestead LAK AL REN
2. Barry McDonald WML 46–55 San Fernando SCH AL REN

C. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

9 at-large; 3 PMAB; up to 2, four-year term

This committee develops and recommends social witness policy to the General Assembly. Social witness policies apply the Gospel to ethical concerns in the social order and in the church’s own life. Thus, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy helps the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency maintain and strengthen the prophetic voice of the church; provides them with a regular capacity to study the theological and ethical dimensions of emerging issues; gives them advice and counsel on overtures, reports, and actions recommending policy direction or action on social witness; and assists them to guide the whole church toward a better understanding of Christian social responsibility, both personal and corporate. The committee’s three primary functions are (1) to prepare policy statements, resolutions, study papers, and social involvement monitoring reports for consideration by the General Assembly and its council; (2) to provide advice and counsel to all mid councils—especially to the General Assembly and its council—on possible positions to take on social policy questions and to interpret the General Assembly record on these matters; and, (3) to help the PMA and mid councils evaluate and explore new forms of social witness, including the use of an interactive cyber journal. Twelve (12) members, nine (9) elected at-large, and three (3) members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Up to two, four-year terms.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Social ethics professor; prison chaplain; union or grass-roots organizer; political scientist; persons with human rights and international perspective. Persons should be able to write with skill and insight on theological/public policy matters.

Time Requirement: Meets three times annually for a three-day meeting. Additional committee and task group meetings/assignments plus travel time can bring the total up to 15–22 days per year.

Class of 2018
1. Linda Mary Eastwood WFT 56–65 Western Reserve COV AL NEW
2. Kathryn Poethig WFL 56–65 New York City NE AL REN
3. Raymond R. Roberts WMT 46–55 Elizabeth NE AL REN
4. Noelle Royer WFR 26–35 Seattle ANW PMAB NEW
5. Steven B Webb WMR 66–75 National Capital MAT AL NEW
D. **Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns**

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) works with the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and its staff, the Office of the General Assembly, and other entities related to the General Assembly to keep a strong prophetic voice for racial justice before the church. The committee has access to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the General Assembly directly by means of reports, resolutions, and advice and counsel.

ACREC’s Primary Functions:

1. The committee is an advocate within the denomination maintaining an active witness for racial justice in the church. The ACREC may address any issue that significantly impacts the quality of life for people of color, such areas as civil rights, housing, employment, healthcare, public education, affirmative action, environmental racism, economic justice, criminal justice, and immigration policy.

2. The committee recommends to the General Assembly new policy and timely revisions to existing policies and monitors the implementation of policies approved by the church. The ACREC strives to identify and challenge practices that adversely affect the quality of life and restrict full participation of people of color in the life of the church.

Committee Composition: The committee is composed of twelve (12) members normally eligible to serve two, four (4) year terms. Members of the five racial ethnic caucuses (African American, Asian American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Native American) shall select one member from each caucus to be elected through the General Assembly Nominating process to serve a four-year term with eligibility for one additional term.

Six members (one from each racial ethnic constituency group listed above, plus one more) are nominated at-large by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), ensuring geographic, racial and gender diversity. One member is appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee.

Skills & Expertise Needed:

- Demonstrated commitment to social and economic justice as an expression of Christian discipleship and faith;
- Understanding of the systemic and structural nature of racism;
- Willingness to work collectively to articulate a theological understanding of racial justice and combat racism both in the church and in the world;
- Familiarity with or a willingness to become familiar with the church’s public policy witness;
- Knowledge and expertise in a wide range of social justice issues;
- Skills in social analysis;
- Writing ability;
- Regular access to email.

Time Requirement: The committee meets three times in a non-assembly year, four times in an assembly year. Committee members may serve as liaisons to other entities and/or serve on a task force or subcommittee requiring additional travel. The total time commitment may range from an average of 15 to 25 days per year. Committee members are also required to participate in occasional conference calls between meetings.

Nominated by GANC: Five (5) at-large persons from designated racial ethnic categories; and one (1) at-large person, race and ethnicity unspecified, for balance and diversity within the committee, are nominated to serve on ACREC for a term of four-years.

**Class of 2016**

1. Raafat Labib Zaki  
   MMT 46-55 Grace SUN MC NEW†

**Class of 2018**

2. Nahida Halaby Gordon  
   W/MFR 66–75 Muskingum Valley COV MA NEW

3. Joo H. Kim  
   AMT 36–45 Twin Cities Area LAK AA NEW

4. Gwendolyn D. Magby  
   BFT (D) 56–65 Tropical Florida SA BA NEW

5. Ricardo Moreno  
   HMR 36–45 San Gabriel SCH HC NEW

| Class | FR | MR | FT | MT  | A  | B  | H  | M  | N  | O  | W  | D  | YA | 25– | 26+ | 36+ | 46+ | 56+ | 66+ | 75+ |
|-------|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 2016  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 3   | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0   | 2   | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| 2018  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1   | 1  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0   | 2   | 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   |
| Total | 2  | 2  | 2  | 4   | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 0   | 4   | 2   | 3   | 1   | 0   | 0   |

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E. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is called by the General Assembly to its work in a world where women experience injustice and oppression because of their gender. Affirming our Reformed tradition, Presbyterians recognize “the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God” (Book of Order, F-2.05). The church is motivated by the painful recognition of sexism, and has explicitly articulated in the Articles of Agreement (Section 5.6) its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The ACWC is the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s contemporary fulfillment of this historic commitment.

The ACWC is housed in the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director’s Office. The ACWC has direct access to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the General Assembly. The committee’s three primary responsibilities include:

1. serving as a voice of advocacy on existing and emerging issues of justice both within the church and society;
2. evaluating and monitoring policies, procedures, programs and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women; and
3. giving the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency advice and counsel via overtures, resolutions, and reports recommending policy direction or action on justice issues.

The committee carries out these advocacy and monitoring functions in collaboration with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

Committee Composition:

The ACWC is made up of twelve (12) members, including:
- two clergy women
- one female church lay employee
- the Presbyterian Women Church-wide Coordinating Team Vice Moderator for Justice and Peace
- one Presbytery Mission Agency Board Executive Committee member
- seven at-large members chosen to balance the committee with regards to geography, race ethnicity, age and expertise.

At least four members are racial ethnic, and at least two, but not more than three, are men. Members may serve up to two, four-year terms.

Skills & Expertise Needed:

- Critical faith perspective on sexism and gender justice
- Passion for seeking justice for women
- Advocacy experience
- Skills in social analysis
- Knowledge in women’s issues and commitment to remaining informed on current events relevant to gender justice
- Familiarity with or willingness to become familiar with Presbyterian policy
- Writing ability
- Access to email is also necessary as this is the primary means of communication for the committee.

Time Requirement: The ACWC meets three times annually for three days each meeting. A few members will also attend Advice and Counsel meetings in April of General Assembly years and the General Assembly. Additional committee and working group assignments plus travel time can bring the total to 12–20 days per year. Much of the work of the committee occurs between meetings, so committee members should expect to devote some individual time to the work of ACWC. Members should also be prepared to participate in occasional conference calls and regular email correspondence between meetings.

Nominated by GANC: 10 At-Large (7 At-Large; 3 At-Large from designated categories)—For a four year term.

Class of 2018

1. Kerri Allen  WFT  36–45  Chicago  LIN  AL  REN
2. Joann Haejong Lee  AFT  26–35  Twin Cities Area  LAK  AL  REN
3. Joyce Rarumangakay Rompas  AFR  56–65  National Capital  MAT  AL  NEW
4. Zoe Van Dyke  WFL  25–  Twin Cities Area  LAK  WCL  NEW
5. Floretta L. Watkins  BFT  46–55  Charlotte  MAT  AL  NEW
F. Audit Committee

The Audit Committee reviews and approves the annual audited financial statements with independent auditors and management. It ensures that the independent auditors are satisfied with the disclosure and content of the financial statements. The committee also provides oversight of the system of internal controls through the review and approval process of the internal audits performed in accordance with the approved internal audit plan. The Audit Committee informs the Presbyterian Mission Agency if internal controls are functioning as intended. The Audit Committee is also expected to make recommendations for improvements and reporting upon the reliability and integrity of financial information.

The Audit committee consists of six (6) members: three (3) from the membership of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and elected by the PMAB; two (2) at large members for special expertise, nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee for a two-year term, eligible for two additional terms for a total of six years, and elected by the General Assembly, and one (1) member from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, nominated by COGA.

Skills & Expertise Desired: Financial background and training/education would be helpful. Experience as an internal auditor, certified public accountant, and knowledge about governance and internal controls is a plus. An understanding of generally accepted accounting principles, financial statements and audit committee functions, experience in preparing or auditing the financial statements, including experience in accounting for estimates, accruals, and reserves, and experience with internal controls and procedures for financial reporting. Anyone with an active interest in the integrity, governance, finances, and control of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be considered.

Time Requirement: The Audit Committee ordinarily meets in conjunction with the Presbyterian Mission Agency meetings. In addition, the Audit Committee has the option to meet more frequently than the scheduled Presbyterian Mission Agency meetings. The annual review of the audited financial statements is a meeting that is usually held in April or May.

Class of 2016
1. Ellen Pearre Cason WFR  56–65 New York City NE AL REN
2. Richard Allen Turpen WMR  56–65 Sheppards & Lapsley LW AL REN

G. Board of Pensions

30 at-large members—For a four-year term.

Four basic functions have been assigned, by the General Assembly, to this board: (1) design and administer a comprehensive program of pension, medical, and other benefits for ministers, missionaries, and certain other church workers; (2) design and administer a program of financial assistance to help meet needs that are beyond the scope of the pension and benefits; (3) establish and operate retirement housing for eligible retirees and their spouses; and (4) receive, invest, and disburse the funds required to support these plans and programs for the sole and exclusive benefit of members and beneficiaries of the assistance and home programs. Currently thirty (30) at-large members, no more than 40 percent may be teaching elders. One board member may be nominated upon recommendation of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Election is for a term of four years, with eligibility for a second term, but in no event may a director serve more than eight consecutive years.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Needed: Benefit plan design; managing a large charitable trust or foundation; employee benefits administration; health, death, and disability plans; insurance; investment; the actuarial sciences; law; or government relations. A broad understanding of and commitment to the church and team skills.

Time Requirement: Regular meetings, 2–3 days in duration, are held three times a year in February or March, in June or July, and in October. There may be special meetings at the call of the chairperson.

Class of 2016
1. Amy Williams Fowler WFT  56–65 Genessee Valley NE AL NEW
2. Arlene W. Gordon BFT  66–75 Tropical Florida SA AL NEW

Class of 2018
3. Philip D. Amoa BML  26–35 Philadelphia TRI AL NEW
4. Wendy S. Bailey WFT  46–55 New Brunswick NE AL NEW
5. Fredric Joseph Bold, Jr. WML  26–35 Greater Atlanta SA AL NEW
H. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Office of the General Assembly will encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be a people of hope; seeking together the mind of Christ, working for justice and mercy in the world, and participating in God’s continual reformation of the church.

The General Assembly elects a committee on the Office of the General Assembly to carry out the assembly’s oversight of the Stated Clerk and the Office of the General Assembly, to assure the accountability of the Stated Clerk to the General Assembly during the interim between the sessions of the assembly, and to provide linkage with the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This committee is mandated to carry out an annual review of the Stated Clerk; jointly with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, recommend to the General Assembly the per capita budget and the per capita apportionment rate; review and present recommendations regarding the docket and the proposed referral of each item of business coming before an assembly; present to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of future General Assembly meetings; review the work of Special Committees and make recommendations to the General Assembly; and be available to the Stated Clerk for consultation on all proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of the General Assembly. Sixteen (16) members The Moderator and Vice Moderator of the General Assembly will serve as a member of the committee with vote during the years of moderatorial service. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, The Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Vice Chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency will serve as corresponding members of the committee without vote.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Persons elected to serve on the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly should be: grounded in the Constitution of the PC(USA); concerned about the church; able to work well with and have respect for others; creative and energetic; able to provide leadership; competent in financial and business administration, communications and technology, and meeting planning (including an ability to think strategically about the program and format of General Assemblies) knowledgeable about church polity, governing body relations, ecumenical relations, church history and, have a broad understanding of the church and its resources.

Time Requirement: Approximately thirteen days (on the assembly year), which includes two meetings (Fall, Winter), and attendance at General Assembly. Approximately eight days on the assembly non-year.

Class of 2016
1. Barbara J. Gaddis WFT 56–65 North Central Iowa LAK AL NEW
2. Heath K. Rada WMR 56–65 Western N. Carolina MAT GA Moderator NEW

Class of 2018
3. Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo HMT 46–55 Mission SUN AL NEW
5. Nigel Leon Lovell-Martin BMT 46–55 Tropical Florida SA AL NEW
6. Kathleen Matsushima WFT 66–75 Chicago LIN AL NEW
7. Carol McDonald WFT 56–65 Wabash Valley LIN AL REN
8. Marcia Mount Shoop WFT 36–45 New Hope MAT AL REN
9. Alejandra Spir-Haddad OFR 46–55 Ohio Valley LIN AL REN

Class FR MR FT MT FD MD A B H M N O W D YA 25- 26+ 36+ 46+ 56+ 66+ 75+
2016 3 2 2 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 4 3 0 0
2018 1 0 3 2 0 1 0 1 1 0 0 1 4 0 0 1 0 1 3 1 1 0
Total 4 2 5 2 0 1 0 2 1 0 0 1 10 0 0 1 0 1 7 4 1 0
1. Committee on Theological Education

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has General Assembly responsibility to serve as a two-way communication link between the denomination and its’ graduate theological institutions in order to strengthen them for their mission to the whole church. The COTE seeks to envision and foster partnerships and new initiatives for the benefit of the PC(USA), other governing councils, and our Presbyterian seminaries. The COTE serves as an advocate for theological education, seeking to support our Presbyterian seminaries through the Theological Education Fund, the Theological Schools Endowment Fund, as well as the Seminary Support Network.

COTE reports to the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and directly to the General Assembly.

Twenty-three (23) voting members: 11 church-at-large, 2 from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, 10 representatives of the denomination’s theological schools. Length of term: 4-year term. Members at-large may NOT be trustees, staff, or faculty of Presbyterian seminaries.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Persons who have a keen interest in theological education, church leadership development and expertise in processes related to ministry formation in the PC(USA) for example, CPM, COM, board membership, new church development, and church transformation.

Time Requirement: Annual Winter meeting from Tuesday to Thursday during the last full week of February, and biannually in the Fall (odd numbered years only) on Monday through Wednesday during the third week of September. Task force and committee meetings in between and usually by conference call about once every few months.

Nominated by GANC: 11 At-Large—For a four-year term.

Class of 2016

1. Garnett E. Foster WFT 66–75 Chicago LIN AL NEW

Class of 2018

2. Alan Bancroft WMT 26–35 Middle Tennessee LW AL REN
3. Matthew Miles WMT 26–35 Tres Rios SUN AL REN
4. Mary Elva Smith WFR 56–65 Mid-Kentucky LW AL REN
5. Saundra Tracy WFR 56–65 Ohio Valley LIN AL NEW
6. Tom M. Trinidad AMT 36–45 Pueblo ROC AL NEW

J. Educator Certification Committee

The Educator Certification Committee establishes the standards of the Educator Certification process. These standards are described in detail within the Educator Certification Handbook, as approved by the Committee. Standards include the oversight of courses offered to fulfill knowledge and skill requirements, designating Educator Certification Advisors in consultation with presbyteries, and evaluating certification examinations. The council also maintains relationships with the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators and with theological institutions related to the PC(USA). The Educator Certification Committee is made up of nine (9) members elected in two classes for four-year terms. A committee member may be elected to a second consecutive term. Membership of the committee should include at least one of the following: director of Christian education; staff of a mid council body; pastor serving a church that employs a church educator; faculty, or staff member of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological school; associate pastor of Christian education; racial ethnic representative. Ex-officio members of the council include: a representative from the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators and a representative from Union Presbyterian Seminary. The committee is staffed by the PC(USA) associate for Certification and Christian Vocation.

Skills & Expertise Desired: Persons wishing to be considered for the Educator Certification Committee should possess the following skills: knowledge of the content areas necessary for Educator Certification (biblical interpretation; Reformed theology; Presbyterian polity, program and mission; education theory and practice; worship and sacraments), experience in Christian education in congregations; and expertise in evaluating educational materials.

Time Requirement: Meets twice a year for three days, with committee work between meetings handled through email and conference calls. In addition, committee members are expected to evaluate certification exams each year and to work with other committee members to give written feedback to candidates for certification concerning their work.

Nominated by the GANC: 9 At-Large—For a four-year term.
Class of 2018
1. Jenna Campbell WFR 26–35 Indian Nations SUN DCE NEW
2. Craig Foster WMT 26–35 Foothills SA ACE REN
3. Donald Griggs WMT 66–75 San Francisco PAC AL REN

K. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation

Since 1799 the Presbyterian Foundation has developed gifts and managed funds on behalf of congregations, mid councils, the General Assembly, and other agencies of the church. The Foundation a faith-based, balanced approach to investing and faithfully safeguards and distributes funds according to the instructions of the donors. The Foundation remains fully committed to its mission statement: “A vital part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation cultivates, attracts, and manages financial resources of individuals and institutions to serve Christ’s mission.”

Governance   The Foundation is governed by a board of trustees. The permanent complement consists of nineteen Presbyterian men and women nominated by GANC and elected by the General Assembly to serve a designated term. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency are ex officio trustees. An elected trustee shall be eligible to serve two full or partial terms, for up to a total of eight (8) years.

Board Composition: Due to the nature of the Foundation’s work, the composition of the board must reflect expertise and experience in each of the following areas: accounting, banking/trust, clergy, development, human resources, legal, investment management, marketing, and investments.

Time Requirement: There are three official board meetings per year, two days each; some committees may require an additional meeting.

Trustee Attendance: Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings. There may be a need for an occasional excused absence. However, the absence of one or two trustees can truly hamper the board’s ability to conduct business, since only three to five trustees are assigned to each standing committee. Trustee attendance will be monitored to maximize the effectiveness of the board.

Trustee Duties and Responsibilities: Trustees are to carry out the fiduciary responsibilities of the corporation. As the fiduciary, this body is legally appointed and authorized to hold assets in trust and manage the assets for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), mid councils, local churches, and other related entities. Trustees’ responsibilities also include understanding the Foundation’s mission, evaluating current business opportunities and threats, and providing the Foundation’s CEO and organization with clear strategic direction.

Class of 2018
1. José R. Muñoz HML 46–55 San Juan BPR AL NEW
2. Harry Bartel WMR 66–75 Grace SUN AL REN
3. Steven Bass WMR 56–65 Seattle ANW AL REN
4. Elizabeth Dunning WFR 56–65 Utah ROC AL REN
5. Marilee K. Hopkins WFR 56–65 Chicago LIN AL REN
7. Robert Olcott WML 56–65 National Capital MAT AL REN
8. Terry Allison Rappuhn WFR 56–65 Middle Tennessee LW AL NEW
10. David Zimmerman WMR 46–55 San Francisco PAC AL NEW

L. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee develops policy and strategy for the administration of the functions that report to the Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services. Shared Services supports the mission of the church by providing the following services to the ministry areas and other entities of the church: Property Management; Finance/Accounting; Purchasing; Mail and Print Center; Hubbard Press/Presbyterian Distribution Service; and Information Technology.
Skills & Expertise Needed: Persons with strong business experience and a passion for effective church stewardship and efficient support operations. Financial and audit expertise is beneficial; knowledge of customer service, distribution, real estate, and management information systems, also helpful.

Time Requirement: The Finance Committee meets three times a year in even years and two times a year in odd years in conjunction with and just prior to the meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Meetings are generally one day long. Time requirement for this entity is moderate with 2 to 3 face-to-face meetings, and 2 to 3 conference calls per year to review quarterly financial statements.

Nominated by the GANC: 11 members: Nine (9) members of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board; two (2) At-Large members—Over two-year term.

Class of 2016
1. Raul Felipe Santiago-Rivera HMR 36–45 San Juan BPR AL NEW
2. Kathy Trott WFR 56–65 Sacramento PAC AL REN

M. General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations works to highlight the vision of ecumenical involvement and work within the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The committee plans and coordinates the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s engagement in ecumenical relations, articulating Reformed and Presbyterian identity in the midst of the church’s ecumenical commitments and provides guidance for the church’s conversations with non-Christian religious traditions.

Membership—20 Members
12 At-large nominations by the GA Nominating Committee
4 invited and appointed from ecumenical partners (1) and full communion partners (3)
1 member appointed by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly
1 member appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
2 ex-officio with vote—the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly (or the Associate Stated Clerk for Ecumenical Relations) and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency or Board (or the Associate Director of Ecumenical Partnerships in World Mission).

Class of 2018
1. Amantha L. Barbee BFT 46–55 Charlotte MAT AL NEW
2. Heidi Hadsell de Nascimento WFL 56–65 Chicago LIN AL NEW
3. Gun Ho Lee AMT 36–45 New Hope MAT AL REN
4. Robert C. Reynolds WMT 66–75 Chicago LIN AL NEW
5. Jeremiah Rosario HMR 36–45 New York City NE AL NEW
6. Anne Weirich WFT 56–65 Muskingum Valley COV AL NEW

N. General Assembly Committee on Representation

The committee is mandated in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order. The main functions of the committee are “to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.” (G-3.0103) At the national level that means to advise, advocate, consult with, as well as review, report, and make recommendations to the General Assembly and its entities on the implementation of the principles of participation and inclusiveness.

The committee maintains relationships with appropriate constituency groups, providing updates on the status of the PC(USA) with regard to representation and inclusiveness (especially in areas of difference recognized as the basis of discrimination and inequality in church and society, namely race, ethnicity, gender, ability/disability, and age). Reporting biennially to the General Assembly, the committee annually receives AA/EEO data from the agencies, reviews the diversity and inclusiveness of agencies and decision-making bodies at the national level, reviews implementation plans, recommends revision to AA/EEO goals and advises national leaders on issues related to and supporting full participation and representation. The committee reports directly to the General Assembly, reviews synod committees on representation, and provides training to synod leaders biennially.
Skills & Expertise Needed: (within the membership of sixteen) Expertise in church polity, facility with AA/EEO and supplier diversity policies and procedures, demonstrated commitment to inclusiveness and diversity, willingness to listen to others and to speak for others when appropriate, an understanding of advocacy and ability to articulate that role in developing resources, ability to assess statistical analysis/evaluation, creativity, willingness to act as a consulting resource and connection to your synod, knowledge of the work of representation/participation, relatability across difference and good communication skills. Experience with producing resources for a multicultural church, utilizing cultural proficiency, and/or perspectives/values of persons with disabilities is a plus.

Time Requirement: Meets two or three times annually (differing depending if it is a GA year), for three to four days each. Minimum annual time requirement of ten days (includes travel); additional subcommittee and special task group work will include conference calls, time commitment at least 3 hours a month outside of meetings.

Nominated by GANC: 16 At-Large—for a four-year term, inclusive of all synods, and in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.

**Class of 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Synod</th>
<th>New</th>
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<td>SW</td>
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<td>Martha Ross-Mockaitis</td>
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**Class FR MR FT MT ML A B H M N O W/N W D YA 25- 26+ 36+ 46+ 56+ 66+ 75+**

| Year | Class | FR | MR | FT | MT | ML | A | B | H | M | N | O | W/N | W | D | YA | 25- | 26+ | 36+ | 46+ | 56+ | 66+ | 75+ |
|------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|---|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 2016 | 5     | 2  | 3  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0   | 1 | 0 | 0  | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| 2018 | 2     | 1  | 3  | 0  | 1  | 1  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2   | 3 | 1 | 0  | 1   | 0   | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0   |

**Total**

| Class | FR | MR | FT | MT | ML | A | B | H | M | N | O | W/N | W | D | YA | 25- | 26+ | 36+ | 46+ | 56+ | 66+ | 75+ |
|-------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|---|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 2016  | 5  | 2  | 3  | 1  | 1  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0   | 1 | 0 | 0  | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| 2018  | 2  | 1  | 3  | 0  | 1  | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1   | 2 | 3 | 1   | 0   | 2   | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0   |

O. General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission

The responsibilities of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) are described in the Rules of Discipline section of the Book of Order. Members of the GAPJC shall have experience in interpreting the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Experience with the Rules of Discipline and the normal functioning of church councils is very helpful. The GAPJC shall have an equal number (as nearly so as possible) of teaching and ruling elders, with one member at-large elected from each synod for a six-year term. No person shall serve on more than one permanent judicial commission at the same time. The Moderator, Stated Clerk, or any member of the staff of the General Assembly or any of its entities, shall not serve on its permanent judicial commission.

Skills and Expertise Needed: Strong writing skills and analytical ability; computer literacy; and the ability to use word processing software.

Helpful Background: Current or former stated clerk work, volunteer on presbytery or synod PJC, and/or advocacy within PC(USA).

Time requirement and commitment: Ten to fifteen days away from home annually for meetings of the GAPJC. Meetings usually last four days, and normally are held over weekends three times each year. In addition to the days away from home for meetings, advanced preparation (from the nominee’s home or office) is required prior to each meeting. Preparation before each meeting normally includes considerable reading of case materials, prehearing work on an assigned case committee, completion of writing tasks, and several conference calls. Nominees must be willing to assume this time commitment.

A meeting is scheduled for July 31–August 4, 2014. At that time a schedule for the two-year cycle between General Assemblies will be set.

Nominated by GANC: 16 at-large—for a six-year term.

**Class of 2020**

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<td>Mary A. McClure</td>
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<td>Kevin L. Nollette</td>
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<td>Flor N. Velez-Diaz</td>
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<td>Noroeste</td>
<td>BPR</td>
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P. Mission Development Resources Committee

The Mission Development Resources Committee is an advisory committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. This committee makes decisions on Church Loans, Walton Awards for excellent New Church Developments and Mission Program Grants (New Church Development, New Worshiping Communities, Presbytery-level Transformation). The MDRC is comprised of Thirteen (13) elected members: Twelve (12) At-Large and One (1) Presbyterian Foundation Representative. Members are eligible to serve up to two four-year terms.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Persons with extensive experience in establishing new congregations, leading congregational transformation, real estate, banking, legal, and an interest and commitment to evangelism and mission through church development. It is helpful if those considering service on this committee have either established a new congregation, or led an existing congregation through a transformation effort, or served on a presbytery mission or church development committee. A significant portion of the committee’s work entails reading and evaluating grant proposals. This is a working committee that requires a great deal of time commitment.

Time Requirement: The Mission Development Resources Committee meets face-to-face each spring and fall. New Church, New Worshiping and Presbytery Transformation Team members will each have four additional scheduled conference call team meetings. Loan Team members will have bi-weekly telephone conference calls throughout the year.

Class of 2018
1. Robert H. Baker WMR (D) 66–75 Western Reserve COV AL NEW
2. Maryann Farnsworth WFT 46–55 Heartland MAM AL REN
3. David Grachek WMT 56–65 Western North Carolina MAT AL NEW
4. David Hicks WMT 56–65 Grand Canyon SW AL REN
5. Calik "Tito" Rivera HMR 56–65 Kendall PAC AL NEW
6. Marie Zupka-Ludder WFR 56–65 Long Island NE AL NEW
7. Enid Flores HFL 36–45 de San Juan BPR FDN NEW

Q. Presbyterian Men

Two minister members at-large for two, 2-year terms. The National Council of Presbyterian Men Inc. (NCPMI), operating as the National Presbyterian Men’s Ministry (NPMM or PM), is the General Assembly’s organization of Presbyterian men. Synod, presbytery, and congregational organizations of Presbyterian Men are responsible to their respective governing bodies and are related to the National Council by membership affiliation. The National Council is composed of the members of its Executive Board; members elected by synods, Synod Representatives (SR); presbyteries, Presbytery Representatives (PR); and member congregations, Congregation Representatives (CR). The Board has thirteen (13) members: Moderator; Vice Moderator/Moderator-Elect; Clerk; Treasurer; African American/Black Men’s Representative; Hispanic/Latino Men’s Representative; Korean Men’s Representative; Native American Men’s Representative; Young Men’s Representative; Immediate Past Moderator; Chair of the Membership and Advocacy Committee; and two (2) Ministers of the Word and Sacrament elected at-large by the General Assembly to the office of Pastor Advisor and who serve terms of two years.

Class of 2016
1. Benjamin Keller WMT 36–45 Great Rivers LIN AL NEW
2. Gary E. Pennington WMT 75+ Mid-Kentucky LW AL NEW

R. Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee

The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is responsible for implementing General Assembly policy related to mission responsibility through investment. MRTI assists the church at all levels to utilize its investments as key instru-
ments to promote its mission goals in society. MRTI provides leadership for effective engagement of the private sector in partnership with ecumenical colleagues in the United States, and in collaboration with indigenous churches, ecumenical bodies and local groups in other nations. Current priority issues include climate change, human rights, environmental performance, sweatshops, banking practices, violent video games, and child sex trafficking.

Twelve (12) members: two (2) from membership of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board; two (2) from membership of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Inc.; two (2) from membership of Board of Pensions; one (1) each named by the Advisory Committees on Social Witness Policy, Women’s Concerns, and Racial Ethnic Concerns (usually from the membership of these advisory committees); three (3) At-Large members.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Knowledge of the PC(USA), its policies, structures and reality is desired. Knowledge and experience with social issues, particularly as they relate to corporations is important; persons with backgrounds in ethics, business, law, investments and advocacy as well as persons who bring experience from congregations with investment policies for their endowments and related-institutions (i.e. campus ministry, higher education). MRTI also benefits from members with theological training.

Time Requirements: Meets three times annually—two face-to-face meetings (one in the spring and one in the fall) and one committee conference call which is done in January.

Nominated by GANC: 3 At-Large—For a four-year term.

Class of 2018
1. George Philips AMR 56–65 Giddings-Lovejoy MAM AL REN
2. William H. Levering WMT 56–65 Albany NE AL NEW

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S. Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examinations

This Committee prepares and administers the written examinations that comprise one of the requirements for ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA). [See G-2.0607d] The Committee has twenty-four (24) members. Twelve (12) members of the Committee are elected (on a rotating basis) from among readers in six regional groupings of presbyteries. The other twelve (12) members are elected by the General Assembly, with consideration being given to areas of needed expertise, to gender and racial/ethnic representation, to an approximate balance of ruling and teaching elders, and to various sub-cultures within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with regard to the overall composition of the PCC. There is particular need for persons who have post-graduate expertise in one of the four areas tested by the four senior ordination examinations: Biblical Exegesis (including use of biblical texts in their original languages), Theological Competence (with special emphasis on Reformed theology), Church Polity, and Worship and Sacraments. The focus of the four senior ordination examinations is to determine one’s entry-level readiness for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA). The exams present pastoral challenges whereby candidates may demonstrate how they integrate their faith and theological education in practical ministry.

Skills & Expertise Needed: The members of the Committee are expected to have training/expertise and/or significant practical experience in at least one of the four areas of examination. Members must have the ability to write resource papers to be used for preparation by the reading groups and give online presentations on the examinations as a part of training for readers. The ability to read and assess someone else’s work without imposing one’s own point of view is critical. The work of the PCC is greatly facilitated by members who are bilingual in Korean/English or Spanish/English.

Time Requirement: Annual Meeting of six days in April/May; participation in review of reader comments during four exam evaluation periods each year (first week of February, May, August, and November, working from home using online technologies); preparation of resource papers, questions and presentations for training of readers (seven to ten days total on flexible scheduling)

Nominated by GANC: 12 at-large members in two staggered classes of six members each, serving four-year terms.

Class of 2018
1. Margaret Cowan WFR 56–65 East Tennessee LW AL NEW

Class of 2016
1. Margaret Cowan WFR 56–65 East Tennessee LW AL NEW
2. Clayton F. Allard WMT 36–45 Grace SUN AL NEW
3. Trent Hancock WMT 36–456 Pittsburgh TRI AL NEW
4. Paul Junggap Huh AMT 46–55 Greater Atlanta SA AL NEW
5. Sam Y. Kim AMT 46–55 Atlantic Korean MAT AL NEW
6. Sandra Luciano-Andujar HFT 56–65 Central Florida SA AL NEW
7. Pamela Szurek WFT 46–55 Long Island NE AL REN
T. Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel

Needed: Presbyterians with passion to support ministry in the U.S Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and VA Medical Centers. Four Presbyterian denominations elect members to the Council. The Constitution of the Council sets forth ten specific responsibilities: (1) inform the church that its mission is carried into unique and difficult areas through chaplains’ ministries; (2) procure, screen, and endorse clergy to serve as chaplains to the military, both active and reserve status; to the Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, both full and part-time; to the Civil Air Patrol; and to the services’ Candidacy Seminarian programs; (3) provide ecclesiastical supervision and support; (4) keep chaplains and mid councils aware of mutual responsibilities and foster live and supportive relationships; (5) provide a unified influential voice in speaking to the government on matters relating to military personnel; (6) develop effective programs of ministry to military personnel; (7) encourage and enable local congregations in support of their members in the military services; (8) cooperate with other similar ecclesiastical bodies; (9) give representation to denominational agencies and ecumenical bodies in concerns with matters relating to military personnel and VA Hospital patients; and (10) consider other matters as referred by member denominations. Eight (8) at-large members and 1 Presbyterian Mission Agency Board member to represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on the council.

Skills and Expertise: Some knowledge of military/VA chaplaincy would be most helpful. Members would normally be retired, reserve or former chaplains or spouses, or have extensive military experience. As our work deals often with the middle and upper courts of the church, persons with past or current experience in elected or staff positions would be helpful.

Time Requirement: One annual meeting in November requires two full days. If elected to Executive or Interview Committee an additional two to four interspersed days during year. Visits/calls are made to active duty chaplains serving in local area. There may also be three or four teleconferences each year.

Nominated by GANC: 8 At-Large; 1 membership from Presbyterian Mission Agency Board—Over a four-year term.

Class of 2018

1. Andrew Hart WMT 36–45 Long Island NE AL NEW
2. Leslie R. Hyder WMT 56–65 San Joaquin PAC AL NEW
3. Sidney Leak WMT 46–55 South Alabama LW AL REN
4. Bill Nisbet WMT 56–65 Greater Atlanta SA AL REN

U. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

The purpose of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee is to give policy advice, review the work, assist in setting strategic program direction and planning, and recommend an annual budget. This “is a ministry of relief and response to national and international disasters, aid to refugees and displaced persons, refugee resettlement and efforts toward development.” This ministry is “carried out through ecumenical partnerships, related church agencies, middle governing bodies, and congregations.” Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

Each member is expected to: (1) review and provide advice for the ongoing work of PDA to ensure that PDA is strategically aligned with the priorities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency; (2) assist in setting strategic program direction and planning; (3) review and provide advice as to how designated funds should be have been spent in large scale disasters (over $500,000); (4) be personally involved in program interpretation of the One Great Hour of Sharing; (5) contribute their knowledge and expertise in disaster relief; and (6) support the development and implementation of communication and fund-raising strategies. The committee is comprised of seven (7) at-large members. Members are eligible to serve one, four-year term and are eligible for consideration to one additional term.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Experience in disaster response or international relief ministries are a pre-requisite for membership on the the Advisory Committee. The committee additionally seeks persons with special skills and knowledge in communication/public relations, financial management, and strategic planning.

Time Requirement: Meets twice a year for 2–3 days each meeting. One to two conference calls between meetings.

Nominated by GANC: 7 At-Large—Over four-year term.
V. Presbyterian Hunger Program

The purpose of the Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee is to guide the church’s response to hunger and its underlying causes by serving as advisors to staff. The PHP works in five program areas: Direct Food Relief, Development Assistance, Hunger Education, Public Policy Advocacy, and Lifestyle Integrity. The program seeks to strengthen hunger work in congregations, presbyteries and partners thru its domestic and international grants, a network of Hunger Action Enablers across the country, and implementation of education and advocacy projects.

Each member is expected to: (1) review funding applications and make recommendations on grants; (2) attend all meetings [two 2-day meetings in March and October and two or three conference calls throughout the year]; (3) promote OGHS and other initiatives to support the PHP; and (4) if possible, encourage Hunger Action Enablers and others who are engaged in the PHP’s work at mid-governing body level.

The entire PHP Advisory Committee is responsible to the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry (or its successors) and carries out the following tasks: (1) recommending PHP operating guidelines; (2) making and reporting funding (grant) decisions within the approved guidelines; and (3) suggesting the development of programs and strategies for implementing the "Common Affirmation on Global Hunger," and other General Assembly policies related to hunger and poverty. The committee is comprised of up to eleven (11) members: nine (9) at-large who are eligible for up to two four-year terms; one (1) liaison from Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Justice Mission Committee; and one (1) Mission to U.S.A. person or a Missionary-in-Residence, when available.

Skills & Expertise Needed: Members are selected on the basis of their experience/expertise in domestic or international development issues and/or of their involvement in hunger ministry at the national, synod, presbytery, or international level. They are also recruited for their regional distribution, their racial ethnic identity, and their status as lay or clergy persons.

Time Requirement: PHP meets face-to-face two times annually (March and October), with subcommittees meeting 2–3 times annually by conference call.

Nominated by GANC: 9 At-Large—Over four-year term.

W. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

The Presbyterian Mission Agency is the mission and ministry arm of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Board members serve for a term of six years, meet five times in a two year cycle between biennial General Assemblies, and typically serve on one to three other subcommittees or as representatives on other boards or committees of the church or church-related organizations. The forty elected board members are diverse in age, geography, race, and experience.

What the Presbyterian Mission Agency does. Mission has always been at the heart of who we are as Presbyterians. For more than 175 years, the Presbyterian church has engaged in mission around the world, and today the Presbyterian Mission Agency meets changing needs in a broad range of programs that inspire, equip, and connect the PC(USA) in its many expressions to serve Christ in the world through new and existing communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. Five ministry areas carry out our work, sup-
Experience/skills currently needed in board members. The church will be best served by a Presbyterian Mission Agency Board whose members constitute a wide range of experience and skills. We are particularly seeking persons with these skills in 2014:

- Advocacy/ministries of compassion
- Church development and transformation
- Communications/marketing/public relations
- Finance/accounting
- Funds Development
- International mission
- Law
- Management
- Youth/young adult ministry

Expectations of Elected Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members:

- Able to fulfill one six-year-term (those elected at the 2014 General Assembly will complete their term at the close of the 2020 General Assembly).
- Minimum mandatory commitment to spend 8–12 days a year attending Presbyterian Mission Agency board meetings (in assembly years there are three meetings per year—one in February, May, and September and in non-assembly years there are two meetings per year—one in February and in September).
- Service on at least one other related committee, requiring up to six additional days per year.
- Willingness and ability to serve on various task forces, other boards, and committees.
- Comfort, desire, and willingness to be an ambassador on behalf of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to and with other groups across the church.

In addition, board members are expected to be faithful and accountable in the following ways as outlined in the Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations, http://www.pcusa.org/resource/presbyterian-mission-agency-manualofoperations/:

Diversity:

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership.” (F-1.0403 of the Book of Order) In response to the church’s commitment to diversity and inclusivity, the Presbyterian Mission Agency especially seeks persons of color, persons with disabilities, and younger teaching and ruling elders.

For a further description of the agency, annual report, mission work plan and funding, information: www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/about/about-pma/

Forty voting members of which 36 are nominated by the GA Nominating Committee: 6—General Assembly commissioners (2—from current General Assembly, 2—from the immediate past General Assembly, 2—from the preceding General Assembly); 4—Young adult (18–35) at-large members; 3—presbytery staff (ordained elders and/or minister of the Word and Sacrament); 2—synod staff (ordained elders and/or minister of the Word and Sacrament); 21—persons representing presbyteries upon recommendation of the presbyteries.

Other voting members include current Moderator of the General Assembly, immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly, the current Moderator of the Churchwide Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women, and a representative from National Council of Presbyterian Men.

The make-up of the council should be such that all synods are reflected in the presbytery membership.
X. Presbyterian Publishing Corporation


The Board is composed of nine (9) to twelve (12) persons. The remaining directors will be nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly. Up to two, four-year terms. Skills & Expertise Needed: Expertise in business, finance, education, law, pastoral ministry, and publishing.

Time Requirement: Three, two-day face-to-face meetings per year (total of six days), plus 1–2 conference calls per year.

Nominated by GANC: 10 at-large—Over four-year term.
Y. Review Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

Composition: The committee is composed of twelve (12) members: four (4) commissioners from the previous three assemblies—(2008 in San Jose, 2010 in Minneapolis, and 2012 in Pittsburgh), four (4) who have previously served on the board of a General Assembly agency that is not under review. (i.e., Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) Foundation Board, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program Board, Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board). The at-large members may include ecumenical partners.

The Review Committee’s responsibility is to provide an objective report to the General Assembly as to the agencies’ compliance to the standards of review and the quality and acceptability of the agencies’ self-study. The committee may provide advice on areas of program improvement. The committee’s role will be to examine the agencies’ church relations, its policies and practice and its program effectiveness.

Class of 2016

1. Raymond Anglin BMT  66–75  Tropical Florida SA AL NEW
2. Dianne Kareha WFT  56–65  Lehigh TRI Comm/2008 NEW
3. Cliff Lyda WMT  56–65  Chicago LIN Comm/2010 NEW
4. Manley Olson WMR  66–75  Twin Cities Area LAK AL NEW
5. Catherine Rice Harrison WFT  66–75  Inland Northwest ANW AL NEW
6. Kenneth Kim AMR  75+  East Tennessee LW AL NEW
7. Patricia Valentine WFR  66–75  The James MAT GA Comm NEW
8. Carmen M. Rosario HFT  66–75  New York City NE GA Comm NEW
9. Matthew Schramm WMT  26–35  Lake Huron COV Agency NEW
10. Laird J. Stuart WMT  66–75  Lake Michigan COV Agency NEW
11. Jane Searjeant Watt WFT  65+  Albany NE Agency NEW
12. Pending

2016 0 2 4 4 2 1 1 0 0 0 6 0 0 0 2 0 0 2 5 1

Z. Review Committee on the Presbyterian Mission Agency

Composition: The committee is composed of twelve (12) members: four (4) commissioners from the previous three assemblies—(2008 in San Jose, 2010 in Minneapolis, and 2012 in Pittsburgh), four (4) who have previously served on the board of a General Assembly agency that is not under review. (i.e., Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) Foundation Board, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program Board, Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Board). The at-large members may include ecumenical partners.

The Review Committee’s responsibility is to provide an objective report to the General Assembly as to the agencies’ compliance to the standards of review and the quality and acceptability of the agencies’ self-study. The committee may provide advice on areas of program improvement. The committee’s role will be to examine the agencies’ church relations, its policies and practice and its program effectiveness.

Class of 2016

1. Eric Beene WMT  36–45  Savannah SA AL NEW
2. Eliana Maxim HFT  46–55  Seattle ANW AL NEW
4. Elizabeth Swee WFR  56–65  Northern Plains LAK AL NEW
5. James N. Tse AMR  46–55  New York City NE AL NEW
6. J. Perry Wootten WMT  75+  New York City NE Comm NEW
7. Tacey Braithwaite WFR  56–65  South Dakota LAK Comm NEW
8. Debra Averly WFT  46–55  San Francisco PAC Comm NEW
10. Stephen Proctor WMR  56–65  Carlisle TRI Agency NEW

2016 1 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 9 0 0 0 0 1 5 5 0

Total 1 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 0 0 0 9 0 0 0 0 1 5 5 0
**AA. Stated Clerk Nomination Committee**

Nine members in accordance with Standing Rule H.2.b. (3)

5 members nominated by the GA Nominating Committee:
1 mid council stated clerk,
2 ruling elders and 2 teaching elders from among the commissioners to the 2008 GA in San Jose, 2010 GA in Minneapolis; and/or 2012 GA in Pittsburgh.

3 members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly nominated by COGA; one serves as the moderator of the committee.

1 member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency

**Class of 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
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**BB. National Committee on the Self Development of People**

Twenty-two At-Large—Over a four-year term.

The National Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) provides the opportunity for the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and non-members to help establish partnerships with economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people in the United States and around the world, which helps them to develop toward their own potential, self-determination, and human dignity. (People who are not Presbyterian may be nominated, elected, and serve).

**Class of 2018**

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**Item 00-03**

[The assembly approved Item 00-03. See p. 53.]

*General Assembly Nominating Committee Slate Proposed by Moderator Neal D. Presa*

The Reverend Dr. Neal D. Presa, Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), places in nomination the following persons for election to the General Assembly Nominating Committee:
Item 00-04

[The assembly approved Item 00-04. See p. 53.]

The General Assembly Nominating Committee recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) elect the following nominees:

D. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns

Class of 2018

6. Judith Wellington

Class FR MR FT MT FL ML A B H M N O W D YA 25- 26+ 36+ 46+ 56+ 66+ 75+
2016 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2 2 0 0
2018 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 1 1 1 0
Total 2 2 3 4 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 1 1 0 0 0 4 3 3 1 0

W. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

Class of 2016

7. Landon Whitsitt

Class FR MR FT MT FL ML A B H M N O W D YA 25- 26+ 36+ 46+ 56+ 66+ 75+
2016 3 2 4 3 0 0 2 1 0 0 0 0 0 9 0 2 0 2 1 1 2 6 1 0
2018 3 1 1 1 1 5 0 1 2 1 0 0 0 0 8 0 1 0 1 2 0 7 1 0
2020 3 4 3 3 0 0 1 2 1 0 1 0 8 1 2 1 2 4 4 1 0 1
Total 9 7 8 11 0 1 5 4 1 0 1 0 25 1 5 1 5 7 6 11 4 2 1

Does not include Moderators and Ecumenical Advisory Members
Item 01-01

[The assembly approved Item 01-01. See pp. 2, 8.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the proposed docket as follows:

**Proposed Docket**

221st General Assembly (2014)

Detroit, Mich.

**Saturday, June 14:**

8:30–10:15 Riverside Conversations: Preassembly Workshops for Commissioners/Advisory Delegates

Lunch Break

11:00 a.m. **221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014) CONvenes**

Worship

Commissioning Service

12:30 noon Group Lunch

2:30 p.m. **BUSINESS MEETING 1**

• Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Conversations on Race I
• Committee on Local Arrangements
• Stated Clerk’s Orientation
• Presbyterian Mission Agency Report
• Moderator’s Report
• General Assembly Nominating Committee Report
• Assembly Committee on Business Referrals

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Recess

5:30 p.m. Commissioner and Advisory Delegate Orientation to the Six Agencies

(in the Exhibit Hall with a Group Dinner)

7:00 p.m. Opening Prayer

1001 Worshipping Communities Video Competition

**BUSINESS MEETING 2**

Moderator’s Election

**Sunday, June 15:**

10:00–Noon Worship in Local Churches (to include lunch)

1:30 p.m. **NEW BUSINESS DEADLINE**

2:30 p.m. **BUSINESS MEETING 3**

• Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Conversations on Race II
• Reports from Special Committees:
  Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar
  Mid Council Commission II
  Review Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams
  National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force
  Committee on Review of Biennial Assemblies
• Confirmation of the Vice Moderator
• Commissioning of Mission Workers

4:40–6:30 p.m. Moderator’s Reception—Cobo, Grand Ballroom

5:30 p.m. Group Dinner

7:30 p.m. **Committee Meetings I**

**Monday, June 16:**

7:00 a.m. OGA Breakfast and Morning Worship—Cobo, Grand Ballroom. Speaker Lillian Daniel

9:30 a.m. **Committee Meetings II**

Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. **Committee Meetings III**

Dinner Break

7:30 p.m. **Committee Meetings IV**

**Tuesday, June 17:**

8:30 a.m. Worship
01 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS REFERRALS

9:30 a.m.  
Committee Meetings V
Lunch Break

1:30 p.m.  
Committee Meetings VI
Evening
Committees meet as needed
(It is anticipated that all committees will be finished with business by 5:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, June 18:

8:30 a.m.  
Ecumenical Worship Service

Report Reading Time: Pay particular attention to Item 00-WCA

Lunch Break

2:00 p.m.  
Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 4
• Speakout
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Stated Clerk’s Orientation II
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Consent agenda, Item 00-WCA: All item receiving a super majority vote in assembly committee meetings
• Assembly Committee Reports
Announcements

5:30 p.m.  
Closing Prayer
Recess

7:00 p.m.  
Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 5
• Speakout
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions Report: Introduction of Princeton Seminary President Sara B. Moseley Memorial
• Assembly Committee Reports
Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess

Thursday, June 19:

8:30 a.m.  
BUSINESS MEETING 6
Opening Prayer
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Special Order: Council discussion of recommendations concerning Middle East and Marriage (90 minutes)
• Assembly Committee Reports

11:15 a.m.  
Worship
Recess
Lunch Break

1:30 p.m.  
BUSINESS MEETING 7
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee Reports
Announcements
Closing Prayer

5:30 p.m.  
Recess
Dinner Break

7:30 p.m.  
Opening Prayer
**Item 01-02**

[The assembly approved Item 01-02 with amendment. See p. 2.]

I. **Referrals in Progress**

A. **Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy Referral in Progress**


Response: Final Response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).
B. Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Referral in Progress


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016). [Pulled from consent agenda, See Item 12-12, p. 919]

C. Committee on Theological Education Referrals in Progress


Response: Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

2. 2012 Referral: Item 10-17 B.1–3. (1) Request the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to Revisit Underlying Cultural Assumptions Not Limited to But Including Those Related to Language and Socioeconomic Groupings in the Ordination Exams, and Make Recommendations to the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examination of Candidates (PCCEC). Such Recommendations Will Be Identified by a Prior Study; (2) Direct the COTE to Partner with Presbyterian Theological Educators and PC(USA) Seminary Faculty and Senior Staff to Identify Funding and to Participate in the Hispanic Summer Program’s “Through Hispanic Eyes”; (3) Direct the COTE to Collect and Compile from PC(USA) Seminaries Data Regarding the Race, Ethnicity, Denominational Affiliation, and Gender Composition of Faculty, Board Members, and Students and Provide a Comparative Annual Report to Each Seminary President and Board—From the Hispanic/Latino/a Leadership Conversation Group (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 76, 859).

Response: Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) and after any action taken by the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the recommendations of the Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry and Standard Ordination Examinations.

3. 2012 Referral: Item 16-07 3.a,d,e,f. Regarding Education and Support for Developing New Churches and Ministries in a New Day. (a) Call on PC(USA) Seminaries to Develop Courses to Better Prepare Students for Emerging Cultural Realities. These Would Include Training in New Church Development, Non-Traditional Worshipping Communities, and Transformation of Congregations. Courses Should Also Address Cross-Cultural Experiences, Community Organizing, and How to Engage in Ministries with Underrepresented Populations Such as Communities of Color and People with Disabilities. (d) Call on the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to Work with PC(USA) Seminaries to Intentionally Recruit and Increase the Numbers of Racial Ethnic and Immigrant Students in the Seminaries. (e) Call on COTE to Work with PC(USA) Seminaries to Develop Plans to Hire, Mentor, Support, and Retain Scholars from Underrepresented Communities, and to Commit to Prioritize Finding Candidates to Replace Retiring Faculty with Scholars from Underrepresented Communities. (f) Call Upon PC(USA) Seminaries to Develop Resources for Congregations to Use to Analyze Their Particular Local Mission Contexts—Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 48, 50, 1463).

Response: Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) and after any action taken by the 221st General Assembly (2014) on the recommendations of the Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry and Standard Ordination Examinations.

D. General Assembly Committee on Representation Referral in Progress


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

E. Office of the General Assembly Referrals in Progress


2. 2012 Referral: Item 21-02. On Instructing the General Assembly to Take Action to Implement the PC(USA)’s Policy on Inclusion of People with Disabilities—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, Recommendation 2. Direct Stated Clerk to Form a Working Group to Develop Cost Effective Training Materials and to Develop a Plan for Training All Entity Staff, Commissioners, Mid Council (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 64, 65 1693of the electronic file; pp. 64, 65, 342 of the print copy).

Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

F. Presbyterian Mission Agency Referrals in Progress:


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

5. 2012 Referral: Item 12-09. A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigration a Reality. Recommendation. Direct the Office of Immigration Issues and the Office of Theology, Worship and Education to Collaborate in the Development of Accessible Worship and Study Resources That Will Assist Presbyterians in

Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


2012 Referral: Item 21-01. On Instructing MRTI to Study and Report Corporate Practices of Health Insurance Companies and Possible Divestment of Same. Recommendation 4. The GAMC, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Board of Pensions Are Requested to Report on Their Actions to the 221st and the 222nd General Assembly (2014) and (2016), with an Eye to Guiding Individual Presbyterians, Congregations, and Mid Councils in Relation to Their Own Investment Holdings in This Major Part of the Economy—From the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 64, 1687–92 of the CD; p. 341 of the printed copy).

Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).


Response: The Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) has prepared annual reports for PMA and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) for more than twenty years. These status reports will continue to be completed and provided to the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR).


Collegiate Ministries Progress Report:

The Office of Collegiate Ministries (OCM) is well established with a full-time staff associate, administrative assistant, and communications director. UKirk (meaning University Church) is gaining traction nationally with more than sixty-one...
campus ministries incorporating the UKirk brand with another fifty connected to the UKirk network. The UKirk structure is in place as follows: the UKirk Leadership Board acting as an advisory committee; a UKirk Network helping to resource and connect collegiate ministry workers; and UKirk Ministries who are reaching, loving, and teaching college students to be lifelong followers of Jesus Christ. The following UKirk resources were created to help those working with college-age young adults: Bible studies; Worship Resource; Fundraising Resource. Internship Grants were established to help congregations and campus ministries train and give practical experience in collegiate ministry and to start UKirk. There is a UKirk website (www.ukirk.org) and an active social media community.

The OCM has committed to starting 101 New Worshiping Communities (NWC) focused on the college campus community. We have exceeded our two-year goal as more than twenty NWC’s have started with many receiving 1001 NWC funding.

In 2013, the OCM planned with the Ecumenical Campus Ministry Team a national ecumenical conference and training for collegiate ministry workers in Chicago called “Shared Space” with Presbyterian collegiate ministry workers attending. The OCM consulted with Columbia Theological Seminary in establishing a Doctor of Ministry in Collegiate Ministries that will begin in 2015. The future for collegiate ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is hopeful and we look forward to making a full report at the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

II. Final Responses to Referrals

A. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) Final Responses to Referrals


   Response: The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy developed and circulated a print resource, also downloadable, of the policy statement, a cover letter from the Stated Clerk, study questions from an economist member of the study team, liturgical suggestions for adapting a communion service from the Theology & Worship unit, a resource list, and a copy of the Social Creed to situate the treatment of the economy within a broad Christian social vision.


   Response: The above resource includes specific treatment of racial ethnic and immigrant communities in its section, “The Plight of Our Neighbors Today,” and was distributed with a cover letter highlighting key themes to a range of offices in the Center, a mailing to approximately 125 ethics professors in the seminaries and colleges (including Presbyterian members of the Society of Christian Ethics), and a mailing to approximately 200 pastors active in social witness for economic justice. Workshops on it were presented at Big Tent and the CPJ Training Day in 2013. Two articles in the online journal, Unbound, lifted up the document and an ecumenical consultation was held at the Washington Office of Public Witness on taxation including World of Hurt, Word of Life as context.


   Response: This referral is answered by Item 09-16, “Tax Justice: A Christian Response to a New Gilded Age,” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 663.)

Response: This referral is answered by Item 11-11, “Risking Peace in a Violent World: Affirmations for Presbyterian Consideration,” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 860.)


Response: This referral is answered by Item 11-11, “Risking Peace in a Violent World: Affirmations for Presbyterian Consideration,” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 860.)


Response: This report was printed, posted, and widely distributed in cooperation with the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia office of World Mission, including to our mission partners overseas. (Its cover includes pictures taken by mission coworkers.) No negative feedback has been received although there has been debate on the progress of the Syrian and Libyan instances of the Arab Awakening in relation to articles posted in the online journal Unbound (www.justiceUnbound.org). The booklet has been displayed in a reception area for Compassion, Peace, and Justice and World Mission in the Presbyterian Center, and also mailed to the Presbyterian ethics professor organization, Social Ethics Network.


Response: This referral is answered by Item 08-07, “Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals,” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 495.)


Response: This referral is answered by Item 08-07, “Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals,” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 495.)

B. The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Final Responses to Referrals


Response: The Board of Pensions submitted its plan in advance of the deadline.


Response: As part of its plan to address cultural competency, in 2013, the Board of Pensions contracted with a well-known consultant in this arena, who performed a cultural competency assessment with the Board of Pensions’ management group (approximately 85 of 190 staff), reviewed the individual and group results, and conducted specific training with the
management group about the leadership competencies necessary to manage effectively with a more diverse workforce. The consultant subsequently conducted mandatory cultural competency training and with all other staff.


Response: The Board of Pensions submitted comprehensive reports with requested information to the appropriate committees of the General Assembly as it has done in the past.


Response: The Board-wide assessment of, and training conducted on, cultural competency was a significant goal for the Board of Pensions in 2013, and the review and evaluation of that program was part of the 2013 Report of Management. Executive management has reviewed the data on affirmative action and supplier diversity with the board of directors as part of the annual Human Resources Report.

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the BOP reviews the CEO’s annual performance, which focuses on the effective management of the organization, including issues of relationships with staff and plan members, and specifically includes a component called Employee Morale and Development. This component evaluates the morale and productivity of all staff and the ability of all employees to work harmoniously with equal opportunity to grow and develop.

In recent employee opinion surveys, conducted every two years, the Board of Pensions’ diverse staff gave very positive ratings to the organization for workplace environment and development opportunities.

The elected Board of Directors of the Board of Pensions has had an extended dialogue about cultural competency in the last two years and is exploring this in greater detail as it considers future topics for education of all members of the board of directors. A component of cultural competency will be part of the training and orientation of new board members beginning in 2014.


Response: The Board of Pensions maintains a comprehensive new employee orientation program that includes a component on the values of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and provides instruction on sensitivity to issues of diversity. As so few of its staff purchase for the organization—and these individuals have served in their positions for an extended time—the values of supplier diversity have been reinforced with this group.


221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014) 119
Response: As a benefits organization, the Board of Pensions is not typically called on for theological reflections and the board has not been a party to any discussions with other agencies on this matter. However, believing that the contributions of all who serve the church are valuable to the building up of the ministry of the church, the board has traditionally structured its plans and programs, with very few exceptions, to be inclusive of both teaching elders and other church workers. Taken as a comprehensive plan, the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is designed so that members do not have to worry about benefits, freeing them to focus on their calls. Finally, the Presbyterian CREDO program has been a vehicle for many who serve the church to undertake the prayerful discernment called for in this referral.

7. 2012 Referral: Item 20-03. On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Consider the Possibility of Adding to the Disability Benefits the Option of Partial Disability Benefits—From the Presbytery of San Gabriel (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 36, 1628 of the CD; p. 333 of the printed copy).

Response:

Background, Including Overview of Current Disability Benefit

The disability provisions in question are part of the Death and Disability Plan, one component of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Employing organizations are responsible for the payment of dues for coverage under this plan. The disability program is designed to provide plan members with a source of income in the event of total long-term disability.

The Board of Pensions’ disability benefit, as it is currently designed, not only serves as an income replacement tool, but it offers many unique features not traditionally covered by standard disability programs, including:

- A non-standard ninety-day benefit waiting period (or elimination period, defined as the time that a member must be away from work due to the disability before benefit payments commence). Most plans include a 180-day elimination period.
- Return to work provisions that, in some circumstances, permit the continuation of disability benefits during a period of limited rehabilitation, trial work, or a partial return to work.
- A formula for calculating income replacement benefits that is based on the greater of a member’s effective salary or the median salary (providing lower-paid members more than 60 percent, and in some cases up to—but never more than—100 percent of pre-disability income).
- Continued participation in the full Benefits Plan as an ACTIVE member, with no dues obligation by either the member or the employing organization (the Disability Plan absorbs this entire dues expense for the duration of disability). This includes the provision of medical benefits for the member and all eligible dependents, continued pension benefit accrual, and continued death benefit protection.
- The ability for teaching elders to classify their disability income as housing allowance.
- Social Security Disability application assistance.
- Board-provided Medicare Part B premium for the disabled.

This plan design, specifically the short elimination period and return to work provisions, permit flexibility in administration not found in most commercial disability plans. The return-to-work provisions in particular reflect one of the Plan’s principal objectives—returning members who become disabled to meaningful employment to which they might be suited by education, training and/or experience.

Study Approach and Findings

In response to this referral, the Board of Pensions, in partnership with a consulting organization that specializes in disability benefits for faith-based organizations, initiated a study of partial disability benefits. The study was designed to examine the prevalence of such coverage and the estimated expense of providing benefits to members deemed “partially disabled” for some amount of time before reaching an inevitable long-term disability status. This work included surveying other denominational plans as well as reviewing common practices of private employer plans.

A consistent definition of “partial disability” is elusive, with the term meaning different things in different contexts. Sometimes the term is applied to provisions that provide more flexible elimination periods in a disability plan, other times the reference is to a plan that provides a prorated benefit for someone not totally disabled. Although some plans do provide variations of something called “partial disability” benefits, it is not prevalent in faith-based plans: only two of seven denominations surveyed provide such benefits as a precursor to eventual long-term disability benefits.

Providing for a partial disability benefit would create some significant risks to the Board of Pensions’ Plan:
• Administrative Complexity: The determination of “partial disability,” given the extreme variability in functional abilities from one member to the next, even with the same diagnosis, would be challenging for Liberty Mutual. The ultimate determination of work capacity would require considerably more contact with members, treating physicians, employing organizations, and the Board of Pensions, likely resulting in the need for more specially trained staff, both at Liberty Mutual and at the Board of Pensions.

• Higher Costs: Any expansion to the current definition of disability will increase the cost of the Death and Disability Plan. With additional members qualifying for benefits, the plan’s liabilities would be increased, requiring a corresponding increase in plan assets. This could trigger the need to raise the amount of dues currently assessed to all employing organizations.

**Human Costs: A Compromised Employment Relationship**

When considering issues related to those who serve the church, it is important to remember that the larger church—the General Assembly or the Board of Pensions, for example—is not the employer in the relationship with the member. The relationship between the employing organization (often a local congregation) and the employee is of central importance. One of the questions asked of a congregation at the time a teaching elder is installed as pastor illustrates this well, as members of the church are asked: “Do we promise to pay him (her) fairly and provide for his (her) welfare as he (she) works among us; to stand by him (her) in trouble and share his (her) joys? ...” (*Book of Order, W-4.4006(b)(3)*).

The Disability Benefits provided under the Benefits Plan today are specifically designed (and funded) to provide protection at the time when an individual can no longer perform the material duties of his or her work. At that time and only at that time, when a plan member is declared totally disabled, the PC(USA) has found it appropriate for the Benefits Plan to relieve the congregation of its economic and social responsibility. The idea of shifting part of that responsibility from the employer to another party, whether the Board of Pensions or some other institution, in the case of a member who meets some definition of “partially disabled” puts at risk this foundational principle of employment relationships in the church—that we are to stand by each other in trouble.

**Recommendations**

Recognizing that any additional benefit offered under the Death and Disability Plan would increase the plan’s cost, add complexity to the plan’s administrative processes, and profoundly impact the vital relationships between individual members of the Benefits Plan and their employers, the Board of Pensions does not believe that implementing a partial disability benefit would be advisable at this time.

8. **2012 Referral: Item 20-04. On Instructing the Board of Pensions to Switch Mental Health Providers—From the Presbytery of Central Nebraska (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 36, 37, 1630 of the electronic file; pp. 36, 37, 333 of the printed copy).**

*Response:* Through CIGNA Behavioral Health, the Board of Pensions’ mental health claims administrator, active recruitment efforts have been made to secure additional network providers. CIGNA has also signed single-case agreements with providers in many circumstances to facilitate care for members of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).


*Response:* The Board of Pensions has supported the Stated Clerk in these conversations as requested. The result is that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) and Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (EC) are not interested in participating in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

10. **2012 Referral: Item 21-01. On Instructing MRTI to Be in Conversation with the BOP to Ensure the PC(USA) Health Plan Submits to the Same Standards That PC(USA) Asks of Other Insurers; the Foundation and the BOP Are Requested to Report on Their Actions to the 221st and 222nd General Assembly (2014) and (2016)—From the 220th General Assembly (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 64, 1687 of the electronic copy; pp. 64, 341).**

*Response:* Please see the final response of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, on this item (II. Final Responses to Referrals, F. Presbyterian Mission Agency Final Responses to Referrals, Final Response 78).

11. **2012 Referral: Item 21-02. On Instructing the General Assembly to Take Action to Implement the PC(U.S.A.)’s Policy on Inclusion of People with Disabilities. Recommendation 2. Direct the Stated Clerk to Form a Working Group That Includes Human Resources Staff from General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC), the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and the Board of Pensions to Form a Working Group That Includes Human Resources Staff from Each Entity and Representatives from Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) and the Disability Consultants in Order to Develop Cost-Effective Training Materials (Web-Based or Otherwise) and to Develop a Plan for Training All Entity Staff. Commissioners to GAMC,**
and All Commissioners to General Assembly in Disability Awareness and Inclusion—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 64, 65, 1692–98 of the CD; pp. 64, 65, 341–42 of the printed copy).


Response: Senior human resources staff of the Board of Pensions has participated in the working group. From that work, background materials from *Living into the Body of Christ* have been circulated with various operating teams of the Board of Pensions’ staff with encouragement to maintain in their work appropriate sensitivities to the concerns raised in the materials.

Awareness and inclusion of those living with disabilities was one component of the Board of Pensions’ cultural competency assessment and training in 2013.

C. General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Final Response to Referral


The Environmental Ministries office of the Presbyterian Hunger Program participates actively in Creation Justice Ministries. It also has developed “Earth Care Congregations” network. Started in 2010, The Earth Care Congregation (http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/) certification program supports holistic environmental justice concerns, including education and action on climate change. Currently there are 125 certified Earth Care Congregations that holistically integrate caring for God’s creation throughout the life of their congregation—in worship, education, facilities, and outreach.

The Environmental Ministries program continues to work with ecumenical partners to support local congregations as they encourage youth and young adult involvement in environmental ministry. It also has a strong ecumenical presence and joins in promoting a unified voice as the ecumenical community addresses concerns about climate change and other environmental issues. It also distributes ecumenically developed resources to Presbyterian congregations as appropriate. Through representation at the Creation Justice Ministries, the PC(USA) is in conversation with the environmentally focused programs with other ecumenical partners and their green church certification programs.

D. General Assembly Committee on Representation Final Responses to Referrals in Progress


Response: GACOR shared reports in 2013 and has a mechanism for continuing to share data with these partners.


Response: The GACOR created a working group in 2012 and 2013 to address referrals from Item 11-17. In February 2013, the committee hosted an initial meeting with the leadership of all six agencies to clarify the referrals and receive input from the agencies. Data forms were distributed for the agencies to report employment and supplier diversity data. All six agencies submitted reports on 2012 data by the deadline in 2013. After review, these forms are in the process of being revised and will be distributed in 2014 (for 2013 data). In 2014, the committee will begin its review and recommendation of revision of benchmarks/goals in employment and supplier diversity by fitting into an established pattern of other reviews directed by the General Assembly. Employment and Supplier Diversity reviews of the six agencies will fit into the established pattern in a six-year cycle. Therefore, reporting to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) are the reviews set to happen in: 2014—Presbyterian Mission Agency and 2015—Office of the General Assembly. Reporting to the 223rd General Assembly (2018) are the reviews set to occur in 2016—Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) and 2017—Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (PILP). Reporting to the 224th General Assembly (2020) are the reviews set to occur in 2018—Presbyterian Foundation (FDN) and 2019—Board of Pensions (BOP). Having been reviewed once, the agency reviews will resume on a six-year cycle as a “regular and recurring basis.”

Response: The GACOR determined that each agency has cultural particularities that need to be taken into consideration when establishing benchmarks. The data sets used to evaluate employment pools will need to be developed in the first review of each agency. Federal statistics may inform a larger context but may not be directly comparable. This will be an ongoing project.


Response: This referral is answered by Item 09-19 (p. 735) and by GACOR Final Response to Referral 2, above (p.122), being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014).


Response: This referral is answered by Item 09-19 being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 735.)

**E. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Final Responses to Referrals**


Response: The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly has worked through a deliberate process in response to the issues raised in Item 03-02. That process has succeeded in reducing the General Assembly per capita budget through staff reductions and other means. This process has not ended but will continue through 2016.

The presbyteries’ struggle to pay their per capita is born in the confluence of several factors including: a weak economy, issues inside the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the changing nature of congregations. The General Assembly determined in 1999 that:

A presbytery has the responsibility to remit per capita allocations to synod and General Assembly, even though a congregation does not pay the per capita allocated to it by the presbytery … as long as funds are available within the presbytery (Minutes, 1999, Part I, p.107)

While providing a relief valve for presbyteries that do not receive the full allocation of per capita from their congregations, the General Assembly was also asserting a basic governance issue at the heart of this determination. The General Assembly is comprised of commissioners elected by their presbytery This is part of a fundamental understanding that governance in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is through its councils.

These presbyters shall come together in councils of regular gradation. These councils are sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate council. The larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller. (Book of Order, F-3.0203)

The commissioners elected by their presbytery gather together at the General Assembly to discern decisions of behalf of the whole church. One of those decisions is to approve financial commitments, thus obligating the whole church to these expenditures. Many of those obligations come from constitutional mandates created with the approval of the presbyteries. An example would be the meeting of the General Assembly itself. The combination of the obligations approved by the General Assembly commissioners, in addition to those required constitutionally, constitutes the per capita budget.

Similarly the Mission budget too is approved through the discernment of the commissioners to the General Assembly. It likewise becomes an obligation made by the General Assembly for the whole church. The PCUSA, through its councils, has chosen to develop mission funding through a variety of appeals to individuals, congregations, and presbyteries for general, special, and extra-commitment giving.

Thus the General Assembly expresses the voice of its elected presbytery commissioners in making commitments for the life of the church and its mission. These commitments are, by General Assembly authority, obligations of the whole church.
As a hallmark of covenantal community, the councils of the church are mutually accountable to one another within the whole in meeting these obligations through diverse strategies of stewardship.

Once the per capita budget is approved the per capita rate is calculated. That rate, too, is approved by the commissioners of the General Assembly on behalf of the whole church. This rate is then communicated to the presbyteries and in each instance their presbytery commissioners determine the best way forward to interpret per capita giving to their respective congregations. The General Assembly does not directly communicate the per capita asking to congregations. In 2012, one hundred and five of the presbyteries added their own per capita rate to the General Assembly rate and sent the resulting per capita asking to their congregations. In 2012, sixty-eight presbyteries included the per capita rate in their total mission budget asking from their congregations.

It is the presbyteries that determine how best to raise the funds to meet the obligations made by the presbyteries and the General Assembly. Consistent with the active role the presbyteries take in creating these obligations, it would seem inconsistent for presbyteries to opt for a passive role in funding these obligations by only submitting such monies as sessions may choose to send. Consistent with the role of councils’ mutual accountability, it is incumbent upon presbyteries to continue to obligate themselves to raise the funds through whatever method they may choose to support the functions they helped to identify as priorities. That discretion is within the powers of the presbytery in the Constitution. It would be the response of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to not sever the creation of obligation to expenditures from the obligation to raise funds for those expenditures.

F. Office of the General Assembly Final Responses to Referrals


   Response: The Stated Clerk issued an invitation to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO) to a consultation on sharing benefits plans. The invitation was accepted by the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians. A discussion was held with Board of Pensions representatives. Because of the contracts ECO already has in place, there is not a possibility of a joint medical plan. Future discussions about possibilities with the optional retirement plans may be held.


   Response: By requiring the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to include gender and race in its annual statistics on salary and benefits paid to individual exempt church workers, the General Assembly may be harming the people it intends to benefit. Employment lawyers commonly advise employers not to include boxes on application forms seeking information on the race and gender of applicants, as well as information on age, disability, national origin, and other information. Such information can be used to make unlawful and discriminatory decisions in the hiring process.

   In addition, federal law prohibits pre-employment inquiries as to gender unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification:

   29 CFR 1604.7—Pre-employment inquires as to sex, provides in pertinent part:

   Any pre-employment inquiry in connection with prospective employment which expresses directly or indirectly any limitation, specification, or discrimination as to sex shall be unlawful unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification.

   By directing OGA to identify exempt church workers by name, gender, and race, potential employers can find these church workers and use that information to make potentially unfair, unlawful discriminatory decisions in the hiring process.


   Response: The Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) has added the Reverend Elijah Parish Lovejoy to the list of honored names, which also includes the Reverend Dr. Donald McClure. The list of honored names will be featured on the new PHS website when it debuts this spring. PHS senior staff have established policies and procedures for adding names to this list in the future.

Response: The Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) Joining Hands Initiative—in collaboration with the Office of Public Witness (OPW)—has engaged this overture:

a. The PHP and OPW provided the following through which more than 1,000 Presbyterians engaged in work to stop both the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and implementation of the fast track process by the administration, due to the additional powers given corporations within the agreement, according to leaked documents, in partnership with Red Unido Manos in Peru.

(1) More than 1,000 “Take Action” letters were sent to President Obama via CapWhiz on the TPP itself.

(2) More than 3,000 postcards to date have been sent to members of the House of Representatives opposing fast track.

(3) Many letters and cards were followed up with telephone calls within presbyteries and by letters from presbytery execs drafted by PHP.

(4) Individual pastors and presbytery reps visited elected officials in approximately thirty district offices.

(5) The focus is now shifting to senators.

b. The PHP produced trade reform posters and postcards utilized in churches and by secular groups, such as the Citizens Trade Campaign. Ninety Presbyterians participated in a webinar on the TPP and forty more on a webinar on fast track; both are lodged on the trade page, www.pcusa.org/trade. The PHP is also working on a Bible study that addresses trade issues through scripture (available in March 2014). Trade game is being developed and piloted and will be available Spring 2014.

c. The OPW is visiting congressional leaders on fast track alongside the Interfaith Committee on Trade Justice.

d. PHP staff preached at least seven times this year on texts related to trade in U.S. congregations.

e. The Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment Act was not introduced into Congress as planned; similar legislation is under development and the OPW and PHP are tracking its progress.

f. Jed Koball—PC(USA) mission co-worker—visited congregations speaking on trade issues and its impact in Peru and the U.S.

g. The Office of Immigration Issues of the General Assembly monitors trends in U.S. immigration and the numerous factors, including trade, that impact the flow of immigration. The office coordinates with Presbyterian Mission Agency partners to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform that accounts for this and all causes of immigration.


Response: The Office of Immigration Issues signed onto a letter to elected officials regarding “legislative principles” that include: passing the DREAM Act, reform detention standards, and end programs like Secure Communities and 287(g) where local law enforcement cooperate with federal immigration officials.

The Stated Clerk sent a letter to officials at the Department of Homeland Security, Customs, and Border Patrol, and to President Obama to urge them to end the ATEP program (lateral repatriation).

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition and it is a signatory to the Interfaith Platform on Humane Immigration.

In a January 2013 letter to Presbyterians, the Stated Clerk called for reform that included the principles set forth by the General Assembly and called that this reform not happen at the expense of border communities. In a statement issued July 3, 2013, the Stated Clerk expressed concern about the build up at the border and in a letter written on September 27, 2013, to members of the House, the Stated Clerk lifted up border communities and the needless militarization of our borders.

Response: The Stated Clerk issued a pastoral letter to Presbyterians on December 11, 2012, urging them to contact their representatives and encourage the support of The Indonesian Family Refugee Protection Act.


Response: The Office of the General Assembly sent reminders to the worship planning committee ahead of Big Tent and General Assembly to remind them of this mandate.


Response: The Office of the General Assembly held two roundtable discussions on immigration reform where staff could discuss the possibility of reform and share information on recruiting Presbyterians to work for reform as well as resources to educate about the need for reform.


Response: Representatives from ACREC were invited to meet with each agency review committee during their initial meeting.


Response: Added to the Agency Review Manual before current cycle of agency reviews.


Response: Continued to focus on gathering information during the registration process to identify special needs and updated equipment which is used to provide for full participation.


Response: Instructions to COLA and COLA manual amended to make explicit the instructions of the assembly.


Response: The parties responsible for worship planning at the 2013 Big Tent and the 221st General Assembly (2014) considered the proposal. Neither felt that this opportunity as right for the direction they were led to take worship. Immigrant stories were highlighted in the reports on emerging worshipping communities and integrated into exhibit hall and programs at both Big Tent and the 221st General Assembly planning.

and Racial Ethnic Equity as It Relates to Inquirers and Candidates in the Call Process—From the General Assembly Council, on Behalf of Women of Color Consultation Committee (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 75–76, 854 of the electronic copy; pp. 61, 75–76, 230 of the print copy).

Response: The Office of the General Assembly, through Vocational Ministries, reviews all resources on a regular basis, updating as necessary, in areas of content and inclusiveness.


Response: As part of the restructuring of the Office of the General Assembly, some duties of the former Office of Vocation were transferred to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Responsibilities for the Racial Ethnic Seminary Conference, which includes racial ethnic women, was one of the events transferred. In addition, the Office of the General Assembly continues its work in facilitating the discernment of call for all Presbyterians, including racial ethnic women, through the Church Leadership Connection, training events, and resources.


Response: As part of the restructuring of the Office of the General Assembly, some duties of the former Office of Vocation were retained by the Office of the General Assembly and placed in Vocational Ministries. Bi-vocational ministry remains one of the emphases of the work of this area. The Church Leadership Connection, the on-line program through which call seekers and calling organizations can meet, was recently enhanced and includes the ability to facilitate bi-vocational ministry.


Response: The Office of the General Assembly, as part of the restructure, has created a programmatic emphasis for ruling elders. The work will include a renewed emphasis on the unique and substantial role that ruling elders play in the life of the church and how, through partnership with deacons, teaching elders and members, the priesthood of all believers manifests itself.


Response: The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved a resolution that urged a variety of action around Secure Communities or S.Comm. This is a federal program developed in 2008 and under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), that, where implemented, allows local law enforcement agencies to run the fingerprints of all persons arrested for any crime through a federal immigration database. If there is a match, federal immigration officials may issue a detainer requesting local law enforcement hold the person for a full forty-eight hours after that person would normally be released. The forty-eight hours excludes weekends and holidays. In some jurisdictions individuals are held much longer than forty-eight hours. After disagreement about whether the program was optional or mandatory for local law enforcement, many have refused to participate in the program by either not honoring detainers or developing procedures about when a person’s fingerprints would be entered into the immigration database. The Office of the General Assembly has closely watched the debate around Secure Communities and worked with our interfaith partners to take action to end the program. This includes educating Presbyterians about this program and its impacts on communities. Specifically, the Stated Clerk sent a letter in 2013 to the Obama Administration and the Department of Homeland Security requesting the end of this program and other programs that essentially designate local law enforcement agencies as agents of federal immigration agencies. The Presbyterian-
ian Church (U.S.A.) also joined the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) in their “Champion Legislative Principles” letter, which was sent multiple times to Congress and called for the end of S.Comm. and similar programs. While the Office of the General Assembly has not been aware of litigation surrounding S.Comm. after the 2012 assembly, advocates continued to watch the reports published by DHS after Representative Zoe Lofgren called on the agency to clarify the goals and requirements of the program and how the Supreme Court’s decision on Arizona's SB 1070 would impact local law enforcement activities around immigration. In late 2013 a new report was issued that argued detainers were a violation of the United States Constitution. The Office of the General Assembly will continue to monitor activities around S.Comm. including litigation and join as appropriate in amicus curiae.


Response: The Office of Vocation took the following actions to improve and shorten the call process. Training was provided to mid councils, search committees, and call seekers in effectively using the Church Leadership Connection System (CLC). Included in the training were instructions in evaluating Personal Information Forms (PIF) and Ministry Information Forms (MIF) to assess greater compatibility and fit between call seekers and calling organizations. The CLC was revised in August 2013. The new system improves and shortens the call process by incorporating more quantitative search options into the system, which reduces the number of applications received for positions available. The new forms include leadership competencies, optional links for sermons and lessons plans, narrative questions that solicit outcome responses, and additional matching fields that ensure greater compatibility in the call process. Online tutorials are available for all CLC users to assist in using the revised system. The call process will be shortened as a result of a more effective matching process that allows call seekers and calling organizations to be more specific about their leadership competencies and needs. Training to encourage an openness to call and understanding how leadership impacts mission and ministry is included in all CLC training.


Response: In February 2014, the Office of the General Assembly sent a survey to all presbytery stated clerks asking questions about presbytery and congregational activities around the study and discernment concerning the meaning of Christian marriage.

One hundred four of the 172 presbyteries responded. Due to the reporting deadline for General Assembly reports, there were several presbyteries who reported that they will be engaging in some study at some date beyond the reporting deadline.

Several congregations also reported directly to the OGA. Those reports are available from the Office of the General Assembly. These are the presbytery reported results:

1. 66.35 percent of presbyteries engaged in a study on marriage since the 220th General Assembly (2012).

2. The context for the study (could choose more than one answer):
   52.63 percent at a presbytery meeting
   23.68 percent at a separate presbytery event dealing only with marriage
   13.16 percent as part of a larger presbytery event

31.58 percent Other:
   • We did two events going through the series at two different locations for convenience of our members
   • Training event
   • Presbytery Council, Committee on Ministry
   • Within individual congregations
   • In conjunction with drafting an overture on the subject
   • Part of our steering committee meeting at Presbytery
   • Docketed for part of the March 2014 meeting of presbytery
   • Some individual churches are doing this study
   • Resources made available and announced
   • Workshop at an education event
   • Discussion material was sent to the members and commissioners to the presbytery with a letter encouraging each church to study the material and the issue
   • Council
   • We have an educational event scheduled for April
3. How the subject of marriage was engaged (could choose more than one answer):
   45.90 percent Small group conversation/discussion
   40.98 percent Used prepared study material
   18.03 percent Presentation by prepared individuals, including sermons
   18.03 percent Prayer
   8.20 percent Bible study
   11.48 percent Other
      • Guided teaching and ruling elders through the materials for use with their congregations
      • Videoed a debate and made video available to churches.
      • Several churches held open dialog
      • Stated Clerk announced the resource at two Presbytery gatherings, and made the links (including the Korean materials) available on the Presbytery resource webpage.
      • Coordinating Council discussion, Study at individual congregation
      • The stated clerk continues to pray on this
      • We have an event scheduled for April.

4. Materials used (could choose more than one answer):
   90.63 percent Office of Theology and worship “Christian Marriage in the PC(USA)” study material
   28.13 percent Other marriage study materials:
      • Gifted speakers to talk about marriage
      • Covenant Network's supplemental materials
      • More Light materials
      • Both long and short versions plus others brought random materials and articles.
      • Each group determined their own materials
      • A wide variety of sources
      • Own, based on overtures sent to GA, Covenant Network material, etc.
      • The Advisory Opinion and links to both long and short study guide were distributed to the coordinating Council. Council chose not to do a study and not to promote it further than what had already been done in the clerk's report in June.
      • General Assembly materials and pending overtures
      • Not yet determined

5. During the past two years, did your presbytery encourage congregations to engage in a study on marriage?
   44.12 percent No
   42.16 percent Yes
   13.73 percent Don’t Know

6. If yes, did you direct congregations to particular resources?
   57.14 percent Yes
   28.57 percent No
   14.29 percent Don’t Know

7. If yes, please list the resource(s) recommended to your congregations:
   • Thirty presbyteries recommended the Office of Theology and Worship “Christian Marriage in the PC(USA)” study material.
   • Study materials, supplementary documents that were listed in the study, and the covenant network's supplemental materials.
   • Some congregations also selected their own resources.
   • As part of June 2013 Presbytery Agenda and Reports: 1) 220th General Assembly (2012)13-NB [The assembly approved Item 13-NB with amendment. 2)
   • Advisory Opinion: Marriage and Same-Gender Ceremonies
   • Covenant Network materials
8. Approximately what percentage of congregations in your presbytery engaged in a study of marriage since the 220th General Assembly (2012)?

- 91.36 percent: zero to twenty-five percent of congregations
- 8.64 percent: twenty-five to fifty percent of congregations
- 0 percent: fifty to seventy-five percent of congregations
- 0 percent: seventy-five to one hundred percent of congregations

9. How did these congregations engage in the study (could choose more than one answer)

- 55.84 percent Don’t Know
- 37.66 percent Used prepared study material
- 29.87 percent Small group conversation/discussion
- 24.68 percent Bible study
- 23.38 percent Prayer
- 15.84 percent Presentation by prepared individuals, including sermons:
- 5.19 percent Other

10. Comments:

- In the midst of other significant issues gripping the presbytery’s attention, including but not solely uncertainty about the 221st GA, this topic was not addressed by presbytery but may have been studied in congregations; there were no reports to the presbytery about any studies done.

- At a presbytery meeting we heard from representatives of three congregations who had done the entire PC(USA) study and recommended it. Then at the meeting we completed one of the lessons from the study.

- Washington State voters approved same sex marriage in 2012.

- Our unity is in Jesus Christ. Discussing this topic would have fractured our unity, since no one is seeking “to” discern; our presbyters have already discerned and our (sic) firm (though of different discernments) in their beliefs.

- EP asked the Christian Education Committee to address this topic and encountered some reluctance. The committee has scheduled a workshop in March.

- Two items from Council (now Cabinet) minutes:

  1. June Council Minutes Stated Clerk’s Report
     In his report to presbytery the clerk proposes to present the Office of the Stated Clerk’s Advisory Opinion 7 “Marriage and Same Gender Ceremonies” with a Q & A time.

  2. Marriage Study Guides
     There was a discussion regarding whether to conduct regional gatherings or a study in conjunction with a presbytery assembly using the brief guide. There was no particular energy or interest for doing so, particularly since the guides do not directly address the hot-topic of same sex marriage. We will continue to make both guides available, for churches or groups who may wish to use the, but will report to GA that we did not feel that the study guide directly addressed the issues.

- We are doing all we can to keep our congregations in the PC(USA). We don’t encourage congregations to study issues that could or would cause division at this time. We did give the congregations a list of resources regarding several issues that they could study if they desire.

- Some folks were interested in studying the material, most were not. Sorry!

- I was very disappointed in the PC(USA) study. VERY thin soup. Gave little insight, little to work with. I expect much more, and we need it.

- We continue to hold that it is up to the individual and individual congregation to determine their beliefs and practices in regards to the meaning of Christian marriage.

- We have been so busy finishing up with gracious dismissals, dealing with the closing of two congregations and dealing with a complete change in presbytery staff that there has not been time for Foothills to engage this study.
• Parliamentary solutions (technical) are not able to resolve this “adaptive” issue. We need more discussion and less “voting”

• The study brought out major conflicts among people who had known each other for years. Not a good prediction for the ability of the Assembly or the denomination to deal with the issue this year.

• A small group in the church I serve is working through the study. The experience has been one of the best we’ve had: good and sustained attendance, evidence of study/reflection between sessions, and energy for the conversations. It is well-conceived and well done. The final question each session brilliant! It allows sharing without judgment of any observation or opinion, and engages a powerful question: What difference does it make? Thank you.

• Baltimore Presbytery has been studying this topic at least since 2004. During the last four years my sense is that we are tired of talking about it.

• We used Table Talk format organized by the Peacemaking Committee. There were three sessions that churches could attend. Material from the Office of Worship were made available at presbytery meetings.

• Our more conservative congregations were, for the most part, not interested in conversation. Those who participated were more open minded. Preaching to the choir.

• From one person who participated…The passage of 10-A started an exodus of churches form the PC(USA). The passage of an overture on same sex marriage this summer will open the flood gates of churches leaving the PC(USA). The churches not leaving the PC(USA) will suffer major losses of members who cannot continue to be associated with the PC(USA).

• The Leadership Team was presented with the study resources developed by the PC(USA) but felt no energy, given the difficulties over 10-A to engage in this topic.

• The leadership of Cimarron Presbytery felt that the study provided by the Office of Theology and Worship was lacking and therefore, not usable. There was an overwhelming amount of background material to cover and absorb, especially for members who have not been closely following the topic of marriage. In contrast, the discussion questions themselves seemed rather shallow. Regrettfully, Cimarron Presbytery did not have the time or resources to seek out or develop other study resources on this important topic.

• Things are settling down in our Presbytery and we may be of a mind to engage such a study next year.

• There was little energy for this conversation as a whole but individual churches were interested.

• At a Presbytery Leaders Training Event, a workshop was offered to help those wanting to learn how best to use the prepared materials from the Office of Theology and Worship. Those who attended they were able to return to their respective congregations to offer either small group or large group discussion on the topic.

• In Minnesota, a proposed constitutional amendment banning same-gender marriage was the focus of public and church discussion, and tended to put the issue more into a discussion of public law than church position. That campaign absorbed most of the interest in the issue.

• I am a new Stated Clerk so I did not participate in discussion regarding this, but I believe that our focus has been on stability. This very topic has the potential to produce instability at this time.

• Our presbytery has scheduled a presbytery-wide study session, probably using the two-hour module, for a gathering in May. We think the marriage issues will continue to be important to PC(USA) and our country, and two of our 221st GA Commissioners are preparing to lead the May discussion. Too late for the survey, but we will engage one another on the issues. Materials at first read are excellent.

• I’m sorry. We’ve just had other stuff preoccupying us for a while.

G. Presbyterian Mission Agency Final Responses to Referrals

Response: Presbyterian Mission Agency’s associate for Cultural Proficiency consulted with and assisted all agencies in the creation of Six-Year Cultural Proficiency Plans for each agency. All Six-Year Plans were submitted to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC), and the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) in 2012.


Response: Cultural proficiency and antiracism training is required for all new hires of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and all current staff must attend updated cultural proficiency and antiracism training at least once in a three-year cycle. On December 5, 2012, and December 6, 2013, cultural proficiency and antiracism training opportunities were provided for all staff at Staff Development Day, as well as through scheduled courses and sessions as part of individual ministry staff development workshops.


Response: The Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency affirmed the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God. They encouraged congregations, presbyteries, synods, and seminaries to recognize the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God and to incorporate it into worship, conferences, training events, and other activities in a press release published and distributed by the Presbyterian News Service.

4. 2012 Referral: Item 10-20. A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God. Recommendation 3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council to Provide Annual Funding in the Amount of $7,000 for the Joint Working Group (Up to Eight Members) to Meet Independently of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Once Each Year, to Be Incorporated into the Per Capita Budget Every Year—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 75, 871–73 of the CD; p. 235 of the printed copy).

Response: The Presbyterian Mission Agency provided funding from its per capita budget in the amount of $7,000 for the Joint Working Group, which consists of two members of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and two members of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, to meet independently of those respective committees. The Joint Working Group met with the associate for Gender and Racial Justice, who consulted with the group in planning the Women of Color Consultation held in October 2013.


Response: The associate for advocacy committee support and an administrative assistant provide staff support for the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns. The staff members’ offices are lodged within the Office of the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This exact staffing pattern has been in place since 2010.

The associate and the administrative assistant report to the manager of Racial Ethnic Leadership Development. From time to time, the associate for advocacy committee support may enlist the expertise of other staff such as the director of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, the associate for Gender and Racial Justice, the manager of Racial Ethnic Leadership Development, Human Resources managers, and other Presbyterian Mission Agency staff in addressing issues of concern to the advocacy committees.

The coordinator for the General Assembly Committee on Representation and ruling elder resources/Assistant Stated Clerk provides staff support for the General Assembly Committee on Representation. The coordinator for the General As-
General Assembly (2012) and the Program Will Be Inaugurated No Later Than the Meeting of the 221st General Assembly (2014) —From the 220th General Assembly Mission Council to Create a Process to Raise Funds to Invest in the West Bank, Investment (MRTI) of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.

Recommendation 5. The General Assembly Mission Council to Create a Process to Raise Funds to Invest in the West Bank, Investment (MRTI) of Its Engagement with Corporations Involved in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank.

General Assembly (2012) Study Committee Opportunities for Positive Investment, with a Report Back to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Middle East Foundation, and the General Assembly Mission Council) and Appropriate Counterparts in the American Ecumenical, Presbyterian Church (USA), the Presbyterian Church USA, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the Presbyterian Foundation attended a session in cultural proficiency and antiracism conducted by the same consultant used by the Board of Pensions to educate their staff. The Presbyterian Mission Agency’s associate for cultural proficiency left the organization in early 2013. Following her departure, the director of Human Resources along with other outside consultants began developing a new training program around cultural proficiency and antiracism that builds on the topic from introduction to deeper levels of understanding. One of the contributing consultants is David Esterline, a recognized expert in the field, professor at McCormick Seminary, and member of ACREC. The updated program will be rolled out to all staff and new hires in 2014. The new program will be shared with ACREC, and feedback will be requested.


Response: The six General Assembly-related entities (Board of Pensions—BOP, Presbyterian Mission Agency—PMA, Office of the General Assembly—OGA, Foundation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.—PILP, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—PPC) provided Biennial Status Reports on the Representation of Women and Persons of Color in Employment to GACOR through the Reverend Molly Casteel, Assistant Stated Clerk and coordinator, Representation, Inclusiveness and Ruling Elder Training by May 31, 2013, as directed by Deborah Fair, moderator, and Hector Rivera-Velez, vice moderator, General Assembly Committee on Representation chair of the AA/EEO Task Group.


Response: In 2013, the leadership and/or key staff of the Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Mission Agency, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, and Presbyterian Foundation attended a session in cultural proficiency and antiracism conducted by the same consultant used by the Board of Pensions to educate their staff. The Presbyterian Mission Agency’s associate for cultural proficiency left the organization in early 2013. Following her departure, the director of Human Resources along with other outside consultants began developing a new training program around cultural proficiency and antiracism that builds on the topic from introduction to deeper levels of understanding. One of the contributing consultants is David Esterline, a recognized expert in the field, professor at McCormick Seminary, and member of ACREC. The updated program will be rolled out to all staff and new hires in 2014. The new program will be shared with ACREC, and feedback will be requested.


Response: On March 28, 2013, the report was published on CenterNet, the intranet system accessible by employees of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation published the report to its employees on its intranet system on May 2, 2013. On March 25, 2013, the Board of Pensions published the report to its employees on BoardConnection, the BOP intranet system.

9. 2010 Referral: Item 14-08. Breaking Down the Walls. Recommendation 3.e. Urges a Visit to Israel/Palestine by a High-Level Joint Delegation of Presbyterians (Including Representatives from the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation, and the General Assembly Mission Council) and Appropriate Counterparts in the American Ecumenical, Jewish, and Muslim Communities, with Costs Shared Among the Participating Faith Groups, for the Purpose of Identifying Opportunities for Positive Investment, with a Report Back to the 220th General Assembly (2012)—From the Middle East Study Committee (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 50, 52, 1021–1119).


Response: Leaders of the Presbyterian Foundation and the Presbyterian Mission Agency took a joint trip to Israel/Palestine in March 2013 for the purposes of developing a positive investment program, as directed by the 219th General Assembly (2010). The program builds on efforts by congregations, seminaries, and other church institutions; and follows an additional directive from the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The project team developed criteria for investments (based on prior General Assembly actions), consulted with faith and business leaders in the region to identify investment opportunities that fit the criteria, reviewed business plans and supporting documentation from numerous opportunities, then visited a number of the projects and businesses that seemed to best fit. The criteria for the projects call for investments that will:

- Make a difference in the lives of those most vulnerable.
- Preserve an effective witness to peace in the entire region.
- Be invested in West Bank owned/sponsored initiatives or companies.
- Result in sustainable economic development (without supporting the occupation).
- Engage Christians in the West Bank around issues of job creation and economic development.
- Confine business activity solely to peaceful pursuits, and refrain from allowing their products or services to support or facilitate violent acts by Israelis or Palestinians against innocent civilians, construction and maintenance of settlements or Israeli-only roads in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, and construction of the Separation Barrier as it extends beyond the 1967 “Green Line” into Palestinian territories.
- Minimize or eliminate Palestinian dependence on Israel or others.
- Offer transparency of use and impact.
- Provide direct engagement with those who ultimately benefit.

Two initial investments have been placed:

- A loan to complete construction of a continuous education building at a Christian college in Bethlehem. The building will house two restaurants and a training kitchen for the college’s culinary school, along with classrooms for the college’s tour-guide training program. These are key areas of job creation in Bethlehem.
- A loan to construct a renewable energy installation for an industrial park near Bethlehem.
- Investment to create a microfinance initiative in partnership with a Ramallah-based bank. The program will offer loans in the $1,500–$20,000 range to create and/or expand micro-small businesses, mostly in the agricultural sector. The program has a target of 80 percent women borrowers, with a required minimum of 51 percent women borrowers. Loans will be made at rates significantly below those charged by other microfinance institutions in the region.

Work continues on a third potential investment in renewable energy.

Initial funding for the investments came from the Creative Investment Funds designated by prior assemblies, which are held by the Foundation for the benefit of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Additional funds have been raised from congregations, which are able to participate in the program through a revocable charitable trust established with the Foundation’s subsidiary New Covenant Trust Company.

While this Presbyterian work has been done in partnership with individual Palestinian Christians, Palestinian Muslims, and Israeli Jews, it has not been possible to have a high-level joint delegation with appropriate counterparts in the American ecumenical, Jewish, and Muslim communities.

Congregations interested in investing in peace through this effort should contact Rob Bullock at the Presbyterian Foundation (800-858-6127 or rob.bullock@presbyterianfoundation.org).


Response: Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA) was awarded the remaining $25,000 of a $100,000 grant to complete the work begun by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Communications and Funds Development office. PHEWA created a fund-raising task force that developed a comprehensive fund-raising plan that was adopted by the PHEWA board and presented to an all-network leadership gathering in March 2013. Implementation of this plan began in the Fall 2013. The fund-raising plan follows.
PHEWA FUNDRAISING STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Introduction

As a hybrid organization, PHEWA relies on two separate sources of revenue: the national church, in the form of a funded position and limited staff support within the office of Social Witness Ministries and PHEWA, the independent 501(c)3 nonprofit. This fundraising plan is focused on PHEWA the nonprofit. Its goal is to strengthen PHEWA’s financial stability so that PHEWA might continue to interpret and implement General Assembly policy in those areas where individual and community health and justice intersect.

There are two distinct but related component parts to this comprehensive plan: strengthening and increasing the reach of the relational infrastructure on which PHEWA is built; and engaging in direct fundraising strategies. Both will require dedicated work groups to achieve these goals—dedicated both in the sense of commitment and willingness to lead by example as well as the sense that this will be the sole focus of work group members with no other PHEWA related tasks assigned to them.

1. Strategy I: Relational infrastructure enhancement includes:
   a. Congregational and mid council outreach and membership retention;
   b. Individual membership communication and outreach;
   c. Identification of and outreach to potential major donors;
   d. Marketing and publicity;
   e. The development and upgrade of our member/donor database.

2. Strategy II. Direct fundraising includes:
   a. Board giving;
   b. Establish endowment fund, design and implement strategy;
   c. Grants—identify and apply for available grants;
   d. Major gifts;
   e. Solicit institutional and individual membership, initial and continuing;
   f. Special appeals;
   g. Online giving.

Strategy I: Build Relational Infrastructure

Relational infrastructure upholds and sustains PHEWA. Network leaders and members, and former leaders, all contribute to PHEWA’s effectiveness and sustainability through in-kind and financial donations. The task of the Relational Infrastructure Enhancement Team (RIET) is the development of a multipronged plan of outreach and support to the individuals, congregations, and mid councils that constitute the core of PHEWA.

The following five categories of activity were identified by the Funding Strategy Task Force as critical to PHEWA’s health and sustainability.

1. Congregational and Mid Council Outreach, Membership Retention
   a. 2013 Goals:
      • Compile lists of all synods and mid councils in the PC(USA), including email addresses.
      • Personal contact with every synod executive and presbytery.
      • Identify congregational members of PHEWA.
      —Personal contact.
      • Identify one congregation in each presbytery that is not yet a PHEWA member for direct solicitation.
   b. What networks can do:
      • Encourage your own congregation and mid-council to become a PHEWA member
2. **Individual Membership Communication and Outreach**
   
a. Purpose: healthy membership base.
   
b. 2013 Goals:
   
   • Contact every PHEWA member with a phone call.
   • Upgrade membership database to include emails.
   
c. Tasks to achieve goals:
   
   • Phone interview sheet available by April 1
   • Member contact assignments made
   • Results of outreach turned in (May 15)
   
d. What your network can do:
   
   • Keep a current network membership list and maintain a regular schedule of contacting them.
   • Welcome new members within a week of being notified of their joining.
   • Notify staff of questions or concerns.

3. **Identification of Potential Major Donors and Outreach**
   
a. Purpose: potential funding stream; opportunity to leave legacy.
   
b. 2013 Goals:
   
   • Pull names of everyone who has given over $100 in a one year period within the last three years.
   • Develop a personal contact schedule.
   • Identify individuals who need to receive a personal visit.
   
c. What your network can do:
   
   • Identify potential major donors within your network.
   • Coordinate visits and/or “asks” with fundraising team.

4. **Marketing and Publicity**
   
a. Purpose: To increase congregational and mid council awareness of network activities including effective distribution of resource materials.
   
b. 2013 Goals:
   
   • Publish articles on PHEWA/PHEWA network activities in 25 percent of the presbyteries that distribute e-newsletters.
   • Submit articles to denominational communications staff.
   • Present information about PHEWA and PHEWA Networks at twenty-five congregations.
   • Contact pastors of current PHEWA member congregations offering to lead an adult forum on PHEWA and PHEWA.
   
c. Networks:
   
   What your network can do:
   
   • Take pictures at events, presentations etc., send them to Susan Stack and Trina Zelle.
   • Report on PHEWA/network activities (i.e. display booth at presbytery, leading a workshop on network issue).
   • Write articles about your network’s activities for your church newsletter.
   • Ask your church webmaster to create a link to both PHEWA websites.
   • Download a copy of the PHEWA PowerPoint and use when making network presentations.
5. **Upgrade Member/Donor Base**
   a. **Purpose:** To ensure accurate records of membership, contributions, and membership contacts.
   b. **2013 Goals:**
      - Identify most appropriate software program for PHEWA needs
      - Purchase dedicated PHEWA laptop and software
      - Transfer information from denominational software to proprietary PHEWA database
   c. **What your network can do:**
      - Maintain a supply of PHEWA membership forms for distribution and collection
      - Distribute them and, when possible, collect them. Keep information for your own records as well then send them to Louisville.

**Strategy II: Implement Direct Fundraising**

Direct fundraising builds on the work of relational infrastructure development and maintenance. The Funding Strategy Task Force identified the following categories for direct fundraising.

1. **Board Giving**
   a. **2013 Goals:**
      - Articulate expectation of giving and/or fundraising for executive committee and network leadership.
      - Option to include PHEWA in will.
      - 100 percent participation at any level of giving.
   b. **What your network can do:**
      - Raise awareness with new network leadership

2. **Establish Endowment Fund**
   a. **2013 Goals:**
      - Set up endowment fund with Presbyterian Foundation.
      - Design and launch an endowment campaign.
   b. **What your network can do:**
      - Raise awareness with network leadership; include in presentations

3. **Grant Development/Fee for Service Opportunities**
   a. **2013 Goals:**
      - Complete Guide Star profile.
      - Develop five projects in line with PHEWA/CPJ work goals.
      - Fill out common grant form and keep available.
      - Approach three synods with fee for service opportunity.
      - Submit potential grant possibilities to grants working group to determine appropriateness with PHEWA and network project goals.
   b. **What your network can do:**
      - Decide on a couple of projects that your network has the capacity to complete if you had adequate funding.
      - Keep projects on file with national office.
      - Notify national office if an opportunity has arisen. PHEWA will have to sign off on any grant that is submitted, since PHEWA serves as fiscal agent for all of the networks.
4. **Major Gifts**  
   a. 2013 Goals:  
      • Identify ten potential major gift givers.  
      • Set up visitation schedule and goals.  
      • Prepare for visit in consultation with staff and board members who have a history with given individuals.
   b. What your network can do:  
      • Keep in touch with all of your network members. Never assume that someone is not capable of giving.
5. **Institutional and Individual Membership**  
   a. 2013 Goals:  
      • Make personal contact with institutional memberships (mid councils and congregations) including a personal visit if possible.  
      • Make personal contact with individual members preferably from a designated network representative.  
        –Encourage automatic renewals on an annual basis.
   b. What your network can do:  
      • Each network team lead asks own congregation/presbytery to join.  
      • Encourage membership at every presentation that you make.
6. **Online Giving**  
   a. 2013 Goals:  
      • Develop separate fund-raising page on website.  
      • Clarify ECO accounts.  
      • Develop online fundraising campaigns to coincide with mailings.
   b. What your network can do:  
      • Raise awareness among membership
7. **Special Appeals**  
   a. 2013 Goals:  
      • Design and schedule fund-raising campaigns based on PHEWA/network accomplishments, projects, or designated Sundays.
   b. What your network can do:  
      • Keep network membership informed.  
      • Provide easy ways for membership to promote campaigns in their own ministry settings.

Endnote

* Fundraising Goals for 2013 include:  
  1. Institutional memberships: $10,000  
  2. Individual memberships: $7,000  
  3. Major Gifts: $15,000  
  4. Grants: $50,000  
  5. Earned income (training and workshop leadership): $2,500  
  6. Special appeals: $7,500  
  7. Online giving: $7,500  
  8. Board giving: $10,500


Response: This referral is answered by Item 13-02, “Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Directory for Worship,” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 956.)


Response: The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations has published God’s Unity ... Our Journey: A Bible Study and Reflections on the Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This resource is available for download from the PC(USA) website: http://www.pcusa.org/resource/gods-unity-our-journey/.


Response: The Office of Theology and Worship created a website that includes the full agreement, a summary of its recommendations, a summary of its theological affirmations, and a set of discussion questions. It can be found at: http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/these-living-waters-common-agreement-mutual-recogn/. News of this website has been released on the PC(USA) website, Facebook, and Twitter. It has also been mentioned in the e-newsletter “Font and Table,” which is sent to more than three thousand subscribers interested in sacramental renewal, and in Call to Worship.


Response: The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (GACEIR) has developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions for the Episcopal/Presbyterian agreement and has distributed it throughout the PC(USA). In addition, GACEIR has begun work on two initiatives to help presbyteries understand this agreement and to facilitate partnership:

- GACEIR has begun the identification of congregations where there is PC(USA)/Episcopal shared ministry.
- GACEIR has made connection between the 1001 New Worshipping Communities in the PC(USA) with the corresponding movement in the Episcopal Church.


Response: An instrument will be prepared by June 1, 2014, and will be located on the PC(USA) website at: www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/just-compensation.


Response: The Environmental Ministries Program has created an energy fund to help congregations reduce their carbon footprint (see http://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/H000142/). This fund has been advertised through social media and e-newsletters. When it has received enough financial support, a process will be created to allow congregations and other organizations to apply for funds to reduce carbon footprint in the ways outlined above. Meanwhile, other funding is compiled and communicated on occasion by Environmental Ministries to Presbyterians, such as through this blog posting: http://www.pcusa.org/blogs/eco-journey/2013/6/17/financial-resources-converting-renewable-energy/.

Response: Despite good faith efforts, the process of revision recommended by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and approved by the assembly has not borne fruit, largely due to the ever heightening tensions within the PC(USA) over Israel/Palestine. This tension has overwhelmed the process of producing a contemporary and comprehensive theological statement on the relationship between Christians and Jews reflective of the diverse perspectives within both the Presbyterian and Jewish American communities.

However, in an effort to fulfill the mandate of the 216th General Assembly (2004) to “reexamine and strengthen the relationship between Christians and Jews and the implications of this relationship for our evangelism and new church development,” the Presbyterian Mission Agency, through its Office of Theology and Worship, offers, “Christians and Jews, People of God: A Contribution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the Interfaith Conversation” as a resource for study. The study can be found on the PC(USA) website. Although the study is not comprehensive of all of the themes and perspectives that continue to develop in nuance throughout both our respective religious communities, it reflects a significant effort to reexamine and strengthen our relationships. Therefore, the resource in its current revised form is not offered as a policy statement seeking General Assembly approval but rather as a resource to encourage the furthering of conversation and building of healthy relationships between Christians and Jews.

As the Office of Interfaith Relations and Theology and Worship continues to reexamine and strengthen the commitments of Presbyterians and American Jews to one another in expansive ways and invites the wider church to join the process, we will:

a. continue to be guided by the document, A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews (1987),

b. further the work of Interfaith Relations through councils, schools, and congregational life in order to strengthen the relationship between American Presbyterians and American Jews as well as deepen already significant relationships with and commitments to Palestinian Christians in the U.S. and in Israel/Palestine, and

c. continue to participate in, support, and encourage the work of American Presbyterians and American Jews who strive to work together for God’s justice while upholding the integrity of our unique traditions and perspectives.


Response: The Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA) held a consultation at Stony Point Conference Center on February 17–19, 2012. Interactive presentations were made by Presbyterians with expertise and experience in criminal justice issues, as well as by ministry partners from the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church. An interim network leadership team was established at this consultation. On September 6, 2012, the PHEWA Board of Directors voted to accept the Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network (PCJN) as the newest grassroots ministry network of PHEWA.


20. 2010 Referral: Item 10-10. Report, Neither Poverty Nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church. Recommendation 2.e. Request the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to Convene an Appropriately Structured Discussion Among the Seminaries on the Matter of Compensation Ranges and Sharing Economic Burdens During Recession

Response: The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) is staffed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency in the Theology, Worship, and Education ministry area but reports directly to the General Assembly, and will include a response to this referral in the COTE narrative report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) (see Item 13-Info, Committee on Theological Education Agency Summary, I. Overview, B. Accomplishments).


Response: Congregational Ministries Publishing (CMP) has developed a webpage located at http://www.presbyterianwetlands.org that provides free, downloadable resources for youth and adults that explore ways in which Presbyterians can share in caring for creation. This website also points constituents to the Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO) created by the office of environmental ministries. This enables Presbyterians to have a convenient mechanism to give funds to the Presbytery of Louisiana to support their efforts to protect the wetlands. The ongoing commitment of CMP is to work with the Presbytery of Louisiana to keep the webpage current with information about caring for the wetlands and linking to any other educational resources that have, or will be, developed to educate constituents on the importance of the wetlands ecosystem.


Response: The Environmental Ministries Program has created a fund to garner financial support (see http://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/H000141/). Environmental Ministries is also in conversation with presbytery leaders of the emerging Theological Wetlands Education Center to find out how best to support them.

23. 2012 Referral: Item 09-03. Review of the World Council of Churches. Recommendation 9. Direct the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to Continue and/or Increase Participation on the Various Committees, Commissions, and Leadership of the WCC as Invited; Request OGA and GAMC to Inform the WCC of Internal Structural Changes or Changes in Personnel so That Invitations May Be Appropriately Offered—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 9, 769–78 of the CD; p. 208 of the printed copy).

Response: Working collaboratively with the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency (formerly General Assembly Mission Council) has informed the World Council of Churches of internal structural changes so invitations may be appropriately offered.


Response: The Presbyterian Mission Agency has implemented the Lund Principle, launching several new initiatives with full communion and covenant partners since the 220th General Assembly (2012). Some highlights of these efforts include: initiating a relationship with the Church of England to learn about and dialogue around church development and redevelop-
ment; planning a joint regional training event/conference about evangelism with the United Methodist Church, Disciples of Christ, United Church of Christ, Church of the Brethren, Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Presbyterian Church of Canada, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; expanding the West Africa Initiative, a post-civil war sustainable development project that includes the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, and the Disciples of Christ. These efforts are in addition to existing ecumenical efforts in responding to disasters, caring for creation, hunger and poverty alleviation, corporate engagement, collegiate and youth ministries, and equipping people to engage in advocacy with elected leaders.

25. **Alternate Resolution to 2012 Referral: Item 10-03. On Supporting Young Adults in Mission and Leadership Development for the Future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recommendation. Direct the GAMC to Increase Promotion of This Vital and Dynamic Program to Mid Councils—From the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 75, 797–99 of the CD; p. 212 of the printed copy).**

**Response:** The Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) Program is working hard to achieve the goals set out in the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s 2013–2014 Directional Goals, to triple the size of the YAV program in four years. In our first year under this plan, we have achieved strong success, placing seventy-three YAVs for national and international service in 2013/2014, a 33 percent increase over the year prior.

In response to Item 10-03 from the 2012 General Assembly (2012), the Young Adult Volunteer program has undertaken several specific areas of promotion in support of the YAV program and to increase the mission funding of the program by mid councils and congregations. First, we have created the position of associate for Recruitment and Relationship Building for the YAV program. This position has a focus on building the visibility and awareness of the Young Adult Volunteer program at all levels of our church, from individuals, congregations, and mid councils. This includes both recruiting participants for the program as well as inviting the wider church to support and partner with YAV participants through existing funding vehicles such as the Pentecost Offering.

In the past year, the YAV program has increased its promotion of the Pentecost Offering, inviting all levels of the church to participate in that offering at the increased rate (additional 10.01 percent) to meet the goals set forth in this overture. Particularly with the increase in collection time over the summer months, we are hoping for a significant increase in the participation and quantity of fundraising from congregations and mid councils.

Additionally, the YAV program is in the process of initiating a funds development effort that will support the long-term sustainability of the YAV program. This effort will have specific efforts at targeting individuals, congregations, and mid councils to partner with and share in the ministry of sending young adults into a year of transformative service.


**Response:** Congregational Ministries Publishing (CMP) develops and publishes curriculum for all ages of Presbyterians. The denominational curriculum *We Believe* is in the recycle phase of production, meaning that the quarterly curriculum for 2014–15 is being modified and updated from previous years with adjustments to art, activities, and format. A new denominational curriculum is being developed and will release in Fall 2015. For the first time, CMP is developing a Spanish-language version of this new resource simultaneously. The general editor for English resources and the general editor for Spanish-language resources serve as co-leaders on this project. Co-leadership will ensure that the voices of racial ethnic women are represented in both the English and Spanish language versions.

*Feasting on the Word* curriculum is a joint project between Presbyterian Publishing Corporation and CMP. Based on the award winning commentary by the same name, this innovative resource integrates the essays into the curriculum by providing the biblical background for teachers. With more than one hundred contributors to the series, many of whom are racial ethnic women, diverse voices are helping to shape the faith formation of the participants as well as those leading the sessions.

The editorial staff of CMP work with the Racial Ethnic Leadership Development manager to identify racial ethnic women who display the skills necessary to write technically and theologically for a denominational curriculum.

27. **2012 Referral: Item 10-16. Women of Color Consultation Committee Report. Recommendation 4. Direct the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW Ministry Areas, in Consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, to Plan a Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) That Focuses on the Inclusion of Women of Color of All Ages in Leadership and Decision-Making in Presbyteries and Synods, and/or Their Successor Bodies. the Next WoCC Shall Be Held No Later Than the Fall of 2013 and Be Reported on to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, Part I, pp. 61, 75–76, 854–57 of the CD; p. 230 of the printed copy).**
Response: This referral is answered by Item 08-10, “Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of ‘Hearing and Singing New Songs to God’” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 518.)


Response: The Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area, specifically the Office of Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support, in collaboration with the Office of Resources and Relationships in the Theology, Worship and Education ministry area, created the Hispanic/Latino Youth and Young Adult network, which held its inaugural meeting on July 31, 2013. The network held two training events, one in July 2013, and one in November 2013. The network has empowered its youth and young adult participants to lead the group and to mentor other youth and young adults.


Response: Representatives from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the National Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Caucus, Hispanic/Latino-a organization moderators, clergy, church members, theological seminars, and mid council representatives held a National Hispanic/Latino-a consultation on October 30–November 1, 2012, in Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of creating and coordinating a strategy plan that could provide direction and guidance for an effective implementation of the Strategy for Ministry with the Hispanic-Latino Constituencies in the Presbyterian Church, approved by the 215th General Assembly (2003). A draft of an action plan was created at this consultation. On January 20–21, 2014, a core group of those who participated in the consultation met to finalize the strategic plan and to put into place steps to help with its implementation.

Representatives from Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries and Theology, Worship and Education also discussed the National Hispanic Strategy at the Fall Polity Conference in November 2012, and copies of the Hispanic National Strategy and the implementation manual were sent to Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterian pastors, churches, regional caucuses, Latina women’s groups, and Latino men’s groups, with a request to hold training events on the strategy. A copy of the strategy report is available for online download in English and Spanish at http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/hispanic/hispanic-resources. A Hispanic strategy presentation was also held in Orlando at the Hispanic Latin Presbyterian Women “Encuentro” gathering and at the Continuing Education Seminar for Hispanic/Latino-a pastors, the tri-annual National Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterian Caucus assembly, the bi-annual assembly of the Synod of Puerto Rico, the Presbyterian Mission Agency board (at its February 2013 and April 2013 meetings), and at mid councils across the church.


Response: The Joint Working Group planned the Women of Color Consultation, which was held October 11–13, 2013, in Louisville, Kentucky, and entitled “Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of ‘Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.’” The Joint Working Group approved the keynote presenters and provided the framework for the four themes of the consultation (“intersectionality,” “the Church as a system of privilege and discrimination,” “commitment to inclusivity with justice,” and “making visible the leadership of women of color”) from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force Report, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Singing New Harmonies, approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008). A member of the Joint Working Group also attended the consultation as a participant.


Response: Presbyterian News Service has published various news and announcements items on the web on Celebrating a Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God, and it has also been posted on websites in the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area. The decade has also been lifted up in print publications, including Presbyterianans Today, the Racial Ethnic Torch, and in the Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study.

Response: The Office of Public Witness has been very engaged in the Farm Bill reauthorization, including emphasis on conservation and sustainable agriculture. These issues make up a constant component of our environmental and agriculture advocacy. The Stated Clerk sent a letter to this effect to members of Congress on July 26, 2013.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW), in consultation with the Presbyterian Hunger Program and ecumenical and interfaith partners, has been very engaged in the Farm Bill reauthorization. The PC(USA) signed “Faithful Farm Bill Principles” with our ecumenical and interfaith colleagues, and these principles touch on most of these points. Since the 220th General Assembly (2012), the OPW has published twenty-six blog posts, nine email action alerts, and countless Facebook posts and tweets on the Farm Bill (as of November 2013). OPW staff has also given presentations on the Farm Bill and the PC(USA)’s priorities for a fair food and farm system. In addition, our major annual events, Compassion, Peace, and Justice (CPJ) Training Day Conference and Ecumenical Advocacy Days had a theme of food justice. Likewise, the Big Tent CPJ Partner conference focused on food justice, where participants learned about these priorities, engaged in education, advocacy, and reflection on what a just food system should be.


Response: This referral is answered by Item 08-09, “For-Profit Prisons, Jails, and/or Detention Centers Be Added to the List of Companies for Divestment and/or Proscription of Investment Ownership” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 516.)


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has been active in supporting the authority and budget of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Through our budget and appropriations work, we have worked to protect the EPA’s budget. We have also done blog posts on EPA issues since the 220th General Assembly (2012), with more planned. The topic of one of the OPW’s Second Tuesday briefings was on EPA budget and oversight authority. The OPW also participated in the EPA’s public hearing on carbon pollution, authority under the Clean Air Act, on November 7. OPW staff helped to plan a prayer service outside the EPA as the hearing began and the director for the Office of Public Witness offered testimony during the hearing.


Response: This letter from the Stated Clerk was sent to Congress in Fall 2013. The Office of Public Witness also includes concern for the waters of the U.S. in its environmental advocacy and in its 2012 celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act.
Reentry strategies developed at the Pittsburgh consultation, PLACE-MAKING: Creating Community After Incarceration, held January 24–26, 2014, were shared with mid councils and churches working with reentry issues, resulting in the collaborative development of replicable models.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) is advocating on these issues with the Samuel L. Proctor Conference and Washington Interreligious Staff Community (WISC) Partners through the larger context of ending mass incarceration. OPW has participated in on-going organizing efforts to reduce sentencing on minor drug possession charges and nonviolent offenses with both grassroots leaders (Proctor Conference) and the interfaith community of WISC.


Response: A web page listing PC(USA) resources that address our role in helping implement God’s community as a place that is open for all and embraces all with forgiveness will be available by June 1, 2014, to be found at: www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/racism-incarceration-restoration. Rather than develop a paper, resources for congregations are being developed by the Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network. These resources include an analysis of the possibilities and challenges of this ministry.

Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) work with Interfaith for Worker Justice (IWJ) and Comprehensive Immigration Reform addresses Advocacy for Collective Bargaining for All Workers. These coalitions bring the OPW in touch with both faith and labor organizations. Advocacy on the issue of protecting the middle class is being done on many fronts since this struggle is lodged between many issues including budget, employment and immigration.


Response: Deborah’s Daughters Women’s Listening Visits were held in 2013. A listening visit with women seminarians was held at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in February 2013, and with young women participants at the Big Tent in August 2013. In April 2013, the associate for Gender and Racial Justice in Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women consulted with Research Services and developed a survey instrument to capture data for Deborah’s Daughters clergywomen listening visits throughout the church. This survey instrument was completed in the fall of 2013, and a Deborah’s Daughters visit was subsequently held in the Presbytery of Boston in November 2013. Deborah’s Daughters listening visits are planned for 2014 and 2015.


Response: Devotions from the Words Matters project were posted on the AllWomen in the Church Website in 2012 and 2013. The Word Matters project was also featured on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s website carousel of rotating features. The National Council of Churches Justice for Women Working Group ceased meeting in 2013, and a restructuring occurred at the National Council of Churches, which eliminated the program area responsible for the Words Matters project. The Words Matter project ended and has not had active updates since the fall of 2012. The value of the project, since the fall of 2012, resides solely as an archival resource.


Response: A bulletin insert promoting the Words Matter project was posted on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s website as a resource available for download for Advent preparation. The Words Matter project has not had active updates since the fall of 2012. The value of the project, since the fall of 2012, resides solely as an archival resource.


Response: Financial support in the amount of $4,000 was provided to the National Council of Churches by the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area in the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The National Council of Churches Justice for Women Working Group ceased meeting in 2013, and a restructuring occurred at the NCC, which eliminated the program area responsible for the Words Matters project. The Words Matter project ended and has not had active online updates since the fall of 2012.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has been active in educating Presbyterians about sexual assault and relationship violence through its work on the Violence Against Women Act. OPW Summer Fellow devoted significant time to research on next steps and creating educational material. The OPW will continue to engage on issues of sexual assault, violence against women, and relationship violence.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has been actively engaged in the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), in which the Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting (SAFER) Act (not the bill named in this overture, but similar to it) to reduce rape kit backlogs was included. The bill was approved by Congress in early 2013, in a stunning bipartisan vote in both chambers of Congress. No data is yet available as to the effectiveness of these new provisions. From the 220th General Assembly (2012) until July, 2013, the OPW published eleven blog posts about VAWA, sent six email action alerts, and posted countless Facebook posts and tweets. The OPW also requested and received Presbyterian Mission Agency permission to join and participate in the Interfaith Domestic Violence Coalition, which is a good partner on these and many other issues related to sexual and relationship violence. The OPW is also considering what are the best ways to support military victims of sexual assault through legislation or executive order.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) is actively engaged in the congressional debate over comprehensive immigration reform. Immigration is a top priority for the OPW in the 2013 legislative year, which is incredibly timely with the congressional action on immigration reform. The OPW annual issues brochure identifies “Welcoming Our Immigrant Brothers and Sisters” as a key priority. We have devoted 100 percent of the time of our Bill Emerson Hunger Fellow (six-month term in the office) to immigration reform issues, and she has been very engaged in the debate. She and other office staff are also intentional about collaborating with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Immigration Issues in the Office of General Assembly. From January to July, 2013, the OPW published sixteen blog posts, four email action alerts, and countless Facebook posts and tweets. The immigration debate slowed down after the activity in the Senate over the summer, 2013, and movement in the House is slow. The OPW will continue, in concert with the Office of Immigration Issues, to monitor this issue and to invite Presbyterians to action.
Immigrant groups in the greater Washington area. OPW also republished some of the action alerts prepared by partners in the IIC. OPW has also been active in engaging with staff attends coalition meetings; participate in strategy sessions, advocacy visits, vigils, protests, press conferences, etc. We tweets. The OPW will continue, in concert with the Office of Immigration Issues, to monitor this issue and to invite

opposing-hr-2278/. The OPW remains committed to advocating for Comprehensive Immigration Reform and working closely with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Immigration Issues and the Stated Clerk.

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OPW staff attends coalition meetings; participate in strategy sessions, advocacy visits, vigils, protests, press conferences, etc. We also republish some of the action alerts prepared by partners in the IIC. OPW has also been active in engaging with immigrant groups in the greater Washington area.

OPW has worked closely with the Office of Immigration Issues in order to engage Presbyterians around the justice issues involved in comprehensive immigration reform, focusing on a pathway to citizenship, family unity, and human rights concerns over militarization of our southern border. We have been in touch regularly with the Office of Immigration Issues to make sure that our strategy is correct and that we are on message.

Response: In consultation with World Mission, a letter was sent to all members of congress in support of the Christian Indonesians, advocating a just resolution to their immigration status. After discussing the issue with immigration staff of Church World Service, the OPW decided that the best course of action would be to advocate for a provision to be included in the immigration reform bill that would alleviate the current impasse and allow the Indonesian Christians to apply for asylum. The specific legislation that was mentioned in this referral only has one cosponsor who is deceased. As it is highly unlikely that this legislation will move forward, taking action to include something in the immigration reform bill seemed the wiser path to take.

The Office of Public Witness (OPW), in collaboration with the Office on Immigration Issues, prepared a letter for the Stated Clerk to communicate to President Obama, Director of Homeland Security, Director of Immigration, Customs and Enforcement, and the United States Congress, calling for the termination of the S-Comm Program, detailing the detrimental impact of S-Comm on the security of our families and our communities. The letter was posted in the denomination's web site at http://www.pcusa.org/resource/opposing-hr-2278/. The OPW remains committed to advocating for Comprehensive Immigration Reform and working closely with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Immigration Issues and the Stated Clerk.

Response: Immigration is a top priority for the Office of Public Witness (OPW) in the 2013 legislative year, which is incredibly timely with the congressional action on immigration reform. The OPW annual issues brochure identifies “Welcoming our Immigrant Brothers and Sisters” as a key priority. We have devoted 100 percent of the time of our Bill Emerson Hunger Fellow (six-month term in the office) to immigration reform issues, and she has been very engaged in the debate. She and other office staff are also intentional about collaborating with the Office of Immigration Issues in the Office of the General Assembly. OPW published sixteen blog posts, four email action alerts, and countless Facebook posts and tweets. The OPW will continue, in concert with the Office of Immigration Issues, to monitor this issue and to invite Presbyterians to action.

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Assembly (2012) and the 221st General Assembly (2014) and the Office of Theology and Worship Prepare and Distribute educational Materials to All Presbyteries and Congregations (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 46, 47, 1300 of the CD; p. 273 of the print copy).

Response: A number of resources have been developed and are available at [www.pcusa.org/marriage](http://www.pcusa.org/marriage). These include a six-week study for congregations and councils, a two-hour study specifically for councils, past general assembly statements, and other resources. The availability of these resources has been made widely known through news articles, social media, mid council communications, and the web platforms. The Office of the General Assembly will report any responses to the assembly.


Response: The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations worked with the Office of Public Witness and the Office of the Stated Clerk to send a letter with these calls to the persons in the United States Government identified in 2012 Referral: Item 14-01.

61. 2012 Referral: Item 14-02. On Support for the People of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Recommendation 2. Direct the Stated Clerk to Communicate to the President of the United States, the U.S. State Department, and Appropriate Congressional Leaders the Need to Ensure That the Fundamental Human Rights and the Political Will of the Congolese People Are Fully Respected by the Strengthening of Transparent, Accountable, and Effective Democratic Institutions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and to Call Upon the Government of the United States to Do the Items Listed in a. Through g.—From the Presbytery of Boston (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 63, 1304–08 of the CD; pp. 275–76 of the print copy).

Response: In consultation with the World Mission Africa Office, a letter from the Stated Clerk advocating for the items in 2012 Referral: Item 14-02 was sent December 1, 2013.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) has advocated for the human rights of the Congolese people; transparent, accountable, and effective democracy in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and conditions conducive to free, fair, and credible elections; transparency in extractive industries; the minimization of the impact of conflict minerals; and quality primary and secondary education in the DRC with Congress and the administration. The OPW has organized an advocacy day for members of the Congo Mission Network. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (PMUN) has done similar advocacy in meetings with representatives of the United Nations Security Council. Action alerts inviting Presbyterians to contact Congress in support of these positions have been created and shared with members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Staff from the OPW and the PMUN are in frequent contact with the Congo Mission Network.


Response: The Office of Public Witness has advocated for policies consistent with the listed affirmations with Congress and the administration. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations has advocated for policies consistent with the listed affirmations in meetings with representatives of the United Nations Security Council and within the United Nations community. Both offices have consulted with other ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and with the Office of General Assembly in their advocacy work.

64. 2012 Referral: Item 14-NB. Recommendation. The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Presbyterian Ministry to the UN, and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to Study and Consider Actions to Bring Justice to the Disputed Territory of Western Sahara, Considered by Many International Jurists to Be Illegally Occupied by Morocco, Including the Issue of Corporate Engagement and the Renewal of Diplom-
matic Efforts to Support Self-Determination, and Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—From the 220th General Assembly (2012). (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 64, 1347 of the CD; p. 280 of the print copy)

Response: This referral is answered by Item 11-08, “Western Sahara: Occupied, Non-Self-Governing Territory, and Test Case for International Law” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (See p. 840.)


Response: The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, in consultation with the Office of the Stated Clerk and the World Mission area coordinator for the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia, shared this call in a statement that went to the member states of the United Nations on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

66. 2012 Referral: Item 15-02. On Boycotting Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories and Hadiklaim (an Israeli Date Growers Cooperative). Recommendation 2. Call for the Boycott of All Israeli products Coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Including AHAVA Dead Sea Laboratories Beauty Products and All Date Products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Co-Operative Ltd, Often Marked by the Brand Names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River (Not Israeli Products from Israel.)—From the Presbytery of San Francisco (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 41, 1366–70 of the CD; p. 281 of the print copy).

Response: A staff team comprised from the Office of Public Witness (OPW), Presbyterian Ministry to the United Nations (PMUN) and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) conducted research on consumer products and goods produced in the illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. By June 2014, a website will be developed and provide General Assembly policies, information on settlements and why they are an obstacle to a just peace, lists of products to boycott, and campaigns individual Presbyterians can support. This information served as a basis for a communication by the Stated Clerk inviting mid councils, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to support the boycott.

In addition, a consultation was held at the PMUN for various Presbyterian church groups and staff to increase coordination of boycott activities. Also, in partnership with other faith-based investors, MRTI engaged several retailers selling consumer products from the illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.


Response: Considerable attention has been given to the situation in Israel and Palestine. Mission Personnel remained in the region until late 2013, and work was done to strengthen the bonds with ecumenical partners in the region. This work was augmented by several visits by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) members and staff, church members involved in congregation to congregation partnerships, and tours led by Presbyterians permitting participants to encounter the people and the reality within which they live.

Work was done by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation in partnership with the Presbyterian Mission Agency to identify investments in the West Bank that would contribute to the economic well-being of Palestinians without normalizing or strengthening the Israeli Occupation of Palestinian Territories, or being seen as a substitute for a political solution to the conflict. In addition, corporate engagement with companies operating in Israel and Palestine urged the companies to practice equal employment opportunity in hiring to promote integration and better understanding across religious and ethnic lines.


Response: This referral is answered by Item 14-01, “1001 New Worshipping Communities” being presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). See p. 995.)
Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) to hold a national consultation of representatives from the GAMC, African American Leaders with Experience in Evangelism and Church Growth, the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC), and Mid Councils to Be Held in 2013, in Order to Develop Strategies and Collaborate on Growing New and Existing African American Congregations and Communities of Faith in the PC(USA)—From the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 48, 49, 1444–49 of the CD; p. 290 of the print copy).

Response: An African American Church Growth Consultation was held in Louisville, Kentucky, on May 23–25, 2013. Forty participants including mid council executives, leaders from the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC), African American leaders with experience in evangelism and church growth, and staff from the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly met to review the African American Church Growth Strategy and collaborate on growing new African American worshiping communities and transforming existing congregations.

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Office of the General Assembly met to review the African American Church Growth Strategy and collaborate on growing new African American Congregational Support, provided training for African American church growth coaches in coordination with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) staff hosted a one-day meeting for African American leaders with experience in evangelism and church growth, and staff from the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to Hold a National Consultation to Develop Strategies and Policies to Support Racial Ethnic, Multicultural, and New Immigrant Church Growth in the PC(USA)—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 48, 49, 1444–49 of the CD; p. 290 of the print copy).

Response: The Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area, specifically the Office of African American Congregational Support, provided training for African American church growth coaches in coordination with the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area in May 2013. An additional training was held October 28–30, 2013. The coaches will be deployed to five regions and will collaborate with mid councils and congregations to analyze needs, access the potential for mission and ministry, and work toward African American church growth.

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Over the past six years Evangelism and Church Growth has been actively pursuing alternative means for funding the work of new church development and new worshiping communities. In partnership with the Presbyterian Foundation, and Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., we have been diligently working to convert funds originally used for brick and mortar to fund new church developments and new worshiping communities with great success. See the Presbyterian Foundation’s video on this work: http://vimeo.com/46238777. Through the Office of Mission Program grants, we have created a new delivery system for funding new worshiping communities. See the Presbyterian News Service article—http://www.pcusa.org/news/2012/11/2/new-mission-program-grants-1001/. The topic of funding and sending local missionaries is under discussion with world mission and mid council leaders. Local congregations have been encouraged to participate in the new worshiping communities’ movement by sending individual and multiple leader church plant teams in collaboration with mid councils.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) has worked collaboratively with the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to develop a plan that will ensure the translation of essential documents in both Korean and Spanish. Recognizing that interpretation of the term essential could be different for both constituencies, PMA staff hosted a one-day meeting for...
each constituency. The participants devised a working document that outlined which existing documents and resources take precedence to be translated and determined which future documents should be included. For both constituencies, it was imperative that the lists include submittals submitted to the General Assembly and statements and media releases produced by the Stated Clerk. Other items are not mutual to both constituencies and therefore may be translated in one of the stated languages. Participants of both meetings agreed to act as ongoing advisers to the translators should the need arise.

To facilitate the work of translation, the PMA has hired two translators: one for Spanish language and one for Korean language. Both translators were hired in summer 2013 and are actively translating documents. While the translators are employed by the PMA, the costs associated with these new positions are shared with the OGA.

Two web pages (one for each constituency) are being developed. Both web pages will serve as aggregated sites that will link to all respective language-specific resources, announcements, and documents that are being translated. The completion of the web pages is scheduled for spring 2014.

Response in Spanish: El informe del comité especial acerca de la naturaleza de la Iglesia en el siglo XXI. 5. Instruya al Concilio de misión de la Asamblea General y a la Oficina de la Asamblea General a trabajar en el desarrollo de planes específicos para proporcionar accesibilidad básica de información esencial del Concilio de misión de la Asamblea General para los principales grupos de idiomas diferentes al inglés. El Concilio de misión de la Asamblea General informará a la 221va Asamblea General.

La Agencia de misión presbiteriana (PMA por sus siglas en inglés) ha trabajado en colaboración con la Oficina de la Asamblea General (OGA por sus siglas en inglés) para desarrollar un plan que asegure la traducción de los documentos esenciales en coreano y español. Al reconocer que la interpretación de la expresión esencial podría ser diferente para los dos grupos, el personal del PMA organizó una reunión de un día para cada grupo. Las personas que participaron elaboraron un documento de trabajo donde describen los documentos existentes y los recursos que tienen prioridad para ser traducidos y determinaron que documentos se deberán traducir en el futuro. Para ambos grupos, fue imperativo que las listas incluyeran menciones presentadas a la Asamblea General y las declaraciones y comunicados de prensa producidos por el secretario permanente. Hay otros artículos que no se adecuan para ambos grupos, por lo que se pueden traducir en una de las lenguas indicadas. Las personas que participaron de ambas reuniones acordaron actuar como grupo asesor en curso a los traductores en caso de necesidad.

Para facilitar el trabajo de traducción, PMA ha contratado a dos traductores: una para el idioma español y uno para el idioma coreano. Ambos traductores fueron contratados en el verano de 2013 y están traduciendo activamente documentos. A pesar de que los traductores son contratados por PMA, los costos asociados con estas nuevas posiciones son compartidos con la Oficina de la Asamblea General.

Se están desarrollando dos páginas web las cuales servirán como sitios agregados que estarán conectadas con todos los recursos, anuncios y documentos de los idiomas en los cuales se está traduciendo. El término de las páginas web está programado para la primavera del 2014.

Response in Korean: 21세기 교회의 본질에 대한 특별 위원회(SC)의 보고

GAMC와 총회 사무국(OGA)에 지시하여 비 영어권 주요 그룹들이 총회 선교 위원회(GAMC)의 필수(essential) 정보들을 접근할 수 있는 특별 계획들을 개발할 수 있도록 해주기 바탕이다. GAMC는 이것에 대해 제 221차 미국 장로교 총회에 보고하도록 해주기 바탕이다.

장로교 선교국(PMA)은 필수 문서들이 한국어와 스페인어로 번역될 수 있도록 하기 위해 총회 사무국(OGA)과 협력하고 있다. “필수”라는 용어가 한국쪽과 스페인어 부서에 각각 다른 것을 의미할 수 있다는 것을 인식한 후, PMA 직원들은 각 부서와 하루 동안 만남을 가졌다. 참가자들은 현존하는 문서들과 자료들 중 어떤 것들이 우선적으로 번역되어야 하는지를 설명해주자는 지침서를 만들었고, 미래의 어떤 문서들이 번역되어야 하는지를 결정했다. 두 부서는 총회에 제출하는 개정안과, 총회 서기에 의한 성명서들과 미디어 발표들을 반드시 번역해야 하는 목록들이라는 것에 일치했다. 다른 목록들에 대해서는 두 부서가 각각 다른 의견을 보였기 때문에, 그들 각각이 결정한 목록들이 번역될 수 있을 것이다. 양쪽 참가자들은 필요가 있을 때마다 번역자들의 지속적인 자문 역할을 해주기로 동의했다.

번역 작업을 촉진시키기 위해, PMA는 두 명의 번역자를 고용했다. 스페인어를 위해 한 명, 한국어를 위해 한 명. 두 번역자들은 2013년 여름에 고용되어 문서들을 열심히 번역하고 있다. 번역자들은 PMA에 의해 고용되었지만, 이 새로운 자리와 관련된 비용은 OGA와 공동으로 분담한다.

두 개의 웹사이트(각 부서 당 하나씩)가 만들어지고 있다. 두 웹페이지는 집계 섹션으로 만들어져서 번역되고 있는 각 언어로 된 자료들, 광고들, 문서들을 그곳에서 모두 볼 수 있게 해줄 것이다. 웹페이지는 2014년 봄에 완성될 예정이다.

Response: A web page will be developed by June 1, 2014 to be found at www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/just-compensation that links to a number of Presbyterian resources on the nature of compensation, economic justice, and potential practices.


Response: The 211th General Assembly (2012) charged the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the other five agencies of the PC(USA) to articulate a renewed call for the Priesthood of All Believers, moving away from models of church that rely on an unhealthy dependence on professionalized ministry and ignore the call of believers for mission and ministry in daily life. This call is consistent with the description of membership and ordered ministries in our Form of Government.

Membership is “a commitment to participate in Christ’s mission.” And that members are therefore responsible to proclaim “the good news in word and deed,” work “in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment,” and participate “in the governing responsibilities of the church” (Book of Order, G-1.0304).

In addition, deacons are called, in particular, to engage in “caring for members in need, handling educational tasks, cultivating liberality in giving, collecting and disbursing monies to specific persons or causes, or overseeing the buildings and property of the congregation” (Book of Order, G-2.0202). Ruling elders are called, in particular, “to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships” (Ibid, G-2.0301).

The Presbyterian Mission Agency commits to continue to attend to the important roles in the church of members, deacons, and elders and to integrate this into our work. In keeping with the General Assembly mandate, we commend this charge to the other agencies and ask them to consider joining the Mission Agency in this commitment.


Response: Great Commission Churches equipping and nurturing people to follow Jesus in their communities by reaching new people and doing justice.

GREAT COMMISSION—Matthew 28:18–20: “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

a. Light of Hope Presbyterian Church, Marietta, Georgia

Light of Hope Presbyterian Church is the prayerful result of three struggling churches coming together to be one church to serve their community. Each church was originally developed due to “white flight” in the Atlanta, Georgia, area. Each of these churches experienced their neighborhoods once again radically changing. But this time, instead of leaving, they made a commitment to serve people where God had planted them. To serve their neighborhood, they decided to sell the three church properties and start from scratch. They called Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz as the pastor to lead them in this fresh start. They are using the “Engage” curriculum as a resource to help them be the church in their community and share their faith grounded in God’s redeeming work in Jesus. Their ministry is taking them into the lives of people they never dreamed of reaching. Max, a homeless man in the community, has found a home in the Light of Hope Church and has experienced hope for the first time in his life. He was baptized by the church and is now a growing disciple of Christ. http://www.lohpc.com

b. CN Jenkins Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina

Under the leadership of Jerry Cannon, CN Jenkins is making disciples, reaching new people, and serving others in their community. This growing, vibrant church sends out volunteers into their community and is a place in which people can not
only receive spiritual nurture and care but also experience their physical needs being met through a health clinic, a clothes closet, and free haircuts. Through serving Charlotte and CN Jenkins members following Jesus into the community, this church has experienced many people making professions of faith and joining their faith community. 
http://www.cnjenkins.org/home.cfm & http://bcove.me/94bwllwq

c. **North Avenue Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia**

Scott Weimer, pastor of NAPC, states, “We are praying mightily that God will use us as a Great Commission Church.” Their ratio of baptisms to deaths is 3-1, and in the past few years have baptized eighty mainland Chinese students, almost all “doc” and “post-doc” students. Their growth over the past three to five years is nearly 40 percent multiethnic and multinational. The congregation has developed three worship services, each in a different style of worship, without falling into “worship wars.” Recently, they have held Dave Ramsey Financial Peace courses for middle class folks, and the church is currently offering a newly developed financial management course for the working poor. They continue to help people follow Jesus in ways that involve sharing faith in authentic ways and doing justice. 
http://www.napc.org/

*d. The Open Door, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

The Open Door is a church planted in a community with a vision to not only reach the people in their neighborhood but to make their neighborhood a better place to live by partnering with other local ministries and through developing an Urban Farm that supports the working poor and brings people into the loving presence of Jesus. They have a vibrant worship service each week and an intentional process for faith development. There is artistic development happening all over their neighborhood. New galleries, artist’s lofts, cafés, ethnic restaurants, and other types of businesses are moving into the East End on a weekly basis. This activity is an indicator of a grassroots movement among 20–30 year olds and artists to move into this section of Pittsburgh. The Open Door sees the community redevelopment initiatives already in place as fertile ground for sharing the Gospel. They are a church with a heart to connect, partner, and develop relationships with young artists and organizations in the neighborhood. As a result, many young people are being reached and are on mission to share the love of Jesus and do Justice in their neighborhoods. At the heart of the BJ Woodworth’s (pastor) vision is making disciples. 
http://pghopendoor.org

*e. Hope for Life Chapel (1001 New Worshiping Community), Los Angeles, California*

Tamara John is the pastor of one of our 1001New Worshiping Communities. Her ministry flows directly from what God is doing in her life. As she has experienced God working in the beauty and difficulty of her life, she has felt a call to do ministry with people who have been wounded by life. Her call is lived out in an RV ministry in a park with fifty-two RVs, with each housing one to six people. Through worship and care, she is ministering to people often forgotten by the local church. She works with and serves people who have lost jobs, are addicted, and have been bruised by life. Tamara states, “I get to baptize people now, to bring them down into the water and to raise them up into new life in Jesus Christ. That is my hope for everyone I meet—for Jesus to make them new, with all the old gone.”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8GsbvcZpMw

*f. New Hope Presbyterian Church, Orange, California*

New Hope is growing followers of Jesus Christ who are equipped and nurtured in the body of Christ to serve people in Orange, California. Some of them are called to go door-to-door in neighborhoods talking with people about the needs of the community and the needs in their own lives. They present the gospel as the foundation by which the church is meeting those needs. They also support music in the local schools by raising the money to provide the music program and by offering lessons to fifty-two students. They make an effort to meet the needs of their community by serving children in need and offering hope where there has been little hope. New Hope’s pastor, Chineta Goodjoin, has a heart to see her community transformed through God’s love revealed in the body of Christ. 
http://mynewhopepres.org/#/my-new-hope
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nw15CXLkHw


Response: Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff, along with staff from the Office of the General Assembly, have worked with the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar. The report from that special committee will go directly to the General Assembly. See Item 13-01, Report and Recommendations from the General Assembly Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar to the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) A web page has been developed at www.pcusa.org/belhar.

78. 2012 Referral: Item 21-01. On Instructing MRTI to Study and Report Corporate Practices of Health Insurance Companies and Possible Divestment of Same. Recommendation 2. The MRTI Committee Is Instructed to Be in Conversation with the PC(USA) Board of Pensions to Ensure the PC(USA) Health Plan Submits to the Same Standards That PC(USA),
Response: The Board of Pensions was reviewed by a General Assembly Review Committee as part of the normal periodic review process. These discussions included the healthcare insurance program and other benefits offered by the Board. The report of the review committee will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014) for its examination and action. See Item 12-A, General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions.


Response: The designated funding of $10,060 in 2013 and $6,360 were used to bring the Working Group to a face-to-face meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, and cover expenses related to curriculum development.


Response: By June 2014, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s website will link to the policy “Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities” accompanied by words of encouragement that congregations and mid councils study and implement the policy.


Response: The entities designated as working group participants have developed and implemented a plan that fulfills the recommendations of 2012 Referral: Item 21-02 at every level of participation. The Office of the General Assembly will provide a report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). See I. Referrals in Progress, E. Office of the General Assembly, Referral in Progress 2, above (p. 115).


Response: The Office of Public Witness, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations and the Presbyterian Church, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA) through Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options have utilized their resources to support full access to reproductive health care. This includes advocacy for the full implementation of health care reform, written support for Medicaid expansion and the requirement that employer health plans include contraception, and collaboration with international nongovernmental organizations (NGO) and ecumenical partners to ensure universal access to reproductive care.


Response: The Office of Public Witness (OPW) and the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA) have demonstrated support for the Healthy Families Act, the Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act, and other federal programs that meet these goals, through direct communication with Congress and through action alerts inviting Presbyterians to advocate on these issues. Essential to this advocacy is support for federal programs to provide workers with paid sick leave and parental leave, preserve worker/family protections, and create a universal pre-K early education program. The OPW called on Presbyterians to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Family Medical Leave Act and supported a bill in Congress to provide federal workers with paid parental leave. Because the federal government is the nation's largest employer, changes in its own practices and policies toward its workers frequently lead the way to new industry and professional standards.

Response: Implementation plans are being developed by entities within Compassion, Peace and Justice, including the Office of Public Witness, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, and Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA).


Response: An Extra Commitment Opportunity Account E051409 (http://www.presbyterianmission.org/donate/E051409/) now exists to be utilized to support Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN) in the development of and to expand participation in certification of an AIDS competent church and church leaders programs and to distribute information to mid councils and congregations to better educate the church to the existence of this opportunity.


Response: In 2013 and 2014, unrestricted funding in the amounts of $266,000 and $247,000, respectively, were added to the Office of Theological Education. These amounts were added to offset the impact of applying cost recovery.


Response: A resource guide will be available First Quarter 2014 on the Presbyterian Mission Agency website that can be accessed by employees, General Assembly agencies, presbyteries, and synods.


Response: Beginning January 2014, supplier diversity training for new employees has been added as part of new employee orientation. In addition, supplier diversity training is being presented as one of the classes available at annual staff development day.

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**Item 01-03**

[The assembly approved Item 01-03 with amendment. See p. 2.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the following list of referrals of business:

**00 Plenary**

00-01 Proposed Committee Structure—OGA
00-02 General Assembly Nominating Committee 2014 Nominations, GANC
00-03 General Assembly Nominating Committee Slate Proposed by Moderator Neal D. Presa, MOD
01 Business Referrals

01-01 Proposed Docket—COGA
01-02 Plenary Consent Agenda: Referrals in Progress and Final Responses to Referrals

02 Bills and Overtures

03 General Assembly Procedures

For Plenary Action

03-01 On Issuing a Request to Teaching Elders to Participate in the Administrative Costs of the Church by Paying Per Capita—From the Presbytery of Albany
03-02 On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Limit Payments of Per Capita—From the Presbytery of Detroit
03-03 On Amending G-3.0500 to Give YAAD’S Voice And Vote and to Rename Them to “Youth Adult Commissioners”—From the Synod of the Covenant
03-04 Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—From the Committee on Review of Biennial Assemblies
03-05 Joint COGA/PMA Budget Proposals for General Assembly Per Capita Budgets 2014–2016—COGA/PMA
03-06 A Resolution to Support Hotel and Hospitality Workers Through the Adoption of Just Policies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) — ACWC
03-07 Amendment to Standing Rule H.1.b.(3) (Moderatorial Election Expenses)— COGA
03-08 Confirmation of Class of 2018 for the Presbyterian Historical Society Board—COGA
03-09 Standards of Ethics for Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly—COGA
03-10 Approve Appointment and Terms of Associate Stated Clerks—COGA
03-11 Approve Site Selection for 224th General Assembly (2020)—COGA

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

03-Info A. Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly—COGA
03-Info B. Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society—PHS
03-Info C. Moderator’s Report
03-Info D. Revised Covenant of Understanding

Information

03-Info General Assembly Nominating Committee Agency Summary—GANC
03-Info Revised Covenant of Understanding—COGA

04 Middle East Issues

For Plenary Action

04-01 On Reviewing General Assembly Policy Regarding the Two-State Solution in Israel Palestine—From the Presbytery of San Francisco
04-02 On Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions—From the Presbytery of San Francisco
04-03 On Engaging Presbyterian to Witness for Palestinian Human Rights and for Ending the Occupation of Palestine—from the Presbytery of Grace
04-04 On Supporting Middle East Peacemaking—From the Presbytery of New Covenant
04-05 On Calling for a Boycott of All Hewlett-Packard Products—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick
04-06 On Affirming Occupation-free Investment in Palestine—From the Presbytery of Mackinac
04-07 On Adopting the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Recommendation on Divestment—from the Synod of the Covenant
04-09 Resolution on Equal Rights for All Inhabitants of Israel and Palestine and on Conversations with Prophetic Voices—ACSWP

05 Mid Councils Issues

For Plenary Action

05-01 On Consultation Before Possible Reorganization of Synod or Presbytery Boundaries—From the Presbytery of Homestead
05-02 On the Reconfiguration of Synod Boundaries—From the Synod of Puerto Rico
05-03 On Transferring Han Yang Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of San Fernando—from the Synod of Southern California & Hawaii
Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
05-A Synod Minutes

Information
05-Info MCC Minutes

06 Church Polity and Ordered Ministry

For Plenary Action
06-01 On Amending G-2.0104b. by Replacing “Guided by” with “Obedient to” in Reference to Scripture and the Confessions—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee
06-02 On Amending G-4.0206a. Regarding the Sale or Encumbrance of Property Given to a Local Congregation as a Gift—From the Presbytery of Lake Michigan
06-03 On Amending G-2.0509, Renunciation of Jurisdiction—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta
06-04 On Amending G-2.0803, the Call Process and Background Checks—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta
06-05 On Amending G-2.0509, Renunciation of Jurisdiction—From the Presbytery of Western Reserve
06-06 On Amending G-3.0301 Regarding the Minimum Number of Operating Sessions and Teaching Elders In Presbytery—From the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon
06-07 On Amending D-10.0103 – Referral to Investigating Committee—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley
06-08 On Amending G-2.0401 to Allow Presbyteries to Elect and Ordain Persons as Commissioned Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of San Diego
06-09 On Amending F-2.05, G-2.0105, and W-4.4003c to Clarify What is Meant by Essentials of the Reformed Faith—From the Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley
06-10 On Amending G-1.0403, Affiliate Congregational Membership for Teaching Elders—From the Presbytery of Twin Cities Area
06-11 On Amending G-3.0403(c) to Allow Churches to Realign with Other Established Presbyteries within the PCUSA—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler
06-12 Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams
06-13 Request for Constitutional Interpretation of G-2.1001, Functions of Commissions Ruling Elders, From the Presbytery of Santa Fe—ACC
06-14 Request for Constitutional Interpretation of G-3.0403c, From the Synod Council, Synod of South Atlantic—ACC

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary

Information
06-Info A. General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Roster and Decisions—OGA
06-Info B. Mid Council Statements of Compliance with the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions—OGA
06-Info C. Report on Proposed Amendments—OGA
06-Info D. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Agency Summary
06-Info E. Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) Agency Summary

07 Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

For Plenary Action
07-01 On Distinguishing Between Biblical Terms for Israel and Those Applied to the Modern Political State of Israel in Christian Liturgy—From the Presbytery of Chicago
07-02 The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) —GACEIR
07-03 Review of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A.—GACEIR
07-04 Invitation to Ecumenical Delegates to the 222nd General Assembly—GACEIR
07-05 The Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Dialogue—GACEIR
07-06 World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly Delegation Report—GACEIR
07-07 Seventh Day Adventists Dialogue—GACEIR
07-08 Review of National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.—GACEIR
07-A Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

Information
07-Info General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Agency Summary

08 Mission Coordination

For Plenary Action
08-01 On Support for the IMCK Endowment and the Endowment Concept — New Castle
08-02 [Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]
08-03 Proposed Revisions to the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action — PMA
08-04 Revision to the PMA Manual of Operations — PMA
08-05 A Resolution to Define and Interpret Standards for PC(USA) Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges — ACREC
08-06 A Resolution to Develop a Churchwide Antiracism Policy — ACREC
08-07 Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals — ACSWP
08-08 The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing the Church’s Urban Vision — ACSWP
08-09 For-Profit Prisons, Jails, and/or Detention Centers Be Added to the List of Companies for Divestment and/or Proscription of Investment Ownership — PMA
08-10 Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God — PMA
08-11 Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions — PMA
08-12 The Institutional Relationship Agreement between Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. and the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) — PMA
08-13 Report of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force — PMA
08-14 A Resolution to Address Child/Youth Protection Policies and Resources in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) — ACWC
08-15 Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church — PMA
08-16 Confirmation of Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director — PMC

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
08-A Minutes, Presbyterian Mission Agency
08-B Audit

Information
08-Info B. Report of the Presbyterian Mission Agency on Current Task Forces, Work Groups, and Ad Hoc Committees — PMA
08-Info D. EEO/AA Report — PMA

09 Social Justice Issues

For Plenary Action
09-01 On Taking Meaningful Action to Reduce Gun Violence — From the Presbytery of National Capital
09-02 On Entering a Two-Year Season of Reflection on the Plight of Unwanted Children, and Appointing a Special Committee on Abortion Review — From the Presbytery of South Alabama
09-03 [Item 09-03 became Item 11-15. There is no Item 09-03.]
09-04 Regarding a National Moratorium on the Imposition of the Death Penalty — From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta
09-05 On a Two-Year Study to Discern How to Advocate for Effective Drug Policies — From the Presbytery of San Francisco
09-06 On Advocating for Financial and Political Reform — From the Presbytery of Santa Fe
09-07 On Gun Violence Prevention — From the Presbytery of Hudson River
09-08 [Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]
09-09 On Food Sovereignty for All — From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta
09-10 On a Study of End of Life Issues — From the Synod of the Covenant
09-11 Affirming the Importance of Maternal and Child Nutrition over 1000 Days — From the Presbytery of National Capital
09-12 On Providing a Trauma Crisis Counseling Consultation to Train in Best Practices in Caring for Survivors of Homicide Victims — From the Presbytery of Nevada
09-13 A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.) — ACREC

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09-14 National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force Report
09-15 A Resolution to Educate Against and Help Prevent Voter Suppression—ACREC
09-16 Tax Justice: A Christian Response to a New Gilded Age—ACSWP
09-17 Self-Study Report of the ACWC—ACWC
09-18 Membership of GA Committee on Representation—GACOR
09-19 Standard Definition of Supplier Diversity—GACOR

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
09-A Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation

Information
09-Info Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Agency Summary
09-Info Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) Agency Summary 2012–2014
09-Info General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) Agency Summary

10 Civil Union and Marriage Issues

For Plenary Action
10-01 On Amending W-4.9000 Concerning the Church’s Role in Legal Marriage and Services of Christian Covenant—From the Presbytery of Lehigh
10-02 On Amending W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Presbytery of Cascades
10-03 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Affirm Pastoral Discretion in Performing Marriage Ceremonies—From the Presbytery of Heartland
10-04 On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Affirm Pastoral Discretion in Performing Marriage Ceremonies—From the Presbytery of East Iowa
10-05 On Amending W-4.9001, Christian Marriage—From the Presbytery of Midwest Hanni
10-06 On Rescinding the 1991 Authoritative Interpretation Concerning Teaching Elders Performing Marriages for Same-Gender Couples And Sessions Permitting such Ceremonies in their Facilities—From the Presbytery of New Castle
10-07 On Creating a Task Force to Identify Common Ground and Reconcilable Differences with Respect to Same Gender Marriage—From the Presbytery of Eastern Korean

11 Peacemaking and International Issues

For Plenary Action
11-01 On Peace Discernment—From the Presbytery of Baltimore
11-02 On Turning Attention to the Plight of the Church That is Suffering Due to Sectarian Violence and Persecution in Egypt and Other Parts of the World—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh
11-03 On Removing Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism—From the Presbytery of Long Island
11-04 On the Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones) —From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley
11-05 On Lifting All Travel Restrictions for U. S. Citizens Traveling To Cuba—From the Presbytery of St. Augustine
11-06 On Authorizing a Consultative Process to Provide Guidance for the Church’s Response to the Dramatic Changes Taking Place in Cuba—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe
11-07 On Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide—From the Presbytery of Los Ranchos
11-08 Western Sahara: Occupied, Non-Self-Governing Territory, and Test Case for International Law—PMA
11-09 A Resolution on Behalf of Dominicans of Haitian Descent and any Others Impacted by the Decision 168/13 of the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic—ACREC
11-10 Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance—ACSWP
11-11 Risking Peace in a Violent World: Affirmations for Presbytery Consideration—ACSWP
11-12 On Helping to Remedy the Tragic Conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—From the Presbytery of Boston
11-13 A Resolution on Developing a Comprehensive Social Witness Policy on Human Trafficking as a Human Rights Issue—ACWC
11-14 Resolution on Sexual Violence within the U.S. Military Services: A 2014 Human Rights Update—ACSWP
11-15 On Encouraging Use of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation—From the Presbytery of New York City

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
11-A ACSWP Minutes

Information
11-Info Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) Agency Summary
12  BOP, PILP, PPC and Foundation

For Plenary Action
- 12-01 On Amending G-2.0504b. to Require Participation in the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas
- 12-02 On Directing the Board of Pensions in the Distribution of Pension Benefits of Church Leaders and Administrators of Churches Leaving the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Tropical Florida
- 12-03 On Publishing the Current List of Churches Certified as Relief of Conscience Churches—From the Presbytery of National Capital
- 12-04 On Directing the Board of Pensions to Study Allowing Small Churches to Participate in the Benefits Plan Based on One-Half of the Current Median Salary Formula—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe [Concurrence withdrawn. Not referred for lack of a concurrence.]
- 12-05 Confirm Election of Individuals to the PILP Board of Directors—PMA
- 12-06 [There is no 12-06.]
- 12-07 Reelection of Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer—FDN
- 12-08 Confirm Directors to the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN
- 12-09 Churchwide Gifts Program—FDN
- 12-10 [There is no 12-10.]
- 12-11 Confirm the Election of the President of the Board of Pensions—BOP

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
- 12-A General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions—CoR-BOP
- 12-B General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation—CoR-FDN
- 12-C Report on Benefits Plan Amendments—BOP
- 12-D Minutes, Board of Pensions—BOP
- 12-E Minutes, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation—PPC
- 12-F Minutes, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program—PILP
- 12-G Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation—FDN

Information
- 12-Info Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Agency Summary—FDN
- 12-Info New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.—FDN
- 12-Info Presbyterian Church (USA) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—PILP

13  Theological Issues and Institutions

For Plenary Action
- 13-01 Report of the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar
- 13-02 Draft of Proposed Directory for Worship to Church for Study and Comment—PMA
- 13-03 Approve President of Princeton Theological Seminary—COTE
- 13-04 Grant Permission to Theological Seminaries to Celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper—COTE
- 13-05 Trustees of Theological Institutions—COTE
- 13-06 Approval of List of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Related Schools, Colleges and Universities—PMA
- 13-07 Report of the Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions
- 13-08 On Celebrating the 500th Birthday of John Knox—From the Presbytery of Eastern Korean

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
- 13-A Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Assembly Training School—COTE
- 13-B Award for Excellence in Theological Education—COTE
- 13-C Minutes, Committee on Theological Education

Information
- 13-Info Committee on Theological Education Agency Summary

14  Congregational Vitality

For Plenary Action
- 14-01 1001 New Worshiping Communities—PMA
- 14-02 Educate a Child, Transform the World—PMA
- 14-03 Living Missionally—PMA
- 14-04 Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Church Growth Consultation Committee Report—PMA

Committee Final Action and Report to Plenary
- 14-A Women of Faith Awards—PMA
- 14-B Sam and Helen Walton Awards—PMA
15 Immigration and Environmental Issues

For Plenary Action

15-01 On Divestment From Fossil Fuel Companies—From the Presbytery of Boston
15-02 On Affirming the Importance of Sustainable Development and the Precautionary Principle—From the Presbytery of Southern New England
15-03 On Affirming a Programmatic Review of the Impact of Expanded Coal Export Projects on Human Health and Well Being—From the Presbytery of Seattle
15-04 On Recognizing the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative to Affirm, Promote the Civil and Human Rights of Immigrants in Our Communities—From the Presbytery of Central Florida

Item 01-04

[The assembly approved Item 01-04. See p. 3.]

The Assembly Committee on Business Referrals recommends that Standing Rule A.2.a. be suspended in order to receive late business.

Item 03-05, Per Capita Budget Proposals, 3/4/14
Item 03-07, Standing Rules Amendment to H.1.b.(3)(a), 4/22/14
Item 03-11, Site selection, 6/4/14
Item 03-Info, C. Moderator’s Report, 6/2/14
Item 03-Info, D. Revised Covenant of Understanding, 3/25/14
Item 06-Info, F. Advisory Committee on Litigation, 4/16/14
Item 08-15, Budget and Financials of the Church, 4/29/14
Item 08-B, Audit, 5/22/14
Item 08-Info, D. EEO/AA Report, 6/9/14
Item 12-11, Confirmation of President of BOP, 4/2/14
Item 12-C, BOP Plan Amendments, 4/2/14

Re-referral: MCII Minutes from 04 Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues to 02 Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures
Item 02-01

[The assembly received Item 02-01. See p. 8.]

A. Referral of Commissioners’ Resolutions


3. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Studying the Effectiveness of Mid Council to Mid Council Reference Checks and Clearance Procedures. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Mid Council Issues (05). Vote: 30/0.


5. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Iran. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Peacemaking and International Issues (11). Vote: 30/0.


7. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Advocating Regulation of Ammunition. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (09). Vote: 30/0.

8. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Endorsing a Clergy Letter Project and Evolution Sunday. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions (13). Vote: 30/0.

9. Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Tragedy at the Tent of Nations. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues (04). Vote: 30/0.

10. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Reaffirming the Rights of Children and Attention to Violence Against Children in Israel and Palestine. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues (04). Vote: 30/0.

11. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Childcare at General Assembly. Referred to: Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03). Vote: 30/0.

12. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Requesting the Release from Prison of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera. Referred to: Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC and Foundation (12). Vote: 30/0.

13. Removed as a Commissioners’ Resolution because of Plenary Action.

14. Commissioners’ Resolution. On a Commitment to Prayer for Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation in Israel and Palestine. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues (04). Vote: 30/0.


16. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Theological Diversity Concerning the Definition of Marriage. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues (10). Vote: 30/0.

17. Commissioners’ Resolution. Support for a Just and Peaceful Compromise of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues (04). Vote: 30/0.

18. Commissioners’ Resolution. On Encouraging Parental Leave Policy. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Social Justice Issues (09). Vote: 30/0.

19. On Designating Presbytery Executives as Corresponding Members of the General Assembly. Referred to: Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03). Vote: 30/0.

B. Referral of Pulled Business Referral Report 01-02.

01-01, I. B. 2010 Referral: Item 18-06. On Directing the Board of Pensions to Extend Benefits to Same-Gender Spouses and Domestic Partners, Comment: BOP Highly Urged to Provide Relief of Conscience for Congregations with Moral
Dilemma Regarding This Issue—From the 219th General Assembly (2010) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 54, 56, 393). Referred to: Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC and Foundation (12). Vote: 30/0.

C. Final Action Referral

Item 06-15. Heidelberg Catechism for Final Action. Referred to: Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry (06). Vote: 30/0.

Item 02-02

[The assembly approved Item 02-02. See p. 8.]

Proposed Docket
221st General Assembly (2014)
Detroit, Mich.

Wednesday, June 18:
8:30 a.m. Ecumenical Worship Service

Report Reading Time: Pay particular attention to Item 02-WCA

2:00 p.m. Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 4
• Speakout
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Consent agenda, Item 02-WCA: Items receiving a super majority vote in assembly committee meetings
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, and Foundation (12)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (03)

5:30 p.m. Closing Prayer
Recess
Group Dinner
7:00 p.m. Opening Prayer

BUSINESS MEETING 5
• Speakout
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on Theological Issues and Institutions Report (13)

• Memorial Minute: Sara B. Moseley
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Church Polity and Ordered Ministry (06)

Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess

Thursday, June 19:
8:30 a.m. BUSINESS MEETING 6

Opening Prayer
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• Special Order: Council discussion of recommendations concerning Middle East and Marriage (90 minutes)
02 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

11:15 a.m. Worship
Recess
Lunch Break
1:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 7
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination (08)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Congregational Vitality (14)
Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess
Dinner Break
7:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 8
• Speakout
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Memorial Minute: Cynthia Bolbach
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues (15)
Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess

Friday, June 20:
8:30 a.m. BUSINESS MEETING 9
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
• Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
• GANC Report
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Civil Union and Marriage Issues (10)
11:15 a.m. Worship
Recess
12:00 noon Group Lunch
1:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING 10
• Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
• Ecumenical Greeting
• Assembly Committee Reports
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (07)
  Report of the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues (04)
Announcements
Closing Prayer
Recess
5:30 p.m. Group Dinner
7:30 p.m. Opening Prayer

Saturday, June 21:
9:00 a.m. Opening Prayer
BUSINESS MEETING 12

- Memorial Minute: Albert Winn
- Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
- Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures (Financial Implications)
- Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets (Financial Implications)
- Introduction of Presbytery of the Cascades Committee on Local Arrangements

11:00 a.m. Closing Worship in Plenary

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Item 02-Info

[The assembly approved Item 02-Info. See p. 8]

Minutes of the Mid Council Commission and the Mid Council Commission II.
Item 03-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-01. See p. 18.]

On Issuing a Request to Teaching Elders to Participate in the Administrative Costs of the Church by Paying Per Capita—From the Presbytery of Albany.

The Presbytery of Albany overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to ask all teaching elders\(^1\) to assume the moral responsibility of participating in the administrative costs of this church by paying per capita each year, as other church members do, being assessed by their presbyteries of record.

**Rationale**

Teaching elders are by definition members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are members, not of local congregations, but of presbyteries.

Presbyteries have not been assessed “per capita” for these member teaching elders in the same manner that other church members are, without regard to whatever tithes and offerings they may donate to local churches.

As a matter of parity, teaching elders should be participating in the burdens of the administrative costs of our self-governing polity.

Item 03-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-02 with comment. See p. 18.]

[Comment: We respectfully remind presbyteries of the flexibility available under the 1999 authoritative interpretation. We also respectfully remind sessions of their respective covenantal responsibilities to both the presbytery and General Assembly.]

On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Limit Payments of Per Capita—From the Presbytery of Detroit.

The Presbytery of Detroit overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall the last paragraph of G-3.0106 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“Each council above the session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within its bounds. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of per capita funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may direct per capita apportionments to sessions within their bounds, but in no case shall the authority of the session to direct its benevolences be compromised. Where a presbytery has directed per capita apportionments to sessions, and sessions do not submit their full assessments, the presbytery may remit to the synod and General Assembly only those per capita finds actually received.”

**Rationale**

Per capita apportionments are a traditional means of funding General Assemblies, and have evolved over the years into a method for supporting various ecclesiastical and administrative expenses of presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. The term *per capita* is used because the amount apportioned is based on the membership (head count) of the presbytery.

Since The Presbytery of Detroit v. Westminster Church Port Huron in 1976, presbyteries have been forbidden from punishing churches for their failure to pay per capita apportionments. The matter has been addressed and litigated many times over the years, and the prohibition has never been removed, so that a presbytery has no way to require its churches to pay when they do not pay, even when they do it as protest to actions of the church. Repeated attempts to give presbyteries the authority to require congregations to pay per capita over the years have failed on the grounds that for sessions, per capita is a benevolence, and a presbytery cannot tell a session how to allocate benevolences. Recent attempts have all been opposed in the assembly committee by the Office of the General Assembly and/or the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC), with the result that the assembly committee has never recommended the assembly approve a change:

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\(^1\) Office of the General Assembly statistics, [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org), as of 2011 there were 21,064 teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
• In 1999, the General Assembly was asked whether presbyteries are required to pay per capita even if the churches do not pay, and if yes, whether they could pay from “general benevolence funds.” On advice of the ACC, the General Assembly responded yes to both questions. (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 65, 107);

• A request in 2002 on advice from the ACC and COGA was answered by the following:

Resolved, That presbyteries are urged (1) to partner with those churches who struggle financially to pay per capita and (2) to work pastorally with those sessions who choose to withhold their per capita. Individual sessions are reminded that to withhold per capita puts at jeopardy the connectional and covenantal nature of our church that is affirmed by our ordination vows.

We call on the General Assembly agencies and presbyteries to work to alleviate the problems that lead to withholding so that the church may proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world. We believe that at such a time as this, it is not wise or prudent to change the current understanding of the way per capita is collected and transmitted. Nevertheless, presbyteries are encouraged to raise per capita payments from churches through voluntary payments in the spirit of 2 Corinthians 9:7: “Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (NRSV). (Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 41).

• In 2006, on the advice of the ACC and COGA, the General Assembly refused a request for an authoritative interpretation that would require churches to pay per capita, which refusal was justified by the following comment:

We strongly encourage all congregations to take seriously their commitment to the connectional nature of the church. One evidence of that commitment is the per capita contributions that help provide for the church’s shared ministry beyond the congregation. We recommend that presbyteries exert pastoral care with congregations that choose to withhold per capita. Such pastoral care could be extended through their committees on ministry or other committees as designated by the presbytery council. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, pp. 47–48, 157)

• In 2010, however, the General Assembly approved an authoritative interpretation proposed by the Office of the General Assembly and recommended by the assembly committee that said, “A presbytery is required to remit to the General Assembly and the synod per capita funds remitted by the session of member churches for per capita, even if the presbytery lacks sufficient funds to pay its own expenses” (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 205). For presbyteries, per capita is not a benevolence, it is a required payment that is an increasing burden.

• A proposal in 2012 to allow presbyteries to pay only per capita they receive from churches was considered by the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) both submitted written reports opposing the overture. At the hearing, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly assured the assembly committee that they were very concerned about per capita, so the assembly committee referred it back to the Committee on the General Assembly for its consideration. (See Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 79, 170.) The COGA has done nothing with the referral.

Since presbyteries are required to pay the full apportionment to higher governing bodies from their mission budgets when not received from the churches, the effect is to reduce the amount available for the mission of the presbyteries to their own regions. In effect, it forces presbyteries to pay per capita from their benevolence monies (mission budgets) (Minutes, 1999, Part I, pp. 65, 107). Many presbyteries report that they are making serious cuts to their budgets, laying off staff, drawing on their reserves in order to pay their full per capita apportionment. Meanwhile, the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) operations, significantly funded by per capita, have for decades been protected from the financial crises faced by the presbyteries.

In recent years increasing numbers of congregations have refused to pay per capita apportionments as a way of expressing dissatisfaction with actions of the church, often citing actions of the General Assembly. In 2010, fifty presbyteries did not pay their per capita apportionment in the amount of some $950,000. Sixty-seven presbyteries did not pay their full 2011 per capita payments in the amount of $1,220,037.50. Records show that forty of those presbyteries specifically said they are paying only what was received. One presbytery said it just did not have the funds.

No reported action has been taken by the General Assembly or any synod to enforce the requirement that presbyteries pay the full assessments, except in a 2012 case where a ruling elder filed a remedial case against his own presbytery, resulting in the synod PJC’s decision requiring his presbytery to change its policy that it would pay only what it received. These are times when respect for the Constitution is in increasing jeopardy, and insisting on a rule that is frequently flouted does serious damage to our polity.

The “new” Form of Government places support for their congregations as the first priority for presbyteries, G-3.0301, but the effect of the requirement to pay per capita for the ecclesiastical expenses of their synods and the General Assembly is to place support of higher councils above their own churches. The requirement reduces their ability carry out their primary duty. The intention that the presbyteries play important parts in generating missional congregations is thus seriously damaged. Furthermore, declining payments present a great temptation for synods and the General Assembly, to increase per capita assessments to take the decreased receipts into account.

Since 39 percent of presbyteries paid 2011 per capita only what they have received or can afford—up from 29 percent the year before—the effect is that those presbyteries that are loyal to the rules of our polity are penalized. To remove the penalty for faithfulness seems equitable. Moreover, where it is forbidden for presbyteries to require the payment of benevolences
from their churches, it also should be forbidden for higher governing bodies to require presbyteries to pay per capita from their benevolences, which is exactly what is done when presbyteries must take from their mission dollars to pay per capita assessments.

Therefore, the Presbytery of Detroit petitions the General Assembly to send this overture to the presbyteries so they can decide the matter. In the past, on the recommendation of its committees, General Assemblies have exerted their authority to keep this decision from the councils that are most affected by it. It is time now for the presbyteries who pay this assessment to be given a say in how it is administered.

Concurrence to Item 03-02 from the Presbyteries of Beaver-Butler, Lehigh, Muskingum Valley, Northumberland, Washington, and Western Colorado.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-02

Advice on Item 03-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 03-02, which would amend G-3.0106.

This item is very similar to overtures the General Assembly received in 2004 (Item 03-17, Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 200) and 2012 (Item 03-02, Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 170), both of which were disapproved. The 2012 recommendation was disapproved with comment to refer the matter to the Committee on the Office of General Assembly. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) reminded the assembly both times of the relevant authoritative interpretations concerning per capita and pointed out that the overture erroneously assumed that presbyteries used uniform practices in raising per capita funds.

This current overture requests that the Book of Order, G-3.0106, be amended by adding the words “Where a presbytery has directed per capita apportionments to sessions, and sessions do not submit their full assessments, the presbytery may remit to the synod and General Assembly only those per capita finds actually received.” This added language clearly indicates that the proposed amendment only applies to those presbyteries that apportion per capita to sessions, but not to the other presbyteries that use other methods of raising per capita funds. This creates a two-tier system of per capita payments—one where presbyteries are required to pay per capita and one where presbyteries only pay what sessions submit.

In addition, this “optional” amendment is contrary to the intent of the earlier portion of G-3.0106 stating presbyteries: “…are responsible … for raising and timely transmission of per capita funds to their respective synods and the General.” As interpreted, the presbytery, not sessions, are responsible for payment of per capita. An “optional” system would disregard the unity and interdependence of the councils of the church.

... These councils are sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate council. The larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller. (Book of Order, F-3.0203)

The administration of mission demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church, in that councils share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers (F-3.0203). Through their members and elected commissioners, lower councils participate in planning and administration of the work of higher councils, and in consultation between bodies concerning mission, budget, staffing and fair employment practices, and matters of equitable compensation.

The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s new creation in Jesus Christ, and should strengthen the church’s witness to the mission of God. (Book of Order, G-3.0106)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to remind the assembly of the relevant authoritative interpretations concerning per capita. It also presents the following options (a) to disapprove the overture (which is the ACC’s recommendation); (b) to approve the overture; (c) to propose a constitutional amendment that would give the presbyteries the power to require the sessions to pay per capita (which would necessarily limit the authority of the session to determine the distribution of the church’s benevolences); (d) to remind presbyteries of the flexibility available under the 1999 authoritative interpretation and to remind sessions of their respective covenantal responsibilities; (e) to remove the mandatory provisions of this section of the constitution; or (f) to direct that a comprehensive study be conducted of the funding system at work in the denomination.

COGA Comment on Item 03-02

Comment on Item 03-02—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The COGA respectfully advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to answer Item 03-02 with its (COGA’s) final response to referral to 2012 Referral: Item 03-02. On Amending G-3.0106 to Allow Presbyteries to Forward Only Per Capita Funds Received to Their Synods and the General Assembly—From the Presbytery of Detroit (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 10, 79, 170 of the electronic copy; pp. 10, 79, 155). See Item 01-02, II. Final Responses to Referrals, E. Committee on the Office of the General Assembly Final Responses to Referrals. [COGA answer to referral of Item 03-02 from 220th General Assembly (2012)].
Item 03-03

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-03 with comment. See pp. 12, 19.]

[Comment: While the committee recognizes the value of the YAAD program, the input these advisors give us, the perspective they bring to our discussions, and the experiences it gives our emerging church leaders, we recommend Item 03-03 not be approved for the following reasons: 1) There is flexibility within the current Book of Order for this intent to happen. 2) The overture actually could work counter to the intent of the overture in that there would be no prior vote for advice; their voice would be blended with all other votes with no distinctions as to how the younger commissioners were thinking. 3) We also wish to honor and respect the advice of COGA and the ACC that offer serious considerations on how to include young adults in the whole life of the church. 4) The 221st General Assembly (2014) encourages the COGA to continue the discussion of how to include young adults in all levels of the life and ministry of the PC(USA) including the encouragement of sessions and presbyteries to affirm the call of young adults to the office of ruling elder, while encouraging persons who have served as YAADs as well as other advisory delegates to the 221st General Assembly (2014) to be included in this discussion and discernment.]

On Amending G-3.0501 and G-3.0503 to Give YAAD’s Voice and Vote and to Rename Them as “Young Adult Commissioners”—From the Synod of the Covenant.

The Synod of the Covenant overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote.

1. Shall the first paragraph of G-3.0501 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders elected by presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds (F-1.0403 and G-3.0103). In addition, each presbytery shall elect one young adult commissioner (ages 18–25). The ruling elders and teaching elders elected shall serve as commissioners according to the following proportions:”

2. Shall the second paragraph of G-3.0503 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A quorum of the General Assembly shall be one hundred-twenty commissioners, fifty of whom shall be ruling elders and fifty teaching elders, and twenty young adult commissioners (ages 18–25), representing presbyteries of at least one fourth of its synods.”

Rationale

The purpose of this overture is to allow the elected young adult advisory delegates to have the right to vote. The implication would also be a name change from young adult advisory delegate to young adult commissioners.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states in G-3.0501 that the General Assembly should be “reflective of the diversity within their bounds.” Young adults within the ages of 18 and 25 represent an important voice in the church and are important for the future of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Presently the age of YAADs is 17 to 23. This proposal would change that by a few years and would provide an increased possibility that the young adult commissioners could be either a ruling elder or a teaching elder.

As we work to create 1,001 new worshiping communities, young adults should and will be an important part of the success of those communities.

If we want to be true to goals of inclusiveness and representation within the larger church, giving the young adults voice and vote would be a step in that direction. Presently the YAADs do have voice and vote in the committees. This overture would acknowledge those gifts for the assembly meeting as well.
By creating young adult commissioners instead of YAADs, we welcome, embrace, and listen to our younger Presbyterian generations. They have been unintentionally disenfranchised and unrepresented on our councils, and hence, we are opening ourselves up to the voices of the future being able to discern and vote in the present.

The sooner we make the young adults in our church voting stakeholders, the more they will feel welcomed and valued. The sooner we recognize their leadership, the sooner our young adults will have ownership in the life and decisions of the church. This overture will say to the young adults in our midst this is your church too. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) needs and values your voice and trusts your discernment.

This proposed overture would change the historic balance of an equal number of teaching elders and ruling elders. The young adult commissioners may be ruling elders, teaching elders, deacons, or lay church members. The current Book of Order is more permission-giving than in the past. This overture is consistent with this approach and with our theology and ecclesiology since commissioners are guided by the Holy Spirit, Holy Scriptures, and faith, and not informed by ordination or older age. In addition, young adult commissioners have unique perspectives and life experiences, which are rarely heard and understood by the church. As we as a denomination move into a more flexible approach, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should acknowledge the need to include the voice and vote of young adult commissioners who are currently disenfranchised from voting in church councils while their right to vote in civil elections has been granted and protected by the United States Constitution.

This change will not have added cost and has no per capita implications, but will further enhance the General Assembly meetings.

**Concurrence to Item 03-03 from the Presbytery of Geneva.**

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 03-03**

*Advice on Item 03-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 03-03. This overture seeks to amend Section G-3.0501 and G-3.0503 of the Form of Government to change the composition of the General Assembly by adding a new classification of commissioner elected by each presbytery entitled “young adult commissioner.” The purpose of this change is to increase the number of young adults, ages 18–25, having both voice and vote at General Assembly meetings.

The proposed amendment would omit the requirement that young adult commissioners be a presbyter, a ruling elder, or a teaching elder. It would thereby significantly alter an element of church governance of foundational and historical importance. The value of having General Assembly commissioners comprised of ruling elders and teaching elders who are accountable to the church on the basis of their ordination vows cannot be overstated. Ruling elders and teaching elders have received a call to ordered ministry. “The call to ordered ministry in the Church is the act of the triune God. This call is evidenced by the movement of the Holy Spirit in the individual conscience, the approval of a community of God’s people, and the concurring judgment of a council of the Church” (G-2.0103). This call uniquely prepares individuals for the arduous discernment required of General Assembly commissioners. “The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness” (G-3.0501). To include a new class of General Assembly commissioners that have not received a call to an ordered ministry as either a ruling elder or teaching elder would fail to equip them with the required preparation needed to carry out the responsibilities of their commission.

Another issue to be considered is the effect this amendment will have on the representation of presbyteries that vary significantly in size and number of young adult members. The proposed amendment will give each presbytery one additional commissioner, regardless of size, resulting in disproportionate representation among the presbyteries.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) considers youth and young adults as a vital and vibrant constituency of the church and has provided an opportunity for their voice and influence to be expressed at General Assemblies dating back to 1970. One mechanism that has been used over the last several assemblies is representation of youth as youth advisory delegates (YADs) that have had a voice but no vote on the floor of the assembly (see the 1970 G-13.0100(1), Minutes, UPCUSA, 1969, Part I, pp. 771, 65, Ref. 18; cf. Minutes, PCUS, 1979, Part I, pp. 123, 178; Minutes, PCUS, 1970, Part I, pp. 94, 102; Minutes, UPCUSA, 1973, Part I, pp. 466, 64; Minutes, UPCUSA, 1970, Part I, pp. 100, 1005; Minutes, UPCUSA, 1969, Part I, pp. 771, 65). The participation of advisory delegates (including youth advisory delegates—now “young adult advisory delegates”) is provided for in the Standing Rules of the assembly. The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR), over a period of ten years, has evaluated the pools of persons selected by their presbyteries to serve as commissioners, and recognize “that it is very rare (sometimes one per assembly out of nearly 700) for commissioners to be elected who are under the age of 25 and not too much more frequent when commissioners are selected who are under the age of 35. This reality may be a negative consequence of the young adult advisory delegate positions each presbytery has (aged 17–24, many are ordained ruling elders and some have been teaching elders)” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 251, GACOR comments on Item 04-01, Recommendation 5).
There have been a number of different recommendations to increase the number of youth and young adult commissioners and increase their participation to include a vote on the floor of General Assembly such as Recommendation 5 of the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Ibid, p. 243). The final recommendation from that committee concluded that while the “young adult demographic has been and continues to be an underrepresented group as commissioners to General Assembly,” the proper implementation of increasing their representation in vote should be referred back to the Special Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies (Ibid, p.73).

We further note that the first paragraph of G-3.0501 of the Form of Government provides in part:

The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds (F-1.0403 and G-3.0103) … [emphasis added].

This section of the Form of Government was changed to include the requirement that the delegates elected to General Assembly from the presbyteries be “reflective of the diversity within their bounds” (G-3.0501). This new requirement not only affects the young adult advisory delegates (YAADS) but also other diverse constituencies within the bounds of the presbyteries.

The election of commissioners by presbyteries has been a right afforded to the presbyteries under the Constitution, with the manner of election left to the discretion of the presbyteries (former G-13.0102b). Historically there has not been a constraint regarding whom the presbyteries could elect other than the requirement that the delegation consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders. Under the current Form of Government there is an explicit requirement that the delegation “[reflect] … the diversity [of the] bounds” (G-3.0501). This introduces the potential for a number of competing interests that must be taken into consideration with regard to diversity, of which age—in this case, youth—may be one. Other areas of diversity may include race, ethnicity, disability, and gender. To require the election of a young adult commissioner from each presbytery would elevate the importance of youth over other underrepresented groups such as racial minorities and women. The ability to elect young adults from presbyteries now exists and well may be required under the revised G-3.0501.

If the 221st General Assembly (2014) decides to accomplish the stated intent of Item 03-03, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the General Assembly require that the new designation of young adult commissioner require the young adult to be a ruling elder or teaching elder and take into consideration the disproportionate impact of this amendment on presbyteries that vary significantly in number of young adult members. The issue of parity between ruling elders and teaching elders would also have to be addressed.

COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-03

Comment on Item 03-03—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The COGA respectfully advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 03-03.

Item 03-03 seeks to transform, in a manner fundamentally inconsistent with the nature of Presbyterian polity, the nature of the General Assembly, by giving young adult advisory delegates vote in the General Assembly’s plenary. As its rationale concedes, nothing in the overture requires that such individuals, to have vote, be presbyters (e.g., teaching or ruling elders). Thus, the overture directly contradicts the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (F-3.0202), which reaffirms in the new Form of Government the historic and theological understanding of our church’s way of making decisions: “This church shall be governed by presbyters, that is, ruling elders and teaching elders.” Further, given the age range suggested by the overture for young adult commissioner (ages 18–25), is very likely that those elected to such service who are presbyters would be ruling elders, given the educational requirements to become a teaching elder. Thus, the overture is further inconsistent with the principle that councils shall consist, in as equal a number as is possible, of teaching and ruling elders. Contrary to the overture’s rationale, the new Form of Government reaffirmed rather than diminished these principles. The assertion in the overture’s rationale that the flexibility of the new Form of Government justifies departure from the fundamental principles of Presbyterian decision-making is belied by the intentional reaffirmation of those principles in F-3.02.

Further, the stated goal of the overture—strengthening the voice of young adults throughout the denomination—would not be accomplished by the constitutional revision the overture proposes. The COGA urges that the real answer to assuring that young adults having a voice in our denomination begins in our congregations, and rises through our presbyteries and synods: a deeper awareness of the strength the theology underlying the offices of ruling and teaching elder bring to our polity; an intentional effort to seek out young adults, and youth, for election by congregations as ruling elders; and encouragement of young adult and youth involvement in presbytery and synod life by their election as commissioners to those councils.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 03-03

Comment on Item 03-03—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation respectfully advises that the assembly consider the following comment.
At the 220th General Assembly (2012), of the 688 commissioners, there were no ruling elders or teaching elders under the age of 25. While 93 (11 percent) commissioners were age 26–45, nearly 90 percent of commissioners were over the age of 45.

It is instructive to examine more closely the representation of young adult commissioners under age 25 and adult commissioners age 25–45 in the 219th, 220th, and 221st General Assemblies (2010), (2012), (2014). Here are some statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assembly</th>
<th>Commissioners</th>
<th>Under 25</th>
<th>0.15 percent</th>
<th>25–45</th>
<th>3.5 percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>219th General Assembly (2010)</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruling Elders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Elders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220th General Assembly (2012)</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruling Elders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Elders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221st General Assembly (2014)</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.09%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruling Elders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Elders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** (2.4 percent of commissioners had not registered age data at time of reporting—16 missing)

It is also instructive to examine the representation of young adults under age 25 and adults age 25–45 for teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Age data for ruling elders is not available. Here are the statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2012)</th>
<th>Total Membership = 1,849,496</th>
<th>Total Teaching Elders = 20,849</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
<td>Total Active Ruling Elders = 77,778*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Elders</td>
<td>8***</td>
<td>Age data on ruling elders is not reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,806</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Indicates that the data is reported in the Session Annual Statistical Form and not all congregations complete it. An active ruling elder is a person currently serving on session.

*** All teaching elders under 25 in the PC(USA) are persons recording their ethnicity as White.

The Book of Order in second paragraph of F.1.0403 sets forth our principles of unity and diversity. It states,

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological convictions. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

Had this overture been in effect in 2012, the proportion of commissioners under age 25 would have increased from 0 percent to 18 percent. Even so, since 11 percent were between 26 and 45, more than 70 percent of commissioners would still have been over 45.

This overture is an attempt to address the lack of inclusion, representation, and participation of young adult commissioners under age 25. It would have a profound positive influence on the age distribution of commissioners. And it would give greater responsibility and access to young adults while not increasing the cost of the assembly.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

**Item 03-04**

Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

The Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the following recommendations:

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendations 1.–2. with amendment. See pp. 12, 19.]

1. That the Standing Rules be amended by inserting the following text as an Introduction:

   “Introduction
   
   “Values Present at General Assembly
   
   “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common
good. ... If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor. 12:4–7 and 26–27)

“The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love and witness. (G-3.0501)

“With glad and grateful hearts, we affirm these core values in our worship, work, and witness together in gatherings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

“• That the common life of the whole church, as evidenced in our meetings, will reflect the mind of Christ, demonstrating consolation, spiritual sharing, compassion and sympathy, and doing nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regarding others as better than ourselves. We will be in full accord and strive to model the faithful, obedient, humble, and self-emptying witness of Jesus Christ.

“• That our engagement with one another in the ministry of the gathered church will reflect the transforming love of God, enabling us to discern God’s will together. We will use our gifts on behalf of one another and the world, giving glory to God. We will love genuinely and hold fast to all that is good. We will rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer. We will live in harmony with one another and overcome evil with good.

“• These values will enable us

"• to engage with one another in love, humility, grace, and servant discipleship, as the council of the whole church;

"• to encourage and increase collaboration within and among all councils of the church;

"• to participate in discussion, deliberation, and discernment in ways that are fair and honest and open;

"• to focus each meeting of the General Assembly to encourage the full and prayerful participation of those seeking the mind of Christ for the whole church.

“We acknowledge these core characteristics of gatherings of the General Assembly:

“• Affirming the Presbyterian distinctives that God is sovereign and God alone is Lord of the conscience;

“• Encountering and learning from Presbyterians and many others from across the United States and around the world;

“• Gathering again with old friends in the family reunion that is General Assembly;

“• Creating and expanding generative relationships with fellow Christians;

“• Learning from individuals who are quite different from one another;

“• Witnessing with joy and thanksgiving the emergence of new leaders for the church;

“• Experiencing an intentional, faithful process for discernment and decision making;

“• Experiencing God’s presence through worship, devotions, hallway prayers, and Christ-centered conversations;

“• Hoping and yearning together that our mutual witness will point to the reign of God;

“• Demonstrating the church is not focused on any one cause or individual;

“• Growing in our understanding of Christ and the church;

“• Meeting sisters and brothers in Christ who represent a particular perspective and who listen and share with care and respect;

“• Making decisions through contemplation, prayer, and heartfelt sharing;

“• Continuing a history and heritage together since 1789.

“We demonstrate and sustain our core values through these central commitments.

“• Reflect the Body and Seek the Mind of Christ

“In all things, the General Assembly reflects the body of Christ and seeks the mind of Christ through worship, prayer, discernment, and action.

“• A Broad Context for Christ’s Broad World

“The General Assembly provides a helpful, faithful context for understanding the beauty and diversity of the body of Christ in the world.
“• Expansive and Spiritual Deliberation

“The General Assembly embraces an easily understood and accessible process that creates opportunities for questions, prayer, and God’s unexpected movement, rather than hurrying to yes/no votes.

“• Order and Flexibility

“The General Assembly deliberates with fairness, attention to process, order, and the encouragement of minority voices, while creating space for decision making grounded in discernment and dialogue and for the emergence of new leadership.

“• Reunion and Affirmation

“The General Assembly encourages the best of our Presbyterian tradition and friendships new and old.

“• Faithful Stewardship

“The General Assembly demonstrates faithful stewardship of human and financial resources.”

2. That Standing Rule A., Sources of Business for the Meeting, be amended as follows:

a. Amend Standing Rule A.1.a., Papers in General, as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. The General Assembly shall consider only those papers delivered to the Stated Clerk in compliance with Standing Rule A and any other papers whatsoever that have been delivered to the Stated Clerk. Ordinarily, such papers shall have been forwarded to the Stated Clerk postmarked, or electronically delivered, no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly.”

b. Amend Standing Rule A.2. be amended by inserting new text as “e.” to read as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown as italic.]

“Reports with Recommendations

e. All reports that bring recommendations shall use the following form:

“The [name of agency, commission, or committee] requests the [# of the assembly] General Assembly [year] of the PC(USA) to [state the specific action or actions the General Assembly is being asked to take].”

To this shall be appended a rationale, stating the reasons for submitting the requests and/or the report of the entity, commission, or committee.”

c. Amend Standing Rule A.3.a., Overtures, as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. Overtures are items of business that must have been approved by a presbytery (with concurrence of another presbytery) or a synod and shall request the General Assembly to take a particular action, or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution. (See Book of Order, G-3.0302d.)”

d. Amend Standing Rule A.3.e., Overture Advocates, as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(1) Each presbytery or synod that submits an overture shall notify the Stated Clerk of the name of a commissioner or some other person in attendance at the General Assembly who has been designated as the advocate for the overture. The an overture advocate who shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

Each council who submits an overture or concurrence may appoint only one overture advocate who shall be a teaching or ruling elder from that council. (See Standing Rules A.3.(c)(6) and E.2.)

“(2) In the event that the assembly refers an overture to a General Assembly entity for further consideration (and not simply for implementation), the presbytery or synod submitting the overture shall be invited by the Stated Clerk to designate an overture advocate for the assembly meeting at which the entity’s response to the overture is presented. The overture advocate shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

e. Move “4. Communications and Resource Material” and “5. Advisory Committee on the Constitution and Communications and Resource Material” to the end of Standing Rule A. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]
“6. 4. Entity and Synod Minutes [Text remains unchanged.]

“7. 5. Presbytery Reports [Text remains unchanged.]

“8. 6. Commissioners’ Resolutions [Text remains unchanged.]

“4. 7. Communications and Resource Material [Text remains unchanged.]

“5. 8. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report [Text remains unchanged.]”

Rationale for Recommendation 2.

The changes made to Standing Rule A. fall into two categories. The first group of changes, which includes changes to Standing Rule A.1.a, A.2.e, and A.3.a, is non-substantive in nature and can be seen as necessary. The deletion in A.1.a removes a loophole, which renders the guidelines put forth in Chapter A meaningless. The rest of the non-substantive changes acknowledge technological realities and change Standing Rules in accordance with decisions of the last assembly.

The other group of changes is substantive in nature, which includes the second part of Recommendation 2.b and Recommendation 2.d and 2.e. These changes can be seen as advantageous in that they assist commissioners in conducting the business of the assembly.

The second part of Recommendation 2.b. standardizes reports (of agencies, commissions, or committees), on which the assembly is to act, using the same format required of overtures. Additionally, this change will clarify the sometimes confusing parliamentary question about whether the assembly approves/receives/hears a report or acts on the recommendations of the report.

Recommendation 2.d. limits the quantity and explicates the purpose of overture advocates. Overture advocates are people appointed by a council to the assembly to provide additional background information and answer questions regarding the overture as they arise. The recommended change in the Standing Rules closes a loophole that has been used by some councils in an attempt to gain extra voices by appointing multiple overture advocates and specifies that the purpose of an overture advocate is to explain the action of the council making the overture, not to be an expert witness to the issues the overture might raise.

Eliminating paragraph A.3.a.(2) further reinforces the role of the overture advocate in supporting the original overture and the role of the assembly to own a motion once it is initially offered. If, after the overture has been considered in committee and plenary, the whole assembly should decide to commit the overture to further study, the requirement in A.3.e.(2) for subsequent consultation is a redundancy.

Recommendation 2.e. reorders Standing Rule A in a more intuitive way. This change would make the chapter organized so that after “Papers in General,” the rules regarding business on which the assembly is asked to act precede rules regarding non-action information before the assembly, e.g. advisory committee reports and resource material. This recommendation doesn’t change the rules substantively, but rather makes the rules flow more logically.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 3.a. See pp. 12, 19.]

3. That Standing Rule B (Commissioners, Delegates, and Other Participants at the Meeting) of the Standing Rules be amended as follows:

   a. Amend Standing Rule B.1.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “List Delivered by 420 180 Day Deadline

   “b. Presbyteries shall elect commissioners in sufficient time to permit the list of commissioners to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 420 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are commissioned.

Rationale for Recommendation 3.a.

The deadline for reporting the names of commissioners elected by the presbyteries, which corresponds with the first deadline for business, was not changed with the move to biennial assemblies. This creates a very tight schedule for recruiting and training committee leadership and naming the committee membership. Only after receiving the entire list of the names of commissioners can the Moderator begin the 4–6 week process of selecting committee leadership. Committee assignments cannot be made and announced until committee leadership is selected and confirmed. Communications from the leadership to the committee members cannot commence until the leadership has been oriented to the work of assembly committees.

Over the years a recurrent suggestion has been to use electronic mediums to bring the committees together before the assembly is convened. The recommended change in the Standing Rules would allow committee leadership to be selected and
oriented early enough in the year of the assembly to allow a season of preparation for each committee. Committee membership could be assigned near the 120 deadline for business and committee leadership trained soon afterward.

If this recommendation were in effect for the 221st General Assembly (2014), it would have looked like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current 120 day deadline</th>
<th>Proposed 180 day deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyteries elect commissioners</td>
<td>Fall 2013 or winter 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for reporting commissioners</td>
<td>February 14, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Publish list of commissioners and solicit nominations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contact nominees to check on availability/interest and to get resume</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Moderator’s selection meeting with COGA and COR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Moderator’s selections contacted and confirmed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee assignments made</td>
<td>April 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and orienting of committee leadership</td>
<td>May 12–14, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee leadership begins communicating with members and organizing conversations</td>
<td>May 19, 2014 (26 days before assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Committees cannot begin conducting business until the assembly officially convenes.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening of 221st General Assembly (2014)</td>
<td>June 14, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 3.b. See pp. 12, 19.]

b. Amend Standing Rule B.2.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. There shall be four categories of advisory delegates: youth, theological student; missionary, and ecumenical. When the ratio of advisory delegates to commissioners exceeds one to three, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be authorized to make changes to the Standing Rules to create a ratio of less than one to three. The expenses of each advisory delegate shall be paid by the General Assembly (see Standing Rule I.3.) on the same basis as the expenses of commissioners (see Standing Rule B.2.f.2 below for exception).”

Rationale for Recommendation 3.b.

The General Assembly has long valued bringing many voices to the table in their deliberations and has accomplished that with a commitment to the role of advisory delegates who sit as full members on committees and voice at plenary. The number of advisory delegates is stable as detailed in the Standing Rules, but the number of commissioners is flexible as presbytery size and number fluctuates.

In the course of the last few decades, the total percentage of advisory delegates in the whole number of commissioners and advisory delegates has remained near 25 percent—or one advisory delegate for every three commissioners. In order to maintain the balance between our Foundational Principle of Presbyterian Government described in F-3.02 and the vitality that the voices of advisory delegates bring to the General Assembly, it is our opinion that the 1:3 ratio should be maintained.

The conversation on how best to maintain this balance in a particular assembly is put upon the hearts of the elected representatives on the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly when an imbalance appears. They could bring solutions, including (but not limited to) constitutional changes in the number of commissioners (if adopted by the standard protocol for changing the constitution, or adjustments in the Standing Rules in the number of advisory delegates.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 3.c. See pp. 12, 19.]

c. Amend Standing Rule B.2.d. by striking B.2.d.(2) and re-numbering (3) and by amending (3) [now (2)] as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(2) Each presbytery will request each candidate for young adult advisory delegate to submit an application/questionnaire and be interviewed by an appropriate presbytery committee in order to ensure the selection of the best qualified person to serve as young adult advisory delegate. The youth ministries staff shall prepare and distribute to each presbytery a sample/suggested questionnaire for use in reviewing candidates for election as young adult advisory delegates.

“(3) Presbyteries shall elect young adult advisory delegates in sufficient time to permit the list of advisory delegates to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected.”

[d. Amend Standing Rule B.2.e. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"[e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates and Assembly Student Assistants

"[I]—Each theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate three two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program and must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery. One of these students shall be designated by the institution as delegates and the other student shall be designated as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120–180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the names of the two students to be delegates to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

"[(2) Each theological institution in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program and must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery. One of these students shall be designated by the institution as the delegate and the other student as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120–180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

"[(3) All non-Presbyterian theological schools represented by corresponding members on the Committee on Theological Education and one additional non-Presbyterian theological seminary shall be asked to nominate one theological student advisory delegate and one alternate. The additional non-Presbyterian seminary shall be chosen on a rotating basis, descending alphabetically, from those that have at least twelve Presbyterian enrollees (either inquirers or candidates under the care of a presbytery) as of October 1 in the year preceding the assembly. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 120–180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

"[(4) Nominated students shall have at least one more year of study following the assembly remaining in their degree program. The Stated Clerk shall forward the name of the nominated students to the presbyteries of jurisdiction for election and confirmation.

"[(5) In those years when the number of assembly committees exceeds the number of theological student advisory delegates named in the above process, the Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on Theological Education for an equitable plan for soliciting more nominees from Presbyterian seminaries and seminaries in covenant or corresponding relationship. This plan may also include students from other seminaries who have a significant number of Presbyterian students.

"[(6) In addition to theological student advisory delegates, the Stated Clerk shall solicit as many theological students to serve as assembly assistant (assembly assistants) as are necessary to facilitate the work of the assembly.]"

[d. Amend Standing Rule B.2.e.(1)--(3) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"[e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates..."

"[(1) Each theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate three students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. Two of these students shall be designated by the institution as delegates and the other student shall
be designated as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under the care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the names of the two students to be delegates to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

“(2) Each theological institution in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. One of these students shall be designated by the institution as the delegate and the other student as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under the care of a presbytery. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

“(3) All non-Presbyterian theological schools represented by corresponding members on the Committee on Theological Education and one additional non-Presbyterian theological seminary shall be asked to nominate one theological student advisory delegate and one alternate. The additional non-Presbyterian seminary shall be chosen on a rotating basis, descending alphabetically, from those that have at least twelve Presbyterian enrollees (either inquirers or candidates under the care of a presbytery) as of October 1 in the year preceding the assembly. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.”

Rationale for Recommendation 3.c.–d.

This change in the Standing Rules reflects two current assembly realities: (1) a decline in membership has meant fewer commissioners and an imbalance in the ratio of commissioners to advisory delegates. In 2012 there was almost one advisory delegate for every three commissioners. And (2) the increased use of student assistants (primarily seminary students) has given more seminary students the opportunity to be intimately involved in the life of the assembly.

As the nature of the assembly has changed, the Office of the General Assembly has been recruiting more student assistants and giving them great responsibility in committee and plenary. These student assistants universally report that they gain a broad knowledge of the work of the assembly and a better understanding of our polity. Giving seminary students the opportunity to encounter the national nature of the church at an assembly is a high value for the Office of the General Assembly. In 2012 there were twenty-four theological student advisory delegates (TSADs) and an additional eighteen student assistants for a record number of seminary students involved in the assembly.

The recommended changes in the Standing Rules seek to decrease the number of advisory delegates by changing the formula for TSADs and bringing the role of student assistant explicitly into the planning of the assembly. Instead of two students from each of the denominational theological schools, there will be at least one from each and one from seminaries with a covenant relationship, not to be fewer than the number of assembly committees. Filling all of the necessary positions for student assistant will require solicitations from all of the denominational, covenant and corresponding theological schools giving ample opportunity for assembly participation to those interested and able.

e. Amend Standing Rule B.5.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. Ecumenical representatives are individuals sent at the initiative of another church to be the official representative of that church. The Stated Clerk shall may announce to member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches the date and place of the next meeting of the General Assembly. When officially certified through appropriate ecclesiastical channels at least forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, these persons shall be welcomed as guests of the General Assembly and introduced to the council through the report of the assembly committee addressing ecumenism. The assembly shall may assume the expense and housing of such guests on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.”

f. Amend Standing Rule B.5.f. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“f. Interfaith Representatives—Three observers of other faiths or religious traditions, who shall be representatives chosen by recognized religious bodies of non-Christian religious traditions and/or faith communities shall be present at the assembly at the invitation of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.
The interfaith representatives shall be present with the church in its deliberations, and to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing information germane to the decision-making process. The assembly shall **may** assume the expense of housing and on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.”

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 4.a., with amendment. See pp. 18, 20.]

4. That Standing Rule C (Formation of Committees and Referral of Business) be amended as follows:

a. Amend Standing Rule C.1.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “c. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall appoint a commissioner to be moderator and a second to be vice moderator to each committee. **The moderator positions are filled by commissioners [from the next General Assembly or may be from an assembly within the last six years. All vice moderator positions shall be filled by commissioners to the upcoming General Assembly.** Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusively mandated in the Book of Order, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be ruling elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. **The moderators of at least two-thirds of the assembly committees shall be current commissioners. No more than one person from any one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods shall be equitably represented.”

**Rationale for Recommendation 4.a.**

The core values of our gatherings as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as described in Recommendation 1, profess that “the common life of the whole church, as evidenced in our meetings, will reflect the mind of Christ, demonstrating consolation, spiritual sharing, compassion, and sympathy, and doing nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regarding others as better than ourselves.”

Moderating a General Assembly committee can be a complex and daunting task. It is increasingly difficult as committees grow in size. Responsibilities for formulating agendas, facilitating discussion, and maintaining neutrality, when coupled with the demands placed on all commissioners, can be particularly overwhelming. Thus, this change opens the possibility for the Moderator to appoint persons familiar with the workings of the assembly who have documented experience as skilled moderators to lead committees, ensuring that debate, discussion, and discernment happen in fair and decent order.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 4.b. See pp. 12, 20.]

b. Amend Standing Rule C.3.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “c. **How Business Is Referred**

   “(1) for consideration by an assembly committee and recommendation for action by the General Assembly;

   “(2) for consideration and action by an assembly committee with a report of the action to the General Assembly;

   “(3) for consideration by the General Assembly through its inclusion in a consent agenda **when the committee has approved a motion by 75 percent or more;**

   “(4) for consideration by the General Assembly in a plenary business session.”

**Rationale for Recommendation 4.b.**

The majority of business that comes to the floor of the assembly has been overwhelmingly approved or disapproved by the committee that has considered it. This change proposes to streamline plenary business so that time might be used to develop consensus on items where there are a variety of viewpoints and convictions, and makes this section consistent with Standing Rule F.5.b.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 5–6.a. See pp. 12, 20.]

5. That Standing Rule D (Beginning of the General Assembly Meeting) be amended as follows:

   Amend Standing Rule D.1.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

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“c. The Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner, advisory delegate, and corresponding member to a seat in advance of the meeting. They shall occupy the assigned seats during each meeting of the General Assembly at which business may be transacted. An assistant to commissioner who has been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be assigned a seat adjacent to the commissioner. The Stated Clerk shall assign seats to commissioners and delegates in a manner that shall assure that the most favorable seats, with regard to the platform, will be assigned to delegations from the various presbyteries in turn through an annual rotation of space assignments.”

6. That Standing Rule E (Committee Meetings) be amended as follows:

a. Amend Standing Rule E.1.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. The moderator shall presides over the committee’s deliberations. The moderator may request the vice moderator or others to preside and to assist in the work of the committee.”

*Rationale for Recommendation 6.a.*

The core values of our gatherings as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as described in Recommendation 1, profess “that the common life of the whole church, as evidenced in our meetings, will reflect the mind of Christ, demonstrating consolation, spiritual sharing, compassion, and sympathy, and doing nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regarding others as better than ourselves.”

Committee moderators have varying degrees of experience and skill in moderating meetings, particularly when the issues are complex and/or highly charged and the committee is very large. This amendment gives moderators greater flexibility in inviting others to facilitate portions of the committee proceedings, while still maintaining overall control of the committee.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 6.b. See pp. 13, 20.]

b. Amend Standing Rule E.2. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Open Meetings

“a. Meetings of assembly committees shall be open to the public (as space permits) provided, however, that the committee may go into executive session at any time in accordance with the Open Meeting Policy printed in the Manual of the General Assembly. Ordinarily, the committee assistant will be expected to remain with the committee in executive session.

“Time of Worship and Prayer

“b. Each meeting of the committee shall include a time of worship and opportunity for prayer.

“Parliamentary Procedure

“b. c. The deliberations of the committee shall be conducted in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised. Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised except when in contradiction to the Constitution of the PC(USA). Prior to a vote, methods of deliberation shall be consistent with the principles of Presbyterian government. (F-3.02 and G-3.0305)

“Use and Preparation of Resources Material

“e. d. Use and Preparation of Resource Material:

“(1) Each committee shall determines the use to be made of the resource material or resource persons available to assembly committees. Each assembly committee shall determines whether or not to permit the distribution of particular materials to the committee members.

“Preparation of Resource Material

“(2) Resource material (except for previously published books or interpretive brochures), including advice and counsel memoranda, that provides background or advice on items of new business, including commissioners’ resolutions, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the assembly committee leadership team prior to presentation to the assembly committee to which the business has been referred. A hard copy of this resource material, accompanied by a disk copy, shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consider any request that is made to distribute this resource material to the full assembly.
“Reports of Special Committees

“e. When business has been referred by a previous assembly to a special task force, committee, or commission created for that purpose, the assembly committee receiving that report shall set aside no less than ½ hour (30 minutes) to hear a presentation by the special task force (or committee or commission) giving background on their report. Each committee shall determine if additional time is required for presentation.

“Privilege to Speak

“e. During the deliberations of the committee, in contrast to public hearings, only the following persons, having been recognized by the moderator, may speak:

“(1) Members of the committee;
“(2) Committee assistant;
“(3) Persons with special expertise, including elected members or staff members of General Assembly entities;
“(4) Members of special committees, task forces, commissions created by previous assemblies (see E.2.d and K.1.f), Overture advocates, and signers of commissioners’ resolutions;
“(5) Persons invited by the committee through a majority vote of the committee; and
“(6) Representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, who may speak to overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, or other business on which the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has presented advice or recommendations, or matters that propose amendments to the Constitution, or that affect compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution.

“(7) In the event that business being considered by an assembly committee has been referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for advice, representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall be entitled to speak.

“(8) The committee moderator shall provide that the total time allotted to persons, other than members of the committee, who speak for or against a recommendation be equal so far as possible except as outlined in E.2.d.

“Overture Advocates/Signer of Commissioners’ Resolution

“f. [Text remains unchanged.]

“Responsibilities of Overture Advocate

“g. [Text remains unchanged.]

Rationale for Recommendation 6.b.

Open Meetings—The core values of our gatherings as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as described in Recommendation 1, include encouraging “the full and prayerful participation of those seeking the mind of Christ for the whole church,” and suggests that the gathered body experience “God’s presence through worship, devotions, hallway prayers, and Christ-centered conversations.” Including worship and prayer in committee meetings will bear witness to our core values and help us to better discern God’s will together.

Parliamentary Procedure—While Robert’s Rules is the traditional parliamentary process through which decisions are made, decision-making bodies at various levels throughout the PC(USA) have discovered many other effective models for group discernment. The core values of our gatherings as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as described in Recommendation 1, include commitments to “participate in discussion, deliberation, and discernment in ways that are fair and honest and open … making decisions through contemplation, prayer, and heartfelt sharing.” These core values will be demonstrated and sustained when “the General Assembly deliberates with fairness, attention to process, order, and the encouragement of minority voices, while creating space for decision making grounded in discernment and dialogue and for the emergence of new leadership. This amendment allows moderators and committees to adopt discernment processes other than/in addition to Robert’s Rules.

Reports of Special Committees—When an assembly commits (or refers) an item of business to a special committee, it is as Robert’s Rules says “so that the question may be carefully investigated and put into better condition for the assembly to consider” (RRNR 11th ed. p 168). The special committee is in effect a continuing part of the previous assembly and their report the continuation of the previous debate.

There has been little clarity and some inconsistency on how the reports of special committees are received in the committees of the assembly. Is their report subject to the equal-time requirement of E.2.e.(8) that “The committee moderator shall provide that the total time allotted to persons … who speak for or against a recommendation be equal so far as possible”? 
This amendment to the Standing Rules recognizes the unique nature of special committees and the importance of giving the assembly time to hear and discuss the reports of the special committees (to which a great deal of PC(USA) time, talent, and financial resources have been committed). While a committee may grant more time for the report of a special committee (especially in complex reports), the changes in the Standing Rules ensures at least thirty minutes of report time and does not link the report to E.2.e.(8), which addresses those who wish to speak for or against specific recommendations before the assembly committee.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 6.c. See pp. 13, 20.]

   c. Amend Standing Rule E.4.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “4. Organizational Meeting

   “a. Ordinarily, the initial meeting of each assembly committee shall be an organizational meeting in private session for up to one hour for the purpose of developing intragroup dynamics and determining procedural matters, such as approval of the committee’s agenda and consideration of the style in which the committee plans to operate.”

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 7.a. See pp. 13, 21.]

7. That Standing Rule F (General Assembly Plenary Meeting) be amended as follows:

   a. Amend Standing Rule F.2. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “2. Reports of Assembly Committees

   “Distribution

   “a. Electronic copies of the written reports of assembly committees (print or electronic) shall ordinarily be distributed to commissioners no later than the close of the meeting prior to the one at which they are to be considered. When necessary, the Stated Clerk shall arrange for the reproduction and distribution of reports.

   “Adequate Docket Time

   “b. [Text remains unchanged.]

   “Committee Moderators

   “c. Committee moderators should move the approval of recommendations with minimum comment, and material in the commissioners’ printed resources shall not be read.

   “Financial Implication

   “d. [Text remains unchanged.]”

   Rationale for Recommendation 7.a.

   Electronic transmission of committee reports is an efficient and environmentally sustainable method of information distribution and should be utilized when appropriate. This amendment does not prevent the distribution of physical copies when necessary.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 7.b. See pp. 13, 21.]

   b. Amend Standing Rule F.5.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “Debate

   “a. In debate on any pending matter, no commissioner or delegate shall be allowed to speak more than two minutes until all other commissioners or delegates who desire to speak on the pending matter have been heard.”

   Rationale for Recommendation 7.b.

   Streamlining the work of the General Assembly has been a consistent goal of this committee. During plenary deliberation, the time allotted for commissioners to speak to an issue is generally curtailed once debate becomes contentious, repetitive, or as time becomes scarce. However, motions to reduce speaking time, though normally passed, often require debate that further reduces already limited time. It is the opinion of this committee that two minutes is an adequate amount of time to make a concise point on the plenary floor and this amendment will preclude avoidable debate about limiting time.
c. Amend Standing Rule F.5.e. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Cellular Telephones Electronic Devices

e. Use of cellular telephones is prohibited during meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the assembly committees. During these meetings, pagers may be used only in the silent mode. Commissioners are expected to be present when meetings are in session both physically and mentally. The use of electronic devices for purposes other than those directly related to the current topic is therefore discouraged when meetings are in session. Commissioners are also expected to adhere to the General Assembly Social Media Policy.”

Rationale for Recommendation 7.c.

The use of electronics devices at General Assembly provides increasing utility while simultaneously creating new avenues of possible abuse. This amendment modernizes and expands the reference beyond pagers and cell phones to electronic devices generally and affirms the proper role of electronic devices as tools to aid discernment.

d. Amend Standing Rule F.7.a. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Head of Communion

“a. When the Head of Communion of a member church of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches, or the National Council of Churches is in attendance at a session of the General Assembly as an ecumenical advisory delegate or as an ecumenical representative, and proper notice is provided, the assembly shall provide up to five three minutes of docket time to each such Head of Communion to present a greeting to the assembly.”

Rationale for Recommendation 7.d.

Streamlining the work of the General Assembly has been a consistent goal of this committee. While maintaining the importance the ecumenical representation, three minutes is an adequate amount of time to present a greeting to the assembly.

e. Amend Standing Rule F.8.b. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Nonofficial Printed Material

“b. Ordinarily, printed materials that are not official business before the General Assembly may only be distributed at authorized booths in the General Assembly Exhibit Hall. Other distribution is permitted in the mailboxes provided for commissioners and advisory delegates, and also can be handed out twenty-five feet or more from entrances to the building in which the General Assembly meets.”

Rationale for Recommendation 7.e.

Mailboxes are no longer provided for commissioners and advisory delegates and this change is reflected in the amendment.

8. That Standing Rule H (Persons in Ordered Ministry and Elections) be amended as follows:

Amend Standing Rule H.1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“1. Moderator of the General Assembly

“Title/Functions

“a. Title and Functions of the Moderator at the General Assembly

“(1) The Moderator of the General Assembly is an ecclesiastical person in ordered ministry, along with the Stated Clerk, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). The ministry of the Moderator is grounded in the ministry of baptized persons and in the particular ordained ministry of ruling elders and teaching elders.
“(2) The office of Moderator may be shared by Co-Moderators. In this case, the office of Vice Moderator will remain vacant until the next election of a Moderator.

“(3) The title of the Moderator is ‘The Moderator of the [number] General Assembly [year] of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).’

“(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly is a commissioner of the General Assembly.

“(5) When the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church’s life and upholding the people of God through prayer.

“(6) The Moderator shall preside over the General Assembly that elects him or her, and over the meetings of the next General Assembly until a successor is elected. The Moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the council (Book of Order, G-3.0104).

“(7) The Moderator and the Vice Moderator shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.”

“b. At the discretion of the candidate, he or she may choose to stand for election with a Co-Moderator or with a Vice Moderator candidate. When choosing to stand with another Moderator candidate, both candidates:

“(1) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(2) notify the Stated Clerk of their intention to stand for election together, and

“(3) will together determine how to fulfill the duties of the office.”

“Election

“b. c. Election of the Moderator

“(1) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(2) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the assembly, the Moderatorial candidates will announce the name of a commissioner each has selected to offer to the assembly to confirm elect as Vice Moderator, as appropriate.

“(3) The following campaign procedures shall be observed:

“(a) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(b) In order to encourage reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit in the selection of the Moderator, no neither candidates or their advocates are allowed to communicate with shall send a mailing of any campaign materials, print or electronic, to commissioners and/or advisory delegates or permit such a mailing to be sent, nor shall candidates or their advocates contact commissioners and/or advisory delegates by telephone.

“(c) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(d) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(e) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(i) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(ii) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(iii) An announcement of the commissioner each candidate has selected to be presented to the assembly for confirmation as Vice Moderator if the candidate is elected,

“(b) (iii) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the Stated Clerk.

“The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but all material including photographs submitted for each presentation shall be provided in electronic format as well as print. The material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no less than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution, and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Moderator, if elected.

“Each proposed Vice-Moderator candidate who wishes to be included may send biographical information and a photograph in electronic format.
“(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected in the following manner:

“(a) When the General Assembly is ready to elect its Moderator, each candidate shall be nominated by a commissioner to the assembly in the following manner; the commissioners making nominations shall be recognized at microphones on the assembly floor. Upon recognition by the assembly Moderator, the nominator shall say, *one of the following statements:*

“(i) ‘Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _____ from the Presbytery of _______ and Ruling/Teaching Elder ____ from the Presbytery of _____.’

“(ii) ‘Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _____ from the Presbytery of _____. And for Vice Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder ____ from the Presbytery of _____.’

“The nominator shall then return to his/her seat on the plenary floor. No seconds to nominations are required.

“(b) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(c) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(d) Where there is only one nominee nomination for Moderator, the election may be by acclamation. Where there is more than one, the election may be by secret ballot in one of the following ways a format which is determined by the Stated Clerk and announced to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the convening of the assembly.

“(i) Each commissioner shall vote by means of an electronic voting system. The Stated Clerk shall advise the Moderator of the totals. The Moderator shall announce the result of the vote as tabulated. If no nominee has received a majority of the whole vote, another vote shall be taken in the same manner. When one nominee shall have received a majority, the Moderator shall announce the result and declare the nominee to be elected.

“(ii) If the assembly votes to use paper ballots, the Stated Clerk shall provide ballots and assign no fewer than ten commissioners to act as tellers, collecting and counting the ballots. The results shall be given to the Stated Clerk who shall report the totals to the Moderator who shall announce them to the assembly.

“(5) The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Moderator and Vice Moderator, as appropriate, as the last item of business at the session in which the Moderator is elected. The family families of the newly elected Moderator officers and all present previous Moderators shall be invited to the platform. The service shall use the order of service for “Installation of Governing Body Officers and Staff” from the Book of Occasional Services. The processional banner of the Moderator shall precede the newly elected Moderator into the assembly. The Moderator’s cross and stole shall be presented by the most recent serving Moderator. A representative of the presbytery of the Moderator’s membership shall ask the questions of installation. The newly elected Moderator invites a person to lead the prayer of installation. The most recent serving Moderator gives the charge, a hymn is sung by the assembly, and the newly elected Moderator gives the benediction.

“Vice Moderator

“e. d. Vice Moderator

“(1) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days before the convening of the assembly, a Moderatorial candidate shall announce the selection of a commissioner who will be proposed to serve as Vice Moderator. At the next business session of the assembly following the election of the Moderator, the Moderator shall announce the name of the commissioner for Vice Moderator. After a brief speech by the person selected, the assembly shall immediately proceed to vote on his or her confirmation. Should there be no confirmation, the Moderator shall bring another commissioner’s name for confirmation to the next business session of the assembly. The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Vice Moderator.

“(2) The Vice Moderator represents the assembly at the request of the Moderator. When the Vice Moderator serves in this capacity, all those duties incumbent on the Moderator shall be expected of him/her.

“(2) Each proposed Vice-Moderator candidate shall include biographical information and a photograph in electronic format to be included with the Moderator candidate information.

“(3) The Moderator may request the Vice Moderator to preside and to assist in the performance of other functions of the Moderator during and following the General Assembly.
“Vacancy

d. e. Vacancy in the Office of the Moderator or Vice Moderator
“(1) [Text remains unchanged.]
“(2) [Text remains unchanged.]”

Rationale for Recommendation 8.

The Introduction in Recommendation 1. begins with words from 1 Corinthians “Now there are varieties of gifts ….” Recommendation 8.a. recognizes that just as people have a variety of gifts, there are also a variety of ways those gifts can be expressed. This proposal expands the possibilities in how the Moderator position can be expressed.

There are numerous examples of successful co-pastor arrangements that allow two people to bring their unique skills to the position and as a result benefit both themselves and the congregation. In the same way, we believe that providing the option for co-moderators can bring these same benefits to the individuals as well as the General Assembly.

The changes proposed to the Moderator election process accomplish three goals: support the addition of the co-moderator option, simplify some wording, and create additional flexibility in the process.

Combining the Moderator and Vice Moderator elections into a slate election provides a more consistent election process in light of the new co-Moderator option.

Providing more flexibility in how the Moderator election is conducted simplifies the language in the Standing Rules and at the same time reflects the core values listed in the new Introduction, most explicitly Expansive and Spiritual Deliberation and Order and Flexibility.

[The assembly approved Item 03-04, Recommendation 9. See pp. 12, 21.]

9. That Standing Rule K (Commissions, Special Committees, and Special Administrative Review) be amended as follows:

Amend Standing Rule K.1. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“1. Commissions and Special Committees

“Purpose

“a. Unless otherwise specified in the assembly’s action, any body or group established by the General Assembly to carry out decisions of the assembly, or instructed to report to the assembly, or make recommendations to the assembly, or both, shall be known as a commission or special committee (see Book of Order, G-3.0109). The purposes of a special committee must be ones that cannot be undertaken by the work of an existing corporation or entity under its assigned responsibilities. Due to the financial and staffing implications, before authorizing the establishment of a special committee, the assembly shall hear a report from the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, which shall have consulted with the most closely related entity and a member designated from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, as to whether the work to be assigned to the special committee could more effectively and economically be assigned to that entity. The General Assembly may establish special committees and commissions to carry out decisions of the assembly or make recommendations to the assembly on matters that cannot be undertaken or accomplished by an existing entity. (Book of Order, G-3.0109)

“Considerations for Creating

“b. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall be notified by any assembly committee whenever there is discussion about the creation of a special committee. In discussing the possible creation of a special committee, the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall hear from related corporation or entity representatives as well as representatives from the assembly committee considering the proposal. Financial implications of special committees should accompany any recommendation for action by the assembly. The written comment of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures must be incorporated as background in the report of the assembly committee containing a recommendation to create a special committee. In considering the creation of a special committee or commission the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall hear from relevant agencies as well as from the assembly committee considering the proposal. Financial implications of special committees or commissions shall accompany any recommendation to the assembly.

“Appointed by Moderator

“c. Any commission or special committee authorized by the General Assembly, unless otherwise designated, shall be appointed by the Moderator in collaboration with the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the
General Assembly Committee on Representation. The Moderator is also authorized to fill by appointment any vacancies that may occur in any of such commissions or committees. No teaching elder, ruling elder, or other person shall be appointed to serve on more than one such commission or committee except by consent of the General Assembly. The Moderator of the General Assembly appoints members of special committees or commissions, unless otherwise designated, in collaboration with the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation. The Moderator is authorized to fill any vacancies that may occur. No person appointed may serve on more than one committee or commission unless otherwise designated by the assembly.

“Length of Existence and Reports

d. Special committees shall complete their work within two years unless the General Assembly that authorized its establishment specifies a different period. Special committees shall submit a written report to the General Assembly that shall include a recommendation to extend its existence (if beyond the period authorized), or, at the conclusion of its work, a recommendation for dismissal. Special committees shall also publish interim reports, no less than annually, by electronic or print means. Such interim reports shall indicate the progress made by the special committee on its assigned tasks and offer a timeline and process for completing its work. When a special committee requests an extension of its existence, the request shall be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. After consultation with the most closely related assembly entity, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will recommend to the assembly whether the project shall be reassigned to the entity, remain with the special committee, or be terminated. Any extension to its existence shall require a two-thirds vote of the commissioners. Special committees or commissions shall normally complete their work within two years. Requests for an extension of work shall be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. An extension shall require a two-thirds vote of the assembly.

“Review

c. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall review the work of each special committee and include in its report to each session of the General Assembly a summary of the work being carried out by each special committee, including any recommendation to transfer the work assigned to a special committee elsewhere, or to dismiss the committee. A special committee shall not consider matters currently referred to another special committee or entity. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall review the work of each special committee or commission.

“Representation at General Assembly and Funding

f. The expenses of one member of a special committee or commission to attend the General Assembly session to make any oral presentation of the report of the committee or commission that may be docketed, and to respond to questions concerning that report shall be paid by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission. This member shall be designated as the corresponding member. The exceptions to this rule are as follows:

“(1) At the General Assembly meeting in which the final report of the committee or commission is presented, the moderator, who shall serve as the corresponding member of the committee or commission, and one other designated member of the committee or commission shall attend to present the report and serve as resource to the committee considering the report. Unless otherwise approved in advance by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (due to special circumstances), only the expenses of these two authorized representatives shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission.

“(2) In the event of a minority report, a designated member of the committee’s or commission’s minority shall also be invited to attend. The expenses of this member shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly through the regular budget of the committee or commission.

“(3) Other members of special committees or commissions, not otherwise referred to in this standing rule, shall be reimbursed for attendance at a General Assembly session only if they are individually involved in hearings or other official purposes.

f. When the report of the special committee or commission is presented, its moderator shall serve as a corresponding member of the assembly and may be accompanied by one other member of the committee or commission. The expenses of these authorized representatives shall be reimbursed through the committee or commission’s budget.

“In the event of a minority report, a designated member of the minority shall also be invited to attend the assembly. The expenses of this member shall be reimbursed through the committee or commission’s budget.

“Other members of special committees or commissions may be reimbursed for attendance at the assembly only if they are required to be involved in hearings or for other official purposes.
“Coordination

“g. Any such commission or committee shall consult with and advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency on the progress of its work in order to assist the council in its responsibility for coordinating the work of the entities of the General Assembly and the work of presbyteries and synods. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff services and other assistance to special committees and commissions. The work of the special committees and commissions shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly.

“Staff Services

“h. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff services and other assistance to such commissions and committees in order to facilitate and coordinate their work. The work of commissions and special committees shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly.

Rationale for Recommendation 9.

In concert with our review of the other sections of the Standing Rules, we offer these recommended changes in order to simplify the language.

Overall Rationale

INTRODUCTION

These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:


The Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies was established by action of two previous assemblies. The 214th General Assembly (2002) in recommending biennial General Assemblies to the PC(USA) requested a review of the biennial concept following the 219th General Assembly (2010.) A committee was to be appointed by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council—now the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Item 03-18 to the 219th General Assembly (2010) from the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy requested an expansion of the scope of the review committee to include all matters related to the form and function of the meeting of the General Assembly.

The following persons were named to the original committee: Glen Bell, then of Indianapolis, Indiana, now of Sarasota, Florida; Theresa Cho, San Francisco, California; Thomas Evans, Atlanta, Georgia; Glen Alberto Guenther, Denver, Colorado; Marcus Lambricht, Princeton, New Jersey; Kathy Lueckert, Seattle, Washington; Carol McDonald, Indianapolis, Indiana; Matthew Schramm, Bay City, Michigan; David Van Dyke, St. Paul, Minnesota. Carol McDonald was appointed moderator and Thomas Hay, Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, was named as staff resource.

Actions proposed to, and approved by, the 220th General Assembly (2012) (see Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 241ff.) were:

1. The affirmation of continued biennial meetings of the General Assembly.

2. That the docket of each biennial meeting of the General Assembly contain plenary sessions focused on prayer, Bible study, and community building.

3. That the dockets for the next three successive General Assemblies (2014, 2016, 2018) be constructed around the Great Ends of the Church, the Marks of the Church, and the Notes of the Church (F-1.0302, F-1.0303, and F-1.0304).

4. Each overture sent from a presbytery to the General Assembly must receive concurrence from at least one additional presbytery.

5. Commissioners’ resolutions must be signed from two commissioners representing two different presbyteries.

6. All decisions made by assembly standing committees by a ¾ (supermajority) vote shall be placed on the General Assembly Plenary Consent Agenda to be considered as the first order of plenary business following committee meetings.
Any actions requesting constitutional change must be considered in plenary. In addition to all consent items from assembly committees, the following items shall be placed on the General Assembly Plenary Consent Agenda: (a) all unchallenged nominations from the General Assembly Nominating Committee; (b) unanimous recommendations from assembly agencies and entities for confirmations of those offices that, according to the Manual of the General Assembly, require General Assembly confirmation. In all cases, the right of any commissioner to remove an item from the General Assembly Plenary Consent Agenda shall be preserved.

7. The practice of pre-election Moderatorial booths was eliminated.

8. Moderatorial nominating speeches were eliminated.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) also extended the work of the Biennial Review Committee for two years. The following persons were appointed to serve by Moderator Neal Presa: Ruling Elder Conner Clark, Heartland Presbytery (YAAD to the 220th General Assembly [2012]); Teaching Elder Rhonda Kruse, Hudson River Presbytery; Ruling Elder Lee Tan, Milwaukee Presbytery; Teaching Elder Reggie Weaver, then of Chicago Presbytery (commissioners to the 220th Assembly [2012]). With the resignations of Tom Evans and Reggie Weaver, the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies consists now of eleven persons plus Tom Hay, staff resource. Carol McDonald has continued to serve as moderator.

Throughout the four years of its endeavors, the committee has kept before it these words: “The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness” (G-3.0501).

As we present our recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014), we want to say to the whole church:

• The way we have worked together as a committee reflects our hope and dream for this and all future meetings of the General Assembly. We have been a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. We have reflected on Scripture, prayed together, listened to one another, celebrated one another’s professional and personal joys and challenges, and walked with one another in life-changing events and circumstances.

• We affirm the value of Robert’s Rules of Order as our guide for doing business and making decisions together. Yet we have listened to the church and have heard a yearning for dialogue and conversation that focuses on issues and ideas rather than on rules and regulations.

• We have studied, with diligence, the Manual and Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

• We have worked carefully to identify and articulate values we believe are, and should be, visible in the worship, work and witness of every meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) It is our recommendation that this Values Statement become the Introduction to the Manual and Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

• We are proposing several changes to the Manual and Standing Rules of the General Assembly. We believe our recommendations reflect the hopes of those who crafted the Form of Government adopted by the church in 2011.

May the recommendations contained in this report further the capacity of each future General Assembly to live as a community of faith, hope, love, and witness.

COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 03-04

Comment on Item 03-04—From the Committee on Theological Education.

The Committee on Theological Education encourages the 221st General Assembly (2014) to not approve Recommendation 3.d. concerning Standing Rule B.2.e. [as found in the Manual of the General Assembly] on theological student advisory delegates.

The opportunity to serve the PC(USA) as a theological student advisory delegate (TSAD) can be formative for the faith and life of seminarians. The experience of serving as a TSAD often nurtures in these seminarians a deeper understanding of the way the denomination functions in ministry and mission. The presence and witness of TSADs is also helpful and healthy for other commissioners, advisory delegates, and the General Assembly as a whole, especially those who may not regularly be exposed to students of one of our PC(USA) theological institutions.

The experience TSADs gain at General Assembly shapes their future education and ministry. These seminarians return home with a broader perspective of the denomination and its work and worship and share this perspective in the seminary classroom and with their own congregations.

The financial cost of bringing twenty-four TSADs to General Assembly is not insubstantial. The COTE believes, however, that the positive and long-term benefits gained from the presence of TSADs at the assembly far surpass the overall fi-
In summary, the COTE advises against voting for this particular recommendation as we believe theological student advisory delegates (TSADs) are an investment in the future of the church, providing hope and future leadership and guidance to the PC(USA).

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 03-04

Comment on Item 03-04—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) has particular responsibility for advising the assembly regarding actions that will affect representation and participation in its life together. The GACOR respectfully advises that commissioners consider the following comment.

The original tasks given to the Biennial Review Committee required an extension of their service to bring the final recommendations. We provided input to them where they allowed access. The final report was not distributed for consultation.

Many of the recommendations make adjustments that seek to provide adequate time for deliberation and preparation for an assembly. Having commissioners elected and reported earlier will allow for more time in selecting and preparing leaders as well as allowing for earlier appointment to committees (allowing for longer time for commissioners to prepare for the work before the assembly).

Recommendation 4.a. has significant impact and needs careful consideration. GACOR has concerns regarding constraints on participation and narrowing representation. The proposed changes to Standing Rule C.1.c. will alter the nature of assembly committee leadership. There are two major changes being proposed:

1. Allows up to 1/3 of assembly committee moderators to be selected from beyond the pool of commissioners elected to that assembly. GACOR asks, what is the standing of the proposed non-commissioner moderators? Are they added as commissioners to the assembly (incurring additional costs) in addition to the elected commissioners from their presbyteries? With parallel recommendations to require reporting of commissioners earlier, there should be sufficient time to determine leadership qualities and recommend persons for service.

2. Removes the guideline of “no more than one person from any one presbytery” being appointed to serve as vice moderator, allowing duplication of presbytery representation. It may limit geographic distribution of assembly committee leadership. For example: There are 14 committees for the 221st General Assembly (2014) and 28 leaders selected. Of 656 commissioners, 28 presbyteries (of 172) have a commissioner serving as a committee leader. Removing this guideline allows for an even narrower geographic distribution of committee leaders to serve future assembly committees.

Respectfully, there seems to be a spelling error in Recommendation 4.a. GACOR suggests the simple correction may be to replace the word “inclusively” with the word “inclusivity.”

GACOR applauds the changes asked for in Recommendation 6.b. This recommendation suggests necessary Standing Rule changes so that assembly committees are given flexibility in selecting deliberative processes. GACOR observes assembly committees with an interest of measuring access to participation of commissioners and advisory delegates within different deliberative processes. They are looking for patterns of participation for differing methods of discernment and provide feedback to the Stated Clerk. This action allows for greater experimentation. Having observed two assemblies, already it is clear that the use of Robert’s Rules privileges some commissioners voices in deliberation and final actions. The expanding of processes will affect those patterns differently and result in wider participation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

Item 03-05

Joint COGA/PMA Budget Proposals for General Assembly Per Capita Budgets 2014–2016

[The assembly approved Item 03-05, Recommendations 1.–2.a. See pp. 13, 21.]

1. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMA) recommend that the 221st General Assembly (2014) incorporate into the Minutes the Comparative Balance Sheet for 2013 and 2012, along with the 2013 Actual Performance in the Per Capita Statement of Activities.
2. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMA) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014)

a. Approve the Revised 2014 General Assembly Per Capita Expense Budget totaling $12,891,246;

b. Approve the total Expenditure Budget for 2015 totaling $12,279,103 and for 2016 totaling $12,262,898.

c. Approve that there be an increase in the General Assembly Per Capita rate of $0.05 in 2015 to $7.07, and that the previously approved rate of $7.02 for 2014 be also approved for each year 2015 and 2016.

3. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMA) recommend that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve that an amount of $1,354,306 be designated from the 2015 per capita budget (about half the cost of the General Assembly meeting), and be reserved for use in the year of the General Assembly meeting (2016).

Rationale for Recommendations 1.–3.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMA) continue to be grateful to the whole church for their faithfulness in meeting their per capita obligations (about 90 percent collection rate) for 2012. We believe that these funds have enabled the General Assembly to carry out its core ecclesial functions so that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can carry out its ministry in faithfulness to Scripture and our Constitution.

Building the per capita budgets for 2015 and 2016 continues to be a challenge. The total revenue level is impacted by variables as diverse as a slow-moving economy, stock market fluctuations, value of assets held, levels of membership loss, and the ability of presbyteries to fully meet their per capita obligations. Most of these factors impact the overall per capita budget negatively. On the expenditure side, challenges besides annual inflation include added costs due to increase in number of commissioners to the General Assembly since 2010, as well as added costs to carry out an assembly at different locations.

Given these dynamics, both OGA and PMA faced the reality that major reductions would be necessary unless there was to be a very substantial increase in the per capita rate, which we determined would create a real hardship in the church. Recognizing that the challenges mentioned are adversely impacting governing bodies at every level, and in order to hold to a minimum increase in the per capita rate, hard choices had to be made relative to staffing levels, the consolidation of expenses, and limiting merit increases to staff compensation. In fact, the OGA and PMA made several adjustments reducing the previously approved budget for 2014 by almost $1,437,000, and are now proposing a revised budget for 2014. In order to ease the burden at every level, we are also proposing that we maintain the General Assembly Per Capita rate at the current rate of $7.02, without any increase for 2015, and 2016, although annual inflation is around 3 percent. We have budgeted to utilize a reasonable amount of reserves each year, after carefully reducing budgets, in order to eliminate any increase in the per capita rate for the next two years.

The details behind these calculations can be found on the attached sheets. We believe that such restraint in holding the per capita rate without increase and reduced expenditure levels are necessary for the well-being of the church and the fiscal integrity of the per capita budget. We would encourage a similar spirit of restraint by commissioners as you consider other proposals that might have financial implications at the 221st General Assembly (2014), and consequently impacting the proposed budgets and the General Assembly per capita rate.

4. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMA) recommend that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the attached allocation of designated funds for OGA, and PMA task forces, totaling $2,059,774 for 2014, $1,899,815 for 2015, and $2,192,093 for 2016.
Rationale for Recommendation 4.

The allocation of designated funds, are reserved for specified expenditure planned to augment the per capita budget so that steep increases to the per capita apportionment rate may be cushioned. The primary items include part of the Presbyterian Historical Society operations, General Assembly session, ordination examinations, the production and distribution of OGA publications, and OGA/PMA task forces. The sources of these funds are mostly from independently generated revenue, including gifts and endowments. Some meetings and conferences generate revenue for expenses, independent of the per capita budget and are accounted through the designated funds.


Overall Rationale

REVIEW BUDGET PERFORMANCE (JAN–DEC) 2013

The 2013 General Assembly Per Capita Budget was revised to have total revenue of $13,413,919, and a total expenditure of $13,792,598, thus ending with a draw on reserves of ($378,679). The actual figures for 2013 performance indicate that we ended the year with a draw of only ($132,441) from reserves, resulting from a total revenue of $13,507,990, and a total expenditure of $13,640,431.

During March 2013, the Office of the General Assembly undertook a reorganization/restructure program, which resulted in reduction of staff and realignment of functions serving the larger church. This necessitated severance costs that totaled about $700,000 in 2013. In spite of this additional expense, the draw on reserves at end year has been reduced to a level close to $132,000, which is far less than that originally budgeted and approved by the last General Assembly (original $659,711). This was made possible by reduced budgets during revision and under expenditure.


Item 03-06

[The assembly approved Item 03-06 with amendment. See pp. 13, 21.]

A Resolution to Support Hotel and Hospitality Workers Through the Adoption of Just Policies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of General Assembly to include protective language in every hotel contract so that if there is a labor dispute at the contracted hotel, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can pull out of the contract without penalty.

2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of General Assembly to adopt a policy that gives preference to hotels where [workers are organized] [workers’ rights are protected either by organization, or through the fair practices of their employers], and commits to honoring and upholding boycotts that are directly related to workers’ wages and working conditions.

3. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter, to be distributed electronically, to every presbytery and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) interest group, encouraging adoption of a similar policy that includes incorporating protective language in every hotel contract, giving preference to hotels where [workers are organized] [workers’ rights are protected either by organization, or through the fair practices of their employers], and committing to honoring and upholding boycotts that are directly related to workers’ wages and working conditions.”

Rationale

The Scriptures and our confessional standards uphold Christians to just compensation for workers and fair working conditions. As such, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long-standing commitment to workers’ rights, fair wages, and humane working conditions, affirming that, “All conditions of paid employment, including compensation and working conditions, should sustain and nurture the dignity of individuals, the well-being of households and families, the social cohesiveness of communities, and the integrity of the global environment.” Currently, however, the PC(USA) does not have a policy that helps us support and stand with hotel and hospitality workers when their rights are being violated by their employers.

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In 2013, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) had a contract with the Hyatt Hotel for the Big Tent gathering in Louisville, Ky. When leaders of the PC(USA) learned that Hyatt workers, in collaboration with the organization Unite Here, had called for a global boycott of the Hyatt due to their unjust practices, they decided to break the contract for all common space (such as meeting, meal, and workshop space) in order that those Presbyterians who desired to observe the global boycott could do so without missing any events at Big Tent. Sleeping rooms that had been contracted were retained, but attendees could choose alternate hotels for their accommodations. Unfortunately, breaking this contract cost the church financially. It was the right thing to do, and the church should be proud of the sacrifice it made for the sake of justice. The reality is, however, if protective language had been included in the contract, there would not have been a cost.

This incident revealed that no policy is currently in place to help guide our leaders and conference-planners through the process of formulating contracts with hotels and other vendors with the rights of workers in mind. This recommendation seeks to provide that kind of guidance through the following three steps:

1. Including protective language into every hotel contract will ensure that we can break a contract if necessary without the financial loss we incurred in 2013. Protective language allows an organization to break contracts without penalty, including reasons involving labor disputes. Not only will this protect the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), it will send a message to hoteliers that our church supports and cares about hotel and hospitality workers. The PC(USA) can also include language that requires hoteliers to disclose any labor disputes that arise, so that the church is duly informed and able to make these decisions when necessary. Resources on how to include such language are available at the website of Interfaith Worker Justice, and could be utilized by the legal counsel of the PC(USA).4

2. Officially stating that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), “gives preference to hotels where workers are organized and commits to honoring and upholding boycotts that are directly related to workers’ wages and working conditions” would provide clear guidelines for which hotels will be considered first when booking meetings and rooms and would enable conference planning teams to make sound logistical decisions that adhere to the church’s commitment to justice.

3. Directing the Stated Clerk to communicate and encourage adoption of our denominational policies to the presbyteries and the church’s interest groups ensures that the whole church is aware of this commitment and has the tools to go and do likewise.

We are called as a church to advocate and stand for worker justice. Our theology of work and labor must be reflected in how we make financial decisions and which businesses we choose to support. We have already clearly stated with our words and our actions that the church values the dignity of workers, and this resolution helps us to do so more efficiently and strategically. Doing so also contributes toward reaching the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s directional goal of compassionate prophetic discipleship, demonstrating and proclaiming God’s justice, peace, and love.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 03-06 be approved.

The purpose of the recommendations from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is to establish more specific strategies for carrying out the church’s long-standing policies in support of workers’ rights, including the right to organize, the right to fair wages, and the right to safe working conditions. As quoted in the ACWC’s rationale, the church’s policies on justice for workers are grounded in its understanding of the gospel’s message of human dignity, human equality, and abundance of life for families and communities that God intends for all. For the faithful, worker justice cannot be sacrificed to economic expediency nor defined by market rates and practices.

4 Faith Community Guide to Supporting Hospitality Workers,” Interfaith Worker Justice, <http://www.iwj.org/resources/hospitality-workers-guide#protectivelanguage> (23 January 2014) provides guidelines on language that can be used in contracts for this purpose. The following is a sample of Protective Language:

Notwithstanding anything in this Agreement to the contrary, if performance hereunder would foreseeably involve Group] in or subject it to the effects of a boycott, strike, lockout, picketing or other labor dispute and [Group] therefore withholds, delays or cancels performance, it shall have no liability therefrom, provided that [Group] may not withhold, delay or cancel performance based upon a labor dispute involving its own employees. In the event of a cancellation under this Section, neither [Group] nor its members shall have any future obligation under this Agreement, and any deposits or other payments made to the Hotel by [Group] or its members to reserve rooms or other space for use, and/or for services to be provided, shall promptly be refunded to [Group] or its members. This Section shall supersede all other provisions of this Agreement and shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of [Group’s home state here].

The following is a sample of language for a Notification of a Labor Dispute:

The Hotel agrees to notify [your Group] in writing within ten (10) days after it becomes aware of any labor relations dispute involving the Hotel and its employees including, but not limited to, union picketing, the filing of an Unfair Labor Practice charge by a union, the expiration of a negotiated labor contract, an existing or impending strike or lockout or any other matter which could reasonably be construed as a labor-management relations dispute.
The recommendations apply the church’s policies to an area in which the church has a specific presence: the use of hotels for conferences, meetings, and General Assemblies. The church is a direct consumer of the labors of hotel workers. As such, the church impacts the working conditions and life possibilities of hotel workers through its use of consumer power. The question before the assembly is whether the proposed recommendations use the church’s power faithfully.

To answer that question, it is important to understand clearly who is affected by the church’s decisions. In a recent study of five companies that provide more than 70 percent of U.S. full-service hotel rooms, 80 percent of the workers were Black, Latino/a, and Asian women and men. They perform work as housekeepers, banquet servers, stewards and dishwashers, cooks and kitchen workers. The study found that as a group, hotel workers are 40 percent more likely to be injured on the job than all other service sector workers; they are more likely to sustain more severe injuries requiring time off and medical treatment or medically restricted work, or transfers. The poor working conditions of housekeepers, who are 25 percent of hotel workers, and 90 percent of whom are women of color (Latina, Black, and Asian women), were clearly described by the academic researchers: “In hotel workers specifically, guest room cleaning work is marked by time pressure, low job control, low wages, increasing use of contingent employees without job security, and few opportunities for career advancement.”

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics clearly documents the higher wages of unionized workers whether measured by industry or by workers’ characteristics. In the leisure and hospitality industry, the bureau reports that full-time unionized workers earn on average $611 a week compared to $487 for non-unionized workers. It also reports that the average number of hours worked in a week in April 2014, was only 26. Full-time work is not offered to many. On the basis of wages alone, a preference for unionized hotels is clearly supported by the data.

However, the church’s support for workers’ right to organize is based on its belief in participatory employment: that is, the dignity of workers is expressed, supported, and maintained by workers’ freedom to organize in order to represent their concerns and interests to employers, “to participate actively in economic decision making that affects them.” Understood in this way, good employers providing good working conditions are as much in need of this relationship with their employees as are problematic employers. Worker participation in decision making is an expression of their dignity as equal human beings. Thus, for the church to approve a preference for hotels with organized employees, as in Recommended 2, is consistent with, and perhaps required by, the church’s existing policies.

Recommendation 1 is, as ACWC explains, a way to protect the church from financial losses in the case of a hotel involved in labor activities clearly contrary to the policies of the PC(USA) and its members, resulting in a labor action. The ACSWP has consulted with two organizations that share the PC(USA)’s positions on worker rights: the Society of Christian Ethics and the American Academy of Religion. The Society of Christian Ethics, with an annual meeting involving 500–600 attendees, has required the inclusion of protective language in its hotel contracts for the past eight years without incident, according to its executive director. The American Academy of Religion, with an annual meeting of as many as 10,000 attendees, has adopted a similar policy after experiences with the Hyatt boycott. Examples of relevant contract language would be available from these and other professional organizations. In addition, each of these organizations uses the contract negotiation process to question the hotel about its treatment of workers and its relationship with their unions.

Recommendation 2 would also commit the PC(USA) “to honoring and upholding boycotts that are directly related to workers’ wages and working conditions.” The comment of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) expresses concern that this would keep the church from using other methods of engagement and subject the church to the opinions of others in place of its own discernment process. However, boycotts are an action of last resort. It is much to the advantage of workers to negotiate with employers to work out agreements, avoiding strikes or boycotts. Workers sacrifice their own income and job security when forced to take these measures. Some may remember the call of Black South Africans to boycott their country in their struggle against apartheid. Some may remember the calls to boycott during the civil rights movement. The church is not blocked from studying, investigating, and witnessing before or during the long negotiating period. The ACSWP advises that the church, in developing its policies on workers’ rights, has indeed done these studies and investigations. It has concluded that wages and working conditions should support the dignity of persons, families, and communities. Nor is the church blocked from entering negotiations with management, as MRTI does. The ACSWP believes that the power to consume creates such an opportunity to negotiate that should be used. Now the General Assembly must decide whether it is prepared, if called, to take actions on behalf of a group of workers whose unjust laboring conditions we already know and we can affect. Will we boycott if asked? We are reminded of Martin Luther King’s answer from a Birmingham jail:

You may well ask, “Why direct action, why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn’t negotiation a better path?” You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored.”

The ACSWP advises that if the General Assembly approves these recommendations, the conditions that lead to boycott may well be avoided.

Endnotes

ii. Ibid., 120.

iii. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Table 4. Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by union affiliation, occupation, and industry,” http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t04.htm. For documentation of the higher wages of unionized workers generally, see http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t02.htm. It should be noted that many hotel workers do not have full time employment and, thus, earn much less.


ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 03-06.

As Reformed Christians, in the light of the Bible and our confessional standards, we believe in just compensation for workers and fair working conditions for all human beings. For many years, the PC(USA) has been committed to supporting the rights of workers, fair wages, and decent working conditions.

As a denomination we cannot be co-participants of unjust situations by supporting hotels that are violating the rights of their employees.

This resolution will help us avoid penalties by being good stewards of our resources while at the same time being consistent with what we believe, preach, and do. We cannot host meetings that talk about justice while still reinforcing unworthy work conditions.

We can preach, with our example, that we care about other human beings, loving them as ourselves, and that we are a church committed to justice and peace.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns recommends the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 03-06, noting the following.

As a matter of clarification, ACWC offers the following counsel:

In Recommendation 2, by “give preference,” ACWC does not mean to assert that right-to-work states such as Kentucky cannot be included in consideration for meetings. Rather, the intent is that meeting planners always start with hotels where workers are organized wherever and whenever possible.

Further, ACWC recommends that comments from legal counsel be considered in relation to the theological basis for advocating for hotel workers rights. Stories in the Gospels teach us that Jesus ate with tax collectors, sinners, outcasts, and women and is remembered to have shared parables about treating workers in the vineyard (Mt. 20:1–16) with fairness. There is no testimony regarding Jesus seeking legal counsel for his own prophetic mission. We recognize that we are living in a different time and age, but the strong theological basis to argue for justice for workers comes through in our tradition and therefore calls the church in certain circumstances to speak prophetically from that tradition.

OGA & PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-06

Comment on Item 03-06—From the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (“PMAB”) and the Office of the General Assembly (“OGA”) stand strongly behind the values for fair employment practices expressed by the ACWC but hold reservations about the details required by this recommendation. Speaking up for just compensation and reasonable working conditions is a part of our scriptural and confessional mandate and true to our historical witness.

Our concern is that, as currently presented, the resolution does not take into account the comprehensive ministry of the church and prior actions of the assembly.

Recommendation 1 directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“PMA”) and OGA to include protective language in every hotel contract. Any contract in the hospitality industry is a negotiation between skilled meeting planners and hotel managers who give and take to create an agreement that is beneficial to both. It is already practice of the OGA and the PMA to insert language very similar to that proposed in the recommendation into any contract at the beginning of negotiations. In the course
of negotiation, this contractual language may prove to be unworkable or other reassurances take on greater relevance. It is sometimes the judgment of the agency to drop the protective language in lieu of other considerations in order to complete the contract. To require every contract to include specific language puts those who confer on our behalf in a bind that may not meet our comprehensive missional and justice goals.

We would propose that if the General Assembly approves this recommendation, it consider inserting language such as “attempts to” before the words “include protective language…” in order to encourage meeting planners in the negotiation stages.

Recommendation 1 also makes reference to “a labor dispute at the contracted hotel” without defining what constitutes a labor dispute. Such general language is not useful when it comes as a directive from the General Assembly. Staff is left parsing what constitutes a labor dispute and who qualifies as a party in the dispute.

We would propose that, if the General Assembly approves this recommendation, it might be more helpful for the recommendation to use language such as “…so that if the contracting entity of the PC(USA) determined that the hotel violated the missional goals of the church, it could pull out of the contract.”

Recommendation 1 would then read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of General Assembly to [attempt to] include protective language in every hotel contract so that if [there is a labor dispute at the contracted hotel, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can] [the contracting entity of the PC(USA) determined that the hotel violated the missional goals of the church, it could] pull out of the contract without penalty.”

Of greatest concern are the implications of Recommendation 2, which “commits [the PMA and OGA] to honoring and upholding boycotts …” Such a policy abdicates to other bodies (such as Unite Here) our missional responsibility to engage in a prayerful, thoughtful process of engagement before initiating a boycott. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a vital history, going back almost a century, of joining strategically in boycotts. In 1979, the church established eight criteria before entering into a boycott. Among those criteria is to ask if “… other approaches to correcting the injustice [have] been seriously undertaken?” Furthermore the assembly instructed: “There are many methods of seeking social change, and boycott should rarely, if ever, be the strategy of first resort. Discussion and persuasion, exposure to public opinion, legislative remedy, and legal action are only a few of the options” (Minutes, UPCUSA, 1979, Part I, p. 253, “Boycotts: Policy Analysis and Criteria”).

As currently written, the PMA and OGA would be required to respect a boycott declared by other institutions without engaging in our own process of study, persuasion, negotiation, or witness. We would be relinquishing our own policies and the discernment of our councils to bodies with no connection or responsibility to our membership. The final conclusion of these boycotts would not be determined by the church, but by other entities for us.

One of the strengths of our Mission Responsibility Through Investment (“MRTI”) program is the way it opens avenues for the church to engage businesses in concrete, thoughtful conversations before moving toward any consideration of divestment. A boycott should be the end of the conversation between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and an institution, not the beginning.

Different language would instruct all the agencies of the church, when made aware that a hotel has been targeted for boycott by some organization, to initiate an investigation of the issues, conversation with the parties, and determination of how the PC(USA) might best contribute to the issues of justice before entering into a contract.

Recommendation 2 also instructs the PMA and OGA to “adopt a policy that gives preference to hotels where workers are organized …” without recognizing the many hotels whose workers are treated with justice but are not currently organized. Are good managers and the workers employed by them to be bypassed for preferential treatment for unions? This standard would imply that all of the hotels in Louisville and in many whole states (and all of our conference centers) do not meet the justice goals of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) because their workers are not organized.

Item 03-07

[The assembly approved Item 03-07. See pp. 13, 22.]

Amendment to Standing Rule H.1.b.(3) (Moderatorial Election Expenses)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) amend Standing Rule H.1.b.(3) as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(3) The following campaign guidelines are intended to create an equal and open opportunity for moderatorial candidates. To this end, the following procedures shall be observed:
“(a) Candidates should budget campaign spending of no more than $1,500, excluding travel and meeting expenses related to their candidacy shall covenant not to spend in excess of $2,000 in making their candidacy known to the church. This $2,000 includes out-of-pocket expenses as well as the estimated value of in-kind contributions, but does not include travel and meeting expenses.

“(b) Each candidate shall submit to the Stated Clerk an itemized statement of expenses, including travel and meeting expenses related to his/her candidacy and in-kind contributions. This statement shall be submitted to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly prior to the convening of the General Assembly. This information shall be distributed to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the election of the Moderator. The statement of expenses of all candidates shall be kept on file in the Office of the General Assembly following the meeting of the General Assembly.

“(c) The Office of the General Assembly shall not reimburse a candidate for campaign expenses, but shall assume expenses involved in printing and distributing material submitted for information packets as outlined in Standing Rule H.1.b.(3)(e)(g).

“(d) (e) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(e) (f) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(f) (g) [Text remains unchanged.]

Rationale

In order to create a level opportunity for individuals seeking to run for Moderator of the General Assembly, the General Assembly approved limitations on moderatorial election expenses, which are found in the Manual of the General Assembly at Standing Rule H.1.b.(3)(a). When the limitations were placed in the Manual of the General Assembly, provision was made for the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to review the candidates’ statements of expenses in order to assure the commissioners that the limitations were being observed. However, the rules are vague on the issue of in-kind donations, which could create disparity among candidates, depending upon their willingness and ability to seek donations. The COGA suggests that language be framed that would encourage equal and open opportunity rather than framing more regulations. Since the current spending limit did not specify that in-kind donations were part of that limit, the recommendation is that the overall limit be raised to $2,000 and include in-kind donations.

Item 03-08

[The assembly approved Item 03-08. See pp. 13, 22.]

Confirmation of Class of 2018 for the Presbyterian Historical Society Board—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) requests the 221st General Assembly (2014) to confirm the following persons to serve on the Presbyterian Historical Society Board:

Class of 2018:

Robert Maggs, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
Ellen Clark Clemot (New York City, New York)
George Abdo (San Marino, California)

Item 03-09

[The assembly approved Item 03-09 with amendment. See pp. 18, 22.]

Standards of Ethics for Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve “Standards of Ethics for Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to the General Assembly” as a code of ethics for commissioners and advisory delegates to the General Assembly:
1. **Foundations.** The standards of ethical conduct for commissioners and advisory delegates to the General Assembly are founded in our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ and the witness of Scripture. Commissioners and advisory delegates to the General Assembly should find particular guidance in the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In fulfilling the particular responsibilities of service as commissions and advisory delegates to the General Assembly, particular ethical obligations arise from the nature of the assembly and the role commissioners and advisory delegates play in it. Among the foundational principles of our polity that lead to particular ethical responsibilities for commissioners and advisory delegates are that:

a. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by presbyters exercising “shared power … by presbyters gathered in councils” ([Book of Order](https://www.pcusa.org), F-3.0208 & F-3.0202).

b. “Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ” ([Book of Order](https://www.pcusa.org), F-3.0204).

c. “Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” ([Book of Order](https://www.pcusa.org), F-3.0205).

All commissioners and advisory delegates have a responsibility to act in a manner that preserves these principles. These specific aspects of these responsibilities are set forth below.

2. **Independent Judgment.** All commissioners and advisory delegates shall avoid actually or potentially compromising the exercise of their independent judgment in seeking to discern the will of Christ in the decisions made by the General Assembly, and situations that give even the appearance of compromising the exercise of their independent judgment.

   “a. Definition. ‘Compromising independent judgment’ means any situation in which the commissioner or advisory delegate may be influenced or appear to be influenced in decision-making by any motive or desire for personal advantage or obligation to others with an interest in the decisions of the General Assembly. [Such situations can arise not only during the meeting of the General Assembly, but at any time after an individual has been selected as a commissioner or advisory delegate. Accordingly, any commissioner asked to serve in a committee leadership position shall disclose prior to accepting such an appointment any matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of compromising his or her independent judgment.] Personal advantage means a financial interest or some other personal interest, whether present or potential, whether direct or indirect. [When in doubt, the commissioner or advisory delegate is to assume there might be at least the appearance of a compromise of his or her independent judgment, and should raise the question pursuant to these standards.] [Such situations can arise not only during the meeting of the General Assembly, but at any time after an individual has been selected as a commissioner or advisory delegate.]

   “b. Potential Compromises of Independent Judgment. [Any commissioner asked to serve in a committee leadership position shall disclose prior to accepting such an appointment any matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of compromising his or her independent judgment.] All commissioner or advisory delegates are likewise to disclose promptly, in writing, matters and relationships that have the potential for giving rise to the appearance of compromising his or her independent judgment in the business before the General Assembly. Examples include, but are not limited to, financial interests in a decision of the assembly, acceptance of gifts or trips provided by those with an interest in or who are advocating for or against a recommendation or overture before the assembly. All disclosures are to be made promptly in writing to the moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures. [When in doubt, the commissioner or advisory delegate is to assume there might be at least the appearance of a compromise of his or her independent judgment, and should raise the question pursuant to these standards.]

   “c. Gifts and Relationship Building. To avoid even the appearance of impropriety, any gifts, gratuities, special favors, and hospitality to a commissioner or advisory delegate shall not be accepted by any commissioner or advisory delegate from any person or organization that sells, delivers, or receives any goods, materials, or services to or from any entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or from any person or entity who are advocating for or against a recommendation or overture before the General Assembly. This prohibition includes those persons or organizations that desire to enter into such relationships with any entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). There are four exceptions to this rule:

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5 While not all advisory delegates will have been ordained to the ordered ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the standards set forth therein are appropriate guidance to all who have accepted service as an advisory delegate to the General Assembly.
(1) Gifts, meals, outings, and relationship-building activities provided by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches, middle councils, partner churches or related organizations. Commissioner or advisory delegate shall not accept monetary gifts of any amount.

(2) Gifts that primarily benefit the General Assembly and not an individual commissioner or advisory delegate, such as gift cards, gifts of complimentary rooms given to the General Assembly by hotels, conventions, and conferences in relation to official General Assembly business.

(3) Occasional small gifts (less than $50 in value, such as flowers or foodstuffs) to an individual commissioner or advisory delegate. Where gifts are shared with other commissioner or advisory delegates or other General Assembly participants (e.g., foodstuffs set out for all to partake), then the gift is not deemed to be to an individual commissioner or advisory delegate.

(4) Luncheons, dinners, outings, and relationship-building activities in connection with General Assembly business may be received. If an activity permitted under this paragraph results in a value of more than $100 to the commissioner or advisory delegate, the commissioner or advisory delegate shall promptly report this in writing to the General Counsel of the PC(USA) and the moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures. The written report will include a description of the activity, the dollar value, the name of the person/organization providing it, and the business that person/organization does with an entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or the recommendation before the General Assembly that the person/organization is advocating for or against. The Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures shall maintain a log that includes all of the written reports submitted under this Section (4).

d. **Process and Resolution.** All disclosures, reports, or questions regarding actions that might actually or potentially compromise a commissioner’s or advisory delegate’s independent judgment are to be made promptly and in writing to the moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures. The Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures will consult with the Stated Clerk and with the General Counsel of the General Assembly or designee as appropriate. After consultation, the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures will make a recommendation to the General Assembly. The General Assembly makes the final decision as to whether any action of a commissioner or advisory delegate has compromised a commissioner’s or advisory delegate’s independent judgment.

3. **Confidentiality of General Assembly Information.** In the rare circumstance in which the General Assembly meets in executive session, commissioners or advisory delegates shall not disclose information disclosed in the course of such a session that is not known outside of the General Assembly or is not known by public means (Standing Rule F.5.g.)

4. **Preservation of the Deliberative Process.** Each commissioner and advisory delegate should act in a manner that preserves the rights of other commissioners and advisory delegates to participate in the deliberative process.

a. **Cellular telephones.** “Use of cellular telephones is prohibited during meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the assembly committees. During these meetings, pagers may be used only in the silent mode” (Standing Rule F.5.e.).

b. **Demonstrations.** “Spontaneous or planned demonstrations by individuals or groups are prohibited inside the building where the General Assembly meets” (Standing Rule F.11.b.).

5. **Violations.** Allegations of any violation of these standards during the course of a General Assembly shall be brought to the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures. The Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures shall give the accused reasonable opportunity to be heard. If it finds a violation of these standards has occurred after giving the accused due process (RONR §61), the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures may bring to the General Assembly a motion to reprove the accused commissioner or advisory delegate. A decision by the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures not to bring a motion to reprove to the General Assembly is not appealable to the General Assembly. Violation or noncompliance with this policy may also result in discipline by the council with jurisdiction over the commissioner or advisory delegate.

6. **Amendments.** These standards may be amended from time to time. In consultation with the General Counsel of the General Assembly, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly is authorized to periodically review this policy and to recommend reasonable and necessary changes to these standards.

7. **Designees.** Where these standards assign a duty to a particular officer or staff position, that officer or staff position may use the General Counsel or its designee to complete the duties.

8. **No Waiver by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).** Nothing in these standards shall be construed to waive any claim, assertion, or defense of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to exemption or exclusion from applicability of a statute and/or regulation or lack of jurisdiction of a civil court or governmental agency.
9. **Trainings.** Trainings to familiarize the commissioner or advisory delegates with these standards and its related forms and procedures will be posted on the General Assembly website in advance of each meeting of the General Assembly. Commissioners assigned to the Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures will receive training regarding their responsibilities under this policy.

**Rationale**


The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly was charged by the 220th General Assembly (2012) as follows:

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in consultation with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, to develop and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) a Code of Ethics Policy for all commissioners and advisory delegates that reflects the intent and content of the Ethics Policy for Elected and Appointed Members of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that was approved in 2009. (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 188–89 of the electronic file; p. 160 of the print copy)

The rationale for the commissioners’ resolution that was the basis for this action indicates that the underlying concern was “the attempt to influence the actions and vote of commissioners and advisory delegates through the offer and acceptance of expensive gifts or experiences” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 189). However, the commissioners’ resolution itself and the rationale reference the PMA-COGA Ethics Policy as the model COGA should use in developing a policy for commissioners and advisory delegates.

The COGA sought to model these standards on the PMA-COGA Ethics Policy, while recognizing that commissioners and advisory delegates to the General Assembly serve in a different role than elected members of COGA and the Presbyterian Mission Agency. These standards are therefore premised on the need to protect the integrity of the General Assembly’s deliberative process and the ability of commissioners and advisory delegates to seek the will of Christ unfettered by actions that might compromise their independent exercise of judgment on matters before a General Assembly, as well as ensuring that commissioners and advisory delegates do not interfere with the General Assembly’s deliberations. Accordingly, the proposed standards begin with a statement of the foundational principles that govern the ethical responsibilities of individuals called to service as commissioners and advisory delegates. It then sets forth three areas of ethical duty: avoiding even the appearance of any action that would compromise the independent exercise of a commissioner’s or advisory delegate’s judgment, maintaining confidences, and preservation of the integrity of the deliberative process. The remaining provisions (§§ 5-9) concern administration of these standards.

**Item 03-10**

[The assembly approved Item 03-010. See pp. 13, 22.]

**Approve Appointment and Terms of Associate Stated Clerks—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.**

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, with the concurrence of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Elect Teaching Elder Sue Davis Krummel, Teaching Elder Joyce Lieberman, and Ruling Elder Kerry Rice to a first, four-year term as Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly.

2. Elect Teaching Elder Thomas Hay to a second, four-year term as Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

3. Elect Teaching Elder Robina Winbush and Ruling Elder Loyda Aja to a fourth, four-year term as Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly.

**Rationale**

The Standing Rules of the General Assembly at H.2.d. states the following:

The General Assembly may elect one or more Associate Stated Clerks as the General Assembly shall determine. The Stated Clerk shall nominate persons to fill each such office after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The term of office shall be four years, subject to reelection at the pleasure of the General Assembly.

These six persons give exemplary service as leaders of the major ministry areas of the Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), are in good standing as ruling elders and teaching elders, and are faithful Christian leaders who serve the church with “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.” The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly enthusiastically nominates these six persons for election or reelection as Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly.
Item 03-11

[The assembly approved Item 03-011. See pp. 13, 22.]

Recommendation for Site and Date of 224th General Assembly (2020)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) accept the invitation of the Presbytery of Baltimore for the 224th General Assembly (2020) to meet in Baltimore, Maryland, from June 20–27, 2020.

Rationale

Standing Rule I.1.d gives instructions for rotating the place of the meetings of the General Assembly between four areas of the United States. Under the plan assemblies are scheduled for Detroit, Michigan (2014—Area C); Portland, Oregon (2016—Area A); and St. Louis, Missouri (2018—Area B). This rotation places the 224th General Assembly (2020) in Area D, which includes the synods of South Atlantic, Puerto Rico, the Northeast, Trinity, and the Mid-Atlantic. Possible convention cities were identified in this area and the presbyteries represented by those cities were contacted about invitations.

General Assembly Meeting Services of the Office of the General Assembly then sent requests for proposals to the convention bureaus of those cities whose presbyteries also offered invitations. After review, five cities provided opportunities worth further investigation: Rochester, Atlanta, Baltimore, San Juan, and Tampa. All five cities offered very attractive possibilities.

Site visits were made to four of the five cities, and ten criteria for evaluation were developed, including financial commitments, ease of facility use, hotel convenience, and the spiritual and emotional impact of a particular site on commissioners and advisory delegates.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly heard a recommendation from the General Assembly Meeting Services and is excited to recommend Baltimore for much that it offers.

The assembly last met in Baltimore in 1991. Since then the convention center—located in a thriving downtown and a block from the Inner Harbor—has been expanded and there is ample space for the official meetings. Various discounts and contributions from local firms brought the convention center rent down to about $25,000. There are more than 1,900 hotel rooms within a few blocks of the convention center at rates as low as $119.

In making their recommendation, COGA recognized Baltimore’s location on the eastern corridor making it easily accessible by train or car as well as by air. The dates were also an important fact for COGA, which appreciated that these dates are after Pentecost, most graduations, and before the 4th of July holiday.

The Presbytery of Baltimore has a long tradition of engagement and support for the General Assembly. Seven times in our history they have hosted a General Assembly. Seven times the assembly has elected a member of the Presbytery of Baltimore to serve as their Moderator. Their strong leadership will be a genuine asset to the OGA in planning and hosting the 224th General Assembly (2020).

Overall we believe that the city and the Presbytery of Baltimore offer the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) an outstanding location for holding a General Assembly and that commissioners, advisory delegates, staff, and visitors will be excited to be in Baltimore.

Item 03-12

[The assembly approved Item 03-012. See pp. 13, 22.]


The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) instructs the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to establish a policy for the process of selecting host sites for future General Assemblies, and that in developing such a policy the following points are to be considered:

1. Providing to presbytery leadership basic information helpful in considering the possibility of offering an invitation to host a General Assembly (e.g. Manual of Operations and budgets of previous General Assemblies, FAQ document, one-page summary of expectations of host presbytery, timeline for key decisions/actions by host presbytery once selection is approved by General Assembly);

2. Laying out a timeline for receiving invitations from presbyteries to host a General Assembly, including sufficient time for a presbytery to consider such an invitation at a stated meeting and the timing for requesting proposals from prospective city convention bureaus;

3. Consulting with presbytery leadership and councils prior to proposals being presented to COGA;
4. Immediate notification to presbytery leadership once COGA has decided to recommend a presbytery as a host for General Assembly.

**Rationale**

The councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ (*Book of Order*, G-3.0101).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) has the responsibility to recommend to a General Assembly a site for a future General Assembly.

A presbytery serving as a host for a General Assembly engages as many as 2,000 volunteers, provides hours of staff and volunteer time in planning and preparation, and raises as much as $200,000 in funding.

There was no consultation with presbytery leadership in the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy [site of the 223rd General Assembly (2018)] or the Presbytery of Baltimore [proposed site of the 224th General Assembly (2020)] following a request to consider the possibility of being considered as a host for General Assembly until after COGA approved the recommendation.

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**COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-12**

Comment on Item 03-12—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly welcomes the opportunity to assure that clear communications occur with potential host presbyteries during the process of selecting sites for future meetings of the General Assembly. Accordingly, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly advises that this item be referred to COGA for action and response to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

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**Item 03-13**

[The assembly referred Item 03-13 with comment. See pp. 18, 23.]

[Comment: Refer Item 03-13 to COGA to be reported to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Childcare at General Assembly.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Office of the General Assembly to ensure that childcare and child-friendly spaces are provided at all General Assembly meetings, following models used for other Presbyterian meetings, such as Presbyterian Women’s Gatherings and Big Tent.

**Rationale**

The PC(USA) continues to emphasize the importance of the involvement of young adult members. In order to support the participation of many of these Presbyterians, childcare must be provided.


Young Clergy Women’s Project: [http://youngclergywomen.org/conference/childcare/](http://youngclergywomen.org/conference/childcare/)


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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-13**

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 03-13.

The rationale of the overture rightly points out that the PC(USA) is strongly emphasizing the involvement of young adult members in the life of the church and seeks to increase both the numbers and levels of young adult participation. Childcare and child-friendly spaces at all General Assembly meetings would make participation much more feasible for young parents.

The ACSWP notes providing childcare would not only be a support to young adults but particularly to women. We confess in our Brief Statement of Faith that the Holy Spirit “calls women and men to all ministries of the church.” Provision of childcare and child-friendly spaces would help align our actions with what we confess in our faith.

Finally, the provision of childcare at all General Assembly meetings would contribute to the health of marriage and families, decreasing the financial and emotional burden of church members with children when travel is required to attend General Assembly meetings.

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eral Assembly meetings. The 216th General Assembly (2004) of the PC(USA) approved the policy statement Transforming Families, reaffirming in many ways the importance of the family in Christian faith.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-13

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 03-13.

To offer adequate childcare at churchwide events like the General Assembly meetings it is very important to support young adults, clergy couples, single parents, and racial ethnic immigrants’ participation and leadership.

For young adults, clergy couples, and single parents with kids, it is needed to offer childcare if we want to support younger parents to participate in the life and decision-making process of our denomination.

In the case of clergy couples, it is a challenge to leave their kids at home when both of them have responsibilities, are participating and assuming leadership roles in our church. So they need also the support with care for the younger members of their family.

For immigrants representing racial ethnic groups of the denomination, it is a challenge to attend the General Assembly meetings without their kids since as immigrants many of them do not have extended family members near to them to take care of their kids while they are away.

Additionally, to pay for childcare services during a whole week of business meeting it is extremely expensive. Despite there is a policy from the Presbyterian Mission Agency to pay for childcare services, it is only valid for staff and elected members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Activities, childcare, and child-friendly spaces for toddlers and kids are needed during important business at the General Assembly if we want to have a fair representation of all races, gender, and ages according to the General Assembly Committee on Representation and as it is stated in our Book of Order (G-3.0103, Participation and Representation, F-1.0403, Unity in Diversity).

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 03-13

Advice and Counsel on Item 03-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 03-13.

The ACWC has long supported adequate childcare at churchwide events.

Ensuring that childcare is available is essential to raising a new generation of leaders as well as supporting parents. While business is central to the meetings, alternatives should be considered such as flexible sharing of a single commissioner position and/or flexible voting schedule to encourage younger parents to participate.

While childcare is emphasized in this overture, other caregivers could be included, to open up an opportunity for participation by those with responsibilities to care for people with disabilities, elder care, etc.

COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-13

Comment on Item 03-13—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly advises that Item 03-13 be referred to COGA for further study with instructions to report its recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016). There are a variety of factors that need to be considered with respect to this item, including state law limitations on the time period children of various ages can be kept in childcare and the demand for such childcare by commissioners. Allowing further study of this issue by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly may allow development of alternatives that better meet the underlying goals of this item.

Item 03-14

[The assembly disapproved Item 03-14. See pp. 18, 23.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Amending Standing Rule B.3.a. to Designate Presbytery Executives as Corresponding Members of the General Assembly.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) amends Standing Rule B.3.a. to designate presbytery executives corresponding members of the General Assembly, beginning at the 222nd General Assembly (2016). The amended Standing Rule B.3.a. would read as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown as italic.]
“a. The following persons shall be corresponding members: Moderators of earlier General Assemblies; the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other members of the staff of the Office of the General Assembly as designated by the Stated Clerk; the members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly; the members of the PMA Executive Committee and staff of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and of the divisions and related entities designated by the council; all members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution; the executives of synods; the executives of presbyteries; one person designated by each entity reporting directly to the General Assembly, including permanent, special, and advisory committees (additional persons may be designated by such bodies if authorized by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly); and the presidents (or their designee) of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and seminaries related by covenant agreement.”

COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 03-14

Comment on Item 03-14—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly advises the General Assembly in addressing this item to consider the impact of the significant increase in the number of corresponding members this item would create. The General Assembly currently has approximately 120 corresponding members, many of whom are limited in the right of voice to issues relevant to their particular entity. This item would add approximately 170 more individuals to the number of corresponding members, which could create practical problems in such a large number of individual seeking to comment on items of business before the General Assembly during periods of debate.

Item 03-A

[Item 03-A, COGA minutes, were approved with comment. See p. 23.]

[Comment: Approved with minor typographical corrections that were submitted.]

Minutes, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

Item 03-B

[Item 03-B, PHS minutes, were approved with comment. See p. 23.]

[Comment: Approved with minor typographical corrections that were submitted.]

Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society.

Item 03-Info

A. General Assembly Nominating Committee Agency Summary

The notion that we are called to be together has led Presbyterians to conclude that this is how we should make decisions: not independently or unilaterally, but together. This is as true within the life of a local congregation as it is for the denomination as a whole. Decisions are shared among the various members or governing bodies for the good of the whole, because together we are the body of Christ. (Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers, Third Edition, Gray & Tucker, p. xii).

Introduction

Through the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s comprehensive nominations process, the General Assembly is afforded the opportunity to select, from the varied gifts and services of Presbyterians, the most qualified persons to serve on General Assembly entities with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

Assigned Responsibilities

The General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) is charged with providing careful nominations of persons to serve in elected membership on more than thirty on-going boards, committees, councils, and commissions designated by the General Assembly. The GANC does its work in conformity with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to full participation and representation of the rich diversity of the church in its governance.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee itself is broadly representative of the constituency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The committee consists of sixteen members, women and men from each of the synods of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). They represent various racial ethnic identities, age groups, different theological perspectives, and include
persons with disabilities. The Moderator of the previous General Assembly nominates GANC members for election by the ensuing General Assembly.

The General Assembly nomination process is application based and is open and accessible to the broad membership of the church. Persons who wish to be considered for nomination must complete and submit an application form and solicit personal references. In addition to providing a way to gather consistent demographic data, the application form allows for personal and creative narrative responses to a variety of questions about the applicant’s sense of call to service, qualifications, and experience. Applicants can be confident every application is reviewed during the nomination process.

Accomplishments

The GANC continues to connect with Presbyterians corporately and individually—through meetings of presbytery and synod nominating committees, participation and attendance at national and regional conferences, engagement and correspondence with leaders at all councils of the church and other official Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) groups—in order to inform Presbyterians of the many and diverse opportunities for service.

In addition to face-to-face engagements, individuals, congregations, presbyteries, and synods can find a listing of positions open for election on the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s website www.pcusa.org/nominations.

About a year before it meets to make nominations, the GANC mails to each presbytery and synod the list of vacancies to be filled. Additionally, the GANC website provides instructions, information about the nominations process, and committee descriptions. These descriptions contain information on the skills and expertise needed and time requirements for service. The descriptions are a useful tool for candidates as they determine whether or not their particular gifts and abilities are a match with the identified needs of a specific entity.

Persons interested in being considered for service on a General Assembly level committee must do so by submitting an application for nomination form. Until the 2012–2014 nomination cycle, the General Assembly Nominating Committee utilized an online application process. Delays in the conversion and upgrade of the nominations online application and database systems resulted in applicants in this cycle having to apply via an electronic Word document. Even so, as of February 15, 2014, approximately 225 applications were received for about eighty-five at-large vacancies. Applications remain active for two General Assembly cycles. In the 2012–2014 cycle, the General Assembly Nominating Committee has utilized a paperless system for its nominations process. The conversion of the online application process and database is to be completed in fall 2014.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee continues to further its efforts to deepen cultural competence and proficiency by providing educational opportunities for its members. Its February 2013 meeting included three presentations for this purpose: Rob Fohr and Abigail Heimach, Young Adult Catalyst Office, Presbyterian Mission Agency on Creating Space for Young Adults; James Hudson, president, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program on Generational Theory; and Dr. Mordean Taylor-Archer, vice provost for diversity, University of Louisville on Recruiting Persons of Color.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee works in concert with the General Assembly Committee on Representation to ensure that membership on all General Assembly entities is broadly representative of the membership of the whole church.

Through participation at conferences, conversations, and engagement with the General Assembly Committee on Representation, racial ethnic caucuses, affinity groups, individual contact at all mid council levels as well as with pastors and ruling elders across the denomination, the General Assembly Nominating Committee strives to increase the number of racial ethnic persons and persons with differing theological perspectives in its pool of applicants.

In its efforts to provide the General Assembly Committee on Representation quantifiable information about the theological diversity of the pool of nominees, the GANC added the following question to its nomination form: “Which terms describe your stand on theological issues facing the church today?” Applicants are provided with the following categories (listed in alphabetical order on the form): Conservative, Evangelical, Liberal, Moderate, Orthodox, Progressive, and I prefer not to answer. Applicants are encouraged to check all that apply and a space is provided for comments. In addition, the GANC has removed a question on its form, “To assist the General Assembly Nominating Committee in addressing the Presbyterian Church’s commitment to theological diversity, please briefly describe your theological perspective,” replacing it with, “Please name one key theological issue facing the church today and explain your perspective on this issue.”

The General Assembly Nominating Committee notes that many applicants do not identify themselves as persons with disabilities even when a disability does exist. Thus, we believe that the number of persons with disabilities serving the church on committees at the General Assembly level is actually higher than reported. In an effort to encourage persons to self-identify the GANC sought the advice of Presbyterians for Disability Concerns. As a result, the GANC revised a question on its form from, “Are you a person living with a disability?” to “The GA Nominating Committee is dedicated to ‘engaging people living with disabilities into active service governing body [council] service’ (from Living Into the Body of Christ, PC(USA) 2006). Are you living with a disability? If yes, please describe the accommodations needed for your participation...
in this entity’s work. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will continue to seek ways to encourage persons living with disabilities to make this information available.”

Members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee relate actively to mid councils and General Assembly entities throughout the year. Each General Assembly Nominating Committee member serves as a liaison to the nominating committee of the synod in which the member resides. Each member attends at least one synod or synod nominating committee meeting every other year to explain the nominations process.

The General Assembly Nominating Committee invites all General Assembly entities to send a written report biennially concerning the specific needs of the entity regarding nominees presented to the General Assembly. In addition, the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s liaison member is available to meet with the entity or be in contact by telephone or mail at the entity’s invitation, so that the nominating process may be explained and that the skills and expertise needed by the entity are identified. This information, along with advice and counsel received from the General Assembly Committee on Representation, assists the General Assembly Nominating Committee in its work.

Since the 220th General Assembly (2012) there have been five meetings of the General Assembly Nominating Committee: February 28–March 2, 2013, in Louisville, Kentucky; November 6, 2013 via conference call; February 26–March 1, 2014, in San Diego, California; and video conferences on March 12 and March 31, 2014. An orientation for new members was held November 29–December 1, 2012, in Fort Worth, Texas.

There are sixteen members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee—one member residing in each of the sixteen synods. The General Assembly, upon the nomination of the General Assembly Moderator, elects the members of the General Assembly Nominating Committee; members serve a six-year term. The following officers were elected and served from July 2012 to June 2014: Warner R. Durnell (teaching elder), Synod of Living Waters, moderator; Tully M. Fletcher IV (teaching elder), Synod of the Southwest, vice moderator; and Lita Simpson, (ruling elder) Synod of the Sun, secretary. Other members of the committee are: Victor Aloyo Jr. (teaching elder), Synod of the Northeast; Joan Carpenter (ruling elder), Synod of Southern California and Hawaii; Juanita D. Holley (ruling elder), Synod of Lincoln Trails; Roger B. Howell (ruling elder), Synod of the Covenant; Yena K. Hwang (teaching elder), Synod of Mid-Atlantic; Bertram G. Johnson (teaching elder), Synod of Alaska-Northwest; Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks (church member), Synod of the Rocky Mountains; Judy Lussie (ruling elder), Synod of the Pacific; Danny C. Murphy Sr. (teaching elder), Synod of the South Atlantic; Judith North (ruling elder), Synod of Lakes and Prairies; Bob Riggs (ruling elder), Synod of Mid-America; Marta T. Rodriguez (ruling elder), Presbiteriano Borinquén en Puerto Rico; John M. Willingham (teaching elder), Synod of the Trinity.

The office of the General Assembly Nominating Committee is located in the Office of the General Assembly, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396. Assistant Stated Clerk Valerie Kiriishi Small, ruling elder, serves as the coordinator for General Assembly Nominations (part-time).


The Reverend Dr. Neal D. Presa

THE GOSPEL: Our Common Faith

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13, NRSV).

1. We gather in Detroit, Michigan, for the 221st General Assembly (2014) with the theme from Romans 15:13, “Abound in Hope.” The hope we have been given by God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit is grounded in God’s action, in God’s continual being for us, and in the enduring promise that the good work that God began in us, God will carry it to completion to the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6).

2. As followers of Jesus Christ in the part of the Reformed tradition called the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we confess that in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promised return of our Lord, there is the Gospel, the power of God to salvation to all who believe (Rom. 1:16).

3. Our hope abounds not because of anything we can muster up in ourselves, but because God’s power, presence, and promise in Christ through the Holy Spirit abounds and abides toward us. Even then, the power, presence, and promise are not abstract entities that God gives. God’s power, presence, and promise is a short-hand way of saying that what is given, what is revealed … or rather, who is given, and who is revealed is the triune God Himself.

4. When we speak of hope, or faith, or love—the trifecta gifts of the Holy Spirit—what we as Christians are given are not quantifiable doses of commodities that can be measured or instrumentalized for our use and abuse; the trifecta gifts are biblical descriptions of the self-revelation, self-giving of the triune God, the fullness of the triune God. The Gospel is person-
al because the Gospel is the self-giving and self-revealing of the person of the triune God who reveals Himself to be One God in three personalities.

5. We as Reformed Christians join our confession to that of all Christians in all times and in all places who have found a common articulation of faith in the Apostles’ Creed—that ancient creed has summarized for more than two millennia for worshiping communities around the world the common faith, the common hope that anchors and propels us in worship and in witness, prayer, and in praise, in song, and in sacrament.

The creed expresses that the Good News is God Himself. The fact that we can describe the triune God in such and such a way: “I believe in God the Father Almighty … in Jesus Christ His Only Son our Lord. … I believe in the Holy Spirit…” We can make such a confession only because the triune God has come toward us, has pursued us, has revealed to us who God is. Such revelation comes by acts of God, words of God, as God moved through the joys and struggles, the trials and travails, the best and worst moments and circumstances of our common humanity, and in the messiness of our histories and the beauties of our cultures, the triune God showed His character, His will, His ways, and how our common humanity had and continues to have a proclivity to go away from God, to inflict wounds and violence against ourselves, against our neighbors, and against God’s own heart. We sin, and desperately need the renovating power of God to unshackle us from ourselves and being shackled to ourselves.

6. God’s yearning and longing for us has and will continue to be that we would delight in His heart and in His life. God takes the initiative, becomes as one of us in the person of Jesus Christ, and in His life, death, and resurrection, we are set free—free to love God, free to love neighbor, free to live lives that pulse after God’s own heart, to delight in what God desires. As God desires for all of creation to be reconciled to Himself, such a radical vision is imparted to us by the giving of the Holy Spirit, who teaches us daily what Jesus Christ Himself teaches, who Himself sought to do the will of the heavenly Father: “For God so loved the world. …” (Jn. 3:16).

7. Our common covenant in community in being the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is to worship together; worship that assumes that we will be sent to testify of the Good News that God in Christ through the Holy Spirit has come, has set us free, has reconciled us to Himself and to one another. Presbyterian pastor Tim Keller succinctly described the Good News that captivates our hearts: “We are so thoroughly sinful and flawed more than we ever dared believed; but at the same time, we are so thoroughly loved and accepted in Jesus Christ more than we ever dared hope.”

8. That’s why we gather for worship, read and meditate on Scripture, and pray: the Holy Spirit comes to us to remind us of the Good News, to recalibrate us to the Good News, so that we would praise God for God’s wonderful works in Christ, that we would be propelled in faith, hope, and love, to testify in words and in deeds of the Good News, that our common vocation Sunday through Saturday would humbly but confidently proclaim the sinfulness of our common lot, and the saving grace of our common Lord.

9. The Gospel, when metabolized in the fibers of our common life together, result in the community being committed to and engaging in what the six Great Ends of the Church describe:

the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
the maintenance of divine worship;
the preservation of the truth;
the promotion of social righteousness; and
the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (Book of Order, F-1.0304)

COMMUNITY: Our Common Life

10. In the 2012–2014 biennium, our life together has been marked by deep struggle and committed hope: deep struggle of grappling with the realities that the church we were two years ago/ten years ago, is not the church we are today, and certainly not the church we will be moving forward; committed hope in that there are multiple places that I have seen and heard where Presbyterians are serving the Lord as faithfully and fully as God’s grace provides. Liturgically adapted from author Anne Lamott, the following has summarized moderatorial service in this biennium: how do we live in the power, possibilities, and promise of the Holy Spirit of Pentecost, as an Easter people in a Good Friday world?

11. Across the country, numerous presbyteries have been and continue to struggle with the realities of dwindling resources, challenged budgets, smaller staff, and congregations that have been dismissed, are being dismissed, or will be dismissed to other ecclesial communions. These are real challenges that affect our life together, that reveal to us what we value, and that place before us opportunities to respond in ways that can advance the cause of the Gospel or stifle its very witness because of responses that are more retributive rather than redemptive.
12. When Hunter Farrell (director of World Mission in the Presbyterian Mission Agency) and I traveled to Cuba to visit with our mission, ecumenical partners, the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba (La Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada en Cuba, IPRC), the IPRC leadership shared with us a gift: that the IPRC will continue relationship with many congregations that have been dismissed to the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECOP) and that the IPRC continues its strong relationship with the PC(USA). The IPRC offered to be that common partner between us and ECOP, that perhaps, in the future, God may bring visible reunion and reconciliation among our two communions.

13. In December 2012 at Stony Point Conference Center in upstate New York, Vice Moderator Tom Trinidad and I convened a table of representatives of the various interest groups in the PC(USA): Fellowship of Presbyterians, Covenant Network of Presbyterians, More Light Presbyterians, NEXT Church, Presbyterian Voices for Justice, That All May Freely Serve, Presbyterian Welcome. Our intent was to provide space where mutual affirmation of one another’s Christian faith, development of mutual friendships and genuine relationships, engagement with the points and roots of theological agreement and theological disagreement, and development of a mode of discourse that sought to “dignify difference” rather than settle for coexistent tolerance. The table met for three days and the various groups have continued to meet in the last two years. I am deeply grateful for the wise counsel provided by former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former U.S. Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, who individually gave of their time to discuss with me ways in which to frame and conduct conversations under tense circumstances.

14. There’s a committed hope in the way presbyteries respond to the challenges they face. The Presbytery of Alaska, while confronted with the challenges of a number of congregations dismissed to ECO, has since merged with the Presbytery of North Puget Sound, offering a vital witness in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, and the continuation of faithful mission. The Yukon Presbytery, whose congregations are separated by geographical distance, exhibit a supportive and loving community as they enact the laying on of hands, sharing the joys and struggles of their respective congregations, and embrace one another in encouraging one another in ministry. The Presbytery of Los Ranchos, while confronted with several congregations in the dismissal process, models a strong, vibrant presbytery that takes teaching and ruling elders leadership development to new heights, a deep commitment to new church development, and “flipping the presbytery” so that presbytery gathers are not staid affairs, but life-giving, centered on worship, prayer, and sharing of ideas and practices. The Presbytery of Transylvania, as with several other presbyteries, has moved toward a virtual presbytery staff office, where staff work in virtual space, but meet face-to-face in various congregations to exhibit the connectional nature of our life together. The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta realigned its staff to have a series of congregational mentors and consultants—modeling in a tangible way that the presbytery exists for the congregations, to equip and assist congregations for vitalized ministries. The Presbytery of Tres Rios engages the Gospel in impoverished areas, serving with immigrant families, working collaboratively with ecumenical, interfaith, and civic partners to provide affordable housing, healthcare, afterschool care, and education.

15. There’s a committed hope in the longtime faithful ministry of Presbyterian Women (PW). Even as PW discerns the future that will include a new generation of women, racial ethnic women, and continuing relationships with regional and local PW chapters affected by dismissed congregations, PW continues to be a strong supporter of national and global mission work. Presbyterian Women, at their Churchwide Triennial Gathering in 2012, resolved to focus global mission efforts with the Sudan and South Sudan. Presbyterian Women’s historic efforts continue to bear fruit as witnessed to by a moderatorial delegation that visited the Yodogawa Christian Hospital and the Presbyterian Japan Mission in Osaka, Japan. The Yodogawa Christian Hospital is regarded as one of the finest private hospitals in Japan, offering high-quality care, seeking the healing and wholeness and mind, body, and heart as daily Christian worship occurs in one of their three chapels. The hospital opened the first-ever in Southeast Asia a hospice facility for terminally-ill children and their families. Yodogawa Christian Hospital was founded in the early 20th century with seed money from the PW Birthday Offering.

16. A handful of young adult advisory delegates (YAADs) of the 220th General Assembly (2012) gathered for a first-ever, post-assembly reunion gathering in the summer 2013 at Nashville, Tenn., with the theme “Reunite, Renew, Respond” as we engaged in the Scripture texts of the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the 221st General Assembly (2014): Isaiah 40:31 and Romans 15:13, respectively. This was done through worship, Bible study, songs, development of liturgies, prayer, fellowship, and service at Room at the Inn, a ministry that serves with homeless populations of Nashville, empowering them to break out of addictions and life circumstances that were self-destructive. With the support of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, First Presbyterian Church Nashville, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Nashville, and several other sponsors, this YAAD event showed the power of community. Some of the liturgies and prayers can be found at this link: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ghrjgziy67q7e3z/8eg3zf268B.

17. The Presbyterian Youth Triennium held in the summer 2013 at Purdue University once again brought together in one place well more than 5,000 youth and young adults for worship, Bible study, energizers, song, and service as they engaged the theme, “I Am”—seeking to understand and engage their God-given identities as children of God. Packed over 150,000 meals, they made local impact, and inspired nationwide and global Presbyterians.

18. The launch of the long-awaited new hymnal, Glory to God, has been well-received and widely-acclaimed across the church and in ecumenical circles. Being regarded as one of the finest contemporary hymnals developed, pre-orders and current orders have far exceeded expectations. What a gift and a treasure as a present-generation sings songs of the faith, and prays the liturgies contained therein. Vice Moderator Tom Trinidad was present at all six launch events of the new hym-
nal as he shared our passion for music and liturgy and as he discussed our Reformed ecclesiology. Thanks be to God! Glory to God!

19. The work of the General Assembly Mid-Council Commission will bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) key recommendations that will help guide discussions of our life together in councils. How might presbyteries and synods engage in conversations that not merely limit the number of synods from 16 to 8, but find ways in which we can articulate 8 missional priorities, not merely 8 geographical configurations. How might congregations and presbyteries partner with one another across geography, to engage in 8 mission priorities over the next decade, 8 mission priorities that are hands-on, practical, and grounded in the biblical witness for a better and just world? Imagine what our General Assemblies would be like if we spent one week engaging in prayer, sharing in best practices, around 8 missional priorities, such as ministries for clean water (as the Synod of Living Waters does), alternative energy (as the Synod of the Sun does)? What about a mission priority that addresses poverty, human trafficking, urban ministry, etc.? Having an agreed upon 8 missional priorities would enable collaboration and conversation beyond geographical boundaries of synods and presbyteries, but based on passion and interests.

20. The work of the General Assembly Special Committee on the Belhar Confession will bring a necessary recommendation to the 221st General Assembly (2014) that the PC(USA) adopt the Belhar Confession. We need to face the reality that the church still has a problem with institutional racism and power. The Belhar Confession, from the voices of struggle of our South African sisters and brothers, speaks a prophetic word to our life together of undoing racism, of living into the radical reconciliation in Jesus Christ, and confessing the ways in which we have been complicit in creating and perpetuating racial violence in words and in deeds, both explicitly and implicitly.

21. The work of the National Racial Ethnic Ministry Task Force calls the 221st General Assembly (2014) to a comprehensive consideration of racial ethnic ministries at all levels of the church, and how intentional commitments and resources can come to bear on our entire life together, and not just pockets of the country or in isolated programmatic units.

22. The work of the General Assembly Special Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies brings to the 221st General Assembly (2014) key recommendations on how our gathering in national council might be enhanced to create community, enable collaboration beyond responses and votes to overtures and reports.

23. The “For Such a Time as This” program places recent seminary graduates to serve as teaching elders in congregational contexts that would not otherwise be able to call a full-time ministry due to financial challenges or geographical preferences by the pool of candidates searching for calls.

24. The Big Tent Conference held in the summer 2013 brought together once again major national conferences in one setting for excellent worship, and the commissioning of mission co-workers.

25. Our ten theological seminaries—Princeton Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, Union Presbyterian Seminary (Richmond, Va., and Charlotte, N.C.), Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and San Francisco Theological Seminary—and the two seminaries that are in covenant agreement with the General Assembly (the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Puerto Rico and Auburn Theological Seminary)—each and collectively bring faithful witness to the Gospel in preparing women and men for ministry in the church and world. Even as the landscape of the church is changing, so it is with theological education. Our seminaries are committed to contextualizing theological education, adapting to changing times, and engaging the global and local in ways that enhance teaching, learning, and research.

26. We are blessed to be in historic relationships with sixty-three colleges and universities. Each of them relate to the PC(USA) in different ways, but all of them take faith and learning seriously, preparing women and men to be responsible citizens in the nation and world, through worship, Bible study, community service, and spiritual formation.

27. Our camp and conference centers provide important programs and space for spiritual formation, education, recreation, theological reflection, and mission service.

28. The “1001 New Worshipping Communities” initiative has well more than 200 communities and more in the pipeline as many presbyteries and a few synods embrace the challenge to establish 1001 new worshipping communities in the next decade—inspiring, equipping, and supporting that wherever two or three are called to gather for worship, study, prayer, and service in Christ’s name, the Church will offer support.

29. There are numerous congregations that bring faithful Gospel witness. Consider the Utqiagvik church in Barrow, Alaska, in the northern slope which is the key Christian presence in that icy desert, as singing and fellowship can be heard and seen. What about Hormigueros Presbyterian Church in Puerto Rico, a community of many ages as they offer powerful and passionate worship, young people in liturgical dance, excited to know about Jesus Christ and serve in His name? Or the Christ the King Church in Maryland, an African American congregation whose choir collected and delivered toiletries and bottled water and brought it to my congregation in Middlesex, N.J., following Hurricane Sandy. Or what about First Presbyterian Church in Ossining, N.Y., which shares the Gospel with the prison inmates of Sing Sing Prison.
30. Our ecumenical and global relationships are essential for our life together and the Gospel witness. A sizable PC(USA) delegation traveled in September 2012 to the Centenary Celebration of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (PCK) and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK). We witnessed the deep faithfulness of our Korean sisters and brothers as they have become over the last century a significant “sending church” of thousands of missionaries throughout the world, gathering for daily early morning prayers, fervent in the Gospel, and working for the hoped-for reunification of the Korean peninsula and reconciliation of the North and South and families separated since the Korean War. One of the outcomes of that trip was the hosting by the PC(USA) in April 2013 of a mission consultation where the principal leaders of the PCK traveled to Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary as we jointly crafted a framework that lays out a mutual commitment of our mission and ecumenical partnerships in the next century.

31. The Presbyterian World Mission Asia-Pacific Office, Theology and Worship office in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the General Assembly Moderator office supported a theological education consultation of seminary partners in Southeast Asia hosted by the Silliman University in Dumaguete, Philippines, in April 2013. With the Asian, Asian American population in the United States as the fastest growing immigrant group, and our deep, historic relationships of partners in the Southeast Asia region, sharing of perspectives from each other’s vantage points as both sides of the Pacific engage Gospel and cultures in our respective contexts in a 21st century world provided significant learnings and outcomes. A shared covenant that resulted from that gathering was endorsed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board; the covenant also provided a model for global/regional consultations and mission frameworks for inter-seminary collaboration and partnership to which the Committee on Theological Education has blessed and which at least one of our seminaries, San Francisco Theological Seminary, established an official relationship with the Silliman University Divinity School. This theological education consultation has catalyzed interest and demonstrated necessity for other global regions to embark on similar theological consultations to consider contextual realities of theological education and formation in a 21st century world.

32. A moderatorial delegation to Lebanon and Egypt in May 2013 was an expression of solidarity with our partners: the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt (Synod of the Nile), and the Coptic Orthodox Church. Our delegation lamented the harsh realities of the nearly 2 million people displaced from Syria since war broke out nearly four years ago. In the midst of destruction of buildings and various terrorist acts, faithful Christians continue to worship and service, often at great cost to themselves and their families. Christians and moderate Muslims in Lebanon work together for the common good and in mutual dialogue and relationships. In Egypt, on the brink of the second revolution that brought down the Morsi regime and the Muslim Brotherhood, Egyptian Presbyterians and Coptic Christians serve faithfully, offering a critical witness of the Gospel, and in many cases, under dire circumstances. The Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo developed a unique center to engage and advance Christian-Muslim scholarship, study, and dialogue.

33. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met in May 2013. There was in one setting in the city of Edinburgh the confluence of the richness of the Scottish Reformed tradition and history, the royal crown of Her Majesty the Queen, the Church of Scotland’s ecclesiastical delegates, and ecumenical delegates from all over the world. The realities and issues of ordination for ministers in same-gender relationships and the question of same-gender marriage and civil unions were prominent areas of debate and consideration, as with our own context in the PC(USA).

34. Three Colloquia on Ecclesiology: What is the nature and purpose of the Church? Who is the Church? Why the Church? To engage these questions that shape the present-future of the PC(USA), Vice Moderator Tom Trinidad and I convened three Moderator’s Colloquia on Ecclesiology—April 2013, December 2013, and March 2013—at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Fuller Theological Seminary, respectively. I am deeply grateful to Presidents Ted Wardlaw, Craig Barnes, Mark Labberton, and their faculties, staff, and students for their hosting and support, together with the strong endorsement of the Committee on Theological Education and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation. Each of these colloquia had seven presenters (pastors, seminary professors, mid council or national staff), together with respondents from the host seminary and area teaching/ruling elders, as we collectively considered what does it mean for the Church to be Christ’s gathered-sent community, worshipping-witnessing communities; or to put it theologically, the Church as being liturgical-missional. Each of the twenty-one presenters considered this question from various angles—Eucharist, baptism, ecumenism, mission, justice, multiculturalism, liturgical theology, liturgical reform, salvation, the Holy Spirit. The presentations will be published in an edited volume by Wipf and Stock, tentatively titled, Liturgical-Missional: Essays on a Reformed Ecclesiology.

35. Three Gatherings on Unity with Difference: How do we live into the unity that is already effected by the triune God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, notwithstanding our experience of deep theological disagreement and ecclesiastical division? How do we engage in genuine discourse that does not merely tolerate difference but dignifies difference? To engage these questions, Vice Moderator Tom Trinidad and I convened three Moderator’s Conversation on Unity with Difference—December 2012, December 2013, March 2013—at Stony Point (NY) Conference Center, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Whitworth University, respectively. I am deeply grateful to Stony Point co-directors Kitty and Rick Ufford-CHASE and their staffs, Princeton Seminary president Craig Barnes, and Whitworth University president Beck Taylor and their respective staffs, faculty, and students for their support, along with the assistant of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation. On the first gathering with the various interest groups, see paragraph 13 above. The Princeton gathering was a focused conversation on the nature and purpose of the Reformed confessions, their relationship with the Book of Order, and how they relate to current discussions on Christian
marriage. The Whitworth gathering was a focused conversation on “Race, Gender, and Religious Identities,” specifically how do we as North American Christians speak of the Gospel contextually embodied and lived in such a way that dignifies historical and theological realities concerning racial identities, cultural messaging and encoding of gender roles and expectations, and the Gospel’s engagement with peoples of other faith traditions. The learnings and methodologies of these three gatherings will be published as a co-authored piece under the aegis of Witherspoon Press as a web-based resource for congregational and presbtery use, tentatively titled, *Unity with Difference: Resources for Our Life Together.*

36. Working with staff of the Office of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency, particularly Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons and Executive Director Linda Valentine and their staffs, on calls to action and prayer following such events as Hurricane Sandy, Oklahoma shooting, Hurricane Haiyan, the trial of George Zimmerman and the death of Trayvon Martin, the release of Meriam Ibrahim and the tragedy of human rights in Sudan and South Sudan, and several others.

37. With the ratification of the necessary 2/3 majority of presbyteries for the new common translation and Scripture citations of the Heidelberg Catechism, the 221st General Assembly (2014) will be asked to give final approval. This new translation is the result of the ecumenical collaboration we have with the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Following the 450th anniversary of the catechism last year, our adoption of this new translation amplifies the significance of this beloved expression of our Reformed faith, the consequence of ecumenical relationships, and, most supremely, the confident affirmation of Q/A 1, that “in life and in death, we belong to God.”

**THE TRIUNE GOD: Our Common Hope**

38. There are so many staff in the national offices, in mid councils throughout the church, in seminaries, colleges, and universities throughout the U.S., ecumenical offices in various countries whom I thank for your generous support of the office of General Assembly Moderator, and of me and my family, personally. There are the many hundreds of thousands (if not a few million) of people who have prayed these last two years, the thousands of hands I have shaken, and the many thousands of faces with whom I have looked at eye-to-eye. From these, I must name Stated Clerk of the General Assembly Gradye Parsons, Associate Stated Clerks Tom Hay and Loyda Aja, and OGA staff Molly Williams, Angie Stevens, Randy Hobson, Toya Richards, Sharon Youngs, Valerie Small, and PMA staff Mienda Uriarte for their near weekly if not daily patience with me as the present and outgoing occupant of the moderatorial office, their support and assistance and wise counsel through and through. My deep gratitude to my support network of trusted friends and colleagues in the church and outside, particularly the so-called “Quadrumvirate.” I am deeply grateful for the faithful service of and enduring friendship with Tom Trinidad, Vice Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012). In these last two years, he has shared in the travels, travels, and joy of this shared ministry. My thanks, too, go to his family—Kyndra, his wife, children Huston and Jordan—and his congregation, Faith Presbyterian Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, for sharing Tom with all of us and the entire church.

39. My gratitude to four communities with whom I have been blessed to serve and presently serving in ministry over the course of this moderatorial term: Middlesex (N.J.) Presbyterian Church (2003–April 2014), New Brunswick Theological Seminary (2011–April 2014), Village Community Presbyterian Church of Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. (since May 2014), North-West University of Potschefstroom, South Africa (since November 2013).

40. My deepest and profound gratitude and love to my family—my wife of twelve years, Grace, my sons Daniel and Andrew—for the many days I missed baseball and basketball games, FaceTiming and Skype connections from airports and hotel rooms, for your patience, love, and resilience. I am truly and immensely blessed.

41. This report concludes as it began: with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We enter the 2014–2016 biennium with fewer congregations and fewer members and fewer dollars, with deep anxiety in many corners of the church, with real challenges that confront us in every place. Yet, it has always been that way, with varying measures and degrees. In every age and in every place, the people of God encounter trouble and calamity, at the personal, national, organizational, cultural, systemic, global, and even cosmological level. Yet, in every age and in every place, as the Scriptures testify and to which our confessions/creeds/catechisms are living expressions and expositions, the triune God who has revealed and given Himself as the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit does not cease from saving, does not desist from pursuing us, does not pause from redeeming the world, does not ignore the plight and conditions of our individual lives nor of the world. In fact, quite the opposite. What we know, what we believe, and what we trust is in the Who … . who we know, who we believe, and who we trust is that the Triune God who created us, who came as Jesus Christ, by whose life, death, resurrection, ascension, eternal priestly intercession, and promised return in glory, will accomplish all things in all ways, to the glory of God. How do we know, believe, and trust? By the person and work of the Holy Spirit who testifies through the holy testimony of Scripture of this reality, the living faith to which we have been given, and the sacred calling to which every generation has been summoned to—to testify of what we have seen, heard, tasted, and freely received.

That is the story to which 1.8 million followers of Jesus Christ called the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have been called together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
JULY

Presbyterian Women Triennial Churchwide Gathering, Orlando, Fla.
House Fellowship Gathering of the United Presbyterian Church, Plainfield, N.J.

AUGUST

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley
  —Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, Ala.
  —Presbytery meeting, First Presbyterian Church, Selma, Ala.
Meeting with synod executives, Albuquerque, N.Mex. and leaders of Presbytery of Santa Fe
Meetings with staff at the Presbyterian Center, Louisville, Ky., and Presbyterian Foundation, Jeffersonville, Ind.

SEPTEMBER

Presbytery of Tres Rios, El Paso, Tex.
  —Project Vida, El Paso, Tex.
  —Casa de Amiga, Juarez, Mexico
  —Pasos de Fe, Juarez, Mexico
  —Ordination of the Reverend Ira Neal Locke, First Pres, El Paso
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Louisville, Ky.
Centennary of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea and the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea, Seoul, South Korea.
  —Preached at the Hong Kwang Presbyterian Church, Seoul
  —Preached at the Myung Sung Presbyterian Church, Seoul
Preached at the 115th Anniversary of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Trenton, N.J., and celebrated commissioning of 2012–2013 residents of the Bethany House of Spirituality and ministry of Urban Mission Cabinet

OCTOBER

Private meeting with Dr. Condoleezza Rice, Stanford University, Calif., on ecumenical diplomacy
Address and open session with executives and stated clerks at Fall Polity Conference, Louisville, Ky.
Dallas II World Mission Consultation, Dallas, Tex.
Address to National Korean Presbyterian Pastors’ Conference, Somerset, N.J.
Synod of the Northeast at Stony Point (N.Y.) Conference Center
Committee on Theological Education at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary
Princeton Theological Seminary for Bicentennial Closing Worship Service and speaker at student forums
Christ the King Presbyterian Church in Maryland
Chief Chaplain Rear Admiral Mark Tidd (USN)

NOVEMBER

Drew University Madison, N.J.
Moderators’ Conference, Louisville, Ky.
Racial Ethnic Seminarians Conference, Louisville, Ky.
Yodogawa Christian Hospital and Japan Mission Church, Osaka, Japan
Transylvania Presbytery, Lexington, Ky.

DECEMBER

Phone consultation with former U.S. Senator George Mitchell on diplomacy
Pittsburgh Presbytery

Christmas party reception at the White House and policy briefing at the Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Moderator’s 1st Conversation on Unity with Difference, Stony Point (N.Y.) Conference Center with Vice Moderator Tom Trinidad, group facilitator Bill Schlesinger, and representatives from The Fellowship of Presbyterians, Covenant Network of Presbyterians, That All May Freely Serve, More Light Presbyterians, NEXT Church, Presbyterian Welcome, Presbyterian Voices for Justice

2013

JANUARY

Chairs and chiefs of six national agencies, Louisville, Ky.
National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force, Louisville, Ky.
Newton Presbytery, Morris Plains, N.J.
Redstone Presbytery and Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church
Philadelphia Presbytery
Donegal Presbytery
Re-Forming Ministry Core Cluster, San Diego, Calif.

FEBRUARY

Synod of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba, Havana, Cuba
  —Presbyterian-Reformed Church, Luyano, Cuba
  —First Presbyterian Church, Havana, Cuba
  —Evangelical Theological Seminary, Matanzas, Cuba
  —Cuba Council of Churches

Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa., and Shenango Presbytery representatives

Monte Vista Grove Homes retirement community, Pasadena, Calif.

New Seminary of the West, Pasadena, Calif.

Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

Los Ranchos Presbytery, Malibu, Calif.

Synod of Southern California-Hawaii Asian American gathering, Los Angeles, Calif.

San Fernando Presbytery, Encino, Calif.

Hanmi Presbytery, Los Angeles, Calif.

Riverside Presbytery, Irvine, Calif.

San Diego Presbytery, San Diego, Calif.

San Gabriel Presbytery, San Marino, Calif.

Brentwood (Calif.) Presbyterian Church

MARCH

West Plano (Tex.) Presbyterian Church

Austin College, Sherman, Tex.

Whitworth University, Spokane, Wash.

San Joaquin Presbytery, Fresno, Calif.

San Francisco Theological Seminary

Redwoods Presbytery

San Francisco Presbytery
Synod of South Atlantic, Greenville, S.C.
Chartering of Nuevas Fronteras Church, Plainfield, N.J.
Forum on Gun Violence, Wachung (N.J.) Presbyterian Church

APRIL

Keynote Korean English Ministry Pastors’ Conference, Princeton Theological Seminary
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Louisville, Ky.
Synod of the Northeast Racial Ethnic Convocation, Princeton Theological Seminary
Joint lunch with Gregg Mast (president of New Brunswick Theological Seminary) and Craig Barnes (president of Princeton Theological Seminary)
PC(USA) mission consultation with the leadership of the Presbyterian Church of Korea held at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Chicago Presbytery
—Preached at Rogers Park Presbyterian Church, Chicago
—Preached at Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago
—Ecumenical and Interreligious Working Group of Chicago Presbytery

McCormick Theological Seminary
Moderator’s 1st Colloquium on Ecclesiology, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Consultation on Theological Education in Southeast Asia, Silliman University, Dumaguete, Philippines
Preached at the Silliman University Church, Dumaguete, Philippines

MAY

New Braunsels, Tex., New Church Development
Mission Presbytery, San Antonio, Tex.
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and Near East School of Theology at Beirut, Lebanon
Presbyterian Evangelical Church of Egypt (Synod of the Nile), Coptic Orthodox Church, Egyptian Council of Churches at Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt, and the St. Macarius Monastery
General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Edinburgh

JUNE

Joint Meeting of the Mercersburg Society and the Association of Reformed Liturgy and Music, Princeton Theological Seminary
First Presbyterian Church, Ossing, N.Y.
Synod of the Trinity, State College, Pa.
160th anniversary celebration of Ridgewood (N.Y.) Presbyterian Church
Started fifty-two-week blog reflection on the Heidelberg Catechism, “Journey to Detroit and #GA221 via Heidelberg” available at http://www.nealpresa.com/heidelberg-catechism
1st Reunion Gathering of General Assembly YAADs, Nashville, Tenn., at the Scarritt Bennett Center, Mission Service at Room at the Inn, and fellowship at the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville
Preached at First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tenn.

JULY

Graystone Presbyterian Church, Indiana, Pa.
Presbyterian Youth Triennium, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.
Massanetta Bible Springs Conference, Shenandoah, Va.
“Chairs and Chiefs” of the six national agencies meeting, Louisville, Ky.
Big Tent Conference, Louisville, Ky.
National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Ministers Training Seminar, Montreat (N.C.) Conference Center
Joint Gathering of Homestead and Missouri River Valley presbyteries
Calvin Crest Camp and Conference Center, Fremont, Nebr.
Sinodo de Boriquen (Puerto Rico)
—Presbyteries of San Juan, Nuroeste, Suroeste
—Evangelical Theological Seminary in San Juan
—Inter-American University campuses
—Preached at Hormigueros Presbyterian Church
—Visited various congregations and ministry sites

SEPTEMBER
Convocation Preacher at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga.
Clean Water U Training of Living Waters for the World, Oxford, Miss.
First Presbyterian Church, Tupelo, Miss.
Eastminster Presbytery at Mineral Ridge, Ohio
West Virginia Presbytery
General Assembly Leadership meeting with leadership of Racial Ethnic Caucuses/Councils, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, General Assembly Committee on Representation
Committee on Theological Education at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte, N.C.
Newark Presbytery, East Orange, N.J.
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Louisville, Ky.
Alaska Presbytery, Juneau, Alaska
Santa Barbara Presbytery, Oxnard, Calif.
El Montecito Presbyterian Church, Santa Barbara, Calif.

OCTOBER
St. Augustine Presbytery, Starke, Fla.
Cincinnati Presbytery, Blue Ash Presbyterian Church, Ohio
Pleasant Ridge (Ohio) Presbyterian Church
Yukon Presbytery, Anchorage, Alaska
Utqiagvik Presbyterian Church, Barrow, Alaska
Polity Conference, Louisville, Ky.
Davidson College (N.C.)
Inauguration/Installation of Craig Barnes as seventh president and professor of pastoral ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary
Synod of the Covenant (Toledo, Ohio)—preached and presented on Belhar Confession

NOVEMBER
Princeton Theological Seminary Conference at San Marino Community Church (Pasadena, Calif.)
Inauguration/Installation of Mark Labberton as president and the Lloyd Ogilvie Professor of Preaching of Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena, Calif.)
Decatur (Ga.) Presbyterian Church and Greater Atlanta Presbytery
Food Stamp/SNAP challenge

Moderated World Mission/PDA Webinar on Philippines disaster caused by Typhoon Haiyan

DECEMBER

New Castle Presbytery and 330th anniversary of Francis Makemie’s ministry at the Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church (Snow Hill, Md.)

Meeting at N.J. with Dr. Victor Joseph, director of external relations of the Sam Higginbottom University in India

Northern New England Presbytery (Bedford, N.H.) and preached at Bedford Presbyterian Church

Moderator’s 2nd Colloquium on Ecclesiology, Princeton Theological Seminary

Moderator’s 2nd Conversation on Unity with Difference

(Focus: The Nature and Purpose of the Reformed Confessions and their relationship to current discussions on Christian marriage)

2014

JANUARY

Scioto Valley Presbytery (Ohio) and preached at First Presbyterian Church (Athens, Ohio)

Joint Gathering of DeCristo and Grand Canyon Presbyteries (Phoenix and Tucson, Ariz.) and preached at Valley Presbyterian Church (Green Valley, Ariz.)

Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) at San Jose, Calif.

FEBRUARY

Keynote via Skype the Leadership Development Conference of the Savannah Presbytery gathered at Epworth-by-the-Sea in Georgia. Snowstorm prevented my air travel

Whitewater Valley Presbytery, Indianapolis, Ind.

MARCH

Orientation meeting/briefing for the United Nations Commission on Status of Women, N.Y.

Moderator’s 3rd Conversation on Unity with Difference at Whitworth University, Spokane, Wash. (Focus: “Race, Gender, and Religious Identities: Dignifying Differences in Community”)

Moderator’s 3rd Colloquium on Ecclesiology at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

221st General Assembly (2014) committees leadership selection meeting in Louisville

APRIL

Keynote/Preach Festival of Faith/Presbytery Event of West Virginia Presbytery

Festival of Theology and Alumni/ae Reunion Event, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Louisville, Ky.

Keynote and Preach at the American Church in Paris (France)

MAY

Skype audio-video conference with candidates for Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014)

JUNE

Moderator’s 2nd Convocation for Asian American Presbyterians Pre-Assembly Event

221st General Assembly (2014), Detroit, Mich.
C. Revised Covenant of Understanding, Setting Forth the Delegation of Authority of Responsibilities from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) Board of Directors.

REVISED COVENANT OF UNDERSTANDING
March 2014

This Revised Covenant of Understanding is entered into for purposes of setting forth the delegation of authority of responsibilities from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Stated Clerk) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to the Presbyterian Historical Society Board of Directors (PHS Board). It should be understood that the PHS Board is not the corporate board of directors of the Presbyterian Historical Society, but is a board implementing that authority delegated to it by the Stated Clerk and COGA.

Context

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II, Book Of Order 2013–2015, (Book of Order), and the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), (Organization for Mission), are the foundational documents essential for understanding the authority of the Stated Clerk and COGA, as well as their authority to delegate powers to the Presbyterian Historical Society and the PHS Board. The powers and authority delegated by the Stated Clerk and COGA to the PHS Board are embodied in this Covenant of Understanding entered into by these three entities. Excerpts from those foundational documents are set forth below that pertain to the Stated Clerk and the authority delegated to the PHS Board.

The Book of Order, Form of Government:

CHAPTER THREE
COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

G-3.01 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

G-3.0101 Councils as an Expression of Unity of the Church

The mutual interconnection of the church through its councils is a sign of the unity of the church. Congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while possessing all the gifts necessary to be the church, are nonetheless not sufficient in themselves to be the church. Rather, they are called to share with others both within and beyond the congregation the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world. This call to bear witness is the work of all believers. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by councils composed of presbyters elected by the people (F-3.0202). These councils are called the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with the acts of each subject to review by the next higher council. Powers not mentioned in this Constitution are reserved to the presbyteries.

Councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ. …

G-3.0104 Officers

Each council shall elect a clerk who shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church. Such extracts, verified by the clerk, shall be evidence in any council of the church. The clerk of the session shall be a ruling elder elected by the session for such term as it may determine. The clerk of a presbytery, a synod, and the General Assembly shall be called stated clerk, shall be elected by the council for a definite term as it may determine, and must be a ruling elder or teaching elder. A stated clerk may be removed from office prior to completion of his or her term of service through the use of the process outlined in G-3.0110.

G-3.0106 Administration of Mission

Councils higher than the session may provide examples of policies and procedures that may be gathered into advisory handbooks. These examples illumine practices required by the Constitution but left to councils for specific implementation. Such handbooks may also offer information that enhances or secures the ministry of the particular council.

Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council. …

A council may delegate aspects of its tasks to such entities as it deems appropriate, provided that those entities remain accountable to the council. …

G-3.0107 Records

Each council shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of said councils or their legal successors. When a council ceases to exist, its records shall become the property of the next higher council within whose bounds the lower council was prior to its cessation. The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safe-
keeping of the body’s records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or in a temperature and humidity controlled environment of a seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)…

**********

G-3.0109 Committees and Commissions

Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church, and may create such structures jointly with other councils, in consultation with the next higher council. In appointing such committees and commissions councils shall be mindful of the principles of unity in diversity consistent with the provisions of this Constitution (F-1.0403, G-3.0103).

A committee shall study and recommend action or carry out decisions already made by a council. It shall make a full report to the council that created it, and its recommendations shall require action by that body. Committees of councils higher than the session shall consist of both teaching elders and members of congregations, with at least one half being members of congregations.

The Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (The Organization for Mission), among the many other functions assigned to the Stated Clerk, explicitly places responsibility for the Presbyterian Historical Society under the Stated Clerk and Office of the General Assembly, as follows:

The Stated Clerk is responsible for maintaining the archives and records management facilities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), for the supervision of an agency for the preservation of the history of American Presbyterianism and for the promotion of the study of Presbyterian history. The Stated Clerk shall assure the implementation of a records management program. (Section B (2)(m))

Records and History in the Office of the General Assembly shall be under the direction of a person appointed by the Stated Clerk. The general administration of the Presbyterian Historical Society and Records and History shall be carried out from Philadelphia, which will be the location of the office of the Associate for Records and History. (Section B(3)(c) [Emphasis added.]

The following will be related to the Office of the General Assembly for staffing and budgeting purposes: Permanent Judicial Commission; Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Historical Society; Committee on Representation; Advisory Committee on the Constitution; Advisory Committee on Litigation; General Assembly Nominating Committee; Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates, and commissions and special committees of the General Assembly (see Standing Rule K.1) (Section B(3)(c)) [Emphasis added.]

The Organization for Mission also provides:

The Stated Clerk is the chief executive officer of the Office of the General Assembly.

The Stated Clerk shall have available personnel to assist in performing the assigned functions. (Section B (2)(i)) [Emphasis added.]

The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for its actions and recommendation to the General Assembly, a proposed budget. This budget shall provide for the funding of the session of the General Assembly, the Office of the General Assembly and all bodies related to it, the funding of the participation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical bodies, and other expenses deemed necessary. (Section B (2)(ii)) [Emphasis added.]

The action of the 216th General Assembly (2004) established a board of directors as a part of the governance structure of the Presbyterian Historical Society, stating its mission as follows:

The Board exists to assure that the mission of the PHS—to collect, preserve, and share our history—is achieved in the most effective and efficient manner, in support of the mission of the PC(USA), and in faithfulness to God’s call.

We do this as committed stewards, anticipating changing environments, By:

1) Setting strategic directions and measuring effectiveness and outcomes;
2) Providing oversight and accountability to the church at large;
3) Ensuring financial stability;
4) Advocating, promoting, and serving internal and external stakeholders, now and in the future. This is the description of the responsibilities of the PHS Board of Directors under the Committees of the General Assembly section of the current Organization for Mission (Section IV (C.7))

The Understandings

This Covenant of Understanding is by and between the following: the Stated Clerk, COGA, and the PHS Board. The following enumerated duties of the PHS Board shall be carried out on behalf of the Stated Clerk and COGA:

1) Strategic Direction of PHS. The executive director and senior staff of PHS, working under the oversight and direction of the PHS Board, shall be responsible for developing a strategic plan for the direction and future of PHS, updating such plan as changing conditions may warrant. Because of the new economic realities caused by the impact of declining per capita funding for PHS operations, the Parties recognize that increased efforts for funds development for PHS, including an increased level of direct contact with mid councils, individual Presbyterian congregations, and members, must be an important part of any strategic plan to enable PHS to continue fulfilling its mission of collecting, preserving, and sharing the history of American Presbyterianism. All strategic plans shall be communicated by the PHS Board to the Stated Clerk and COGA for review and approval.
(2) **Annual Assessment of Outcomes.** The PHS Board, in conjunction with the PHS staff, shall annually measure and assess the outcomes and effectiveness of PHS in fulfilling its strategic plan in carrying out its mission to collect, preserve, and share the story of the American Presbyterian experience with Presbyterians, congregations, and mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the scholarly community, and the general public. By March 31st of each year, the PHS Board will provide a report based on the findings of this assessment to the Stated Clerk and COGA.

(3) **PHS Funds Development.** The PHS Board shall provide oversight and strategic direction to funds development activities of PHS. In addition, each member of the PHS Board shall be expected, to the extent of their ability, to participate in and support the funds development activities of PHS, including making personal financial contributions to support the annual operating and capital needs of PHS.

(4) **PHS Programs.** Consistent with its strategic plan, PHS will develop programs that connect PHS directly with congregations, mid councils, and members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and provide materials that will inform congregations of the history of American Presbyterianism and the services available from PHS to serve their needs.

(5) **OGA Policies.** The PHS Board shall adhere to all operating, ethics, and personnel policies of the Office of the General Assembly.

(6) **PHS Executive Director and Associate for Records and History.**

   (i) **Annual Evaluation.** The PHS Board shall name representatives of the Board to participate with the Stated Clerk’s office in the annual evaluation of the PHS executive director.

   (ii) **Executive Director and Other Senior Staff Level Staff Vacancies.** In searches to fill any vacancy in the position of the PHS executive director, the PHS Board shall name representatives to participate with the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee in the search process for a new executive director. The PHS Board’s representatives will have significant input regarding those qualities that relate to the responsibilities delegated to the PHS Board in this Covenant of Understanding. In addition, the PHS Board shall be advised by the PHS executive director of vacancies in senior staff level PHS staff positions and provide input on decisions to fill those vacancies.

   (iii) **Reporting Obligations of the PHS Executive Director.** The PHS executive director shall report regularly to the PHS Board on those matters that relate to the areas of responsibility delegated to the PHS Board. Reporting to the PHS Board shall be in addition to the executive director’s regular reporting responsibilities to the Stated Clerk and COGA.

(7) **Budgets.** The PHS staff shall develop a consolidated operating budget that includes the per capita budget as it applies to PHS as a part of the regular Office of the General Assembly (OGA) budget process and the PHS designated budget. Subsequent to the development of the budget by the PHS senior staff, it shall be presented to the PHS Board for its approval. Subsequent to the PHS Board’s approval, the PHS Board shall (a) forward the Per Capita Budget to COGA for approval and submission to the General Assembly for approval; and (b) forward the Designated Budget to COGA for receipt and transmission to the General Assembly for final approval.

(8) **Non-Financial PHS Assets and Collections.** The PHS Board shall provide oversight for PHS’ building, property, and collections. The PHS Board and PHS senior staff shall develop a capital facilities plan that shall be approved by the Stated Clerk and COGA. The PHS Board shall report at least annually to COGA on these and other issues as required by the Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

(9) **PHS Endowment and Income Funds.** In cooperation with the Stated Clerk and the Presbyterian Foundation, the PHS Board shall ensure PHS compliance with the donors’ intent for all PHS endowment and income funds.

(10) **Communications and Bylaws.** The PHS Board shall have the authority to issue regular communications, such as press releases and written reports, and to establish bylaws for the conduct of its business.

(11) **PHS Board Nominations Process.** The PHS Board’s Nominations and Governance Committee shall consist of at least three members of the PHS Board, and the Executive Director shall serve in an *ex officio* capacity on that committee.

(12) **PHS Board and COGA.** COGA shall appoint a liaison to the PHS Board, who shall serve as a member of the PHS Board with voice and vote. Any term limitations upon membership on the PHS Board shall not apply to such a liaison while he or she is a member of COGA. The chair of the PHS Board shall attend at least one COGA meeting a year. As frequently as is feasible, but not less than once every two years, the entire PHS Board shall meet with COGA.

(13) **Number of PHS Board Members.** The PHS Board shall consist of not less than eight (8) and not more than twenty-four (24) persons.

(14) **Covenant of Understanding Review.** This document may be reviewed and amended from time to time by the Parties but reviewed not less than every three years.
The Stated Clerk of the Office of the General Assembly PC(USA), Gradye Parsons

Chairman of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA), Vince Thomas

Chairman of the Board of the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS), Paul Watermulder

Dated this ______ day of __________________, 2014
## Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
### Per Capita
### Comparative Balance Sheet 2013 & 2012

### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>12/31/2013</th>
<th>12/31/2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$ 56,485</td>
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<td>Short term investments</td>
<td>1,658,292</td>
<td>551,542</td>
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<tr>
<td>OGA Foundation</td>
<td>830,296</td>
<td>314,221</td>
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<td>Per Capita Investments</td>
<td>3,864,690</td>
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<td>Long term investments</td>
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<td>Endowment investments</td>
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<td>654,664</td>
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<td>Investments PILP</td>
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<td>367,634</td>
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<td>Apportionment receivable--current year</td>
<td>2,728,335</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apportionment receivable--prior year</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allowance for Uncollectible Apportionments</td>
<td>(1,363,942)</td>
<td>(1,235,515)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other receivables</td>
<td>(135,794)</td>
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<td>Prepaid-Other</td>
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<td>Land, Building and Fixed Assets</td>
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<td>Accumulated depreciation</td>
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<td>(9,334)</td>
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<td>Total Assets</td>
<td>$ 8,685,003</td>
<td>$ 7,134,469</td>
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### Liabilities and Net Assets

#### Liabilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>12/31/2013</th>
<th>12/31/2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable-PMA</td>
<td>$ 243,900</td>
<td>$ 7,794</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>9,410</td>
<td>2,681</td>
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<td>Receipts in Process/ Other</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>(450)</td>
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<td>Total liabilities</td>
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<td>$ 10,024</td>
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#### Net assets:

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<th>12/31/2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undesignated</td>
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<td>$ 6,074,531</td>
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<td>Designated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanently Restricted</td>
<td>89,569</td>
<td>89,569</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>$ 8,430,917</td>
<td>$ 7,124,444</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</td>
<td>$ 8,685,003</td>
<td>$ 7,134,469</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## PER CAPITA
### Statement of Activities
#### Budget Proposals 2014-2016 (Approved 221st GA)

### SOURCES OF FUNDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Revised</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Actual *</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Revised</th>
<th>Adjustments</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$13,108,425</td>
<td>$13,287,792</td>
<td>$13,259,438</td>
<td>$13,199,919</td>
<td>$13,199,919</td>
<td>$13,177,509</td>
<td>$12,983,462</td>
<td>($194,047)</td>
<td>$12,368,937</td>
<td>$11,744,412</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$118,132</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$88,077</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$187,145</td>
<td>$215,774</td>
<td>$13,393,169</td>
<td>$13,454,438</td>
<td>$13,413,919</td>
<td>$13,507,990</td>
<td>$13,392,309</td>
<td>$13,198,462</td>
<td>($194,047)</td>
<td>$12,583,937</td>
<td>$11,959,412</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL REVENUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Revised</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Actual *</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Revised</th>
<th>Adjustments</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>$13,199,919</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<td>$88,077</td>
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<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$187,145</td>
<td>$215,774</td>
<td>$13,393,169</td>
<td>$13,454,438</td>
<td>$13,413,919</td>
<td>$13,507,990</td>
<td>$13,392,309</td>
<td>$13,198,462</td>
<td>($194,047)</td>
<td>$12,583,937</td>
<td>$11,959,412</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXPENDITURES**

1 **CHURCH WIDE MINISTRIES**

2 **ECUMENICAL & ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES**

3 **MID COUNCIL MINISTRIES**

4 **TOTAL SCHEDULES 1, 2, & 3**

5 **PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY/BOARD**

6 **OTHER WORKS**

7 **UNCOLLECTIBLE APPOINTMENTS**

8 **OTHER EXPENSES**

9 **TOTAL EXPENSES 1 - 8**

10 **Committed for Subsequent Assemblies**

11 **Estimated Under-Expenditure**

12 **Planned Use of Reserves**

13 **TOTAL EXPENSES & COMMITMENTS**

**Net to or (from) Reserve**

---

**Note:** *2013 Actuals are subject to audit*
## USING THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS:

- Projected Rev and Exp for 2013 & 2014
- Number of members for 2012-2014 is as follows: please note that apportionment revenue is based on the membership reported two years prior to the current year; that is 2013 apportionment revenue is based on membership reported at end of 2011:
  
  - (2012): 2,004,192
  - (2013): 1,921,240
  - (2014): 1,849,496

For 2015 & 2016 projected membership reduction of 100,000 each year.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Manage expenditures to be less than budgeted
- Planned use of reserves after holding 30% of Budget

## RISKS

- Actual membership declines more than projected
- Actual expenditures exceed budgeted expenses
- Church and economic related issues impacting Revenue & Investment values
- General Assembly financial implications increases expenditure
- The level of available funds from reserves (after the 30% provision) declining

### Actual and Projected Sources of Funding and Expenditures 2012-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unrestricted net assets, January 1</strong></td>
<td>$6,727,299</td>
<td>6,065,941</td>
<td>5,933,500</td>
<td>6,240,716</td>
<td>6,420,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Reserve (30% annual budget)</td>
<td>4,688,042</td>
<td>3,676,920</td>
<td>4,278,105</td>
<td>3,811,214</td>
<td>3,787,219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from prior years available</td>
<td>2,039,257</td>
<td>2,389,021</td>
<td>1,655,394</td>
<td>2,429,502</td>
<td>2,633,386</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Sources of funding

#### Apportionments

- $6.63 for 2012: $13,287,793
- $6.87 for 2013: 13,198,919
- $7.02 for 2014: $12,983,462
- $7.07 for 2015: $12,368,937
- $7.12 for 2016: $11,744,412

#### Income formula and other income

- 2012: $118,231
- 2013: 88,077
- 2014: 215,000
- 2015: 215,000
- 2016: 215,000

#### Miscellaneous

- 2012: $5,220

#### Realized and unrealized gain on investments

- 2012: $187,145
- 2013: 215,774
- 2014: 215,000
- 2015: 300,000
- 2016: 300,000

#### From Prior years accumulation/Reserves

- 2012: $300,000
- 2013: 300,000
- 2014: 300,000
- 2015: 300,000
- 2016: 300,000

#### Total

- 2012: $13,593,169
- 2013: 13,507,990
- 2014: 13,198,462
- 2015: 12,883,937
- 2016: 12,259,412

### Total Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td>15,626,807</td>
<td>12,256,401</td>
<td>14,260,352</td>
<td>11,349,742</td>
<td>13,978,369</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designated for Subsequent General Assembly</td>
<td>(1,372,280)</td>
<td>1,384,030</td>
<td>(1,354,306)</td>
<td>1,354,306</td>
<td>(1,354,306)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Under Expenditure</td>
<td>(14,800)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures &amp; Commitments</strong></td>
<td>14,254,527</td>
<td>13,640,431</td>
<td>12,891,246</td>
<td>12,704,048</td>
<td>12,624,063</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net To(From) Reserves</td>
<td>(661,358)</td>
<td>(132,441)</td>
<td>307,216</td>
<td>179,889</td>
<td>(364,651)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unrestricted net assets, December 31</strong></td>
<td>6,065,941</td>
<td>5,933,500</td>
<td>6,240,716</td>
<td>6,420,605</td>
<td>6,055,954</td>
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<td>OGA/PMA DESIGNATED BUDGET 2014-2016</td>
<td>Attachment C</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OGA Sales of Publications</td>
<td>(50,568)</td>
<td>460,300</td>
<td>416,700</td>
<td>(6,968)</td>
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<td>Replacement Reserve-OGA</td>
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<td>Ecumenical Reserve</td>
<td>203,651</td>
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<td>10,000</td>
<td>268,651</td>
<td>75,000</td>
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<td>Replacement Reserve-DOH</td>
<td>76,433</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>91,433</td>
<td>75,000</td>
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<td>Presbyterian Historical Society</td>
<td>3,972,209</td>
<td>699,145</td>
<td>869,574</td>
<td>3,801,780</td>
<td>800,091</td>
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<td>General Assembly Mtg - Registration</td>
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<td>269,500</td>
<td>250,000</td>
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<td>30,000</td>
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<td>Stated Clerk Training/Fall Polity</td>
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<td>120,000</td>
<td>115,000</td>
<td>12,202</td>
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<td>Cooperative Reading Grp-Ord Exams</td>
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<td>115,000</td>
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<td>120,000</td>
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<td>Moderator's Travel</td>
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<td>Moderator's Annual Gathering</td>
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<td>GACOR Diversity Project</td>
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<td>Fred Jenkins Memorial Library Fund</td>
<td>1,464</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>964</td>
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<td>Presbyterian Leader Formation</td>
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<td>Ecumenical Consultation</td>
<td>(1,276)</td>
<td>(1,276)</td>
<td>(1,276)</td>
<td>(1,276)</td>
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<td>Church Property and Legal</td>
<td>76,186</td>
<td>47,500</td>
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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>17,749</td>
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<td>Unity &amp; Heritage Seminar</td>
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<td>OGA/PMA Task Forces</td>
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<td>6,000</td>
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<td>36,876</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,706,694</td>
<td>1,967,445</td>
<td>2,059,774</td>
<td>4,614,365</td>
<td>1,724,091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item 04-01

[The assembly approved Item 04-01. See pp. 58, 60.]

On Reviewing General Assembly Policy Regarding the Two-State Solution in Israel Palestine—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Instruct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to do the following:

a. Provide a comprehensive history of the establishment of General Assembly policies favoring a two-state solution in Israel Palestine.

b. Prepare a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016), utilizing the report of the Middle East Study Committee approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010)—Breaking Down the Walls (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 1021ff); the subsequent follow-up report by the Middle East Monitoring Group to the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 1413ff); and relevant and recent reports by the United Nations General Assembly Human Rights Council, the World Council of Churches, other corresponding ecumenical partners, and reliable human rights organizations that achieves the following:

(1) Provides the most up-to-date information regarding all aspects of the Israeli occupation of Palestine including

(a) the present status and pace of illegal settlement building;

(b) the appropriation of Palestinian land and natural resources;

(c) the restriction of movement on Palestinian citizens in Palestine;

(d) the extent to which human rights are denied to the Palestinian people.

(2) Examines present General Assembly statements about the viability of a Palestinian state and honestly evaluates these statements in light of the most recent developments regarding the true facts on the ground in Palestine;

(3) Makes a recommendation about whether the General Assembly should continue to call for a two-state solution in Israel Palestine, or take a neutral stance that seeks not to determine for Israelis and Palestinians what the right “solution” should be.

(4) Makes other policy recommendations related to findings from this report.

c. Consult with responsible parties representing the concerns of both Israelis and Palestinians in preparation of this report.

d. Consult also with appropriate, official PC(USA) General Assembly entities in the preparation of this report, including staffing teams, mission networks, and national caucuses.

2. Provide a study guide for the report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) that will help inform the whole church of the situation on the ground in Palestine, pointing out the enormous difficulty of helping “in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state” (action taken by the 220th General Assembly-2012). This study guide should honestly point out that:

a. For every two-year period occurring between General Assembly meetings, Palestinians are suffering an increasing loss of their human rights, freedom, livelihoods, property, and even their lives;

b. Simple, financial investment in a completely occupied land where the occupiers are relentless and unwavering regarding their occupation is not enough to dismantle the matrix of that occupation or dramatically change the vast majority of communities or individual lives that are bowed and broken by systematic and intentional injustice.

[Financial Implications: Per Capita—$19,200 (2015); $5,460 (2016)]
A. Official Policy Statements on the Two-State Solution by PC(USA) General Assemblies

1. The 214th General Assembly (2002) urged “all the parties involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to work toward a just sustainable peace by... an affirmation by Israel that it will work with Palestinians toward the establishment of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state with the same sovereign rights as those of the State of Israel” (Minutes, 2002, Part I, pp. 732–33).


B. The Two-State Solution Then and Now

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**Palestinian loss of land 1946 to 2013**

The green areas are under Palestinian Control

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Map 1: Palestinian Loss of Land 1946-2013

The green area shows land under Palestinian control.
These maps clearly delineate the present status of the so-called “two-states” of Israel and Palestine. Map 1 shows the erosion of the Palestinian territory, over six decades, which was to provide for a viable state. In the panel outlining the U.N. Partition Plan in 1947, as well as the panel showing a significant loss of territory from 1949–1967, a two-state solution still appeared viable. As can be seen in the panel showing the present state of Palestine since 2005, it is hard to look at this portion of the map and think that a two-state solution can ever be achieved. It is important to remember that all the white space in what once was a contiguous West Bank (named because it is west of the Jordan River) represents land now controlled by the
Israel in March 2013 points out where the numerous illegal Israeli settlements presently exist. The settlements are called “illegal” for the simple reason that international law clearly prohibits occupying nations from creating permanent settlements on the land they occupy for the purpose of transferring their population to occupied regions. Bear in mind that for each black dot on the map, there is a system of walls, fences and checkpoints separating the settlements from Palestinian populations. In order to accommodate this, large sections of Palestinian land have been confiscated to provide what the Israeli government considers to be an adequate buffer zone between its citizens and Palestinians. In addition, from the Palestinian land that has been confiscated for this purpose, Israel draws out the natural resources necessary to support the settlements. This includes sources of Palestinian water, greatly reducing the water supply of Palestinians in the areas where they are still permitted to live.

At the present time, Israeli settlement expansion continues at a fast pace and in five to ten years there will be more black dots on the map than there are today. In light of these facts on the ground, it seems unrealistic, and perhaps even naïve, for the PC(USA) to maintain a policy of calling for a two-state solution when no real possibility of that seems to exist. The commissioning of this report is intended to provide the church with precise and accurate information to help it shape its policy on this conflict for the future. It is important to note that this is not a call for creating policy to support a different kind of solution (one-state, for instance). Rather, it is an effort to examine how our church can continue to be relevant in the discussion about the situation as it presently stands. This first requires an honest appraisal of the rapidly changing facts on the ground and whether past policies adequately address those facts.

C. Recent Developments

The 220th General Assembly (2012) called upon the General Assembly Mission Council to “create a process to raise funds to invest in the West Bank” to be inaugurated at this 221st General Assembly (2014) (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1400). The purpose of this is to fund “active investment in projects that will support collaboration among Christians, Jews, and Muslims and help in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1396).

As virtuous as this statement sounds, its fundamental flaw comes in the fact that no one knows what a “viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state” looks like, nor how to achieve that even though our church has been calling for this since 1967. The reason for this is simply because every policy and every action taken by the Israeli government in regard to Palestine is dedicated towards the non-existence of a viable infrastructure in the Occupied West Bank. There can be no denial, in accordance with the approval of the Middle East Study Committee report by the 219th General Assembly (2010) that the facts on the ground in present-day Palestine point toward the destruction of everything required to ensure that a viable Palestinian state can ever exist. In that sense, the Middle East Study Committee report, known as Breaking Down the Walls, as well as the study guide of the Kairos Palestine Document developed by the Middle East Monitoring Group (2012), are clear warnings that the viability of a sovereign Palestinian state, if not impossible already, is in extreme danger.

In March 2013, the Israeli newspaper, Ha’aretz, quoted Dr. Mustafa Barghouti, head of the Palestinian National Initiative movement: “The passivity of international diplomacy and that of the Americans in particular is especially dangerous and unacceptable in the face of the establishment of an even more extremist, settlement-expanding Israeli government than its predecessor. This Obama policy speeds up the end of the two-state solution.” The article points out: “At the beginning of his presidency Obama raised expectation when he called for a halt to construction in the settlements, but he quickly abandoned this demand and now only expects that the Palestinians renew the barren negotiations that have gone on for 20 years. All that Israel expects from the Palestinians in the negotiations is to agree to self-rule in Bantustans—something no Palestinian or none of their leaders will accept.”

With this said, and in light of the fact the 220th General Assembly (2012) voted to put a plan for investment in Palestine in place, we call upon the General Assembly to not receive the General Assembly Mission Council plan for investment without seriously considering what is truly required to bring Christians, Jews, and Muslims together in a way that would actually create a viable infrastructure in a land where the policies of the occupier are dedicated towards not only preventing that, but destroying what little infrastructure presently exists. Accepting such an investment plan at this General Assembly must be coupled with an action that takes seriously the present condition of the Palestinian state, honestly asks hard questions about standing General Assembly policy regarding the two-state solution, and fully informs all Presbyterians (as well as our ecumenical partners) about these conditions and facts. The purpose of this overture is to not derail recommendations asked for by the 220th General Assembly (2012), but to simply point out that this is not enough. We need to completely understand all the
conditions under which we are investing Presbyterian funds, and consequently, the barriers to overall success from the standpoint of human justice.

It is our contention that the best entity to study this issue, from our historical positions up through our contemporary concerns, is the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, which understands the full breadth and depth of this issue as well as General Assembly policy statements as they have been discussed and debated in our denomination throughout the decades.

Concurrence to Item 04-01 from the Synod of the Covenant and the Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Palisades.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved as amended below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The [Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the] 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [to]:

“[A. With regard to the ‘peace process’ between Israel and Palestine,

“[1. respectfully urges the president of the United States, with congressional approval as necessary, to request that the Security Council of the United Nations take responsibility for any further peace negotiations between the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (or other appropriately representative body); to recommend that the Security Council designate an envoy to lead future negotiations and to determine and report publicly on obstacles to the implementation of Resolution 242 and subsequent agreements and accords; and to recommend measures to end the occupation of all territories ruled by Israel since 1967, to ensure equal citizenship rights for all inhabitants under Israeli control, and to ensure that Jerusalem is a shared capitul where historic sites and free exercise of all three historic monotheistic faiths are protected; all based on previous internationally agreed upon terms of reference (including UN Resolution 338 following the 1973 war, and respecting the 1967 borders, E. Jerusalem, rights of refugees, security, and other final status issues);

“[2. approves in principle the position that no U.S. military, security, or intelligence aid, assistance, or cooperation be given to any government that practices or permits systematic religious, racial, or ethnic discrimination;

“[3. directs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Office of Public Witness, and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to communicate the positions above to the president of the United States, members of Congress, United Nations member missions, and ecumenical partners;

“[B. With regard to the public witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):]

“1. Instruct[s] the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to do the following:

“a. [Text remains unchanged.]

“b. [Text remains unchanged.]

“(1) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(a) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(b) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(c) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(d) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(2) Examines present General Assembly statements about the viability of a Palestinian state and [honestly] evaluates these statements in light of the most recent developments regarding the [true] facts on the ground in Palestine;

“(3) [Text remains unchanged.]

“(4) [Text remains unchanged.]

“c. [Appoint three experts and appropriate Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and Mission Agency staff, including a writer, to] [C] [c]onsult with responsible parties representing the concerns of both Israelis and Palestin-

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ians in preparation of this report, including official assessments of negotiating prospects obtained through face-to-face contact in Israel and Palestine, as well as Washington, D.C., and New York City.

“d. [Text remains unchanged.]”

“2. Provide a study guide for the report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) that will help inform the whole church of the situation on the ground in Palestine, pointing out the enormous difficulty of helping ‘in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state’ (action taken by the 220th General Assembly-2012). This study guide should [consider whether] [honestly point out that]:

“a. [Text remains unchanged.]”

“b. [Direct] [Simple] financial investment in a completely occupied land where the occupiers are relentless and unwavering regarding their occupation is not enough to dismantle the matrix of that occupation or dramatically change the vast majority of communities or individual lives that are bowed and broken by systematic and intentional injustice.”

The presbyteries sponsoring this overture are correct in identifying the plausibility of a “two-state solution” as the basic question facing any peace process. Further, they correctly cite Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policy and outline the components of a study of the material feasibility of a two-state solution. The maps provided are generally accurate approximations of a process by which land has been annexed, encircled by the Separation Wall, classified as public land and given to settlements, or, as in Area C, declared off-bounds to Palestinians for security reasons. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy comments on the very real economic obstacles to Palestinian self-determination in its Advice & Counsel memorandum on Item 04-06, Occupation-Free Investment, and the resolution proposed as Item 04-09.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy believes that the study proposed could be carried out by a small team of persons at reasonable cost, building on the extensive policy developed in 2010, and that this would be a reasonable and customary expenditure of per capita funds that General Assemblies normally allocate for studies and public witness.

The purpose of such a focused study would be enhanced, in the committee’s view, by greater attention to the diplomatic dynamics that would themselves be improved by the second section suggested. The recommendation for a change in framework for negotiations is strongly in line with the church’s support for a two-state solution. It recognizes that any internationally recognized solution would in large part be a political decision or direction, not simply a matter of facts on the ground. Commissioners may wish to separate the committee’s recommendation, but it would not affect the need for a study nor the need for nonviolent economic witness as the end of the recent peace process demonstrates.

The depth to which Israeli identity and worldwide support are anchored in the concept of a homeland for Jewish people, and the tensions between religious preferences and democratic values of all parties, require careful understanding as there are several entwined narratives within the larger picture of Israeli power and Palestinian dispossession.

There are also significant differences among Palestinian positions vis-à-vis civic and religious freedom, alongside de jure and de facto recognition of Israel’s presence on 78 percent of Palestinian territory prior to 1948. The basic acceptance of Israel’s claim to land within the 1949 armistice lines—the basis of the 1967 Green Line—was made by the Palestine National Congress in 1988; all subsequent negotiations simply focus on how the remaining 22 percent will be apportioned. Some official refusals to recognize Israel by Palestinian groups relate to their concern that Israel has never declared its borders, while some Israeli parties in the governing coalition deny any rights of Palestinians to a state.

Thus the obstacles to a two-state solution reflect both the physical “facts on the ground” identified in the overture, and the diplomatic imbalance of relying on Israel’s primary ally also to function as mediator. In light of the collapse of the second set of peace talks in five years (the George Mitchell process, then John Kerry’s effort), and the failure of the Oslo Accords to halt the continuing growth of settlements (more than 550,000 settlers over the Green Line since 1995, in addition to approximately 50,000 prior to those agreements), the argument for a more objective international process seems strong. Despite weaknesses in some UN peacemaking efforts, where there is international consensus there have been successes (Libya, Syria’s chemical weapons, many regional cease-fires and international treaties). There may be other international methods better than the Security Council envoy proposed, but the fact is that maintaining U.S. custodianship of the process recalls the saying about trying the same thing again and again and expecting different results. Not likely.

Shifting the key venue of negotiation to the highest level of the United Nations would allow the international consensus in favor of freedom for the Palestinians (as seen in the vote for Palestine’s status as a non-member observer state) to help create a fairer balance in negotiation between the vastly unequal parties of Israel and Palestine. By going to the Security Council (rather than the Human Rights Council or the “Quartet” with its monitoring and marketing role), the United States would retain its role (and veto) but would share more broadly the moral responsibility for the on-going denial of human rights in occupied Palestine. A UN process would also necessarily involve the application of international law as a common standard for Palestinian and Israeli actions.
A summary of three standard positions on negotiations over peace in the Middle East may be taken from a review by Philip Wilcox of books by Jimmy Carter, Benny Morris, and Daniel C. Kurtzer and Scott B. Lasensky in 2009, as the first Obama administration effort began (Wilcox, Philip C., Jr. “Brokering Mideast Peace,” The Christian Century, July 28, 2009, pp. 31–33). Wilcox, a former ambassador to the region, contrasts Carter’s relative optimism (in We Can Have Peace in the Holy Land), Morris’ pessimism (in One State, Two States: Resolving the Israel/Palestine Conflict), and the realism of another ambassador and U.S. Institute for Peace Fellow on the need to focus on U.S. strategic interests and stop serving as “Israel’s lawyer,” in Aaron David Miller’s phrase. Carter argued that Hamas had shown it could cooperate, that the U.S. should work with the 2002 Arab League Peace Initiative (which offered normalization across the region if the occupation ended) and that a multinational peace force could be offered to allay Israeli security concerns. Morris, an Israeli “new historian” who had debunked many myths about the creation of Palestinian refugees in the 1940s, had come to fear and distrust Palestinians generally, based partly on blaming Yassir Arafat for Camp David’s failure. He favored giving the West Bank to Jordan and Gaza to Egypt, neither of which is desired by the would-be recipient countries, which already have many Palestinians. The third book, Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: American Leadership in the Middle East, argued that “Washington must be tougher by insisting on the parties’ accountability to their previous commitments and by penalizing violations....” This has not happened, and seems increasingly unlikely given the role of special interest money in U.S. politics.

Rather than seeing mutual accountability, in fact, during the recent nine month “peace talks” sponsored by the United States, the Israeli government announced more than 14,000 new housing units in the settlements, often timing the announcements to undercut visits of U.S. government officials. Secretary of State John Kerry has testified that Israel’s refusal to curtail settlements and finally to release a fourth group of only twenty-five Palestinian prisoners led to a “poof” that ended the process—and that process had become one of simply trying to find a framework for continuing to talk. There were no significant achievements during the 9 months, and in fact a growing number of “price tag” desecrations of Christian and Muslim sites, increased number of shootings of nonviolent Palestinian protesters and farmers trying to harvest alongside “security zones,” and numbers of Palestinians denied identity cards in Jerusalem. The growth of settlements, however, seems the clearest marker of a systematic disregard for the feasibility of a Palestinian state.

The actual complexity of negotiations may thus be overstated, as Mahmoud Abbas signaled Palestinian willingness to allow Israeli security forces in the Jordan valley in a non-militarized Palestinian State. While the division among Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and East Jerusalem was criticized, a plan for rejoining governance of the two enclaves has been equally criticized by the current Israeli government. Prime Minister Netanyahu used Palestinian unity as a reason to blame Palestinians for the latest failed peace process. It may thus be helpful to remember Prime Minister Netanyahu’s response to the Oslo process. To quote from Wikipedia, noting its own citations:

“In a 2001 video, Netanyahu, reportedly unaware he was being recorded, said: “They asked me before the election if I’d honor [the Oslo accords]... I said I would, but [that] I’m going to interpret the accords in such a way that would allow me to put an end to this galloping forward to the ’67 borders. How did we do it? Nobody said what defined military zones were. Defined military zones are security zones; as far as I’m concerned, the entire Jordan Valley is a defined military zone. Go argue.”[10] Netanyahu then explained how he conditioned his signing of the 1997 Hebron agreement on American consent that there be no withdrawals from “specified military locations”, and insisted he be allowed to specify which areas constituted a “military location”—such as the whole of the Jordan Valley. “Why is that important? Because from that moment on I stopped the Oslo Accords”, Netanyahu affirmed.”[11]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declaration_of_Principles


Commissioners may wish to approve this overture with or without the proposed amendments, or to decline the call to study this matter, or to ask that the study be done on another basis. In general, it has been the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that policy recommendations be made by people elected to committees commissioned for that purpose. Either the small expert task force recommended, or a purely staff or consultant arrangement, would both be guided by prior General Assembly policy, consult with church partners, and report through the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, which consists of Presbyterians elected to develop ways to respond to and nurture the conscience of the church.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-01.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns recommends approval of this item because we are in need of a comprehensive report that recap our church’s positions over the decades vis-à-vis Israel and Palestine, and helps Presbyterians understand the historical basis for the current scene and facts on the ground. Additionally, it is vitally important for the church to review its decades-old policy on the two-state solution, which has not been informed by the most recent developments in the region and the latest rounds of peace negotiations.
The ACREC believes the right to self-determination is a fundamental right and in today’s post-colonial era, it is paternalistic and even patronizing for one nation or people to tell another nation or people what kind of government or state is right for them.

The ACREC believes that after decades of the PC(USA) supporting a “two-state solution,” it is time for us to leave that decision to the people who live in the region and have to handle the day-to-day obstacles. Both Israelis and Palestinians are very capable of determining what type of state and government they desire. Even with our long history of partnership in the region, for an American denomination in another hemisphere to profess that a particular type of “solution” is ideal harkens back to a colonial mindset and era.

The ACREC strongly believes that, yes, Presbyterians do need to know the facts on the ground and question the occupation of Palestine, now nearing fifty years, but ACREC also believes we should not support one type of solution over another. The Israelis and Palestinians should determine what type of solution is right for them, not us.

The ACREC strongly urges the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve this overture.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

Women have long been invested in peacemaking initiatives and cooperative and collaborative leadership. The ACWC stands in solidarity with international women’s ecumenical and interfaith groups advocating for women’s voices to be heard regarding ongoing conflicts in Israel-Palestine and against war and militarism. In addition, ACWC is aware that the current debate among Presbyterians over the best way to speak to the oppression of Palestinians is highly polarized, even among advocates for justice. In light of this fact, ACWC recommends that the committee leadership be asked to use the 1992 statement, “Seeking to Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement,” as a guide for their discussions. (The statement can be accessed by following this link: https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/peacemaking/pdf/guidelines.pdf.

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-01**

*Comment on Item 04-01—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).*

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

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**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-01**

*Comment on Item 04-01—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.*

PC(USA) mission partners in the Middle East agree that the current “facts on the ground” and the slim chance of success for the current peace process render a two-state solution unattainable at the current time. It is their view that the long-standing PC(USA) policy, reaffirmed as recently as 2010, supporting a two-state solution is unrealistic in light of the continued expansion and intractability of Israeli settlements and the obstinacy of the Israeli military occupation of Palestine.

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**Item 04-02**

[The assembly answered Item 04-02 by the action taken on Item 04-04. See p. 60.]

*On Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.*

In service to God’s love and justice for all of the people of Palestine and Israel, and in accord with international law concerning self-determination and human rights, the Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:
1. Instruct the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to disinvest from Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, in accord with our church’s decades-long socially responsible investment (SRI) history, and not to reinvest in these companies until the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) is fully satisfied that product sales and services by these companies are no longer complicit in
   a. the building and security of illegal Israeli settlements, which U.S. foreign policy, and most recent U.N. fact-finding mission determine to be an obstacle to peace;
   b. the construction and maintenance of walls and fences that illegally encroach upon Palestinian lands, destroying Palestinian rights to own property and pursue livelihoods;
   c. the management of checkpoints that dehumanize Palestinians and cut off innocent civilians from their property and natural resources;
   d. contributing to and profiting from the relentless, five decade long, military occupation of the Palestinian territories.

2. Affirm that this action underlines the worsening situation in Palestine, calling attention to
   a. the occupation of Palestine, which destroys lives and entire cultures, and for the sake of justice between Jews, Christians, and Muslims, that it needs to end;
   b. the violation of Palestinian human rights; through home demolitions, constricting movement for work, school, personal needs, business, essential (and emergency) medical care; and the illegal mass political imprisonment of Palestinians;
   c. the disproportionate impact on the Christian minority due to restrictions on family unification, housing, the isolation of Bethlehem and other conditions of occupation;
   d. the failure to attract investors to Palestinian businesses choked by the occupation matrix, the blockade of Gaza, and restrictions on the West Bank economy, which adds more than 20 percent to business costs in Palestine.

3. Recognize that while the 220th General Assembly (2012) called upon the church to pursue only nonviolent investment in Palestine and Israel, we still profit from companies engaged in violent pursuits in Palestine, by providing equipment and materiel supporting illegal occupation, contrary to our church position.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk to:
   a. Communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities, and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations that hold assets in Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions to disinvest as well.
   b. Inform our ecumenical partners of this action, nationally and globally—particularly within Israel and Palestine—encouraging them to hear this witness and to also consider applying socially responsible, human rights criteria to other companies in their portfolios that are complicit in the occupation of Palestine.

5. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to monitor developments in international law and related to the occupation, to continue to advocate conditioning foreign aid for Israel to compliance with human rights law, and to support all measures designed to provide for viable statehood and a shared Jerusalem, including protection for Christian and Muslim as well as Jewish holy places.

Rationale

This rationale is in four parts:

I. Activity of the 220th General Assembly (2012) with highlights of the report of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) concerning its decades-long corporate engagement with companies profiting from non-peaceful pursuits in Israel/Palestine.


III. Key maps showing current conditions in Palestine, as well as the conditions that led up to this point.

IV. Concluding statement of our responsibility as a church that proclaims the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

I. Activity of the 220th General Assembly (2012)

The 220th General Assembly (2012) (GA) was the first time the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) had brought a recommendation to disinvest from companies—Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solu-
tions—engaged in Israel’s occupation of Palestine and non-peaceful pursuits in Palestine, and the first time a GA standing committee ever recommended such action to the plenary. The recommendation to disinvest, approved by the Assembly Committee on Middle East and Peacemaking Issues (#15), was sent to the plenary floor by a 36-11-1 margin. Assembly Committee 15 had listened to hours of hearings and debate, and had at its disposal maps, resources, and experts to sufficiently discuss Israel’s occupation of Palestine, as well as our investment history in the three companies engaged in non-peaceful pursuits in the Holy Land. The morning of plenary debate, the Rabbi bringing interfaith greetings after being asked not to do so, said disinvestment may irreparably fracture relations with the Jewish community and implored voting against Assembly Committee 15’s recommendation http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZpRQBHQoB8. Commissioners lodged complaints with the denominational leadership. The 220th General Assembly (2012) vote for disinvestment failed by a two vote margin (333-331) in favor of a minority report (369-290-8), which instead called for positive investment.

Later the 220th General Assembly (2012) voted overwhelmingly (457-180-3), calling for a boycott of all products coming from illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The arguments in support of this action in both Assembly Committee 15 and on the plenary floor, were in essence, the same arguments in support of disinvestment delineating how occupation and the nonstop expansion of settlements were destroying Palestinian life and culture. In both cases, Assembly Committee 15 understood the logic and consistency of those arguments, voting for both disinvestment and boycott. Though that same dynamic occurred on the plenary floor, the General Assembly chose to support boycott and vote against disinvestment.

Further confusing the issue, the plenary later voted to provide teaching elders and church workers participating in the programs of the Board of Pensions a “relief of conscience” clause so that at their request their pension funds would not be invested in these companies. The plenary voted to do this even after an official from the Board of Pensions said it could not be done, and the Moderator of the General Assembly responded by saying that with God all things are possible. Following a break the Moderator returned to the podium to announce that he was ruling the action out of order. This further indicates that the plenary, after hearing of the truth of illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine, did everything short of disinvestment to send a clear signal that non-peaceful activities by companies supporting occupation cannot be tolerated.

Since the 220th General Assembly (2012), nothing constructive regarding corporate practices in Palestine has occurred on the part of Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, or Motorola Solutions. Also, there has been no sign that Presbyterians employed by them have sought to bring change from within so that the business practices of their employers are consistent with the clear moral investment strategies of their church.

To review the entire Mission Responsibility Through Investment record of corporate engagement with these companies, commissioners are strongly urged to read its report to the 220th General Assembly (2012), which can be located at http://www.pc-biz.org/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=4021.

Here are highlights of that report:

A. Caterpillar

An article in Haaretz, an Israeli newspaper, dated March 11, 2009, reported on the close relationship between Caterpillar’s Israeli dealership and the Israeli military. This includes selling the Caterpillar D-9 bulldozers to the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) who has them weaponized by an Israeli company. The article notes that the IDF has used these bulldozers from the mid 1980s, and has hundreds of them in its arsenal. After that, the Caterpillar dealer provides maintenance work. The dealership’s mechanics provided maintenance in the recent Gaza war (these dealership employees maintained and serviced Caterpillar equipment near the battlefield during the Gaza War of January 2009, when more than 1,300 civilians were killed and the entire civilian infrastructure of the territory was destroyed) and the Second Lebanon War. The dealership noted publicly its close working relations with the IDF, according to an article dated March 17, 2009, the IDF also “is planning to draft civilian bulldozer-maintenance personnel for reserve duty, marking the first time the army will be conscripting the staff of a private firm in wartime.” This would permit the IDF to use Caterpillar dealership employees on the battlefield in future operations.

The dialogue clarified several issues, but did not produce any progress. Company officials made it clear that the company took no responsibility for the use of its products even by its dealers (the only party considered to be a customer), had no procedure in place for monitoring or ensuring compliance with Caterpillar’s stated expectations even in a situation with a documented historic pattern of the equipment being used in human rights violations, and no desire to develop such a procedure. Further, they indicated that Caterpillar, although a global company doing business in virtually every country except where prohibited by U.S. law, had no capacity to evaluate whether particular actions are in accord with human rights conventions or international humanitarian law. Finally, Caterpillar did not provide information on whether its dealership was selling equipment to major construction companies building the illegal settlements, the separation barrier, or the Jewish Israeli-only roads in the occupied territories as requested.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) action called for continued engagement within the context of the following clear and public policy denouncing the company from profiting from involvement in serious human rights violations and obstacles to a just peace in Israel and Palestine: “… the [General Assembly] strongly denounces Caterpillar’s continued profit-making from
non-peaceful uses of a number of its products. We call upon Caterpillar to carefully review its involvement in obstacles to a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, and to take affirmative steps to end its complicity in the violation of human rights. We hope that, by God’s grace, Caterpillar will come to exercise its considerable power and influence in the service of a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine” (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 363 of the printed version, p. 986 of the electronic version).

While the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) denouncing the company’s continued profiting from its involvement in human rights violations was designed in large measure to convince Caterpillar that the church was serious about the gravity of this complicity, the company remained unresponsive. On April 19, 2011, MRTI sent its own letter to new CEO Douglas Oberhelmer, expressing hope for a new spirit of conversation around these issues and requesting dialogue (see Appendix 2 in game-mrti-recommendations-appendix1.pdf under “Additional Resources”, see p. 311, electronic copy). There was no response. On July 26, 2011, the United Methodist Board of Church and Society retransmitted the 2010 letter (see above) from eight religious shareholders to the new CEO requesting a meeting to discuss the issues described in the correspondence. Again, there was no response.

B. Motorola Solutions

The dialogue on June 18, 2007, focused on human rights standards and conventions, and explored the company’s involvement in the occupation through sales of military communications products, fuses for bombs, security technology for Jewish Israeli settlements on the West Bank, and operating a cell phone business in the West Bank. Motorola denied that any of its activities implicate it in the Israeli occupation, or raise human rights concerns. A shareholder resolution addressing broader human rights issues was filed by several religious shareholders in the fall of 2007. In response, Motorola requested a follow-up meeting, which occurred on January 7, 2008. The company indicated its intent to review and amend its policies but would not specify the particular changes under consideration and made clear that its human rights policies would not be applied to their business relationships with foreign governments. This lack of clarity and limited scope led the religious investors, including MRTI representatives, to decline to withdraw their resolution, which went to a vote at the annual shareholders meeting on May 5, 2008. It received more than 12 percent of the shareholder vote, enough to be resubmitted in 2009. Although the conversation with Motorola has been less productive than hoped, religious shareholders agree that more in-depth dialogue on corporate social responsibility and human rights might potentially create a more productive arena for analyzing the Israel-Palestine conflict and other world situations and ought to be continued.

A shareholder resolution similar to the one from 2008 was filed with Motorola requesting that the company amend its human rights policies “to conform more fully with international human rights and humanitarian standards…” The resolution was co-filed by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church, Mercy Investment Program, and the Episcopal Church. The company did not respond to a request in the filing letter for a meeting to discuss the resolution. When the filers tried to set one up following the annual meeting, the company declined, but offered to answer written questions. The stockholder meeting was held on May 4, 2009. Speaking in support of the resolution, which received 9.7 percent of the vote, were representatives of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Following the 2009 annual meeting, religious shareholders requested another dialogue, but on June 12, an e-mail from Motorola’s legal department refused to meet in person saying the company would only answer questions in writing. Questions were submitted, but answers did not adequately respond to the concerns expressed. In an email of January 13, 2010, the company also declined to facilitate a meeting with Motorola Israel during the February 2010 visit of religious shareholders to Israel and Palestine. The 2010 shareholders meeting was held on May 3 where the human rights resolution was voted on again. It received a vote of 11.8 percent. Motorola also announced that it would be splitting into two new companies by the end of 2010: Motorola Solutions and Motorola Mobility.

Meanwhile, the involvement of Motorola in the Occupation lessened in some important ways. The sale of armaments work by Motorola Israel meant that it no longer made bomb fuses for the Israeli military. Motorola also announced its intention to sell its Israeli cell phone company, and has sought bids from potential buyers. The company supplied cell phones to the Israeli soldiers operating in the Occupied Territories, and built cell towers in the illegal settlements. However, the company maintained its stance of no face-to-face dialogues, but would answer some written questions.

On November 4, 2010, in the filing of the shareholder resolution on human rights for the 2011 annual meeting, MRTI expressed its hope that the company would respond positively through constructive dialogue. The company did not respond. The corporate restructure was completed on schedule. The shareholder resolution was voted on at the annual meeting of Motorola Solutions on May 2, 2011. However, this time it received a lower vote total (5.4 percent), and could not be resubmitted for 2012. At the meeting, the CEO of Motorola Solutions announced that the company would be concentrating on the Middle East for its integrated communications products. Following the meeting, MRTI sought to determine how the restructuring had affected the company’s business in Israel-Palestine. Motorola Mobility confirmed that the Israeli cell phone company had been sold to a French company, and that its business was now limited to marketing cell phones in civilian markets. It also confirmed that the business lines with the Israeli government remained with Motorola Solutions. Motorola Solutions did not respond to MRTI’s information request of July 11, 2011.

C. Hewlett-Packard

The company sells hardware to the Israeli Navy, and as a contractor manages all Information Technology (IT) including its operational communications, logistics, and planning including the ongoing naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. This block-
ade has included interdicting humanitarian supplies by attacking or turning back international vessels carrying the supplies, and attacks on Palestinian fishermen.

The company also is involved through its ownership of Electronic Data Systems in providing electronic biometric identification scanning equipment to monitor only Palestinians at several checkpoints inside the West Bank, including as part of the separate road system, restricting Palestinian movement. At these checkpoints, the 2.4 million West Bank Palestinians are required to submit to lengthy waits as well as the mandatory biometric scanning, while Israelis and other passport holders transit without scanning or comparable delays.

Hewlett-Packard also has extensive involvement with the Israeli Army. Soldiers in the IDF are issued a Tadiran Communications ruggedized personal digital assistant (RPDA) based on the Hewlett-Packard IPAQ (handhelds and smart phones) as part of Israel’s Anog soldier modernization program. This equipment is used to enforce the Occupation. In July 2009, Hewlett-Packard won a contract for the installation of software products in a three-year IDF virtualization tender worth an estimated $15 million, with a two-year option to extend.

Hewlett-Packard also has business relationships with the illegal settlements in the West Bank. A subsidiary, HP Invent, outsources information technology services to Matrix and to its subsidiary Talpiot, which has its main outsourcing center in the illegal West Bank settlement of Modi’in Illit. By using Talpiot’s services, clients of the company are profiting from the company’s relationship with an illegal settlement and are helping solidify the occupation.

In addition, Hewlett-Packard worked with the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel in the occupied West Bank to develop specialized solutions for government data storage, and used this project in marketing publicity. Despite the fact that Ariel is deep in the Occupied West Bank, the company’s published description of this work claims that Ariel is within Israel, including the use of a map making no reference to the West Bank as a separate occupied territory.

In addition, as with Motorola Israel, its Israeli subsidiary does not disclose its equal employment opportunity record of its hiring practices.

A shareholder resolution was developed requesting a review of Hewlett-Packard’s human rights policies, and a report on their implementation. It was filed by the PC(USA), United Methodist General Board of Pensions and Benefits, and four Roman Catholic religious orders. The filing letters requested an opportunity for dialogue, and prompted a positive response by the company. On October 28, 2009, several religious participants met with company officials by conference call. The discussion reviewed Hewlett-Packard’s policies and procedures, and identified issues of concern for further discussion. Participants were grateful for the positive atmosphere, and willingness to cooperate. As the company agreed to initiate a board of directors level review of its human rights policy, and committed to positive follow-up to the issues identified in the dialogue, the shareholders decided to withdraw the resolution.

However, the follow-up was spotty in some areas, and nonexistent in others. One positive aspect of the engagement though was meeting with a representative of HP Israel in Jerusalem in February 2010. The discussion was informative about the extent and variety of Hewlett-Packard’s businesses. Requested information on the company’s employment practices and how the human rights policy influences the company’s business with governments was not provided.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) directed MRTI to continue its efforts to engage Hewlett-Packard on these issues. Although efforts began to schedule dialogue with company management in November 2010, the company repeatedly deferred and postponed this meeting. Attempts to schedule conference calls met with delays, but one was finally held on April 19, 2011. Unfortunately, it was not a productive dialogue. While the religious shareholders had communicated clearly their desire for an in-depth discussion of the biometric scanners at the checkpoints, Hewlett-Packard’s representatives, including its person in charge of implementing its human rights policy, said that they were not knowledgeable on the issue and could not discuss it. They also did not offer to set up a subsequent call with Hewlett-Packard representatives who could. In addition, they announced that the human rights assessment they were conducting (which would include Israel-Palestine) would concentrate on systems evaluation, and any specifics would not be included in Hewlett-Packard’s public reporting. Indeed, Hewlett-Packard’s public report contained no reference to its business operations in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Hewlett-Packard produced a Global Citizenship Report for 2010, its most recent one. It states in its Global Issues section: “At HP, we believe technology is a driver of social progress, environmental sustainability and economic opportunity. We’re committed to helping individuals everywhere use technology to connect and create a better world.” The company reviews its involvement in the United Nations Global Compact, and its support for the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. It notes that it is one of eight founding members of the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI). However, nowhere does Hewlett-Packard discuss the relationship of its policy commitments to its involvements in non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine.

II. Recent United Nations Findings

Since the adjournment of the 220th General Assembly (2012), the twenty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly Human Rights Council issued its report regarding the “Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories” (February 2013) and brought these conclusions:
Conclusions

100. The facts brought to the attention of the mission indicate that the State of Israel has had full control of the settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory since 1967 and continues to promote and sustain them through infrastructure and security measures. The mission notes that, despite all pertinent United Nations resolutions declaring that the existence of the settlements is illegal and calling for their cessation, the planning and growth of the settlements continues of existing as well as of new structures.

101. The establishment of the settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (see annex II), is a mesh of construction and infrastructure leading to a creeping annexation that prevents the establishment of a contiguous and viable Palestinian State and undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

102. The settlements have been established and developed at the expense of violating international human rights laws and international humanitarian law as applicable in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as recognized notably by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion of 9 July 2004.

103. The settlements are established for the exclusive benefit of Israeli Jews, and are being maintained and developed through a system of total segregation between the settlers and the rest of the population living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This system of segregation is supported and facilitated by a strict military and law enforcement control to the detriment of the rights of the Palestinian population.

104. The mission considers that, with regard to the settlements, Israel is committing serious breaches of its obligations under the right to self-determination and certain obligations under international humanitarian law, including the obligation not to transfer its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Rome Statute establishes the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court over the deportation or transfer, directly or indirectly, by the occupying Power of parts of its own population into the territory it occupies, or the deportation or transfer of all or parts of the population of the occupied territory within or outside that territory. Ratification of the Statute by Palestine may lead to accountability for gross violations of human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law and justice for victims.

105. The existence of the settlements has had a heavy toll on the rights of the Palestinians. Their rights to freedom of self-determination, non-discrimination, freedom of movement, equality, due process, fair trial, not to be arbitrarily detained, liberty and security of person, freedom of expression, freedom of access to places of worship, education, water, housing, adequate standard of living, property, access to natural resources and effective remedy are being violated consistently and on a daily basis.

106. The volume of information received on dispossession, evictions, demolitions and displacement points to the magnitude of these practices. These are particularly widespread in certain areas and acute in East Jerusalem.

107. The mission noted that the identities of settlers who are responsible for violence and intimidation are known to the Israeli authorities, yet these acts continue with impunity. It is led to the clear conclusion that institutionalized discrimination is practiced against the Palestinian people when the issue of violence is addressed. The mission believes that the motivation behind this violence and the intimidation against the Palestinians and their properties is to drive the local populations away from their lands and allow the settlements to expand.

108. The mission is gravely concerned at the large number of children who are apprehended or detained, including for minor offences. They are invariably mistreated, denied due process and a fair trial. In violation of international law, they are transferred to detention centres in Israel.

109. Children endure harassment and violence, and encounter significant obstacles in attending educational institutions, which limits their right to have access to education. The occupying Power, Israel, is failing in its duty to protect the right of access to education of the Palestinian children and failing to facilitate the proper working of educational institutions.

110. Information gathered by the mission showed that some private entities have enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements, either directly or indirectly.

111. Women alone in their homes, the Bedouins and other vulnerable groups are easy targets for settler violence, creating a sense of insecurity in Palestinian society in general.

The above information may be located in the following report: Human Rights Council; 22ND session—Agenda item 7; Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories; Report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.* This report in pdf format can be accessed by inputting this information in the appropriate Internet search engine: G.E. 13-10742 Human Rights Council, Twenty-second Session Agenda, Item 7, Human Rights Situation in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories.

III. Maps

Map 1 is part of the (above) report of the United Nations General Assembly Human Rights Council.

Map 2 shows the disintegration of Palestinian land on the West Bank preventing the creation of a viable Palestinian State.

Map 3 shows the historical progression of the Palestinian loss of land from 1946 to 2005.
Map 2

Fragmentation of Land on the West Bank Blocks Creation of a Viable Palestinian State

"Everybody has to move, run and grab as many hilltops as they can... Everything we don't grab will go to them."
Adel Sharon, 1990

"We'll make a pastrami sandwich of them. We'll insert a strip of Jewish settlement, in between the Palestinians, and then another strip of Jewish settlement, right across the West Bank, so that in 25 years time, neither the United Nations, nor the United States, nobody, will be able to tear it apart."
Adel Sharon, 1973 to Winston Churchill III

Map 3

Palestinian loss of land 1946 to 2013
The green areas are under Palestinian Control

|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------|

Palestinian Loss of Land 1946-2013
The green area shows land under Palestinian control.
The writers and endorsers of this overture are convinced that as circumstances presently stand, we can do no less than become part of a global human rights movement (ecumenical, interfaith, and secular) to disinvest from corporations whose business practices violate the human rights of the Palestinian people through occupation by the Israeli government. It is unconscionable that the PC(USA), which has already called upon Presbyterians to boycott products made in the illegal settlements, continues to invest in and profit from corporations engaged in activities that are not peaceful and labeled illegal by the United Nations Human Rights Council. If the actions of Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions in regard to their business practices with the Israeli government do not violate PC(USA) policy regarding its prohibition on investments that benefit from non-peaceful pursuits, what actions ever would? It is our plea that through faithfulness towards the justice taught by our Lord Jesus Christ, the investment policies and decisions of our denomination will be consistent with the following statement: We are the Church of Jesus Christ. When the powers of the world decide that they will conduct business as usual, and that business is contrary to the teachings of Christ and the will of God for humanity, then it is time for the church to end its complicity in this sinful behavior.

Concurrence to Item 04-02 from the Presbyteries of Genesee Valley, New Brunswick, New Hope, and Palisades.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-02.

The ACREC acknowledges MRTI’s careful and methodical ten-year process and thanks them for their faithful service. The ACREC agrees with MRTI that

1. the church has exhausted all avenues to bring about changes in the policies and practices of Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions through corporate engagement;

2. as long as the denomination’s policy is that we should not profit from “non-peaceful pursuits,” and as long as these three U.S. companies identified by MRTI remain deeply involved in “non-peaceful pursuits,” then as a matter of integrity, the church should end our investment in these companies.

New information on Caterpillar, Inc. not in the MRTI report:

On April 1, 2014, The New York Times reported that Caterpillar used a Swiss subsidiary to reduce its taxes by $2.4 billion.¹ This tax-avoidance scheme was developed by PricewaterhouseCoopers who was paid $55 million “for helping [CAT] transfer $8 billion of profits to the Swiss subsidiary from 1999 to 2012. The transfers had no economic substance and were made solely to take advantage of the lower tax rate Caterpillar negotiated with Switzerland, according to Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.” (The same article mentions HP also transferring profits offshore to avoid U.S. taxes).

During this time, CAT imposed a six-year wage freeze on its hourly workers, and awarded the current CEO massive pay increases.

• At Caterpillar, Pressing Labor While Business Booms—NY Times article, July 2012.²
• Caterpillar Chief’s Pay Jumps 60%—Wall Street Journal article, April 2012.³
• SEC Action Puts Caterpillar Resolution on Sudan Up for Shareholder Vote—NY State Comptroller press release.⁴

In this light, ACREC believes CAT’s human rights record in Sudan and Israel/Palestine demonstrates its “Code of Corporate Conduct” is selective and only goes as far as the company prefers it to go and does not apply evenly across the board.

The ACREC believes that the same standards that have guided votes on MRTI recommendations over the last forty-two years of corporate engagement by the committee, should continue to guide the General Assembly on this vote, no matter who is committing the human rights violations, where, and against whom. To use different standards to judge the

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³ http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB100014240527023044444604577338083842676136
⁴ http://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/mar13/032113.htm
evidence is at best, discriminatory, and at worst, sets a bad precedent of exceptionalism that will diminish the effectiveness of MRTI’s future work.

The ACREC sees the following reasons for the General Assembly to approve the MRTI report and NOT to apply exceptions to it:

1. The MRTI report does not target Israel, but U.S. corporations who are profiting from a military occupation. Charging MRTI and the PC(USA) with holding Israel to different standards is a misrepresentation of the ten-year history and MRTI’s careful engagement with the three American corporations.

   - The PC(USA) will continue to hold shares in companies that do business in Israel, but are not profiting from non-peaceful pursuits, including McDonald’s, Procter & Gamble, Coca Cola, IBM, etc.

2. While it is true that some Jewish groups and organizations have said our corporate engagement process has “damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews,” not all Presbyterians and not all Jews agree with this statement. In fact, in some cases, the opposite is true. The call for not profiting from the occupation has strengthened relationships between some Presbyterians and some American and Israeli Jewish groups and individuals who oppose the occupation. This is evidenced by the support for MRTI from

   - The Israeli Committee Against House Demolition (ICAHD)⁵.
   - The Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace. The rabbis of Jewish Voice for Peace maintain that the human rights violations of CAT, Inc., H-P and Motorola Solutions are not in accord with Jewish Values.⁶

The very claim that this has affected our relationships with all Jews in a blanket way commits the serious error of classifying an entire people into one monolithic category. General stereotyping can and often does lead to racism in situations where decisions are made by assuming all people of one race or ethnicity hold the same viewpoints.

Hewlett-Packard is involved in questionable human rights issues in China and Syria as well as in Israel/Palestine as cited in a shareholder resolution voted on at their 2014 Annual Meeting. Both H-P and Motorola Solutions have wholly-owned subsidiaries in Israel whose record of equal employment opportunity is deficient.

   - While more than 20 percent of the Israeli population is non-Jewish, the high-tech industry, obligated by law not to discriminate, employs between 0.5 to 5 percent non-Jewish Israelis. Neither company will disclose its employment record.

Video of CAT bulldozers destroying Palestinian homes—first 40 seconds of this trailer of 2013 film, “Where Should the Birds Fly?”⁷

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved with amendment to Recommendation 1 as shown below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. [Instruct] [Urge] the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to disinvest from Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, in accord with our church’s decades-long socially responsible investment (SRI) history, and not to reinvest in these companies until the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) [is fully satisfied that] [recommends their removal from the divestment listing. The Committee on MRTI is urged to consider the following factors in determining when the] product sales and services by these [and potentially other] companies are no longer complicit in ['non-peaceful pursuits' and in]” [The rest of the recommendation section remains unchanged.]

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy supports the recommendations of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) in its Advice & Counsel memorandum to Item 04-08. In that memorandum we present the theological and policy bases for supporting corporate social responsibility work, including the recommendation to divest of securities in the three named corporations. This overture performs a valuable function in examining and affirming the record from outside MRTI and, in our view, proposes considerations that may be helpful going forward if the commissioners approve the divestment and occupation-free investment MRTI recommends. Hence the amendments suggested, which also

⁵ http://icahdusa.org/an-open-letter-from-jeff-halper/
⁶ http://www.rabbisletter.org/
⁷ http://whereshouldthebirdsfly.org/
recognize that the compliance of the investment bodies of our church is voluntary, although they are agencies of the General Assembly and to be guided by the theology and ethical direction of the assembly.

The overture presents past General Assembly policy and past actions correctly, including the favorable vote of commissioners in 2012 to ask the Board of Pensions to establish a separate investment portfolio that would not hold the securities of Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, a vote that was subsequently ruled out of order.

Regarding the human rights situation in Israel and Palestine, the overture’s data from the United Nations could be supplemented by similar findings from the U.S. State Department’s annual Human Rights reports, the reports of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other nongovernmental organizations, and the reports of human rights organizations within Israel such as B’Tselem.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-02.

Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.

BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 04-02

Comment on Item 04-02—From the Board of Pensions.

Item 04-02, an overture from the Presbytery of San Francisco, and Item 04-08 from the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) recommend that Caterpillar, Inc., Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett-Packard be added to the General Assembly Divestment List. The Board of Pensions offers this comment, originally approved by the Board’s Executive Committee in May 2006, to clarify its practice when corporations are added to that list.

Comment of The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on the several recommendations relating to Divestment and Affirmative Investment

In all its corporate actions, the Board of Pensions strives to support the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the social witness policies approved by the General Assembly. Sometimes there is apparent conflict between the social witness desires of the denomination and our legal duties to members of the Benefits Plan. It is clear that our mutually approved long-term policies and procedures have worked well to avoid conflict and we urge the General Assembly to take no actions that would displace these very helpful policies and procedures.

The General Assembly has delegated oversight responsibility for Benefits Plan and Assistance Plan monies to the Board of Pensions. This responsibility makes the Board a “fiduciary,” a status that carries both certain duties and the potential for certain liabilities if carried out improperly. This delegation and separation of oversight duties is intended to relieve the General Assembly from both fiduciary duties and liabilities. The Board, acting through its Board of Directors, chooses the actual investment managers and determines how the money is allocated among various classes of securities to achieve the long-term investment objectives required of the Plans. The Board does not select specific investments (either to buy or to sell): security selection is the job of the investment managers themselves.

As indicated below, managers of individually managed portfolios are made aware of our social witness policy and are required to justify to the Board of Pensions any deviation from that policy.

These are all important separations of roles and responsibilities that are in the best interests of commissioners, of the denomination, of the Benefits Plan and of Plan members. For these reasons, the General Assembly does not direct the Board of Pensions to divest the portfolio of an investment held by the Benefits Plan and does not direct that the Board of Pensions affirmatively invest in any specific security.

The General Assembly does, however, determine the social witness policies of the Church, including how they pertain to investments of money held by or under the aegis of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It does advise the Board (and the Foundation) and it does urge us to take certain actions from time to time. We in turn are mindful of the General Assembly’s wishes.

To confuse this important definition of roles and responsibilities, would risk potential liability to the General Assembly, and possibly incur more investment risk for the Pension Trust and other benefits and assistance assets than would otherwise be desirable. We cannot, and the General Assembly would not have us avoid or compromise our legal duties and threaten the security of the Benefits Plan and Assistance Program.
There are two specific duties for us to consider when it comes to the question of divestment.

First, the Board of Pensions has a “duty of loyalty” to act in the sole and exclusive interests of the Benefits Plan members. That means our decisions must be in the interests of that group taken as a whole, not in the interests of the Board, and not in the interests of some other group or some special part of the Church. The Board of Pensions has established procedures that it believes are completely faithful to this obligation.

Second, the Board has a “duty of care” to see to it that sufficient funds are available to keep the promises made to Plan members, both current and future. Selling or buying securities based on social witness principles alone could easily translate into taking too much or too little risk at any given point in time. The Board of Directors has adopted detailed investment policies governing the allocation of the Plan’s investments in various asset classes and the selection of managers for those asset classes. This allocation is the primary way we manage investment risk. The investment managers are responsible for the selection of individual investment holdings. We are responsible for selecting the investment managers, and this selection process is another of our risk management tools, and is an equally important separation of duties. The result is that the Board of Pensions must make its own, independent judgments based on its legal duties of loyalty and care.

Having said that, it is our often-expressed objective to support the declared social witness policies of the denomination as best we can. Fortunately, specific policies on divestment adopted by the General Assembly in 1984 have served our mutual interests well, have promoted a united voice and have avoided conflicts within the denomination.

**Divestment**

The Board of Pensions participates in the Church’s MRTI activities. Under the 1984 policies of the General Assembly, the denomination’s Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment recommends that a company be added to the General Assembly’s divestment list after several steps. Three of those steps include (a) undertaking a thorough and comprehensive research of the company’s involvement in an objectionable practice, (b) engaging the company in constructive dialogue about those practices through meetings and submission of shareholder resolutions; and (c) it is determined that no lesser alternative to divestment is available. Ultimately the General Assembly determines, upon receiving such a recommendation, what is the effective social witness action for the Church and its entities to undertake (including divestment or affirmative investment). The General Assembly has long recognized that the divestment practice of the Board of Pensions is one of a “prohibition of ownership” rather than one of an “immediate sale” of securities listed for divestment.

When and if a security is added to the prohibited securities list (there are currently 428 securities on the list), the Board of Pensions has adopted a formal process to ensure that the failure to own the security will not harm the financial soundness of the Plan. At this point, there are two levels of decision because of the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the decision-makers. The first decision is for an investment manager. The Investment Manager must decide whether not owning a divestment list security will harm their portfolio results. If it decides that failure to own will not harm results, there is no issue as to portfolio performance, and the security is not held. Since, as a general rule our investment policies provide for observance of the General Assembly’s divestment policies, if the manager decides that failure to own will harm portfolio performance, it must ask us and provide justification for an exception.

The second decision now becomes one for the Board of Pensions. It is inappropriate for us to fail to act. In other words, we are obligated to independently decide whether or not to initiate divestment, or to grant an exception. In the event of a request for exception, if the Investment Committee determines that the request is reasonable and appropriate in the context of our duty of care, it may grant the exception. Currently, there is only one security held by the Board of Pensions under an approved exception request.

For example,

Stock A is placed on the divestment list for the first time. Manager X owns Stock A. When the divestment list is updated, we advise Manager X that Stock A may be held as a part of their normal investment program until such time as the security becomes part of the manager’s sell discipline for all clients. Any subsequent purchase requires an exception from the Board of Pensions.

If a Manager does not own the stock, any purchase requires an exception.

From time to time, securities are removed from the divestment list, and managers are so advised.

**Affirmative Investment**

The duties of care and loyalty apply equally as limitations on the purchase of securities. In addition, the separation of roles and responsibilities between the Board and our investment managers is breached when we begin telling our investment managers to actively purchase specific securities. At that point we become portfolio managers ourselves, and to date that is not a responsibility we have undertaken because it would impose additional regulatory burdens and administrative expenses on the Plan that we have chosen to avoid.
Shareholder Resolutions and Proxy Voting

We do hold a small portfolio of securities outside the Benefits Plan specifically at the request of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment in order that the Church can use these shares to propose shareholder resolutions from time to time. These holdings are at minimum levels required to submit shareholder resolutions.

It is also appropriate to note that the Board of Pensions does vote all shares held by or through us in accordance with the actions of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment. The Board of Pensions respectfully requests that the General Assembly take this comment into account when considering the several recommendations on Divestment or Affirmative Investment proposed to the General Assembly. The processes in place have served us well for over twenty years, and will continue to serve us well going forward.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-02

Comment on Item 04-02—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This overture supports the recommendation from the Presbyterian Mission Agency, approved at its February 2014 board meeting, calling for Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions to be added to the General Assembly’s list of companies whose stocks and bonds are proscribed from investment (commonly known as the General Assembly Divestment List).

This recommendation is based upon the comprehensive report by the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), http://www.pcusa.org/resource/mrti-report-and-recommendations-israel-palestine-c/, on its multiyear engagement of corporations involved in non-peaceful pursuits in Israel and Palestine as defined by the General Assembly.

Item 04-03

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-03. See pp. 58, 60.]

On Engaging Presbyterian to Witness for Palestinian Human Rights and for Ending the Occupation of Palestine—From the Presbytery of Grace.

The Presbytery of Grace overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. Affirm the prophetic witness of Jesus Christ against all forms of racism and powers of oppression with courage, honesty, and love; affirm that through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God has called the church into a ministry of repentance, reconciliation, and hope, working towards cooperation and peace among all nations; and recognize through these affirmations that the love of God for all peoples, includes Israelis, Palestinians, Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

2. Respect the human rights of the Israeli people and oppose all forms of anti-Semitism, and deplore the violation of the human rights of Palestinians by the government of Israel, which includes but is not limited to
   a. systematic expropriation of Palestinian land and water for Jewish-only settlement colonies;
   b. deportation and forcible transfer of Palestinian populations;
   c. imprisonment and torture of Palestinians;
   d. construction of a separation wall/barrier deep into the militarily occupied Palestinian territories;
   e. building Israeli-only bypass roads to connect the Jewish-only settlement colonies together and to Israel;
   f. destruction of Palestinian agricultural lands and homes and expropriation of Palestinian property not justified by military necessity; and
   g. daily humiliation at numerous checkpoints deep within the Palestinian territories.

3. Recognize that Israeli practices, infrastructure, and the military occupation confine Palestinians to live in isolated enclaves and deny Palestinians freedom of movement, freedom of residence, a right to a nationality, and the right to leave and to return to their country of origin.

4. Acknowledge that Israel’s noncompliance with international law and numerous United Nations resolutions is assisted by the government of the United States through its annual gift of at least three billion dollars and its veto within the United Nations Security Council of resolutions condemning Israel’s violations of the human rights of Palestinians, and Israeli violence against its neighboring countries.
5. Acknowledge that the actions of the Israeli government listed above meet and surpass the United Nations definition of apartheid as defined by International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973) and as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (2002).

6. Strongly urge the government of the United States to pursue policies that treat both Israelis and Palestinians with equal regards and end its policies that favor Israel and allow it to continually violate the human rights of Palestinians (Christians and Muslims) within its borders and within the territories it militarily occupies.

7. Direct the Stated Clerk to urge President Obama and our Congress to act courageously in urging the government of Israel to cease and desist in its discrimination and violence against its Christian and Muslim citizens and to end the military occupation of the Palestinian territories, and the blockade of the Gaza Strip.

8. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to engage in constructive, peaceful, and nonviolent actions to bring about reconciliation between Christians, Jews, and Muslims living within the former Mandate Palestine.

Rationale

A. Purpose

This overture is pursued with the hope it will lead to a peaceful reconciliation between the people of Israel and Palestine. It is only through reconciliation that peace with justice will be realized.

B. Why Presbyterians Must Act

As Presbyterians we believe the prophetic mission of the church is to speak the Word of God courageously, honestly, and lovingly; following the example of Jesus. The church is called to stand alongside the oppressed to help bring about justice for them, leading to peace and reconciliation with their oppressors. Christians spoke out in the 1950s against racial segregation in the United States and later on against apartheid in South Africa. They must again raise their voices and speak out against Israel’s violations of Palestinian human rights.

In the twentieth century, Christians of the West did not speak out loudly enough to stop the profound suffering and discrimination that the Jewish people of Europe experienced during World War II culminating in the Jewish Holocaust. Are we to remain silent in the twenty first century to the suffering of Palestinian people who are living under military occupation, encirclement, and blockade by the State of Israel? If we are to heed the prophetic mission of the Church to speak the Word of God, we must speak out and act to end this suffering.

To solve a problem, one has to honestly recognize and acknowledge that the problem exists. The rationale section of this overture will demonstrate how Israel’s practices and actions against the Palestinian people, both Christians and Muslims, and Israel’s physical changes to the land and infrastructure of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and its blockade of the Gaza Strip constitute (as defined by the 2002 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (RSICC)) elements of crimes against humanity that include apartheid and more. In other words, Israeli policies and practices are worse than just apartheid. Jimmy Carter, former president of the U.S. and Nobel Peace Prize winner said: “Israel does occupy this territory deep within the West Bank, and connects 200-or-so settlements with each other, with a road, and then prohibits the Palestinians from using that road, or in many cases even crossing the road. This perpetrates even worse instances of apartness, or apartheid, than we witnessed even in South Africa” (2006).

First, consider the testimony of the “Russell Tribunal on Palestine,” which was composed of eminent people from various countries, including Israel.” The legitimacy of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine comes “from the prestige, professional interests, and commitment to fundamental rights of the Members that constitute this Tribunal.” Members of the Jury included Alice Walker, author and poet, U.S.A.; John Dugard, professor of international law, former special rapporteur for both UN Commission on Human Rights and International Law Commission; Mairead Corrigan Maguire, Nobel Peace laureate 1976, Northern Ireland; and many other distinguished persons. A complete list of the jury is available in the endnotes.

- Russell Tribunal: “In its Cape Town session, the Tribunal found that Israel subjects the Palestinian people to an Institutionalized regime of domination amounting to apartheid as defined under international law. This discriminatory regime manifests in varying intensity and forms against different categories of Palestinians depending on their location. The Palestinians living under colonial military rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are subject to a particularly aggravated form of apartheid. Palestinian citizens of Israel, while entitled to vote, are not part of the Jewish nation as defined by Israeli law and are therefore excluded from the benefits of Jewish nationality and subject to systematic discrimination across the broad spectrum of recognized human rights. Irrespective of such differences, the Tribunal concluded that Israel’s rule over the Palestinian people, wherever they reside, collectively amounts to a single integrated regime of apartheid.” (2013)

- Ramzy Baroud, editor of the Palestine Chronicle, in his article, “Fighting Apartheid in Palestine: South Africa’s Unfinished Business” said: “the recent approval by South Africa’s cabinet to distinguish between products made in Israel and
those made in illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank. It was also a natural progression of South Africa’s policies, which have reflected impatience with Israel through the years. Israel’s policies have long been geared towards decimating Palestinian society, along with any chances for a just peace. It was clear that Israel has chosen the Apartheid option, not just as a de facto outcome of its policies, but through a decided legal and political pattern.” (2012)

- Ronald Kasrils, a member of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine Jury and of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the African National Congress (ANC) (1987–2007) said: “Travelling into Palestine’s West Bank and Gaza Strip, which I visited recently, is like a surreal trip back into an apartheid state of emergency. It is chilling to pass through the myriad checkpoints—more than 500 in the West Bank. They are controlled by heavily armed soldiers, youthful but grim, tensely watching every movement, fingers on the trigger. … The West Bank, once 22% of historic Palestine, has shrunken to perhaps 10% to 12% of living space for its inhabitants, and is split into several fragments, including the fertile Jordan Valley, which is a security reserve for Jewish settlers and the Israeli Defense Force. Like the Gaza Strip, the West Bank is effectively a hermetically sealed prison. It is shocking to discover that certain roads are barred to Palestinians and reserved for Jewish settlers. I try in vain to recall anything quite as obscene in apartheid South Africa.” (2007).

- Yossi Sarid, former Israeli minister of education, said: “What acts like apartheid, is run like apartheid and harasses like apartheid, is not a duck—it is apartheid. … What should frighten us, however, is not the description of reality, but reality itself.” (2008)

- Michael Ben-Yair, former Israeli attorney general, said: “Passionately desiring to keep the occupied territories, we developed two judicial systems: one—progressive, liberal—in Israel; and the other—cruel, injurious—in the occupied territories. In effect, we established an apartheid regime in the occupied territories immediately following their capture. That oppressive regime exists to this day.” (2002)

- Shulamit Aloni, former Israeli minister of education, said: “Jewish self-righteousness is taken for granted among ourselves to such an extent that we fail to see what’s right in front of our eyes. It’s simply inconceivable that the ultimate victims, the Jews, can carry out evil deeds. Nevertheless, the state of Israel practices its own, quite violent, form of Apartheid with the native Palestinian population.” (2007)

- Henry Siegman, former director of the American Jewish Congress & Synagogue Council of America, said, “Successive Israeli governments have long sought to preclude the two-state solution. Israel has crossed the threshold from ‘the only democracy in the Middle East’ to ‘the only apartheid regime in the Western world.’” (2007)

- Ilan Pappe, Israeli and former Haifa University history professor said, “Israel is now one of worst apartheid regimes in the world. It controls almost all of Palestine (apart from Gaza which it imprisoned hermetically since 2005). It has the largest number of apartheid laws and regulations than any country in the world and the longest imposition of emergency laws and regulations that rob citizens of their most basic human and civil rights.” (2011)

- Nelson Mandela said “We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.” (1997)

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the South African Nobel Peace prize winner said “I have been to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and I have witnessed the racially segregated roads and housing that reminded me so much of the conditions we experienced in South Africa under the racist system of Apartheid. I have witnessed the humiliation of Palestinian men, women, and children made to wait hours at Israeli military checkpoints routinely when trying to make the most basic of trips to visit relatives or attend school or college, and this humiliation is familiar to me and the many black South Africans who were corralled and regularly insulted by the security forces of the Apartheid government. It is not with rancor that we criticize the Israeli government, but with hope, a hope that a better future can be made for both Israelis and Palestinians.” (2010)

- Israeli human rights group B’Tselem said: “Israel has created in the Occupied Territories a regime of separation based on discrimination, applying two separate systems of law in the same area and basing the rights of individuals on their nationality. This regime … is reminiscent of distasteful regimes from the past such as the Apartheid regime in South Africa.” (2002)

- The Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa, after two years of studying Israeli practices towards the Palestinians, concluded that Israel practices the “three pillars” of apartheid in the occupied territories in a manner calculated to prevent Palestinians from participation in the political, social, and cultural life of their country. (2009)

C. PC(USA) Statements Acknowledging Israeli Human Rights and International Law Violations

The church is seriously disturbed by the social injustice and oppression experienced by Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the following statements concerning Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Please consult Appendix A for a more complete listing of PC(USA) statements.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the Middle East Study Report, which states that:

- The Israeli occupation leads to the denial of human rights for Palestinians and violation of international laws.
Military aid to Israel to be contingent upon Israel eliminating human rights abuses in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) passed a policy calling upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence could be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.

These statements and others found in Appendix A portray facts on the ground that are irrefutable and acknowledged by Israel.

D. What Are Crimes Against Humanity and What Is Apartheid?

The 2002 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (RSICC), ratified by the United Nations as international law effective July 1, 2002, defines crimes against humanity in Article 7 which states:

For the purpose of this Statute, “crime against humanity” means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack:

a. Murder;
b. Extermination;
c. Enslavement;
d. Deportation or forcible transfer of population;
e. Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law;
f. Torture;
g. Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity;
h. Persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender … or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court;
i. Enforced disappearance of persons;
j. The crime of apartheid [see Appendix B for a definition of apartheid];
k. Other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.

Note that in part J of Article 7, the U.N. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court declares that apartheid is a “crime against humanity” because it is an act committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population. The crime of apartheid is defined as “inhumane acts committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.

Furthermore, the U.N. defines “racial discrimination,” as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”

This rationale will demonstrate that in addition to apartheid, Israel’s policies and practices include additional elements of crimes against humanity.

E. Israel’s Laws, Polices, and Practices Towards Palestinian Citizens of Israel and Palestinians in the Occupied West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem

Israel has created a system where one ethnic group, Israeli Jewish nationals, have a superior status and another ethnic group, non-Jewish Arabs (Christians and Jews) living in Palestine and Israel, have an inferior status. Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically take actions to prevent Palestinians from participating in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of their country. The expropriation of Palestinian land, restrictions on the freedom of movement and residence, confining Palestinians to ghettos, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of Palestinians, the restriction or denial of Palestinian rights to work, education, peaceful assembly, and religious practices are all part of Israeli measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from full participation in the economic, environmental, and social life of their country. This discriminatory system benefits Israeli Jews and causes irreparable harm to non-Jews both in Israel itself and in the occupied Palestinian territories.

This section highlights the following eight areas in which the state of Israel’s laws, policies, and practices violate the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (ICPSCA) ratified by the United Nations.

1. Denial to the Right to Life and Liberty of Person (In Violation of ICPSCA, Article II.a.)

Palestinian human rights defenders, political representatives, and civil society activists have been targeted and imprisoned as a technique of silencing and containment. Palestinian prisoners have routinely been subject to coercive interrogation techniques, excessive use of solitary confinement
and isolation, medical neglect, and physical and mental abuse amounting to ill-treatment and torture. Conditions of detention, particularly with regard to hygiene, nutrition, and access to health care, typically fail to meet minimum standards, and family visits are routinely denied. The circumstances of Palestinians in detention have been brought back to the forefront of international concern in recent times through the initiation of widespread hunger strikes by prisoners. The Tribunal expresses its solidarity with the Palestinian political prisoners, and condemns in the strongest possible terms:

- the use of military law to criminalize political expression;
- the prosecution of Palestinian civilians, including children, by military courts in violation of international standards for fair trial;
- the systemic torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees;
- the pervasive policy of intermittence without charge or trial.

Torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees is also in violation of the 2002 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (RSICC, Article 7 [Crimes Against Humanity], e, f).

2. **Deliberate Imposition of Living Conditions Calculated to Cause the Physical Destruction of Palestinians in Whole or in Part (In Violation of ICPSCA, Article II.b.)**

The physical wellbeing of any people is determined in large part by their access to adequate housing, drinking water, agricultural irrigation water, food, agricultural areas, utilities, employment, education, and wastewater treatment. The laws, policies, and practices of Israel systematically deprive many Palestinians adequate living conditions in some or all of the above categories. Israeli practices deliberately impose on Palestinians living conditions calculated to make life intolerable. Israel exploits Palestinian natural water and land resources through restricting water supply to Palestinians, not investing in infrastructure for economic development, uprooting olive and fruit trees of Palestinian farmers, and preventing the freedom of commerce for Palestinian farmers and workers.

- Over one and a quarter million olive and fruit trees and thousands of acres of farmland have been destroyed in Palestinian territories since 1967. Nearly 465,000 olive trees were uprooted between 2000 and 2005.
- Since the beginning of the occupation in 1967, Israel’s strict control of the water sector in the occupied territories has prevented water development to meet Palestinian water needs, and caused shortages and a water-quality crisis.
- Israel has neglected construction of infrastructure to connect the Palestinian rural population to a running water network as well as proper maintenance of existing networks. In 2008, 227,500 Palestinians in 220 towns and villages were not connected to a water network. Another 190,000 Palestinians are only partially served.
- Of the water available from West Bank aquifers, Israel uses 83 percent, (10 percent for illegal Israeli settlers in the West Bank and 73 percent residents in Israel). West Bank Palestinians use the remaining 17 percent.
- Israel generally restricts Palestinian water use to the municipal and limited commercial and industrial sectors by limiting the extraction of groundwater for agricultural irrigation purposes.
- In the West Bank, about 50 groundwater wells and more than 200 cisterns have been destroyed or isolated from their owners by construction of the separation barrier, affecting the domestic and agricultural needs of more than 122,000 people.
- Only 7 percent of the water in the Gaza Strip meets World Health Organization standards.
- West Bank Palestinian water consumption is 40 liters per day less than the minimum global standards set by the World Health Organization.
- Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem pay taxes, but receive few benefits. The municipality has failed to invest significantly in infrastructure and services, such as roads, sidewalks, and water and sewage systems, in East Jerusalem’s Palestinian neighborhoods.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and deliberately imposes living conditions calculated to cause the physical destruction of the Palestinian people in whole or in part, in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

3. **Expropriation of Landed Property Belonging to Palestinians (In Violation of ICPSCA, Article II.c., d.)**

- Under the 1947 United Nations Palestine partition Resolution 181, 56 percent of the land area of Palestine was designated for a Jewish state and 44 percent for an Arab state. This resolution stipulated that the equal rights of minorities within each state must be protected. However, in the war that followed Israel’s declaration of independence in May 1948, Israel occupied 78 percent of the land thereby expropriating much of the land designated by the United Nations for an independent Arab state. (See Map 1 below.)
- In 1947–48, 750,000 non-Jewish residents of land designated by the U.N. for the Jewish state and much of the Arab state were either forcibly removed from their landed property or not allowed to return to their homes in defiance of international law. The land was expropriated by Israel for Jewish housing, farms, roads, businesses, parks, and cemeteries.
- In June 1967, East Jerusalem was occupied by the Israeli military. Twenty-seven square miles of East Jerusalem were annexed to Israel. More than 30 percent of the land in East Jerusalem has been expropriated to build new settlements where approximately 200,000 Israeli’s reside in 47,000 units of housing.
Between 1967 and 2009, vast areas of West Bank land have been expropriated to allow more than 121 settlements and 100 outposts for Jewish residents. Nearly half a million settlers now live in the occupied West Bank, including 190,000 in East Jerusalem.

Separation walls/barriers are constructed on land in the West Bank and will expropriate an additional 11.9 percent of Palestinian land in the West Bank when completed.

The agricultural Jordan Valley area, about 30 percent of the West Bank, is now off limits to most Palestinians.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually expropriates the landed property of Palestinians in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

4. Denying Palestinians Right to Freedom of Movement (in Violation of ICPSCA Article II.c., d.)

- Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically deny Palestinians the right to movement. Israel uses a number of means to restrict Palestinian movement in the West Bank, which include: permanent and temporary checkpoints, physical obstructions, the Separation Wall, roads on which only Israelis can drive, and the movement-permit regime.

- Checkpoints: In 2009, more than 600 checkpoints and roadblocks in the occupied West Bank restricted Palestinians’ freedom of movement to their homes, businesses, schools, jobs, hospitals, and farms. Palestinians routinely suffer indeterminate waiting, humiliating treatment, uncertainty, and denial of passage at checkpoints.

- Segregated roads: Segregated roads, which Israel euphemistically calls “bypass roads.” link settlement colonies with one another and with Israel. The 493 miles of bypass roads provide unrestricted access to Israeli vehicles but restrict or prohibit Palestinian travel. These roads cut off Palestinians from their agricultural land, schools, hospitals, markets, and extended families and carve up the West Bank into isolated enclaves.

- Separation Wall: In the West bank much of the Separation Wall extends well beyond the internationally recognized border and separates Palestinian homes from their farmland, businesses, schools, hospitals, and the homes of family and friends. In East Jerusalem the Separation Wall is constructed through the middle of a once contiguous city, much like the Berlin Wall. The wall’s main purpose is not security, but rather to separate Palestinians from Israeli settlement colonies constructed on illegally expropriated Palestinian land. The separation Wall cuts deeply into the West Bank in several locations. There is creeping confiscation of land in the areas between the 1967 West Bank border and the Wall, where severe movement restrictions continue to result in the inability of Palestinian landowners to gain access to their farm land. Along this zone between the Green Line and the Wall thousands of Palestinians on both sides of the barrier are being driven into poverty by restrictions on residency, lack of access to farm lands, inability to market their crops, and confiscation of land. By implementing these means, Israel has split the occupied territories into five geographical areas: North, Center, South, the Jordan Valley, and northern Dead Sea. Movement between the sections and within each section has become, in recent years, hard, slow, and sometimes impossible. Israel almost completely forbids the movement of Palestinians between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and impedes Palestinians from entering Israel and going abroad:

- These restrictions significantly affect the daily lives of Palestinians in commerce, in access to medical treatment and educational institutions, and in conducting social activities. Simple actions such as going to work in a nearby town, marketing farm produce, obtaining medical treatment, and visiting relatives entail bureaucratic procedures creating great uncertainty.

- Israel’s restriction on freedom of movement for non-Jewish Palestinians is discrimination based on ethnic origin since these restrictions apply only to Palestinians. Jewish residents are permitted to enter and leave settlements without restriction.

The net result is that the State of Israel systematically and continually denies the freedom of movement to Palestinians in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

5. Dividing the Population Along Racial Lines by the Creation of Separate Reserves and Ghettos for the Palestinians (in Violation of ICPSCA. Article II.d.)

Sections E.3., 4., and 5., and Maps 1 through 5 show how Israeli laws, policies, and practices in the West Bank combined with the infrastructure of illegal settlements, bypass roads, checkpoints, and the separation wall/barrier systematically create separate reserves or ghettos for Palestinians. Palestinians are forced to live in isolated enclaves that in turn eviscerate the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually divides the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the Palestinians in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

6. Denying Palestinians the Right to a Nationality (in Violation of ICPSCA. Article II.c.)

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations adopted a Partition Plan for Palestine that divided the League of Nations’ British Mandate of Palestine. In this partition plan, 44 percent of the land was allocated for an Arab state and 56 percent was
allocated for the Jewish state. While Israel did become an independent state in 1948, the independent Palestinian state did not come into existence because the land designated as an independent Palestinian state was militarily occupied by Israel.

- Between 1948 and 2009, the state of Israel has systematically occupied and/or annexed most of the land that had been designated by the United Nations for an independent Palestinian state. In doing so, Israel has denied the Palestinians a right to a nationality.
  - In 1967, Israel annexed East Jerusalem in violation of international law.
  - Between 1967 and 2009, Israel has controlled the rural undeveloped part of the West Bank, called Area C in the Oslo Peace agreement. Through the construction of settlement colonies, bypass roads, the separation wall/barrier, buffer zones, and the creation of land reserves, Israel has left Palestinians in control of only 13 percent of the land area of the British mandate of Palestine.
  - Israel has failed to implement the November 22, 1967, United Nations Resolution 242 requiring Israel to withdraw its forces from the West Bank and Gaza.
  - In 1978, Israeli Menachem Begin signed the Camp David Accords, which stated, “The Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by its inhabitants.” By not implementing this agreement to end its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Israel has denied the Palestinians right to a national homeland.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually denies Palestinians the right to a nationality in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

7. Enacting Legislative and Other Measures Calculated to Prevent Palestinians from Participation in the Political, Social, Economic and Cultural Life of Their Country (in Violation of ICPSCA. Article II.d.)

Israeli laws, policies, and practices systematically take actions to prevent Palestinians from participating in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of their country. The expropriation of Palestinian land, restrictions on the freedom of movement and residence, confining Palestinians to ghettos, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of Palestinians, the restriction or denial of Palestinian rights to work, education, peaceful assembly, and religious practices are all part of Israeli measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from full participation in the economic, environmental, and social life of their country. This discriminatory system benefits Israeli Jews and causes irreparable harm to non-Jews both in Israel itself and in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The net result is that the state of Israel systematically and continually enacting legislative and other measures calculated to prevent Palestinians from participation in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of the country, in violation of the International conventions on apartheid.

8. How Do Israeli Laws, Practices and Policies Surpass Apartheid and Meet the Definition of Crime Against Humanity?

a. Deportation and forcible transfer of populations (in violation of RSICC, Article 7, d). Examples are the Nakba (the forcible evacuation of over 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and villages in 1947-48), the Naksa (the forcible evacuation of over 250,000 Palestinians after and during the 6 day war in 1967), and more recently the Bedouins from the Negev in Israel and the OPT and the pressure on Palestinians to leave the Jordan Valley in area C – purportedly as preparation for Israel to annex the Jordan Valley in violation of the fourth Geneva convention.

b. Persecution (in violation of RSICC, Article 7, h):

Persecution involves the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights of the members of an identifiable group in the context of a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population. Following deliberations in its Cape Town session, the Russell Tribunal concluded that the evidence supports a finding of persecution against the Palestinians in relation to the following acts:

- the siege and blockade of the Gaza Strip as a form of collective punishment of the civilian population;
- the targeting of civilians during large-scale military operations;
- the destruction of civilian homes not justified by military necessity;
- the adverse impact on the civilian population effected by the Wall and its associated regime in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem;
- the concerted campaign of forcible evacuation and demolition of unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev region of southern Israel.
9. Responsibility of the United States of America

The US has demonstrated a commitment to Israel’s establishment and viability as an exclusionary and militarized Jewish State at the expense of Palestinian human rights. While US administrations initially offered moral support, since the Six Day War in 1967 the US has provided unequivocal economic, military, and diplomatic support to Israel in order to establish and maintain a qualitative military superiority over its Arab neighbors in violation of its own domestic law: Israel being the largest recipient of US foreign aid since 1976 and the largest cumulative recipient since World War II in the amount of approximately $115 billion; and via diplomatic support such that between 1972 and 2012, the US has imposed the sole veto on UN resolutions critical of Israel forty-three times (thirty of which concerned the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)) and via pressure on Member States to prevent efforts to pass or enforce General Assembly resolutions holding Israel accountable; and receipt of 60% of US Foreign Military Financing (FMF) funding, making it the largest recipient of US military funding.

The US has not only failed to ensure that Israel respects International Human Law (IHL) but it has exerted little or no influence on Israel to stop key violations of IHL. On the contrary it has on occasion encouraged Israel to violate IHL. The US has acquiesced in, and indirectly encouraged, the construction of both settlements and the Wall. In the case of Israel’s assaults on Gaza its (US) support has been more direct and could be said to constitute encouragement.

International responsibility is incurred by a State that aids or assists another State in the commission of internationally wrongful acts (Article 16 of the International Law Commission Draft Articles on State responsibility). The US undoubtedly assists Israel in the commission of internationally wrongful acts by providing military, material and political support to Israel.

The US must cease its unequivocal economic, military, and diplomatic support to Israel that makes the US directly complicit in a very wide range of Israeli violations of international law. In particular the US must cease its destructive veto policy at the UN Security Council, most notably on the issue of Israel’s colonial settlements, which the US itself acknowledges as unlawful.

10. Why Christians Cannot Be Silent

The Israeli policies in the West Bank and the infrastructure of the illegal Israeli settlements, bypass roads, checkpoints, and separation wall/barrier that constitute an apartheid system in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are in plain view for all to see. However, even for Christians and Americans that personally recognize this apartheid system, it is difficult for some of them to speak out and acknowledge it publicly. One reason may be fear of disturbing our relationships with some of our Jewish or Christian brothers and sisters. It is difficult for many Christians to publicly criticize the policies of Israel’s government for fear that even legitimate criticism may be seen as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic or characterized as “picking on Israel” among many countries in the Middle East with human rights violations. Some Christians believe they must silence their criticism of Israel’s policies because of the history of the Holocaust and the failure of many Christians to speak out at the time. Some believe that using the word “apartheid” has a harsh or jarring effect that can hamper constructive dialog.

Our call as Christians means we must sometimes get out of our comfort zone and risk controversy and criticism from people or organizations with which we are in relationship. It is because of this call that we must recognize what we witness in occupied Palestine, which is that Israel’s laws, practices, and policies constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people.

In 2011, a ninety-year-old Israeli Holocaust survivor did a speaking tour of the U.S. entitled the “Never Again to Anybody” tour. He said what some Jews learned from the Holocaust was “never again to us.” But what other Jews learned was “never again to anybody.” After World War II, Christians too vowed that never again would they be silent if a government passed laws establishing and maintaining the domination by one ethnic group over another ethnic group through systematic separation, oppression, and denial of basic human rights. Silence in the face of evil was wrong then, and it is wrong now.

Appendix A
Recent PC(USA) Statements on Israel-Palestine

The PC(USA) respects the human rights of the Israeli people and opposes all forms of anti-Semitism. The General Assembly (GA) recognized the daunting and mounting obstacles to reconciliation and peace with justice for both Israelis and Palestinians and affirmed with great urgency the historic Presbyterian stances with specific regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, calling for:

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved the Middle East Study Report’s statements that:

- The Israeli occupation leads to the denial of human rights for Palestinians and violation of international laws.
- One of the hopes of the Oslo interim agreement was settlement growth would cease, however the opposite has occurred, resulting in the current population of 285,000 in the West Bank and 198,700 in East Jerusalem. (Maps 3, 4, 5)
- The growth of the number of settlements and settlers is perceived by many as an attempt by Israel to prevent the establishment of an economically viable Palestinian State. (Maps 3, 4, 5)
The number of housing demolitions is alarming and shocks the human conscience. It is estimated that some 24,145 Palestinian homes have been demolished in the occupied territory since 1967.

Another concern of the occupation is the numerous “Israeli-only” bypass roads that carve up the Palestinian homeland and connect one settlement to another. This has a devastating effect on the ability of normal Palestinians to live out a normal life—to visit family, to farm family property, to seek medical treatment, to secure employment; and to travel freely in one’s own country. (Map 2)

While few would deny the right of a government to put a barrier on its own property line, three-quarters of this barrier is inside the West Bank on Palestinian land. This is often perceived by Palestinians as an effort to secure an illegal settlement, claim water resources, and annex Palestinian land. The location of the barrier is a violation of international law and is thus perceived as a means to preempt a just peace. (Map 3)

These statements portray facts on the ground are irrefutable and acknowledged by Israel. The settlement colonies, the bypass roads that connect them, and the separation wall/barrier imprison Palestinians in isolated enclaves, eviscerate the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state.

a. an immediate cessation of all violence, whether perpetrated by Israelis or Palestinians;

b. the end of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and diversion of water resources;

c. an immediate freeze both on the establishment or expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and on the Israeli acquisition of Palestinian land and buildings in East Jerusalem;

d. the relocation by Israel of the Separation Barrier to the 1967 border;

e. the withholding of U.S. government aid to the state of Israel as long as Israel persists in creating new West Bank settlements;

f. continuing corporate engagement through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment with companies profiting from the sale and use of their products for non-peaceful purposes and/or the violation of human rights;

g. a shared status for Jerusalem;

h. equal rights for Palestinian citizens of the state of Israel;

i. the cessation of systematic violation of human rights by any party, specifically, practices of administrative detention, collective punishment, the torture of prisoners and suspects, home demolitions and evictions, and the deportation of dissidents;

j. the immediate resumption by Israel and Palestine of negotiations toward a two-state solution;

k. military aid to Israel to be contingent upon Israel eliminating human rights abuses in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) passed a policy calling upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.

Appendix B: Definition of Apartheid

International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (ICSPCA)

The U.N. “International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid,” ratified by the United Nations an international law on November 30, 1973, declared that apartheid is a crime against humanity. Article II of this convention defines “apartheid” as follows:

Article II

For the purpose of the present Convention, the term “the crime of apartheid”, which shall include similar policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination as practiced in southern Africa, shall apply to the following inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them:

(a) Denial to a member or members of a racial group or groups of the right to life and liberty of person:

(i) By murder of members of a racial group or groups;

(ii) By the infliction upon the members of a racial group or groups of serious bodily or mental harm, by the infringement of their freedom or dignity, or by subjecting them to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

(iii) By arbitrary arrest and illegal imprisonment of the members of a racial group or groups;

(b) Deliberate imposition on a racial group or groups of living conditions calculated to cause its or their physical destruction in whole or in part;

(c) Any legislative measures and other measures calculated to prevent a racial group or groups from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country and the deliberate creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups, in particular by denying to members of a racial group or groups basic human rights and freedoms, including the right to work, the right to form
recognized trade unions, the right to education, the right to leave and to return to their country, the right to a nationality, the right to freedom of movement and residence, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;

(d) Any measures, including legislative measures, designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the members of a racial group or groups, the prohibition of mixed marriages among members of various racial groups, the expropriation of landed property belonging to a racial group or groups or to members thereof

(e) Exploitation of the labor of the members of a racial group or groups, in particular by submitting them to forced labor;

(f) Persecution of organizations and persons, by depriving them of fundamental rights and freedoms, because they oppose apartheid.

Appendix C:

Responding to Critics Who Believe Using the Word “Apartheid” Is too Harsh

Recognizing that Israel’s laws, practices, and policies in the West Bank constitute apartheid against the Palestinian people is merely acknowledging the facts on the ground and how they compare to the United Nations definition of apartheid. However, some supporters of this apartheid system may say using the word apartheid is “too harsh” or falsely accuse those who use the word as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic. These accusations are often made to deflect legitimate criticism of Israeli policies in order to divert attention from the facts on the ground. Those who support this overture may receive such criticism. Below are responses to such criticism.

This overture is not anti-Israel.

This overture intentionally focuses on Israel’s laws, practices, and polices that promote the occupation of Palestinian territories and not Israel’s right to exist. Most critics of Israel’s occupation of Palestine also strongly support the right of Israel to exist within the internationally recognized 1967 borders and emphatically condemn violence against civilians by all parties. Israel, like all nations, has the right to provide security for their citizens by taking appropriate measures that are consistent with international law. Holding Israel accountable to these same global standards is not anti-Israel.

Many Israeli and American Jews oppose settlement colonies on Palestinian land, all of which are illegal under international law. Within the Israeli and U.S. Jewish communities there is a growing, active, and passionate debate about whether Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is in the best interest of Israel. Each side in this debate is pro-Israel, trying to discern how to assure a secure, viable, and sustainable state. Christians must support the pro-Israel positions that advocate for human rights and justice for the Palestinian people and reject the positions that promote the systematic oppression of the Palestinian people. When patriotic Americans spoke out against slavery, racial segregation, or the Vietnam and Iraqi wars some Americans falsely accused them of being anti-American. Critics of Israel’s occupation of Palestine may also be falsely accused of being anti-Israel, but they are not. They are pro-human rights.

This overture is not anti-Semitic.

Anti-Semitism is discrimination against or prejudice or hostility toward Jews. This overture is not critical of Jews as people or of Jewish religion or culture. It intentionally states it is Israel’s laws, polices, and practices towards the Palestinian people that constitute apartheid. Many Jewish individuals and human rights organizations in Israel and the U.S. recognize that Israeli actions in the West Bank and Gaza constitute apartheid. Christians must, with confidence, reject any politically motivated charges of anti-Semitism that are made to silence legitimate criticism of Israel’s apartheid practices. This kind of hyperbolic language is untrue, harms civil discourse, and serves to hamper efforts to monitor, and prevent Israeli human rights violations. Not engaging in morally responsible action when faced with the clear findings of human rights organizations and the international community is morally indefensible.

This overture is part of an honest interfaith dialog between Jews and Christians.

Building strong interfaith relationships with our Jewish brothers and sisters is important for many Christians and churches. They are built on mutual interest, honesty, and integrity. Interfaith conversations encompass social justice issues such as hunger, homelessness, poverty, discrimination, human rights, war, and peace. Israel’s policies in occupied Palestine are but one issue. The Jewish community itself is divided on it. An honest dialog ultimately builds stronger relationships while silence erodes them. Through honest dialog we may find some Jewish people who support the occupation and some who agree it must end. We must have confidence that the interfaith relationships we have built on many social justice issues are strong enough to sustain a disagreement on the wisdom of Israel’s continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Some relationships may be strengthened and some may be strained, but they are unlikely to break if they are based on honoring each other’s call to be faithful to their interpretation of Scripture.

Is it appropriate to criticize Israel’s human rights violations?

There are human rights violations and injustices in many countries in the Middle East besides Israel, and all such violations should be equally condemned. However, one reason to focus on Israel is that it receives more than one-third of all U.S. foreign aid. Americans, therefore, have a special responsibility to make sure that money is used to prevent social injustice, not to perpetuate it. Israel is the sixteenth richest country in the world; it is one of the world’s largest arms producers and nuclear powers, and it refuses to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and has defied seventy United Nations Security Council resolutions seeking peaceful reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. United States’ complicity with Israel obligates us to speak out.

Israel’s militarily occupation of Palestine is not needed for security reasons.

At any time since 1967, Israel could have allowed the United Nations to occupy the West Bank and provide security. United Nations peacekeeping missions have been successful in dozens of other countries. However, if the U.N. had occupied Palestine to provide security in 1967 or anytime thereafter, it would have preserved the land for residents of a Palestinian state and not allowed Israel to expropriate
Palestinian land to build Jewish settlement colonies. Israel does not need to occupy the West Bank for security reasons. Israel chooses to occupy the West Bank so it can expand its borders and dominate the Palestinian people.

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**Concurrence to Item 04-03 from the Presbyteries of Muskingum Valley and the Redwoods, and the Synod of the Covenant.**

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-03.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this item because we agree with B’Tselem, *The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*, who state “Israel has created in the Occupied Territories a regime of separation based on discrimination.” The facts on the ground display a high level of discrimination for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial ethnic group over another, and on that basis, result in oppressing an entire ethnicity.

Palestinians are denied nationhood and nationality, while Israeli Jewish nationals (settlers on occupied land) have a superior status over Christians and Muslims living in Palestine on the basis of racial ethnic reasons. i.e., because they are Jewish. These Jewish settlers live in the Occupied Palestinians Territories (OPT) under civil law, while the indigenous people live under military law. Two separate legal systems apply based on identity. The separation is complete.

**On Defining “Race” and Basing Privileges on It**

- Contrary to common belief, “race” is a social and political reality, not a biological or genetic reality. There is widespread agreement among scholars that race, as understood in the United States, is a social construct. Race is not an objective, scientific, or biological consistent characteristic of a person or group of persons. (The ACREC resource person can speak more to this issue.)

- The evidence that race is not biological is the fact that the amount of genetic variation within so-called race groups is much greater than variation between groups. i.e., an African person can have more common DNA with an Asian person than with another African. “The genetic diversity within any historically defined race, swamps the small amount of difference between such groups, making the boundaries of these categories entirely arbitrary. Therefore, race in humans does not have a biological meaning” (Angie K. Huxley, http://www.biologyreference.com/Ar-Bi/Biology-of-Race Jan 23, 2014).

- The American Anthropological Association says “Present-day inequalities between so-called ‘racial’ groups are not consequences of their biological inheritance but products of historical and contemporary social, economic, educational, and political circumstances.” The ACREC reminds the 221st General Assembly (2014) that “ethnicity” has to do with blood and belonging, while “race” has to do with power, privilege, and prejudice. Which groups have “access to power and privilege” defines the boundaries, not biological differences.

- Racism, however, is a social system in which some are advantaged and others are disadvantaged because of skin color, or perceived “race.” Racism is a system of advantage that is perpetuated when its existence is not acknowledged.

**On Inequality and Racism in Israel and the OPT**

In Israel proper, according to The Abraham Fund, an initiative working since 1989 “to promote coexistence and equality among Israel’s Jewish and Arab citizens,” there is great inequality in Israel’s population, which is far worse in the OPT. This wide inequality gap is foundational for keeping Israel’s official policy of Hafrada (“separation” in Hebrew) in place. (*apartheid* means separation in Afrikaans).

The Abraham Fund: “Although Israel’s Arab citizens account for one-fifth of the country’s population, the economy of Israel is largely oriented toward its Jewish population. The Poverty Report (National Insurance Institute, 2006) indicates that over 54% of the country’s Arab citizens were living in poverty in 2006, compared to 14.7% of the country’s Jewish citizens. The widespread poverty among Arab families is attributed, for the most part, to the low employment rate of Arab citizens.”

The ACREC points to this data as foundational to attitudes that have developed in Israel and the OPT, which contribute to keeping the populations separate and unequal. According to a 2014 Israeli survey, “68% of Israelis believe the Arab population was subject to racism.” http://www.jpost.com/National-News/Survey-Who-suffers-from-racism-in-Israel-345603. (The figure is 79% for racism against Ethiopian migrant workers.)

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* [http://www.abrahamfund.org/en](http://www.abrahamfund.org/en)
Reported in Israeli Newspaper, Ha’aretz, a 2012 survey provides an even bleaker picture, showing that “most of the Jewish public in Israel supports the establishment of an apartheid regime in Israel if it formally annexes the West Bank.” Some of the survey results:

- 59 percent of the Jewish respondents want preference of Jews over Arabs in admissions to jobs in government ministries
- 49 percent of Jews want the state to treat Jewish citizens better than Arab citizens, 42 percent don’t want to live in the same buildings as Arabs
- 42 percent don’t want their children in the same classes as Arab children
- 33 percent want to bar Arabs from voting for the Israeli parliament
- 69 percent would object to giving Palestinians in the West Bank the right to vote if the West Bank was annexed by Israel
- 74 percent is in favor of separate roads for Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank.


The ACREC reminds the church that these Arabs who are, according to the survey, “subject to racism,” are indigenous people who deserve nothing less than equal rights, guaranteed by whatever government is in place.

In The Jewish Daily Forward, August 2013, Larry Derfner writes on racism in Israel:

The ADL [Anti-Defamation League] goes after anti-Semitism with a fist, it goes after Israeli racism with a sigh. As a matter of fact, the ADL and the entire American Jewish establishment should suspend their campaigns against anti-Semitism indefinitely and take a look at what’s going on in Israel.

http://forward.com/articles/182171/israels-everyday-racism-and-how-american-jews-tu/#ixzz2xdzNqUEV

The ACREC holds on to the belief that God created all people good. To deny some people (because of skin color or language) the privileges other have, is to deny God’s good creation. To allow this system—in which some receive advantages simply because of perceived “race”—to go unchecked is to deny that God made all people in God’s own good image.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 04-03 with amendment to Recommendations 4–6 as shown below: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“4. Acknowledge that Israel’s noncompliance with international law and numerous United Nations resolutions is assisted by the government of the United States through its annual gift of at least three billion dollars and its [repeated] veto within the United Nations Security Council of resolutions [condemning] [opposing] Israel’s violations of the human rights of Palestinians, and Israeli [violence] [military operations] against [Gaza and] its neighboring countries[,] particularly Lebanon].

“5. Acknowledge that the actions of the Israeli government listed above meet and surpass the United Nations definition of apartheid as defined by International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973) and as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (2002)[, which includes ethnic and other categories of people subjected to systemic discrimination as is enforced in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. Within the 1967 borders of Israel, the U.S. State Department Human Rights Report (2013) identifies ‘institutional and societal discrimination against Arab citizens, including the Bedouin, in particular in access to equal education and employment opportunities.’ These patterns of exclusion and disadvantage are also cited by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.]

“6. Strongly urge the government of the United States to pursue policies that treat both Israelis and Palestinians with equal regards and end [its] policies [and laws] that [favor Israel and allow it to continually violate the human rights of Palestinians (Christians and Muslims)] within its borders and within the territories it militarily occupies [exempt Israel from human rights and humanitarian standards and seek to prevent Palestine from becoming a signatory to human rights treaties and other provisions and covenants of international law shared in by other states].”

It is hard to look at a multibillion dollar, twenty-foot concrete wall erected mainly on confiscated land that extends around settlements and isolates Palestinian communities, roughly twice the length of Israel’s 1967 border, and not realize that something other than security is involved. This overture provides detailed documentation of the systematic dispossession and control of the Palestinian people, followed by discussion of what measures the church and other persons of good will should take to try to reverse this train wreck of international policy.
The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) acknowledges the temptation to deny these realities and to avoid unpleasant discussions of these systematic patterns that are now hardening attitudes for a second or third generation and are affecting the moral standing of both Israel and the United States. The ACSWP has compared the documentation given in the overture with U.S. State Department reports on both Israel and the Occupied Territories, which are not without human rights violations (http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=220358&year=2013#wrapper), and with reports from another UN agency that investigates discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/4DC9430BE04D596885257C2700565A0D). The committee has also reviewed other Israeli, Palestinian, and international human rights organization reports. It is hard to argue with the facts and laws presented in the overture. The question for commissioners is whether the measures recommended are the best response.

The basic approach of this overture is to challenge the temptation to denial, and to address the enabling policies of the U.S. government as well as the State of Israel. All recommendations but Recommendation 5 do this in a forthright way that is consistent with the policies of previous General Assemblies, which are correctly cited in the overture. Commissioners need to determine whether the suffering and lack of hope of the Palestinian people merits our church challenging the status quo. In light of the repeated failure of “peace processes” and the de facto ethnic cleansing involved in settlement expansion, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises approval, with the amendments noted.

Recommendation 5 of the overture proposes that the term, “apartheid,” be recognized as an accurate word for the systemic nature of what the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has generally called, “occupation.” “Occupation” does not address the second-class citizenship of Arab Israelis within the 1967 boundaries of Israel, nor does it fully address the State of Israel’s unilateral claims to annex all of Jerusalem and other territory. But “occupation” has characterized the military rule, control, and surveillance of movement, separate court system, and denial of citizenship rights in the “occupied territories.” After forty-seven years, however, measures that might be justified in the short term take on another character. “Apartheid” is a word increasingly used within Israel and around the world, often in relation to the “separation barrier” described above, and “apartheid” is in fact the Afrikaans word for “separation.”

On a factual level, commissioners may consider whether the Rome Statute’s emphasis on systemic discrimination rather than race alone in defining “apartheid” is accurate. The relevant provision cited in the overture is “racial discrimination,” as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”

Yet the force of the word, “apartheid,” is undeniably emotional and commissioners may want to modify its force, as in “resemble apartheid,” or “amount to a form of apartheid,” or avoid the word altogether. Use of the word would not imply an exact comparison with South African practice, which generally wanted Black labor along with their land and used “passes” rather than “permits.” Without a substantial change in the conditions Israel imposes on Palestinian life, however, it will become harder and harder to avoid using the “A” word for an intense form of ethnic and religious discrimination that does not contribute to peace or democracy.

Item 4-03 stands with or without Recommendation 5, and use of the term “apartheid” does not affect measures of nonviolent economic pressure, such as boycott or divestment.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-03.

Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.
Map 1: Palestinian Loss of Land 1946-2013
The green area shows land under Palestinian control.

Map 2: Annexation of East Jerusalem for building Jewish only settlements.

Map 3: Bypass roads linking settlement colonies in the West Bank with Israel allow unrestricted settler movement but allow limited or no access to Palestinians. Triangles are major Israeli settlement colonies.
**Map 4: The Separation Wall** (blue line). None of the Palestinian West Bank is part of Israel under international law. However, the separation wall is not on the West Bank’s border, but meanders deeply into Palestinian territory and puts large swaths of the West Bank on

**Map 5: Encircled enclaves** (reserves or ghettos) confine Palestinians into 64 isolated and totally surrounded canton-like reserves in the West Bank. The triangles are major Israeli settlement colonies.

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**Item 04-04**

[The assembly approved Item 04-04 with amendment. See pp. 58–59, 60]

*On Supporting Middle East Peacemaking—From the Presbytery of New Covenant.*

The Presbytery of New Covenant overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to:

*The PC(USA) has a long standing commitment to peace in Israel and Palestine. We recognize the complexity of the issues, the decades-long struggle, and the pain suffered and inflicted by policies and practices of both the Israeli government and Palestinian entities. We further acknowledge and confess our own complicity in both the historic and current suffering of Israeli and Palestinian. Yearning for justice and reconciliation, the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommends the following:*
[1. Reaffirm Israel’s right to exist as a sovereign nation within secure and internationally recognized borders in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.]

[4.] Declare its commitment to a negotiated two-state solution (two states for two peoples) in which a secure and universally recognized State of Israel lives alongside a free, viable, and secure state for the Palestinian people.

[2.] [Reject any proposed divestment and economic sanctions against the state of Israel or any application of the PC(USA)’s corporate engagement policies toward such ends.] [Instruct the Presbyterian Foundation and the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA), to divest from Caterpillar, Inc., Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, in accord with our church’s decades-long socially responsible investment (SRI) history, and not to reinvest in these companies until the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) is fully satisfied that product sales and services by these companies are no longer in conflict with our church investment policy. This action on divestment [is not to be construed or represented by any organization of the PC(USA) as divestment from the State of Israel, or as alignment with or endorsement] [does not mean an alignment with the overall strategy] of the global BDS (Boycott, Divest and Sanctions) movement.]

[3.] Call [Reaffirm PC(USA)’s commitment to interfaith dialogue and partnerships with American Jewish and Muslim friends and Palestinian Christians, and call] for all presbyteries and congregations within the PC(USA) to include interfaith dialogue and relationship-building as part of their own engagement in working for a just peace.

[4.] Call for all foreign aid given by the U.S. government—including aid to Israel and the Palestinian Authority—to be comprehensively and transparently accounted to the American people and held to the same standards of compliance with all applicable laws.

[5.] Call for church advocacy for foreign-aid accountability to be directed toward its universal adherence rather than targeted for selective application to some recipients and not others.

[6.] Encourage Presbyterians to travel to the Holy Land, and give broad support to the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities throughout the Middle East.

[7.] Affirm the importance of economic measures and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians that support and advance a negotiated two-state solution. [To that end, the 221st General Assembly (2014) does not endorse boycotts of Israeli or Palestinian products.]

[8.] Urge all church institutions to give careful consideration to possible investments in Israel-Palestine that advance peace and improve the lives of Palestinians and Israelis.

Rationale

Two States for Two Peoples

The two-state solution remains the best path to sustainable peace, but requires a renewed commitment to peacemaking by Israelis, Palestinians, and the international community. The Presbyterian community can help this renewed effort by continued advocacy of our core peacemaking principles: that the rights and aspirations of both Palestinians and Israelis be respected, that both parties have legitimate grievances, and that both parties have obligations that must be met for the peace process to move forward.

For Israel, there is no military solution to the conflict. Without progress toward a two-state solution, the violence may subside for periods of time but will inevitably return. The security concerns of Israel are legitimate, proven by hostile actions by its neighbors, and Israel’s security must be assured. At the same time, Israeli actions that constrain the ability of Palestinians to build a peaceful and free society hinder the cause of a democratic Jewish homeland. Unilateral actions by the parties are counterproductive. In 2012, the unilateral move by the Palestinian Authority for U.N. recognition, in violation of previous peace agreements between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, was met with another Israeli announcement of West Bank settlement expansion that many in the international community contend hinders the creation of a viable and contiguous Palestinian state. Israel also suspended tax transfers to the Palestinian Authority (PA), redirecting taxes collected to cover unpaid electric power obligations of the PA. Both parties need to return to bilateral negotiations, as a better path to peace.

For Palestinians to become effective negotiators representing their majority view and interests, they need to resolve internal political divisions within Palestinian society. While polling shows most Palestinians support peaceful coexistence and the two-state solution, powerful Palestinian factions, most notably Hamas, remain openly committed to violence and the destruction of Israel. The 2012 launching of rockets and missiles from Gaza at Israeli homes and schools set back the cause of a Palestinian state, and innocent Palestinians ended up suffering from the response as rockets were launched from the midst of densely populated civilian areas in Gaza. We hear endlessly within our church about the need to “end the occupation.” However, if Israelis believe the West Bank could become another launching pad for rocket attacks in the manner Gaza has, they
will, understandably, not end their military presence in the West Bank. Until the rocket attacks and other violence end permanently, and Palestinians as a people come together and abandon the idea of destroying Israel, there can be no free and independent Palestinian state.

The path to a two-state peace may be long and rough, but as long as there are ordinary Israelis and Palestinians of good will who yearn for peace, and there are many, their hopes and aspirations must not be abandoned. Hamas and other violent factions are barriers to peace. It should not be forgotten, however, that over the last several years the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank has made important progress in discouraging violence, establishing the rule of law, and improving the lives of ordinary Palestinians. There have been no rockets launched at Israel from the West Bank, and 95 percent of West Bank Palestinians are subject to Palestinian police and security, not Israeli.

A statement we often hear is that “the window for peace is about to close” and “urgent action is needed.” The truth is that there are no fast solutions to these kinds of protracted challenges. Negotiations between Palestinian and Israeli leaders are “frozen” because neither side yet has a powerful enough consensus from their people to negotiate a final and definitive peace agreement. Such a consensus is built one person at a time.

Our role, as a church, should be to support grassroots dialogue and bridge-building toward that end, especially with young Palestinians and Israelis, and support positive economic cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli enterprises. When such social and economic efforts are successful, both Palestinian and Israeli leaders are more empowered to take the risks necessary to achieve sustainable peace.

**Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Efforts That Target Israel Are Fundamentally Unjust, Do Not Advance Peace, and Should Not Be Supported**

The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) effort is a coordinated international movement targeting Israel. Most of the world sees the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the conflict it is. Many BDS advocates try to frame the problem as one that is caused by the “occupation,” with one party (Israel) oppressing another (the Palestinians). Many BDS advocates refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of Israeli security concerns. To the Palestinian leaders of the BDS movement, all of Israel is considered “occupied Palestinian territory.” By their own statements, the prospect of a two-state solution that recognizes Israel’s right to peace and security along with the Palestinian right to freedom and self-determination is not what they really want. For them, only a “one-state” of Palestine will satisfy their long-range goals. Long-standing PC(USA) policy supports a two-state solution, making support of the international BDS movement incompatible and counterproductive.

When BDS activists claim that they only want Israel to end the occupation of the disputed territories, many are disguising their long-range objectives. When Israel voluntarily ended the occupation of Southern Lebanon, Hezbollah took over and now has more than 50,000 rockets aimed at Israeli cities. Hezbollah openly calls for the complete destruction of Israel. Israel unilaterally ended the occupation of the Gaza Strip. Hamas now controls Gaza, and openly calls for the annihilation of Israel. If Israel were to unilaterally pull out of the West Bank area before a negotiated settlement is achieved as the result of political and economic pressure from the international BDS movement, it is likely that armed groups like Hamas would take over the West Bank just as they took over Gaza and put millions of innocent lives at risk.

In recent years the BDS movement, in a coordinated effort, solicited all four of the mainline Christian denominations to join the BDS movements’ efforts to divest from specific U.S. companies that do business with Israel. These efforts were rejected by all four denominations.

The Lutherans refused to join the BDS effort, explicitly stating at their churchwide assembly that they would not go down the divestment path. The presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church has come out against divestment and in favor of positive investment. The United Methodist Church’s pension board concluded that the three companies targeted for divestment by the BDS movement (Hewlett Packard, Caterpillar, and Motorola Solutions) have positive human rights records and codes of conduct and that divesting from them would render the church unable to raise any concerns that might arise in the future. The Methodist’s general conference agreed, overwhelmingly rejecting divestment by a two-to-one margin. The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) rejected divestment, as did three consecutive General Assemblies before it who refused to approve BDS overtures sent to them. The most recent head of the National Council of Churches also opposed BDS.

**Fair and Consistent Treatment of Foreign Aid Recipients**

Fair, consistent, and unbiased treatment implies that the human rights record of Israel should be judged alongside the human rights records of the Palestinian group Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian Authority (PA), which governs the West Bank. (The United States provides direct aid to the PA, and indirect aid to Hamas-governed Gaza through the U.N.).

In 2012 the widely respected organization Human Rights Watch issued a comprehensive report on the extent of human rights violations by Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The report documented a pervasive practice of beatings, torture, and executions by firing squad without fair trial. The Charter of Hamas calls for the destruction of Israel and claims that Muslims have a religious obligation to kill Jews. Hamas openly describes the intentional killing of Israeli civilians as a legitimate tactic of
“resistance.” Since Israel unilaterally ended the occupation of Gaza in 2005, thousands of rockets have been launched from Gaza at Israeli homes and schools.

In the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority has made important strides establishing the rule of law, discouraging violence, and advancing the welfare of ordinary Palestinians. Nonetheless, Palestinians have been arrested for nothing more than criticizing PA leadership. In 2012, a Palestinian man in the West Bank, Muhammad Abu Shahala, was sentenced to death for selling land to a Jew, a capital crime under Palestinian Authority laws, which was a clear violation of human rights.

Human rights must be a priority. A peaceful and secure Middle East is an equally important priority. Decisions balancing these essential priorities must be made thoughtfully and carefully, and, unfortunately, are not simple and easy. The faith community can play an important and constructive role, but only if all people of good will work together.

A Model for Peacemaking

Many thought that the violent confrontation between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland would never end peacefully. It did—with the help of the PC(USA). Rather than picking a side, PC(USA) peacemakers sent to Northern Ireland became trusted intermediaries able to work with both sides of the battle. Our peacemakers were quick to condemn injustice perpetrated by either side and equally quick to affirm the aspirations for peace that existed in the hearts of people on both sides.

This model for peacemaking not only is effective, it is consistent with biblical commands that we work for justice. This overture moves the PC(USA) in the direction of the Northern Ireland model and away from a model that is transparently partisan for one side in the Israel-Palestine tragedy.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) of the PC(USA) (GA) reaffirmed and reinforced the decades-long Presbyterian commitment to peacemaking in the Middle East. Despite an intense and well-funded lobbying campaign by BDS advocates from both within and outside the PC(USA), the GA rejected a recurring proposal to divest from three companies doing business with Israel: Caterpillar Tractor, Hewlett Packard, and Motorola Solutions. Sadly, BDS advocates within our denomination, affiliated with the global Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement, seem unwilling to accept the fact that our church has time after time chosen a different path toward advancing peace.

Instead of divestment, the 220th General Assembly (2012) called for positive investment in peace. General Assembly commissioners wisely chose to stay the course embraced by the PC(USA) consistently for decades: to engage in dialogue and cooperation with all people of good will, to act as peacemakers and not parties to the conflict, and to invest in peaceful endeavors of both an economic and social character. This coincided with recent actions by the Lutherans, Methodists, and Episcopalians all soundly rejecting divestment and embracing positive investment for peace.

In 2010, close to 35,000 West Bank Palestinians were employed by Israeli companies with operations in the West Bank, supporting more than 200,000 Palestinians financially (Ha’aretz December 2010). In a landmark agreement, the Histadrut (Israeli Trade Union Council) and the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) signed an agreement in August 2008 to base future relations on negotiation, dialogue, and joint initiatives to advance “fraternity and co-existence” (Israeli and Palestinian trade unions cooperate). An example of this cooperation was evident in October 2007 when the Histadrut successfully petitioned Israel’s High Court of Justice for Israeli labour law to be applied in the occupied territories, something that was previously denied. Nine judges ruled that Palestinians working for Israeli employers in West Bank settlements should be given the same work benefits provided by Israeli law. The ruling set an important precedent that benefits thousands of Palestinians working for Israelis and Israeli companies throughout the West Bank. Palestinians who work for Israeli companies earn twice as much on average as those who work in areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority. For many, the difference in wages is even higher (Your Middle East, 2012).

SodaStream is an example of an Israeli company targeted by the BDS movement. Sodastream has operations in the Maaleh Adumim settlement block adjacent to Jerusalem, which is widely expected by both Palestinians and Israelis to be part of Israel proper once final borders (with fair and sensible land swaps) between Israel and Palestine are established. Sodastream’s settlement operations are an example of successful coexistence with its 160 West Bank employees and Israeli Jews, Christians, Russians, Ethiopians, and Bedouin. The company celebrates the holidays of all and fosters cultural exchange. When BDS activists pressured a Swiss company to sever ties with SodaStream, the company reestablished its business ties after doing its own investigation of SodaStream policies.

According to a study conducted by Israeli researcher Issa Smeirat as part of his M.A degree, more than 16,000 Palestinians from the West Bank have established businesses and firms inside Israel and its settlements. This includes establishing several factories and companies, many of which have numerous branches (Ha’aretz, Nov. 22, 2011).

A good case in point is the Atarot industrial zone adjacent to Jerusalem. Before 2001, more than 200 companies were located in the zone. About forty of them were Arab-owned, and two-thirds of the 4,000 employees were East Jerusalem or Palestinian Arabs. Today, even the Palestinian Authority does not describe the Atarot industrial park as an “illegal settlement” because Palestinians have more than $500 million of investments in the area, including the print headquarters for the Palesti-
Economic development and Palestinian-Israeli cooperation in the West Bank is an essential foundation for peace. Efforts are already underway at the grassroots level and can be furthered by political leaders engaged in ongoing dialogue. This past May, 300 Palestinian and Israeli business leaders met at the World Economic Forum meeting in Jordan and formed a new initiative called *Breaking the Impasse* (BTI). The goals of BTI are twofold: to press Palestinian and Israeli political leaders to move forward on the two-state solution, two states for two peoples, and to advance commerce that will benefit both parties and bolster the peace process.

The Israeli-Palestinian Chamber of Commerce is focused on the same objective of economic growth and cooperation. In 2012, two-way trade between Israel and Palestinian-governed areas totaled $4.3 billion. While the majority of this trade was the purchase of Israeli products by Palestinians, $816 million was spent by Israelis on Palestinian-produced goods and products. Palestinian sales to Israel were up 18 percent from the prior year and moving in the right direction. In addition to the economic benefit, this commerce creates more opportunity for Israelis and Palestinians to simply know each other and relate on a person-to-person basis.

Israel can speed economic development in the West Bank by providing increased freedom of movement and permitting development of needed infrastructure. Many security checkpoints have been closed as violence in the West Bank has subsided, but more can still be done. Better roads in Israeli-administered areas of the West Bank are needed to efficiently link Palestinian population centers. An example of this the new Palestinian city of Rawabi, currently under construction, which needs a good road connecting to Ramallah that must pass through Israeli administered territory. Israeli approval for this road has yet to be finalized, and should be a high priority topic in the peace negotiations.

**Concurrence to Item 04-04 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara (with Additional Rationale)**

This overture calls on Presbyterians to act as peacemakers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a conflict that has gone on too long, must end, and will end when people of good will in Israel and Palestine prevail. The overture recognizes the necessity of foundation building for peace through grassroots collaboration, person-to-person contact, mutual respect, and cooperation. It calls on Presbyterians to be active and constructive participants in these efforts, as growing numbers of ordinary Israelis and Palestinians demand the peaceful future they deserve.

The overture also calls on the General Assembly to make clear that the PC(USA) is not a part of the international Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement. Proposals seeking divestment from companies doing business with Israel have been rejected at the last four consecutive General Assemblies in 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012, yet they keep coming back as if none of these previous considerations, and subsequent rejections, had happened. Official committees of the PC(USA), like the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), have failed to recognize the spirit and intent of prior General Assembly actions and have continued to promote the very kind of negative approach to peacemaking that prior General Assemblies have rejected. This is wrong and must end.

We all want to see an end to the conflict and the occupation, but here a moment of truth is called for: the occupation will not and cannot end until the Palestinian people and their leaders choose a viable, democratic, Palestinian state, committed to living peacefully alongside the Jewish state of Israel. This is the hope of all of us, but this point has not yet been reached.

We wish to thank in advance all of those commissioners, advisory delegates, and staff coming to the PC(USA)’s 221st General Assembly (2014) with a biblical commitment to a more just and peaceful world.

**ACSWP Advice and Counsel on Item 04-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises disapproval of this overture for the following reasons:

1. This overture is essentially the opposite of prophetic challenge and would restrict the witness of the church and the hopes of the Palestinian people. Next to its innocence about power and sin, it is the voices of Palestinian Christians that are most lacking in this overture. The overture echoes Israeli government attacks on the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. About 40 percent of Prime Minister Netanyahu’s annual speech this spring to AIPAC, the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, comprised attacks on BDS (http://mondoweiss.net/2014/03/netanyahu-denouncing-travelers.html). The large amounts of money and time spent by representatives and supporters of the Likud-led Israeli government attacking Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions, strongly suggests that they understand that their own policies of occupation are the source of their “de-legitimation.” The effectiveness of nonviolent economic pressure was also confirmed by Secretary of State John Kerry, who pointed to the growing worldwide strength of BDS in one of his efforts to keep the “peace process” going.
2. That this overture echoes so much of the Netanyahu government party line should give commissioners pause. Clearly most international supporters of nonviolent economic pressure on Israel to end the occupation understand that the Palestinians accepted the existence of Israel in 1988, one reason why the Oslo process could begin in the early 1990s. The overture follows the defenders of occupation in repeatedly insinuating that what supporters of divestment “really want” is a “one state,” and that “many are disguising their long-term objectives.” Well, some may regard a two-state solution impossible at this point due to settlements, and others may oppose Israel’s existence, but that has never been the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s position. Even Hamas, for example, demonized throughout the overture, effectively accepts Israel’s existence despite its rhetoric, which mirrors the language of Israeli extremist parties. Further, while any settlement must include justice for the Palestinian refugees, it is scare-mongering to suggest that fair compensation would involve their mass return to Israel within the Green Line of 1949/1967. Far from opposing the safety and freedom of Israel, efforts at nonviolent economic pressure are intended to prevent it from forever being defined as an occupier.

3. While the General Assembly supports what is referred to as the two-state solution, based on United Nations resolutions, the capacity of the U.S. government to “broker” peace—even while preventing a broader UN-backed process of negotiation—must be backed by fair nonviolent economic pressure if it is ever to be successful. By urging the abandonment of corporate social responsibility—an area the Presbyterian and other “mainline” Protestant churches pioneered—Item 4-04 would deny the church the use of its investments for mission and damage the church’s integrity. Basic to that integrity is putting our investments where our witness is. Being a peacemaker does not only mean calling for a peace process when there is no peace process. And frankly, caring about people under occupation carries a sense of urgency missing from this overture. It is not partisanship to seek justice by refusing to cooperate with oppression, and divestment and boycott are basic forms of noncooperation.

4. Effective peacemaking understands power and resistance and is not conflict-avoidance. There is a strong strand of Christian realism in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s peacemaking work, a realism that started the corporate responsibility process before other denominations. It is that realism that must judge this overture as naïve about the effective power of a nuclear-armed state that practices “asymmetric containment” over a powerless and divided population. Peacemaking requires justice which requires equalizing power. In Northern Ireland, the United States helped the Roman Catholic minority gain standing with Great Britain while also insisting on respect for human rights and voting for all. In Israel and Palestine, the United States has sided with the more powerful party and has echoed the Israeli government in condemning and blocking as “unilateral” efforts by Palestinians to get their rights respected through international law at the United Nations.

5. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy’s advice & counsel memorandum on Item 4-06, “Occupation-free” investment presents sources of data on the strangulation of the Palestinian economy, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Quartet (U.S., UN, European Union, and Russia). The arguments of this overture are very similar to those that supported the role of U.S. companies in South Africa during apartheid. The economists and bankers in those multilateral institutions are very clear that the Palestinian economy cannot grow within the thicket of restrictions around isolated sectors and deprived of both natural resources, including water, and developed resources, such as steady electricity and full “3G” radio frequencies. Commissioners interested in a hardheaded look at the economics of the occupation are encouraged to read those resources that look at the big picture of desperation that drives Palestinians to work at almost any task to support their families.

6. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy appreciates the statement that “For Israel, there is no military solution to the conflict.” Yet the overture prioritizes Israel’s security and underlines the flaws of Hamas and other “hostile” neighbors without noting the constant violence of the occupation. Past General Assemblies and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy are also concerned about Israel’s security, and wish it were less dependent on the constant exercise of military might. The methods of nonviolent witness recommended by MRTI do not endorse human rights violations by anyone. Where the overture itself is most deeply partisan, however, is in denying Palestinians, Muslim and Christian, a voice. Brave Christians, under constant pressure to maintain residency and unable to get permits to build, are being forced out of Jerusalem. Muslims and Christians are unable to worship freely and their properties are under constant threat of encroachment, and yet they ask for nonviolent economic pressure—just as did the South African black population. Despite its rhetoric, this overture asks the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to choose a side: the side of occupation. In the struggle for South Africa, and in the Central American struggles, as in the civil rights struggle here at home, the church stepped up. We think it is that time again.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 04-04.

The ACREC commends the general peacemaking stance of this overture but sees multiple places of misreadings and misrepresentations. The ACREC urges the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove this overture because it continues the enabling paradigm of occupation that has been in place for almost fifty years.
This overture is completely lacking the reality of the occupation. Nothing in the recommendations of this overture will eliminate the conditions of living under occupation. The ACREC sees no prescription for a way forward through elimination of injustice in this overture.

The false descriptions provided of the economic picture are not actually helpful in eliminating the restraints that are holding down the Palestinian economy. No Palestinian prefers to work under an occupied government and would prefer to work for a free Palestine, even if their standards of living might suffer for a time.

Further, the overture is missing any reference to the current racism that is rampant in Israeli society, as evidenced in recent data, linked below. ACREC sees no prescription for the elimination of racism in this overture, and believes that support of this form of misrepresentation of the realities in Israel/Palestine would be enabling the occupation to continue.

Data on discrimination in Israel:

The Abraham Fund: “Although Israel’s Arab citizens account for one-fifth of the country’s population, the economy of Israel is largely oriented toward its Jewish population. The Poverty Report (National Insurance Institute, 2006) indicates that over 54% of the country’s Arab citizens were living in poverty in 2006, compared to 14.7% of the country’s Jewish citizens. The widespread poverty among Arab families is attributed, for the most part, to the low employment rate of Arab citizens.”

The ACREC points to this data as foundational to attitudes that have developed in Israel and the OPT, which contribute to keeping the populations separate and unequal. According to a 2014 Israeli survey, “68% of Israelis believe the Arab population was subject to racism” (http://www.jpost.com/National-News/Survey-Who-suffers-from-racism-in-Israel-345603). (The figure is 79 percent for racism against Ethiopian migrant workers).

Reported in Israeli Newspaper, Ha’aretz, a 2012 survey provides an even bleaker picture, showing that “most of the Jewish public in Israel supports the establishment of an apartheid regime in Israel if it formally annexes the West Bank.” Some of the survey results:

- 59 percent of the Jewish respondents want preference of Jews over Arabs in admissions to jobs in government ministries
- 49 percent of Jews want the state to treat Jewish citizens better than Arab citizens, 42 percent don’t want to live in the same buildings as Arabs
- 42 percent don’t want their children in the same classes as Arab children
- 33 percent want to bar Arabs from voting for the Israeli parliament
- 69 percent would object to giving Palestinians in the West Bank the right to vote if the West Bank was annexed by Israel
- 74 percent is in favor of separate roads for Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank.

http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/survey-most-israeli-jews-wouldn-t-give-palestinians-vote-if-west-bank-was-annexed.premium-1.471644

The ACREC reminds the church that these Arabs who are, according to the survey, “subject to racism,” are indigenous people who deserve nothing less than equal rights, guaranteed by whatever government is in place.

In The Jewish Daily Forward, August 2013, Larry Derfner writes on racism in Israel:

The ADL [Anti-Defamation League] goes after anti-Semitism with a fist, it goes after Israeli racism with a sigh. As a matter of fact, the ADL and the entire American Jewish establishment should suspend their campaigns against anti-Semitism indefinitely and take a look at what’s going on in Israel.

http://forward.com/articles/182171/israels-everyday-racism-and-how-american-jews-tu/#ixzz2xdzNqUEV

The ACREC holds on to the belief that God created all people good. To deny some people (because of skin color or language) the privileges other have, is to deny God’s good creation. To allow this system—in which some receive advantages simply because of perceived “race”—to go unchecked is to deny that God made all people in God’s own good image.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-04.

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9 http://www.abrahamfund.org/en
Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-04

Comment on Item 04-04—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has worked in close collaboration with ecumenical partners throughout the Middle East for nearly two centuries, listening attentively to their expression of their witness, lives, hopes, and needs. This overture in its rationale and recommendations is at sharp variance with the lived experience of our ecumenical partners in Israel-Palestine. Whether they are Palestinian citizens of Israel suffering from discrimination in almost every aspect of their lives or Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza enduring a multi-decade military occupation and economic colonization, their reality reflects an enormous imbalance of power.

Strategies and programs seeking a just peace based on a two-state solution that fail to acknowledge and account for this reality on the ground will be ineffective if not counterproductive.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency has worked and is working to promote General Assembly policy affirming universal human rights and international humanitarian law applying the same ethical standards and moral principles to all nations. This involves public policy advocacy in international arenas such as the United Nations and domestically with the U.S. government, economic development and humanitarian relief, and engagement with transnational corporations to conform their practices with respect for human rights, international law, and economic and social justice.

Item 04-05

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-05. See pp. 60, 61.]

On Calling for a Boycott of All Hewlett-Packard Products—From the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

The Presbytery of New Brunswick overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. Call for the boycott of all products manufactured and sold by Hewlett-Packard until the company ceases to profit from all non-peaceful pursuits in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the violation of Palestinian human rights.

2. Direct the Stated Clerk to

   a. communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and strongly encourage these groups and organizations to endorse this boycott, calling upon all Presbyterians to be led by their conscience in the face of human rights violations, ongoing oppression, and injustice;

   b. inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, encouraging them to do the same.

Rationale

THE HISTORY OF HEWLETT-PACKARD (HP)

Hewlett-Packard (HP) began in 1938 as the creation of good friends, Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard. In that year they invented their first product: Oscillators for Walt Disney (model 200B). By 1942 the company became a health insurance pioneer. After entering the microwave field in 1943, HP incorporated in 1947, went public in 1957, and global in 1959. During this time the company developed Fast Frequency Counters and the first Oscilloscopes. In 1962 it made the Fortune 500 list and would reach the top of that list in 1984. In the 1970s, HP took the lead in laser technology and became a leader in business computing. In the 1980s, the company introduced the Touchscreen Personal Computer, the LaserJet printer, and the DeskJet printer. By 1993, ten million LaserJet printers had been sold throughout the world and the company introduced the Omnibook 300 laptop computer. The very first commercial all-in-one device went to market in 1994. By 2005 HP was called “the most trusted” industry leader. From 2005–2011, Hewlett Packard acquired these companies: Mercury Interactive Corporation, EDS, Palm Inc. and ArcSight (http://www8.hp.com/us/en/hp-information/about-hp/history/history.html).

ON THE ONE HAND—HP’S POLICY STATEMENTS

HP Global Citizenship Statement

“At HP, we embrace our role as a global citizen. As one of the world’s largest information technologies companies, what we do and how we do it matters. That’s why we use global citizenship to help shape and advance our business strategy… We

HP Statement on Corporate Ethics

“We use our size and influence to promote respect for human rights in all our business dealings. We do this by working with organizations such as the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI) and BSR, which promote awareness of the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights” (http://www8.hp.com/us/en/hp-information/global-citizenship/governance/ethics.html and see also those guiding principles as set forth in the document found at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf).

ON THE OTHER HAND—FACTS ON THE GROUND

HP Business Practices in Regard to Palestine

“The company sells hardware to the Israeli Navy, and as a contractor manages all Information Technology (IT) including its operational communications, logistics, and planning including the ongoing naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. This blockade has included interdicting humanitarian supplies by attacking or turning back international vessels carrying the supplies, and attacks on Palestinian fishermen.

The company also is involved through its ownership of Electronic Data Systems (EDS) in providing electronic biometric identification scanning equipment to monitor only Palestinians at several checkpoints inside the West Bank, including as part of the separate road system, restricting Palestinian movement. At these checkpoints, the 2.4 million West Bank Palestinians are required to submit to lengthy waits as well as the mandatory biometric scanning, while Israelis and other passport holders transit without scanning or comparable delays.

Hewlett-Packard also has extensive involvement with the Israeli army. Soldiers in the IDF are issued a Tadiran Communications ruggedized personal digital assistant (RPDA) based on the Hewlett-Packard IPAQ (handhelds and smart phones) as part of the Israel’s Anog soldier modernization program. This equipment is used to enforce the occupation. In July 2009, Hewlett-Packard won a contract for the installation of software products in a three-year IDF virtualization tender worth an estimated $15 million, with a two-year option to extend.

Hewlett-Packard also has business relationships with the illegal settlements in the West Bank. A subsidiary, HP Invent, outsources Information Technology services to Matrix and to its subsidiary Talpiot, which has its main outsourcing center in the illegal West Bank settlement of Modi’in Illit. By using Talpiot’s services, clients of the company are profiting from the company’s relationship with an illegal settlement and are helping solidify the occupation.

In addition, Hewlett-Packard worked with the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel in the occupied West Bank to develop specialized solutions for government data storage, and used this project in marketing publicity. Despite the fact that Ariel is deep in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the company’s published description of this work claims that Ariel is within Israel, including the use of a map-making no reference to the Palestine as a separate occupied territory."

This information comes from the report of the PC(USA) Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) to the 220th General Assembly (Pittsburgh, 2012) and can be found at: http://www.pc-biz.org/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=4021.

For a map showing location of Ari’el, see Attachment 1 (030 attachment-1-map.pdf), p. 313, electronic copy.

PRESENT GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLICY ON BOYCOTT REGARDING PALESTINE

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the following action by a 457-180-3 vote:

1. Call upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.

2. Call for the boycott of all Israeli products coming from the occupied Palestinian Territories, including AHAVA Dead Sea Laboratories Beauty Products and all date products of Hadiklaim, the Israel Date Growers Co-operative Ltd., often marked by the brand names: King Solomon Dates and Jordan River (not Israeli products from Israel).

3. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC(USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to endorse this boycott until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk to inform our ecumenical partners of this action, both nationally and globally, and call upon them to join the boycott of these companies. (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 41; see also http://www.pc-biz.org/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3775)

In approving this boycott of all Israeli settlement goods, it was the intent of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to send a clear message that it will not tolerate the profiting of companies through military occupation, ethnic cleansing, the illegal appropriation of land and natural resources, and policies promoting displacement and disenfranchisement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Along with the United Methodist Church, which took the same action in 2012, Presbyterians have become leaders in
what has become an international interfaith boycott movement. Through its Israel Palestine Mission Network, for instance, the PC(USA) has been a significant player in the U.S. Campaign to End the Occupation Interfaith Coalition’s boycott of So- dastream, which is a product manufactured by an Israeli company in the illegal settlement of Ma’ale Adumim outside of Bethle- hem. This boycott effort is in full accordance with the actions of the 220th General Assembly (2012).

This is only part of the equation, however. At the same time that we are telling Israeli companies that they must not prof- it from the occupation of Palestine, we are still supporting American corporations that are doing the same through the sale and service of products in support of the occupation of Palestine by the Israeli government and military. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has longstanding policy and practice in which it does not invest in corporations that profit from non-peaceful pursuits, but also has a strong history of calling upon the consciences of individual Presbyterians to not purchase products from companies that through their business practices actively engage in the violation of human rights in our nation and the world. Through boycott, Presbyterians have been an important part of the successful fight against apartheid in South Africa, ending the sales of Nestles’ infant formula to impoverished mothers in developing nations that caused infant affliction and death, and ensuring the human rights of exploited farm workers in Immokalee, Florida, through the Taco Bell boycott, to name only a few.

The time for Presbyterians to stand up against a U.S. company that is seriously violating the rights of all Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is now upon us. As seen on its own website, HP takes pride in making statements about its global citizenry and corporate ethics in our nation and in the world. As a Church of Jesus Christ, seeking to be a moral agent in, and prophetic voice to a fallen creation, it is our great responsibility to call upon HP to make good on its own moral and ethical claims. Hewlett-Packard has been a great American company since 1938 and we can be proud of its innovation throughout the decades. Hardly any of us are able to do business, personal or otherwise, without exposure to and usage of HP products, which makes this particular boycott so challenging. We acknowledge that this is a hard decision to make because large numbers of us like their products and even have them in our homes, including the author of this overture. In that way, HP has been like a corporate friend to American businesses and households for a long time. It is now time, however, to tell our corporate friend that it is violating human rights in terrible ways and that we can no longer purchase its products until such time that it ceases to profit from this violation through an occupation that is causing and continuing the hardship, suffering and pain, and even death of innocent Palestinians.

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**Concurrence to Item 04-05 from the Presbyteries of Greater Atlanta and Palisades.**

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-05**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

This overture requests the Presbyterian Church to be a witness for the need for human rights for Palestinians and for an end to the Israeli occupation.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 04-05.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved a boycott of all products produced in Israeli settlements, naming several well-known consumer brands (such as Ahava cosmetics) and also noting that such products are often labeled, “made in Isra- el.” The European Union is increasingly requiring more accurate labeling, and an Israeli human rights group produces a thorough list of companies and products of the settlements. Hewlett-Packard certainly operates in and helps sustain Israeli settlements, even if its products are made and services provided in many different places. And most U.S. consumers are more likely to encounter Hewlett-Packard products than the products of Caterpillar Tractor and Motorola Solutions, the two other companies whose engagement in non-peaceful pursuits is detailed in the divestment recommendations of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

One question before commissioners is whether they should recommend the Hewlett-Packard boycott to encourage personal choices to purchase consistent with any shared decision of the General Assembly as a body to recommend divestment. Such a boycott would not only be consistent but have a different kind of impact on both the purchase-avoider and the company. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy speaks to the nature of boycott and selective purchasing in general below.

A second question has to do with the focus on Hewlett-Packard rather than the other two corporations recommended for divestment based on their strategic and instrumental role in the occupation of Palestine. It may be that commissioners would want to recommend broadening the number of firms to be boycotted, or to recommend study of broader boycott choices regarding the occupation. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy believes there is an element of urgency in any witness related to the situation in Palestine and supports the boycott of Hewlett-Packard products partly for that reason, but that sense of urgency regarding the fate of a two-state solution and other conditions could support adding Caterpillar and Motorola Solutions as well, given the thorough process already conducted with regard to both.

With regard to boycotts as a strategy of nonviolent economic pressure, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has approved boycott positions in the past, including two dealing with food products: the Nestle Boycott (concerning improperly marketed infant formula in countries lacking adequate clean water) and the Taco Bell Boycott (to increase farm worker wages). In the
case of Nestle, boycott was chosen partly because few U.S. investors held securities in the Swiss-based firm and partly because its chocolate products were well-known. (Other infant formula companies were subject to corporate engagement).

The Presbyterian church’s history of “selective patronage” and consumer boycotts is presented more fully in the booklet commended for study by the General Assembly Mission Council in 1979: “Boycotts: Policy and Criteria” (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/boycotts-policy-analysis-and-criteria/). That study notes that all “consumer spending reflects personal and group values,” and is thus broadly selective, while what it terms “selective patronage” is reflected in decisions not to patronize discriminatory businesses (such as in “Project Equality”) as well as alcohol, tobacco, and gambling enterprises.

The basic moral logic of not supporting or profiting from activities contrary to Christian values comes through in a General Assembly action in 1937: “We favor the adoption by the Congress of legislation … which forbids the shipments of Child Labor goods in interstate commerce, and which requires informative labels to be attached to Child Labor goods” (such labels would assist boycotting).

Because the assembly has already approved a broad boycott of settlement products, it would be clear that Hewlett-Packard and any other firms named were not being focused on in isolation from other enterprises taking advantage of the conditions of occupation. Purchasers would be encouraged to look carefully at all settlements and companies connected with them.

The 1979 study provides criteria for engaging in boycotts and some theological reflection on how the church takes moral stands. In terms of criteria, these include: consistency with church policy, lack of other alternative means of influence (such as shareholding and U.S. legislation), timeliness, effectiveness, impact on other aspects of our mission, and provision for review. The ACSWP finds that these criteria are generally met by the boycott of Hewlett-Packard, and believes that such non-violent economic pressure would be consistent with the call for economic solidarity from both Palestinian civil society and the broad ecumenical and evangelical groups of Palestinian Christians (in the Kairos Palestine document and the “Christ at the checkpoint” conferences). Commissioners may recognize the action called for in this overture as the addition of Hewlett-Packard to an existing and broadly supported boycott rather than a new campaign in itself.

In terms of effectiveness, the Israeli government has passed various measures to prevent or hamper the boycott of settlement products, such as “The Prevention of Harming the State of Israel by Boycott Law (5771-2011), which has been in an appeals process (http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/4DC9430BE04D596885257C2700565A0D#$qhash.PqQ71zK4.dpuf). Clearly such measures would infringe on free-speech rights, but one approach is to attempt to provide standing for affected corporations to sue boycott practitioners.

With regard to the legitimacy of economic pressure overall, both the Gaza blockade by Israel and its restrictions on East Jerusalem and the West Bank constitute boycott and sanctions against Palestinian goods and services. This economic “hard-ball” may make official Israeli criticisms of the boycott, divestment, and sanctions efforts appear hypocritical.

In fact, all words-only efforts have not deterred the Israeli government from expanding settlements, including the purported “legalization” of three once “illegal” settlements in late April. Thus the boycott strategy remains an effective and very participatory way to support greater justice for the Palestinians, and seems to be regarded by the Israeli government and its supporters as a danger to their control. Even when companies do not lose major market share, they are concerned about damage to their reputation and its influence on retailers who carry their products. The principle behind boycott would continue to hold: purchasing Hewlett-Packard products contributes to that company’s support of a military occupation that deprives Palestinians of their land and freedom. Thus not purchasing those products is a form of practical integrity that applies moral standards to market relationships. Overall, in relation to all efforts of advocacy by the church, it is important not to confuse the church’s calling to be a truthful place with efforts to make it a neutral place, and that extends to purchasing as well as investment.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-05—from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-05.

The ACREC agrees with this overture that it is time for Presbyterians to act where possible to help end the almost fifty-year occupation of Palestinian lands. The ACREC agrees fully with the rationale of the overture, particularly, that we have a long and proud history of successful boycotts and that boycotts are a tried and true nonviolent tool for change. Boycotts are a personal way of making a difference in which every consumer can participate.

Hewlett-Packard (HP) profits from the dehumanizing checkpoints that ravage the daily lives of Palestinians through racially-profiled bio-scanning of handprints. Only Palestinians are subject to this daily humiliation; tourists and Israelis are allowed through with no delay. The daily humiliation of standing in line for hours at checkpoints, which has been called “the cattle cage” by poet Susan Abulhawa, should be considered beyond the pale for all people of conscience. HP profits from this kind of inhumane racial profiling.
To see what happens daily in “the cattle cage,” ACREC commends to you this four-minute video that is poet Susan Abulhawa reading her poem Wala, which is set at a checkpoint line that ends at an HP hand scanner: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUIqhxMdfIE.

The ACREC prayerfully urges the 221st General Assembly (2014) to stop personally supporting the company who makes these bio-metric checkpoints possible and profitable.

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ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-05.

Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.

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PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-05

Comment on Item 04-05—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has historically supported boycotts as a nonviolent economic strategy to counter unjust practices and/or promote social change.

These efforts have included boycotting table grapes and fast-food companies on behalf of farm workers, Nestle for selling infant formula in the developing world, and J.P. Stevens sheets and towels to support textile workers.

Most recently, the 220th General Assembly (2012) endorsed the consumer boycott of all Israeli products coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mrti/boycott/.

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Item 04-06

[The assembly approved Item 04-06 with amendment. See pp. 13, 61–62.]

On Affirming Occupation-Free Investment in Palestine—From the Presbytery of Mackinac.

Believing that Christians and Muslims, as well as Jews of Palestine and Israel, deserve the freedom for full human development, and honoring the request of Palestinian mission partners for foreign investment and aid that does not strengthen the occupation or contribute to the denial of rights, the Presbytery of Mackinac overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Affirm the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its constituent bodies to engage in investments in the West Bank in ways that support the rights under international law of the Palestinian people and contribute to their welfare. We affirm our intention to undertake such investments in ways that do not contribute to the continuation of Israel’s occupation, annexation, or blockade of those areas, with specific attention to the illegal Israeli buildings, settlements, and barriers built on Palestinian land in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

2. Commend to the church the work of the Presbyterian Foundation, in cooperation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), identifying principles, approaches, and specific ways in which denominational agencies and entities, presbyteries, congregations, and individual members can engage in such occupation-free investments. We affirm the actions of those who have chosen to make new investments consistent with these approaches.

3. [Affirm and commend to all the work of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF) in establishing an Occupation-Free Fund, so that individuals, congregations, presbyteries, and other entities can make gifts to PPF that will be invested in enterprises that do not benefit financially from the work of occupation, including the expansion of settlements.] The General Assembly further commends other investment vehicles that prohibit investments in corporations that profit from and normalize the economic disadvantaging and dispossession of Christian and Muslim Palestinians denied full citizenship rights. [One example of such an approach is the Occupation Free Fund of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF), which excludes any investment in enterprises that benefit financially from the operations of the occupation, including the expansion of settlements. Investment entities are encouraged to use the terms, “occupation-free,” “transformational,” or “Palestinian ‘development investment,’” to indicate the care taken for investment placements to benefit Palestinians directly, and congregations, presbyteries, and individuals are encouraged to consider such investment.]

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Because these matters cannot be fairly dealt with by simple slogans like invest, don’t divest, we look to our biblical core and the painstaking work of previous General Assemblies. We also seek to be guided by the witness of Palestinian Christians who struggle to endure economically while also calling for all forms of nonviolent pressure to end the occupation.

**Foundations: Biblical Bases**

The prophet Isaiah (Isa. 65:17–25) clearly expresses a vision of the Glorious New Creation that God envisions for the world, a vision that stretches throughout the scriptures and challenges us to participate in bringing that new creation to fruition. In that new vision, God will establish Jerusalem as a joy, where:

- They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
- They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat. (Isa. 65:21–22)

In the Gospel according to Luke (Lk. 10:29–37), a lawyer asks Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus defines the neighbor by telling the story of the Good Samaritan. Jesus is commending acts of mercy when there are those who are oppressed. In the face of Israel’s continuing occupation with its oppression, occupation-free investment is one way we can participate in the mercy that Jesus commends.

In his second letter to the church in Corinth (2 Cor. 8:3–15), the Apostle Paul offers a model of the global church investing in and supporting the needs of the Christian community in Palestine. Paul lifts up the model of the Macedonians, a poor community abundant in generosity, and frames the investing in Christians in the Holy Land as a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance (v. 13).

**Foundations: Past Presbyterian Actions, and the Way Forward**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has repeatedly affirmed that the occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the expansion of settlements in those areas, and the continuing blockade of Gaza by Israel are morally and theologically wrong and are a hindrance to a just peace. Past General Assemblies have pointed to the denial of citizenship rights and self-determination and, listening to the voices of Palestinians themselves, have affirmed the role of nonviolent economic pressure, given the failure of moral suasion to slow the steady expansion of control of Palestinian land and resources. The 216th General Assembly (2004) initiated a process of corporate engagement (Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 66). This has led to continuing study and engagement with companies represented in our portfolio as to the extent to which their products and services enable the occupation.

In 2008, re-affirming the church’s commitment to invest only in companies engaged in peaceful pursuits, the assembly also affirmed the Amman Call (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 1137), which affirmed economic pressure (as proved effective for South Africa). In 2012, the assembly approved a boycott of products of Israeli settlements (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 41, 1366) but narrowly defeated a motion to divest of securities in companies profiting from the occupation (Ibid, pp. 42–43, 1400). The assembly also passed a motion, later ruled out of order, that requested the Board of Pensions to develop a separate fund for ministers who did not want their pensions profiting from the occupation.

The extensive 2010 policy statement on the Middle East, *Breaking Down the Walls* (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 1021ff), recognized the desperate need for economic development for Palestinians, whose economy is systematically weakened by restrictions on human freedom to travel and access to electricity, water, up-to-date technology, communications, etc. In fact, the Palestinian economy is sustained by foreign aid, while the biggest assistance possible would simply be lifting the restrictions and preventing the Israeli government or settlers from taking Palestinian land and water, which clearly discourages investment. Among that report’s recommendations, the assembly “calls on denominational agencies and entities, presbyteries, congregations and individual members to invest positively, after due vetting, in sustainable economic development projects for the West Bank and Gaza (that do not support the occupation) sponsored by Palestinians or jointly by Palestinians and Israelis in equitable partnership” (Ibid, p. 1023, Recommendation 3.d.). The Presbyterian Foundation has been seeking to implement this recommendation since before the action of the 2012 assembly.

As this is written, the latest peace process seems stalled, partly due to Israel’s continuing settlement programs. Today, the prospects for a viable two-state solution are questionable. Recognizing the continuing pressure on Palestinians to leave their ancestral lands, this overture affirms a both/and approach, including both investing in Palestine, done in ways that do not support or validate the ongoing occupation of Palestinian lands, and also denominationally approved actions of boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS).
Focusing on the investment side of that dual approach, this overture affirms and commends to the church the work of the Presbyterian Foundation, which provides details of how the denomination will undertake such investments, including criteria and specific investment opportunities appropriate for our denomination. It also commends to the church the Occupation Free Fund put in place by the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship and encourages others to engage in similar investments. As Jesus commended the work of the good Samaritan who came to the assistance of someone in need, and as Paul commended the Macedonians for coming to the aid of needy Christians in the Holy Land, so are we called on to provide support for the Palestinians as they seek to maintain their rightful place in a land where they have lived for many generations.

**Concurrence to Item 04-06 from the Synod of the Covenant and the Presbyteries of Palisades and San Gabriel.**

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-06**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 04-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 04-06 with amendment to Recommendation 3 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

"3. [Affirm and commend to all the work of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF) in establishing an Occupation Free Fund, so that individuals, congregations, presbyteries, and other entities can make gifts to PPF that will be invested in enterprises that do not benefit financially from the work of occupation, including the expansion of settlements.] The General Assembly further commends other investment vehicles that prohibit investments in corporations that profit from and normalize the economic disadvantage and dispossession of Christian and Muslim Palestinians denied full citizenship rights. [One example of such an approach is the Occupation Free Fund of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF), which excludes any investment in enterprises that benefit financially from the operations of the occupation, including the expansion of settlements. Investment entities are encouraged to use the terms, ‘occupation-free,’ ‘transformational,’ or Palestinian ‘development investment,’ to indicate the care taken for investment placements to benefit Palestinians directly, and congregations, presbyteries, and individuals are encouraged to consider such investment.]"

That the Palestinian economy is dominated by the restrictions of Israeli military occupation is too little understood by most U.S. citizens. Lack of freedom of movement, lack of access to water, intermittent electricity, punishing waits at checkpoints, and, for Israeli Arab citizens, many discriminatory laws, many based on exclusion from service in the Israeli military. Lack of military service, in fact, may be one of the chief reasons Palestinians are rarely found above the bottom rungs in any corporations or government organizations.

The matter of investment is important, though it is disputed how much Palestine would suffer from lack of capital if the occupation were ended. Because of the lack of permits for construction in many areas, the separation of Palestinians from their agricultural land by the separation fence or Wall, and the free rein given settlers to take land and water resources, economic growth is deliberately stunted. The importation of workers from Thailand and other non-Middle Eastern countries is also designed to eliminate the need for Palestinian labor and to emphasize the acquisition and use of land without Palestinians on it. It is for these structural reasons that simply calling investment in Palestine, “positive,” is a form of propaganda, designed to make efforts of nonviolent economic solidarity seem “negative,” and to imply that Palestine has a normal economy.

The endowment fund of the Peace Fellowship is one of a number of funds using investment screens that exclude companies based in settlements or otherwise benefiting directly from the occupation. Clearly many other US based transnational corporations carry on business in Israel and trade with businesses in the occupied territories.

The overture is correct in its policy citations and in noting that Palestine’s economy is highly dependent on foreign aid, primarily from Europe, with approximately $500 million from the United States, to which many strings are attached. (This is between one sixth and one ninth what Israel receives in U.S. aid, though the average Israeli has an income twenty times that of a Palestinian).

In addition to foreign aid to sustain the Palestinian Authority and some basic services, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have made efforts to improve the Palestinian economy, the Quartet (a monitoring group with representation from the U.S., European Union, the UN, and Russia) has proposed plans, and as part of the Kerry-led peace process a management consulting firm was hired to look at blockages to growth in eight sectors of the Palestinian economy. The results of their efforts are reported below. The point is to emphasize that until the occupation is ended or a different “matrix of control” allows Palestinians more freedom or even citizenship, the need for “occupation-free” investment will remain.

The World Bank’s basic study of the effects of restrictions of the Palestinian economy comes from 2008: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/AHLCSept15_08.pdf. A more recent report, looking particularly at the effects of Israeli control of all of “Area C,” the Jordan valley, was published in October of 2013:

To quote from a section summary (p. 23):

Core impediments on the expansion of private sector activity and investment remain, including on access to the West Bank’s — Area C, export restrictions, and import controls on private investment inputs in the WBG (West Bank and Gaza).

Political uncertainties: In addition to the above factors, the stalemate in the peace process and an increasingly uncertain domestic and regional political environment are bound to further inhibit private sector confidence and investment. The absence of concrete indications that restrictions will be lifted any time soon, or of a rise in donor aid that will address the PA’s fiscal difficulties, have also dimmed the economic growth outlook and prospects for a reduction in unemployment, thus raising the potential for social tensions.

The most recent March 2014 Quartet Economic Initiative proposal can be found here: http://blair.3cdn.net/a0302ab9e588825b29_1bm6yhjay.pdf

“The Economic Initiative looks to replace incremental change with transformative change. We have analysed eight sectors of the Palestinian economy and prepared detailed plans for implementation of such change. The eight key sectors include construction, building materials, agriculture, tourism, telecommunications and IT, power, water, and light manufacturing.”

The Wall Street Journal’s blog by Joshua Mitnick sums up some of the problems:

“If there’s one nagging reminder for Palestinian information technology professionals about the tenuous state of the Kerry economic initiative, it’s the persistent refusal by Israel to give Palestinian network providers access to 3G network frequencies despite a recommendation by the Quartet that such a move is necessary to boost the fledgling IT industry – which currently accounts for 6.1 percent of the Palestinian economy.” (http://blogs.wsj.com/middleeast/2014/03/03/benefits-of-palestinian-economic-initiative-slow-to-show/)

On 2 March 2014, Acting Head of Mission of the Office of the Quartet Representative, Mark Singleton, spoke to the Expotech conference in Jericho, organized by the Palestine Information Technology Association, admitting as much and referring to the IMF’s analysis:

In its September 2013 AHLC report, the IMF concluded that “the situation is not sustainable and implies risks to both macro-economic and social stability.” We are also well aware of the causes and constraints. The World Bank’s most recent AHLC report is very clear, stating that “the most significant impediment to economic viability in the Palestinian Territories is the multi-layered system of restrictions imposed by the Government of Israel. Restrictions on access and movement constrain investment, raise costs for doing business, and hinder economic cohesion. Despite some relaxation of certain measures, stronger measures are required, coupled with enhanced domestic reforms.” (http://www.quartetrep.org/quartet/news-entry/ict-Palestine-Information-Technology-Association/)

Without adding additional documentation from the United Nations and other sources, the economic dimensions of the State of Israel’s domination of the Palestinian territories involves the systematic exploitation of natural resources, toleration of high unemployment, and restriction of economic initiatives by Palestinians, punctuated by withholding of tax monies and arbitrary periods of intense security restriction. The intended result would appear to be not the development of the Palestinian economy, but the emigration of as many Palestinians as possible. Occupation-free investment is one small way to provide opportunity for Palestinians to remain on their land, without ignoring the pressures against them.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-06.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns supports this overture because we believe that it is important to support the economy of Palestine, even as the people struggle under occupation. All parts of Palestine’s economy are under Israeli government control, making all successful investments in Palestine subject to Israeli backing and approval.

Investing in an economy under a military occupation where people are subject to military, not civilian law, will not help end the infrastructure of occupation and the “matrix of control,” but is a temporary stop-gap measure to help ease living conditions under occupation. A just peace will be one that includes full and equal rights for all the people who live in Israel/Palestine, no matter their identity, ethnicity, or religion.

The ACREC thanks the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Presbyterian Foundation for their work in identifying some “bread on the table” opportunities where we can invest funds to help Palestinians living under occupation, while at the same time, we work to end support for the infrastructure that enables occupation.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-06.
FOUNDATION COMMENT ON ITEM 04-06

Comment on Item 04-06—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

The Presbyterian Foundation is grateful for this overture and its commendation of the Positive Investment Program. In partnership with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Foundation has developed several opportunities for investment in the West Bank that aim to promote peace through economic development and sustainable job creation. The investments are in education, microfinance, and renewable energy—all key drivers of the Palestinian economy.

To date, the Foundation has invested more than $1 million from the PC(USA)’s Creative Investment funds, in addition to more than $200,000 of funds from participating congregations. Additional churches have also expressed interest.

We recognize that positive investment is one tactic among many needed to resolve the longstanding conflicts in this troubled part of the world. Yet it is one that is having an immediate and positive impact, and we invite congregations, seminaries, and other PC(USA) institutions to join us in this work.

Item 04-07

[The assembly answered Item 04-07 by the action taken on Item 04-04. See pp. 60, 62.]

On Adopting the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Recommendation on Divestment—From the Synod of the Covenant.

The Synod of the Covenant overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:


2. Approve MRTI’s recommendation to add Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions to the General Assembly divestment list until such time as the companies change their corporate practices, and confine their operations in Israel, East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank solely to peaceful pursuits.

Rationale

Since 1971, the Presbyterian church has pursued a policy to use the church’s investments to promote the General Assembly’s mission goals, and to reflect the ethical dimensions of the church’s theology, social teachings, and moral values.

The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) was created in 1972 to implement this General Assembly policy.

For more than forty years, MRTI has followed an engagement with corporations in which investments are held to seek changes in corporate policies and practices to promote the pursuit of peace; respect for human rights; social, economic, and racial justice; securing the rights of women, and environmental responsibility.

The corporate engagement process includes correspondence, dialogues, proxy voting, the filing of shareholder resolutions, public appeals, and, as a last resort when all of this has failed, recommending divestment to the General Assembly.

From time-to-time, the General Assembly has directed MRTI to engage corporations regarding serious, and often controversial, issues such as apartheid in South Africa, forced labor in Burma, oil production in Sudan, health care and private insurance companies, operation of prisons by publically traded companies, operation of sweatshops, human trafficking, child sex exploitation, financial practices, and environmental issues such as toxics and climate change.

Previous General Assemblies since 2004 have directed MRTI to use its customary corporate engagement process, as defined in General Assembly policy in 1976, with corporations involved in non-peaceful pursuits in Israel, East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank. In the case of three companies—Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions—MRTI has concluded that years of corporate engagement have not changed their persistent involvement in non-peaceful pursuits, and that further corporate engagement is not likely to be successful. Therefore, regrettably MRTI has recommended to the 221st General Assembly (2014) that these three corporations be added to the General Assembly’s divestment list as they have decided to reject the General Assembly’s urging that they confine their business activities solely to peaceful pursuits.
The Synod of the Covenant believes that for nearly a decade MRTI has carried out its assignment faithfully with professional due diligence, has applied General Assembly policy consistently and fairly to the situation in Israel and Palestine, and that the recommendation from MRTI seeks to preserve the integrity of the church’s witness for a just peace.

Therefore, the Synod of the Covenant urges the 221st General Assembly (2014) to commend MRTI for its faithful implementation of the General Assembly’s directive, and to approve MRTI’s recommendation to add Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions to the General Assembly divestment list until such time as the companies change their corporate practices, and confine their operations in Israel, East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank solely to peaceful pursuits.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be answered by the response to Item 04-08 and directs commissioners to its Advice & Counsel memorandum attached to that item.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-07.

The ACREC acknowledges MRTI’s careful and methodical ten-year process and thanks them for their faithful service. The ACREC agrees with MRTI that

1. the church has exhausted all avenues to bring about changes in the policies and practices of Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions through corporate engagement;

2. as long as the denomination’s policy is that we should not profit from “non-peaceful pursuits,” and as long as these three U.S. companies identified by MRTI remain deeply involved in “non-peaceful pursuits,” then as a matter of integrity, the church should end our investment in these companies.

New information on Caterpillar, Inc. not in the MRTI report:

On April 1, 2014, The New York Times reported that Caterpillar used a Swiss subsidiary to reduce its taxes by $2.4 billion.10 This tax-avoidance scheme was developed by PricewaterhouseCoopers who was paid $55 million “for helping [CAT] transfer $8 billion of profits to the Swiss subsidiary from 1999 to 2012. The transfers had no economic substance and were made solely to take advantage of the lower tax rate Caterpillar negotiated with Switzerland, according to Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.” (The same article mentions HP also transferring profits offshore to avoid U.S. taxes).

During this time, CAT imposed a six-year wage freeze on its hourly workers, and awarded the current CEO massive pay increases.

• At Caterpillar, Pressing Labor While Business Booms—NY Times article, July 2012.11
• Caterpillar Chief’s Pay Jumps 60%—Wall Street Journal article, April 2012.12

In this light, ACREC believes CAT’s human rights record in Sudan and Israel/Palestine demonstrates its “Code of Corporate Conduct” is selective and only goes as far as the company prefers it to go and does not apply evenly across the board.

The ACREC believes that the same standards that have guided votes on MRTI recommendations over the last forty-two years of corporate engagement by the committee, should continue to guide the General Assembly on this vote, no matter who is committing the human rights violations, where, and against whom. To use different standards to judge the evidence is at best, discriminatory, and at worst, sets a bad precedent of exceptionalism that will diminish the effectiveness of MRTI’s future work.

12 http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304444604577338083842676136
13 http://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/mar13/032113.htm
The ACREC sees the following reasons for the General Assembly to approve the MRTI report and NOT to apply exceptions:

1. The MRTI report does not target Israel, but U.S. corporations who are profiting from a military occupation. Charging MRTI and the PC(USA) with holding Israel to different standards is a misrepresentation of the ten-year history and MRTI’s careful engagement with the three American corporations.

   - The PC(USA) will continue to hold shares in companies that do business in Israel, but are not profiting from non-peaceful pursuits, including McDonald’s, Procter & Gamble, Coca Cola, IBM, etc.

2. While it is true that some Jewish groups and organizations have said our corporate engagement process has “damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews,” not all Presbyterians and not all Jews agree with this statement. In fact, in some cases, the opposite is true. The call for not profiting from the occupation has strengthened relationships between some Presbyterians and some American and Israeli Jewish groups and individuals who oppose the occupation. This is evidenced by the support for MRTI from

   - The Israeli Committee Against House Demolition (ICAHD). 

   - The Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace. The rabbis of Jewish Voice for Peace maintain that the human rights violations of CAT, Inc., H-P and Motorola Solutions are not in accord with Jewish Values.  

The very claim that this has affected our relationships with all Jews in a blanket way commits the serious error of classifying an entire people into one monolithic category. General stereotyping can and often does lead to racism in situations where decisions are made by assuming all people of one race or ethnicity hold the same viewpoints.

Hewlett-Packard is involved in questionable human rights issues in China and Syria as well as in Israel/Palestine as cited in a shareholder resolution voted on at their 2014 Annual Meeting. Both H-P and Motorola Solutions have wholly-owned subsidiaries in Israel whose record of equal employment opportunity is deficient.

   - While more than 20 percent of the Israeli population is non-Jewish, the high-tech industry, obligated by law not to discriminate, employs between 0.5 to 5 percent non-Jewish Israelis. Neither company will disclose its employment record.

Video of CAT bulldozers destroying Palestinian homes—first 40 seconds of this trailer of 2013 film, “Where Should the Birds Fly?”

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-07.

Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.

Item 04-08


The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, upon recommendation from the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:


2. Direct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment to continue the corporate engagement process with corporations operating in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, together with ecumenical partners, as part of MRTI’s regular work plan, in accordance with the previously identified positions and priorities of the General Assembly, and report back on MRTI’s engagements, along with any recommendations, to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

14 http://icahdusa.org/an-open-letter-from-jeff-halper
15 http://www.rabbisletter.org/
16 http://whereshouldthebirdsfly.org/
3. Affirm the selection criteria developed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Inc., in collaboration with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), for investment in West Bank owned/sponsored initiatives or companies: economic development, sustainable job creation, peaceful pursuits, Palestinian investments must minimize or eliminate dependence on Israel or others, transparency of use and impact, and the possibility of direct engagement with the people and organizations involved in the investments.

4. Commend the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Inc., in collaboration with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, for its successful efforts to identify three investments in the Occupied Palestinian Territories that help in the development of a viable infrastructure for a future Palestinian state, and encourage greater engagement with Christians in the West Bank around issues of job creation and economic development.

5. Approve the following resolution:

“The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment has been seeking to engage companies profiting from non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine since the directive of the 216th General Assembly (2004) and the reaffirmations and actions of subsequent assemblies. This process of engagement has, in the case of three companies, produced no substantive change and, in the judgment of this assembly, is likely not to do so in the future. Under the church’s regular process of corporate engagement (approved by the 116th General Assembly [1976] of the PCUS and reaffirmed as policy after reunion), the final step is to recommend divestment from companies where engagement is not resulting in any change. Therefore, in accordance with the actions of prior assemblies, we direct that Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions be placed on the General Assembly Divestment List until such time as they have ceased profiting from non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine, as defined by prior General Assembly actions.”

Rationale

MRTI REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several General Assemblies since 2004 have given clear directives to the Committee on MRTI regarding corporations doing business in Israel and the Palestinian Territories (East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank). All corporations are urged to confine their business activities solely to peaceful pursuits. This means no involvement in roadblocks to a just peace as identified by the General Assembly. Investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)) should be only in corporations involved solely in peaceful pursuits. The MRTI corporate engagement process is the proper vehicle for determining whether a corporation is involved solely in peaceful pursuits.

Since 2004, MRTI developed a clear corporate engagement process consistent with General Assembly (GA) policy on divestment as an ethical investment strategy, and conducted research to identify corporations involved in the non-peaceful roadblocks to a just peace. Working with an interfaith coalition, MRTI engaged several corporations urging them to confine their business activity solely to peaceful pursuits; thus ending their complicity in and profiting from human rights violations.

After several years of corporate engagement by MRTI and its interfaith partners, utilizing all the tools available to investors (correspondence, dialogues, proxy voting, and filing shareholder resolutions), three corporations—Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions—remain entrenched in their involvement in non-peaceful pursuits, and regretfully show no inclination to change their behavior. In fact, if anything, these three corporations have deepened their non-peaceful involvement. As a result, MRTI regretfully informs the 221st General Assembly (2014) that Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions are not in compliance with GA policy, and recommends that these three corporations be added to the GA’s proscription/divestment list until such time as their corporate activities are confined solely to peaceful pursuits.

NARRATIVE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY DIRECTIVES SINCE 2004

A. General Assembly Initiated and Set the Context for the Divestment Process

The 216th General Assembly (2004) instructed the Committee on MRTI to begin a process of “phased, selective divestment” (Minutes, 2004, Part I, p. 66) related to corporations doing business in Israel. Following the assembly, MRTI initiated a process consistent with GA policy. First, MRTI reviewed the 1984 GA policy on the use of divestment as a strategy for socially responsible investing, and the criteria for consideration of any recommendation for divestment. Also reviewed was the 1985 GA policy describing the process of phased, selective divestment.

In November 2004, at its first meeting following the GA, MRTI identified GA policy positions on the obstacles to a just peace in Israel and Palestine. These included the ongoing violence perpetrated by Israelis and Palestinians against innocent people; the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and United Nations resolutions; the presence of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories; the construction of the separation barrier; and the need for a viable Palestinian economy to enhance the possibility of a successful Palestinian state. These GA policies were incorporated into criteria to focus the research into corporations that may be profiting from involvement in any of the obstacles to a just peace. MRTI also adopted a clear statement on the process of progressive engagement of any such companies that affirmed the cycle of dialogue, shareholder resolutions and proxy voting and more dialogue before MRTI
would be in any position to consider recommending possible divestment action to the GA. This was reported to the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) in 2005, and publicized widely through the PC(USA) web site.

B. General Assembly Called for Financial Investments to Be Only in Peaceful Pursuits

The 217th General Assembly (2006) responded to numerous overtures regarding corporate engagement on Israel-Palestine issues, and approved a statement urging that “… financial investments of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits, and affirm that the customary corporate engagement process of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment of our denomination is the proper vehicle for achieving this goal” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 944).

C. General Assembly Called Upon Corporations to Confine Business Solely to Peaceful Pursuits

The 218th General Assembly (2008) received a comprehensive report on MRTI work that included the committee’s belief that more engagement was the appropriate course of action at that time. The GA also called upon corporations doing business in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank “… to confine their business activity solely to peaceful pursuits, and refrain from allowing their products or services to support or facilitate violent acts by Israelis or Palestinians against innocent civilians, construction and maintenance of settlements or Israeli-only roads in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, and construction of the Separation Barrier as it extends beyond the 1967 “Green Line” into Palestinian territories” (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 1223).

D. General Assembly Urging of Pro-Active Efforts to Promote Human Rights and a Just Peace

All General Assemblies since 2004 have emphasized a commitment to a just peace based upon a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable, contiguous Palestinian state where both can exercise their right to self-determination and build societies that provide for the well-being of their citizens. All General Assemblies have supported strategies designed to make a positive and proactive contribution toward that goal. The PC(USA)’s witness has incorporated these positive and proactive strategies accordingly.

The investing agencies of the PC(USA) have been invested and will remain invested in many companies operating in Israel-Palestine that confine their business to peaceful pursuits that do not entangle them in roadblocks to a just peace.

In addition, from the beginning, MRTI has supported economic development of the Palestinian economy in the belief that a viable economy is essential to the success of a Palestinian state. As noted in the historical narrative, MRTI met with Mr. James Wolfensohn who was charged by the Quartet to promote economic cooperation and growth. His efforts were followed by the work of Mr. Tony Blair that included increased economic development funding from the United States and others. Unfortunately, the ultimate success of such efforts depended upon reaching a political agreement that would end the illegal Occupation of the Palestinian Territories that prevents a viable economy from developing. Several studies have pointed to this reality. Most recently, the World Bank concluded that the Occupation was costing the Palestinian economy more than $3 billion annually. Palestinian business leaders are clear that increased economic activity is no substitute for a political solution that ends the Occupation. Another PC(USA) effort supported by MRTI was the work of Donald Mead, development economist, to identify potential investments or activities that would contribute to a stronger Palestinian economy thus permitting more Palestinians to remain on their land. Three potential areas were identified including housing, tourism, and marketing of Palestinian crafts and products. As a result, Presbyterian sponsored tourism using Palestinian tour agencies, hotels, guides, etc. have increased, and sales by PalCraft Aid and olive oil marketing efforts have delivered increased income into Palestinian families. Most recently, the PC(USA) Foundation, Inc., in collaboration with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), has spearheaded an effort to identify proactive investment opportunities that contribute to Palestinian independence and do not normalize the Occupation. The initial investments involved microcredit lending, a solar power project, and a continuing education center.

Finally, through MRTI’s work of corporate engagement carried out with ecumenical partners, corporations have been encouraged to respect human rights and international humanitarian law and practice equal employment opportunity. This promotes the building blocks for a just peace.

What we have learned is that the roadblocks to a just peace in Israel-Palestine could not be sustained or be so effective without the complicity of private corporations and their involvement in the infrastructure of violence and occupation that violates human rights and degrades human dignity. Accordingly, the GA has stated that the church’s investments in companies doing business in Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank be in companies involved in only peaceful pursuits. For nearly a decade, the PC(USA), through its Committee on MRTI and other ecumenical partners, has worked diligently to engage several companies about their involvement and complicity in non-peaceful pursuits and human rights violations.

While this corporate engagement has taken place, the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories has deteriorated. The obstacles to a just peace identified in 2004 remain, and have become more intractable. The continued building of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, illegal under international law, has picked up renewed speed leading to the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) increasing 57 percent from 191,000 to 297,000 between 2000 to
2009 [Peace Now] while the Israeli population as a whole increased only 19 percent between 1999 to 2009 [Israel Central Bureau of Statistics]. The total number of Jewish settlers living on Palestinian land is nearly a million, including 191,960 in East Jerusalem [Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies]. With the illegal settlements comes the construction of Israeli only roads on Palestinian land, and continued construction of the Separation Barrier beyond the 1967 borders, known as the “Green Line.” This leads to a deterioration of Palestinian life as access to agricultural land in restricted, Palestinian land is confiscated, housing permits for Palestinians are denied while home demolitions increase, Palestinian movement on the West Bank is further limited through check points, barriers, and prohibition of using some roads. Increased settler violence against Palestinians grows as settlements expand, and Israeli military and police action increases. Access to water is restricted as allocations to the illegal settlements far outstrips allocations for Palestinians. For example, the water allocation to the illegal settlements in the Jordan Valley and the Northern Dead Sea regions (for less than 10,000 illegal settlers) is almost one-third of the quantity of water that is accessible to the 2.5 million Palestinians living in the West Bank [B’Tselem: May 2011]. All of the companies being engaged continue to profit from their involvement in the occupation and the violation of human rights in the region.

III. CHRONOLOGY OF MRTI’S CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT WITH CATERPILLAR, HEWLETT-PACKARD, AND MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS

A. The Corporate Engagement Process

MRTI conducted research to determine which corporations, if any, were involved in non-peaceful pursuits. In August 2005, MRTI reviewed the research to select from among the identified companies an initial group to engage. Corporate engagement is a deliberate process outlined in the basic policies of the GA on socially responsible investment, dating to 1971, 1976, and 1984. Elements of this process include research, correspondence, dialogue, proxy voting, and the possible filing of shareholder resolutions. Only after all other options fail to achieve the desired results, the Committee on MRTI, through the PMA Board, may recommend to the GA divestment from particular corporations.

The initial corporations were Caterpillar, Citigroup, ITT Industries, Motorola, and United Technologies. As the corporate engagement process unfolded, some corporations were removed from engagement (Citigroup and ITT Industries), and others were engaged (Hewlett-Packard and Microsoft). MRTI also maintained contact with various ecumenical partners that were committed to engaging companies on the issue of their involvement in Israel and Palestine. These included the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, and several Roman Catholic religious orders.

After years of effort, MRTI concluded that three corporations (Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions) have rejected all appeals to confine their business activities solely to peaceful pursuits. In fact, they have deepened their involvement in roadblocks to a just peace. MRTI concluded that further corporate engagement would be unlikely to bring about the positive change in their corporate behavior. A chronology of the corporate engagement with the three companies follows.

B. Caterpillar, Inc.

Caterpillar sells heavy equipment used by the Israeli government in military and police actions to demolish Palestinian homes and agricultural lands. It also sells heavy equipment used in the Occupied Palestinian Territories for the construction of illegal Israeli settlements, roads solely used by illegal Israeli settlers, and the construction of the Separation Barrier extending across the 1967 “Green Line” into the East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

MRTI’s first contact with the company regarding its involvement in the Occupation actually was in 2003 after a young American, Rachel Corrie, was killed by a D-9 bulldozer operated by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in Gaza. The Peace and Justice Committee of the Synod of the Trinity contacted MRTI requesting that a letter be sent to Caterpillar regarding the death.

Beginning in 2007, corporate engagement intensified. A shareholder resolution at Caterpillar was submitted in the fall of 2007 for consideration at the 2008 annual meeting. It requested the board of directors to review the company’s human rights policies and amend them where applicable. Caterpillar also received a resolution on foreign military sales from a coalition of shareholders including several Roman Catholic religious orders and Jewish Voice for Peace.

In addition, several religious shareholders sent a letter to the company requesting a meeting to discuss non-military sales of company products in Israel and Palestine. The company replied by letter on December 13, 2007. While not responding to the request for a meeting, the company said for the first time that “As an industry leader, Caterpillar advocates responsible use of our equipment. We expect our customers to use the products they purchase from us in environmentally responsible ways and consistent with human rights and requirements of international humanitarian law.”

The resolution submitted by the PC(USA) and the Dominican Sisters produced a dialogue on January 30, 2008. Caterpillar representatives reviewed their Worldwide Code of Business Conduct. Discussion focused on the human rights dimensions of the code, what it included or omitted, and who beyond the company’s employees it affected or not. Religious shareholders, including MRTI representatives, raised the need to address the end-use of company products, particularly in countries with human rights challenges. After further discussions, the shareholders agreed to withdraw the resolution from consideration at
the 2008 annual meeting in exchange for an ecumenical dialogue with the company on human rights and the end use of Caterpillar products.

The dialogue was held in July 18, 2008, on the subject of the end-use of Caterpillar products in light of the company’s statement on its expectations for the use of its products. The dialogue included the Episcopal Church, Mercy Asset Management, the Passionists, United Church of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and three boards of the United Methodist Church. The discussion focused on human rights and humanitarian law and conventions, and the company’s expectation that its customers would abide by these standards. The company considers its dealers as its customers. While it meets with its dealers regularly, and would terminate this relationship if it learned that a dealer was offering bribes, it has no mechanism for enforcement of its human rights expectations. The company also requested information from Caterpillar on the customers of its Israeli dealer, particularly major construction companies that are involved in building the illegal settlements and roads that Palestinians are prohibited from using in the Occupied Territories, the construction of the separation barrier on Palestinian land and the demolition of Palestinian homes.

A second dialogue was held on September 10, 2009, to continue the discussion of the previous year. Additional information had become public that was added to the agenda for discussion. An article in Haaretz, an Israeli newspaper, dated March 11, 2009, reported on the close relationship between Caterpillar’s Israeli dealership and the Israeli military. This included selling the Caterpillar D-9 bulldozers to the IDF who had them armored and weaponized by an Israeli company. The article noted that the IDF has used these bulldozers from the mid-1980s, and has hundreds of them in its arsenal. After that, the Caterpillar dealer provides maintenance work. The dealership’s mechanics provided maintenance in the recent Gaza war (these dealership employees maintained and serviced Caterpillar equipment near the battlefield during the Gaza War of January 2009, when more than 1,300 civilians were killed and the entire civilian infrastructure of the territory was destroyed) and the Second Lebanon War. The dealership noted publicly its close working relationship with the IDF, according to Haaretz in an article dated March 17, 2009, the IDF also “is planning to draft civilian bulldozer-maintenance personnel for reserve duty, marking the first time the army will be conscripting the staff of a private firm in wartime.” This would permit the IDF to use Caterpillar dealership employees on the battlefield in future operations.

The dialogue clarified several issues, but did not produce any progress. Company officials made it clear that the company took no responsibility for the use of its products even by its dealers (the only party Caterpillar considers to be a customer), had no procedure in place for monitoring or ensuring compliance with Caterpillar’s stated expectations even in a situation except where prohibited by U.S. law, had no capacity to evaluate whether particular actions are in accord with human rights. Further, they indicated that Caterpillar, although a global company doing business in virtually every country except where prohibited by U.S. law, had no capacity to evaluate whether particular actions are in accord with human rights conventions or international humanitarian law. Finally, Caterpillar did not provide information on whether its dealership was selling equipment to major construction companies building the illegal settlements, the separation barrier, or the Jewish Israeli-only roads in the occupied territories as requested.

Meanwhile, a shareholder resolution requesting a report on foreign military sales was refiled by Jewish Voice for Peace and several Roman Catholic religious orders for consideration at the 2009 stockholders meeting in June. The resolution garnered slightly less than six percent of the shareholder vote, and failed to requalify automatically for the 2010 meeting. Thus, the resolution for the 2010 shareholders meeting was altered to call for the company to review and amend its human rights policy to bring it into greater conformity with human rights and international humanitarian law. The company did not take advantage of this additional opportunity to discuss the resolution, and also declined to facilitate a requested meeting in February 2010 between church members of the Ecumenical Action Group and Caterpillar’s dealer in Israel. When the annual meeting was held in June 2010, the resolution received 24.9 percent of the proxy vote.

Under pressure from non-shareholder interest groups, Caterpillar announced that it was instructing its European dealerships not to sell any Caterpillar products that might then be transshipped to Iran. This violated Caterpillar’s previous statements to religious shareholders that the company did not have the authority to tell its dealers where and to whom they could sell Caterpillar products. A letter from the United Methodist Board of Church and Society on behalf of eight religious shareholders (including PC(USA)) to the then-CEO James Owens was sent on June 8, 2010, seeking clarification of this contradiction. There was no response.

The action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) called for continued engagement within the context of the following clear and public policy denouncing the company from profiting from involvement in serious human rights violations and obstacles to a just peace in Israel and Palestine: “...the [General Assembly] strongly denounces Caterpillar’s continued profiting from non-peaceful uses of a number of its products. We call upon Caterpillar to carefully review its involvement in obstacles to a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, and to take affirmative steps to end complicity in the violation of human rights. We hope that, by God’s grace, Caterpillar will come to exercise its considerable power and influence in the service of a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine” (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 363).

While the action of the 219th General Assembly (2010) denouncing the company’s continued profiting from its involvement in human rights violations was designed in large measure to convince Caterpillar that the church was serious about the gravity of this complicity, the company remained unresponsive. On April 19, 2011, MRTI sent its own letter to new CEO
Douglas Oberhelmer, expressing hope for a new spirit of conversation around these issues and requesting dialogue. There was no response. On July 26, 2011, the United Methodist Board of Church and Society retransmitted the 2010 letter (see above) from eight religious shareholders to the new CEO requesting a meeting to discuss the issues described in the correspondence. Again, there was no response.

These attempts at correspondence were carried out against the backdrop of ongoing submission of shareholder resolutions in 2010 and 2011, each of which presented an opportunity dialogue. There was no response; indeed, the shareholder resolution on human rights submitted by faith-based investors was challenged by company management with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Their challenge was rejected, and the resolution received another strong vote: 25.2 percent. However, despite the strong shareholder votes in 2010 and 2011, new CEO Oberhelmer reiterated to shareholders that Caterpillar has not changed its policies regarding involvement in Israel-Palestine. Because the number of votes significantly exceeded the required threshold, the resolution was resubmitted for 2012.

In 2012, in the run-up to the GA, a meeting was arranged with Mr. Jim Dugan, Caterpillar’s chief corporate spokesperson, on April 16, 2012, in Chicago. MRTI representatives were joined by Mr. Mike Kruse, chairperson of the General Assembly Mission Council (now Presbyterian Mission Agency Board), and two representatives of the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society. Mr. Dugan made it clear that Caterpillar was fully satisfied with its policy, and saw no reason to change how it was doing business in Israel-Palestine. Regarding the recently released United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights developed under the leadership of Dr. John Ruggie, the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Business and Human Rights, Mr. Dugan noted that the company might review them, but that any decision to include them, or make reference to them, in Caterpillar’s policy would likely take some time, and if they were incorporated into the policy, it would not make any difference in how Caterpillar does business in any case. The shareholder resolution was voted on at the 2012 annual stockholders meeting held on June 13th. Again, there was a strong proxy vote of 25.4 percent.

On April 22, 2013, Mr. Dugan wrote to several faith-based investors, including the MRTI chairperson and staff, informing them that Caterpillar had reviewed the United Nations Guiding Principles. He noted that Caterpillar remained fully satisfied with its policy, and found no need to include, or refer to, the Global Principles in the company’s code. On June 12, 2013, the company’s annual meeting was held in Greensboro, North Carolina. The resolution received 26.81 percent of the proxy vote. As usual, several faith-based investors co-filed the resolution.

During the meeting, Mr. Oberhelmer responded to a written question from a shareholder about the company’s business in Israel-Palestine. He reiterated once again that the company took no responsibility for how its products are used, and would not alter its business practices.

Through this multiyear process, MRTI met several times with representatives of the Presbytery of Great Rivers where Caterpillar is headquartered. A listening session was held in 2005 at the outset of the process, and presbytery staff and leadership have met with the full committee and separately with staff. Throughout, MRTI has kept the presbytery informed of the filing of resolutions and the status of communications with the company.

Caterpillar’s serious involvement in non-peaceful pursuits led the 219th General Assembly (2010) to denounce the company’s profiting from involvement in human rights violations. Sadly, despite significant support for the shareholder resolution calling for a review of its human rights policy, Caterpillar has become even more intransigent. It has cut off all communication with the religious shareholders. Caterpillar continues to accept no responsibility for the end use of their products. Over many years, the company has not indicated a willingness to review its policies for distribution or sales in conflicted areas like Israel-Palestine, and does not acknowledge a responsibility for its dealers’ adherence to human rights law in these areas. Caterpillar’s stated commitment to global citizenship is being undermined by its unwillingness to critically self-assess its own conduct in Israel-Palestine. It is the conclusion of MRTI that further efforts to engage Caterpillar through ordinary means (including shareholder resolutions, and written and oral communications) will not be successful.

C. Hewlett-Packard

Hewlett-Packard (HP) has a wholly-owned subsidiary in Israel (Hewlett Packard Israel). The company sells hardware to the Israeli Navy, and as a contractor manages all Information Technology (IT) including its operational communications, logistics, and planning including the ongoing naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. This blockade has included interdicting humanitarian supplies by attacking or turning back international vessels carrying the supplies, and attacks on Palestinian fishermen.

The company also is involved through its ownership of Electronic Data Systems in providing electronic biometric identification scanning equipment to monitor only Palestinians at several checkpoints inside the West Bank, including as part of the separate road system, restricting Palestinian movement. At these checkpoints, the 2.4 million West Bank Palestinians are required to submit to lengthy waits as well as the mandatory biometric scanning, while Israelis and other passport holders transit without scanning or comparable delays.
HP also has extensive involvement with the Israeli Army. Soldiers in the IDF are issued a Tadiran Communications ruggedized personal digital assistant (RPDA) based on the Hewlett Packard IPAQ as part of Israel’s Anog soldier modernization program. This equipment is used to enforce the Occupation. In July 2009, HP won a contract for the installation of software products in a three-year IDF virtualization tender worth an estimated $15 million, with a two-year option to extend.

HP also has business relationships with the illegal settlements in the West Bank. A subsidiary, HP Invent, outsources information technology services to Matrix and to its subsidiary Talpiot, which has its main outsourcing center in the illegal West Bank settlement of Modi’in Illit. By using Talpiot’s services, clients of the company profit from the company’s relationship with an illegal settlement and help solidify the illegal Occupation of Palestinian Territories.

In addition, HP worked with the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel in the occupied West Bank to develop specialized solutions for government data storage, and used this project in marketing publicity. Despite the fact that Ariel is deep in the Occupied West Bank, the company’s published description of this work claims that Ariel is within Israel, including the use of a map making no reference to the West Bank as a separate occupied territory.

In addition, as with Motorola Solutions Israel, its Israeli subsidiary does not disclose its equal employment opportunity record of its hiring practices.

As continuing research indicated involvement by HP in non-peaceful pursuits, MRTI and other faith-based investors recognized the need to engage the company. On March 5, 2009, several religious shareholders were scheduled to hold a conference call with HP, and had submitted a detailed list of questions for the discussion. The company then cancelled the call saying it would respond in writing, and only then consider a meeting. The shareholders reviewed the company’s written answers, and noted that they were vague or incomplete. The General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church contacted the company to renew the request for a dialogue. HP again declined saying they would only respond in writing. Two rounds of letters produced only vague answers to the shareholders’ questions.

A shareholder resolution was developed requesting a review of HP’s human rights policies, and a report on their implementation. It was filed by the PC(USA), United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, and four Roman Catholic religious orders. The filing letters requested an opportunity for dialogue, and prompted a positive response by the company. On October 28, 2009, several religious participants met with company officials by conference call. The discussion reviewed HP’s policies and procedures, and identified issues of concern for further discussion. Participants were grateful for the positive atmosphere, and willingness to cooperate. As the company agreed to initiate a board of directors level review of its human rights policy, and committed to positive follow-up to the issues identified in the dialogue, the shareholders decided to withdraw the resolution.

However, the follow-up was spotty in some areas, and nonexistent in others. One positive aspect of the engagement though was meeting with a representative of HP Israel in Jerusalem in February 2010. The discussion was informative about the extent and variety of HP’s businesses. Requested information on the company’s employment practices and how the human rights policy influences the company’s business with governments was not provided.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) directed MRTI to continue its efforts to engage HP on these issues. Although efforts began to schedule dialogue with company management in November 2010, the company repeatedly deferred and postponed this meeting. Attempts to schedule conference calls met with delays, but one was finally held on April 19, 2011. Unfortunately, it was not a productive dialogue. While the religious shareholders had communicated clearly their desire for an in-depth discussion of the biometric scanners at the checkpoints, HP’s representatives, including its person in charge of implementing its human rights policy, said that they were not knowledgeable on the issue and could not discuss it. They also did not offer to set up a subsequent call with HP representatives who could. In addition, they announced that the human rights assessment they were conducting (which would include Israel-Palestine) would concentrate on systems evaluation, and any specifics would not be included in HP’s public reporting. Indeed, HP’s public report contained no reference to its business operations in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

HP produced a Global Citizenship Report for 2010, which stated in its Global Issues section: “At HP, we believe technology is a driver of social progress, environmental sustainability and economic opportunity. We’re committed to helping individuals everywhere use technology to connect and create a better world.” The company reviewed its involvement in the United Nations Global Compact, and its support for the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. It noted that it was one of eight founding members of the Global Business Initiative on Human Rights (GBI). However, nowhere did HP discuss the relationship of its policy commitments to its involvements in non-peaceful pursuits in Israel-Palestine.

In late 2012, a shareholder resolution was filed requesting a review of the company’s human rights policy. This filing led to a dialogue on January 23, 2013, which included several ecumenical organizations. Prior to the dialogue, a copy of the HP marketing brochure on its work with the Ariel settlement was shared with the company. Unfortunately, as in the past, no one from the company was prepared to respond to how the brochure was produced, and its relationship to corporate policy. In addition, the company declined to confirm what its role was currently in the biometric scanners at the checkpoints, or other business with the Israeli military or the settlements citing “customer confidentiality” for the first time.
Motorola also announced its intention to sell its Israeli cell phone company, and sought bids from potential buyers. However, the company maintained its stance of no face-to-face dialogues, but would answer some written questions. Motorola’s legal department refused to meet in person saying the company would only answer questions in writing. Questions were submitted, but answers did not adequately respond to the concerns expressed. In an email of January 13, 2010, the company also declined to facilitate a meeting with Motorola Israel during the February 2010 visit of religious shareholders to Israel and Palestine. The 2010 shareholders meeting held on May 3 included another vote on the human rights resolution. It received a vote of 11.8 percent. Motorola also announced that it would be splitting into two new companies by the end of 2010: Motorola Solutions and Motorola Mobility.

MRTI also kept the San Jose Presbytery, where HP is headquartered, informed about shareholder resolution filing, and the status of dialogue with HP.

Although HP has been open to meet with religious shareholders on an annual basis, the discussions have been very disappointing. The company declines to engage the serious issues of its involvement in non-peaceful pursuits. It has never addressed the issue of how its human rights policy, about which the company is very proud, informs its decisions about its business with governments, especially governments involved in serious human rights violations. Contrary to the company’s stated policy of transparency in how it implements its human rights policies, no information is shared on its application to the numerous involvements in non-peaceful pursuits. Without a major change in HP’s willingness to engage in serious discussions, corporate engagement is not likely to achieve positive results. Regretfully, MRTI concluded that there is no indication at present that HP will change its course.

D. Motorola Solutions

Motorola Solutions has a wholly owned subsidiary in Israel, Motorola Solutions Israel. The company provided an integrated communications system, known as “Mountain Rose,” to the Israeli government, which uses it for military communications. It also provided ruggedized cell phones to the IDF utilized in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The company also sold wide-area surveillance systems for installation in the illegal Israeli settlements. Prior to corporate restructuring, it operated a cell phone company that placed cell phone towers in the illegal settlements, and sold fuses used in Israeli bombs. The company also will not disclose information about workforce composition and hiring practices.

A second dialogue on June 18, 2007, focused on human rights standards and conventions in relation to the company’s involvement in the Occupation of the Palestinian Territories. Motorola officials denied that any of its activities implicated it in the Israeli occupation, or raised human rights concerns. A shareholder resolution addressing broader human rights issues was filed by several religious shareholders in the fall of 2007.

In response, Motorola requested a follow-up meeting, which occurred on January 7, 2008. The company indicated its intent to review and amend its policies, but would not specify the particular changes under consideration, and made clear that its human rights policies would not be applied to their business relationships with foreign governments. This lack of clarity and limited scope led the religious investors, including MRTI representatives, to decline to withdraw the resolution, which went to a vote at the annual shareholders meeting on May 5, 2008. It received more than 12 percent of the shareholder vote, enough to be resubmitted in 2009. Although the conversation with Motorola had been less productive than hoped, religious shareholders agreed that more in-depth dialogue on corporate social responsibility and human rights might create a productive framework for analyzing the Israel-Palestine conflict and other global situations.

A shareholder resolution similar to the one from 2008 was filed with Motorola requesting that the company amend its human rights policies “to conform more fully with international human rights and humanitarian standards. …” The resolution was co-filed by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church, Mercy Investment Program, and the Episcopal Church. The company did not respond to a request in the filing letter for a meeting to discuss the resolution. When the filers tried to set one up following the annual meeting, the company declined, but offered to answer written questions. The stockholder meeting was held on May 4, 2009. Speaking in support of the resolution, which received 9.7 percent of the vote, were representatives of the United Methodist Church and the PC(USA).

Following the 2009 annual meeting, religious shareholders requested another dialogue, but on June 12, in an email, Motorola’s legal department refused to meet in person saying the company would only answer questions in writing. Questions were submitted, but answers did not adequately respond to the concerns expressed. In an email of January 13, 2010, the company also declined to facilitate a meeting with Motorola Israel during the February 2010 visit of religious shareholders to Israel and Palestine. The 2010 shareholders meeting held on May 3 included another vote on the human rights resolution. It received a vote of 11.8 percent. Motorola also announced that it would be splitting into two new companies by the end of 2010: Motorola Solutions and Motorola Mobility.

Meanwhile, in the run-up to corporate restructure, the involvement of Motorola in the Occupation changed in some ways. The sale of armaments work by Motorola Israel meant that it no longer made bomb fuses for the Israeli military. Motorola also announced its intention to sell its Israeli cell phone company, and sought bids from potential buyers. However, the company maintained its stance of no face-to-face dialogues, but would answer some written questions.
On November 4, 2010, in the filing of the shareholder resolution on human rights for the 2011 annual meeting, MRTI expressed its hope that the company would respond positively through constructive dialogue. The company did not respond. The corporate restructure was completed on schedule. The shareholder resolution was voted on at the annual meeting of Motorola Solutions on May 2, 2011. However, this time it received a lower vote total (5.4 percent), and could not be resubmitted for 2012. At the meeting, the CEO of Motorola Solutions announced that the company would be concentrating on the Middle East for its integrated communications products. Following the meeting, MRTI sought to determine how the restructure had affected the company’s business in Israel-Palestine. Motorola Mobility confirmed that the Israeli cell phone company had been sold to a French company, and that its business was now limited to marketing cell phones in civilian markets. It also confirmed that the business lines with the Israeli government remained with Motorola Solutions. Motorola Solutions did not respond to MRTI’s information request of July 11, 2011.

When the vote on a shareholder resolution fails to reach a threshold established by the SEC, it cannot be refilled for a two-year period. As that waiting period had expired, the human rights policy review resolution was resubmitted for the 2014 annual shareholders meeting. MRTI hoped that there will be a new openness to dialogue and sharing of information regarding the company’s business in Israel-Palestine.

Unfortunately, on December 31, 2013, Motorola Solutions signed a fifteen-year communications contract with the Israeli Ministry of Defense to provide the company’s next generation of ruggedized smartphones to the IDF and the Ministry of Defense. The contract will cost $100 million with half provided by United States military assistance to cover the cost of adaptation, development, and production of the devices for the IDF, by Motorola Solutions US. The other half of the program will be funded from the Israeli military budget, primarily covering maintenance of the system over 15 years by Motorola Solutions Israel.

The Motorola Solutions smartphone eventually will replace the encrypted communications system currently in use by the IDF, Mountain Rose, which was also developed and manufactured by the company. The Israeli army estimated that some military units will be supplied with the new system’s smartphones in about two years, including for operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Until the new system is fully integrated, the IDF will continue to use the Mountain Rose system.

As noted, representatives of the Presbytery of Chicago attended the first dialogue with Motorola, and have been kept apprised of subsequent engagement, filing of shareholder resolutions, and MRTI decisions related to the company.

With Motorola’s separation into two companies, the problematic involvements in non-peaceful pursuits are now confined to Motorola Solutions. These involvements remain significant, and are now locked in for another fifteen years at least. Motorola Solutions has been unresponsive to all efforts by religious shareholders to engage in serious discussions about its involvement in non-peaceful pursuits. MRTI has concluded that there is no indication that the company’s position will change through continued corporate engagement.

IV. CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER COMPANIES

A. Citigroup

The Citigroup dialogue of February 2, 2006, was highly productive. The primary concern with Citigroup involved an allegation that Citigroup had provided insufficient controls to prevent the transfer of funds to Palestinian organizations supporting violence. In conversation with MRTI representatives, the company provided assurance that the bank had robust controls in place to monitor and prevent questionable money transfers. There have been no subsequent reports alleging inappropriate funds transfers by Citigroup. In addition, Citigroup expressed willingness to assist the religious community with exploring how to increase microcredit lending in the region to address the lack of adequate investment opportunities in Palestine. Therefore, in June 2007, MRTI removed Citigroup from its focus list of companies for corporate engagement.

B. ITT Industries

ITT Industries supplied communications and night-vision equipment to the IDF used in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. ITT Industries officials met with MRTI on February 3, 2006. The company would not discuss its business with the Israeli military with any specificity. Between 2008 and 2011, a shareholder resolution was submitted requesting a report on foreign military sales. It received roughly a 7 percent proxy vote each year. MRTI, along with ecumenical partners and representatives from the Presbytery of Hudson River, met periodically with ITT officials. Nothing of substance came of the discussions except a general discussion about ITT’s new corporate ethics program.

In 2011, ITT Industries announced that it would split into three separate companies at the end of that year. One of the new companies, ITT Excelis, would focus solely on its military-related business including its night vision and communications equipment. When the corporate restructure occurred, the new military-related company, ITT Excelis, was added to the GA divestment list in 2012. ITT Excelis, a top-100 military contractor, has received more than 50 percent of its revenue from military contracts averaged over three years. As a result, MRTI dropped corporate engagement with the company from its work plan.
C. United Technologies

The resolution to United Technologies requested that ethical criteria be applied to foreign military contracts, and, with the Episcopal Church as the primary filer, was supported by 23.8 percent of shareholders voting at the annual meeting; a very strong showing, considering resolutions of this nature submitted to major defense contractors routinely receive 3 to 5 percent of the shareholder vote. The vote was sufficient to qualify the resolution for automatic reconsideration at next year’s annual meeting. The Episcopal Church had a brief phone conversation with company officials, and received a commitment to a dialogue on developing a human rights policy. The dialogue has been integrated into a regular conversation between the company and members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. MRTI noted that the involvement of United Technologies has been in the form of a sub-contractor on some military equipment. The primary responsibility lies with a company already on the GA divestment list.

D. Microsoft

In the past two years, initial letters were sent to Microsoft regarding its human rights policy and the company’s provision of specialized software to the Israeli Navy and the government of the illegal settlement of Ariel. After no response was received, a shareholder resolution was filed requesting a review of the company’s human rights policies. The United Church Funds served as the lead filer of the resolution with several faith-based investors, including the PC(USA). This resolution produced the first dialogue on July 15, 2013, and as a result the resolution was withdrawn. The first dialogue covered the company’s process for policy development and conducting a human rights assessment. In this context, the company’s operations in Israel-Palestine were discussed, and follow up questions were developed and conveyed to Microsoft. A second dialogue on November 11, 2013, was held to review the company’s 2013 Citizenship Report including its human rights section. A schedule of conference calls every six months has been set.

V. ECUMENICAL COLLABORATION AND OTHER ADVOCACY

An essential commitment in the General Assembly’s 1984 policy on the use of divestment as an ethical strategy is to work ecumenically. Since 2004, MRTI has devoted considerable time to fostering ecumenical cooperation on engagement. To that end, an informal table called the Ecumenical Action Group: Investment for a Just Peace in Israel-Palestine (EAG) was created. As a result, corporate dialogues and filing resolutions were expanded to include participation by representatives of other Protestant denominations and Roman Catholic religious orders. These have included the Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church (General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Pensions and Benefits, and the New England Conference), Mercy Asset Management, the Passionists, Ursuline Sisters, Maryknoll Sisters, Benedictine Sisters, Congregation of Divine Providence, Sisters of Providence, Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary, Convent Academy of the Incarnate Word, American Friends Service Committee, and the Dominican Sisters. Also participating internationally has been KAIROS Canada, the United Church of Canada, the Ethical Council of the Swedish National Pension Funds, and the World Council of Churches.

Another important development is the creation of “Occupation-Free” screening tools for portfolio management, and increased attention to the Israel-Palestine situation in advocacy on human rights and corporations. Accelerated growth of illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories has prompted increased pressure on companies involved in non-peaceful pursuits. In Europe, churches in the Netherlands have reported on engagements with Heineken. The Dutch company owned 40 percent of Tempo Beer Industry whose Israeli subsidiary subsequently moved its facilities out of the Barkan Industrial Zone in the occupied West Bank, and back into Israeli proper. Swedish churches were instrumental in convincing Assa Abloy, a locksmithing company, to move its facility out of the Barkan settlement in the West Bank to the other side of the Green Line. This ecumenical cooperation has helped identify several European and other companies with extensive ties to the Occupation including Veolia, AIG, Ahava, and Alstom. In September 2013, Royal Haskoning DNV, a Dutch engineering firm withdrew from a sewage treatment project for illegal Israeli settlers in East Jerusalem. In December 2013, Vitens NV, a Dutch water company, severed ties with Mekorot Water Company, an Israeli firm, due to the latter’s business activities in the illegal Israeli settlements. The European Union also announced in 2013 increased restrictions on grants to companies with business operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-08

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the report of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment.

The recommendations in MRTI’s report are the result of a methodical, well-researched, and ecumenical process that considers the importance of high technology from Motorola Solutions and Hewlett-Packard in the enforcement of control of the Palestinian population, including the protection of illegal settlements and blockade of Gaza, as well as the role of Caterpillar armored bulldozers in destroying Palestinian property and constructing settlements and a separation wall, 85 percent on confiscated Palestinian land. Attempts at reaching even low levels of agreement with all three companies have gone on for more than six years while all have been expanding their strategic business relationships with the occupation and refusing to address human rights concerns in any depth.
The basic argument for divestment is that words-only approaches have simply failed to halt the growth of Israeli settlements and the intensification of the occupation, steadily eroding the prospect of a two-state solution and hastening the de-Christianization of Palestine. The repeated failure of a U.S. sponsored “peace process” suggests that the political leadership of the more powerful party, the State of Israel, has no intention of allowing the Palestinians a viable state. Several items before the General Assembly address other aspects of the political impasse, including social discrimination, restrictions on religious and civil liberties, and efforts to magnify “terrorist” threats of Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran. Overall, however, only a deliberate naïveté on the church’s part can ignore the deliberate subversion of the peace process since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin by a Jewish settler in 1995.

The goal of divestment and other nonviolent economic pressure is to help the Palestinian population by ending the occupation of their 22 percent of historic Palestine. The goal is not to end the State of Israel, despite efforts by opponents of divestment to claim that this is the church’s “true” motivation. The goal of helping the Palestinian “captive economy” is addressed by Recommendations 3 and 4 of MRTI’s report (further comment on the economics of the occupation is in ACSWP’s Advice & Counsel on Item 4-06). The church has carefully and repeatedly stated that its’ concern is for Israel and Palestine both to exist in safety and freedom, and that it is in Israel’s interest not to deny another people their rights. Although some American Jewish groups critical of the Presbyterian and other churches taking divestment and boycott actions claim to oppose the settlements, they have not had any success in influencing Israeli policy and generally support continued US military aid and the denial of recognition of Palestinian statehood at the United Nations. In contrast, divestment focused on the occupation embodies the key values of integrity, effectiveness, and solidarity in witness for justice.

Commissioners considering the overall divestment recommendations may consider three dimensions of this act of witness:

1. Is it consistent with the theology and policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
2. Is it an act of investment responsibility that reflects the three key moral criteria of integrity, effectiveness, and solidarity?
3. Does it support other witness to the key problem of the occupation and the failure of political, diplomatic, and violent measures to affect the situation?

A strong theological and ethical basis for divestment in support of freedom for Palestinian Christians and Muslims can be found not only in The Confession of 1967 (the basis for the 1971 mandate for MRTI itself), but in the Barmen Declaration and A Brief Statement of Faith. In its resolution on the Middle East in 2008, the General Assembly:

Affirms the obligation of the church to speak to the governments of the United States and all other nations where it sees those governments violating the commandments of God. In the words of The Theological Declaration of Barmen, which speaks to the dependence of the Church on the Word of God and its independence from any state or ideology, “we reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords... . The state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace ....” (The Book of Confessions, 8.15, 8.22). The sovereignty of God thus judges all claims of sovereign nationhood, all boundaries, all exercises of force, and all uses of resources by human beings. The Church is thus called to help discern where the Spirit is working in the world, guided by Scripture and its confessions.

In A Brief Statement of Faith, we affirm that:

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. [emphasis added] (Book of Confessions, 10.4, Lines 65–71)

The words in italics, in this case, may refer particularly to the Christians of Palestine and Israel whose voices are often disregarded in deliberations focused on the attitudes of Jews or Muslims.

In terms of policy, the Middle East report approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010), “Breaking Down the Walls,” introduced its recommendations with several summary statements:

We deeply value our relationships with Jews and Muslims in the United States, Israel, and the predominantly Muslim countries of the Middle East. Yet the bonds of friendship must neither prevent us from speaking, nor limit our empathy for the suffering of others. Inaction and silence on our part enable actions we oppose and consequences we grieve. ...

We also recognize that our concern to end support for both violence in all its forms and the ongoing occupation and settlement of Palestine places demands of integrity on how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) uses its own resources and investments. Let us be clear: we do affirm the legitimacy of Israel as a state, but consider the continuing occupation of Palestine (West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem) to be illegitimate, illegal under international law, and an enduring threat to peace in the region. Furthermore, we recognize that any support for that occupation weakens the moral standing of our nation internationally and our security. (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1027 of the electronic version)

2. The Board of Pensions’ comment affirms the compatibility of its primary fiduciary responsibility to Plan members with the participation of Board members and staff with the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) policy and process, which include Military-Related Investment Guidelines (1982) and an extensive study, The Divestment Strategy: Ethical and Institutional Context (1984). The 1982 guidelines led the church to restrict its investments in nuclear warhead makers and the largest military contractors, whose securities continue to be proscribed for church investment agencies. The 1984 study focuses
on the two values of effectiveness and integrity, analyzed in light of trusteeship and Christian mission (https://www.pcusa.org/resource/divestment-strategy-principles-and-criteria/). These values led to a range of strategic criteria that guided the church in the “selective, phased divestment” of securities in thirteen companies as part of the larger campaign against apartheid. In broad strokes, then, there were three key values undergirding considerations such as impact on those suffering, urgency, technical feasibility, coordination with partners, limitation of other strategies, and clarity of message.

In terms of effectiveness, historically, church-led nonviolent economic pressure of all kinds, including divestment, contributed to the eventual departure of 214 of the 324 U.S. corporations operating in South Africa in 1981, representing an equity decline from $2.6 billion to $714 million, a substantial move toward isolating South Africa economically. As is well known, after the 1994 end of apartheid, figures such as Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Allan Boesak credited the churches with decisive impact, as did studies such as Robert K. Massie’s *Loosening the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (Doubleday, 1998).

The 1984 study describes how divestment of securities, through removing access and influence “inside” a corporation as a stockholder, may have more impact on corporate policy from the “outside.” Divestment’s effectiveness is not primarily financial but impacts the reputation and legitimacy of the behaviors focused on in ecumenical and sometimes international campaigns. Vigorous opposition to divestment by the Israeli government and its supporters indicates a real fear of being associated with the occupation and oppression of Palestinians, affirming that divestment carries an effective message that justice is needed.

In terms of the second criterion, integrity, this is not to be seen as a purity or “cleansing the portfolio.” The Reformed tradition does not favor separation from the world or a position of moral perfection, unattainable in any event. We do, however, affirm that our principles should be backed up by action, lest we profit from practices we decry. The phrase in the Preliminary Principles of the *Book of Order* is that “truth is in order to goodness,” with the implication that the church should be a truth-teller and a truth-doer.

The church’s action, from this perspective, is less about strictly economic consequences and more about the prophetic nature of the church, acting in obedience and without being compromised. Yet seeking integrity can also make for effective witness against practices accepted by majorities or those in power.

The nature of Christian mission in the Middle East involves the church in acts of solidarity with the remaining Christians, and with all who seek a peace with justice. Although support for divestment and other forms of economic pressure is strongly discouraged by the Israeli government, an unprecedented ecumenical group issued the Kairos Palestine affirmation in December of 2009. Among the nonviolent methods of resistance to the occupation that they endorse is divestment:

4.2.6 Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly sincerely proclaiming that their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. The aim is to free both peoples from extremist positions of the different Israeli governments, bringing both to justice and reconciliation. In this spirit and with this dedication we will eventually reach the longed-for resolution to our problems, as indeed happened in South Africa and with many other liberation movements in the world.

4.3 Through our love, we will overcome injustices and establish foundations for a new society both for us and for our opponents. Our future and their future are one. Either the cycle of violence that destroys both of us or peace that will benefit both. We call on Israel to give up its injustice towards us, not to twist the truth of reality of the occupation by pretending that it is a battle against terrorism… (From Kairos Palestine Document: A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering: http://www.kairosperadise.ps)

As to overall Palestinian views of the occupation and divestment as a strategy, the position of the Kairos church leaders seems to articulate a broad desire for resistance. An April 22, 2012, report by 60 Minutes confirms that Christians view the occupation as the primary impetus to their departure (http://mondoweiss.net/2012/04/60-minutes-profiles-palestinian-christians-michael-oren-falls-on-his-face-defending-israel.html).

As a strategy, then, the divestment of securities in three key corporations would strengthen the integrity of the church’s moral opposition to the occupation, focus attention effectively on the means by which the occupation is profitably maintained, and be a clear sign of support for the Palestinian Christians and others seeking peace with justice. It would also be an action consistent with international law and a witness against the political failures that enable an oppressive situation to continue.

3. Relation of divestment to the “peace process.”

Since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin by a fundamentalist Jew in 1995, the Oslo peace process has never recovered. See the ACSWP Advice & Counsel memorandum on Item 4-01 for Benjamin Netanyahu’s efforts to stop the Oslo process. The Second Intifada included suicide bombings and severe punitive raids on Palestinians, acts of terrorism fueled by increasing Islamist and Jewish fundamentalism. Settlement growth continued through the 1990s and 2000s, despite purported suspensions and the removal of 7,500 settlers from Gaza in 2005. Rockets by radical groups—a terrifying, if largely inaccurate, threat—were a cause or pretext for a one-sided war on Gaza (http://www.uruknet.info/?p=74717). Repeated UN and other international reports maintain that Israel’s strict control over Gaza’s borders amounts to collective punishment of its inhabitants.
The failure of the second Camp David process in 2000, though blamed largely on Yasser Arafat by Israeli and U.S. sources, reflected a substantial Palestinian willingness to concede land colonized by the major settlement cities, but an unwillingness to give up on a coherent Palestinian state with some shared sovereignty in Jerusalem. With the separation wall extensions, continued annexations and removals in East Jerusalem and Area C (60 percent) of the West Bank, strangulation of Palestinian land such as at the Tent of Nations (http://www.tentofnations.org), and violent responses to peaceful Palestinian protests, little hope was seen for a renewed peace process.

Public policy advocacy by the churches and human rights groups has been massively outgunned by well-funded groups dedicated to the defense of all Israeli interests, despite the emergence of more critical groups in the U.S. Jewish community. Diplomatically, although the US sponsored renewed negotiations, it has blocked international efforts to allow Palestine membership in the United Nations and has vetoed efforts to hold Israel accountable to international law more than thirty times, while continuing more than $3 billion in military aid every year. This one-sided support for the State of Israel and its occupation, along with the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has weakened the international reputation of the United States, particularly among the world’s 1.4 billion Muslims.

General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and many other good people have called repeatedly for an effective end of the occupation since 1974, only to see both nonviolent and violent liberation efforts of the Palestinians suppressed. While interfaith dialogue has had some value during this time, the U.S. political and media context allows relatively little debate over the nature of the occupation of Palestine, much less opposition to its continued support. Similarly, the exodus of Christians from the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, will continue unless voices coupled with action are raised challenging the conditions that are designed to push Arabs out of desirable areas.

For the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to back its moral concerns with divestment would be a dramatic act of conscience and leadership. Although 2009 Presbyterian Panel survey data indicate that a majority of Presbyterians support divestment for human rights reasons, considerable pressure will be applied and allegations of anti-Semitism are to be expected, encouraging conflict in the church. Thus commissioners have to determine how important it is to act on a clear matter of justice in the face of open opposition.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-08

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-08.

The ACREC acknowledges MRTI’s careful and methodical ten-year process and thanks them for their faithful service. The ACREC agrees with MRTI that

1. the church has exhausted all avenues to bring about changes in the policies and practices of Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions through corporate engagement;

2. as long as the denomination’s policy is that we should not profit from “non-peaceful pursuits,” and as long as these three U.S. companies identified by MRTI remain deeply involved in “non-peaceful pursuits,” then as a matter of integrity, the church should end our investment in these companies.

New information on Caterpillar, Inc. not in the MRTI report:

On April 1, 2014, The New York Times reported that Caterpillar used a Swiss subsidiary to reduce its taxes by $2.4 billion.17 This tax-avoidance scheme was developed by PricewaterhouseCoopers who was paid $55 million “for helping [CAT] transfer $8 billion of profits to the Swiss subsidiary from 1999 to 2012. The transfers had no economic substance and were made solely to take advantage of the lower tax rate Caterpillar negotiated with Switzerland, according to Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.” (The same article mentions HP also transferring profits offshore to avoid U.S. taxes).

During this time, CAT imposed a six-year wage freeze on its hourly workers, and awarded the current CEO massive pay increases.

• At Caterpillar, Pressing Labor While Business Booms—NY Times article, July 2012.18

• Caterpillar Chief’s Pay Jumps 60%—Wall Street Journal article, April 2012.19

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SEC Action Puts Caterpillar Resolution on Sudan Up for Shareholder Vote—NY State Comptroller press release.20

In this light, ACREC believes CAT’s human rights record in Sudan and Israel/Palestine demonstrates its “Code of Corporate Conduct” is selective and only goes as far as the company prefers it to go and does not apply evenly across the board.

The ACREC believes that the same standards that have guided votes on MRTI recommendations over the last forty-two years of corporate engagement by the committee, should continue to guide the General Assembly on this vote, no matter who is committing the human rights violations, where, and against whom. To use different standards to judge the evidence is at best, discriminatory, and at worst, sets a bad precedent of exceptionalism that will diminish the effectiveness of MRTI’s future work.

The ACREC sees the following reasons for the General Assembly to approve the MRTI report and NOT to apply exceptions:

1. The MRTI report does not target Israel, but U.S. corporations who are profiting from a military occupation. Charging MRTI and the PC(USA) with holding Israel to different standards is a misrepresentation of the ten-year history and MRTI’s careful engagement with the three American corporations.

   • The PC(USA) will continue to hold shares in companies that do business in Israel, but are not profiting from non-peaceful pursuits, including McDonald’s, Procter & Gamble, Coca Cola, IBM, etc.

2. While it is true that some Jewish groups and organizations have said our corporate engagement process has “damaged relationships between Presbyterians and Jews,” not all Presbyterians and not all Jews agree with this statement. In fact, in some cases, the opposite is true. The call for not profiting from the occupation has strengthened relationships between some Presbyterians and some American and Israeli Jewish groups and individuals who oppose the occupation. This is evidenced by the support for MRTI from

   • The Israeli Committee Against House Demolition (ICAHD).21

   • The Rabbinic Council of Jewish Voice for Peace. The rabbis of Jewish Voice for Peace maintain that the human rights violations of CAT, Inc., H-P and Motorola Solutions are not in accord with Jewish Values.22

The very claim that this has affected our relationships with all Jews in a blanket way commits the serious error of classifying an entire people into one monolithic category. General stereotyping can and often does lead to racism in situations where decisions are made by assuming all people of one race or ethnicity hold the same viewpoints.

Hewlett-Packard is involved in questionable human rights issues in China and Syria as well as in Israel/Palestine as cited in a shareholder resolution voted on at their 2014 Annual Meeting. Both H-P and Motorola Solutions have wholly-owned subsidiaries in Israel whose record of equal employment opportunity is deficient.

   • While more than 20 percent of the Israeli population is non-Jewish, the high-tech industry, obligated by law not to discriminate, employs between 0.5 to 5 percent non-Jewish Israelis. Neither company will disclose its employment record.

Video of CAT bulldozers destroying Palestinian homes—first 40 seconds of this trailer of 2013 film, “Where Should the Birds Fly?”23

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-08

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-08.

Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.

BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 04-08

Comment on Item 04-08—From the Board of Pensions.

Item 04-02, an overture from the Presbytery of San Francisco, and Item 04-08 from the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) recommend that Caterpillar, Inc., Motorola Solu-

20 http://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/mar13/032113.htm
21 http://icahdusa.org/an-open-letter-from-jeff-halper/
22 http://www.rabbisletter.org/
23 http://whereshouldthebirdsfly.org/
Comment of The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on the several recommendations relating to Divestment and Affirmative Investment

In all its corporate actions, the Board of Pensions strives to support the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the social witness policies approved by the General Assembly. Sometimes there is apparent conflict between the social witness desires of the denomination and our legal duties to members of the Benefits Plan. It is clear that our mutually approved long-term policies and procedures have worked well to avoid conflict and we urge the General Assembly to take no actions that would displace these very helpful policies and procedures.

The General Assembly has delegated oversight responsibility for Benefits Plan and Assistance Plan monies to the Board of Pensions. This responsibility makes the Board a “fiduciary,” a status that carries both certain duties and the potential for certain liabilities if carried out improperly. This delegation and separation of oversight duties is intended to relieve the General Assembly from both fiduciary duties and liabilities. The Board, acting through its Board of Directors, chooses the actual investment managers and determines how the money is allocated among various classes of securities to achieve the long-term investment objectives required of the Plans. The Board does not select specific investments (either to buy or to sell): security selection is the job of the investment managers themselves.

As indicated below, managers of individually managed portfolios are made aware of our social witness policy and are required to justify to the Board of Pensions any deviation from that policy.

These are all important separations of roles and responsibilities that are in the best interests of commissioners, of the denomination, of the Benefits Plan and of Plan members. For these reasons, the General Assembly does not direct the Board of Pensions to divest the portfolio of an investment held by the Benefits Plan and does not direct that the Board of Pensions affirmatively invest in any specific security.

The General Assembly does, however, determine the social witness policies of the Church, including how they pertain to investments of money held by or under the aegis of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It does advise the Board (and the Foundation) and it does urge us to take certain actions from time to time. We in turn are mindful of the General Assembly’s wishes.

To confuse this important definition of roles and responsibilities, would risk potential liability to the General Assembly, and possibly incur more investment risk for the Pension Trust and other benefits and assistance assets than would otherwise be desirable. We cannot, and the General Assembly would not have us avoid or compromise our legal duties and threaten the security of the Benefits Plan and Assistance Program.

There are two specific duties for us to consider when it comes to the question of divestment.

First, the Board of Pensions has a “duty of loyalty” to act in the sole and exclusive interests of the Benefits Plan members. That means our decisions must be in the interests of that group taken as a whole, not in the interests of the Board, and not in the interests of some other group or some special part of the Church. The Board of Pensions has established procedures that it believes are completely faithful to this obligation.

Second, the Board has a “duty of care” to see to it that sufficient funds are available to keep the promises made to Plan members, both current and future. Selling or buying securities based on social witness principles alone could easily translate into taking on too much or too little risk at any given point in time. The Board of Directors has adopted detailed investment policies governing the allocation of the Plan’s investments in various asset classes and the selection of managers for those asset classes. This allocation is the primary way we manage investment risk. The investment managers are responsible for the selection of individual investment holdings. We are responsible for selecting the investment managers, and this selection process is another of our risk management tools, and is an equally important separation of duties. The result is that the Board of Pensions must make its own, independent judgments based on its legal duties of loyalty and care.

Having said that, it is our often-expressed objective to support the declared social witness policies of the denomination as best we can. Fortunately, specific policies on divestment adopted by the General Assembly in 1984 have served our mutual interests well, have promoted a united voice and have avoided conflicts within the denomination.

Divestment

The Board of Pensions participates in the Church’s MRTI activities. Under the 1984 policies of the General Assembly, the denomination’s Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment recommends that a company be added to the...
General Assembly’s divestment list after several steps. Three of those steps include (a) undertaking a thorough and comprehensive research of the company’s involvement in an objectionable practice, (b) engaging the company in constructive dialogue about those practices through meetings and submission of shareholder resolutions; and (c) it is determined that no lesser alternative to divestment is available. Ultimately the General Assembly determines, upon receiving such a recommendation, what is the effective social witness action for the Church and its entities to undertake (including divestment or affirmative investment). The General Assembly has long recognized that the divestment practice of the Board of Pensions is one of a “prohibition of ownership” rather than one of an “immediate sale” of securities listed for divestment.

When and if a security is added to the prohibited securities list (there are currently 428 securities on the list), the Board of Pensions has adopted a formal process to ensure that the failure to own the security will not harm the financial soundness of the Plan. At this point, there are two levels of decision because of the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the decision-makers. The first decision is for an investment manager. The Investment Manager must decide whether not owning a divestment list security will harm their portfolio results. If it decides that failure to own will not harm results, there is no issue as to portfolio performance, and the security is not held. Since, as a general rule our investment policies provide for observance of the General Assembly’s divestment policies, if the manager decides that failure to own will harm portfolio performance, it must ask us and provide justification for an exception.

The second decision now becomes one for the Board of Pensions. It is inappropriate for us to fail to act. In other words, we are obligated to independently decide whether or not to initiate divestment, or to grant an exception. In the event of a request for exception, if the Investment Committee determines that the request is reasonable and appropriate in the context of our duty of care, it may grant the exception. Currently, there is only one security held by the Board of Pensions under an approved exception request.

For example,

Stock A is placed on the divestment list for the first time. Manager X owns Stock A. When the divestment list is updated, we advise Manager X that Stock A may be held as a part of their normal investment program until such time as the security becomes part of the manager’s sell discipline for all clients. Any subsequent purchase requires an exception from the Board of Pensions.

If a manager does not own the stock, any purchase requires an exception.

From time to time, securities are removed from the divestment list, and managers are so advised.

Affirmative Investment

The duties of care and loyalty apply equally as limitations on the purchase of securities. In addition, the separation of roles and responsibilities between the Board and our investment managers is breached when we begin telling our investment managers to actively purchase specific securities. At that point we become portfolio managers ourselves, and to date that is not a responsibility we have undertaken because it would impose additional regulatory burdens and administrative expenses on the Plan that we have chosen to avoid.

Shareholder Resolutions and Proxy Voting

We do hold a small portfolio of securities outside the Benefits Plan specifically at the request of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment in order that the Church can use these shares to propose shareholder resolutions from time to time. These holdings are at minimum levels required to submit shareholder resolutions.

It is also appropriate to note that the Board of Pensions does vote all shares held by or through us in accordance with the actions of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment. The Board of Pensions respectfully requests that the General Assembly take this comment into account when considering the several recommendations on Divestment or Affirmative Investment proposed to the General Assembly. The processes in place have served us well for over twenty years, and will continue to serve us well going forward.

$Item 04-09

[The assembly approved Item 04-09 with amendment. See pp. 13, 62.]

Resolution on Equal Rights for All Inhabitants of Israel and Palestine and on Conversations with Prophetic Voices

Despite decades of General Assembly and other international support for the freedom and self-determination of the Palestinian people, yet recognizing that the right to vote and personal freedoms have been denied or limited for most Palestinians under occupation and within Israel, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approve the following measures (a) to support equal rights and unblocked economic development for all inhabitants of Israel and the occupied territories
including Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, and (b) to support the open and faithful discussion of this need for equal rights and legal standing within congregational and other forums:

A. Regarding the provision of equal rights, the General Assembly supports:

1. The establishment and protection of equal human rights for all inhabitants of Israel including:
   - the establishment and protection of equal human rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel, giving them parity with “Jewish Nationals;”
   - freedom of travel and worship, including legal protection for non-Jewish sites;
   - full protection of property rights without penalty for absence from Israel for business, education, family, or personal reasons;
   - unhindered opportunities for economic development; and
   - benefit from U.S. of financial aid without identity-based discrimination or exclusion.

2. The establishment and protection of equal human rights for all inhabitants of the occupied territories including Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza including:
   - fair due process for all Palestinian inhabitants of the occupied territories who are arrested, convicted, and imprisoned either by the Israeli Defense Force or the Palestinian Authority;
   - the ability to marry residents of other Palestinian areas without losing residency;
   - special care in protecting the human rights of children;
   - freedom of travel and worship;
   - full protection of property rights, including freedom from arbitrary or unjust home demolitions;
   - unhindered opportunities for economic development, including full access to international economic aid without identity-based discrimination; and
   - access to tax revenues illegally sequestered.

3. Measures to ensure free and fair elections within the Palestinian territories, Israeli zones of control or in whatever political realities may be created by the current peace process, with the provision of election and human rights observers as necessary.

B. Regarding open and prophetic discussion of Palestinian human rights within congregational and other forums:

1. Affirms the position of the 219th General Assembly (2010) that “Views with respect the integrity of the religious faiths of Jews, Muslims, and other peoples, the value of non-coercion in religious life, and the benefits of public toleration of religious diversity to diminish extremism, discrimination, and bigotry” (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 1025) and encourages congregations to host conversations that include diversity within as well as among religious traditions represented;

2. Encourages Presbyterian congregations to reach out to neighboring synagogues, temples, and mosques as possible to explore nonviolent ways to promote peace with justice in Israel and Palestine, and recommends the shared reading of texts from the Hebrew prophets as a particular starting point in conversation with New Testament and Quranic texts on the nature of human dignity, the shared image of God, and universal human rights;

3. Recommends the inclusion of a full range of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian viewpoints in conversations, including the increasing number of prophetic voices committed to nonviolence and equal rights [such as Jewish Voice for Peace, Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, Kairos Palestine U. S., Friends of Saheel North America, Muslims for Progressive Values, and coalitions like the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation];

4. Requests the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Middle East office and other Presbyterian Mission Agency offices, to produce suitable resources for such conversations.

[Financial Implication: Per Capita—$4,000 (2015)]

Rationale

While peace talks are periodically undertaken to address the continuing problem of the occupation of Palestinian lands and the status of refugees from Israel going back to the 1947–49 period, Palestinians suffer continuous deprivation of human
rights and reduction in the viability of any future state. This resolution does not address the question of one or two states (an important but larger question), but focuses on the need for legal status and voting rights to protect human beings, primarily Muslim and Christian Arabs, whose capacity for redress of the violation of their rights is blocked by lack of citizenship, among other legal handicaps. During each peace process these rights are further deferred, though they are the responsibility of the power with sovereignty to ensure. (For concerns about the current peace process, see samples from the International Crisis Group, such as: http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/israel-palestine/147-leap-of-faith-israel-s-national-religious-and-the-israeli-palestinian-conflict.aspx)

The key role of citizenship as a human right is contained in principle in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Government of Israel is a signatory (http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx).

Article 25 of that Covenant states:

Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

(a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;

(b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;

(c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his (her) country.

It should be noted, however, that the covenant does not convey the rights to be a citizen of any particular state.

Insofar as Israeli government policy continuously expands the confiscation of Palestinian land and water; destroys Palestinian homes and infrastructure; cuts Palestinians off from livelihood and enforces daily humiliation by a massive wall built primarily on Palestinian land; imprisons thousands of prisoners, including minors, without fair due process; denies fundamental rights of movement and enforcement of contract for those in occupied territories; keeps Gaza effectively in a state of collective punishment (since the election of Hamas representation in an open election); and maintains a second-class citizenship status for Arab Christians and Muslims who are not “Jewish Nationals” within pre-1967 Israel, the Government of Israel demonstrates a systematic and frequently violent identity-based denial of human rights.

This state of affairs has been documented repeatedly by the United Nations, the U.S. State Department, human rights organizations inside and outside of Israel, and is very difficult to justify on the basis of security; enforcing the dispossession of millions of people creates resentment, fear, occasional violence, and continuous trauma among the occupied population. (See as example, Situation of Human Rights in territories occupied since 1967: http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/469/94/PDF/N1346994.pdf?OpenElement.) The World Bank and other bodies have documented the blockages to Palestinian economic development caused by the occupation, creating dependency on Israel and adding to the costs of virtually all products. (See West Bank and Gaza, Area C and the Future of the Palestinian Economy: http://hlrn.org/img/violation/Area+C+Report+Oct-13.pdf) Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations have also documented the costs of occupation on human development: (See Kerem Navot (Naboth’s Vineyard) report on impacts of Israeli Settlers’ agriculture: http://rhr.org.il/eng/2014/01/report-agriculture-as-a-means-of-land-grab/) The recommendations in this resolution address the lack of rights underlying continued Palestinian dispossession, regardless of the outcome of peace talks, and would help address violence and abuses within Palestinian jurisdictions and among Palestinian as well as Israeli groups.

With regard to conversations about General Assembly policy positions and the views of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim neighbors and fellow U.S. citizens, this resolution proposes conversations that reflect the growing diversity in the Jewish community on the question of Israel’s expansion and treatment of the Palestinians, as well as the diversity of the Muslim community, itself torn by conflict overseas. This proposal does not propose comprehensive interfaith dialogue (which involves many topics), but a focus on peaceful change and human rights, subjects that may also allow for secular participants. The degree to which congregations or presbyteries would look at the scriptural bases for these would depend on participants.

The social witness policy on the Middle East approved by the General Assembly in 2010, Breaking Down the Walls (2010), included an encouragement of “local dialogues and shared projects with American Jews and Muslims …” as well as “study of Reformed theological understandings of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of historical understandings that encompass various narratives and verifiable sources” (Minutes, 2010, Part 1, p. 1023). Examples of different viewpoints from Christian, Jewish, and Muslim conversation partners were added as a supplement to that policy in 2012 (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/report-middle-east-study-committee).

That policy statement also included an initial statement of principles based in long Presbyterian support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, self-determination, and opposition to all identity-based forms of discrimination, including "equal rights for Palestinian citizens of the state of Israel" (Ibid), and “the cessation of systematic violation of human rights by any party, specifically, practices of administrative detention, collective punishment, the torture of prisoners and suspects, home demolitions and evictions, and the deportation of dissidents” (Ibid). This resolution provides measures to move forward on that larger policy.
Advice and Counsel on Item 04-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 04-09.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this item because we agree with B’Tselem, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, who state “Israel has created in the Occupied Territories a regime of separation based on discrimination.” The facts on the ground display a high level of discrimination for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial ethnic group over another, and on that basis, result in oppressing an entire ethnicity.

Palestinians are denied nationhood and nationality, while Israeli Jewish nationals (settlers on occupied land) have a superior status over Christians and Muslims living in Palestine on the basis of racial ethnic reasons. i.e., because they are Jewish. These Jewish settlers live in the Occupied Palestinians Territories (OPT) under civil law, while the indigenous people live under military law. Two separate legal systems apply based on identity. The separation is complete.

On Defining “Race” and Basing Privileges on It

- Contrary to common belief, “race” is a social and political reality, not a biological or genetic reality. There is wide-spread agreement among scholars that race, as understood in the United States, is a social construct. Race is not an objective, scientific, or biological consistent characteristic of a person or group of persons. (The ACREC resource person can speak more to this issue.)

- The evidence that race is not biological is the fact that the amount of genetic variation within so-called race groups is much greater than variation between groups. i.e., an African person can have more common DNA with an Asian person than with another African. “The genetic diversity within any historically defined race, swamps the small amount of difference between such groups, making the boundaries of these categories entirely arbitrary. Therefore, race in humans does not have a biological meaning” (Angie K. Huxley, http://www.biologyreference.com/Ar-Bi/Biology-of-Race Jan 23, 2014).

- The American Anthropological Association says “Present-day inequalities between so-called ‘racial’ groups are not consequences of their biological inheritance but products of historical and contemporary social, economic, educational, and political circumstances.” The ACREC reminds the 221st General Assembly (2014) that “ethnicity” has to do with blood and belonging, while “race” has to do with power, privilege, and prejudice. Which groups have “access to power and privilege” defines the boundaries, not biological differences.

- Racism, however, is a social system in which some are advantaged and others are disadvantaged because of skin color, or perceived “race.” Racism is a system of advantage that is perpetuated when its existence is not acknowledged.

On Inequality and Racism in Israel and the OPT

In Israel proper, according to The Abraham Fund, an initiative working since 1989 “to promote coexistence and equality among Israel’s Jewish and Arab citizens,” there is great inequality in Israel’s population, which is far worse in the OPT. This wide inequality gap is foundational for keeping Israel’s official policy of Hafrada (“separation” in Hebrew) in place. (apartheid means separation in Afrikaans).

The Abraham Fund: “Although Israel’s Arab citizens account for one-fifth of the country’s population, the economy of Israel is largely oriented toward its Jewish population. The Poverty Report (National Insurance Institute, 2006) indicates that over 54% of the country’s Arab citizens were living in poverty in 2006, compared to 14.7% of the country’s Jewish citizens. The widespread poverty among Arab families is attributed, for the most part, to the low employment rate of Arab citizens.24

The ACREC points to this data as foundational to attitudes that have developed in Israel and the OPT, which contribute to keeping the populations separate and unequal. According to a 2014 Israeli survey, “68% of Israelis believe the Arab population was subject to racism.” http://www.jpost.com/National-News/Survey-Who-suffers-from-racism-in-Israel-345603. (The figure is 79% for racism against Ethiopian migrant workers.)

Reported in Israeli Newspaper, Ha’aretz, a 2012 survey provides an even bleaker picture, showing that “most of the Jewish public in Israel supports the establishment of an apartheid regime in Israel if it formally annexes the West Bank.” Some of the survey results:

- 59 percent of the Jewish respondents want preference of Jews over Arabs in admissions to jobs in government ministries
- 49 percent of Jews want the state to treat Jewish citizens better than Arab citizens, 42 percent don’t want to live in the same buildings as Arabs

24 http://www.abrahamfund.org/en
• 42 percent don’t want their children in the same classes as Arab children
• 33 percent want to bar Arabs from voting for the Israeli parliament
• 69 percent would object to giving Palestinians in the West Bank the right to vote if the West Bank was annexed by Israel
• 74 percent is in favor of separate roads for Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank.

http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/survey-most-israeli-jews-wouldn-t-give-palestinians-vote-if-west-bank-was-annexedpremium-1.471644

The ACREC reminds the church that these Arabs who are, according to the survey, “subject to racism,” are indigenous people who deserve nothing less than equal rights, guaranteed by whatever government is in place.

In The Jewish Daily Forward, August 2013, Larry Derfner writes on racism in Israel:

The ADL [Anti-Defamation League] goes after anti-Semitism with a fist, it goes after Israeli racism with a sigh. As a matter of fact, the ADL and the entire American Jewish establishment should suspend their campaigns against anti-Semitism indefinitely and take a look at what’s going on in Israel.

http://forward.com/articles/182171/israels-everyday-racism-and-how-american-jews-tu/#ixzz2xdzNqUEV

The ACREC holds on to the belief that God created all people good. To deny some people (because of skin color or language) the privileges other have, is to deny God’s good creation. To allow this system—in which some receive advantages simply because of perceived “race”—to go unchecked is to deny that God made all people in God’s own good image.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-09

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern offers the following advice and counsel to the 221st General Assembly (2014) on Item 04-09.

Please see ACWC’s counsel offered on Item 04-01.

Item 04-10

[The assembly approved Item 04-10 with amendment. See pp. 13, 62.]


The 221st General Assembly (2014) declares that Zionism Unsettled does not represent the views of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [and directs all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) entities to express this statement in all future catalogs, print or online resources] [, and directs the staff of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to no longer distribute Zionism Unsettled and have the document removed from the church web store immediately].

Rationale

In January 2014, the Israel Palestine Mission Network (IPMN) of the PC(USA) issued a “congregational study guide” on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict titled Zionism Unsettled. This four-color book and DVD was made for sale on the PC(USA) store for $10, and purports to be used by congregations to study the issues involved in peacemaking in the Middle East. While not an official report of the church, it is marketed in such a way that it appears to have the stamp of approval of the whole church when it is actually a product of a mission network.

Using politically charged rhetoric, including calling Israel as being “towards a single Jewish, apartheid state, Zionism Unsettled presents a one-sided view of the conflict and is not a study guide, but instead, a polemic that distorts issues rather than educates. As such, it is in direct opposition to established General Assembly policy calling for the legitimate rights of both Palestinians and Israelis to be recognized. The study guide reveals a desire by some in our denomination to deny the right of the Jewish people to a homeland in Israel.

Through its placement on the PC(USA) website and store, Zionism Unsettled appears to represent the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and has been viewed that way in several press reports.

Presbyterians are called to support and encourage diverse points of view and vigorous discussion on a variety of issues. When crafting materials for a study guide, it is essential that issues are presented in a way in which those studying the issue can fairly examine as many sides of an issue as possible. A study guide should not be one-sided; nor should it denigrate one party. Zionism Unsettled fails in that it appears as propaganda attempting to sell itself as an unbiased study. Yet, it demonizes the Israelis and distorts complex issues.
The “Statement of the Ecumenical and Interreligious Work Group of Chicago Presbytery on Zionism Unsettled” captures the problems with the study guide quite clearly. They identified three main issues:

First, IPMN chose to argue its case outside of the bounds of the historic principles as laid down by the General Assembly over the years, equally affirming the creation and security of the State of Israel and the peoples within her, and the validity and necessity of a Palestinian state, sovereign and sustainable within negotiated and safe borders. Furthermore ... this document gives the appearance that it formally represents the PC(USA).

Second, to critique certain policies of the Israeli government is a practice supported by the Jewish and Israeli community itself, and is needed in all free societies, including the United States. But it is a different thing to lift up the stereotypical image of “the Zionist,” “Zionism” or “Israel” in which the description turns to scape-goating and the imagined stereotype is described as embodying humanity’s worst traits and motives, exhibiting long term machinations of destruction. ...

Third, to offer a critique of Israeli policies is, in and of itself, not inherently anti-Judaic. So, it is unfortunate the document is riddled with statements and allusions to Jewish people that fall under that rubric. (http://www.chicagopresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/EIRWG-Statement-on-Zionism-Unsettled.pdf)

“The Statement on ‘Zionism Unsettled,’” by Dr. Katharine Henderson, president, Auburn Theological Seminary, captures more of the biased and damaging nature of the report.

... The premise of the document appears to be that Zionism is the cause of the entire conflict in the Middle East and the root of all its problems. For its authors, Zionism functions as the original sin, from which flows all the suffering of the Palestinian people.

One of the important consequences of this polemic is to undermine the legitimacy of the state of Israel and contradict policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) over several decades. Our denomination has consistently supported the needs and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians; it has advocated for justice, security, and reconciliation for all, while acknowledging the complexity of the problem and the difficulty in reaching a just and lasting peace. (http://pfmep.org/press-releases/138-auburn-seminary-statement-on-zionism-unsettled)

The Reverend Doctor Christopher Leighton also captures the problems of this document in his “Open Letter to the Presbyterian Church.”

[The IPMN’s] agenda threatens to polarize our community, betray relationships with our Jewish colleagues, and ultimately undermine our credibility as “peacemakers.” Despite the resolution approved at the 218th General Assembly “to avoid taking broad stands that simplify a very complex situation into a caricature of reality where one side clearly is a fault and the other side is clearly a victim,” IPMN’s congregational study guide, “Zionism Unsettled,” [conflicts with] the ideals and the practices that our Church has striven to uphold. It turns us from peacemakers to polemicsists, and from honest dialogue partners to partisan ideologues. (http://www.icjs.org/featured-articles/open-letter-presbyterian-church-0)

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ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-10

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 04-10.

It is not the usual policy of General Assembly to vote on resources sold by the online store. The sale of any particular resource and the use of facilities of the church by organizations and individual Presbyterians does not represent an endorsement of those resources or a particular privilege of use. Yet this is not simply a matter of an effort to suppress discussion of controversial matters. People of good faith do often disagree on issues of conscience. The following two citations are therefore relevant:

F-3.0101 God Is Lord of the Conscience

a. That “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.”

b. Therefore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable: We do not even with to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others.

F-3.0105 Mutual Forbearance

That, while under the conviction of the above principle [Truth and Goodness F-3.0104] we think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith, we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which [people] of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.”

The ACSWP does not believe it helpful to compare voices commending and voices condemning, Zionism Unsettled, the resource in question. The resource is seen quite differently from this resolution by many Presbyterians and other people of faith. It is our understanding that this collection of essays represents an effort to answer the question of why settlements continue to be built, or the occupation continues, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Others may have different answers. The General Assembly is not called to endorse or condemn this resource as it is not a proposed official policy statement and is not being sent out by the General Assembly.
Advice and Counsel on Item 04-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 04-10.

The ACREC does not agree with the spirit or content of this resolution. Presbyterians have a time-honored tradition of study and dialogue and we value looking at difficult issues of our times from all sides and through different lenses. We have a longstanding tradition of not running away from difficult conversations, accepting that there are people of faith on both sides of any issue who deserve to be heard.

This quote from February 13, 2014, by Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency regarding the publication of Zionism Unsettled affirms:

Our church has a long history of engaging many points of view when it comes to dialogue on critical issues facing the world around us — it’s who we are, part of our DNA,” said Linda Valentine, executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. “There are likely as many differing opinions as there are Presbyterians—and, like many denominations, we don’t always agree.”

... In 2004, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) formed the Israel Palestine Mission Network (IPMN) to help move the church toward the goal of a just peace in Israel/Palestine. The independent group—which speaks to the church and not for the church—recently published a study guide, Zionism Unsettled: A Congregational Study. The guide is intended to prompt discussion on the ever-changing and tumultuous issue of Israel-Palestine. The IPMN booklet was neither paid for nor published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

“There are myriad voices within congregations, and some would like to see the church go beyond that stance,” added Valentine. “But we remain guided by the policies of the General Assembly, seeking peace for Israelis and Palestinians alike.”

There are a variety of voices and opinions within the Jewish community on this issue as well. Jewish Voice for Peace advocates for a peaceful and just solution among Palestinians and Israelis that respects human rights for all. (http://www.pcusa.org/news/2014/2/13/presbyterian-church-us-remains-committed-peace-ist/)

Walter Brueggemann, professor emeritus, Columbia Theological Seminary, has praised Zionism Unsettled: “The urgency of the Palestinian plight in the face of Israeli intransigence indicates that intentional, concrete, and sustained public action is necessary to respond credibly to the crisis. Zionism Unsettled is a welcome study guide. It will prove an effective vehicle for helping to mobilize public opinion so that both attitudes and policies can be transformed in the face of an imperious and exploitative ideology.” Comments like these from well-known scholars and advocates for justice clearly demonstrate how this resource opens needed conversation. More praise for the booklet is posted by the network that has published it here.

On May 19, 2014, Gradye Parson, Stated Clerk, wrote the following pastoral letter to Presbyterians as we approached our 221st General Assembly (2014):

In Presbyterians and Politics: Disturbers of Government*, I recalled the first General Assembly in 1789, where commissioners engaged with government by approving a letter to be written to President George Washington expressing delight in his appointment to the “first office in the nation.”

I also wrote,

On one hand, it would appear that those of the Reformed tradition have been defenders of the role of government, and on the other hand, disturbers of governments. Presbyterians have argued with the government about many issues, such as slavery, education, temperance, labor conditions, segregation, war, and the environment. At times, the General Assembly has spoken for the vast majority of the church, and at other times, the assembly has spoken a prophetic word to itself and the world.

Today we continue our rich tradition of engagement in the public sphere. (http://pres-outlook.org/2014/05/call-prophetic-witness-letter-stated-clerk-gradye-parsons/) (*www.pcusa.org/resource/presbyterians-and-politics/)

The ACREC believes in open wide discussion of the issues of our times and urges the assembly to refrain from shutting down debate on issues that may not be widely agreed upon.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 04-10

Comment on Item 04-10—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Israel Palestine Mission Network was established by a directive of the 216th General Assembly (2004), “for the purpose of creating currents of wider and deeper Presbyterian involvement with Palestinian partners, aimed at demonstrating solidarity and changing the conditions that erode the humanity of Palestinians living in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza.”

Item 04-11

[The assembly approved Item 04-11 with amendment. See pp. 13, 62.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On the Tragedy at Tent of Nations.

Responding to the unwarranted and illegal attack by the Israeli military on the Nassar family farm near Bethlehem on May, 19, 2014, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) takes the following steps:
1. Condemns the May 19, 2014, bulldozing by the Israeli military of 1,500 to 2,000 mature, fruit-bearing apricot and apple trees and grapevines growing on land owned by the Daoud Nassar family in the West Bank of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

2. Commends and thanks the Nassar family for establishing on their land Tent of Nations, a peace project that has hosted thousands of international visitors who have visited the farm, worked as volunteers, held workshops and conferences in the facilities there, worked in the summer youth camps, and have taught in the Women’s Education Center they established in the nearby village of Nahalin.

3. Encourages Presbyterians to visit Tent of Nations and to work to end the senseless destruction of farms, homes, and businesses in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

[4. Endorses legal efforts at redress and protection of the “Tent of Nations” and invites Presbyterians and others of good will to help this family preserve and rebuild upon their ancestral land.]

Rationale

On May 20, 2014, Friends of Tent of Nations North America (FOTONNA) posted the following appeal on their web site (fotonna.org):

This petition letter is being written in protest of the actions by the Israeli Military Courts against the Nassar family and their Tent of Nations Peace Project. This family has documentation of ownership for their 100-acre farm, located just six miles southwest of Bethlehem in the West Bank, dating back to the Ottoman Empire. They have been working through the Israeli Military/Civil Courts and the Israeli Supreme Court since 1991, defending their ownership rights to this land called Daher’s Vineyard. So far, they have been able to hold back serious threats with legal challenges/appeals through the courts. In December 2012, new demolition orders were issued for 10 structures on the farm (including animal pens, compost toilets, temporary tent structures, cisterns, etc.) and three more structures were added in January 2013. None of these structures poses a security threat to neighboring Israeli settlements.

The family protested these actions through their lawyer; they applied for new building permits for all 13 structures. In addition, they submitted the following information by February 24, 2013:

- Additional land survey maps: one topographical map which shows the farm location in the region; two technical maps, one at 1/250 scale and the other 1/50,000 scale, which show the new structures and their locations and dimensions;
- Plans for sources of providing electricity and water to the land from the village and for provisions for gray water and filtration systems;
- Approval/signature of the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture, certifying that the land is agricultural land.

As of mid-April 2014, there had been no word from the Military Court as to their decisions regarding these matters; the family never knows what to expect or when to expect it. In late April/early May 2014, however, the Military Authorities placed a warning on the land declaring that the trees were planted on “State Land” and, therefore, constituted a trespass and should be “evacuated”! On May 5, the Nassar family filed an appeal with the Military Court against this order and clarified that the land was not “State Land” and that the trees were planted on the family land. Furthermore, they clarified that the Supreme Court had declared that the Nassar family should continue with the “re-registration” process of their land.

According to the law, no demolition or evacuation is allowed once an appeal is filed and until a final verdict has been delivered. In spite of this fact, however, they rushed to destroy the land and uproot the trees. On May 19, 2014, the Israeli Military brought in bulldozers and, unannounced, illegally destroyed between 1,500 and 2,000 mature, fruit-bearing apricot and apple trees and grape vines in the lower valley on the land as well as reducing the terraced land to rubble. We would like you to look into this situation as soon as possible and help us prevent any additional destructive action on the part of the Israeli Military from taking place. This family lives by the motto “We Refuse to be Enemies” and is committed to solving issues in a non-violent manner. This 22-year struggle must come to an end in a just and legal manner and we urge you to use your influence to ensure that justice does prevail in this case. (http://www.fotonna.org/newsletters/red-alert.html)

On June 3, 2014, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship (PPF) Executive Director Rick Ufford-Chase issued the following statement (presbypeacefellowship.org):

I have visited the Tent of Nations twice, and have told my friends that I believe it to be the most powerful, authentic example of a commitment to Christian, principled nonviolence anywhere in the world. I consider the Nassar family my friends. On the PPF Delegation’s visit in January, my son Teo and I planted several small trees together, which was among the most meaningful things we have ever done together.

When I grow weary of the struggle for justice, or question my own commitment to nonviolence as a strategy of resistance to powerful forces of violence and oppression, I think of the Tent of Nations. If decision-makers in the State of Israel believe that they can demoralize the Nassar family – or thousands of us who are their supporters around the world – they have seriously miscalculated. When Jesus said to his disciples “I say to you, listen – love your enemies,” he was crazy like a fox. In the face of overwhelming military might backed by the power of empire, in Jesus’ time and in our own, the most powerful response to oppression and destruction and violence and death is the power of love.

I hope you’ll take a few moments to sign this petition and let them know that this travesty is a historical pivot-point, a turning point. Illegal expansion of settlements must stop. The occupation must stop! Bulldozing olive groves and Palestinian homes must stop.

Then—please write a note of hope to the Nassars to thank them for their witness and their faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

May the peace that passes all understanding be upon each of us.
Advice and Counsel on Item 04-11—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-11 with amendment by adding Recommendation 4 to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“(4. Endorses legal efforts at redress and protection of the ‘Tent of Nations’ and invites Presbyterians and others of good will to help this family preserve and rebuild upon their ancestral land.)

This commissioners’ resolution is consistent with existing Presbyterian policy and pursuits of peace affirmed by previous assemblies.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-11

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-11.

The Nassar family has a long history of living out The Good News. The Tent of Nations is a fulfilled dream of Bishara Nassar, a Palestinian Christian who lived all his life in Bethlehem and on the land itself and died in 1976, after which his family carried on with his work to uphold his vision. According to the Tent of Nations, this vision seeks “to bring people of various cultures together to build bridges of understanding, reconciliation, and peace.” Importantly, Tent of Nations “brings together youth from around the world, especially from areas of conflict for face-to-face interaction.” So it is especially tragic for such a peacemaking presence so close to the birthplace of Christ to be under constant threat of destruction and to have borne such a loss last month.

The ACREC urges the General Assembly to support this Christian family in Palestine who have remained on their land near Bethlehem in the West Bank as all other land circling them has been turned into illegal Jewish settlements. The recent tragedy of the loss of mature fruit trees is documented with several photographs on this Israeli news site: http://972mag.com/photos-israeli-authorities-destroy-palestinian-families-valley-of-fruit-trees/91701/.

Isaiah 55:12–13: “For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

Item 04-12

[The assembly approved Item 04-12 with amendment. See pp. 60, 62–64.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Reaffirming the Rights of Children and Attention to Violence Against Children in Israel and Palestine.

[Heeding the call of Christ to care for the welfare and safety of children, truly “the least of these,” and to advocate for them in situations of crisis or abuse, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Israel Palestine Mission Network, the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to do the following:

[1. Appoint a team to conduct a study of the history and current situation of violence against children in Palestine and Israel, including

[• widespread and systematic patterns of ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system, including physical violence, psychological intimidation, and violent night arrests;

[• denial of due process guarantees, including denial of the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, particularly the presence of a parent or family member during interrogation;

[• the use of coercion or force during interrogations, including physical violence and psychological pressure, to compel children and youth to give testimony, confess guilt, or to provide otherwise incriminating statements against their family, friends, and communities;

[• the negative impact on former child detainees, including the psychosocial effects and obstacles to reintegration and access to education following their release from custodial detention; and]
1. Reaffirms the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the human rights of all children, particularly the children of Palestine and Israel.

2. Reaffirms the support of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as expressed by the 202nd General Assembly (1990), and affirms its support for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

3. Calls upon the United States Senate to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this call to members of the Senate and encourages the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA) to promote the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in its advocacy with the United States Senate.

4. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency, in cooperation with the Israel Palestine Mission Network, to engage in advocacy and public witness for the human rights of children in Palestine and Israel in relation to:
   - widespread and systematic patterns of ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system, including physical violence, psychological intimidation, and violent night arrests;
   - denial of due process guarantees, including denial of the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, particularly the presence of a parent or family member during interrogation;
   - the use of coercion or force during interrogations, including physical violence and psychological pressure, to compel children and youth to give testimony, confess guilt, or to provide otherwise incriminating statements against their family, friends, and communities;
   - the negative impact on former child detainees, including the psychosocial effects and obstacles to reintegration and access to education following their release from custodial detention; and
The discriminatory legal framework in force in the Occupied Palestinian Territory involving separate laws governing children based on religion or ethnicity.

[5. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency[, in cooperation with the Israel Palestine Mission Network,] to create information documents, study guides, or other educational materials using information, research, and statistics from the Palestinian Authority and the State of Israel, United Nations agencies, including OCHA and UNICEF, and other human rights or nongovernmental organizations, such as B’Tselem, Defense for Children International Palestine, and Amnesty International to be made available through digital download at the PC(USA) website, as well as links to materials and research from other organizations.]

[Financial Implication: Per Capita $13,130 (2015); Per Capita $7,000 (2015)—Revised]

Rationale

“Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven. What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.” (Mt. 18:10–14)

Because we believe that all children depend upon adults for safety and security. In a world that does not always value children; All children are affected first and most deeply by those things that work against health and wholeness:

Therefore we hope for a world where all children can find a safe place; where all ages, races, genders, creeds, and abilities are recognized, valued, and celebrated; where all adults hear the voices of children and speak with as well as for them; where all children have “first call” on the world’s resources and first place in the minds and hearts of the world’s adults. ("A Vision for Children and the Church,” adopted 1993)

Hundreds of cases of human rights abuses against Palestinian children (under the age of 18) documented each year by UNICEF, Save the Children, Defense for Children International Palestine (DCI-Palestine), and other organizations. In many cases, children are forcibly removed from their homes, often in the middle of the night, and taken to detention centers or prisons. In some cases there is deliberate sleep deprivation as part of their detention experience.

Often the children and their parents are not told the reasons for the arrest, and parents have no idea where their children are being taken. The most common accusation against these children is stone-throwing. While interrogated in detention, children are routinely asked questions about individuals in their families and communities, are shown photos of individuals that they are required to identify, and asked to make reports on the activities of persons around them.

During 2013, according to statistics from the Israeli Prison Service, an average of 199 children were detained and three out of four Palestinian children arrested from the West Bank experienced some form of physical violence during arrest, transfer, or interrogation. Some estimates place the number of children who have been detained and prosecuted in the system at 8,000 since the year 2000.

Following a ten-year study, UNICEF released a March 2013 paper, “Children in Military Detention,” which reports that more than 700 Palestinian children, ages 12–17, are detained each year by Israeli army, police, and security agents. “Ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system appears to be widespread, systematic, and institutionalized,” the paper says.

The Defence of Children International—Palestine website introduction reports that:

Since the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory in 1967, Palestinians have been charged with offences under Israeli military law and tried in Israeli military courts. It is estimated by the UN that since 1967, over 700,000 Palestinian men, women and children have been detained under Israeli military orders.

The Israeli military detention system consists of a network of military bases, interrogation and detention centres, and police stations in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and in Israel, where Palestinians, predominantly from the West Bank, are initially taken for questioning and temporary detention. Some of these facilities are inside settlements in the West Bank. Palestinians, including children, remain at these facilities while awaiting sentencing by the military courts, or are transferred to prisons, most of which are located inside Israel, where they wait to be sentenced, or to serve out their prison terms. It should be noted that transferring children out of the Occupied Palestinian Territory violates Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

An Israeli juvenile military court was established in September 2009, following mounting criticism relating to the prosecution of children as young as 12 years in the same military courts used to prosecute adults. In practice, the juvenile military court convenes every Monday and Thursday, using the same facilities and court staff used by the adult military courts. Children continue to be brought into court in groups of twos and threes, wearing leg chains around their ankles and dressed in the same brown prison uniforms worn by adults.

Military Order 1651 establishes a minimum age of criminal responsibility at 12 years, and sets out the maximum penalties that can be imposed on children in various age categories for a number of listed offences. (http://dci-palestine.org/content/child-detention)

Given the commitment of the PC(USA) to studying, advocating, and taking action on behalf of children at risk, with particular attention to those most vulnerable to the effects of poverty, violence, and denial of basic rights, this resolution asks that the PC(USA) begin its own study of the situation of children in Palestine and Israel and to create a report with recommendations to be brought to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) with its findings and recommendations.
Mindful of the need to conserve denominational resources, this study shall be conducted in digital formats and will use available on-line meeting sites in order to do its work. Should some funding be needed to complete the study, this resolution suggests that the study team approach the Israel Palestine Mission Network for a grant to support the work of the study. As those grants are awarded on an annual basis at the network’s annual meeting, a grant request should be made as soon as possible after the study team is named.

Relevant Research


United Nations Agencies and Offices

Committee on the Rights of the Child
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC)
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (OSRSG-VAC)
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA-OPT)
UNICEF
UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

International Organizations

Defense for Children International – International Secretariat
Child Rights Information Network—CRIN
NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child
Human Rights Watch
Amnesty International
Save the Children International

Palestinian and Israeli NGOs

Al-Haq
Addameer
Al-Mezan Centre for Human Rights
Defense for Children International Palestine
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights
Public Committee Against Torture in Israel—PCATI
B’Tselem—Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories
Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions—ICAHD
Adalah
Association for Civil Rights in Israel—ACRI
Peace Now
Breaking the Silence
Yesh Din

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-12

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the assembly, in response to Item 04-12, approve the following alternate resolution:

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

“1. Reaffirms the commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the human rights of all children, particularly the children of Palestine and Israel.

“2. Reaffirms the support of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as expressed by the 202nd General Assembly (1990), and affirms its support for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

“3. Calls upon the United States Senate to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this call to members of the Senate and encourages the Presbyterian Mission Agency* of the PC(USA) to promote the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in its advocacy with the United States Senate.
04 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

[*Editorial correction to delete the phrase “Office of Public Witness” and to insert the phrase “Presbyterian Mission Agency” in its place, 6/15/2014, per Standing Rule E.7.e.]

“4. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency*, in cooperation with the Israel Palestine Mission Network, to engage in advocacy and public witness for the human rights of children in Palestine and Israel in relation to:

[*Editorial correction to delete the phrase “ministries of World Mission and Compassion, Peace and Justice, including the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations and the Office of Public Witness” and to insert the phrase “Presbyterian Mission Agency” in its place, 6/15/2014, per Standing Rule E.7.e.]

• widespread and systematic patterns of ill-treatment and torture within the Israeli military detention system, including physical violence, psychological intimidation, and violent night arrests;

• denial of due process guarantees, including denial of the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, particularly the presence of a parent or family member during interrogation;

• the use of coercion or force during interrogations, including physical violence and psychological pressure, to compel children and youth to give testimony, confess guilt, or to provide otherwise incriminating statements against their family, friends, and communities;

• the negative impact on former child detainees, including the psychosocial effects and obstacles to reintegration and access to education following their release from custodial detention; and

• the discriminatory legal framework in force in the Occupied Palestinian Territory involving separate laws governing children based on religion or ethnicity.

“5. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency*, in cooperation with the Israel Palestine Mission Network, to create information documents, study guides, or other educational materials using information, research, and statistics from the Palestinian Authority and the State of Israel, United Nations agencies, including OCHA and UNICEF, and other human rights or nongovernmental organizations, such as B’Tselem, Defense for Children International Palestine, and Amnesty International to be made available through digital download at the PC(USA) website, as well as links to materials and research from other organizations.”

[*Editorial correction to delete the phrase “ministries of World Mission and Compassion, Peace and Justice, including the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations and the Office of Public Witness” and to insert the phrase “Presbyterian Mission Agency” in its place, 6/15/2014, per Standing Rule E.7.e.]

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-12

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-12.

The ACREC agrees that study materials with attention to violence against children in Palestine and Israel are needed resources. The church also needs to learn about the ill-treatment of children in Israeli military detention; this is an area of information that very little is known about.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-12

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-12.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns recognizes the many occasions on which the PC(USA) has urged the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the social witness policies approved by General Assembly cited in the rationale section of the commissioners’ resolution.

While the resolution mentions no disaggregated statistics on the gender of children under age eighteen who are detained, it is safe to say there are young girls detained as well as boys. In such detention, girls are particularly powerless and vulnerable. Because children do not have access to families and representation, there is no way to determine whether or not sexual or physical abuse is occurring.

Strengthening the church with information and resources will provide concerned members ways to advocate for the rights of children in this specific context. ACWC committee members are grateful to the commissioners for calling this human rights violation to our attention.
Item 04-13

[The assembly approved Item 04-13 with amendment. See pp. 13, 64.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On a Commitment to Prayer for Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation in Israel and Palestine.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls for the following actions from the Stated Clerk and our presbyteries concerning a call to community engagement and prayer for peace, justice, and reconciliation in Israel/Palestine:

1. [Along with the actions of this General Assembly on Israel and Palestine,] the Stated Clerk shall invite persons from within American Jewish and Palestinian communities (both Christian and Muslim) who represent broad perspectives and concerns regarding conflict between people in Israel and Palestine, to gather for a common day of prayer on the diverse interfaith community and PC(USA) partners for a season of prayer for justice and peace in Israel/Palestine, encouraging gatherings on regional and congregational levels that may include off-the-record discussions. Prayer will be followed by a time of listening for the purpose of deeper understanding of one another. Guests are invited to a closed-door conversation to share their hopes and concerns for peace in Israel/Palestine, the emotions they may have experienced in relation to the conflict, and their understanding of what makes for peace in the region. This time of listening shall close with a time of prayer.

2. Likewise, the Stated Clerk shall write to mid councils, urging them to create a similar day of prayer and listening in their own communities (encouraging pastors to gather with Jewish leaders and “Arab Christians and/or Muslims” given the demographic realities reflected in their context).

3. Mid council facilitators shall be urged to model a form of listening with participants that encourages mutuality and confidentiality, so that deep concerns and commitments may be spoken and heard though they may not be resolved.

4. Facilitators shall be directed to resources from the Reconciliation Program of Presbyterian World Mission and the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Interfaith Relations Office that promote constructive conversation and meaningful dialogue.

5. Presbyteries shall be urged to send a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) to share what has taken place within the presbytery to promote such prayer gatherings.

Rationale

As the Apostle Paul reminds us, in Christ we have known the reconciling God and those who have been called to follow Christ have been entrusted with the message of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:11–21). The Confession of 1967 asserts that at the heart of the gospel in any age is the reconciling work of Jesus Christ (Book of Confessions, 9.06), and the church is called to be an example of reconciliation and freedom, even amongst the nations (Book of Confessions, 9.45). The theological claims in the Confession of 1967 were reaffirmed in a time of great division: the growing Cold War, the fervor of the civil rights movement, the rise of the women’s movement, and the confession was published in the year of the Six-Day war, also known as the 3rd Arab-Israeli war. The call of this confession has shown itself to be both salient and prescient. In it, we are reminded that disciples of Christ are not called to engage the world by patterning our use of power after the world. By contrast, our model for engagement is Jesus Christ, who showed power in the form of a servant, humbling himself even to death on a cross.

For ten years, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been debating overtures regarding boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS). Whether or not the overtures regarding BDS are approved by the 221st General Assembly (2014), people on all sides of the debate are eager to end this culture of conflict (both within and beyond the church). Many are eager to seek new paths that lead toward justice, peace, and reconciliation for all people in Israel and Palestine. Prayer and bridge building through active listening at the national and local level may be a key to that new path.

Last month Pope Francis visited the Holy Land and the world watched as he prayed with both Palestinians and Israeli Jews with his words, his hands, and his feet. In the spirit of the reconciling Christ and in the posture of Pope Francis, this overture is an invitation to the PC(USA) to enter into a season of prayer and listening. Presbyterians believe that the reconciling Christ is at work in the world, even in the midst of conflict between people. In prayer, we listen for God’s guidance, expect God’s transformation, and discover new ways to align ourselves most faithfully with God’s healing and reconciling work in the world. Joining together with Jews, Christians, and Muslims to listen and to pray together for a just and lasting peace, could not only open new avenues for reconciliation between our traditions, but cultivate the trust, imagination, and commitment necessary to find new ways to work together concretely for justice and peace for all peoples in Israel/Palestine.

The General Assembly has long committed its support to grassroots peacemaking efforts. Supporting such a resolution opens the door to greater discernment for Presbyterians as they develop relationships, grow in compassion, and pray that...
wounds might be healed, chains of fear and hatred loosed, and new paths toward a lasting peace discovered. Our faith compels us to be rooted in prayer and rooted in relationship. By so doing, we live into the Great Commandment Jesus commends: to love God and love our neighbor. Let us lay claim to the hope and the promise that the God who created the cosmos and unleashed the Spirit in the world, intercedes on our behalf in prayer, and will transform hearts and minds, bodies and souls. May God’s Spirit continue to lead us as reconciling people.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-13

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-13 with amendment: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“[1. The] [Along with the actions of this General Assembly on Israel and Palestine,] the Stated Clerk shall [invite persons from within American Jewish and Palestinian communities (both Christian and Muslim) who represent broad perspectives and concerns regarding conflict between people in Israel and Palestine, to gather for a common day of [call on the diverse interfaith community and PC(USA) partners for a season of] prayer for justice and peace in Israel/Palestine, encouraging gatherings on regional and congregational levels that may include off-the-record discussions] [Prayer will be followed by a time of listening for the purpose of deeper understanding of one another. Guests are invited to a closed door conversation] to share their hopes and concerns for peace in Israel/Palestine, the [pain] [feelings] they [may] have experienced in [relation to] the conflict, and their understanding of what makes for peace in the region. [This time of listening shall close with a time of prayer.]"

“[2. Likewise, the Stated Clerk shall write to mid councils, urging them to create a similar day of prayer and listening in their own communities (encouraging pastors to gather with Jewish leaders and “Arab Christians and/or Muslims” given the demographic realities reflected in their context);]

“[3. Mid council facilitators shall be urged to model a form of listening with participants that encourages mutuality and confidentiality, so that deep concerns and commitments may be spoken and heard though they may not resolved;]

“[4. Facilitators shall be directed to resources from the Reconciliation Program of Presbyterian World Mission and the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Interfaith Relations Office that promote constructive conversation and meaningful dialogue.]

“[5. Presbyteries shall be urged to send a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) to share what has taken place within the presbytery to promote such prayer gatherings;]"

The approach of this resolution effectively confuses the struggle for human rights and the suffering experienced in Palestine with the emotional experiences and sharing of U.S. citizens. While it is essential to recognize the validity of a range of feelings, the “closed door” context suggests either trust-building and possibly therapeutic exercises or negotiating sessions. In either case, the choice of participants would inevitably be selective and objectives unclear if unrelated to the stated goals of a just peace achieved by nonviolent action. Item 11-09 in fact recommends sincere interfaith discussions among congregations but with a scriptural and policy basis for discussion and prayer.

If decisions on policy matters were in fact to be taken by a group convened by the Stated Clerk, then the “open meetings” policy could apply, but informal discussions are certainly currently within the purview of the Stated Clerk. The cost of such an interfaith gathering might be more merited if related to actions of the General Assembly, but the amendments encourage simply the recognition that prayer and discussion may be merited, not as a substitute for addressing particular measures to help bring justice and peace, but as an accompaniment to them. This would be the choice of participants on each local or regional level, perhaps with the goal of friendship building and truth telling. Further, a confession of complicity might well be more important than a sharing of aggrieved feelings, given the role of the United States in supporting a very unfair situation of real suffering for many.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-13

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 04-13.

The ACREC supports the spirit of reconciliation and healing of this resolution. It is important to have prayer and healing when there have been issues that have divided justice advocates.
Comment on Item 04-13—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Item 04-13 asks, in part, for the Presbyterian Mission Agency for resources related to prayer with and among persons of different religious traditions. The Office of Interfaith Relations has developed and published several resources created for the purpose of accompanying congregations and mid councils in their interfaith engagements. In particular, *Respectful Presence: An Understanding of Interfaith Prayer and Celebration From A Reformed Christian Perspective* was commended to the congregations and governing bodies of the PC(USA) by the 209th General Assembly (1997). *Respectful Presence* offers rationale and guidelines for prayer with interfaith neighbors. It includes a congregational study guide and a sample service called “A Service of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East.” The Office of Interfaith Relations also has available for download these additional resources helpful to interfaith prayer and worship:

1. The Interfaith Toolkit
2. Prayers for Peace in the Middle East—From the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East
3. Presbyterian Principles for Interfaith Dialogue
4. Giving Thanks with Our Interfaith Neighbors–NCCC
6. Interfaith, Celebration, Prayer, and Worship—Based on Respectful Presence
7. Getting Started in Interfaith Relations—2008

All of the resources named are available at [https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/interfaith/](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/interfaith/).

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**Item 04-14**

[The assembly disapproved Item 04-14. See pp. 60, 64.]

*Commissioners’ Resolution. Support for a Just and Peaceful Compromise of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.*

The 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. Endorses as a “third way” approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the discussion paper written by the Ecumenical and Interreligious Work Group of the Presbytery of Chicago, “Perspectives on Presbyterian Church (USA) Support for a Just and Peaceful Compromise of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.” (See the attachment, CR_17%20Background%20Attachment.pdf.)
2. Directs that this paper be distributed to every presbytery of the PC(USA), be made available through the PC(USA) website, and urges presbyteries and congregations to study it and engage in conversations around it.
3. Encourages presbyteries and congregations of the PC(USA) to engage in the following types of actions to promote the conditions necessary for a just and peaceful future for Palestinians and Israelis:
   - Support Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers and their initiatives;
   - Seek partnerships;
   - Encourage understanding of opposing views;
   - Establish relations locally;
   - Get information firsthand from those working for a just and peaceful compromise;
   - Visit Israel, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza together and listen to the full range of perspectives from people on the ground.

*Rationale*

In the midst of contentious debate over selective divestment from companies profiting from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, calls for more expansive participation in the boycott/divestment/sanctions movement as a strategy to pressure Israel to change its occupation and settlement policies, and in light of the controversial study document *Zionism Unsettled*, we believe
that there is a hopeful and humanizing perspective from which to view and engage the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We believe that divestment will ultimately do more harm than good and alienate Presbyterians from partners that we must be in relationship with if we hope to make any constructive contribution to peacemaking in the Middle East. While we understand the sense of urgency that many Presbyterians feel about this issue, we reject the notion that our only alternatives are divestment or doing nothing. The discussion paper offered by the Ecumenical and Interreligious Work Group of the Presbyterian Church of Chicago is a “third way” approach that prioritizes balanced relationship building and partnerships and encourages concrete actions that promote the conditions necessary for a just and peaceful future in the Middle East.

The following key understandings are necessary for such a compromise to be viable:

- The current situation is intolerable for Palestinians, and unsustainable for Israel.
- Presbyterians must listen to and honor the tragic histories and cherished aspirations of each people, as they understand it themselves. We must not seek to deny or diminish the incongruity of these two stories, nor try to equate the struggle and suffering conveyed in each.
- Despite the singularity of each people, their lives and destinies are intertwined. Any just and peaceful compromise of the conflict must be credible and real for both.
- Such a compromise can only be achieved through the self-determination of each people, coupled with a non-negotiable commitment to human rights and communal recognition for all concerned.
- Whatever form the final compromise may take, it will only be achieved through the actions taken by, and decisions made by, the two peoples directly involved.
- We propose that Presbyterians actively support on-the-ground efforts for self-determination, human rights, and respectful co-existence, in order to create the conditions for an achievable, just and peaceful compromise, and lay the groundwork of the harder task of communal reconciliation, undertaken by, and for, both Israelis and Palestinians.

Any stances or actions taken by the PC(USA) must seek to ensure Israel’s right to exist and the end of the military occupation of the West Bank; to resolve the question of East Jerusalem; and to reverse the economic embargo of Gaza by both Israel and Egypt. Conversely, opposing measures that create obstacles to a two-state compromise—such as “normalizing” the occupation, or threatening the safety and well-being of Israeli citizens—must also be a part of the calculation.

As a denomination, Presbyterians are compelled to work on behalf of both sides for a just and peaceful compromise. We should create the conditions that enable the pursuit of an equitable two-state compromise and eliminate the obstacles to such an agreement in pursuit of achieving the desired goal.

We call upon the PC(USA) to consider concrete actions such as these:

Support Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers and their initiatives

Presbyterians—in cooperation with local Jewish, Palestinian Muslim, and Christian communities—can identify and support initiatives in the region and the U.S., where Israelis and Palestinians are working for the economic and social development of Palestinians, and reconciliation on behalf of both peoples. For example:

- Work of the Children of Ibillin and Fr. Elias Chacour;
- Palestinian Children’s Relief Fund.

Seek partnerships

Presbyterians can seek partnerships—regardless of ideological differences—with Jews and Palestinians in service to any aspect of securing a just and peaceful compromise of the conflict. For example:

- Oppose the sale of products from contested settlements in the West Bank;
- Petition Hamas to revise its charter in recognition of Israel as a Jewish state;
- Provide humanitarian aid to Gaza, refugee camps in Lebanon, and residents of Sederot.

Encourage understanding of opposing views

Presbyterians can get to know all the communities involved—Palestinian Muslim and Christian, and Jewish. They can respectfully engage those in any community who do not share their stance on resolving the conflict. Presbyterians should speak up when any of these communities are defamed or demonized. For example:

- Regularly visit and listen without comment to their concerns and hopes for a just and peaceful future in the Middle East;
- Collect and disseminate human-interest stories about the pain and suffering the conflict has inflicted on both Palestinians and Israelis;
- Collect and disseminate stories from those on the front lines working for empowerment and reconciliation.
Establish relations locally

Establish relations with local Jewish, and Palestinian Muslim and Christian, neighbors. Interreligious encounter is no substitute for working towards justice and peace, but it can pave the way for cooperation towards that end. Specifically:

- Visit each community during their religious and cultural celebrations;
- Express solidarity with each community in the midst of their own struggle or suffering;
- Encourage study groups focused on initiatives for empowerment and reconciliation.

Get information first-hand from those working for a just and peaceful compromise

Seek out information from those working for the benefit of both Israelis and Palestinians, with a vision for an equitable future—no matter how unsettling those reports may be. For example, connect with Rabbis for Human Rights.

Visit Israel, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza together

Visit the region together with unlikely ideological co-travelers who are committed to the principle of self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. Seek to travel and meet with those who challenge your perspective. For example:

- Plan trips with mainstream members of all four communities—Jewish, Palestinian Muslim and Christian, and Presbyterian;
- Visit locations determined by each of the participating communities;
- Identify initiatives for empowerment and reconciliation to support jointly;
- Return to educate and mobilize their respective communities.

Presbyterians must join together with their local Jewish, Palestinian Muslim and Christian communities, to actively and practically support empowerment of the Palestinian people; reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians, from the grassroots up; and efforts by individuals and communities willing to take on this extraordinary task, in a courageous and selfless way….before it is too late.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-14

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-14—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following on Item 04-14: ACSWP advises disapproval of Recommendations 1 and 2, and affirms Recommendation 3 as consistent with General Assembly policies.

Item 04-14 has three sections: Section 3, which “encourages presbyteries and congregations of the PC(USA) to engage in the following types of actions ...” is consistent with current General Assembly policy and recommends steps that may be helpful in “promoting the conditions necessary for a just and peaceful future for Palestinians and Israelis.”

Recommendations 1 and 2 are problematic in that they call upon the General Assembly to endorse a particular document created by a small group in the Presbytery of Chicago, which they self-describe as offering a “third way.” For the General Assembly to endorse such a document out of hand, and send it to the presbyteries for study, as well as post it on the PC(USA) website, without adequate opportunity for the assembly to review and critique it or to determine the degree to which it actually offers a new, “third way,” would be presumptuous. It is not in fact an overture that was approved by the presbytery, and, among other debatable assertions, mistakenly characterizes the nonviolent economic measures endorsed by past General Assemblies (boycott, corporate engagement, and divestment) as violent.

It may, in fact, simply be appropriate for commissioners to disapprove this resolution, as the matters are also before the assembly in actions of General Assembly committees and in overtures approved by presbyteries after careful debate.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 04-14

Advice and Counsel on Item 04-14—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 04-14.

While ACREC encourages study and agrees with some of the recommendations of this resolution, members of ACREC have not had access to the paper recommended by the resolution for endorsement and distribution. We are concerned about the content of the paper, its seeming lack of support for divestment, and the process by which this resolution has come to us.
Appendix 1

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

COMPASSION, PEACE AND JUSTICE

VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

April 19, 2011

Mr. Douglas R. Oberhelman
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Caterpillar, Inc.
100 NE Adams Street
Peoria, IL 61629-1430

Dear Mr. Oberhelman:

Greetings to you. My name is Brian Ellison, I’m a pastor of a Presbyterian church in the Kansas City area. I’ve served for twelve years here and during that time have also served on a variety of committees at the national level of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). I am serving currently as chair of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), and I am a director of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

As you are probably aware, at the direction of our General Assembly, our committee has been working for the past seven years with several companies in whom we invest, including Caterpillar, Inc., to address a number of concerns about the ways those companies are profiting from certain pursuits in Israel and Palestine that we believe have contributed, directly or indirectly, to suffering in that troubled region. The conversations between CAT and our committee have not always been productive. Indeed, our representatives and predecessors—yours and mine—have made very little progress in finding common ground or achieving even modest agreement on ways the company’s otherwise positive commitments to human rights could be lived out in this part of the world. The negative outcomes of past attempts at conversation (or, sometimes, the absence of conversation) have adversely affected both the company and the church, including the thousands of Presbyterians in the Peoria area whose families and congregations include Caterpillar employees at every level of the company.

I would like for us to try to change that, and I’m asking you for the opportunity to meet. I’d like to meet with you personally or with representatives at a high enough level of the company who have the ability to speak with authority on matters of company policy and, potentially, help bring about real change. Our committee is willing to have this conversation with a new openness to the company’s efforts when they are undertaken sincerely and forthrightly.

This is not to diminish the depth or seriousness of our concerns. As you may know, last summer’s General Assembly (our church’s highest governing body) committed to continued dialogue with Caterpillar (rather than the divestment that some regional bodies within the church were calling for), but also denounced the company’s “continued profit-making from non-peaceful uses of a number of its products.” The Assembly called upon the company “to carefully

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Toll-free: 888-728-7228 ext. 5909 · Toll-free fax: 502-392-5788

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April 19, 2011  
Page Two  

review its involvement in obstacles to a just and lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, and to take affirmative steps to end its complicity in the violation of human rights.” The Assembly’s statement also lifted up Caterpillar’s many examples of positive leadership in the community, state and nation, noting its donation of resources and equipment and its deserved recognition in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. The statement continued, “But these positive acts do not excuse the severity of the particular injustice that is being done to the Palestinian people through the use, in part, of certain Caterpillar products and from which Caterpillar profits directly or indirectly.”  

This contrast between, on the one hand, Caterpillar’s stated commitments and historic record, and on the other, its present involvement in the region, is what we hope to discuss. And we hope to do so in a positive and productive way. Can we speak soon? Please feel free to contact me by telephone at 816-741-1641 or by email (PTSBrian@aol.com). I will make myself available (along with other staff and elected representatives from the PCUSA) to travel to Peoria, to Chicago (as in the past) or some other location as needed.  

I’m grateful for the opportunity to be in dialogue, and I look forward to moving forward in this conversation.  

Blessings,  

Brian D. Ellison  
The Rev. Brian D. Ellison  
Chair, Mission Responsibility Through Investment  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  

Cc: The Rev. Gradye Parsons,  
   Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (USA)  

The Rev. Bill Somplatsky-Jarman,  
   Staff, Mission Responsibility Through Investment, Presbyterian Church (USA)  

The Rev. Sue Krummel,  
   Executive Presbyter, Great Rivers Presbytery
Captured from Google Earth, information added in Photoshop. According to Google Earth, Ari’el is about 10.31 miles from the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line). The distance across the Occupied Palestinian Territories at this point is about 31.86 miles, Ari’el is thus more than a third of the way into the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
Item 05-01

[The assembly answered Item 05-01 by the action taken on Item 05-04. See pp. 53, 54.]

On Consultation Before Possible Reorganization of Synod or Presbytery Boundaries—From the Presbytery of Homestead.

The Presbytery of Homestead overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to respond to any plan for comprehensive reorganization of synod or presbytery boundaries by encouraging presbyteries, either individually or jointly, to consult with their synod and surrounding presbyteries regarding what functions are appropriate within their respective synod and whether boundaries of their synod or any of the affected presbyteries should change to meet the needs of congregations in the affected region, pursuant to G-3.0403c and G-3.0404.

Rationale

There appears to be widespread recognition that the needs of presbyteries and congregations across the nation varies greatly and that “one size does not fit all.” The functions ascribed to synods are necessary to the efficient and effective functioning of the whole system of governance, and if a particular synod’s functions are reduced or eliminated, it is the affected presbyteries in that synod that must “take up the slack.” Hence, it is those same presbyteries who should initiate any needed change in their region, not the General Assembly determining one solution for the whole church.

It was presbyteries and not the General Assembly that first created synods and it is reasonable that decisions regarding the appropriate functions, operations, and boundaries of synods are best left to the affected presbyteries and their synod(s).

The current Form of Government allows for considerable flexibility in synod function and structure within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), up to and including the reduction of function to only judicial process and administrative review of presbyteries (G-3.0404). This Form of Government has been in effect since 2011 and has not had a chance to be tested by mid councils as they discern the best way to meet their needs and the needs of their congregations. It is obvious from recent actions (with reference particularly to the Synod of Alaska-Northwest) that synods and presbyteries can use the current Form of Government to reduce the functions of a synod when they feel it is appropriate, and are able to accomplish it without a directive from the General Assembly.

The Form of Government allows presbyteries and/or synods to overture the General Assembly to divide, unite, or otherwise combine synods (G-3.0502d) if those councils believe it is in their best interest to do so.

The Form of Government allows two or more synods to form a shared permanent judicial commission (D-5.0101) when those bodies believe it is in their best interest to do so.

Concurrence to Item 05-01 from the Synod of Alaska-Northwest and the Presbyteries of Eastern Oregon, Huntingdon, John Calvin, Minnesota Valley, Northern Waters, Prospect Hill, Santa Fe, South Dakota, and the Twin Cities Area.

Concurrence to Item 05-01 from the Presbytery of Northern Plains (with Additional Rationale):

The current Form of Government allows for the reduced function of synods within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-3.0404).

The current Form of Government has been in effect for less than two years and has barely had a chance to be understood and put into effect.

There appears to be widespread recognition that the needs of presbyteries and congregations across the nation varies greatly and that “one size does not fit all.”

It is felt that decisions of the appropriate function of synods is best left to the presbyteries and synods in a “bottom up” approach rather than a “top down” approach.

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains feels that the Synod of Lakes and Prairies provides a great deal of support to this presbytery and other presbyteries in the synod in the following ways:

• Provide training and resourcing for
  —new committee on ministry (COM) and committee on preparation for ministry (CPM) moderators annually and on request;
  —presbytery office support staff;
ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 05-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 05-01.

From a theoretical standpoint, valuing the voices and experiences from a “bottom up” approach allows for the voices of those who are at risk of being disenfranchised or oppressed to be given a voice at the table and decreases their vulnerability to being silenced. Often, women’s voices and needs are at the “bottom” in regards to hierarchical decision-making and therefore are not heard unless there is an intentional inclusion of them in the process, as is indicated in this overture. In addition, consultation with involved parties will not only benefit the communities that are affected by such reorganization but will also help set up a restructured system that is sustainable.

Item 05-02

[The assembly approved Item 05-02. See pp. 53, 54.]

On the Reconfiguration of Synod Boundaries—From the Synod of Puerto Rico.

The Sinodo Presbiteriano Boriquen en Puerto Rico (Synod of Boriquén) overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct that the Synod of Puerto Rico remain as a synod no matter how many synods are decided upon as a result of the recommendations of the Mid Councils Commission II.

Rationale

The United States of America is rapidly transforming into a culturally diverse society. This diversity influences our church growth and future, as evidenced by the growing numbers of Hispanic/Latinos and Spanish-speaking members joining our congregations. The Synod of Boriquén and its presbyteries (the Presbytery of the Southwest of Puerto Rico, the Presby-
tery of the Northwest of Puerto Rico, and the Presbytery of San Juan) are the only governing bodies within the PC(USA) that fulfill *entirely in Spanish* the mission given by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19 to “Go therefore and make disciple of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Our language and heritage are essential to carrying out our ministry.

We reaffirm, in our historical identity as the PC(USA) in Puerto Rico, that Jesus Christ is Lord, Savior, and the head of the Church. Following the theological and biblical perspective of our reformed tradition, we continue to strive to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the many parts of our denomination, including: the active work of the Presbyterian Women, the generative ministry of our synod and presbyteries’ youth groups, the preparation of teaching elders at the only Spanish-speaking seminary endorsed by our denomination (Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico), and our strong public participation with other ecumenical bodies in Puerto Rico, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

While the ecumenical and interdenominational relations of G-3.0401a apply to all synods, the Synod of Puerto Rico is unique in it; moreover our geographical location and the language and heritage shared with our brothers and sisters of the Caribbean and Latin American regions have developed alliances and ecumenical relations that continue to mutually enrich our ministry and mission in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean countries. Our alliances, relations, and active memberships in the Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Latin-America (AIPRAL) and the Latin-American Churches Council (CLAI) allows us to carry the ministry and mission of the PC(USA) beyond the shores of the island.

Furthermore, our teaching and ruling elders, members, and leaders, have served and continue to serve in different positions at the national Office of the General Assembly, General Assembly committees, commissions, and task forces contributing significantly to the mission within the PC(USA).

If, as a result upon recommendations of the Mid Council Commission II to reconfigure synod boundaries and to reduce the number of synods from sixteen to eight by the 222nd General Assembly (2016), the Synod of Boriquén and its constituent presbyteries petition the General Assembly to retain the Synod of Boriquén as one of the configured synods.

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**Concurrence to Item 05-02 from the Presbyteries of San Juan and Southwest.**

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 05-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 05-02.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns supports this overture because we believe that to maintain the Synod of Puerto Rico is to keep a part of the body of Christ participating as equal within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

At the end of the Spanish American-Cuban War in 1898, Puerto Rico, having been invaded on July 25, 1898, by the Americans was given away to the United States as compensation for the war. After 116 years of U.S. presence and significant political changes (American citizenship in 1917, creation of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in 1952), Puerto Rico had maintained its Spanish language, its culture, and its traditions. As the Spanish American-Cuban War came to an end, the different Protestant denominations descended into this new American colony. The Presbyterian church made its entrance and in 1899 the Reverend Milton E. Caldwell began its evangelizing ministry in the City of Mayaguez. The first Presbyterian Church in Puerto Rico was chartered on April 1, 1900, with eighteen members. There’s no doubt that the Presbyterian Church had left a profound mark on Puerto Rico’s soil, especially in the educational and health fields. The Presbyterian church established the Instituto Politecnico, today the Universidad Interamericana (Inter-American University), the largest private university in Puerto Rico. The Ashford Presbyterian Hospital was founded in 1904. Until 1973 there was only one presbytery, the Presbytery of Puerto Rico which belonged to the Synod of New York. Presbyterians in Puerto Rico celebrated in 1973 the establishment of the Synod of Puerto Rico and the three new presbyteries: San Juan, Noroeste, and Suroeste. The creation of these three presbyteries and the Synod of Puerto Rico provided the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. with much needed diversity as these presbyteries and synod were able to send representatives to different committees at the General Assembly. The Synod of Puerto Rico has the honor of having the first female synod executive, Dr. Ana Ines Braulio in the PC(USA).

According to the Form of Government of the PC(USA), Councils as an Expression of Unity of the Church, G-3.0101, first paragraph:

The mutual interconnection of the church through its councils is a sign of the unity of the church. Congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while possessing all the gifts necessary to be the church, are nonetheless not sufficient in themselves to be the church. Rather, they are called to share with others both within and beyond the congregation the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world. This call to bear witness is the work of all believers. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God.
The Synod of Puerto Rico had been true to its calls by providing resources and leadership to presbyteries and congregations in Puerto Rico in Spanish and culturally appropriated.

The Synod of Puerto Rico plays an important role in maintaining ecclesiastical ecumenical relations with other bodies in the Caribbean and Latin America. Our Form of Government on 3.0401a states:

provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard. This responsibility may include developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, a broad strategy for the mission of the church within its bounds and in accord with the larger strategy of the General Assembly; assisting its member presbyteries when requested in matters related to the calling, ordaining, and placement of teaching elders; establishing and maintaining, in conjunction with its presbyteries, those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its region; facilitating joint action in mission with other denominations and agencies in its region; facilitating communication among its presbyteries and between its presbyteries and the General Assembly; providing services for presbyteries within its area that can be performed more effectively from a broad regional base.

Exercising this right, the Synod of Puerto Rico had established alliances and membership in some ecumenical bodies such as the Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Latin America (AIPRAL), and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) among others. If the Synod of Puerto Rico is dismantled, Puerto Rican Presbyterians would lose these important ecumenical and connectional ties that have been a blessing to the unity of the body of Christ to this day.

Furthermore, ACREC states that to dismantle the Synod of Puerto Rico would mean a backward step in the history of the PC(USA). The voice of Presbyterians from Puerto Rico would be diminished given the fact that it would become a minority within the synod to which it would be assigned. To dismantle the Synod of Puerto Rico would represent a geographical challenge. This would mean that the representatives of Puerto Rico would need to leave the island to attend the meetings, etc, placing an extra burden on representatives.

For all these reasons ACREC encourages commissioners to approve Item 05-02.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 05-02

Comment on Item 05-02—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully offers this comment on Item 05-02:

The Sínodo de Boriquén is geographically unique, language specific, and culturally diverse. It is faithful to attending to diversity within its council life (as mandated in G-3.0103 and F-1.0403). Absorption into a larger synod where offices may be in a U.S. state will create additional barriers and limitations for relationship, mission, and accountability. Attention to providing wide access to decision-making will be required and may result in other burdens on the new synod. Concerns would center on how issues raised from this synod may be received and responded to in the newly created synod(s) and whether there would be adequate support regarding language, travel/communication, and culture.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

Item 05-03

On Transferring Han Yang Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Hanmi to the Presbytery of San Fernando—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

[The assembly approved Item 05-03. See pp. 13, 54.]

The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014), at the request of Han Yang Presbyterian Church and of the Presbytery of San Fernando, to

1. transfer Han Yang Presbyterian Church from Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of San Fernando; and

2. approve of this transfer to be effective at the conclusion of the 221st General Assembly (2014), meeting in Detroit. No boundary changes are required to effect this transfer.

Concurrence to Item 05-03 from the Presbyteries of the Pacific, San Fernando, and Santa Barbara (with Additional Rationale)

This overture is to request the transfer of a church from the nongeographic Hanmi Presbytery to the geographic Presbytery of San Fernando. This is not a request that any presbytery bounds be shifted. The congregation known as Han Yang
Presbyterian Church, a member church of Hanmi Presbytery, is located at 13500 Branford St. Arleta, CA 91331. They have been worshiping in this space for years. The property is within the bounds of the Presbytery of San Fernando.

The Session of Han Yang Presbyterian Church voted on September 15, 2013, and reported to the congregation shortly thereafter to request the transfer of the congregation to the Presbytery of San Fernando.

The Hanmi Administrative Commission, acting as the presbytery with jurisdiction over Han Yang Presbyterian Church, voted on January 14, 2014, to approve the transfer of Han Yang Presbyterian Church to San Fernando Presbytery pending approval by the congregation and the Presbytery of San Fernando.

The congregation of Han Yang Presbyterian Church, at a congregational meeting on January 26, 2014, voted to approve the transfer of Han Yang Presbyterian Church from the Hanmi Presbytery to the Presbytery of San Fernando pending approval by the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii and the General Assembly of the PC(USA).

The Presbytery of San Fernando voted on February 11, 2014, to receive this congregation into the membership of the Presbytery of San Fernando, pending an action by the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii and the General Assembly of the PC(USA).

The Han Yang Presbyterian Church’s rationale for requesting this transfer is this:

Han Yang Church has enjoyed a growing, mission centered ministry since 1978. However, ministry has been increasingly difficult to plan and engage due to conflicts within the Hanmi Presbytery. The Presbytery has not worked cooperatively with the congregation and is not equipped to care for its pastors. The decision making processes of the Hanmi Presbytery officers are not in line with the Presbyterian way of doing things as outlined in the Book of Order and one remedial complaint after another interferes with mission giving, outreach, and implementation of programs.

Geographically, Han Yang Presbyterian Church is more suited to belong to the San Fernando Presbytery whose offices are only blocks away with a full staff and resources that will enhance our ministry in the community as called by Jesus Christ.

The Presbytery of San Fernando is committed to being a missional presbytery. The presbytery’s vision statement is “Every church a mission center.” San Fernando Presbytery currently has one church that is primarily racial ethnically Korean. It would benefit the Presbytery of San Fernando and make it more diverse by bringing Han Yang Presbyterian Church into the Presbytery of San Fernando.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-03**

Advice and Counsel on Item 05-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 05-03. We support the request of the Han Yang Presbyterian Church to be transferred from the nongeographic Hanmi Presbytery to the geographic Presbytery of San Fernando. We believe in the importance of physical community and the support that is enhanced when people have the opportunity to work side-by-side. In addition, diversity within our churches and presbyteries is highly valued and important for creating healthy communities and to represent the body of Christ, and this move would create more diversity in interactions for both the Presbytery of San Fernando and the Han Yang Presbyterian Church. Diversity in various aspects of leadership allow for women to have more of a voice in systems that have historically silenced them.

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**$Item 05-04**

[The assembly approved Item 05-04 with amendment. See pp. 53, 54.]

*Mid Council Commission II Report*

The Mid Council Commission 2 (MCCII) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Direct that a new configuration of synod boundaries be established [based on an emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call] through a collaborative process between the synods and presbyteries resulting in no more than [eight larger regional] [10–12] synods, each with an emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call. The synods shall report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

2. Inform all synods and presbyteries that designated members of MCC 2 will be available for conversation, clarification, and collaboration during the synods’ and presbyteries’ two-year process of reconfiguring synods.

3. Recommend that the 222nd General Assembly (2016) direct its Moderator, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, to appoint an administrative commission for the following purposes:
a. To assist synods and presbyteries who have been engaged in a substantive plan for reconfiguration but have been unable to resolve particular issues in their process.

b. To recommend to the 223rd General Assembly (2018) the boundary changes necessary to achieve a total of no more than [eight] [10–12] synods, if there remain synods and presbyteries that have been unable or unwilling to engage in a collaborative process of reconfiguration.

4. In order to ensure that the responsibilities listed in G-3.0502 are fulfilled, establish a “Committee on Mid Councils” and charge it to engage in a process for the ongoing strengthening and nurturing of the mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), with particular emphasis on collaborating with the synods of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to support clarity as to their ecclesial and missional identity, purpose, structure, and strategies by amending Standing Rule C.1.a. as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“a. The Stated Clerk shall propose the number and designation of assembly committees to the General Assembly, which shall include a Committee on Mid Councils. The Stated Clerk shall present the proposed committee structure to the General Assembly for consideration and ratification at the first assembly meeting at which business is transacted. In making these proposals, the Stated Clerk shall consult with the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities, and may consult with other persons.”

5. Continue the Mid Council Commission II through the meeting of the 222nd General Assembly (2016) with the following authority:

a. Pursuant to G-3.0502d, to organize new synods, or divide, unite, or otherwise combine previously existing synods or portions of synods [upon request of the synods]; and

b. Pursuant to G-3.0502e, to approve the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine presbyteries or portions of presbyteries.

6. Accept this report as the commission’s answer to the items referred to it by the 220th General Assembly (2012).


Rationale

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: Item 05-12. Mid Council Report, Refer Recommendations 1–4 to a Task Force to Further Discuss, Refine, and Bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) Recommendations Considering the Composition and Organization of the Mid Councils—From the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 21–22, 274ff).

I. Introduction

We invite the General Assembly to envision:

• A church whose existing mid councils come together at a bigger table or multiple tables to aspire to what God is calling them to do, to aspire to what God is calling us to be.

• A church with mid councils that engage in conversations about collaborating, partnering, and networking, as they define their purpose and the best way to live out a new identity.

• A church whose mid councils may focus on relationships or mission, leadership development, administrative support, or essential ecclesiastical functions as the glue that helps presbyteries be in covenantal community with one another.

• A church whose mid councils are prepared to engage in significant structural change for the sake of enabling adaptive and creative change within broader borders.

The Mid Council Commission created by the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Mid Council Commission II) was charged to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations concerning the future of synods in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). After thorough and prayerful study, conversation, and debate, the Mid Council Commission II finds that synods continue to have a vital role within our life as a denomination. However, the time has come for fewer synods within a structure of mutual accountability that encourages each synod to discern God’s call to find its unique role in affirming the creativity that already resides in our mid council system.

II. The Charge to the Commission

The commission was charged by the 220th General Assembly (2012) with the following responsibilities:
1. Respond to Recommendations 1–4 of the Mid Council Commission Report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) by discussing, refining, and bringing to the 221st General Assembly (2014)” recommendations that consider the composition and organization of the mid councils in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 21).

2. Exercise commission authority regarding organizing, uniting and dividing synods and presbyteries and changing the boundaries of presbyteries through the transference of congregations from one presbytery to another.

3. Review the nature and function of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils. (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 21–22)

III. Membership, Meetings and Work of the Commission

A. Membership

The following members of the commission were appointed by the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012):

• Co-Moderators: Ruling Elder Ariel Mink (Presbytery of the Redwoods) and the Reverend Byron Wade (Presbytery of New Hope).

• Members: Commissioned Ruling Elder Barbara Gilliland (Presbytery of Pueblo); Ruling Elder Judi Johnson (Presbytery of San Jose); the Reverend Jason H. Ko (Presbytery of Los Ranchos); Ruling Elder Warren B. Cooper (Presbytery of Philadelphia); the Reverend Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo (Presbytery of Salem); the Reverend Liza Hendricks (Presbytery of Western Reserve); Ruling Elder Jane D. Smith (Presbytery of Riverside); the Reverend Eileen W. Lindner (Presbytery of Palisades); the Reverend Jerrod B. Lowry (Presbytery of Utah); the Reverend Marcia Mount Shoop (Presbytery of New Hope); Ruling Elder James Wilson (Presbytery of Scioto Valley); the Reverend Landon Whitsitt (Presbytery of Heartland); and Ruling Elder Christopher McCloskey, young adult advisory delegate (Presbytery of Southern New England).

• Staff: the Reverend Jill Hudson, coordinator of Mid Council Relations, Office of the General Assembly (OGA); the Reverend Joyce Lieberman, associate for Constitutional Interpretation, OGA; Ruling Elder Andrew W. Yeager-Buckley, program assistant, OGA.

B. Meetings


C. Work

1. Debate Over the Role of Synods Has a Long History

The role of synods in our denominational structure has long been a source of debate. Looking back at the last two decades, in 1993, an overture from the Presbytery of Southern New England proposed the creation of a special committee, among other things, to create a plan to eliminate synods and to divide synod property between presbyteries and the General Assembly. The overture was not approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993). However, the 208th General Assembly (1996) appointed a nine-member Special Committee on Middle Governing Bodies to

… examine the relationships between and among the national offices, synods, and presbyteries; develop and review studies of middle governing bodies for effectiveness; and seek new paradigms for prioritizing, evaluating, visioning, resourcing, and partnering. (Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 200)

The special committee offered several recommendations to the 211th General Assembly (1999) including that

… the PC(USA) move to a three-governing-body system. The committee is convinced that a flexible and simplified three-governing-body system will offer more opportunities and incentives for direct linkage between and among General Assembly, presbyteries, and congregations. (Minutes, 1999, Part I, p. 526)

The 211th General Assembly (1999) took action on some aspects of the special committee’s report, but did not act to move in the direction of eliminating synods, opting instead to receive and commend the report for study.

In 2008, the Presbytery of Central Washington overture the 218th General Assembly (2008) to direct the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council to conduct an examination of the existing synod structure with the intention to streamline the current synod structure into fewer synods, covering larger geographic areas. While this overture was disapproved, it did not end debate over the existence and role of synods. In 2010, the General Assembly, faced with a variety of requests for action related to the form and function of synods in the mid council structure of the denomination, created a Commission on Mid Council.
2. The Work of the First MCC

The work of the first Mid Council Commission was foundational to the work of the current commission. The first MCC listened across the varied voices in the denomination by means of surveys, conference calls with key constituents, and numerous conversations in every synod, at every major gathering of the church, and with key leaders in every level of the church’s life. It took seriously its responsibility to explore deeply theology, history, and sociology of mid councils, engaging with experts in each of these areas as well as the most respected leaders across the denomination about the urgency, necessity, and process of deep transformation. Perhaps most importantly, it initiated a transparent and public discourse using social media, blogs, articles, and conversations about its recommendations while they were still in “draft” stages.

Underlying the recommendations of the first MCC to the 220th General Assembly (2012) is an assertion with which this commission finds itself in deep agreement, and which underpins the recommendations this commission brings:

We live in a rapidly changing world and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not the same denomination it was sixty or thirty years ago, when the structural framework of our current version of Presbyterianism was developed and implemented. As we have envisioned what the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of our post-Christendom world may look like, our Commission has assumed the role of those who prepare the space, invite the artists, and affirm the creativity that already resides in our mid council system. (*Minutes* 2012, Part I, p. 279).

The first MCC brought a number of recommendations to the 220th General Assembly (2012). Of direct concern to this commission were its Recommendations 1.–4., which rested on the premise that the strengthening of presbyteries and the overall denominational structure was best accomplished by “repurposing synods as Multi-Presbytery Missional Partnerships” (*Minutes*, 2012, Part I, p. 279) and eliminating synods as ecclesial bodies within our constitutional structure. See Appendix A of this report.

As noted above, the 220th General Assembly (2012) referred these four recommendations to the current commission (MCCII), charging it to discuss, refine, and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations that consider the composition and organization of the mid councils in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church.

3. The Additional Work of MCCII

MCC II began its work by focusing on three tasks consistent with its charge: fully developing the recommendations that would have to be approved to eliminate synods as ecclesial bodies (see Section VII and Appendix C below); studying and evaluating various models of mid council structure that might accomplish the desire for a more flexible and creative mid council structure; and designing and implementing a process for studying the nature and function of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils. In addition, MCC II sought to deepen its understanding of the learnings from the first MCC by further conversation within the denomination, primarily through telephone interviews with the leadership of the following synods: Synod of South Atlantic (July 24, 2013); Synod of Southern California and Hawai’i (July 30, 2013); Synod of the Southwest (August 6, 2013); Synod of the Sun (August 7, 2013); Synod of Lincoln Trails (August 14, 2013); Synod of the Pacific (August 16, 2013); Synod of the Trinity (August 20, 2013); Synod of Mid-America (August 22, 2013); Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (August 23, 2013); Synod of the Covenant (August 29, 2013); Synod of the Northeast (August 30, 2013); Synod of Lakes and Prairies (September 5, 2013); and Synod of the Rocky Mountains (September 6, 2013).

The outline used for these interviews is attached to this report as Appendix B. The commission also sent representatives to the Synod Executives Forum for face-to-face conversation to better understand the variety of work presently occurring within the synods. With much discussion and prayer, and with a deep sense of humility, MCC II presents the above recommendations for consideration by the 221st General Assembly (2014).

IV. Recommendations Regarding Reconfiguring Synods and Reinvigorating Presbyteries Through a Collaborative Process

In the midst of the tasks charged to MCC II, the commission has been deeply shaped by the reality that the issue confronting the denomination is not simply an issue of saving money or downsizing. Rather, the core challenge for the denomination is how to faithfully be Christ’s church in our contemporary context. It is God who is making all things new; the church is called to open our hearts and minds to what that means for us.

It is the context and God’s call to us that invite us in to this collaborative process. In order for the process to reflect the Body of Christ in all of its diversity and mission, we are calling for collaboration that includes all who are affected by these decisions. Synods, presbyteries, and local congregations have a stake in this transformative process, with synods and presbyteries having a particular responsibility. The marks of a collaborative process include clear access to participation, consistent methods of sharing power in discourse and decision-making, and transparency.

When synods and presbyteries engage in this collaborative process of transformation, we trust that new partnerships will emerge and all levels of the church will find new sources of vitality. In particular, we expect that clear plans will develop around reinvigorating presbyteries to support and challenge congregations to full participation in God’s mission in the world.
Mid Council Commission II has diligently sought to carry out its work of considering the composition and organization of mid councils in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church. The following are our conclusions and recommendations:

A. The organization of synods in the PC(USA) needs to be reconfigured and their functions and role revitalized.

While the MCII concluded that eliminating synods as ecclesial bodies at this time would not accomplish the goal of simplifying and streamlining the governance structure of the PC(USA), the commission believes that the PC(USA) has a denominational structure that no longer fits the church of today. The current synod structure was established when we were a significantly larger church, when denominational loyalty to the mission decisions of higher councils was significantly deeper, and when geographic distance was an obstacle to efficient administration. Today our size, our understanding of denominations, and technology help to create opportunities for new ways of being church. Based on its review of the judicial caseloads of the current synod permanent judicial commissions, it appears entirely feasible for larger synods to carry out that work. Likewise, administrative review and the work of committees on representation can be carried out efficiently and effectively by larger synods.

In the view of MCII, it is also feasible for the mission activities of the current synods to be carried out by synods with a larger geographic scope. The commission heard concerns from synod leaders about loss of relationships and the challenge of combining or continuing current localized mission endeavors. This proposal, however, enables larger synods to organize in ways to foster relationships and mission in smaller geographic areas or moving certain work to presbyteries within that region. The MCII anticipates that the collaborative process of reconfiguration will result in some new forms of mission and partnership that will truly reflect local contexts and their particular needs.

Accordingly, the MCII recommends that the number of synods be reconfigured with the goal of no more than eight synods. The commission’s choice of eight synods was the result of balancing the current size of the denomination and the ecclesial responsibilities of synods. The number eight is not arbitrary but represents our calculation of the structure that will best serve our missional purpose.

B. A system of no more than eight larger synods is best accomplished by collaboration between the existing synods and presbyteries, rather than as a directive from the General Assembly.

The task of combining sixteen synods into no more than eight will not be without its challenges. Staff and leadership structures will need to be reordered, assets transferred or reallocated, and existing legal obligations reassigned. Moreover, redefining synods will require the integration of councils with different cultures, norms, and unwritten assumptions as to how work is done and decisions are made. In order for all affected to have a voice in the decisions made, there must be a collaborative process that includes clear access to participation, consistent methods of sharing power in discourse and decision-making, and transparency. This method of collaboration makes space for a larger conversation than just one about boundaries, but allows for broader and deeper work on priorities, purposes, and possibilities.

Further, such a process will encourage and require presbyteries to examine carefully their own connections with the synod they will be a part of, and the parameters of that synod’s role. We recognize that some presbyteries, faced with questions as to their own future and the up-building of the church within their bounds simply have not had the time or energy to focus on the role of synods. However, the presbyteries have an important interest in engaging in this process. While combining existing synods may be the simplest process legally, a presbytery bordering more than one synod may find that the culture of one of those synods more closely fits its own culture; regional demographic patterns may draw it more naturally in a particular direction; or it may choose to be part of a contiguous synod, if that is the type of council that will best support its response to God’s call.

The MCCII understands that this process may be complicated. As Reformed Christians we understand that the wisdom of the larger body often serves to give guidance and insight to those in more local bodies. Designated members of the MCCII will be available to answer questions about the report, to clarify issues that may emerge in the process, and to interpret the intention of the report. These individuals will neither decide the boundaries of the new synod structure nor adjudicate disputes. Rather, their role is simply to provide a conduit for sharing learnings from the work of the first MCC and MCC II.

C. The process of establishing a system of no more than eight synods needs to move forward promptly with a timeline for approval of new boundaries.

The Mid Council Commission II fully expects synods to embrace this opportunity to reconfigure and revitalize their role in the church. However, there may be roadblocks along the way. Whether arising from a fear of loss or an investment in the system as it currently exists, the temptation to delay can be strong. The need for the church to respond to the changes that both the first MCC and MCC 2 have identified demands the church’s immediate action. The Mid Council Commission’s recommendation that the 222nd General Assembly (2016) establish an administrative commission comes from the denomination’s urgent need to resolve this long-standing issue. Such a commission will likely find that in many areas agreement has been reached, and it is hoped its work can be limited to resolving a relatively few instances in which agreement as to the
boundaries of the realigned synods could not be reached. The administrative commission will also have the authority to recommend synod boundaries in those situations where decisions were not made.

The MCCII recognizes that the legal and practical steps necessary to complete the reorganization of the synods cannot be completed until the General Assembly approves new boundaries for such synods, and that the process of completing the reorganization of the synods will not be complete by the convening of the 222nd General Assembly (2016). The goal of the timeline proposed is to put the synods in the position to take those legal and practical steps soon after the 222nd General Assembly (2016) adjourns in order that the new structure can move forward in their work as soon as is reasonably possible.

D. Eliminating synods as ecclesial bodies at the present time would add complexity to the governance structure of the PC(USA), rather than simplify it.

The MCII’s recommendations were deeply impacted by the recognition that it would not be easy to replace the ecclesial functions synods currently perform with commissions or other bodies. As noted in the discussion of this commission’s charge, one of the tasks we were assigned to undertake was to refine Recommendations 1.–4. from the first Mid Council Commission’s report. These recommendations would eliminate synods as ecclesial bodies. In undertaking that work, it became clear to MCCII that the “cure” of eliminating synods as ecclesial bodies, at least at this time, would very likely be worse than any potential downfall of keeping and streamlining synods as a council within our polity and system of mutual accountability.

In this regard, the MCCII agreed with the rationale offered the 220th General Assembly (2012) by the Presbytery of St. Andrews in support of Item 05-02:

Rather than viewing the practice of the Christian faith as a purely individual matter, Reformed Christians practice their faith together, in community. A significant historic role of church councils in the Reformed tradition is to provide the accountability that is necessary in a large, diverse Christian community like the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

At the same time, as distinct from forms of church government in which authority is exercised downward from the few to the many, the Presbyterian form of government assumes that accountability is exercised with mutuality—government by those who are governed (or their chosen representatives). (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 256)

Relat edly, we believe that the synods are providing a space for advocacy and development of racial ethnic constituencies in our denomination that would not easily be filled at either the presbytery or General Assembly levels of the PC(USA).

As the MCII sought to refine Recommendations 1.–4. with this premise in mind, it recognized that while the PC(USA) is certainly smaller than it once was, it remains too large to simply eliminate any intermediate level of accountability between the General Assembly and the 173 presbyteries of the denomination. The General Assembly and its commissions and committees simply do not have the ability to engage in meaningful oversight over 173 councils. Conversely, we observed, at least on the part of some, a concern that such a reorganization would put too much power in the General Assembly. While the MCCII found the first concern significantly more meritorious than the second, it has concluded that a structure recognizing both concerns would have to replace the current ecclesial functions of synods with administrative and judicial commissions made up of members from those regions.

Accordingly, in perfecting Recommendations 1.–4., the MCCII found that the only means of providing for such oversight was a combination of regional administrative and judicial commissions (together with regional committees on representation) to serve the role of intermediary in the administrative and judicial review of presbyteries. In the MCCII’s view, such a structure complicates rather than streamlines the governance of the PC(USA). It is difficult to assure that such regional commissions would

- reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, gender, and theological diversity consistent with our basic principles of governance,
- reasonably allocate and oversee the expenses incurred in doing their work among the presbyteries within their bounds, and
- diligently carry out the work they have been assigned.

If the PC(USA) wishes to move to a three council governance structure, the most practical means for doing so is to increase the size, and decrease the number, of presbyteries so that the General Assembly could engage in a meaningful review of their work. Such an action, however, would have its own costs, and was beyond the charge given MCCII.

V. Review of the Nature and Function of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) as they relate to Mid Councils

As a part of the mandate creating the Mid Council Commission II, the General Assembly directed the commission “to review the nature and function of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly, specifically with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations in our changing context and to report back to the 221st General Assembly” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 277) the nature of those
relationships. Our findings are best understood in the context of a fabric of relationships that the MCCII believes are healthy, and provide the foundation for the recommendations of the MCCII for the reconfiguration of the synods.

As the subgroup began its review, it recognized that a number of members of the Committee of the Office of the General Assembly concurrently are serving as members of MCCII and as a part of the subgroup whereas no members of the General Assembly Mission Council (later renamed the Presbyterian Mission Agency [PMA]) were members of either the commission or its subgroup. In order to maintain mutually respectful relationships between all the entities engaged in this review and gain the needed sensitivity to the issues and priorities of the PMA, a liaison was established with the help of PMA and provided insight and reflection on the work of the subcommittee.

A. Methodology

The subgroup initially sought to clarify and focus the mandate given by the General Assembly and concluded that the evidence sought was the nature of the relationship of each of the national entities respectively to the synods and presbyteries rather than the relationship “between” the PMA and the OGA or even a “comparative” study of the relationships of each of these agencies to the mid councils. With this focus in mind, the group considered a number of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Given both the time and financial constraints of the MCCII, a number of possible methodological approaches lay beyond the scope of the commission’s capabilities. It was recognized that it would not be possible, for example, to inventory the whole universe of synods and presbyteries nor to quantify the data. Neither was it the purpose of this commission’s inquiry to carry out a “performance review” of national entities but rather to seek a better understanding of the ways in which these agencies relate to mid councils. Moreover this inquiry did not seek to measure attitudes among mid councils as to the possible redistribution of ecclesial functions in the event of the elimination or reorganization of synods. Rather, this inquiry was intended to gain a sense of the “current” relationships and the ways in which current American religious culture might be influencing those relationships within Presbyterian denominational life and culture.

The plan of inquiry agreed upon called for the identification of “bellwethers” within the staff of mid councils and formulation of a number of open-ended questions that would permit these persons broad freedom to explore and reflect upon their respective mid council’s relationship to the PMA and OGA respectively. In both the design of questions to be posed and the sampling methodology the subgroup consulted with the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of PMA.

Interviews were conducted by various members of the subgroup and reported back in full to the subgroup. Following extensive discussion, the subgroup determined to report its findings (a) in summary fashion without specific and potentially identifiable references to specific programs, staff members, etc., and (b) to identify to the themes that emerged from the review without formulating recommendations related to these findings, reasoning that such recommendations might best come from the commission as a whole. (Appendix C of this report provides an outline of the questions used in interviews with synod and presbytery staff.)

B. Findings

The findings from this review generated both insights common to both agencies in the perceptions of the mid councils as well as findings unique to each agency. Our findings are best read in the context of the MCCII’s conclusion that the fabric of the relationships is intact, and that the learnings herein reflect a healthy tension inherent in the need to reconfigure the structure of the synods.

1. Common Findings

a. Among synod and presbytery staff, both PMA and OGA are often perceived as “distant from” and “out of touch” with the realities on the ground in particular locales. This is most often expressed with a sense of inevitability rather than with an accusation of indifference. As national entities, it is assumed that each of these agencies takes a general rather than specific view in counter distinction to the necessity for presbyteries and synods, which take a far more local and specific view of issues. Despite some of the ongoing tensions within the denomination and frequent references made by some about the existence of widespread resentment of national agencies by mid councils and congregations, these findings reflect a much more nuanced set of relationships and attitudes. While experiences of individuals with these two agencies understandably vary, there was consistent feedback that presbyteries and synods receive services from both PMA and OGA and are appreciative of them. At the same time there are ongoing issues of competition in those instances when PMA is perceived as taking initiative within the presbytery/synod without consultation. Similarly, the OGA, especially as represented by the Stated Clerk, can be perceived as failing to take into account the consequence of public pronouncements for the relationships of local Presbyterians to interfaith partners and to neighbors who differ with Presbyterian policies and perspectives.

b. Both agencies are perceived as making substantial efforts to foster a coherent and consistent approach to the mission and ministry of the church. The question is fairly asked whether there is adequate institutional priority and structure sufficient to maintain a coherent “Presbyterian perspective” within the rapidly changing cultural climate of today.

c. Ironically, there is simultaneously an expressed yearning for less “territorial tendencies” among the various agencies and levels of the church’s institutional life but little focused conception of how that might best be achieved. Such
tendencies were not attributed alone to the two national agencies but seen as common among many structures and groups within the church particularly in the context of diminishing resources.

d. A reported “growing sense” that the church at all levels lacks a “clear sense of identity and purpose it once had” continues to be a part of Presbyterian perception despite a widespread claim to “not be nostalgic “for a bygone era.

e. Perceptions of each agency were closely linked to highly specific encounters with national staff and whether or not these staff members were seen as assisting or obstructing the work of the presbytery/synod in question.

f. The perceived importance of effective relationships between national and mid council staff can hardly be overstated. It is the quality of those relationships that enables effective partnership or, in their absence, to foster a sense of discouragement about the denomination as a whole.

2. Findings Unique to Each Agency

Presbyterian Mission Agency: Positively, staff members were seen as being in possession of highly developed knowledge and resources for ministry and a readiness to share these with mid councils. Negatively, PMA was seen as inclined to be competitive (especially with regard to financial and human resources within presbyteries) and, at times, inclined to take initiatives within the bounds of the councils without prior consultation.

Office of General Assembly: Positively, staff members were perceived as offering highly skilled assistance especially in areas related to governance and judicial questions that have a complexity difficult to master at local levels. Negatively, OGA is sometimes seen as the source of tedious institutional maintenance requirements and/or focus on matters of little consequence to struggling congregations. Recent changes in the form of governance were seen as a positive response to these challenges. Moreover, controversial stands and statements of the OGA serve as a source of embarrassment or potential conflict with others. Investment by PMA/OGA in the strengthening of relationships between staff through shared program, consultation, and mutual communication pay substantial dividends.

C. Conclusion

This admittedly limited review of the relationships that characterize the presbyteries and synods with the PMA and OGA respectively offers some insights even though it was neither broad enough nor deep enough to be definitive. Positively, the collected data do not reveal any acute or critical points of tension. Yet, the review did reflect a rather disquieting and widespread malaise concerning a sense of shared identity of the church as a whole. In the present moment, there was expressed a concern for whether the church can afford, financially and in terms of human resources, the continued existence of what are seen as two large and expensive national agencies, as well as two levels of mid council structures. This finding was not, however, accompanied by any assessment that suggested the two agencies are seen as duplicating efforts. Perhaps due to some sampling bias in this review, presbyteries were consistently clearer on both their positive and negative assessments of relationships with the two agencies. Synod responses tended to be less specific and to have their experience mediated by that of their respective presbyteries in their assessments. Presbyteries and synods seek and often obtain assistance from OGA/PMA on a host of issues and matters of church life. Yet, at both synod and presbytery levels there is a concern that neither agency is equipped to help the mid councils address their most acute needs and sometimes serve as a distraction from those vital tasks.

VI. There Is a Need for Deeper, Ongoing Communication Between General Assemblies and Synods

The MCCII affirms that the General Assembly has a special responsibility to encourage, support, and challenge synods in their work. The commission believes that particular and intentional care should be given to the assembly’s relationship to the synods of the church.

Since the General Assembly relates most substantively to the rest of the church through assembly committees, the MCCII recommends the creation of a standing General Assembly committee on mid councils. This standing committee will establish a place where the synods can consistently collaborate with the assembly, and the assembly can fulfill its role of encouragement and support. This committee is a place for mutual accountability.

VII. Continuation of the Commission to Act for the Assembly with Respect to Boundary Issues Between Assemblies

In addition to the responsibilities for making recommendations regarding the future of synods as ecclesial bodies, Mid Council Commission II, like its predecessor, has also had the more mundane responsibility of acting for the General Assembly between its meetings on recommendations to change the boundaries of presbyteries, and potentially synods, when those councils agree upon and request such a change. This authority allows for actions meeting all Book of Order requirements to be taken during the two years between assemblies, and thus for such boundary changes to be approved and implemented without the delay of waiting for the next meeting of the General Assembly. Continuing this authority avoids the delay of a
potentially long delay for approval of movement of one congregation to a different presbytery, or similar actions, in situations in which there is no disagreement as to the propriety of such an action.

VII. Refinement of Recommendations 1.–4. of the First Mid Council Commission’s Report

As noted above, MCC II was charged to “refine” Recommendations 1.–4. from the first MCC report to the 220th General Assembly (2012), in order to put those recommendations into a format that if approved by 221st General Assembly (2014) (and approved by the majority of presbyteries) would eliminate synods as ecclesial bodies. Attached to this report as Appendix D are the actions that would be necessary to accomplish that purpose. These actions are structured into seven recommendations:

• **Recommendation 1:** Changes to the *Book of Order* to eliminate synods as ecclesial bodies;

• **Recommendation 2:** Changes to the Standing Rules of the General Assembly to implement elimination of synods as ecclesial bodies;

• **Recommendation 3:** Changes to the Guidelines for Reviewing Synod Records to implement elimination of synods as ecclesial bodies, converting them into Guidelines for Reviewing Presbytery Records;

• **Recommendation 4:** Changes to the Guidelines for Forming Social Policy to implement elimination of synods as ecclesial bodies;

• **Recommendation 5:** Changes to the *Organization for Mission* to implement elimination of synods as ecclesial bodies;

• **Recommendation 6:** Creation of an administrative commission to wind up the ecclesial affairs of synods; and

• **Recommendation 7:** Adoption of the boundaries of regional permanent judicial commissions and request for the 224th General Assembly (2020) to review those boundaries.

As noted above, MCC II found this exercise valuable in assessing the desirability of taking action consistent with the first MCC’s Recommendations 1.–4., but concluded, based in part on that exercise, not to recommend such a course of action. However, if the assembly desires to recommend such a course, Appendix D sets forth the actions that in the view of MCC II would be required to eliminate synods as ecclesial bodies.

Appendix A

Recommendations 1.–4. of the First Mid Council Commission to the 220th General Assembly (2012)

“1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes to take effect at the close of the 222nd General Assembly (2016):

   “a. Shall G-3.04, The Synod, be deleted, including Sections G-3.0401 through G-3.0406) and Section G-3.05 (including G-3.0501–.0503) be renumbered as G-3.04 (G-3.0401–.0403).

   “b. Shall G-3.03, The Presbytery, be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “‘G-3.03 THE PRESBYTERY

   “‘G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibilities

   “‘The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. A presbytery may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of ruling elders serving as moderators of committees or commissions.

   “‘The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten teaching elders.

   “‘The presbytery is responsible for the *life, ministry, and government* of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations *throughout its region* become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

   “‘[The remainder of this section to remain the same.]

   “‘G-3.0302 Relations with *Synod and General Assembly*, the Church
"The presbytery has a responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship to synod and with other presbyteries and to the General Assembly by:

- consulting with other presbyteries in their region about creating regional mission partnerships for racial ethnic advocacy and support, mission, and ministry projects, and other programs of shared life, diversity, and connection to the larger church
- electing commissioners to synod and General Assembly and receiving their reports;
- electing ruling and teaching elders to be readers of standard ordination examinations;
- seeing that the guidance and communication of synod and General Assembly are considered and that any binding actions are observed and carried out;
- proposing to synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church; and
- sending annually to synod and General Assembly statistical and other information according to the requirements of those bodies. [The remainder of G-3.03, G-3.0303–.0307 to remain the same.]

2. Instruct the synods, in consultation with their constituent presbyteries, to develop and bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) plans to transfer assets, funds, projects, and programs to the appropriate trusts, foundations, or entities of their choice for implementation by the synods by the close of the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

3. Instruct the Moderator to appoint a committee to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk and to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014):

- Recommendations, including any necessary changes in the Manual of the General Assembly, for the appointment of five regional administrative commissions to facilitate churches and presbyteries to fulfill their missional objectives when realignment is necessary and also to support the presbyteries and regions in promoting the full expression of rich diversity in membership, participation, and decision-making (Book of Order, G-3.0103);
- Recommendations, including any necessary changes in the Book of Order and the Manual of the General Assembly, in order to continue to facilitate and support the racial ethnic ministries that have historically been supported by the synods.
- Any additional editorial changes to the Book of Order that will be made necessary by the action of Recommendation 1.

4. Instruct the Moderator to appoint a committee to work in consultation with the Stated Clerk and to bring to the 221st General Assembly (2014) recommendations, including any necessary changes in the Book of Order and the Manual of the General Assembly, to create the necessary number of regional judicial commissions, rooted in the various regions, to serve as courts of appeal to decisions of presbytery permanent judicial commissions (PJCs) and as courts of original jurisdiction in remedial cases against presbyteries or upon reference from presbytery PJCs.”

Appendix B

Synod Consultation Questions

1. Is your Synod (or any of its presbyteries) involved in collaborative work with another Synod (or presbytery within another Synod’s bounds)?
   a. How would you describe the current level of engagement of the presbyteries within your bounds with the work of the synod? Would becoming part of a synod with larger bounds change that level of engagement, and if so, how?

2. If the General Assembly decided to do so, how would you envision your synod being geographically expanded?
   a. Are there any concerns that should be taken into account, if possible, if the Church moves to reduce the number of synods? For instance, are there natural boundaries within the Synod or affinities that it would be helpful for us to know?
   b. How large a synod would you see as viable to conduct the administrative functions referred to in the Book of Order?
   c. Who would you suggest be at the table for the implementation of any Assembly action regarding geographical expansion and at the same time reduction in number of synods.

3. What would you see as the benefits and losses of having fewer but larger synods?
   a. Are there any current programs of the synod that you believe could not be sustained in a larger synod?
   b. Would being part of a larger synod geographically increase the breadth of your vision and mission or make decision making more difficult?
   c. How would you envision your current model of synod decision-making would work if the boundaries of your synod were changed?

4. Is your Synod engaged in any future transition planning? For example, does your synod have a minimalist structure or is there any movement to do so?
a. Is there anything we should know about those future directions that might be helpful to us or anything that you are waiting to learn about the commission’s work that would affect those decisions?

5. What would be some key metrics of success regarding the vitality and viability of synods?

6. How do you think the presbyteries within your bounds would feel about being part of a larger synod?
   a. What is the best way for the commission to garner the input of the presbyteries within your bounds as to the alternatives it is considering?

7. What else do you feel the Commission should know?

Appendix C


FORMAT FOR INTERVIEWS REGARDING PMA AND OGA RELATIONSHIPS WITH SYNODS

Introduction:
“I am a member of the Mid Council Commission and one of the issues raised for us to consider is the relationship between mid councils and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

• Clarity about what we say regarding confidentiality of comments made to us:
  “We will be sharing conversations within our sub-group but when we report to the full Mid Council Commission we will not attach names to particular comments.”

• We will make no promise about whether we will talk with them again or not

Questions:
1. How long have you been in this work as a presbytery/synod executive?
2. A. Can you tell me a little about the nature and extent of your relationship with PMA?
   B. Can you tell me a little about the nature and extent of your relationship with OGA?
3. A. What strengths do you see in your (presbytery/synod’s) relationship with PMA and how can they be enhanced:
   B. What strengths do you see in your relationship with OGA and how can they be enhanced?
4. A. Thinking again about PMA, are there any other questions that I should be asking?
   B. Thinking about OGA, are there any other questions that I should be asking?

Appendix D

Actions Necessary to Accomplish the Objectives of the First Mid Council Commission’s Recommendations 1.–4. to the 200th General Assembly (2012)

1. That the 221st General Assembly (2014) direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the Book of Order to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:
   a. Shall F-3.0107 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “F-3.0107 Church Power
   “That all Church power, whether exercised by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative; that is to say, that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners; that no Church judicatory ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God. Now though it will easily be admitted that all synods and councils may err, through the frailty inseparable from humanity, yet there is much greater danger from the usurped claim of making laws than from the right of judging upon laws already made, and common to all who profess the gospel, although this right, as necessity requires in the present state, be lodged with fallible men.

   “Synod is used in this provision not to refer to a particular council of the church but in its historic meaning of a council of the Church convened to decide a particular issue of doctrine or administration.”
b. Shall F-3.0203 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“F-3.0203 Gathered in Councils

“These presbyters shall come together in councils in regular gradation. These councils are sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate council. The larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller.”

c. Shall the first paragraph of G-1.0103 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A ‘congregation,’ as used in this Form of Government, refers to a formally organized community chartered and recognized by a presbytery as provided in this Constitution. Each congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be governed by this Constitution. The members of a congregation put themselves under the leadership of the session and the higher councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly) (see G-3.0000). The session is responsible to guide and govern the life of the congregation. The session leads the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.

d. Shall the second paragraph of G-3.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by councils composed of presbyters elected by the people (F-3.0202). These councils are called the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with the acts of each subject to review by the next higher council. Powers not mentioned in this Constitution are reserved to the presbyteries.” [The rest of the section remains unchanged.]

e. Shall the fourth paragraph of G-3.0104 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Each council shall elect a clerk who shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church. Such extracts, verified by the clerk, shall be evidence in any council of the church. The clerk of the session shall be a ruling elder elected by the session for such term as it may determine. The clerk of a presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly shall be called stated clerk, shall be elected by the council for a definite term as it may determine, and must be a ruling elder or teaching elder. A stated clerk may be removed from office prior to completion of his or her term of service through the use of the process outlined in G-3.0110.”

f. Shall the eighth (last) paragraph of G-3.0106 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Each council above the session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within its bounds. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of per capita funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may direct per capita apportionments to sessions within their bounds, but in no case shall the authority of the session to direct its benevolences be compromised.”

g. Shall G-3.0109a be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. Judicial Commissions

“Judicial commissions shall consider and decide cases of process for the council or councils according to the Rules of Discipline. Sessions shall perform the function of a judicial commission for the congregation; each council higher than the session shall elect a permanent judicial commission (see D-5.0000). Cooperating synods may elect a joint permanent judicial commission pursuant to G-3.0404 and D-5.0101. Presbyteries shall elect regional permanent judicial commissions pursuant to G-3.0204 and D-5.0101.

h. Shall G-3.0109b(5)–(6) be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(5) (by presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly) visiting particular councils, congregations, or agencies over which they have immediate jurisdiction reported to be affected with disorder, and inquiring into and settling the difficulties therein, except that no commission of a presbytery shall be empowered to dissolve a pastoral relationship without the specific authorization by the designating body (G-2.0901);

“(6) (by General Assembly) reviewing the work of presbyteries; approving the division, union, or combination of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries; creating non-geographic presbyteries; developing joint plans and objectives for the fulfillment of mission, providing encouragement and guidance to its presbyteries and overseeing their work; electing regional committees on representation to review the work of presbyteries regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, advocate for diversity in leadership, and review the decisions of presbyteries as to the employment of personnel, in accordance with
the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403; and developing and providing resources as needed to facilitate the mission of its presbyteries (G-3.0501c and G-3.0502);

“(c) (7) (by all councils) making pastoral inquiry into persons accused of sexual abuse of another person (D-10.0401c) when jurisdiction in a judicial proceeding against such persons has ended due to death or renunciation of the accused; such inquiries shall not be understood as judicial proceedings but shall seek to reach a determination of truth related to the accusation and to make appropriate recommendations to the designating council.

i. Shall ninth paragraph of G-3.0109b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“A commission of presbytery, synod, or General Assembly shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible and sufficient to accomplish their work. A quorum of any commission shall be established by the designating council or councils but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members (except as limited by D-5.0204).”

j. Shall G-3.0202b–e be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. nominate to presbytery ruling elders from the congregation who may be considered for election as commissioners to synod and General Assembly, and to serve on committees or commissions of the same, bearing in mind principles of inclusiveness and fair representation in the decision making of the church (F-1.0403);

“c. see that the guidance and communication of presbytery, synod, and General Assembly are considered, and that any binding actions are observed and carried out;

“d. welcome representatives of the presbytery on the occasions of their visits;

“e. propose to the presbytery, or through it to the synod and General Assembly, such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church; and”

k. Shall the third paragraph of G-3.0301 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The presbytery is responsible for the life, ministry, and government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations throughout its district become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).”

l. Shall G-3.0302 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-3.0302 Relations with Synod and Other Presbyteries and the General Assembly

“The presbytery has a responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship to synod and with other presbyteries and the General Assembly by:

“a. consulting with other presbyteries in their region about creating regional mission partnerships for racial ethnic advocacy and support, mission and ministry projects, and other programs of shared life, diversity, and connection to the larger church;

“b. electing commissioners to synod and General Assembly and receiving their reports;

“c. electing ruling and teaching elders to be readers of standard ordination examinations;

“d. seeing that the guidance and communication of synod and General Assembly are considered and that any binding actions are observed and carried out;

“e. proposing to synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church, and/or proposing to General Assembly overtures that have received a concurrence from at least one other presbytery; and

“f. sending annually to synod and General Assembly statistical and other information according to the requirements of those bodies; and

“g. electing members of regional permanent judicial commissions as requested by such commissions.”

m. Shall the first paragraph of G-3.0304 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The presbytery shall hold stated meetings at least twice each year, shall meet at the direction of synod General Assembly, and may call special meetings in accordance with its own rules.”

n. Shall G-3.04 be deleted and the section numbers in G-3.05 be renumbered as G-3.04: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through.]
"G 3.04 THE SYNOD

"G 3.0401 Composition and Responsibilities

"The synod is the intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.

"When a synod meets, it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. Each presbytery shall elect at least one ruling elder and one teaching elder to serve as commissioners to synod. A synod shall determine a plan for the election of commissioners to the synod, as well as the method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103; both plans shall be subject to approval by a majority of the presbyteries in the synod. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between ruling elders and teaching elders. Each person elected moderator or other officer shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed.

"Synod is responsible for the life and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its presbyteries as they seek to support the work of congregations, to the end that the church throughout its region becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of the church throughout its region, it shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

"In light of this charge, the synod has responsibility and power to:

"a—provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard. This responsibility may include developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, a broad strategy for the mission of the church within its bounds and in accord with the larger strategy of the General Assembly; assisting its member presbyteries when requested in matters related to the calling, ordaining, and placement of teaching elders; establishing and maintaining, in conjunction with its presbyteries, those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its region; facilitating joint action in mission with other denominations and agencies in its region; facilitating communication among its presbyteries and between its presbyteries and the General Assembly; providing services for presbyteries within its area that can be performed more effectively from a broad regional base.

"b—provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received. This responsibility may include authorizing the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at its meetings and at other events and gatherings under its jurisdiction, and exercising pastoral care among its presbyteries; in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the synod may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.

"c—nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ. This responsibility shall include providing such services of education and nurture as its presbyteries may require; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to presbyteries in the areas of mission, prophetic witness, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration; reviewing the work of its presbyteries; warning or bearing witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice within its bounds; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

"G 3.0402 Relations with General Assembly

"The synod has responsibility to maintain regular and continuing relationship with the General Assembly by seeing that the guidance and communication of the General Assembly are considered and that any binding actions are observed and carried out, and by proposing to the General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole church.

"G 3.0403 Relations with Presbyteries

"Each presbytery shall participate in the synod’s responsibility and service through its elected commissioners to the synod. The synod has responsibility for supporting the work of the presbyteries within its bounds and as such is charged with:

"a—developing, in conjunction with its presbyteries, joint plans and objectives for the fulfillment of mission, providing encouragement and guidance to its presbyteries and overseeing their work;

"b—developing and providing, when requested, resources as needed to facilitate the mission of its presbyteries;

"c—organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing; and, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created.

"G 3.0404 Reduced Function

"A synod may, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of its presbyteries, to reduce its function. In no case shall synod function be less than the provision of judicial process and administrative review of the work of the presbyteries (G-3.0401c). Such a synod shall meet at least every two years for the purposes of setting budget, electing members to its permanent judicial commission, and admitting to record the actions of its permanent judicial and administrative commissions. Presbyteries of such a synod shall assume for themselves, by mutual agreement, such other synod functions as may be deemed necessary by the presbyteries and the synod.

"Two or more synods sharing common boundaries, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of the presbyteries in each of the synods, may share administrative services and form a shared permanent judicial commission, with the membership of the commission being proportional, so far as possible, to the number of presbyteries within each participating synod. Each synod shall pay the costs for processing a judicial case arising within its bounds.
"G-3.0405 Meetings and Quorum

"The synod shall hold stated meetings at least biennially, shall meet at the direction of the General Assembly, and may call special meetings in accordance with its own rules.

"A synod may set its own quorum, but it shall include an equal number of ruling elders and teaching elders representing at least three presbyteries or one-third of its presbyteries, whichever is larger.

"G-3.0406 Minutes and Records

"The synod shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings that shall be submitted to the next succeeding meeting of the General Assembly for its general review and control. It shall report to the General Assembly the number of its presbyteries and, in general, all important changes that have occurred within its bounds.

"G-3.05 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

"G-3.0501 Composition and Responsibilities

"The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds (F-1.0403 and G-3.0103), to serve as commissioners according to the following proportions:

p. Shall G-3.0501c (G-3.0401c) be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"c. nurture the covenant community of disciples. This responsibility shall include providing those services, resources, and programs performed most effectively at a national level; communicating with the whole church on matters of common concern; warning and bearing witness against errors in doctrine or immorality in the church and in the world; reviewing the work of presbyteries; providing such services of education and nurture as its presbyteries may require; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to presbyteries in the areas of mission, prophetic witness, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration; discerning and presenting with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, matters of truth and vision that may inspire, challenge, and educate both church and world; serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline; deciding controversies brought before it and advising and instructing in cases submitted to it, in conformity with this Constitution; authoritatively interpreting the most recent edition of the Book of Order in a manner binding on the whole church, in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02 or through a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case, with the most recent interpretation of the Book of Order being binding; and establishing and maintaining an office of the Stated Clerk."

q. Shall G-3.0502 (G-3.0402) be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"The General Assembly has responsibility to maintain relationships with presbyteries and synods by:

"a. consulting with and providing resources for presbyteries and synods as they execute their constitutional responsibilities;

"b. overseeing the work of synods;

"c. reviewing the records of synods, taking care to ensure that they conform to this Constitution;

"d. organizing new synods, or dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining previously existing synods or portions of synods, and

"e. b. approving the acts of synods to organize, divide, unite, or combine synods or portions of synods, with the concurrence of existing presbyteries, creating nongeographic presbyteries, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the General Assembly;

"d. developing, in conjunction with presbyteries, joint plans and objectives for the fulfillment of mission, providing encouragement and guidance to its presbyteries and overseeing their work; and
r. Shall G-3.0503 (G-3.0403) be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-3.0503 G-3.0403 Meetings and Quorum

“The General Assembly shall hold a stated meeting at least biennially. The Moderator, or in the event of the incapacity of the Moderator, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, shall call a special meeting at the request or with the concurrence of at least one fourth of the ruling elder commissioners and one fourth of the teaching elder commissioners to the last preceding stated meeting of the General Assembly representing at least fifteen presbyteries, under the jurisdiction of at least five synods. Commissioners to the special meeting shall be the commissioners elected to the last preceding stated meeting of the General Assembly or their alternates. Notice of special meetings shall be sent no fewer than sixty days prior to convening and shall set out the purpose of the meeting. No other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.

“A quorum of the General Assembly shall be one hundred commissioners, fifty of whom shall be ruling elders and fifty teaching elders, representing at least one-fourth of its presbyteries of at least one fourth of its synods.”

s. Shall the third paragraph of G-4.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Where permitted by civil law, each presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained and shall determine a method to constitute the board of trustees by its own rule. The corporation so formed, or individual trustees, shall have the following powers: to receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property, real or personal, for and at the direction of the council.”

t. Shall G-4.0102 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-4.0102 Members of the Corporation

“Only persons eligible for membership in the congregation or council shall be eligible to be members of the corporation and to be elected as trustees. The ruling elders on the session of a congregation, who are eligible under the civil law, shall be the trustees of the corporation, unless the corporation shall determine another method for electing its trustees. Presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly shall provide by rule for the election of trustees from among persons eligible for membership in the council.”

u. Shall G-4.0203 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-4.0203 Church Property Held in Trust

“All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

v. Shall G-5.04 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-5.04 UNION PRESBYTERIES

“A presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may unite to form a union presbytery with one or more comparable councils or governing bodies, each of which is a member of another Reformed body, with the approval of the synod General Assembly or comparable council or governing body of which each is a part.”

w. Shall G-5.0402 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-5.0402 Plan of Union

“A union presbytery shall be created by the adoption of a plan of union by two-thirds vote of each presbytery or governing body that is party to the union. The synod General Assembly and/or governing body having jurisdiction over each of the uniting bodies shall approve the plan of union.”

x. Shall G-6.03b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. The General Assembly appoints a committee of ruling elders and teaching elders, numbering not fewer than fifteen, of whom not more than two shall be from any synod-presbytery, to consider the proposal. This committee shall consult with the committee or council from which the proposal originated. It shall report its findings to the next General Assembly.

y. Shall W-4.3002c be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]
“c. in the larger church as people serve in the ministries of presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly, and of ecumenical agencies and councils;”

z. Shall D-2.0102 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-2.0102 Councils of the Church

“The councils of the church for judicial process are the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. The session itself conducts trials. The presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly conduct trials and hearings through permanent judicial commissions.”

aa. Shall D-3.0101c be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“c. The presbytery, presbyteries, the synod, and the General Assembly have jurisdiction in remedial cases (D-6.0000) and in appeals (D-8.0000 and D-13.0000). The General Assembly shall determine the presbyteries that shall constitute each regional permanent judicial commission.”

bb. Shall D-4.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-4.0101 Definition

“A reference is a written request, made by a session or a permanent judicial commission of a presbytery or synod to the permanent judicial commission of the next higher council, for trial and decision or a hearing on appeal in a remedial or disciplinary case not yet decided.”

cc. Shall D-5.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-5.0101 Election

“The General Assembly, each synod or cooperating synods, and each presbytery shall elect a permanent judicial commission from the teaching elders and ruling elders subject to its jurisdiction. The presbyteries within the bounds of each regional permanent judicial commission shall elect members of such commissions in rotation, as determined by a system of rotating representation established by each such regional permanent judicial commission, taking appropriate steps to assure the full representation of the diversity of the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Each commission shall be composed of teaching elders and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. When the commission consists of an odd number of members, the additional member may be either a teaching elder or a ruling elder. The General Assembly commission shall be composed of one member from each of its constituent synods [insert number] regions established by the General Assembly. The synod commission regional permanent judicial commissions shall be composed of no fewer than eleven members distributed equally, insofar as possible, among the constituent presbyteries subject to the jurisdiction of that commission. In those synods with fewer than eleven presbyteries, each presbytery shall have at least one member. When two or more synods form a shared permanent judicial commission, the commission shall be composed of no fewer than twelve members, with each synod electing members proportional to the number of the presbyteries in each synod, insofar as possible. The cooperating synod shall designate between them one stated clerk to process the cases filed with the shared permanent judicial commission. The presbytery commission shall be composed of no fewer than seven members, with no more than one of its ruling elder members from any one of its constituent churches. Two of the members of the presbytery commission shall be designated to review any petition for review of the procedures of the investigating committee while the investigation in a disciplinary case is in process (D-10.0204) and to review any petition for review of the decision not to file charges (D-10.0303). These two members shall not take part in any subsequent trial. A session shall refer either form of petition to the presbytery commission.”

dd. Shall D-5.0102 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-5.0102 Term

“The term of each member of a permanent judicial commission shall be six years, with the exception that membership on the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly shall end when that member transfers membership to a church or presbytery outside the synod region from which nominated. In each even-numbered year, the General Assembly shall elect members for a term of six years to fill the vacancies then occurring. Their terms of office will begin with the dissolution of the General Assembly at which they are elected.”

ee. Shall D-5.0103 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-5.0103 Classes

“In synods, regional permanent judicial commissions and presbyteries, commissioners shall be elected in three classes, with no more than one half of the members to be in one class. When established for the first time, one class shall serve for two years, the second class for four years, and the third class for six years.”
ff. Shall D-5.0106 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-5.0106 Commission Expenses

“All necessary expenses of a permanent judicial commission shall be paid by the electing council or councils. Cooperating synods The presbyteries within its jurisdiction shall pay the necessary expenses of a regional permanent judicial commission equally, shared permanent judicial commission equally; however, each synod shall pay the necessary expenses for processing a particular judicial case arising within its bounds.”

gg. Shall D-6.0202 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-6.0202 Who May File Complaint

“A complaint of an irregularity or a complaint of a delinquency may be filed by one or more persons or councils subject to and submitting to the jurisdiction of a council.

“Against Presbytery, Synod, or Council at Same Level

“a. In the instance of a complaint against a presbytery, a synod, or by a council against another council at the same level, a complaint of an irregularity shall be filed within ninety days after the alleged irregularity has occurred; and a complaint of a delinquency shall be filed within ninety days after failure or refusal of respondent to cure the alleged delinquency at its next meeting, provided that a written request to do so has been made prior to said meeting. Those eligible to file such a complaint are

“(1) a teaching elder or a ruling elder enrolled as a member of a presbytery concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that period of enrollment, against the presbytery, with the synod regional permanent judicial commission having jurisdiction over that presbytery;

“(2) a commissioner to a synod, concerning an irregularity or a delinquency during that commissioner’s period of enrollment, against the synod, with the General Assembly;

“(3) a session against the presbytery, with the synod regional permanent judicial commission having jurisdiction over that presbytery;

“(4) a presbytery against the synod, with the General Assembly;

“(5) any council a session against any other council of the same level another session, with the council immediately higher than the council complained against and to which the latter council is subject presbytery having jurisdiction over the session that is the subject of the complaint;

“(6) a presbytery against another presbytery, with the regional permanent judicial commission having jurisdiction over the presbytery that is the subject of the complaint;

“(7) a person who is an employee of a presbytery, a synod or cooperating synod, or an entity of a presbytery or synod, claiming to have sustained injury or damage to person or property by the council or entity, against the presbytery, with the regional permanent judicial commission having jurisdiction over the presbytery-synod, or against the synod or cooperating synod, with the General Assembly.

“Against Session or Presbyterian Mission Agency or Entity

“b. In the instance of a complaint against a session, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, or an entity of the General Assembly, a complaint of an irregularity shall be filed within ninety days after the alleged irregularity has occurred; and a complaint of a delinquency shall be filed within ninety days after failure or refusal of respondent to cure the alleged delinquency at its next meeting, provided that a written request to do so has been made prior to said meeting. Those eligible to file such a complaint are

“(1) a member of a particular church against the session of that church, with the presbytery;

“(2) a session, or a presbytery, or a synod against the Presbyterian Mission Agency or an entity of the General Assembly, with the General Assembly;

“[Text in D-6.0202b(3)–(4) remains unchanged.]”

hh. Shall D-6.0302b be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. The clerk of session, the stated clerk, or executive of presbytery or synod shall not serve on a committee of counsel of the council served.”

ii. Shall D-8.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-8.0101 Definition

“An appeal of a remedial case is the transfer to the next higher council of a case in which a decision has been rendered in a lower council, for the purpose of obtaining a review of the proceedings and decision to correct, modify, set aside, or reverse the decision. An appeal from a presbytery permanent judicial commission shall be made to the regional permanent judicial commission having juris-
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diction over the presbytery. An appeal from a regional permanent judicial commission shall be made to the Permanent Judicial
Commission of the General Assembly.”

jj. Shall D-13.0101 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“D-13.0101 Definition

“An appeal of a disciplinary case is the transfer to the next higher council of a case in which a decision has been rendered in a
lower council, for the purpose of obtaining a review of the proceedings and decision to correct, modify, set aside, or reverse the deci-
sion. An appeal from a presbytery permanent judicial commission shall be made to the regional permanent judicial commission hav-
ing jurisdiction over the presbytery. An appeal from a regional permanent judicial commission shall be made to the Permanent Judicial
Commission of the General Assembly.”

2. That the 221st General Assembly (2014), contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the proposed amendments to the Book
of Order set forth in Recommendation 1. above, approve the following amendments to the Standing Rules of the General Assembly:

a. Shall Standing Rule A.3. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or in-
serted is shown as italic.]

“3. Overtures

“a. Overtures are items of business that must have been approved by a presbytery or synod and shall request the General Asse-
mbly to take a particular action, or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution. (See Book of Order, G-3.0302d.)

“b. The stated clerk of a presbytery or synod considering an overture to the General Assembly shall:

“[Text in (1)–(2) remains the same.]

“(3) Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether a similar overture has already been proposed in
order that the presbytery or synod may concur with the existing overture.

“(4) [Text remains the same.]

“c. Submitting Overtures

“[Text in (1)–(4) remains the same.]

“(5) Presbyteries or synods submitting overtures with a recommendation(s) that affects the work or budget of a General As-
sembly entity(ies) shall submit evidence that the affected entity(ies) has (have) been consulted. If such evidence is not submitted, the
Stated Clerk shall recommend that the overture be received and referred to a future session of the General Assembly so that consulta-
tion may take place.

“(6) In the event that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly receives an overture similar to one already proposed (ex-
cluding the rationale), she or he shall inquire of the presbytery or synod in question whether it would be willing to concur with that ex-
isting overture or desires to withdraw the overture. A presbytery or synod concurring with an overture may submit additional rationale
for its action, provided that it does not duplicate the rationale provided by the overture. The concurrence and any additional ra-
tionale will be printed with the original overture in the Reports to the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture shall be re-
ceived up to 45 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture with consti-
tutional implications shall be received up to 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.

“d. [Text remains the same.]

“e. Overture Advocate

“(1) Each presbytery or synod that submits an overture shall notify the Stated Clerk of the name of a commissioner or some
other person in attendance at the General Assembly who has been designated as the advocate for the overture. The overture advocate
shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the ovet-
ture may be referred. (See Standing Rule E.2.)

“(2) In the event that the assembly refers an overture to a General Assembly entity for further consideration (and not simply
for implementation), the presbytery or synod submitting the overture shall be invited by the Stated Clerk to designate an overt ure ad-
vocate for the assembly meeting at which the entity’s response to the overture is presented. The overture advocate shall be available to
provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred.
(See Standing Rule E.2.)”

b. Shall Standing Rule A.6. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or in-
serted is shown as italic.]

“6. Entity and Synod Minutes

“a. Entities and synods required to submit minutes for review by the General Assembly shall submit such minutes on a calendar
year basis so as to present minutes of all meetings for the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31) preceding the year in
which is held the session of the General Assembly to which such minutes are submitted. The minutes shall contain the attestation that
they have been approved by the entity or synod submitting them in the manner regularly in use within that body.
“b. Presbyteries shall submit their minutes of all meetings for the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31) preceding the year at the time and place requested by the Stated Clerk. The minutes shall contain the attestation that they have been approved by the presbytery in the manner regularly in use within that presbytery.

“c. Minutes of General Assembly entities will be reviewed in accordance with the “Guidelines for Preparation of Minutes of Agencies” as printed in the Manual of the General Assembly. Minutes of the synods will be reviewed in accordance with “Guidelines for Reviewing Synod Records” as printed in the Manual of the General Assembly.

“d. Minutes of presbyteries will be reviewed in accordance with “Guidelines for Reviewing Presbytery Records” as printed in the Manual of the General Assembly.

shall be women. No more than one person from any one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods should be mandated in the Book of Order, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including the moderator of each committee. Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusivity mandated in the Book of Order, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be ruling elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. No more than one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods geographic regions shall be equitably represented.”

d. Shall Standing Rule C.1.c. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“c. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall appoint a commissioner to be moderator and a second to be vice moderator of each committee. Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusivity mandated in the Book of Order, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be ruling elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. No more than one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator or vice moderator. All synods geographic regions shall be equitably represented.”

e. Shall Standing Rule C.3.e. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“e. The Stated Clerk shall present such items of business to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with a recommendation for their referral. In the event that the presbytery or synod disagrees with the referral recommendation, this procedure shall be followed: The presbytery or synod shall be entitled to submit a written statement regarding the background and intent of the overture at the time the overture is initially being considered for referral by the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. If, after that committee makes its recommendation, the presbytery or synod still disagrees with the referral recommendation, the presbytery or synod shall notify the Stated Clerk, in writing, of its disagreement. The overture advocate will then be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture at a special meeting of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral that shall be held no more than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the convening of the assembly.”

f. Shall Standing Rule C.4.b. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. The reports and recommendations of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly regarding the initial docket of the General Assembly and referrals of business shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with any items of business not included in them (see Standing Rules I.4.b.(3) and I.4.b.(4)). Review of the minutes of the synods presbyteries pursuant to G-3.0402c shall be followed: The presbytery or synod shall be entitled to submit a written statement regarding the background and intent of the overture at the time selected by the assembly committee considering the response. The overture advocate shall be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture” or as asked for clarification by the committee concerning the original intent of the overture.”

g. Shall Standing Rule E.2.g. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“g. Overture advocates who have been designated by their presbytery or synod to speak to the response from a General Assembly entity to a referral of an overture shall be responsible for being available at the time selected by the assembly committee considering the response. The overture advocate shall be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture” or as asked for clarification by the committee concerning the original intent of the overture.”

h. Shall Standing Rule I.1.d. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“d. In order to distribute the benefits experienced from hosting a General Assembly meeting throughout the church, the place of meeting shall be rotated among the following four areas (unless prevented by financial or other practical considerations):
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“a. Area A: Synod of Alaska Northwest, Synod of the Pacific, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Synod of the Rocky Mountains, Synod of the Southwest;

“b. Area B: Synod of the Sun, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Synod of Mid-America;

“c. Area C: Synod of Living Waters, Synod of Lincoln Trails, Synod of the Covenant;

“d. Area D: Synod of South Atlantic, Synod of Puerto Rico, Synod of the Northeast, Synod of the Trinity, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.


**b** Area B: Presbyteries of Giddings-Lovejoy, Heartland, John Calvin, Missouri Union, Northern Kansas, Southern Kansas, Arkansas, Cimarron, Eastern Oklahoma, Grace, Indian Nations, Mission, New Covenant, Palo Duro, Piney, South Louisiana, Tres Rios, Central Nebraska, Dakota, Des Moines, East Iowa, Homestead, John Knox, Milwaukee, Minnesota Valleys, Missouri River Valley, North Central Iowa, Northern Plains, Northern Waters, Prospect Hill, South Dakota, Twin Cities Area, Winnebago;

**c** Area C: Presbyteries of Cincinnati, Detroit, Eastminster, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Mackinac, Maumee Valley, Miami Valley, Muskingum Valley, Scioto Valley, Western Reserve, Blackhawk, Chicago, Great Rivers, Midwest Hammi, Ohio Valley, Southeastern Illinois, Wabash Valley, Whitewater Valley, East Tennessee, Holston, Mid-Kentucky, Mid-South, Middle Tennessee, Mississippi, North Alabama, South Alabama, St. Andrew, Sheppards and Lapsley, South Alabama, Transylvania, Western Kentucky; and


\[2. \] Shall Standing Rule K.1.g. be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

\[b. \] Any such commission or committee shall consult with and advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency on the progress of its work in order to assist the council in its responsibility for coordinating the work of the entities of the General Assembly and the work of presbyteries and synods."

j. Shall a new Standing Rule K.2. be added as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

2. Regional Administrative Commissions

\[a. \] In order to exercise its responsibilities to review the work of presbyteries; approve the division, union, or combination of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries; create nongeographic presbyteries; develop joint plans and objectives for the fulfillment of mission, provide encouragement and guidance to presbyteries and overseeing their work; elect regional committees on representation and review the work of presbyteries regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, advocate for diversity in leadership, and review the decisions of presbyteries as to the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.1043; and develop and provide resources as needed to facilitate the mission of its presbyteries (G-3.0501c and G-3.0502), the General Assembly shall create eight regional administrative commissions, for each of the following regions:


Region 3: The Presbyteries of East Tennessee, Holston, Mid-Kentucky, Mid-South, Middle Tennessee, Mississippi, North Alabama, St. Andrew, Sheppards and Lapsley, South Alabama, Transylvania, Western Kentucky, Central Florida, Charleston Atlantic, Cherokee, Flint River, Florida, Foot hills, Greater Atlanta, New Harmony, Northeast Georgia, Peace River, Providence, St. Augustine, Savannah, Tampa Bay, Trinity, and Tropical Florida.


Region 5: The Presbyteries of Denver, Glacier, Plains and Peaks, Pueblo, Utah, Western Colorado, Wyoming, Yellowstone, Central Nebraska, Dakota, Des Moines, East Iowa, Homestead, John Knox, Milwaukee, Minnesota Valleys, Missouri River Valley, North Central Iowa, Northern Plains, Northern Waters, Prospect Hill, South Dakota, Twin Cities Area, and Winnebago.


“b. The initial members of each administrative commission shall be appointed by the Moderator of the 21st General Assembly (2014) in consultation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation from a nominee made by each presbytery within the bounds of the region. In order to ensure appropriate diversity within each commission, the Stated Clerk shall designate whether the nominee from each presbytery shall be a ruling elder or a teaching elder and whether he or she shall be male or female. Each presbytery shall seek to ensure that the full diversity of the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is reflected in its nominee. If the Moderator determines that an administrative commission lacks sufficient racial ethnic, gender, geographic, and theological diversity, he or she may ask one or more presbyteries to provide alternative nominees. The initial appointees to each administrative commission has been divided at appointment into three classes. Thereinafter, the Moderator of each General Assembly shall appoint one third of the members of each commission, in accordance with the classes initially appointed, as well as fill any vacancies in the commission, using the same process as for the initial appointment to the administrative commission.

c. Each administrative commission shall have the following powers within its boundaries:

“(1) to review the work of presbyteries;
“(2) to approve the division, union, or combination of presbyteries or portions of presbyteries, and create nongeographic presbyteries;
“(3) to develop joint plans and objectives for the fulfillment of mission, provide encouragement and guidance to presbyteries, and overseeing their work;
“(4) to elect regional committees on representation (consisting of members representing the full racial ethnic, gender, geographic, and theological diversity of the membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to review the work of presbyteries within its boundaries regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, advocate for diversity in leadership, and review the decisions of presbyteries as to the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403; and
“(5) to develop and provide resources as needed to facilitate the mission of its presbyteries.

d. The expenses of each commission shall be paid by the presbyteries within the bounds of the region assigned the commission in proportion to membership of each presbytery.”

k. Shall current Standing Rule K.2. be renumbered as Standing Rule K.3. and amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

2.3. Special Administrative Review of Synods or Presbyteries

“a. The General Assembly has authority to undertake special administrative review of synods or presbyteries (Book of Order, G-3.0502c). There are three ways the General Assembly could be requested to consider such review:

“(1) by an overture from a presbytery (Standing Rule A.3.);
“(2) by request from one of the General Assembly entities (Standing Rule A.2.); or
“(3) by a commissioners’ resolution (Standing Rule A.8.). If such overture, request, or resolution is acted on favorably by the General Assembly, the General Assembly could undertake Special Administrative Review (G-3.0108b) through commission or special committee as provided for in Standing Rule K.1. and G-3.0109c; or
“(4) by request from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly based upon any concerns arising in the review of the records of such presbytery.

“b. Special administrative review of an alleged synod presbytery irregularity or delinquency may occur when a written request for such review is received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly from another synod or a presbytery within the synod of the alleged irregularity or delinquency. If the request relates to an alleged delinquency, the request can only be filed with the Stated Clerk after the failure or refusal of the synod presbytery to cure the alleged delinquency at its next meeting, having been requested to do so in writing prior to the meeting. When the request for special administrative review is received, the Stated Clerk shall convene a meeting of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the moderator of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. If the request is in order and all the moderators agree that for the good of the church the special administrative review needs to be undertaken before the next meeting of the General Assembly (when the request could be considered by the whole General Assembly), the Moderator of the General Assembly shall appoint a special committee (Standing Rule K.5.) to conduct a special administrative review in accordance with G-3.0108b and report its findings and recommendations to the next General Assembly.”
3. That the 221st General Assembly (2014), contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the proposed amendments to the Book of Order set forth in Recommendation 1, approve the following amendments to the Guidelines for Reviewing Synod Records: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING SYNOD PRESBYTERY RECORDS

Compiled by the Department of Constitutional Services
and the OGA/GAMC Mid Council Relations Office

“Content of the Minutes

The following matters shall be included in the minutes, as applicable:

“1. The minutes shall contain an index.

“2. 1. The date, time, and place of the council meeting; the name of the moderator presiding; and whether it is a “stated,” “adjourned,” or “special” council meeting (Robert’s Rules, Chapter XV, Section 48).

“2. 2. The call of the special meeting and the name of requester(s) and/or the caller in accordance with Synod’s presbytery’s own rules (see Book of Order, G-3.0405 G-3.0304 and Robert’s Rules, Chapter IV, Section 9)

“4. 3. The opening of each meeting with prayer (see Book of Order, G-3.0105).

“5. 4. The closing of each meeting with prayer (see Book of Order, G-3.0105).

“6. 5. The roll of commissioners and attendance and their presbyteries congregations (See Book of Order G-3.0104).

“7. 6. The names of absentees and their presbyteries congregations.

“8. 7. A statement that a quorum was present, including an indication of the number specified as a quorum in the synod presbytery bylaws or standing rules (see Book of Order, G-3.0405 G-3.0304).


“10. 9. The report of the Committee on Representation (see Book of Order, G-3.0103 and G-3.0401 G-3.0301) showing implementation of the principles of participation and inclusiveness in order to assure fair representation in decision making (see Book of Order, G-3.0401 G-3.0301).

“11. 10. The names of members of commissions, committees, and similar groups, including those groups that exist only during a synod presbytery meeting.

“12. 11 Action taken on reports and recommendations and all reports with clear indication of amendments.

“13. 12 The decisions of the Permanent Judicial Commission and other commissions should be reported. A report should be made that lawful injunctions to the presbyteries sessions or congregations have been obeyed.

“14. 13. Actions concerning the organization of new presbyteries congregations or the division, uniting, or otherwise combining of presbyteries congregations or portions of presbyteries previously existing, subject to the approval of the General Assembly (see Book of Order, G-3.0402 G-3.0303b).


“16. 15. The report of the synod presbytery’s entities, if any, and action on its recommendations (see Book of Order, G-3.0108a).

“17. 16. The approved synod presbytery’s budget (see Book of Order, G-3.0113).

“18. 17. The complete report of the full financial review from a public accountant or a public accounting firm. (G-3.0113).


“20. 19. Report of its ecumenical relationship, if any (see Book of Order, G-5.01 and 5.04).

“21. 19. Indication that the minutes have been read and approved by the synod presbytery or by its authorized committee prior to presentation of the peer review.

“22. 20. A record of the synod presbytery having considered “programmatic” matters referred to it by the General Assembly.

“23. 21. An alphabetical roster of former members for the last six years of the Permanent Judicial Commission who may be called upon when necessary to constitute a quorum (see Book of Order, D-5.0206b).
"24. 22. Actions on exceptions from the preceding General Assembly.

"25. 23. A report of property and liability insurance carried by the Synod presbytery. (G-3.0112).


“General Provisions

“1. Each synod presbytery shall deliver to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, during the spring regional meeting to peer review minutes, one copy of the minutes of all sessions of the synod presbytery that have occurred since the last review by the General Assembly, provided that such minutes have been approved by the synod presbytery or its authorized committee, and have been printed or duplicated for distribution.

“2. The minutes shall be bound in a manner that is consistent with the needs of both protection and accessibility.

“3. The title page shall show attestation that the minutes of meetings of the most recent previous session or sessions have been reviewed by the General Assembly and shall give page references to action on exceptions, if there be such.

“4. Minutes shall be signed and attested by either the moderator or stated clerk of the synod presbytery; such signature should appear at the end of the journal before any appendix or supplement.

“5. The bylaws and standing rules of the synod presbytery shall be either bound in the volume of the minutes or submitted for review with the minutes.

“6. The review of the minutes of each synod presbytery shall ordinarily occur as peer reviews by a gathering of all synod presbytery stated clerks within a designate geographic region. Such geographic regions shall be recommended by the Stated Clerk and approved by the General Assembly. Their written review of each synod presbytery’s minutes shall be submitted to the General Assembly Committee assigned the review of the minutes, who shall attest that the minutes of each synod presbytery have been reviewed. If peer review is not completed, the synod presbytery shall submit its minutes for review by the General Assembly Committee charged with overseeing this review.

“7. The Stated Clerk shall deposit with the Presbyterian Historical Society a certified copy of the synod presbytery minutes after they have been approved by the General Assembly.

“Report of the Assembly Committee

“1. The assembly committee reviewing synod presbytery minutes shall report to the General Assembly whether the

“a. proceedings have been correctly recorded;

“b. proceedings have been regular and in concurrence with the Constitution;

“c. proceedings have been prudent and equitable;

“d. proceedings have been faithful to the mission of the whole church, and

“e. lawful injunctions of the General Assembly have been obeyed.

“2. The assembly committee shall recommend appropriate action to the General Assembly, and if it believed the General Assembly should take exception to something in a synod presbytery’s minutes, that exception shall be listed in the committee’s report.”

4. That the 221st General Assembly (2014), contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the proposed amendments to the Book of Order set forth in Recommendation 1, approve the following amendments to the “Forming Social Policy”:

“FORMING SOCIAL POLICY

“1. Definitions

“[Text remains unchanged.]

“2. Requirements

“[Text remains unchanged.]

“3. Policy Statements Requirements

“In addition to section 2. on p. 65, “policy statements” must meet the following requirements:

“a. A prospectus defining the social issue(s) to be addressed by a policy statement shall be developed, adopted, and published by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy or other entity. This prospectus shall be distributed to the Presbyterian News Office, Monday Morning, and other appropriate media. A brief (one-page) summary of the prospectus describing the problem to be addressed, information on where to obtain a full prospectus, and an invitation to respond with comments and suggestions, shall be sent to all synods and presbyteries. This prospectus shall be distributed to all presbyteries with sufficient copies for all congregations, encouraging input from the presbytery and the congregations and indicating how input can be made.

“[Text in 3.b.–h. remains unchanged.]

“i. The policy statement shall be distributed with an official cover letter from the Stated Clerk that says, in part:
“In exercise of its responsibility to witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in every dimension of life, the (number) General Assembly (year) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has approved this policy statement. It is presented for the guidance and edification of the whole Christian Church and the society to which it ministers. It will determine procedures and program for the units and staff of the General Assembly. It is recommended for consideration and study by other governing bodies (sessions, and presbyteries, and synods). It is commended to the free Christian conscience of all congregations and the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for prayerful study, dialogue, and action.

4. Resolution Requirements

“In addition to section 2. on p. 65, “resolutions” must meet the following requirements:

a. [Text remains unchanged.]

b. A resolution shall be distributed with an official cover letter from the Stated Clerk that says, in part:

“In exercise of its responsibility to witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in every dimension of life, the (number) General Assembly (year) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has approved this resolution. It is presented for the guidance and edification of the whole Christian Church and the society to which it ministers. It will determine procedures and program for the entities and staff of the General Assembly. It is recommended for consideration and study by other governing bodies (sessions, and presbyteries, and synods). It is commended to the free Christian conscience of all congregations and the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for prayerful study, dialogue, and action.”

5. That the 221st General Assembly (2014), contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the proposed amendments to the Book of Order set forth in Recommendation 1, approve the following amendments to the Organization for Mission:

“Introduction

I. History of the Structure for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The self-assessment revealed the need for GAC to be closer to congregations, presbyteries and synods and to find ways to better communicate with them. The self-assessment also indicated the large size of GAC was a concern and that GAC needed to look at its size and the relationship between GAC-elected and GAC-staff roles and relationships.

“The church’s mission finds its center in the gospel of Jesus Christ and in witnessing to that gospel. Beneath the variety and complexity of its forms of witness, the church’s mission is one—from the congregation to the General Assembly. To share fully in that mission is the task of every Presbyterian and every council. As the most inclusive council, the General Assembly represents the unity of the synod, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Among its other responsibilities, the General Assembly has the power to set policies, objectives, and priorities for mission, to provide the agencies appropriate for that mission, and to superintend their work (Book of Order, G-3.0501 G-3.0401).

“The Presbyterian Mission Agency, as agent of the General Assembly, implements policies established by the General Assembly; works in partnership with synods and presbyteries; and develops and proposes a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly. Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board are elected by the General Assembly and are representative of synods, presbyteries, and the church at large.

“The General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the synod, the presbyteries, and the sessions work together in partnership on behalf of the mission of the church. The Organization for Mission places emphasis on the congregation as an instrument of mission and on the mid councils working together to provide resources and services to the congregations.

“A. Unity of the Church

[B. Commitment to Mission

[C. Diversity and Inclusiveness

[D. Tradition and Flexibility

[E. Partnership

1 Synods are no longer councils within the structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but were at the time of this study.

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“F. Personnel and Compensation

The General Assembly has approved a personnel, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, and compensation system that is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This system provides guidance regarding overseas personnel, and for General Assembly level entities, synods, presbyteries, sessions, congregations, and church-related institutions in their employment practices. In order to develop consistency and equity across the whole church, these mid councils and institutions are urged to approve and implement these policies with such adaptations as may be necessary.

“G. Additional Factors

“Additional factors to guide the structure and style of mission are:

• the need to affirm the centrality of the mission of congregations, and their need and desire for resources from General Assembly entities, as well as from presbyteries and synods;

[[Text in bullets 2–7 remains unchanged.]]

• the need for an evolutionary design that can be responsive to unfolding changes in the structure and work of the General Assembly, synods and presbyteries.

“II. Statement of Vision and Priority Goals for Mission

“[Text in this section remains unchanged.]

“III. Mission of the General Assembly

“(Book of Order, G-3.0501 G-3.0401)

“The General Assembly is the council of the whole church and it is representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds (F-1.0403 and G-3.0103), to serve as commissioners according to the following proportions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Members</th>
<th>Ruling Elders</th>
<th>Teaching Elders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8,000 or less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,001–16,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,001–24,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24,001–32,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32,001–40,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,001–48,000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48,001 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[[The next five paragraphs remain unchanged.]]

c. nurture the covenant community of disciples. This responsibility shall include providing those services, resources, and programs performed most effectively at a national level; communicating with the whole church on matters of common concern; warning and bearing witness against errors in doctrine or immorality in the church and in the world; reviewing the work of presbyteries; providing such services of education and nurture as its presbyteries may require; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to presbyteries in the areas of mission, prophetic witness, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration; discerning and presenting with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, matters of truth and vision that may inspire, challenge, and educate both church and world; serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline; deciding controversies brought before it and advising and instructing in cases submitted to it, in conformity with this Constitution; authoritatively interpreting the most recent edition of the Book of Order in a manner binding on the whole church, in accordance with the provisions of G-6.02 or through a decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in a remedial or disciplinary case, with the most recent interpretation of the Book of Order being binding; and establishing and maintaining an office of the Stated Clerk.

“IV. General Assembly Officers and Committees and the Office of the General Assembly

“A. Moderator of the General Assembly

“[Text in the first paragraph and in A.1. and A.2. remains the same.]

3. Enabling the Moderator and Vice Moderator to Serve

a. [Text in 3.a. remains unchanged.]

b. The Moderator, the Vice Moderator, and the Office of the General Assembly shall jointly develop a comprehensive plan for their travel based upon the mission of the church and the needs of agencies, mid councils, institutions, ecumenical partners, and other constituencies.

Each synod, regional group of presbyteries (as determined by the Stated Clerk and approved by the General Assembly), in consultation with its presbyteries, will be invited to develop a plan for itineration of the Moderator or Vice Moderator. Ordinarily, a single invitation for a visit within a presbytery will be accepted during each term.
B. Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

2. Functions of the Stated Clerk (For functions related to General Assembly meetings, see Standing Rule H.2.)

n. The Stated Clerk shall promote the harmony and efficiency of the General Assembly and its agencies in cooperation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency and its Executive Director, with special attention to relationships between General Assembly entities, and with synods, presbyteries, and sessions. The Stated Clerk shall have membership on or relationship to appropriate committees, commissions, and agencies of the General Assembly as it shall determine from time to time.

C. Committees of the General Assembly

1. Serving on Assembly Entities

h. The Stated Clerk shall also notify appropriate entities and mid-councils upon being advised of the death of any person holding membership on an assembly entity or who is unable to serve for any other reason. The Stated Clerk shall also declare vacant a position on any such entity held by a teaching elder who ceases to be a teaching elder member of a presbytery of this denomination, or a position held by a member of a particular church who ceases to be a member of a congregation of this denomination.

All such vacancies shall be filled by the same process under which the former incumbent was elected. If a vacancy shall occur during the first term of service of an incumbent, then the original source of the nomination shall propose a nominee for election to complete the unexpired term, and such nominee shall be eligible for renomination and election to an additional full term. If a vacancy shall occur during the second term of service of an incumbent, and the position vacated is one designated for a representative of a presbytery or synod, then the privilege of proposing a nominee for the unexpired term shall pass to the next appropriate presbytery or synod under any rotation system that may be in use, and the nominee so proposed shall be eligible for nomination and reelection to an additional full term. Any vacancy in a position for which the General Assembly Nominating Committee makes nominations may be filled until the next succeeding General Assembly by appointment of the Moderator of the General Assembly upon advice by the nominating committee that the committee has decided to present the name of the appointee to the next session of the General Assembly as its nominee for the position.

3. Advisory Committee on the Constitution

a. The Book of Order, G-6.02, provides for the establishment of an Advisory Committee on the Constitution. The committee is composed of nine (9) voting members who shall be stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, polity professors, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church.

V. The Presbyterian Mission Agency

The Presbyterian Mission Agency is the body of the General Assembly in which are lodged the following responsibilities:

c. to develop and propose, for General Assembly approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency; doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, and presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for General Assembly approval an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the Presbyterian Mission Agency;

VI. Presbyterian Mission Agency Relationships

The Presbyterian Mission Agency works in partnership with synods, presbyteries, and sessions to enable the various councils to join together in churchwide expression of the life and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
“VIII. Other General Assembly Related Corporations

“[Text in VIII.A.–C. remains unchanged.]

“D. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

“[Text in the first three paragraphs remains unchanged.]

“The Board of Directors consist of fifteen (15) members. All members are elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board elects two members from among its membership. The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates six at-large members, one member from among the synods, and two members from among the presbyteries. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation nominates two members and the Corporation’s Personnel/Nominating Committee nominates three at-large members. The Program reports to the General Assembly through the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“The Chair of the Program’s Board of Directors and its President and Chief Executive Officer have privilege of the floor without vote at Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meetings. They are corresponding members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. In addition, the President participates in the Expanded Staff Leadership Team plus Synod Executives Forum.”

6. That the 221st General Assembly (2014), contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the proposed amendments to the Book of Order set forth in Recommendation 1, instructs the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) to appoint administrative commissions for each of the current synods to develop, in consultation with the presbyteries currently within the bounds of that synod, plans to transfer assets, funds, projects, and programs of the synods of that region to the appropriate trusts, foundations, or entities, then to implement such plans as soon as practical, but in no event later than the opening of the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

The members of each administrative commission shall be appointed by the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) from a nominee made by each presbytery within the bounds of the synods whose assets, funds, projects, and programs it is charged with transferring. In order to ensure appropriate diversity within each commission, the Stated Clerk shall designate whether the nominee from each presbytery shall be a ruling elder or a teaching elder and whether he or she shall be male or female. If the Moderator determines that an administrative commission lacks sufficient racial ethnic, gender, geographic, and theological diversity, he or she may ask one or more presbyteries to provide alternative nominees.

In order to carry out its charge, each such administrative commission is empowered to

a. hold the assets of each synod within its region in trust pending completion of its charge;
b. retain legal, accounting, and other professional services and/or hire temporary staff to assist in completing its charge, and to pay the reasonable expenses for such services from the funds held in trust from the synod in question;
c. confer with the presbyteries within the bounds of that synod as to the appropriate use of the assets and funds of the synod, and as to the benefits of transferring the projects and programs of that synod to other entities, including to those presbyteries;
d. open and close bank and investment accounts as necessary to transfer the existing assets, funds, projects, and programs of the synod;
e. create new legal entities to which the assets, funds, projects, and programs of the synod may be transferred, provided that any such entity shall hold all assets in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and shall be controlled by the election of directors or otherwise by presbyteries within the bounds of that synod;
f. consult periodically with the other administrative commissions and with resource personnel provided by the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Presbyterian Foundation concerning the most effective means of accomplishing their charge;
g. wind up the legal affairs of the synod and to dissolve it as a corporation;
h. take all other steps reasonably necessary to accomplish its charge;
i. provide an interim report of its actions to the 222nd General Assembly (2016); and
j. complete its work as soon as prudently possible, but in no event later than the opening of the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

7. That the 221st General Assembly (2014), contingent upon approval by the presbyteries of the proposed amendments to the Book of Order set forth in Recommendation 1, do the following:

a. Approve the following boundaries for regional permanent judicial commissions, effective Jun 21, 2015:


Region 3: The Presbyteries of East Tennessee, Holston, Mid-Kentucky, Mid-South, Middle Tennessee, Mississippi, North Alabama, St. Andrew, Sheppards and Lapsley, South Alabama, Transylvania, Western Kentucky, Central Florida, Charleston Atlantic, Cherokee, Flint River, Florida, Foothills, Greater Atlanta, New Harmony, Northeast Georgia, Peace River, Providence, St. Augustine, Savannah, Tampa Bay, Trinity, and Tropical Florida.


Region 5: The Presbyteries of Denver, Glacier, Plains and Peaks, Pueblo, Utah, Western Colorado, Wyoming, Yellowstone, Central Nebraska, Dakota, Des Moines, East Iowa, Homestead, John Knox, Milwaukee, Minnesota Valleys, Missouri River Valley, North Central Iowa, Northern Plains, Northern Waters, Prospect Hill, South Dakota, Twin Cities Area, and Winnebago.


b. Request that the 224th General Assembly (2020) review the boundaries for regional permanent judicial commissions to ensure that a balance of workloads has been maintained by these boundaries.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 05-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 05-04.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 05-04

Comment on Item 05-04—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) has been a careful observer of the commission since its beginning four years ago. The process behind making this report to the assembly has been a thorough one. The commissions (reporting in 2012 and 2014) have taken measures to be widely inclusive in their counsel—holding listening sessions around the country. GACOR consulted with a subcommittee on options that affect representation functions of councils and how accountability structures are affected by the considered recommendations.

The reduction of synods is a serious manner that will effect participation and representation in decision-making as well as capacities for accountability among councils. How mid councils live out the mandated representation functions and principles of unity in diversity will need to be examined and considered as these changes are lived out. The GACOR supports the commission’s determination that synods remain a useful structure for church life. Relating to the next lower council would have become a difficult task for GACOR and the assembly if synods were removed all together. Returning the task to mid councils for wide consultation and action with a deadline is good. We recognize that any strategy for change must include deadlines but two years may not be enough time to finalize the consulting process given the magnitude of the changes the recommendations of the Mid Council Commission proposes.

We draw commissioners’ attention to Recommendations 3–5 for particular examination. The administrative commission being recommended, in Recommendation 3, is not created until 2016, if the 222nd General Assembly (2014) acts to create it. As with any commission, the boundaries of authority should be carefully constructed. Having a small group act with the authority of the assembly (without their decisions being subject to review and revision) should be a rare occurrence as it limits access and participation in decision-making.

Recommendation 4 concerns itself with Standing Rule C.1.a., regarding assembly committees. There has been a committee named Mid Council Issues in all recent assemblies. The Stated Clerk and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly are charged with determining how many assembly committees are needed and what their tasks will be. The recom-
mendation directs them and adds a charge to that committee. We want to remind synods and presbyteries that they have internal resources of committees on representation (and/or bodies assigned these functions—G-3.0103 and F-1.0403). GACOR offers itself as a consulting resource and partner to this Committee on Mid Councils in particular regard to “ecclesial and missional identity, purpose, structure, and strategies” of synods.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

Item 05-05

[The assembly disapproved Item 05-05. See p. 54.]

On Delaying the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii’s Overture Requesting Dissolution of Hanmi Presbytery, and Creating a New Administrative Commission—From the Hanmi Presbytery.

The Hanmi Presbytery overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Delay action on the overture of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii requesting dissolution of Hanmi Presbytery.

2. Direct the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii to create a new administrative commission that will include seven members from seven geographic presbyteries and five members from current members of the presbytery. This new administrative commission is to work with Hanmi Presbytery by, but not limited to, providing consultations to Hanmi Presbytery and making progress reports to each synod assembly, and making a final report to the spring synod assembly 2016 for the life of Hanmi Presbytery.

Rationale

The 195th General Assembly (1983) approved the organization of the Hanmi Presbytery within the bounds of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii with a ten-year term.

On January 28, 1984, the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii (hereafter the synod) organized the Hanmi Presbytery (hereafter the presbytery) with fifteen Korean American churches and pastors from outside our denominations.

The presbytery, with the concurrence of the synod, submitted an overture to the 204th General Assembly (1992) to extend the term of the presbytery for an additional fifteen years.

The 204th General Assembly (1992) approved an amended overture that extended the life of the presbytery for another fifteen years with the term ending in January 2009.

The presbytery developed and enhanced the Presbyterian presence and missional mandate to the racial ethnic constituencies in the region.

The presbytery has experienced some difficult years following the extended term including a dispute over matters of governance, particularly the nominations and elections of presbytery officers on December 3, 1998, which was one of the precipitating issues that led to the synod council appointing an administrative commission to work with Hanmi Presbytery (hereafter the commission) for the purpose (among others) of conducting a special administrative review of the affairs of the presbytery (G-9.0408–.0409 now G-3.0108b) and determining who were the rightful officers, committee chairs, and committee members of the presbytery for 1999.

Subsequent to the holding of open hearings and the reviewing of presbytery records, the commission determined that there were deep underlying problems within the presbytery, and on June 12, 1999, a special called meeting of the synod assembly reaffirmed the earlier granted authority of the commission and approved the recommendation of the commission to be granted “original jurisdiction,” including acting for the presbytery in several major areas.

The commission, in its 2003 report to the synod assembly, stated that “An increasing number of Hanmi Presbytery members are working very hard to follow the Book of Order … that under the guidance of the Commission, the Committee on Ministry has made significant progress … that Hanmi Presbytery has formed a Mission Statement Advisory Committee to do a Mission Study and prepare a Mission Statement.”

During 2006, ministers and elders of the presbytery determined that “… transformation is needed in Hanmi Presbytery and it is worth the pursuit of developing a healthy Presbytery,” so the presbytery created the Hanmi Presbytery Transformation Task Force at its meeting of June 1, 2006.
The Hanmi Presbytery Transformation Task Force and leadership of the presbytery continue to stress the importance of compliance with the *Book of Order* and the presbytery has initiated training for the committees of the presbytery and the sessions in Presbyterian polity with some resourcing provided by the commission.

The commission is encouraged by the evident efforts on the part of the leadership of Hanmi Presbytery to work with the commission in a spirit of cooperation, which is a contrast with the struggle during much of the service of the commission.

As a Korean-language, nongeographic presbytery, Hanmi Presbytery has numerous gifts to share with the synod and the whole church—cultural and spiritual gifts that can enrich the life of the whole church in this 21st century, and can serve as an effective model of what a viable nongeographic language presbytery should be.

The presbytery realizes that while there is still much work to do, they have expressed their commitment to “succeeding” with God’s help as stated in their recently adopted new Mission Statement: “The Mission of Hanmi Presbytery is to be a faithful partner in mission and ministry with the sessions, congregations, and minister members of the Presbytery; to empower, support, nurture and walk with them in their ministries. … The Presbytery expresses commitment to God’s grace and love by seeking opportunities not only to continue serving Korean immigrants but also for promoting racial and ethnic harmony in a multicultural society; and in glorifying the Lord our God with a modest and faithful lifestyle.

The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the overture by the synod to continue Hanmi Presbytery without term limit.

The presbytery has been experiencing difficulties due to the conflicts of certain congregations, judicial matters over the church property, and lack of leadership effectiveness.

The commission came to the point of time to make a final report, after fifteen years of work, in that the recommendation of dissolution of the presbytery was presented to the synod’s spring assembly on March 29, 2014.

The presbytery acknowledged the recommendation of the commission and organized a task force whose roles and functions were to develop and encourage leadership change and congregational reflection over the past wrongs and mistakes in a mode of repentance of prayer and reflection.

Participation and representation are recommended in G-3.0103:

> The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403). …

Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation. Councils above the session shall establish by their own rule committees on representation to fulfill the following functions: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403.

The Hanmi Presbytery was created as a language presbytery to fulfill these principles of inclusiveness and representation, and the presbytery was duly authorized to initiate the instrumental ability regarding transfer to geographical presbyteries. It is the presbytery’s understanding that geographical presbyteries may not be quite prepared to receive and nurture the congregations and leadership due to differences of language, culture, heritage, and history within a short period of six months.

The presbytery presented a substitute motion to create a new administrative commission and to grant two more years for discernment and process of transfer to geographical presbyteries or the other Reformed body and for comprehensive evaluation of the life, identity, and unfinished mission works of the presbytery.

The presbytery’s substitute motion was failed and the motion by the commission was passed at the synod spring assembly 2014 and carried it to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Concurrence to Item from the Eastern Korean and Midwest Hanmi Presbyteries.

$Item 05-06

[The assembly approved Item 05-06 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 13, 54–55.]

[Comment: The cost is estimated at $20,000, 1/4th of which has been pledged by the nongeographic Korean presbyteries.]

On Forming a Task Force to Study How Korean-Speaking Churches Can Develop into Healthy Members of the PC(USA)—From Midwest Hanmi Presbytery.
The Midwest Hanmi Presbytery overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to form a task force for the purpose of a study as to how Korean-speaking churches can grow and develop into whole and healthy members of PC(USA). The task force [should be formed with the leaders from Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), Office of the General Assembly (OGA), presbyteries, synods, non-geographic presbyteries (Korean), and second-generation Koreans,] [will be comprised of eight members appointed by the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014), in consultation with Korean American church leaders, to meet in two face-to-face meetings, over two years, with a consultant,] and it should report its study to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

[Financial Implication: Per Capita—$580 (2014); $9,735 (2015); $10,725 (2016)]

Rationale

We are proud of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for making tireless efforts with passion for many ethnic groups and new immigrants. The biggest beneficiary and the fruit of these efforts are the Korean church, and we are very grateful for second-generation Koreans to have an opportunity to serve the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) beyond the limitations of an ethnic minority.

The active membership of Asian churches in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is estimated at 70,286, which is about 3.8 percent of the total membership of PC(USA). The African American church membership is 60,311, which is 3.3 percent of the whole membership of the PC(USA). This statistic shows that the Asian church in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has grown a lot. The Korean church membership is 55,000, accounting for more than 80 percent of the Asian church. About 500 teaching elders and 1,200 ruling elders are serving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The majority of Korean churches are made up of first-generation Koreans who are still speaking Korean. Though the number of immigrants is decreasing, Korean churches that use the Korean language will continue to grow due to F-1 visa students from Korea, Korean firm representatives who reside in this country, and many visitors from Korea.

The challenge the Korean church is facing is the fact that it is not fully connected to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Though it is true that the Korean church symbolizes the diversity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and plays important roles, it is still marginalized. The Korean church acknowledges we are responsible for this situation. However, the responsibility also belongs to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the synods, and the presbyteries as well.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is making a lot of effort in order to educate the elders and pastors. If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does not insist only on speaking English, respects different cultures and different languages, and encourage new immigrants to become a variety of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), it should provide new immigrants, including the Korean church, more actively with opportunities to understand and learn the critical traditions, structures, and processes of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) beyond the barriers of language. Translating some documents does not suffice. Ongoing training and learning opportunities should be provided.

First-generation Koreans have established a lot of budget for their children and are making great efforts for them. Second-generation Koreans are leaving the Korean church and are holding important positions as leaders in PC(USA). First-generation Koreans are proud of them, and will do their best to guide more second-generation Koreans to serve the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Second-generation Koreans who start to properly understand the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may have uneasy and confused feelings about first-generation Korean churches. First-generation Korean churches are the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but have very different structure from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Second-generation Koreans hope for first-generation Koreans to be more deeply involved with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and desire to give help, but their efforts are very limited simply because they speak only in English.

Therefore, Midwest Hanmi Presbytery overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to form a task force for the purpose of a study as to how Korean-speaking churches can grow and develop into whole and healthy members of the PC(USA). The task force should be formed with the leaders from PMA, OGA, presbyteries, synods, and second-generation Koreans, and it should report its study to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Concurrence to Item 05-06 from Hanmi and Eastern Korean Presbyteries.

Item 05-07

[The assembly approved Item 05-07 with comment. See pp. 53, 55.]

[Comment: The Assembly Committee on Mid Council Issues (5) gives thanks for and celebrates the historic and ongoing witness of the churches of Hanmi Presbytery and their important role in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We regret that the recent work of the Administrative Commission has not been successful in resolving long-standing concerns, and we share the grief, the disappointment, and the loss with the congregations, the presbytery, the Admin-]
istrate Commission, and the synod that this action has been taken. We look forward to discovering new ways of wel-
coming the Korean congregations into the life of the Synod and presbyteries, to the greater ministry of the church of
the future. We recommend this action, aware that it presents the presbyteries with an important opportunity to wel-
come the congregations and gratefully to receive their contributions to the life and ministry of the PC(USA).]

On the Dissolution of the Hanmi Presbytery—From the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.

The Synod of Southern California and Hawaii overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Approve the dissolution of the Hanmi Presbytery effective with the General Assembly’s concurrence in June 2014.

2. Direct the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii to create a new administrative commission that will in-
clude current members of Hanmi Presbytery to follow through with administrative work related to the dissolution of
Hanmi Presbytery and to oversee the transfer of Hanmi Presbytery congregations and teaching elders to geographic
presbyteries based upon the geographic presbyteries’ individual criteria, or to supervise the gracious dismissal to an-
other Reformed body of any Hanmi Presbytery congregations that refuse to or cannot meet those geographic presby-
tery criteria, all to be accomplished before December 31, 2014.

3. Approve the transfer of each congregation of the Hanmi Presbytery into the geographic presbytery in which
it is located contingent on the acceptance by the geographic presbytery and the approval of the Synod of Southern
California and Hawaii.

4. Direct the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii to assume jurisdiction over any pending judicial matters
involving Hanmi Presbytery. From March 29, 2014, forward, all of the legal expenses related to judicial matters related
to Hanmi Presbytery will be paid by Hanmi Presbytery.

Rationale

The Synod Administrative Commission of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii to Work with the Hanmi Presby-
tery (the “Hanmi AC”) was created in 1999 to oversee and resolve many issues that existed in Hanmi. (See Attachment A
for timeline of activities.) Over the years, the Hanmi AC has conducted necessary work and has endeavored to return original
jurisdiction back to Hanmi Presbytery as appropriate. (See Attachment B for actions reported to synod since 1999.) In recent
years, Hanmi AC has tried to minimize the scope of its work and in the fall of 2012, Hanmi AC requested and the synod as-
sembly authorized the return of most jurisdiction to Hanmi Presbytery. Hanmi AC was directed to retain full presbytery ju-
risdiction over three congregations. Hanmi AC will be dissolved in June, 2014.

Report on the Current Situation with Hanmi Presbytery

As the Hanmi AC concludes fifteen years of work with Hanmi Presbytery, we truly wish we could submit a positive,
glowing report regarding Hanmi Presbytery. However, we find that the current situation is completely the opposite. We have
come to doubt Hanmi Presbytery’s viability on many accounts and have major concerns as listed below, but not limited to:

1. Nominations. The nomination process is always an issue. Rather than focusing on equal representation, it is used as
a power tool to jockey certain individuals to certain committees. Irregularities in the officer nomination and election process
was the original primary presenting issue in 1999 and in the intervening fifteen years the Hanmi AC still finds irregularities
and issues that challenge the integrity of the system.

2. Committee Functioning. Hanmi Presbytery generally lacks trust in the work of its committees. This lack of trust of-
ten has to do with the inconsistent work of the committees, which do not have manuals of operation or agreed-upon policies
of the presbytery. This usually results in committee work being totally reconsidered on the floor of the presbytery meeting, at
times causing a meeting to run until midnight as the presbytery ends up doing the work of the committee.

3. Membership. Hanmi Presbytery presently is radically polarized to a point where its day-to-day functioning is de-
pendent upon which side has more numbers in votes at any particular meeting. One side has successfully recruited a group of
retired teaching elders, some of whom show up to vote as a block without taking the time or effort to comprehend the situa-
tions. While the exact allocation of which representatives are on which side of polarization shifts from time to time, such rad-
cial polarization has been a hallmark feature of Hanmi Presbytery throughout all of the last fifteen years. This even impacts
the ability of committees to do their work since if one side chooses to boycott a meeting, there can be no quorum. This oc-
curred recently in both the council and the COM meetings.

4. Conflict of Interest. Hanmi Presbytery generally truly lacks comprehension of and the avoidance of conflict-of-
interest; in fact, this concept has no translation in the Korean language. A case in point: The nominating committee was given
the responsibility to form an administrative commission for a congregation. The pastor of that congregation, who was a
member of the nominating committee, was allowed to participate in the selection process to basically hand-pick the AC
members. Another example would be the absence of and refusal to implement any guidelines to minimize (or even to disap-
prove) interference in the life of a congregation by a former pastor and that pastor’s family members and other supporters. This lack of policy has resulted in considerable conflict in a number of Hanmi Presbytery congregations.

5. Governance. The administrative commission finds proper Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) polity and procedures being neglected and often disregarded under the guise of cultural differences and convenience. For example, after a sale of property took place without the proper procedure of approval by Hanmi Presbytery, a congregation belligerently refused to produce necessary documents, even at the direction of the Hanmi Presbytery Council. As another example, many Hanmi congregations do not keep formal membership records and new members are not expected to come before the session or the congregation. This means that who qualifies for congregational votes is always in question.

The synod has been left on innumerable occasions to defend (and fund) the protection of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) trust and polity interests on behalf of Hanmi Presbytery, including extensive, expensive civil and ecclesiastical litigation. Thus far the synod has spent more than $2 million dollars on dozens of such litigation and judicial processes.

6. Leadership. Since its inception, Hanmi Presbytery has repeatedly been in conflict with those who held the role of stated clerk or acting stated clerk. A fundamental difficulty arises from that officer not practicing impartiality and in refusal to give unbiased interpretations of the Book of Order. Hanmi Presbytery meetings often run long and become contentious due (in addition to the radical polarization) to a lack of skills in the leadership who are running a meeting. Absence of a skilled and knowledgeable parliamentarian along with inconsistent interpretations by the stated clerk on many occasions has caused confusion and disarray. Insulting personal remarks and statements are often made carelessly with no admonishment from the moderator or the stated clerk about such behavior.

7. Finance. Hanmi Presbytery lacks financial viability. This pattern has been in the making for years. Many congregations go years without paying any per capita at all and many continue to only pay partial obligations. The current financial situation is expected to drastically worsen if two congregations, Torrance First and Han Yang, who are in the process of transferring their membership to geographic presbyteries, complete their process since the two congregations were responsible for 44 percent of Hanmi Presbytery’s per capita income in 2013.

8. Viability. Of the various measurements that indicate viability, the Hanmi AC finds few positives. In December of 2012, the presbytery was given full jurisdiction with the exception of three congregations. Since that time the presbytery conflicts have continued unabated. The financial situation of the presbytery has not improved. And presbytery leadership has not demonstrated its ability to bring peace and unity to the presbytery.

Final Summary and Recommendation

The Hanmi AC members recognize the contributions and the potential that Korean American congregations bring to the PC(USA) and we recognize and value the missional work in which these congregations are involved. Hanmi AC has waited fifteen years to see Hanmi Presbytery live up to its full potential, but we now admit that there is no realistic expectation that this will happen in the current conflicted situation. Hanmi AC has seriously contemplated the dissolution of the Hanmi Presbytery on several past occasions. Before making our recommendation to dissolve the presbytery, Hanmi AC held a consultation with Hanmi Presbytery members during which we heard many concerns, even heartfelt requests for continuance to allow the presbytery to make self-improvements. However, we have waited fifteen years to see improvements but instead we see further deterioration and we believe strongly that it is time to put an end to the waiting.

The members of Hanmi Presbytery suffer from a fundamental handicap of lacking denominational experiences outside of Hanmi Presbytery. We have found that years of training have had little effect. Presbytery and congregational leaders would be better served by being exposed to the life of a geographic presbytery. After fifteen years of working with Hanmi Presbytery, the Hanmi AC believes that the Hanmi Presbytery cannot function within the polity and practices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Item 05-08

[The assembly approved Item 05-08. See pp. 13, 55.]

On Transferring Coudersport Presbyterian Church from the Presbytery of Northumberland to the Presbytery of Lake Erie—From the Synod of the Trinity.

The Synod of the Trinity overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to approve the transfer of the Coudersport Presbyterian Church located in Coudersport, Pennsylvania, from the Presbytery of Northumberland to the Presbytery of Lake Erie. The boundary of the Presbytery of Northumberland would change as follows:

Boundaries: The Counties of Cameron, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Potter (with the exception of Coudersport Presbyterian Church), Snyder, Tioga, and Union, all in the State of Pennsylvania.

Concurrence to Item 05-08 from the Presbyteries of Lake Erie and Northumberland.
Item 05-09

[The assembly referred Item 05-09 with comment. See pp. 13, 55.]

[Comment: Refer to COGA.]

 Commissioners’ Resolution. On Studying the Effectiveness of Mid Council to Mid Council Reference Checks and Clearance Procedures.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Office of Vocations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Office of the Stated Clerk to study the effectiveness of mid council to mid council reference checks and clearance procedures and considers ways to improve the procedures for candidates moving between mid councils. The results of this study, with its attendant recommendations, proposed standards, and expectations, will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Rationale

Recognizing the persistent failure to disclose fully all known information in mid council to mid council background checks of persons seeking to move their membership from one mid council to another, and recognizing the problems this creates for ecclesiastical bodies within those councils, it is necessary to establish a standard for mid council to mid council reference checks. Aware of the issues surrounding inappropriate behavior of ordained individuals that have emerged in the Roman Catholic Church and in mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), it is necessary to impose standards that will require all individuals who provide inter-council references, including but not limited to, executive/general presbyters, stated clerks, chairs of committee on ministry or preparation for ministry, be required to provide full disclosure of all information concerning a candidate of a pertinent or potentially concerning nature.

Excuses used for withholding information including pastoral confidentiality, fear of liability, and the misconception that a teaching elder has a right to privacy once remedial steps have been taken are not persuasive. In point of fact, the Book of Order mandates, in G-1.0304, that “[a] faithful member bears witness to God’s love and grace and promises to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ’s Church. Such involvement includes: … living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life …” while G-2.0104b insists that, “Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life” [emphasis added].

Because of the human and financial costs involved in predatory behavior and investigating allegations related to inappropriate behavior, it is imperative that we ensure full disclosure to protect individuals and churches and to reestablish trust between mid councils. The practice of “passing on” pastors who have shown problematic behavior, without considering the ramifications within other mid councils and churches, is unacceptable and should not be tolerated.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-09

Advice and Counsel on Item 05-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 05-09 with amendment: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Office of Vocations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Office of the Stated Clerk to study the effectiveness [(openness, accuracy, and clarity)] of mid council to mid council reference checks and clearance procedures and considers ways to improve the procedures for candidates moving between mid councils. [The study will identify any specific procedural and content inadequacies and propose policies and/or procedures to remedy these inadequacies. The study will also identify means for preserving privacy and confidentiality that at the same time further justice and fairness for the candidates, congregations, and judicatories.] The results of this study, with its attendant recommendations, proposed standards, and expectations, will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).”

We suggest greater definition of “effectiveness,” and that any study should seek specificity in its findings to better remedy any inadequacies. The confidentiality issue is also one where we would hope not to all parties' rights respected.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 05-09

Advice and Counsel on Item 05-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 05-09.

Whereas ACWC supports the safety of children in all realms of life, ACWC likewise supports presbytery guidelines whereby background checks for clergy include sexual misconduct history, as well as criminal and pastoral relation history.
When such a vital element of background checks is overlooked, persons with a history of sexual misconduct have a greater chance of continuing to move from congregation to congregation, presbytery to presbytery, synod to synod.

However, when the PC(USA) places provisions such as sexual misconduct background checks in place, our children will be safer, and congregations can indeed provide for their shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God, the promotion of social righteousness, and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world, (The Great Ends of the Church, Book of Order, F-1.0304).

COGA COMMENT ON ITEM 05-09

Comment on Item 05-09—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA).

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly agrees that the effectiveness of mid council reference checks is an issue of great importance to the work of those mid councils. The scope of an appropriate study needs to be designed with care, in order to assure that the goals of this item are accomplished. Accordingly, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly advises that this item be referred to COGA with instructions to design an appropriate study and to report its recommendations the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Item 05-A

[The assembly approved Item 05-A with amendment and with comment. See pp. 13, 55.]

[Comment: We report that 05 Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Issues approved the reading of minutes for fifteen of the sixteen synods.]

Review of Synod Minutes

[The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to have the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) name three stated clerks to work with the Synod of Alaska-Northwest to correct the minutes and recommend that compassionate care be demonstrated in equipping them with good counsel to train the synod for orderly record keeping.]
Item 06-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-01. See pp. 27, 72.]

On Amending G-2.0104b by Replacing “Guided by” with “Obedient to” in Reference to Scripture and the Confessions—From the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

The Presbytery of East Tennessee respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0104b be amended by striking the phrase “guided by” before the word “Scripture” and moving it to the place before the words “the confessions” in the last sentence, replacing it in the first instance with the phrase “obedient to,” so that the paragraph reads as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be inserted is shown as italics]:

“b. Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordained ministry. The examination shall include, but be not limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Councils shall be guided by obedient to Scripture and guided by the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.”

Rationale

As God’s covenant people, all Christians are called to “… obey the LORD your God, observing his commandments and his statutes …” (Deut. 27:10).

“They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me …” (Jn. 14:21).

“Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death” (Book of Confessions, Theological Declaration of Barmen, 8.11, emphasis added).

The constitutional questions for ordination and installation refer to the Scripture several times (Book of Order, W-4.4003b, c, d, e). In each case the Scripture is elevated to an authoritative status. Twice it is called “authoritative,” once it is placed above the confessions, and finally, all things pertaining to the church are “subject” to it. The language of the present paragraph implies that Scripture is merely equal to the confessions and has no binding authority in the life of an ordained person or in a council of the church. The new language clearly recognizes the authority of Scripture and conforms to the language of the constitutional questions in the ordination process.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-01

Advice on Item06-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly to disapprove Item 06-01.

This overture seeks to amend the final sentence of G-2.0104b in a way that is similar to a 220th General Assembly (2012) recommendation, Item 07-01, which was disapproved by that assembly. Because of this similarity, the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to that General Assembly is relevant to this item:

The overture proposes to replace the final sentence of the recently adopted language of G-2.0104b with new language. The new language to be inserted is drawn directly from the questions for ordination and installation in W-4.4003d. The avowed purpose of the proposed amendment is to “make the language [of G-2.0104b] internally consistent by reiterating the authority of Scripture over our confessions.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that the present F-2.02 already guarantees that “confessional statements are subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him” (Book of Order, F-2.02). Thus the Constitution elsewhere accomplishes the avowed purpose of this overture.

The final sentence of G-2.0104b currently provides that, “Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.” The present language creates a relationship between the guidance of Scripture and the confessions on the one hand and the determination of readiness of an individual candidate on the other, by indicating that the guidance of Scripture and the confessions is to be sought in the process of applying standards in each individual examination. The session or presbytery seeks the guidance of Scripture and the confessions as part of each examination discussion. Examinations are thus a conversation between a candidate for ordination and/or installation and a session or presbytery, in which are brought to bear the resources of Scripture and the confessions on the question of whether that particular candidate is ready for the ordered ministry under the standards of the Constitution. Removal of this sentence weakens the clarity of the present requirement that the application of standards is an essential element of the examination of each individual candidate. (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 669)

Unlike Item 07-01 (2012), the current item does not propose to amend by inserting language drawn directly from the constitutional questions for ordination and installation in W-4.4003d (“Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?”). The current item proposes an
amendment that condenses the first two clauses of the above question: “obedience” not to Jesus Christ but instead to Scripture, while maintaining the reference to “guidance” by the confessions.

The final sentence of G-2.0104b concerns a session or presbytery conducting an ordination examination, a process that is informed by the guidance received from both Scripture and the confessions in discerning the standards to be applied during the examination. In light of this, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution restates and amplifies the advice above given on Item 07-01 (2012) in reference to the current item.

If the intent of the amendment proposed in Item 06-01 is to restate the authority of Scripture over the confessions, the amendment is unnecessary. Section F-2.02 establishes the confessions as “... subordinate standards in the church, subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him. ...”

If the concern of the proposed amendment is obedience exercised either by individuals or the councils of the church, this concern is addressed elsewhere. Section F-1.0203 states, “... Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.” Also, the responsibilities of councils are to be carried out keeping before it the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves (including that “the Word of God is truly preached and heard;” F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (including “the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind” and the “preservation of the truth;” F-1.0304).

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 06-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-01.

The ACWC’s advice to both the 219th General Assembly (2010) and the 220th General Assembly (2012) was to approve the amendment of G-6.0106b (Book of Order) regarding ordination standards, and the New Form of Government’s language for such (G-2.0104b) clearly articulates the full recognition of a candidate for ministry’s gifts and talents for ordination. Historically, the PC(USA) has resisted subscription to the confessions, and instead, understands them to instruct and lead us. Such is articulated within the Directory for Worship in the ordination vows (W-4.4003c). Furthermore, Chapter Two of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity articulates the purpose of the confessional statements as being the guide “... in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures” (F-2.01), and that “confessional statements are subordinate standards ... subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him” (F-2.02).

Through the gender justice lens of the ACWC, ensuring that councils are called to be instructed, led, and guided by Scripture and the confessions, rather than subscribing to them, further ensures the continued ordination of women, who now make up a majority of seminary students, and who are also in the majority with regard to parishioners. To do otherwise places women’s ordination in jeopardy.

Our obedience is to Jesus Christ, who modeled for us justice for all, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual identity.

Therefore, the ACWC advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove this overture.

Item 06-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-02. See pp. 27, 72.]

On Amending G-4.0206a Regarding the Sale or Encumbrance of Property Given to a Local Congregation as a Gift—From the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-4.0206 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. Selling or Encumbering Congregational Property

“A congregation shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property that has been used for ministry or mission and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation. Property given to a local congregation as a gift for the purpose of funding ministry and mission activities, and has never been used for such activities, does not require the approval of the congregation or the presbytery.”
Rationale

There are times when congregations receive gifts of real property for the purpose of funding the ministry and mission of a congregation. This is especially true during capital campaigns, when an individual may deed over to a congregation real property that will be sold and the monies used in the capital project.

Under current Book of Order requirements, such a transaction requires the approval of both the congregation and the presbytery, a cumbersome process that should be streamlined. The session should have the final say in accepting the gift and selling the property.

Such transactions are really no different than the gifting of appreciated securities (such as stocks and bonds). For tax reasons, an individual can make such a gift, deeding over the security to the congregation. The congregation sells the security and receives the full benefit of the proceeds, while the individual receives a full deduction for the gift and avoids paying capital gains tax (which allows them to make a larger gift to the ministry).

Making this change to the Book of Order may encourage individuals to give property to a congregation for the purpose of funding ministries.

This change in the Book of Order will make it easier to give to churches. Individuals may decide to give a percentage of property about to be sold, allowing them to make a larger gift than if they waited until after they sold the property and paid the required taxes. Such gift could be significant in the life of a congregation and its ministry.

This change to the Book of Order will also bring many churches into compliance as congregations have often sold such properties without approval of presbytery. However, title companies can and do demand to see the minutes for the congregational meeting and presbytery’s minutes for such a sale. Approval of this overture will no longer require such actions.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-02

Advice on Item 06-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-02.

The overture proposes an amendment to G-4.0206a as follows:

Shall G-4.0206 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. Selling or Encumbering Congregational Property

“A congregation shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property that has been used for ministry or mission and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation. Property given to a local congregation as a gift for the purpose of funding ministry and mission activities, and has never been used for such activities, does not require the approval of the congregation or the presbytery.”

The proposed second sentence indicates that the sale of “Property given to a local congregation as a gift for the purpose of funding ministry and mission activities” but that “has never been used for such activities” would not require approval of either the congregation or the presbytery.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that the proposed amendment be disapproved based on the following:

1. Pursuant to G-4.0201, all property is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world, no matter how it has been conveyed to the church.

2. The language of G-4.02 has been specifically written to reflect the historical understanding of property ownership within the church. Any amendment should be preceded by careful historical and legal research.

3. This amendment would create conflict with G-1.0503(d), which states that congregations must approve “buying, mortgaging or selling real property.”

4. Property that has been encumbered for the purpose of funding ministry and/or mission activities may be perceived as having itself been used for those activities.

5. The proposed addition of a second sentence states that “Property given to a local congregation as a gift for the purpose of funding ministry and mission activities, and has never been used for such activities, does not require the approval of the congregation or the presbytery.” It is unclear what it means to “approve” property and what criteria the session must use to determine that the property has never been used for mission activity.
Item 06-03

[The assembly answered Item 06-03 by the action taken on Item 06-05. See pp. 27, 72.]

On Amending G-2.0509, Renunciation of Jurisdiction—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0509 be amended by adding the following new paragraph at the end of that section: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a judicial proceeding, no PC(USA) congregation shall be permitted to employ that former teaching elder in any capacity, nor shall it permit that former teaching elder to perform any volunteer work.”

Rationale

As stated in the Rules of Church Discipline, Preamble, “the purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ” (Book of Order, D-1.0101, Church Discipline). The principles also state in D-1.0102: “The power that Jesus Christ has vested in his Church … is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it.”

When a teaching elder renounces the jurisdiction of the church in the midst of formal judicial process, there is no resolution for either party, particularly for the complainant. Because there has been no acquittal or determination of guilt, the teaching elder has, by virtue of renunciation, removed himself/herself from leadership and office within the church. It could be argued that the church remains vulnerable due to lack of information regarding the circumstances and facts uncovered in the investigative process that might have come to light in the judicial proceeding. Renunciation to stop judicial process should not be an alternative vehicle to continue to work or volunteer in the church when facts and circumstances have not come to light.

Concurrence to Item 06-03 from the Presbyteries of Boise, Giddings-Lovejoy, Glacier, Northumberland, Santa Barbara, and West Jersey.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-03

Advice on Item 06-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

This overture asks to have a new paragraph added to G-2.0509 to read as follows:

“Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a judicial proceeding, no PC(USA) congregation shall be permitted to employ that former teaching elder in any capacity, nor shall it permit that former teaching elder to perform any volunteer work.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to answer Item 06-03 with its response to Item 06-05.

This item and Item 06-05 propose slightly different amendments addressing the situation when a teaching elder renounces the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the midst of a judicial proceeding. The rationale for advising disapproval is the same for both overtures.

Item 06-04

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-04 with comment. See pp. 27, 72.]

[Comment: We strongly urge presbyteries to mandate criminal background checks for all presbytery staff, all teaching elders in validated ministries, all commissioned ruling elders, and others as deemed necessary.]

On Amending G-2.0803, the Call Process and Background Checks—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0803 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]
“According to the process of the presbytery and prior to making its report to the congregation, the pastor nominating committee shall receive and consider the presbytery’s counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call. A complete criminal background check—including state, national, and sex offender registries—and a check of any civil judgments against the teaching elder are required before a call is issued to a teaching elder. When the way is clear for the committee to report to the congregation, the committee shall notify the session, which shall call a congregational meeting.”

Rationale

Background checks are commonplace at every level of our society: volunteer coaches, teachers, church custodians, etc. Almost every other mainline denomination requires background checks for its pastors. It is time for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take the simple but effective step to strengthen our requirements to protect those under our care.

Concurrence to Item 06-04 from the Presbyteries of Boise, Giddings-Lovejoy, Glacier, Northumberland, Santa Barbara, West Jersey, and Western Reserve.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-04

Advice on Item 06-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

Item 06-04 asks the assembly to amend G-2.0803 as follows:

“A complete criminal background check—including state, national, and sex offender registries—and a check of any civil judgments against the teaching elder are required before a call is issued to a teaching elder. When the way is clear for the committee to report to the congregation, the committee shall notify the session, which shall call a congregational meeting.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-04 amending G-2.0803.

While the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should take steps to protect those under our care, this overture is not the appropriate vehicle to do so. The Form of Government was designed to be taken as a whole in describing the form of our life together. It purposefully avoids procedures and details better included in operating manuals, standing rules, or guidelines. Since the revision of the Form of Government, proscriptive language has been avoided in favor of more flexible language. The language of the overture would be better included in a manual of operations or personnel policies.

Many presbyteries already conduct background checks, including criminal background checks, as part of their duties to counsel nominating committees. There is nothing in G-2.0803 that prohibits a presbytery from conducting the types of checks suggested by this overture. Under G-3.0301c the presbytery is already charged with the responsibility of receiving teaching elders, which may include doing appropriate background checks prior to any examination and reception.

This language would limit the call process only to those teaching elders being considered for installed congregational calls. If this language were adopted, there would need to be parallel constitutional language requiring similar background checks for teaching elders in other validated ministries.

“Complete” is an overly broad term that may open the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to liability should an “incomplete” background check occur. Beyond the need to check “state, national, and sex-offender registries,” questions arise whether civil judgments are a sufficient check; i.e. should arrest records be included: criminal conviction; bankruptcies; civil litigation; complaints within the PC(USA) judicial system?

If the General Assembly concurs with the intent of this overture, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the proposed amendment would be constitutional as worded—but may raise the potential of increased exposure to liability issues.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 06-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 06-04 with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“According to the process of the presbytery and prior to making its report to the congregation, the pastor nominating committee shall receive and consider the presbytery’s counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those consid-
Item 06-05

The assembly approved Item 06-05 with amendment. See pp. 27, 72, 73.

On Amending G-2.0509, Renunciation of Jurisdiction—From the Presbytery of the Western Reserve.

The Presbytery of the Western Reserve respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0509 of the Form of Government be amended by adding the following new paragraph at the end of that section: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a judicial proceeding as the accused, that former teaching elder shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

Rationale

As stated in the Rules of Church Discipline, Preamble, “the purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ” (Book of Order, D-1.0101, Church Discipline). The principles also state in D-1.0102: “The power that Jesus Christ has vested in his Church … is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it.”

When a teaching elder renounces the jurisdiction of the church in the midst of formal judicial process, there is no resolution for either party, particularly for the complainant. Because there has been no acquittal or determination of guilt, the teaching elder has, by virtue of renunciation, removed himself/herself from leadership and office within the church. It could be argued that the church remains vulnerable due to lack of information regarding the circumstances and facts uncovered in the investigative process that might have come to light in the judicial proceeding. Renunciation to stop judicial process should not be an alternative vehicle to continue to work or volunteer in the church when facts and circumstances have not come to light.

Concurrence to Item 06-05 from the Presbyteries of Greater Atlanta and Santa Barbara.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-05

Advice on Item 06-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-05.

This item and Item 06-03 propose slightly different amendments addressing the situation when a teaching elder renounces the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the midst of a judicial proceeding. Each proposes adding a paragraph at the end of G-2.0509.
Item 06-05 proposes a new paragraph that says:

“When a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a judicial proceeding, that former teaching elder shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

This proposed amendment appears to be punitive toward individuals who have renounced the jurisdiction of the church, without regard for the assessment by the council with jurisdiction over the work. The proposed amendment would set up a constitutional bar to any work done by the individual based solely on the individual’s having renounced the jurisdiction of the church during a judicial proceeding. Many different alleged delinquencies or irregularities could lead to a remedial complaint while more serious offenses could lead to a disciplinary process. Without regard for the nature, seriousness, or truth of the alleged delinquency, irregularity, or offense, renunciation in the midst of a judicial proceeding would trigger a permanent bar to employment or volunteer service.

Even if the individual does not resume membership in the PC(USA), the church is committed to openness. “Persons who are not members of, or who may have ceased active participation in, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are welcome and may participate in the life and worship of this church and receive its pastoral care and instruction” (G-1.0404). This openness does not eliminate the authority of a council having responsibility for particular paid or volunteer service to assess the suitability of the individual. These two proposed amendments would not permit the council with responsibility for the work to fulfill its G-1.0404 responsibility, regardless of its finding about suitability.

The proposed amendment attempts to create a permanent bar to participation in the life and work of the PC(USA). Renunciation of jurisdiction is a very serious matter, but it does not create an unchangeable status. The return path is to accept the jurisdiction of the PC(USA) anew by joining a congregation. “The members of a congregation put themselves under the leadership of the session and the higher councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly)” (G-1.0103).

An individual, who has renounced jurisdiction, may later take a return path of seeking employment or attempting to volunteer in a congregation or other entity of the PC(USA). There is an authoritative interpretation that states:

A person who has renounced membership and/or church office in a PC(USA) congregation may, at some subsequent point, seek admission to membership in another PC(USA) congregation by reaffirmation of faith. (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 274, authoritative interpretation)

If the council having jurisdiction over that paid or volunteer work learns of the prior renunciation, that council has the responsibility to inquire into the circumstances to assess the suitability of the particular service for the individual. These proposed amendments would bar the participation of the individual without regard for whether the unresolved issues have a bearing on the individual’s suitability for the particular service.

This proposed amendment seeks to address a local issue by means of a constitutional amendment creating a churchwide rule. Alleged prior misconduct is a serious issue and should be addressed by councils in their administrative manuals. Councils should explicitly ask, in writing, about any involvement as a defendant in disciplinary cases or renunciation of jurisdiction from the PC(USA).

Section F-3.0209 provides that “Councils possess whatever administrative authority is necessary to give effect to duties and powers assigned by the Constitution of the church.” Any council that employs individuals in paid or volunteer service already has the authority to screen such individuals in order to protect those served by the church. Most employing councils have adopted employment policies, and should consider adding to their administrative manuals the requirement of appropriate background checks.

If it is the will of the assembly to approve this amendment, the words “judicial proceeding” should be changed to “disciplinary proceeding as the accused” for clarity.

Item 06-06

[The assembly approved Item 06-06 with amendment. See pp. 72, 73.]

On Amending G-3.0301 Regarding the Minimum Number of Operating Sessions and Teaching Elders in Presbytery—From the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon.

The Presbytery of Eastern Oregon overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall the second paragraph of G-3.0301 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]
"The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten teaching elders, unless [otherwise] [an exception is] approved by [the] [its] synod and [the] General Assembly [giving consideration to the responsibilities assigned to presbyteries in G-3.01 and G-3.03]."

Rationale

1. Of the 173 presbyteries in the PC(USA), 30 presbyteries have 30 or fewer churches. Of those, 3 are racial ethnic and 3 are east of the Mississippi River, leaving 24 of the smallest presbyteries in the PC(USA) in the western United States where the distances between churches is often measured in hours and presbytery boundaries include entire states.

The Comparative Statistics 2012 of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shows 67 percent of our congregations have fewer than 150 members and 75 percent have fewer than 200 members. We are a denomination of small churches and vital ministries in the locations where we are planted; where history and connectionalism meet in faithful congregations as they have for hundreds of years.

2. The representation of small churches and presbyteries is vital to the direction and sustainability of the PC(USA) now and into the future. Small presbyteries pay per capita to participate in the life of the denomination, to support the task forces of the denomination, and to have access to the PJC’s of the synods and General Assembly.

Small presbyteries also pay mission, joining our contributions together with those of the larger presbyteries to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) and World Missions. We are faithful in providing leadership at all levels of the denomination. The leadership and modeling of small presbyteries provides a path for others to follow as we remain faithful to Christ in local settings. The representation of small presbyteries at the synod and General Assembly level is a necessary and responsible voice to and with the denomination.

3. Mission is not dependent upon size. In small presbyteries the local PC(USA) congregation is often the only Protestant witness within their community. As such these congregations are responsible for the food pantries, schools, social gathering places, and many other creative ministries. These are more than buildings where people meet on Sunday; this is Christ at work in the midst of the people. These congregations are supported monetarily and spiritually by the presbytery and sustained by the connections with other congregations within the presbytery.

4. Matthew 18:20 states, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Neither the exact number of congregations nor teaching elders determine the validity of a presbytery. Rather, the validity and vitality of the presbytery lies in its ability to support the ministry of its congregations, synod, and General Assembly as it is the body gathered in Christ’s name, doing His work with the resources at hand and through the congregations being the body of Christ in the world.

Concurrence to Item 06-06 from the Presbyteries of Boise, Northumberland, and San Joaquin.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-06

Advice on Item 06-06—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 06-06 with amendment as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through and with brackets; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic with an underline and with brackets.]

“The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten teaching elders, unless [otherwise] [an exception is] approved by [the] [its] synod and [the] General Assembly [giving consideration to the responsibilities assigned to presbyteries in G-3.01 and G-3.03].”

This overture seeks to amend Section G-3.0301 of the Form of Government to allow the synod and General Assembly to change the minimum composition of a presbytery from a minimum of ten sessions to a lesser number on a case-by-case basis. The purpose of this change is to increase the flexibility when forming a presbytery. This change is in keeping with:

1. The recently adopted Form of Government’s statement “Councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ” (G-3.0101). Leaving the minimum number of sessions in the hands of the synod allows each synod to consider how best to fulfill this mandate.

2. The minimum number of sessions was reduced from twelve to ten by the actions of the General Assembly in 2008 (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 146, Item 03-07). Allowing flexibility for the minimum number would continue the efforts of the General Assembly to be responsive to the missional needs of the church and it mission.
3. Permitting flexibility, with review, is in keeping with the guiding principles behind the recently adopted Form of Government that “mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work” (G-3.0106).

4. The change of “the” to “its” provides clarity as to which synod would be asked to approve the exception. This change would clearly designate the synod wherein the presbytery is located.

5. Presbyteries are charged with a wide variety of responsibilities for the church’s mission in G-3.01 and G-3.03. Synods that are requested to approve a presbytery that has less than ten congregations and ten elders should carefully review these responsibilities to determine whether the smaller presbytery can fulfill them.

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**Item 06-07**

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-07. See pp. 72, 73.]

*On Amending D-10.0103—Referral to Investigating Committee—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.*

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall D-10.0103 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Upon receipt of a written statement of an alleged offense,

“a. the clerk of session or the stated clerk of presbytery, without undertaking further inquiry, shall then report to the council presbytery only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense, and refer the statement immediately to an investigating committee;

“b. the clerk of session, without undertaking further inquiry, shall then report to the session only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense, unless the allegation is that of sexual abuse of another person under the provisions of D-10.0401c(1) and (2), in which case the clerk shall report to the session the name of the accused and the nature of the alleged offense. The clerk shall then refer the statement immediately to an investigating committee.”

**Rationale**

This overture is prompted by the recent and earnest effort of a session seeking to fulfill the *Book of Order* mandate of G-3.0106: “All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy.” The particular session’s policy draft included procedures for reporting incidents or allegations of sexual boundary violations. Depending on the accused person’s role (teaching elder, ruling elder commissioned to particular pastoral service, employee, member, congregant, minor), persons to be notified on the basis of role were identified as those of pastor, clerk of session, session personnel committee, presbytery official, church’s insurance agent, legal counsel, parent or guardian of a minor, child protective services, and/or law enforcement officials. However, in the case of a person accused who is a member of the church, the policy invoked the language of *Book of Order*, D-10.0103: “Upon receipt of a written statement of an alleged offense, the clerk of session …, without undertaking further inquiry, shall then report to the [session] only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense, and refer the statement immediately to an investigating committee.”

In the case of an alleged offense that constitutes “sexual abuse of another person,” defined by D-10.0401c(1) and (2), the direct result of the clerk of session’s compliance with the absolute confidentiality clause of D-10.0103 would be to disenfranchise the session, and the teaching elder or ruling elder commissioned to particular pastoral service as moderator, from essential facts as the foundation upon which informed decisions could be made regarding how the session would act to

1. protect persons who may be at risk of harm;

2. fulfill its fiduciary responsibility under civil law as trustees of the corporation (in churches in which ruling elders function as the legal trustees), per G-4.0101;

3. exercise acts of prudent and wise risk management, a goal consistent with the protective purpose of G-3.0112, which reads: “Each council shall obtain property and liability insurance coverage to protect its facilities, programs, staff, and elected and appointed officers.”;

4. preserve the integrity of the church’s mission and ministry for which the session, as council, is responsible, per G-3.0102.
In the context of a local church and a case in which acts of “sexual abuse of another person” are alleged, compliance by a clerk with the absolute confidentiality clause of D-10.0103 would

1. block activation of a provision in a session policy to suspend the accused person from contact with persons at risk, e.g., a church member who volunteers with minors in a church program;
2. block notification of appropriate officials, e.g., child protective services and/or law enforcement officials, the church’s insurance agent, legal counsel, and/or presbytery officials;
3. block notification of parents or guardians of a minor or an adult who lacks capacity;
4. expose the church as a nonprofit corporation to civil liability for failing to take reasonable and prudent steps to protect vulnerable persons;
5. contradict the church-mandated reporting requirements of G-4.0302 when the clerk is a ruling elder and reasonably believes there is a risk of future abuse;
6. impede the ability of the session to comply with D-10.0104 regarding an accusation received from another council and the requirement to cooperate with the proceedings.

The result is the circumstance in which a session clerk by doing right (complying with D-10.0103) is doing wrong (creating unintended and unwanted consequences).

The polity rationale for amending D-10.0103 only in relation to a session and its clerk is based on the fact that in the case of an alleged offense of sexual abuse, a presbytery has options for preventive and risk management actions that a session does not:

1. In the case of an accused teaching elder, D-10.0106 mandates that a presbytery permanent judicial commission “determine whether the accused shall be placed on a paid administrative leave during the resolution of the matter.”
2. Presbytery leadership may utilize the capacity of its committee on ministry to communicate and/or act in sensitive situations involving allegations with serious implications for a local church.
3. A number of presbyteries utilize a sexual misconduct response team that has the capacity to assist in sensitive situations involving allegations with serious implications for a local church.

It is not necessary to change D-10.0103 in relation to a presbytery and a stated clerk. A presbytery has options for honoring confidentiality for the sake of the due process rights of the person accused while concurrently acting as necessary to prevent harm.

The second polity rationale for amending D-10.0103 is based on fact that the Book of Order does not always require an absolute approach to how the principle of confidentiality is addressed. Section G-4.0301, the third paragraph, uses the discretionary language of “may,” and reads: “A teaching elder or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service may reveal confidential information when she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person.”

This subordinates the principle of confidentiality to a higher principle of preventing harm to another. (Note that the absolute language of D-10.0103 has not always been applied strictly in church polity in the context of a presbytery. The Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly has ruled that it is not a violation of D-10.0103 for the stated clerk of a presbytery to disclose the fact of a disciplinary case investigation of a specific person to a session. (See the entry for D-10.0103 in the Annotated Edition of the Book of Order regarding the 2003 Disciplinary Case 215-9, Presbytery of Charlotte v. George W. Jacobs.) Modifying the confidentiality clause of D-10.0103 for the context of a session in a case of “sexual abuse of another person” is compatible with the Book of Order’s recognition of a higher principle of preventing harm to others.

If a session is concerned that disclosure of the name of the person accused and the nature of the alleged offense may interfere with the person’s due process rights in a church disciplinary proceeding, the session has the option of requesting that the presbytery assume original jurisdiction of the case.

The reality is that compliance by a clerk with the confidentiality clause of D-10.0103 will not guarantee that the identity of the person accused or the nature of the alleged offense will be preserved. Such information could be disclosed at any point by the person accused, the person who made the accusation, or another person with direct knowledge of the events in question.

The language proposed by this overture would give a session an informed foundation upon which to make necessary and crucial decisions in the context of alleged sexual abuse.

Concurrence to Item 06-07 from the Presbyteries of Albany, Cherokee, and Western New York.
Advice on Item 06-07—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove amending D-10.0103.

Sexual abuse is a very serious offense in any circumstance. The church must adopt and implement all possible measures to prevent any sexual offense, especially those mentioned in D-10.0401c(1) and (2), and the church must deal with these issues properly if and when they occur.

 reviewing various provisions of the *Book of Order*, there are some tensions, in terms of whether or not to reveal the name of an individual accused of a sexual offense. While D-10.0103 states “shall then report to the council only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense…” G-4.0301 states “A teaching elder or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service may reveal confidential information when she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person” and G-4.0302 states “shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.”

Section D-10.0103 is a general procedure for disciplinary complaint process under the Rules of Discipline, while G-4.0301 and 4.0302 are specific requirements in the Form of Government to deal with sexual abuse or misconduct and/or the risk of harm. This overture is seeking to amend D-10.0103 to reveal the name of the accused by the clerk of session if “the allegation is that of sexual abuse of another person under the provisions of D-10.0401c(1) and (2), in which case the clerk shall report to the session the name of the accused and the nature of the alleged offense.”

The rationale of the overture is good, but the concerns can be resolved by following the provisions of G-4.0301, 4.0302, and a well-developed sexual misconduct policy (G-3.0106) without amending D-10.0103. Thus, no amendment of D-10.0103 is necessary for these additional reasons:

1. While there may be tension between D-10.0103 and G-4.0302, the *Book of Order* F-3.03 states, in part, “Provisions of any part of this Constitution are to be interpreted in light of the whole Constitution. No provision of the *Book of Order* can of itself invalidate any other. Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions.” (For example, see GAPJC case 215-9, *Presbytery of Charlotte v. George W. Jacobs*.)

2. If this overture is approved, it will create inconsistency between proposed D-10.0103a and D-10.0103b for the alleged sexual offense by having two different standards: one for stated clerks who will report to the council only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense and one for clerks of session who should report to the session the name of the accused and the nature of the alleged offense.

3. The sexual misconduct policy of the council (required by G-3.0106) can define in more detail mean to prevent further harm or danger, protect the church from liability, and preserve the integrity of the church.

4. Furthermore, the purpose of the Rules of Discipline has more intent than this overture is seeking to accomplish. The Preamble of the Rules of Discipline (D-1.0101) states that

Church discipline is the church’s exercise of authority given by Christ, both in the direction of guidance, control, and nurture of its members and in the direction of constructive criticism of offenders. The church’s disciplinary process exists not as a substitute for the secular judicial system, but to do what the secular judicial system cannot do. The purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings. In all respects, all participants are to be accorded procedural safeguards and due process, and it is the intention of these rules so to provide.

Thus, the integrity of D-10.0103 should be maintained for the disciplinary proceedings. Procedural concerns about alleged sexual offenses can be addressed by following G-4.0301, 4.0302 and the sexual misconduct policy of the council.

If the General Assembly wishes to amend D-10.0103 for more clarity for an alleged sexual offense, adding “unless the allegation is that of sexual abuse of another person in which case the clerk of session or the stated clerk of presbytery shall report to the ecclesiastical authorities the name of the accused and the nature of the alleged offense (G-4.0301–.0302).” in the current D-10.0103 will better accomplish the intent of the overture. Section D-10.0103 will then read:

“Upon receipt of a written statement of an alleged offense, the clerk of session or the stated clerk of presbytery, without undertaking further inquiry, shall then report to the council only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused
or the nature of the alleged offense, unless the allegation is that of sexual abuse of another person in which case the clerk of session or the stated clerk of presbytery shall report to the ecclesiastical authorities the name of the accused and the nature of the alleged offense (G-4.0301–.0302), and refer the statement immediately to an investigating committee.”

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 06-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 06-07.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns’ understanding of the implications of this overture is that it calls for the breaking of confidentiality in cases of sexual abuse in order for the session of the relevant congregation to make informed decisions regarding safety measures that may need to be put into place regarding the potential victim and/or perpetrator.

Often perpetrators of abuse are able to continue in their behaviors because of the secrecy, denial, and shame associated with abuse. Allowing the clerk of session to be forthcoming in disclosing an allegation allows for the community to take measures to safeguard other community members, and it decreases the power of the secrecy and shame that are often key ingredients in perpetuating cycles of abuse. As one victim said in reference to the secrecy that surrounded her sexual abuse, “It made me feel like something was wrong with me, or that I deserved it [the abuse] in some way because no one said anything, so it must have been ‘okay.’ Denial is an open door in which the cycle of abuse can go through again and again.”

While children and women are not the only victims of sexual abuse, they are the large majority of the victims. While it is difficult to get an accurate number due to underreporting, as many as 1 in 3 girls and 1 in 7 boys will be sexually abused at some point in their childhood. In addition, according to the 1997 U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics report Sex Offenses and Offenders, girls ages 16–19 are four times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault.

Allowing sessions to have access to information they need to make informed decisions regarding their community and its’ members would not only protect women and children but also helps maintain a healthy atmosphere within the church and community, one that does not value secrecy, but instead values open dialogue and safe spaces for all its members.

Item 06-08

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-08. See pp. 27, 73.]

On Amending G-2.0401 to Allow Presbyteries to Elect and Ordain Persons as Commissioned Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of San Diego.

The Presbytery of San Diego overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0401 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-2.0401 Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons

“a. Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from and representative of its membership.

“Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee, provided that the committee shall consist of at least three active members of the congregation, and shall include at least one ruling elder who is currently serving on the session. The pastor shall serve ex officio and without vote. When elections are held, full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nomination from the floor of the congregational meeting by any active member of the congregation. A majority of all the active members present and voting shall be required to elect.

“b. A presbytery may elect and ordain men and women to be ruling elders for the purpose of commissioning them to serve as commissioned ruling elders pursuant to G-2.1002–G-2.1004.”

**Rationale**

One of the goals of the new Form of Government was to provide flexibility for the development of racial ethnic and immigrant congregations. Commissioned ruling elders were specifically identified as a piece of that strategy. Because presbyteries do not have ordaining authority for ruling elders, those men and women who are currently serving in the leadership of racial ethnic and immigrant mission projects and pre-chartered new church developments must leave those congregations, join different congregations, be elected and ordained to the session of the different congregation in order to be eligible for commissioning to return and lead their original congregation. The alternative is for the presbytery to provide access to an ordained teaching elder to administer the sacraments and perform marriages.

In light of the denomination’s approval of the goal of developing 1,001 new worshiping congregations, it makes sense to allow a presbytery the option of ordaining ruling elders for the purpose of commissioning them with authority to perform the functions. Accountability would be identical to all commissioned ruling elders during the course of the commissioning: the presbytery would designate the pastoral services authorized in the commission, a teaching elder shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor, and the presbytery would be required to evaluate the ministry annually.

**Concurrence to Item 06-08 from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara.**

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-08**

Advice on Item 06-08—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 06-08

This overture seeks to amend G-2.0401 by making the existing text section a, and adding a new section b that would read as follows: “b. A presbytery may elect and ordain men and women to be ruling elders for the purpose of commissioning them to serve as commissioned ruling elders pursuant to G-2.1002–G-2.1004.”

This overture proposes a substantive change to long-established Presbyterian polity that persons who serve in ordered ministries are elected by the body to be served. The Historic Principles of Church Order, approved by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in 1788, states:

That though the character, qualifications, and authority of Church officers are laid down in the Holy Scriptures, as well as the proper method of their investiture and institution, yet the election of the persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular society, is in that society. (F-3.0106)

This is amplified by the second paragraph of G-2.0102 (Ordered Ministries):

The government of this church is representative, and the right of God’s people to elect presbyters and deacons is inalienable. Therefore, no person can be placed in any ordered ministry in a congregation or council of the church except by election of that body.

Finally, the business that can be transacted at a meeting of a congregation is limited by the Constitution, in G-1.0503. The very first responsibility listed for a congregation is “electing ruling elders, deacons, and trustees.” No other council or entity is given this responsibility by the Constitution.

The above review establishes that deacons and ruling elders are elected by a congregation, and trained, examined, and ordained by the authority of a session. This right is inalienable, a word that is defined as “impossible to take away or give up.” For a presbytery to be empowered to elect, presumably train, and ordain a ruling elder for the sole purpose of being further trained and commissioned to particular pastoral ministry is an alienation of rights given only to a congregation and its session. Since a ruling elder is a member of a congregation, this overture creates a circumstance where a presbytery places in ordered ministry for a congregation a ruling elder who has not been elected by the congregation.

E lecting and ordaining a person as a ruling elder for the sole purpose of being commissioned to particular pastoral service also undermines the central purpose for the ordered ministry of ruling elder. Ruling elders are persons who have responded to the call of God to perform the ministry of discernment and governance. While ruling elders can be commissioned to particular pastoral ministry, this is not the central purpose for the ministry of ruling elders, and should not be elevated to the primary reason for their election.

Presbytery has the responsibility “for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations” (G-3.0301). To accomplish this, presbytery

... has a particular responsibility to coordinate, guide, encourage, support, and resource the work of its congregations for the most effective witness to the broader community. In order to accomplish this responsibility, the presbytery has authority to:

a. develop strategy for the mission of the church in its district; ... (G-3.0303)
A presbytery’s mission strategy may include alternative forms of ministry, beyond teaching elders in installed or temporary relationships and ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service, to meet the needs of all of its congregations in providing that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard, including training members of congregations to lead worship and preach, as needed.

If the General Assembly wishes to consider this amendment, attention needs to be given to the phrase “men and women,” as the amendment does not define whether these persons are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-08

Advice and Counsel on Item 06-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-08.

That there is a growing dearth of teaching elders, both female and male, receiving calls to serve in far too many of our racial ethnic churches for many reasons including, but not limited to, economic inability to afford full-time pastoral leadership, is a stark reality.

However, granting authority to presbyteries to carry out the function of ordaining elders, a responsibility vested in the session of the congregation in which an elder candidate is a member in good standing, creates the need for complex safeguards against misuse of that authority. This action would give presbyteries the ability to randomly select persons for ordination, commissioning, and placement in pastoral leadership positions for any reason.

COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 06-08

Comment on Item 06-08—From the Committee on Theological Education.

A recent Committee on Theological Education (COTE) sponsored study of commissioned ruling elder (CRE) training programs found most severely lacking. On average, a full training program equals less than one semester of undergraduate level coursework.

The COTE is charged by the General Assembly to maintain and develop a system of theological education from the perspective of the whole church. Until adequate systems of preparation for CRE’s are normalized, we cannot endorse the expansion of their use in presbyteries that this overture allows.

Moreover the three types of congregations with the greatest need specified in this overture are especially complex and, therefore, the adequacy of training is essential. Emerging congregations or worshipping communities primarily composed of new immigrants, non-dominant culture individuals, and/or young adults present amazing possibilities for and call for skilled leadership and preparation programs that include subjects we found are largely absent from the training programs currently in place. These emerging ministry settings call for preparation in areas including theology beyond our own tradition, history, contemporary personal and social ethics, evangelism and church development, social trends and community development, and worldwide and ecumenical mission.

The COTE affirms the need for leadership in and with racial ethnic underrepresented and new immigrant congregations as well as young adults. We are pleased to report leaders from these communities are indeed moving into and through seminaries, including PC(USA) seminaries, and many of them have strong mission agendas in mind. The fastest growing segments of new seminary students falls within these categories of underrepresented constituencies, with, in fact, the fastest growing constituency of seminary students being African American females over 50 years of age. The largest segment of students continues to be under thirty years of age and, therefore, from the younger adult generations.

Presbytery leaders surveyed in 2008 found that training programs done in cooperation with seminaries were the best and of the highest quality. We believe a collaborative approach will be a way forward in the future and are convinced that partnerships between mid councils and seminaries and national judicatories is a proven way to prepare pastoral leaders.

Therefore, we agree with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution that it is the congregation’s role to elect and train ruling elders, not the presbytery. The presbytery’s role is to commission and train those ruling elders from and from congregations that they believe can serve as pastoral leaders.

Instead of this overture, we support recommendations of the Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry, which address

• the leadership needs of those who may come from and who hope to serve new immigrant congregations or congregations whose members are racially marginalized in the United States and

• points out the flexibility the Form of Government already offers presbyteries in appropriate cases.
Comment on Item 06-08—From the Office of the General Assembly.

The Office of the General Assembly advises disapproval of Item 06-08.

Individuals respond to the call of God through the voice of the congregation to serve as a ruling elder. Their primary preparation and oversight for this service is lodged with the session. While they may be called to service beyond the local congregation, their membership, pastoral care, and discipline remain the responsibility of the session of the congregation.

This overture would circumvent the responsibility of sessions in calling, ordaining, caring for, and supervising ruling elders. The overture also opens the possibility that a person might be ordained to the office of ruling elder for the purposes of commissioning without holding membership in a PC(USA) congregation.

While the rationale outlines missional concerns to be considered, it is notable that presbyteries currently have the authority to ordain persons to the office of teaching elder in ways that would allow these concerns to be addressed (Book of Order, G-2.0610).

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 06-08

Comment on Item 06-08—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The 1001 New Worshipping Communities movement will increasingly be dependent on developing new leaders within a presbytery or local congregation. This is especially crucial for racial ethnic, new immigrant, and young adult centered worshipping communities. Many of these leaders, called to start new immigrant, racial ethnic, and young adult new worshipping communities, are not ruling elders in chartered congregations. The ten-year-old movement from the United Kingdom, called “Fresh Expressions,” is similar to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s 1001 New Worshipping Communities movement. Their research shows that 40 percent of the leaders of their Fresh Expressions of Church had not occupied a leadership role previous to starting a Fresh Expression. This movement has started 4,000 Fresh Expressions of Church over the past ten years. When used thoughtfully and sparingly this overture may provide flexibility for presbyteries to employ new strategies for leadership development regarding new worshipping communities.

A presbytery’s ability to elect and ordain men and women as ruling elders, for the purpose of commissioning them to serve a new worshipping community, may provide flexibility for the development of these new worshipping communities, particularly racial ethnic, new immigrant, and young adult communities, whose growth often depends upon transformative leadership. Having trained commissioned ruling elders in the field at the beginning of these new worshipping communities may enhance their growth and provide the opportunity for these new worshipping communities to thrive and become mature expressions of Christian community.

Item 06-09

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-09. See pp. 72, 73.]


The Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following amendments of F-2.05, G-2.0105, and W-4.4003 to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall F-2.05 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“F-2.05 The Confessions as Statements of the Faith of the Reformed Tradition

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of the one triune God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son as Jesus Christ, who is both fully human and fully divine; and the essential truth that salvation and justification are in Jesus Christ alone, through faith in Him and what He has accomplished through His life, death, resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Holy Spirit, who In Christ and by the power of the Spirit, God creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to this central affirmation of God’s sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

“The authority of Scripture as God’s written word and our only rule for life and faith.
“The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation; 

“Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God; 

“A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God’s creation; and 

“The recognition of the reality of human sin, including our tendency to idolatry and tyranny, and our need for God’s gracious provision of the Holy Spirit, which empowers the covenant life of the Church, its faithful stewardship of God’s creation, and its obedience to the Word of God, and which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.”

2. Shall the final sentence in G-2.0105 be amended as follows: 

“The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity as stated in our Foundations of Presbyterian Polity is made initially by the individual concerned, who must declare any scruples at the time of his or her examination by a council, but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member.”

3. Shall W-4.4003c be amended as follows: 

“Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church and in our Foundations of Presbyterian Polity as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions and by our polity as you lead the people of God?”

**Rationale**

Every candidate for ordained office is asked whether he or she receives and adopts the “essential tenets of the Reformed faith,” but no comprehensive list of essential tenets can be found in our Book of Order.

Section F-2.05 offers a good introduction to some principles of the Reformed faith, but leaves out many that are common in all Reformed denominations; it also does not declare any to be essential tenets, leaving candidates and councils with little guidance as to whether a candidate’s beliefs are outside the scope of the Reformed faith. Much is left in the realm of personal opinion, not requiring candidates to explain their beliefs to their councils. This overture would flesh out the principles listed in F-2.05, refer candidates and councils to them for guidance, require candidates to declare scruples to their councils, and give candidates specific tenets to affirm at the time of their examination for ordination or installation.

**Concurrence to Item 06-09 from the Eastern Korean Presbytery.**

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-09**

Advice on Item 06-09—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-09.

The intent of this series of amendments is to define a list of essential tenets of the Reformed faith for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This is seen in the first paragraph of the rationale for this the overture, “Every candidate for ordained office (sic) is asked whether he or she receives and adopts the ‘essential tenets of the Reformed faith,’ but no comprehensive list of essential tenets can be found in our Book of Order.”

There is a long history of this issue within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as to whether to define a list of essential tenets and require those in ordered ministry to subscribe to them. Included in this history are one report and two overtures considered since the 1983 reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA):


There are also actions and reports of our antecedent denominations that relate to this issue:
A report of the UPCUSA in 1983, at the time of reunion, of the Special Committee on Historic Principles, Conscience, and Church Government, growing out of a request for interpretation of the former G-1.0400. (This report contains a history of the issue of defining essential doctrines and subscriptionism throughout the history of American Presbyterianism, from the disputes resulting in the Adopting Act of 1729 to the adoption of the 1788 Historic Principles of Church Order (F-3.01).


The action of the PCUSA in 1927, in relationship to the action of 1910 defining five doctrines as essential and the repeated challenges to that action culminating in the Auburn Affirmation, drafted after the 1924 General Assembly. The action included:

1. The General Assembly does not have the constitutional power to give binding definition to the church’s essential faith. By denying that the assembly has the right to define authoritatively the “essentials” of the church’s faith, the commission eliminated the five points as a source of controversy.

2. While a measure of tolerance was embedded in the church, it was made clear that the church, and not the individual, must decide the limits of tolerated diversity, “either generally, by amendment to the constitution, or particularly, by Presbyterial authority.”

The church has decided limits generally, by amending the constitution to create The Book of Confessions, and particularly, by the continuing examination for ordination of candidates and for reception into membership of ministers. To this end, it must be acknowledged that in ordination the presbytery has historically demonstrated its power and responsibility in determining confirmation with the church’s theology.


In response to the 1996 overture to add five essential tenets to the Book of Order and require subscription to them, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution provided the following advice to the assembly:

The intent of the overture is to define orthodoxy for the clergy, officers, and employees of the denomination.

Presbyteries have the power to interpret the confessional standards of the church and to enforce those standards (G-11.0103). Presbyteries have, through the ordination vows, an adequate means for ensuring the orthodoxy of its members. The session has the same power to ensure orthodoxy of its elders and deacons (G-14.0000). The 206th General Assembly (1994) ruled that “one's adherence or violation of certain ethical or doctrinal standards is best determined, when necessary, by judicial process” (Minutes, 1994, Part I, p. 188).

The Presbyterian church has resisted attempts to include in its foundational documents such theological specificity, desiring instead to allow the bodies that know persons who serve them to inquire into the orthodoxy of their beliefs. (Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 241)

In response to Item 08-05, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the General Assembly:

Over many years, the church has chosen not to approve a discrete list of “essential tenets,” or to take a subscriptionist approach to the ordination questions. The overture’s rationale characterizes this as a “failure to respond adequately.” This consistent response of the church to such overtures is not inadequate and does not indicate an unwillingness or inability to express faith, but rather is an unwillingness to minimize the rich content of the extraordinary collection of documents in The Book of Confessions with such an inadequate list.

It is precisely in The Book of Confessions that the tenets of the Christian faith and the Reformed tradition are expressed in meaningful language in documents written and received by the church through many centuries. The Preface to The Book of Confessions explains:

... Although some other wording may better express the intent, the phrase “essential tenets” is intended to protect freedom with the limits of general commitment to the confessions. ... Moreover, while Chapter II of the Form of Government lists a number of general theological affirmations to summarize the broad general character of Presbyterian faith and life, it too prescribes no specific understanding of any of these affirmations to test the acceptability of people for ordained office in the church. (Confessional Nature of the Church Report, pp. xxv-xxvi)

Within the church’s polity, presbyteries have the power and responsibility to interpret the confessions of the church and the standards they express. In conversation with those who seek to hold office within their bounds, presbyteries by examination determine a candidate’s or minister’s adequate adherence to those confessional standards. In the case of elders and deacons, this power is exercised by the session. ... (Minutes 2004, Part I, p. 610)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution affirms the advice that it gave previously (above).

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 06-09

Comment on Item 06-09—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

Item 06-09 asks the 221st General Assembly (2014) to amend three sections of the Book of Order to clarify what is meant by Essentials of the Reformed faith.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation respectfully offers the following comment and advises that the assembly disapprove this overture.

The Book of Order (in F.1.0403, second paragraph) sets forth our principles of unity and diversity. It states,

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological convictions. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship,
This item, while intending to clarify our Constitution, narrows it instead such that it violates our church’s principles of unity and diversity. Our church seeks a balance between the purity and unity of the church. When it comes to theological convictions, there needs to be room at the table for diverse viewpoints. We think what is intended as clarification results in narrowing theological conviction to a particular orthodoxy, thereby discriminating against those holding an equally Reformed though differing stance.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

Item 06-10

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-10. See pp. 27, 73.]

On Amending G-1.0403, Affiliate Congregational Membership for Teaching Elders—From the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall G-1.0403 be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

   “An affiliate member is a member of another congregation of this denomination or of another denomination or Christian body, who has temporarily moved from the community where the congregation of membership is situated, has presented a certificate of good standing from the appropriate council or governing body of that congregation, and has been received by the session as an affiliate member. An affiliate member may participate in the life of the congregation in the same manner as an active member except that an affiliate member may not vote in congregational meetings or be elected to ordered ministry or other office in the congregation. An honorably retired teaching elder may also apply to the session of a congregation, other than the congregation that he or she has most recently served, to become an affiliate member and with the approval and oversight of the entity of the teaching elder’s presbytery charged with the responsibilities under G-3.0307.

2. Shall G-2.0503c be amended by adding a second paragraph to read as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

   “An honorably retired member may become an affiliate member of a congregation, other than that which he or she has most recently served, with the approval of that congregation’s session, and the approval and oversight of the entity charged with the responsibilities under G-3.0307 of that member’s presbytery.”

Rationale

Retired teaching elders are members of a presbytery, but do not have a formal relationship with a congregation, which has caused concern and a feeling of being isolated and abandoned by some teaching elders.

Many honorably retired teaching elders, as they age, are not able to fully participate in the presbytery. Instead, some would like to participate in congregational life as they are able, and perhaps to receive some pastoral care. This overture, supported by the Association for Retired Ministers, Their Spouses and Survivors (ARMSS), seeks to amend the Book of Order to permit an honorably retired teaching elder to formally become an affiliate member of a congregation, with the approval of both the teaching elder’s presbytery of membership and the session.

While it is presently common for teaching elders to become active within congregations as parish associates, this kind of formal relationship is not suitable for many honorably retired teaching elders. Often, parish associates are expected to have specific duties within their congregations, and their relationships with congregations are expected to terminate whenever a new pastor is installed. In contrast, teaching elders who choose to become affiliate members would be free to volunteer and participate as their age and health permit, without being required to minister to congregants in a professional capacity. Allowing honorably retired teaching elders to become affiliate members may foster close relationships that benefit congregations. Also, if teaching elders were to suffer from dementia and live in nursing homes, encouraging sessions to add their names to lists of affiliate members would help ensure that congregations would continue to look after them, so that they would not be alone and abandoned by the church.

Honorably retired teaching elders would not be able to vote in congregational meetings or be elected to ordered ministry or other office in the congregation, just like all affiliate members (G-1.0403). The presbytery of membership would continue to have original jurisdiction in all disciplinary matters (D-3.0101b(1)). While this proposed overture would at minimum for-
bid a retired teaching elder from becoming an affiliate member in the congregation in which she/he has most recently served, both presbytery and session would continue to be responsible for making sure that principles of separation ethics are upheld to protect the congregation, the pastor in active service, and the retired teaching elder.

Concurrence to Item 06-10 from the Presbytery of Albany.

Concurrence to Item 06-10 from the Presbytery of Flint River (with Additional Rationale)

Retired teaching elders are members of a presbytery, but do not have a formal relationship with a congregation, which has caused concern and a feeling of being isolated and abandoned by some teaching elders.

Allowing such persons to have the status of an affiliate member can foster a closer relationship for both congregations and retired teaching elder. Adding presbytery entity approval and continued oversight safeguards the congregation, the pastor in active service, and the retired member. Not permitting this relationship in the congregations most recently served by an honorably retired member safeguards the new and continuing ministerial service on the next pastor following the former pastor’s retirement. This relationship would not be required of retirees who would retain presbytery membership, responsibilities, and privileges, but would give flexibility and opportunities for service in a new way.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-10

Advice on Item 06-10—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 06-10. This overture would allow an honorably retired teaching elder to become an affiliate member of a congregation in certain circumstances. Teaching elders are members of a presbytery: “Each presbytery determines the teaching elders who are its members …” (G-3.0306). The question raised by this overture is whether a teaching elder can hold dual membership as an affiliate member of a congregation.

Overtures that have raised the issue of dual membership have previously arrived before the General Assembly, including Item 06-12 (dual membership for the pastor’s family in yoked church settings, Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 596) and Item 05-09 (creation of the category of associate member for people who maintain more than one residence, Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 325). In addition, overtures that propose affiliate membership for certain teaching elders have arisen, including Overture 93-94 (Minutes, 1994, Part I, pp. 185, 486), and Overtures 11-87 and 57-87 (Minutes, 1984, Part I, pp. 739 and 762). Past General Assemblies disapproved all of these overtures on the basis of a fundamental principle of Presbyterian polity: for purposes of accountability, oversight, and order, membership is held in one place at one time.

In view of this principle, an argument might be made that G-1.0403 (Affiliate Member) allows a person to hold dual membership in two congregations. However, affiliate membership is permissible only in a specifically defined circumstance:

An affiliate member is a member of another congregation of this denomination or of another denomination or Christian body, who has temporarily moved from the community where the congregation of membership is situated, has presented a certificate of good standing from the appropriate council or governing body of that congregation, and has been received by the session as an affiliate member. ... (G-1.0403)

The key aspect that makes affiliate membership possible is a temporary move away from the community where the person is an active member of a congregation. There are two outcomes of this temporary relationship:

1. If the move becomes permanent, the affiliate member must make a decision to either become an active member of the church of affiliate membership, or become an active member elsewhere.

2. Once the temporary move ends, the relationship of affiliate membership would also end.

The overture as written proposes affiliate membership for an honorably retired teaching elder that does not meet the criteria of G-1.0403. The proposed relationship is not a temporary one, but more of a permanent relationship. Also, the relationship would be established not because of a move from one physical location to another, but out of a desire to move at will between the “community” of presbytery membership and the “community” of congregational participation.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution also advises that the General Assembly discern whether the problem to be addressed requires a churchwide answer by constitutional amendment, or whether the concern could be more effectively resolved by a local or interpersonal solution already provided for in the Book of Order. Resolving this issue by amendment has implications for the church’s understanding of membership in a congregation. The rationale for the overture suggests issues of building and maintaining relationships as persons face the issues of aging. These perceived problems can be addressed effectively under the current Form of Government.
There is nothing in the Book of Order, beyond G-2.0905 and presbytery ethics policies based upon it, that prevents an honorably retired teaching elder from being active in the worship and work of a congregation. Honorable retirement is a category of presbytery membership, as is being engaged in a validated ministry or a member-at-large. Because it is a category of presbytery membership, the teaching elder, although retired from work formerly done, is still responsible to the presbytery for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament to which she or he has been called, as well as the ordination vows taken. Ministry as a teaching elder, even in retirement, includes “... responsible participation in the deliberation, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the (PC(USA)” (G-2.0503a(5), emphasis added).

This “responsible participation” can take on various forms, but certainly, one form is regular attendance and participation in the work and ministry of a congregation. A presbytery is free to designate other ways of relating to congregations, such as a parish associate relationship, that are consistent with its strategy for mission.

If the General Assembly wishes to consider this overture, the following issues should be considered:

1. There is no need to amend two sections of the Form of Government to accomplish the intent of this overture. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the assembly consider the amendment to G-2.0503c, and add the last sentence of G-1.0403 at the end of the overture.

2. The phrase “most recently” is not defined and may cause confusion. Is this to be interpreted as a bar to ever becoming an affiliate member of a congregation that the teaching elder last served, or is there a “shelf life” to this bar, that is, a certain number of years beyond which the bar to affiliate membership expires? Also, the amendment seems to imply (by only speaking of the congregation “most recently served”) that an honorably retired teaching elder can become an affiliate member of other congregations the person previously served. Section G-2.0905 is relevant not just to the “most recent” congregation served, but to all congregations served.

3. While the overture attempts to address oversight issues in this proposed relationship, it still does not resolve problems should a complaint be made against the teaching elder. Disciplinary accusations against a member of a congregation are referred to the session, while disciplinary accusations against a teaching elder are referred to the presbytery. “The entity charged with responsibilities under G-3.0307” is not involved in these stages of disciplinary process.

Item 06-11

[The assembly disapproved Item 06-11. See pp. 72, 73.]

On Amending G-3.0403(c) to Allow Churches to Realign with Other Established Presbyteries within the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.

The Presbytery of Beaver-Butler respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-3.0403(c) be amended by adding the following new text at the end of the present text:

“When a congregation finds it is disengaged from its own presbytery due to theological or practical differences, it may petition its synod to transfer to another presbytery acceptable to both the congregation and the synod. Such a request should only be made after a period of prayerful discernment between the congregation and the presbytery of current membership. The synod shall exercise due diligence in consulting the congregation, its teaching elder(s), and presbytery of membership before deciding upon the request to transfer. A congregation that transfers membership to another presbytery may not request dismissal to another denomination for at least ten years from the date of transfer.”

Rationale

Throughout the church, the practical implementation of our polity and theological stances vary from presbytery to presbytery. The result is that various churches find themselves in presbyteries where the practices and policies, while permissible by Book of Order, go against the collective conscience of a particular local church. Rather than having the only options of obeying the conscience being to leave the church or disengaging from one’s presbytery, we believe that allowing movement within the denomination would allow for the preservation and strengthening of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

We believe that allowing realignment within the PC(USA) is a reasonable accommodation for individual churches and will slow the current erosion within our greater fellowship.

The requirement to remain within the denomination for at least ten years after transfer is meant to discourage any congregation from seeking transfer to a presbytery with a favorable dismissal policy.
Finally, we believe that realignment is pastoral and would allow for a measure of fellowship to remain between believers within the church rather than a complete breaking of fellowship.

Concurrence to Item 06-11 from the Eastern Korean Presbytery.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-11

Advice on Item 06-11—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-11.

This overture seeks to amend Section G-3.0403(c) of the Form of Government to establish a process to transfer a congregation from one presbytery to another, "when a congregation finds it is disengaged from its own presbytery due to theological or practical differences." Section G-3.0403(c) is a section of the Form of Government that deals specifically with synods, the intermediate councils that serve as corporate expressions of the church throughout their regions. Synods have direct authority over presbyteries, not congregations, and are responsible for the life and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its presbyteries (G-3.0401).

A presbytery is empowered by G-3.0303(b) (d) (e) to control the location of its congregations and to resolve difficulties within them. This amendment limits, if not takes away, a presbytery’s opportunity to do so by allowing a congregation to directly petition a synod for a transfer to another presbytery (presumably, through its session). This amendment also raises a concern that for matters of order, congregations or sessions do not communicate directly with a synod, but do so through their presbytery.

Another issue presented in this overture is whether theological or practical differences are a sufficient reason to move a congregation from one presbytery to another. Previous assemblies have found that such differences may change the nature of a presbytery from a geographical expression of the church to one based on theological or missional affinity, or "practical differences.” In so doing, it alters not only the nature of the presbytery, but fundamental affirmations of Presbyterian polity. The idea of nongeographic presbyteries on the basis of theological or other differences is an issue that has been studied and has been disapproved in the last three General Assemblies [218th, 219th, and 220th General Assemblies (2008), (2010), and (2012)].

A historic and foundational understanding of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is that the church is called into being as a community whose true unity is in Jesus Christ (Book of Order, F-1.0302a). The missional diversity of congregations within a presbytery cannot negate that unity but is expressive of this church as a missional body within the whole Church as it seeks to be united with Christ in the power of the Spirit (Book of Order, F-1.0401). The presbyteries are assigned responsibility and power to “develop strategy for the mission of the church” in their geographical districts (Book of Order, G-3.0303a), with each congregation in those strategies and any mission partnerships to be “engaged in the mission of God in its particular context” (Book of Order, G-1.0101).

While the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has provided for nongeographic presbyteries, that has been approved only within the limited framework of the mission needs of racial ethnic and immigrant congregations (Book of Order, G-3.0403c), and then only following review of how language and culture so define the particular context in which the racial ethnic and immigrant congregations are engaged in mission that there is missional need to include them in less geographically bounded presbyteries. It is finally the whole church, through the action of the General Assembly, which must approve a synod’s creation of a nongeographic presbytery; this is not a regional decision alone.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that ecclesiastical relocation of one or more congregations from one presbytery to another necessarily has an impact on the fellowship, order, and mission commitments of the congregations of both the original presbytery and also the new presbytery of membership.

Finally, as stated [in part] in the Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice submitted to the 218th General Assembly (2008):

… the call of God [is] to engage Christ’s mission together, to honor the critiques of brothers and sisters of faith who disagree, and to plan and work together to live out our calling to be “the sign in and for the world of the new reality God is making available to people in Jesus Christ” (G-3.0200). (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 144)

If the assembly approves this overture, the result would be the creation of nongeographic presbyteries contrary to the provisions of G-3.0403c.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-11

Advice and Counsel on Item 06-11—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 06-11.
Overtures that allow churches and presbyteries to choose their membership on the basis of “theological or practical differences” threaten to dissolve the unity of the church as a whole, to diminish financial resources that could be available for joint mission projects, and to create a community of uniformity and like-mindedness as opposed to a community of faith representing the full body of Christ.

In Reformed tradition and the history of Reformed communities of faith, theological disagreements, faithful discussion, diversity of views, and honest debate have provided the occasion for creativity. Think about the reformers, abolitionists, and civil rights activists: What if difference and division had prevailed over the call to live and act as part of Christ’s body? Political and theological issues may be temporarily side-stepped by “allowing realignment” but it will come at the expense of our communal call to live as the body of Christ, each one of us an integral part of it.

$\textbf{Item 06-12}$

\textit{Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams}

The Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 1, with amendment. See pp. 14, 73.]

1. \textbf{Challenge the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to demonstrate its commitment to the full diversity of the Body of Christ described in Scripture (1 Cor. 12:12–13) and the constitution (Book of Order, F-1.0403)\textsuperscript{1} by:}

   a. Encouraging presbyteries to prioritize the election and appointment of persons of diverse cultural heritage to committees or commissions overseeing the preparation for ministry process;

   b. Encouraging presbyteries to broaden the pool of standard ordination exam readers to be more reflective of the denomination’s diversity and to include more participation from racial ethnic persons; and

   c. [Directing] [Encouraging] the General Assembly Nominating Committee to increase the number of racial ethnic nominees to the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) who are presented to the General Assembly for election.

\textit{Rationale for Recommendation 1}

To do justice to the varied heritages and experiences of racial ethnic persons under care and to serve the church within a context that is becoming more culturally diverse, presbytery committees and commissions must include members whose experiences are inclusive of the spectrum of races and cultures within the ministry context of the presbyteries. As they engage a process of discernment and preparation within covenant partnership, committee members offer more effective guidance when they are sensitive to the gifts and challenges engendered by cultural differences for the sake of the individual entering the process, and in service to the church’s own call to ministry.

The committee is convinced that the collaborative process in place for overseeing the examinations has been effective, but the process will always be affected or influenced by the diversity or the lack of diversity reflected in those participating in the committee’s work. Because eliminating cultural bias in the questions and in the reading of exams is a goal of presbyteries and their committees responsible for preparation for ministry, it is important that we aggressively pursue bringing voices to the table that can reflect the realities of ministry in many cultural contexts.

Members of the PCCEC are elected by two different constituencies: the regional reading groups and the General Assembly through nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (see excerpt following from the Manual of the General Assembly). To change the makeup of the PCCEC, it is necessary to challenge both constituencies that elect members.

\textit{Procedures for filling the PCCEC (from “Guiding Principles of Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates,” p. 69, which are part of the Manual of the General Assembly):}

\textbf{MEMBERS:} The Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) will be composed of no fewer than 12 members and no more than 24 members who are ruling or teaching elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any changes to this membership range will require a two-thirds majority vote of the PCCEC before submission to commissioners at a General Assembly for action on behalf of the presbyteries.

\begin{itemize}
   \item No more than half and no less than one-third of the members will be elected by the General Assembly to four-year terms on a staggered schedule. These members will be eligible to be re-elected for an additional term. Candidates for these positions are nominated through the General Assembly Nominating Committee with consideration being given to areas of needed expertise, to gender and racial/ethnic representation, to an approximate balance of ruling and teaching elders, and to various sub-cultures within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with regard to the overall composition of the PCCEC.

   \item Remaining members of the PCCEC will be elected from among and by examination readers designated by the presbyteries. To facilitate representation from across the church, the PCCEC will group presbyteries into regions. The reader representatives will be nominated from and voted
on by readers from their respective regional groupings of presbyteries following procedures determined by the PCCEC. These members will be elected and serve on a staggered schedule in four-year terms, and will be eligible to be re-elected for an additional term. (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 710, electronic version)

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 2. See pp. 14, 73.]

2. Direct the Mid Council Ministries Area of the Office of General Assembly, in consultation with the racial ethnic caucuses of the church and with presbytery leaders, to develop a list of resource persons for circumstances where assistance with cultural proficiency may aid in developing an appropriate process of discernment and preparation for possible service as a teaching elder.

Rationale for Recommendation 2

The need for and range of cultural diversity across the church is outstripping the ability to develop training resources that can assure cultural proficiency by every presbytery member charged with working with inquirers and candidates for all cultural groups in the PC(USA). Identified resource persons from these cultural groups can help presbyters understand cultural differences among inquirers and candidates, increasing the likelihood that the discernment and preparation process is appropriately tailored to the gifts and needs of the individual. Presbyters tasked with overseeing preparation for ministry as teaching elders are encouraged to consult with these resource persons when beginning work with an individual of a different racial ethnic or cultural heritage, to prepare for interaction with the applicant that will be characterized by cultural humility and respect. These resource persons also can be made available to inquirers and candidates as advocates for appropriate process, and as interpreters of the theological commitments and communal values of the Reformed tradition.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 3. See pp. 14, 74.]

3. Direct that Standard Ordination Examinations be retained as one means of assessing a candidate’s readiness to be examined for ordination to the ordered ministry of teaching elder.

Rationale for Recommendation 3

Because ordination to the ordered ministry of teaching elder is an action of a presbytery taken on behalf of the whole church, the committee affirms the need for some denominational standards when determining readiness. Though important as a church-wide standard, the standard ordination exams should not be used as the singular means of assessing readiness for ministry. That is, presbyteries may discern that a candidate who passes the standard ordination exams is not in fact ready for ministry; by the same token, presbyteries may discern that a candidate who has difficulty with the standard exams merits an opportunity to demonstrate readiness in other ways. For this reason, standard ordination exams are only one means of assessment among many.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 4. See pp. 14, 74.]

4. Direct the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCEC) to consult with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) for comment on the cross-cultural accessibility of standard ordination exam questions before they are finalized.

Rationale for Recommendation 4

The process used by the PCCEC to develop ordination exams is complex and spans three years. This process allows ample time to read and consider how a candidate might engage with a particular question as well as how the question is relevant to ministry in the church. Our research identifies the intrinsic impossibility of cultural neutrality. No matter how diverse the composition of the PCCEC, the committee cannot be expected to compose exams that are “culturally neutral.” However, we believe that ACREC’s input will help the PCCEC to compose exam questions that are more accessible across cultures.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 5. See pp. 14, 74.]

5. Direct the PCCEC to include more culturally diverse resources and references in its instructions to and preparation of readers of the examinations, so that the Reformed theological insights of racial ethnic and non-European persons are included.

Rationale for Recommendation 5

Because the exams are intended to be “anonymous” and those writing the exams are instructed not to include anything that would identify themselves to the readers, some students have observed that they have felt unable to cite persons from their cultural contexts (e.g., Latin American, Asian, African, African American). In their instructions to the exam-takers, proctors can assure students that such references are welcome but readers must also be prepared to accept those references as appropriate and non-prejudicial. The examinations handbooks for candidates and for readers, which are posted online on the
6. Direct the PCCEC to develop means to broaden the format of standard ordination examinations beyond time-limited essays, and include additional protocols that may integrate oral presentations into the standard examination process.

Rationale for Recommendation 6

The committee considered the possibility that the written essay-style exams may not be the best assessment of competence for all candidates and that being considered an “exception,” if one is assessed by an alternative to the standard ordination exams, may be perceived as prejudicial. In accomplishing this recommendation, there will be logistical challenges and resource implications (financial and human) that we cannot predict. However, the committee believes that in the current environment, different formats beyond the usual timed, written, essay exams are needed and feedback to this point has concurred. We understand that any standard exam developed and administered by the PCCEC would not be an “alternative means” of assessment requiring a super-majority action of a presbytery under G-2.0610.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 7, with amendment. See pp. 14, 74.]

7. [Direct that] [Encourage] the presbyteries, in consultation with sessions and seminaries, [be mandated] to address with persons under care the contemporary challenges of the ministry of teaching elder as well as the realities of financial debt incurred from education and other sources. Such conversations would consider
   a. bi-vocational probabilities;
   b. expectations of tent-making;
   c. innovative approaches to ministry;
   d. cultivating nontraditional communities (e.g. 1001 Worshiping Communities);
   e. acquisition and use of nonprofit skills (including but not limited to grant writing, volunteer and donor relations, etc.); and
   f. the number of candidates seeking a call compared to the number of open positions for which they might be considered.

Rationale for Recommendation 7

The reality for many candidates seeking a call is that there are increasingly fewer congregations that can afford to hire and provide benefits for full-time teaching elders. Candidates, particularly those in second careers, carrying forward student loans and other debt on top of the costs of living, must confront the possibility that they may not be able to rely solely on ministerial employment to meet their financial needs. The process of preparation for ministry must address these circumstances as matters of stewardship and honoring the covenant between presbyteries, sessions, and the persons under their care.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 8, with amendment. See pp. 14, 74.]

8. [Direct that] [Encourage] presbyteries, through whatever structure they have in place to guide the preparation of persons for ordered ministry as a teaching elder, make full use of the flexibility provided by the Form of Government in G-2.06, particularly G-2.0610, to respond to the unique needs of individual inquirers and candidates, especially those from immigrant and underserved communities.

Rationale for Recommendation 8

The committee believes that there has not yet been sufficient time for the church to adjust to the changes in the Form of Government since its revision in 2011. The revised Advisory Handbook for Preparation for Ministry, a valuable resource for presbyteries, clarifies the new flexibility permitting presbyteries to shape the preparation process in ways that would accommodate their unique contexts and circumstances. The next recommendation would provide additional resources for presbyteries as they consider their options.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 9. See pp. 14, 74.]

9. Direct the Mid Council Ministries Area of the Office of the General Assembly to solicit from presbyteries and make available on the PC(USA) website and by other appropriate electronic means, models of ways presbyteries are
responding to unique and emerging issues related to the preparation and equipping of persons for ordered ministry as a teaching elder.

**Rationale for Recommendation 9**

The committee is aware that a number of presbyteries have implemented or are exploring alternative structures and processes for guiding all inquirers and candidates through preparation toward final assessment. Others are responding to particular circumstances that may be true for other presbyteries as well. Posting these models where presbyteries and committees can easily find them would provide a very useful resource.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 10, with amendment. See pp. 14, 74.]

10. Direct [that through creation of a special task force or direction to the Mid Council Ministries Area of] the Office of General Assembly[,] the General Assembly[,] and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to review the programs and procedures used by, or available to, presbyteries to prepare, equip, credential, and deploy pastoral leadership for congregations other than the preparation process for those seeking ordination to the ordered ministry of teaching elder, with a report to be submitted to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

**Rationale for Recommendation 10**

In wrestling with the charge to study the overall process of preparation for ministry, the special committee concluded that the focus mandated by the referral from the 220th General Assembly (2012) was the preparation of those seeking ordination to the ordered ministry of teaching elder. Limiting the work, however, precluded attention to the spectrum of leadership needs emerging across the church as the denomination responds to a rapidly changing context. Approval of this recommendation would invite review of programs and procedures already in use or under development for the preparation of ruling elders for commissioning to particular service. The review should provide a forum for discussion of how the church will nurture leaders called to emerging communities of worship and service, communities that might seek alternatives to traditional forms of leadership and organization. It shall also explore what options could be made available to allow credentials for pastoral leaders who might have some training, but do not have practical access to the established process of preparation for ministry as a teaching elder, e.g. a leader of an immigrant faith community.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 11. See pp. 27, 75.]

11. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0607 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italic.]

“A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a teaching elder without approval of the presbytery of care. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:

a. [Text in a.–c. remains unchanged.]

d. satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.”

**Rationale for Recommendation 11**

This change in language seeks to distinguish the standard ordination examinations from examination by presbyteries for ordination as well as to reiterate that candidates are accountable to their presbytery of care. It also makes specific that the standard exams are evaluated by way of written comments but are not “graded” and would allow for the introduction of exams for which the “work product” of the exams may be other than written responses to essay questions.

[The assembly approved Item 06-12, Recommendation 12, with amendment. See pp. 27, 72, 75.]

12. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0610 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italic.]

“G-2.0610 Exceptions Accommodations to Particular Circumstances

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“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

[Financial Implication: Per Capita—$12,700 (2014); $15,660 (2015); $12,700 (2016)]

Rationale for Recommendation 12

The new phrasing proposed in G-2.0610 first changes the title of the paragraph to address the perception of some that being an exception is prejudicial in and of itself. The changes proposed in the paragraph are intended to clarify that presbytery minutes should include reasons for both waivers and for alternate means of assessment. The sequence of sentences in the current paragraph could be construed to mean that a presbytery may “waive” everything but G-2.0607d without “good and sufficient reasons” or explanation in the minutes so long as the three-fourths vote threshold was met.

Overall Rationale

Introduction

These recommendations are in response to the following referral from the 220th General Assembly (2012): Item 07-07, On Reevaluating the Process by Which Ordination Exams Are Written, Administered, and Graded (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 682).

1. Reexamine the viability of testing as a way of discerning a candidate’s suitability for ministry.
2. Reevaluate and reassess the process by which the exams are written, administered, and graded.
3. Assess the exams’ assumed cultural neutrality and revise exams as needed to address disparities in pass rates.
4. Work with councils to develop effective, alternative methods of examination, and to encourage their use to grow the pastoral leadership pool for immigrant communities in need.
5. Request the assembly fund an expanded study the overall process of preparation for ministry including the standard ordination examinations with recommendations to be reported to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Context

The General Assembly referral to the Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams emerges from a context of significant changes in American society, changes that multiply exponentially the challenges faced by the 21st century church.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a church shaped by the Reformation ethos of Western Europe, with institutional forms reflecting assumptions and structures of a body politic significantly different from that which frames U.S. culture today. Despite our commitment to diversity and ecumenism, the PC(USA) is still a majority white church deeply rooted in the traditions of its history. These demographics expose a disconnect from American society’s trend toward greater racial and cultural diversity.

If the PC(USA) is to minister effectively, it is imperative that we take into account the ways our context—both local and global—is changing. Soon, there will no longer be a white majority within the American population. As faith traditions continue to multiply, Christianity will become less a normative religion and more one religion among many. In our intensely market-driven climate, religious consumers will continue looking past the familiar mainline denominations in favor of their own personalized spiritual paths.

These trends are layered with a widespread disillusionment with institutions, a dramatic shift in the source of authority, an expanding knowledge base, the accessibility of various worldviews, and the impact of technology—for good and ill—on human relationships and interaction. Within the church we find decreasing financial resources, declining denominational loyalty, and inconsistent patterns of participation in worship and education. In this new reality, the forms and processes that have served the PC(USA) in the past may no longer do so and the assumptions and expectations of corporate life and congregational leadership are being tested.

There are wonderful possibilities associated with these cultural and technological changes. For instance, we already see potential for increased and deepened communication. Opportunities for artistic and linguistic expression increased by social changes as well as technological development will enhance capacities for spiritual and theological expression. All of these changes are currently widening our horizons for mission in exciting and creative ways. The creative possibilities for preparation for ministry are increasing exponentially. How can we find ways to infuse our preparation for ministry process with this potential?
Despite significant changes to the constitutional requirements in 2011, this committee finds that the process of preparation for ministry as a teaching elder is still implemented in many presbyteries as largely unchanged from the linear, form-driven process that was in place prior to 2007. This adherence to old procedures continues in the face of changing cultural expectations and related shifts in the demographics of inquirers and candidates, church leaders, and congregations.

Thirty years ago, the majority of those discerning service as teaching elders were young people who entered seminary right out of college. They were significantly formed in their pastoral development through first calls as associate or assistant pastors or pastors of smaller congregations. Ruling elders and other members of presbyteries frequently mentored them during the transition to pastoral ministry. Now, the majority of those in preparation are exploring ministry as a second or even third career. Their sense of call may have developed while they were in seminary rather than within the faith community of a congregation. They may not begin their theological education with any denominational affiliation, much less having been under care. A growing number of persons entering preparation are older, multicultural, or immigrant. More are geographically tethered, and many leave seminary with significant educational debt. There is no one process of preparation to fit all candidates.

At the same time, the demographic and leadership needs of our congregations are also changing. Just over half of our congregations are under one hundred members, and there are fewer full-time pastoral positions. Small congregations, rural and urban alike, have been identified as “underserved” because they find it difficult to call pastors. In many areas the isolation of congregations is exacerbated as nearby churches are closed. Congregations may be yoked where several are served by a single pastor. In other areas, presbyteries are equipping ruling elders to provide pastoral leadership for congregations unable to afford or attract a teaching elder. Others are working with the spiritual leaders in immigrant communities to identify pastoral leaders who can communicate in their languages and who understand their cultures. As presbyteries respond to the denomination’s challenge to create new worshiping communities, they are working with new types of leaders for what may be nontraditional communities.

In light of this church environment, how can we better prepare a diverse range of candidates for the church the Spirit is reforming?

These new realities argue for a more flexible, individualized process for preparing persons for ministry in today’s church. The 2011 revision to the Form of Government provides presbyteries with great latitude to shape the process to meet the specific needs of inquirers and candidates, while at the same time defining churchwide standards for readiness for examination for ordination. Exercising that latitude will require the committees that guide that process to understand the unique cultural traditions of individual inquirers and candidates and their implications for the preparation process. We must become more culturally competent; we are called to embrace a diversity that may not be reflected in our own congregations or life experiences. Thus committees must become much more aware of and open to fresh methods of formation, education, and assessment.

Not only is the preparation process in the PC(USA) a covenant between an inquirer or candidate, a congregation, and a presbytery, it also involves a partnership with other entities within and outside the church. The realities described above need to be taken into consideration by all parties. While the overall process is primarily guided by the presbytery, usually through a committee, the final assessment of readiness includes ordination examinations prepared and administered by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. For most inquirers and candidates, the educational requirements will be met by a course of study at a seminary or other theological institution, some having no relationship with the PC(USA). This education may be residential, commuter, or through distance learning. An individual’s practice of ministry will likely be shaped at least in part by a supervised practice of ministry experience, Clinical Pastoral Education, or an internship. The quality of communication and active partnership will determine the degree to which the process can be successfully individualized in such a complex situation.

Committee Process

To develop recommendations in the areas assigned to us, we engaged in the following:

- Compiling and reviewing recent mainline pastor preparation studies and practices;
- Analyzing standard ordination exams for cultural bias and failure rates;
- Evaluating the demographics of PCCEC members and readers; and
- Interviewing a sample of pastors, mid council presbyters, racial ethnic caucus members, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) members, and seminary students, at various venues such as Big Tent, the Polity Conference, Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meetings, presbytery meetings, committee on preparation for ministry (CPM) meetings, and seminary on campuses.

These and other approaches will be evident below.
Part 1: Reexamine the viability of testing as a way of discerning a candidate’s suitability for ministry.

As we considered Part 1 of the committee’s charge, we noted that the standard written ordination exams are not designed to discern “suitability” for ministry. In the candidacy phase, “fitness and readiness” are to be established (G-2.0604), with the standard written exams to be one tool for that work (G-2.0607d). “Suitability,” in the language of the Book of Order, is to be established during the inquiry phase (G-2.0603). The committee proceeded with its work with this understanding of the exams’ purpose.

The committee considered the history of the standard written ordination exams. They were established in order that presbyteries would have some method to test all candidates on a denomination-wide basis. Individual calling presbyteries could then trust that a candidate coming from another presbytery was able to articulate adequate responses to ministry situations with both Reformed theological and pastoral concerns in view. This method of examination continues to stand as the only denomination-wide standard for evaluating candidates, and for this reason the committee deemed it valuable enough to keep.

We confirmed that seminaries continue to use written, timed examinations as part of their assessment of students. Therefore such exams in and of themselves are not a strange and foreign concept to candidates. However, we also noted that during seminary studies particular students may be allowed to substitute other work and forms of examination, and that some specific courses do not require exams at all. We concluded that retaining written, timed exams simply in order to mirror seminary methods does not have a viable basis.

Investigation into the discernment practices of other denominations revealed that standard written exams are required by certain denominations but not by others. Different denominations have varying approaches to the preparation of candidates for ministry. Some use a classroom-and-testing model; others use an apprenticeship model. All practices have strengths and liabilities.

Part 2: Reevaluate and reassess the process by which the exams are written, administered, and graded.

The standard ordination exams are written, administered, and evaluated by the PCCEC. We received a full explanation of its work from the Reverend Dr. Timothy Cargal, staff support to the PCCEC, and the Reverend Dr. Michelle Bartel, former moderator of the PCCEC. We learned that:

- Five exams comprise the standard ordination examinations. The Bible Content Exam (BCE) is designed each year at the PCCEC’s annual meeting. The Worship and Sacraments, Biblical Exegesis, Theological Competence, and Church Polity exam questions are composed over a three-year span by the PCCEC. Each question is evaluated thoroughly by the members of the PCCEC in order that the exams may ascertain as clearly as possible a candidate’s ability to articulate the Reformed faith in ministry situations. The PCCEC works diligently to avoid elements in the exams that would distract candidates or readers from this articulation.

- The exams are administered as timed events, completed on computer. Time extensions may be requested by the candidate and authorized by the presbytery committee overseeing that candidate’s preparation process.

- The PCCEC stresses that exams are “evaluated,” not “graded.” “Grading” implies a fixed rubric against which an exam is evaluated, which does not happen with these exams. Readers are instructed to evaluate exams with a final mark of “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory,” with comments to indicate why either mark was given. Members of the PCCEC review all marks and reader comments for consistency and clarity. Readers elected by the presbyteries and trained by the PCCEC evaluate the exams.

We observed that the composition of the exams takes place with rigor and over considerable time, both positive assets. The administration of the exams has moved fluidly from an entirely paper-based system to an electronic, online system, making the process easier and more affordable for the readers and keeping pace with the cultural habits of our time. The evaluation system uses a constituency of readers with the broadest possible base (all presbyteries) and includes ruling and teaching elders. The committee could not envision the administration of an exam process labeled “standard” much improved from the present one.

We examined different “learning styles” and how it might impact candidates taking the standard exams. The concept of “learning styles” is not confirmed by rigorous academic research. The several proponents of “learning styles” in the education community differ in their definitions and implications of “learning styles,” making the usefulness of the concept in our situation difficult to ascertain. Furthermore, “learning style”—how a student receives learning—may not coincide usefully with “expression style”—the means by which the student’s learning is demonstrated. Thus, this committee is not able to respond helpfully to the referral’s appeal to “learning and processing knowledge in different ways.”

We recognized and reaffirmed that candidates with learning disabilities have avenues for accommodation of those disabilities in taking the standard exams. A presbytery can also arrange for an alternate form of assessment to accommodate an individual candidate’s needs (G-2.0610).
The rationale for this part of the mandate included an appeal to consider the failure of “many of our candidates” on first, second, or third attempts of an examination area. For perspective on how many candidates might reasonably pass the standard exams at all, we note that in the legal and medical professions pass rates of students taking written board exams range from 69–88 percent. In recent years, satisfactory results on our exams fall at the upper limit of these rates (see Table 1, and our work on the racial ethnic dimension of this problem in the next section), which would suggest that as professional exams they are not overly rigorous. It is unrealistic to expect a 100 percent pass rate for our candidates; if no one would fail to satisfy the requirements of the standard exams (even on second or third attempts), we might well ask whether the exams really functioned as a tool to assess readiness.

Table 1: Performance by Inquirers and Candidates Taking Exams Fall 2011-Fall 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Area</th>
<th>Total Number Inqs/Cands</th>
<th>% of total who “Satisfied” Area</th>
<th>Taken Once % Ttl % “S”</th>
<th>Taken Twice % Ttl % “S”</th>
<th>Taken 3 times % Ttl % “S”</th>
<th>Taken &gt;3 times % Ttl % “S”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible Content</td>
<td>1694</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94.7% 96%</td>
<td>4.1% 69%</td>
<td>1.0% 88%</td>
<td>0.2% 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible Exegesis</td>
<td>1357</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>77.0% 89%</td>
<td>15.1% 83%</td>
<td>5.9% 73%</td>
<td>2.0% 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>1352</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>79.3% 91%</td>
<td>13.7% 81%</td>
<td>5.3% 68%</td>
<td>1.8% 54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>77.7% 92%</td>
<td>15.7% 80%</td>
<td>5.1% 65%</td>
<td>1.5% 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity</td>
<td>1409</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>77.3% 90%</td>
<td>15.6% 80%</td>
<td>5.2% 67%</td>
<td>1.9% 74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table reports the full experience with the examinations for all inquirers and candidates who took an examination in any area from the Fall 2011 administration through Fall 2013 (five exam cycles). For each exam area, the total number of inquirers and candidates is reported along with the percentage of the total that had satisfied the requirement in that area by Fall 2013. The total for each exam is then broken down by the number of attempts, showing the percentage of the total who had taken the exam in that area once, twice, three times, or more than three times, and the percentage who received a “Satisfactory” evaluation on their respective most recent attempt.

Part 3. Assess the exams’ assumed cultural neutrality and revise exams as needed to address disparities in pass rates.

Conversations with members of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and within the committee revealed the intrinsic impossibility of cultural neutrality. While the PCCEC and the bodies that provide its membership may be encouraged to comprise a diversity reflective of the PC(USA), all specific ministry situations arise out of a particular cultural context. The issue for the exams, then, is that these ministry contexts be cross-culturally accessible.

In light of the method of exam creation, we considered the racial ethnic composition of the PCCEC. During the period of our work, African American and Korean persons served on the PCCEC, though in insufficient numbers; in addition, the absence of Hispanic members was pointedly observed. We discovered that the PCCEC has been trying to recruit members who are Hispanic. We assert that in order for standard exams (of any type) to be cross-culturally accessible, members of the PCCEC must come from a broad variety of contexts.

Upon investigation into the statistics related to “Satisfactory” evaluations on the exams, the committee could not say with conviction that racial ethnic candidates as a group consistently satisfy exam requirements at a statistically significant lower rate than Caucasian candidates as a group when one considers rates on first attempts within a particular examination area and applies necessary controls such as for varying sample size. The committee reviewed reports prepared for previous study groups that sought to statistically analyze performance on the examinations by racial ethnic inquirers and candidates. When trying to study the outcomes for racial ethnic inquirers and candidates, who account for roughly 1-in-5 (twenty percent) of all test takers, sample size problems are exacerbated—especially when further differentiated by specific racial ethnic categories. A particular racial ethnic category may be represented by no more than a few percent of total exam takers. For example, in one recent exam cycle Hispanic test takers were 3 percent of the total, and those who opted to write in Spanish represented just one percent of the total. In such circumstances, the impact of individual test takers on overall “Satisfactory” rates is widely incommensurate with the impact of individual Caucasian (non-Hispanic) test takers within their respective sample sets. What the patterns in these studies show are that while racial ethnic candidates are less likely than their Caucasian counterparts to satisfy all the subject areas with only a single attempt in each area, there is only minor difference in rates of “Satisfactory” evaluation on any first attempt of a particular examination area. Moreover, for both Caucasian and racial ethnic candidates, the strong likelihood is that those who will satisfy all four subject areas will do so having repeated no more than two exams (either two areas repeated once, or one area satisfied on a third attempt).

We did recognize among many racial ethnic candidates and seminary faculty the strong perception that passing the exams is intrinsically harder for racial ethnic candidates. We sensed a need to address that perception in our recommendations, even if it is not in our control to change that perception. The statistical analyses provided to the committee suggest that these perceptions arise from two considerations. First, as already noted, the data show that racial ethnic candidates are less likely than their Caucasian counterparts to satisfy all the subject areas with only a single attempt in each area. In a study of just over eighty racial ethnic candidates and an equal number of randomly selected Caucasian candidates who all took an exam during a particular cycle, 23 of the racial ethnic test takers had satisfied all areas, compared to 30 in the Caucasian sample. Moreo-
ver, fewer than half (9 of 23) of those racial ethnic test takers had satisfied all areas without repeating any subject, whereas three-quarters (23 of 30) in the Caucasian sample group did not repeat an exam area. Second, presbytery committees overseeing inquirers and candidates appear more likely to authorize or even require third or higher attempts of an exam area in the case of racial ethnic persons than for their Caucasian colleagues. The relationship between “Satisfactory” evaluation rates for racial ethnic and Caucasian test takers remains about the same for first and second attempts even as the rates of “Unsatisfactory” evaluations rise sharply. However, at the point of third attempts or higher the two groups diverge significantly both in the number of exams attempted and the rate at which they are evaluated as “Satisfactory.” In the previously cited study of equally sized groups of racial ethnic and Caucasian candidates, there were thirty-seven examinations where the most recent attempt within a subject area by a racial ethnic inquirer or candidate was their third attempt or higher, with only 35 percent (13) receiving a “Satisfactory” evaluation. By comparison, among the Caucasian inquirers and candidates in the sample group there were only six such examinations, and half of those (3) were evaluated as “Satisfactory.”

Our conversations with ACREC members revealed that composing exams in English then translating them to Spanish or Korean can be of limited help to candidates. Knowing that the exam is a translation often leads candidates to spend exam time translating back to English in order to assess the meaning of the question, which defeats the purpose of translation. In the case of Spanish, colloquial and dialectical differences between Hispanic linguistic communities can mean that even official PCCEC translations of the exams by first-language Spanish speakers may use expressions that seem inappropriate to some who take the Spanish edition of an exam. Because of the problems that can arise from attempting to translate into Korean differences between specific English-language translations of biblical passages used in Bible Exegesis exam questions, the PCCEC—at the request of its Korean members—has adopted a policy of not translating that particular exam (although candidates can register to write their responses in Korean).

Part 4. Work with councils to develop effective alternative methods of examination, and to encourage their use to grow the pastoral leadership pool for immigrant communities in need.

We recognize that presbyteries across the denomination have been creating their own alternative assessments since the Book of Order was first published. We discussed at great length the feasibility of a standardized oral exam, or ordination exams whose means involve a combination of media. We concluded that a single method of examination serving as a denomination-wide “standard” alternative to the written exams would have to be birthed by the PCCEC. To address this referral (#4) we would have to do one or both of the following: (1) recommend that the PCCEC be given the responsibility to design a standard alternative exam or (2) without mandating a style or structure for such alternatives, create a reference document that would be helpful to presbyteries as they develop their own alternative methods of examination. This would serve as a “roadmap” for candidates and presbyteries who otherwise would consider an alternative process too daunting.

We discerned that having alternative methods of examination on hand is only one small piece of the solution to “growing a pastoral leadership pool for immigrant communities in need.” Immigrant communities in need of pastoral leadership require presbyteries and committees responsible for preparation for ministry who are: (1) ready to engage the unique challenges of their immigrant communities and leaders; (2) willing to view the extra effort required to use alternative methods of assessment as an exciting opportunity rather than an onerous burden; and (3) able to navigate the social, economic, and linguistic complexities that no universal wording in the Book of Order can address. These needs are amplified by the fact that some racial ethnic communities consider the entire system the PC(USA) uses to find, prepare, and examine teaching elders to be alien or hostile to the way their church communities function.

Part 5. Request the assembly fund an expanded study of the overall process of preparation for ministry including the standard ordination examinations with recommendations to be reported to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

We discussed whether we should consider “the overall process of preparation for ministry” to mean preparation for ministry as a ruling elder commissioned to particular pastoral service (G-2.10) in addition to ministry as a teaching elder. Although we made no formal limitation on our discussions, it seemed to us that, given the time frame of our labors, we would not be able to explore adequately all the preparation avenues available to any person preparing for one of the ministries of the church. Therefore our work focused on preparation for the ordered ministry of teaching elder.

Much of our conversation concerning the process as a whole revolved around whether presbyteries (and their preparation committees) viewed themselves as those who place requirements before prospective pastors or those who engage in a process of (mutual) discernment of call. We observed the tension between rules and guidelines on one hand and the cultivation of possibility on the other.

Endnotes

1. F-1.0403 Unity in Diversity

   “‘As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise’ (Gal. 3:27–29).
“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

2. Definition of suitability, fitness and readiness assumed by this committee.

Suitability

When an individual and a presbytery explore someone’s “suitability for ordered ministry” (G-2.0603), they ascertain whether God has given that person those qualities which the presbytery understands cannot be taught but are essential in ordered ministry. For instance, the presbytery may decide that character, willingness to learn, motivation, or some gifts for leadership must be present to affirm one’s suitability.

Fitness and Readiness

When an individual and a presbytery explore someone’s “fitness and readiness for a call to ministry” (G-2.0604), they ascertain whether that person demonstrates those qualities which the presbytery understands can be taught or developed and are essential for entering a call. For instance, our polity affirms as essential for readiness the ability to do exegesis of the Scriptures using Hebrew and Greek and to articulate Reformed responses to particular situations. Some presbyteries have affirmed that deep self-reflection in pastoral care situations (often taught in Clinical Pastoral Education courses) is essential for readiness.

3. Other than the streamlining of requirements, there has not been a major review of the process of preparation for ministry since the merger of the UPCUSA and the PCUS in 1983, which occasion required the publication of a new Book of Order.

4. G-2.0607 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service

“A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a teaching elder without approval of the presbytery. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:

a. a candidate’s wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;

b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;

c. a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and

d. satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.”

G-2.0610 Exceptions

“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery may waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

5. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Episcopal Church, and the Reformed Church in America require standard written ordination exams; the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Christian Reformed Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the United Church of Christ do not require such exams.

6. For digests of thinking on and critique of learning styles (with bibliographies), see:

http://institute4learning.com/multiple_intelligences.php
http://www.kaganonline.com/free_articles/research_and_rationale/
http://www.cee.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/Professional%20PDFs/10a%20Gregorc%20Learning%20and%20Teaching%20Styles.pdf

7. The U.S. Bar (which administers exams for those hoping to practice law) reported a pass rate of 69 percent across the country (see http://www.adaptibar.com/bar-exam-statistics-11.aspx) ; from 2008–2012, the American Board of Internal Medicine reported a pass rate of 88 percent among those taking the exam for the first time; the 2011 U.S. Medical Licensing Exam had a pass rate of 94 percent among first-time test takers and 70 percent of repeat test takers; the 2012 board exams for nursing had an 80 percent pass rate.

Resources


Committee Members
Ruben Armandáriz, Mission Presbytery Spanish Language Program for Commissioned Ruling Elders
Diana Barber, associate synod executive for leadership, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Moderator
Michelle Bartel, former moderator, Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates
Margaret Elliott, member of the Committee on the General Assembly
Ron Kernaghan, director, Office of Presbyterian Ministries, Fuller Theological Seminary
Susan Niesen, associate presbyter for Leadership in Ministry, Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery
Cathryn Piekarski, member of the Vocation Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
Cynthia Rigby, The W. C. Brown Professor of Theology, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Eric Thomas, graduate of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, PhD student at Drew Theological School
Emrys Tyler, former moderator, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Susquehanna Valley Presbytery
John Welch, vice president of student services and dean of students, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Nicholas Yoda, member of the Committee on Theological Education
Tim Cargal, Coordinator for Preparation for Ministry and Examinations, Staff Support

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-12

Advice on Item 06-12—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

This special committee proposes two recommendations, 11 and 12, that have constitutional implications.

1. Recommendation 11

11. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

   Shall G-2.0607 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italic.]

   “A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a teaching elder without approval of the presbytery of care. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:

   “a. [Text in a.–c. remains unchanged.]
   “d. satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers, examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Recommendation 11.

The proposed amendments to the lead paragraph of G-2.0607 are clear and do not change the intent of the section being modified. However, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that these amendments are not necessary, as the meaning of the paragraph is already clear:

• The presbytery that performs a final assessment of a candidate can only be the presbytery “of care.”
An examination for ordination can only be conducted by a presbytery (G-2.0702). The final assessment of the presbytery (ready for examination for ordination, pending a call) is a determination made after all of the tasks of preparation for ministry have been completed (G-2.0607a–d), including satisfactory evaluations of the standard ordination exams.

The proposed language to amend G-2.0607d is clear, and adequately expresses the flexibility the special committee proposes for certifying a candidate’s readiness for examination for ordination, pending a call.

2. Recommendation 12

12. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0610 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italic.]

“G-2.0610 Exceptions Accommodations to Particular Circumstances

“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an inquirer or candidate, it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Recommendation 12 with amendment as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through and with brackets; text to be inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an individual seeking ordination, it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the phrase “individual seeking ordination” is more appropriate language for the first part of Recommendation 12 than “inquirer or candidate.”

The are other situations where G-2.0610 is applicable, such as a presbytery receiving by transfer a minister of another denomination (G-2.0505a): “… Such ministers shall furnish credentials and evidence of good standing acceptable to the presbytery, and shall submit satisfactory evidence of possessing the qualifications of character and scholarship required of candidates of this church. (G-2.0607 and G-2.0610) … ” The proposed amendment will limit the availability of a waiver to the requirements of G-2.06 to inquirers and candidates only, preventing a presbytery from considering such waivers in these other situations.

Otherwise, the proposed language of the amendment clearly and adequately expresses the intent of the special committee to remove language which the special committee judges to be prejudicial.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes no comment on the proposal to strike “Exceptions” and insert “Accommodations to Particular Circumstances,” as this is not a constitutional matter. The indexing system and related titles are not part of the Constitution. Only the text itself is constitutional.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 06-12

Advice and Counsel on Item 06-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 06-12.

For many years concerns had been raised concerning the ordination process and the ordination exams. Concerns had been raised concerning issues of diversity, culture, languages, and accessibility. The ACREC understand that the recommendations presented in the report addresses some of these concerns. The ACREC considers these recommendations as a firm and right step towards the full diversity of the Body of Christ as described in the Constitution (Book of Order, F-1.0403):

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).
The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

Furthermore, these recommendations take in consideration many of the concerns that were shared with the members of the special committee by members of ACREC and caucuses representative.

The ACREC encourages commissioners to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

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**COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 06-12**

Comment on Item 06-12—From the Committee on Theological Education.

COTE commends the work of the Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry and advises approval of Recommendations 8 and 10.

Recommendation 8: Preparation of inquirers and candidates for ministry as a teaching elder is a partnership between mid councils, congregations, and seminaries. Long geographical distance and conflicting calendars and expectations of schools and judicatories are, for example, making the preparation process difficult for all partners with a common goal of forming those who will serve as teaching elders. Therefore, the COTE affirms this recommendation, and should the General Assembly approve, encourages presbyteries to make full use of flexibility provided by the Form of Government.

Recommendation 10: The Special Committee on Preparation for Ministry interpreted their directive to be specific to the preparation of teaching elders within the PC(USA). Because of the dynamic shifts within the church and the preparations for leaders for ministry, we feel that the work of preparing women and men for service goes well beyond the specific call and function of teaching elders. While we commend the work of this particular special committee, we also concur that the work of discerning next steps for the deployment of pastoral leadership is not nearly done with the varietal of rubrics, contexts, and calls that are already within our midst. The logical next step is the formation of another body to pick up on the work of this special committee, taking it into a new direction, in order that more rationales and possible recommendations can be brought before the 222nd General Assembly (2016). COTE, therefore, advises approval of Recommendation 10.

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**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 06-12**

Comment on Item 06-12—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation respectfully recommends the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the twelve recommendations in this final report in response to the 220th General Assembly (2012) referral to reevaluate the process by which ordination exams are written, administered, and graded.

We would like to commend the special committee for its careful analysis of the current way our standard ordination exams are created, administered, and evaluated. Their recommendations for eliminating cultural bias in the preparation for ministry process and in standard ordination exams are sensible systemic changes, wise specific processes, and achievable ways to eliminate cultural bias.

These actions can hasten the day when all candidates for ministry are judged on the basis of their readiness for ordination as teaching elders in a culturally sensitive, proficient, and competent manner, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological convictions.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

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**OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 06-12**

Comment on Item 06-12—From the Office of the General Assembly.

The Office of the General Assembly would ask that should commissioners approve Recommendation 10 regarding a General Assembly review of programs and procedures for preparing and providing pastoral leadership for congregations in ways other than the preparation process for teaching elders that they direct the review be conducted by the Mid Council Ministries Area of the Office of the General Assembly rather than through creation of a special task force. Mid Council Ministries, together with their partners across the church, have the resources and the opportunities necessary to conduct the review and prepare a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) without incurring the additional expense of a special task force.
Item 06-13

[The assembly approved Item 06-13. See pp. 27, 75.]

Request for Constitutional Interpretation of G-2.1001, Functions of Commissions Ruling Elders—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

In response to Item 06-13, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the following authoritative interpretation of G-2.1001:

“A ruling elder commissioned for limited pastoral service is not authorized to perform any pastoral service outside of the commission by the presbytery, unless the presbytery gives its permission for any specific service. If the request is for pastoral service within the bounds of another presbytery, the commissioning presbytery must also agree to the request.”

Rationale

Item 06-13 from the Presbytery of Santa Fe presents the following question upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

“Does the authority for commissioning a ruling elder for limited pastoral service allow the commissioned ruling elder to administer the Sacraments or officiate at marriages, apart from the limited pastoral service assigned by the presbytery?”

Findings

Pursuant to G-6.02, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the questions presented:

Section G-2.1001 states, “When the presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery. … Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by state law. …” The intent is clear—the commission is for a specific ministry with specific responsibilities.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved an authoritative interpretation of G-14.0801a, which stated “The determinations as to whether a commissioned lay pastor may labor within the bounds of a presbytery lies within the sole discretion of the presbytery in which such ministry occurs” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 438). The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved including this authoritative interpretation in the new Form of Government, and it is in force today.

While the session has responsibility and authority for baptism and celebration of the Lord’s Supper, it is the presbytery who commissions a ruling elder for the sacraments. The presbytery must grant those specific responsibilities in its commission. The 2006 interpretation states that the “authority to commission lay pastors is linked to the fundamental authority of the presbytery to provide for and oversee mission within its geographic bounds” (Ibid). The commission is for pastoral service assigned by the presbytery and limited to that particular pastoral service. The 2006 interpretation also states, “… the presbytery in which an elder seeking commissioning to a particular ministry is a member of a congregation has no authority to commission the elder to such a ministry that occurs within the geographic bounds of another presbytery. Similarly, if a ministry occurs across the geographic bounds of two presbyteries, both presbyteries must approve the commissioning of the lay pastor to that ministry” (Ibid, p. 439).

With regard to weddings—state law and PC(USA) polity must both be considered. While state law may allow the service to be performed by a ruling elder, the PC(USA) takes a more restrictive view for the ruling elder. Again, it is the presbytery who must set out the specific ministerial tasks for the commission of the ruling elder, including the authority to perform a marriage service.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes G-2.1001 could be clarified by the proposed authoritative interpretation.

Questions Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

This request from the Presbytery of Santa Fe presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

Section G-2.1001, Functions of Commissions Ruling Elders states, “Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder … to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by stated law.”

Does such authorization allow the ruling elder to administer the Sacraments or officiate at marriages, apart from the ministry setting of ‘limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery?’ For example, can the CRE officiate at the marriage of his or her non-church member nephew at a park in town, or even within the bounds of another presbytery? Can the CRE baptize his or her grandson, when invited by the session of another church?


Item 06-14

[The assembly approved Item 06-14. See pp. 27, 75.]

Request for Constitutional Interpretation of G-3.0403c—From the Synod Council, Synod of South Atlantic

In response to Item 06-14, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the following authoritative interpretations of G-3.0403c:

“If there is no nongeographic presbytery within their synod, then a racial ethnic or immigrant congregation can apply for transfer to a nongeographic presbytery in a synod that has contiguous boundaries with their current synod. The transfer must be shown to meet the “mission needs” of the racial ethnic or immigrant congregation. This transfer requires the approval of both the sending and receiving presbyteries, as well as the synods and the General Assembly.

“A nongeographic presbytery shall only accept fellowships, new church developments, bible studies, worshipping communities, or other forms of corporate witness into its presbytery from within its own synod. Only an organized congregation may be transferred to a nongeographic presbytery in another synod, by obtaining approval from the geographic and nongeographic presbyteries, as well as the synods and the General Assembly.

“Nongeographic presbyteries shall not unilaterally start ministries in other presbyteries and synods without the approval of those councils.”

Rationale

Findings

Pursuant to G-3.0501c and G-6.02, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution makes the following findings with respect to the questions presented:

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the transfer of six Korean racial ethnic congregations (chartered church) from presbyteries in the Synod of South Atlantic to Atlantic Korean-American Presbytery (nongeographic presbytery) in the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic under this provision. Since then, there were some questions raised concerning transferring or receiving non-chartered congregations, such as fellowship congregations, new church development congregations, or new worshipping communities from the bounds of other synods.

A constitutional musing (CM) was published by the Office of the General Assembly in 2012 to address transferring congregations.

1. With respect to question 1, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that the question presents an issue in which interpretation of the G-3.0403c question is advisable. If there is no nongeographic presbytery within their synod, then a racial ethnic or immigrant congregation can apply for transfer to a nongeographic presbytery in a synod that has contiguous boundaries with their current synod. The transfer must be shown to meet the “mission needs” of the racial ethnic or immigrant congregation. This transfer requires the approval of both the sending and receiving presbyteries, as well as the synod and the General Assembly.

2. With respect to question 2, nongeographic presbyteries shall not accept any non-chartered congregations such as fellowships, new church developments, bible studies, worshipping communities, or other forms of corporate witness into their presbyteries from the bounds of other presbyteries or synods. Accordingly, if a non-chartered congregation desires to transfer to a nongeographic presbytery, it must first become a formally organized congregation within its geographic presbytery and then obtain approval of transfer from the geographic and nongeographic presbytery as well as the synod and the General Assembly. Nongeographic presbyteries should not be unilaterally starting ministries in other presbyteries and synods without the approval of the geographical synod and General Assembly.

3. With respect to question 3, no presbytery shall create fellowships, new church developments, worshipping communities, or other form of corporate witness within the bounds of another presbytery or synod without permission of the other presbytery.

Questions Presented to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

This request from the Synod Council, Synod of South Atlantic presents the following questions upon which it seeks constitutional interpretation:

The request asks a series of questions that have to do with G-3.0403c, which provides a part of the synod relations with presbyteries. Section G-3.0403c states that “the synod has responsibility for…within its bounds … organizing new presbyteries, dividing, uniting, or otherwise combining presbyteries or portions of presbyteries previously existing, and, with the con-
currence of existing presbyteries, creating non-geographic presbyteries, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, or taking other such actions as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the mission needs of racial ethnic or immigrant congregations. Such presbyteries shall be formed in compliance with the requirements of G-3.0301 and be accountable to the synod within which they were created” [emphasis added].

1. What does “other such actions” mean? Does it include transferring racial ethnic or immigrant congregations to a nongeographical presbytery in other synods? If so, under what circumstance? Is there limit on such transfer?

2. Can a nongeographical presbytery in a synod receive fellowship congregations, NCD congregations, or new worshipping communities from the bounds of another synod if permission is given by the respective geographical presbytery in another synod?

3. Can a nongeographical presbytery in a synod create fellowship congregations, NCD congregations, or new worshipping communities in the bounds of another synod if permission is given by the respective geographical presbytery in another synod?

Item 06-15

[The assembly approved Item 06-15. See pp. 4, 72, 75.]

The 221st General Assembly (2014) approves and enacts the Heidelberg Catechism.

Rationale

In accordance with G-6.03d., two-thirds of presbyteries approved the proposed Heidelberg Catechism.

In accordance with G-6.03e., this final action is brought before the 221st General Assembly (2014) as the next ensuing General Assembly.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 06-15

Advice on Item 06-15—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that this action is the necessary and final action to include the new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in the Book of Confessions (Book of Order, G-6.03e).

Item 06-REV

[The assembly approved the review with comment. See p. 75.]

[Comment: To receive and commend the commission for its work.]


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I. Introduction: Scope of Study

This self-study (2008–2013) is mandated by the General Assembly and the Standards of Review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission. Its purpose is to provide a systematic review of the work of the commission since the last review by the General Assembly. This study was prepared by the Self-Study Task Force: Barbara Bundick, Bates Butler, Sue Cornman, Meta Cramer, and Robin Roberts.

Since GAPJC is a commission, not a committee, the standards for review by the General Assembly are constitutional. That is, we are not reviewed on the content of our work (in the decisions), but rather on how we conduct our work. Have we conducted our work according to the mandates of the Constitution? The commission also developed non-constitutional stand-
ard that give us the opportunity to think about our lives together as a body of Christ’s Church. Have we conducted ourselves as befits a body under the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

The raw data for this study are derived from GAPJC minutes, logs, internal surveys, and an external survey conducted by the Office of Research Services. The summary of the most recent external survey is included as an appendix.

With the adoption of a new Form of Government in 2011, the polity landscape of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) changed. While most of the mandates for the commission’s work are found in the Rules of Discipline, the changes in the Form of Government have challenged the commission’s interpretation of the whole Constitution.

Another factor affecting the work of the commission has been the need to address the application of the PC(USA) Book of Order to questions concerning persons involved in same-gender relationships. The adoption of G-2.0104b ("Amendment 10A"), substantially altered ordination standards. The commission both had to decide cases that were filed under former G-6.0106b and cases challenging the new standards on other grounds. The growing number of secular jurisdictions legalizing same-gender marriage also resulted in this commission receiving multiple cases regarding the PC(USA) definition of marriage. As the standards were clarified, cases on this particular issue declined.

The commission has also been challenged by the fact that at least two synods have assumed original jurisdiction of one of their presbyteries. In at least one instance, the presbytery in question had assumed original jurisdiction over a session, thus giving the synod original jurisdiction over the session. This situation has given rise to significant confusion about who has standing under D-6.0202 to file a remedial action and at which level such an action should be filed, not to mention the racial, cultural, and linguistic differences between the synods and the presbyteries in question.

Christ’s Church has never been a static organization. As Chapter One of the Book of Order states, “Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scriptures teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (F-1.0203). It is in this spirit the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission conducts its work.

II. Compliance with Constitutional Standards

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is a constitutionally mandated commission of the General Assembly (D-5.0101), charged to serve “in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline … in a remedial or disciplinary case, with the most recent interpretation of the Book of Order being binding” (G-3.0501c). The commission adopted constitutional standards in order to verify compliance with the overall constitutional mandate as well as the particulars as defined by the Book of Order.

The following data are based on thirty-two cases that were begun and concluded in the period of this study. Cases that have not yet reached conclusion were not included.

The following are the constitutional standards that the Book of Order requires, followed immediately by the findings of this committee as to the commission’s level of compliance:

1. To open and close all meeting with prayer (G-3.0105).

   This standard was met without exception. For this commission prayer is not simply a constitutional standard, but a deliberate practice and spiritual discipline.

2. To secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings (D-1.0101). The commission established the guidelines defined below.

   a. Time lapse between receipt of complaint or notice of appeal and final disposition of case should not exceed an average of one year.

      The shortest time lapse was one month; the longest was thirteen months, with the average of seven months.

      According to the most recent survey, two in ten respondents (20 percent) indicate that, once the GAPJC began to consider the cases in which they were involved, the commission conducted the cases “very promptly.” Nearly half (45 percent) said their case was conducted “promptly.” Three in ten report that their case was conducted less than promptly (“somewhat promptly,” 20 percent; “not promptly, 10 percent). Thus, 65 percent of respondents said their cases were conducted promptly or very promptly. The percentage is lower than in past years, when 89 percent of respondents said their cases were conducted in a very timely or timely fashion. Due to a large volume of litigation in 2011 and 2012, with consequent limits in schedule and resources, some cases were delayed beyond the preferred time limits of the commission.

      b. GAPJC meeting arrangements should be made by staff in a manner that reflects the needs of the commission to do its work, as well as reflecting the stewardship concerns of the church.
Of the seventeen face-to-face commission meetings since 2008, 2/3 were held in Louisville in order to reduce expense. Commissioners’ surveys reflect general satisfactions with this arrangement.

3. To accord procedural safeguards and due process (D-1.0101).

Over the past six years, only one respondent complained that he or she was treated unfairly. In the most recent survey, 70 percent of respondents stated that the parties were treated very fairly, and an additional 20 percent stated that the parties were treated somewhat fairly.

There was also one instance in which a litigant complained that he had been misinformed about the time allowed for opening/closing arguments, protocol about who could speak during oral argument, and extent of response to commissioners’ questions. As a response to this, a newly revised bullet point communication from Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to counsel was devised that details the protocol of oral arguments. The problem has not reoccurred.

4. To examine papers promptly upon receipt to determine preliminary questions (D-6.0305, D-8.0301, D-13.0301).

a. Time between receipt of initial case filings by OGA and forwarding the same to the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) for their determination on preliminary questions should not exceed an average of fourteen days.

Usually the filings are forwarded to the executive committee the same day; longest time elapsed was nine days; average is 1.73.

b. Time between receipt of initial case filings by the executive committee from OGA and their determination on preliminary questions should not exceed an average of thirty days.

The shortest time elapsed for action by executive committee was two days, longest was sixty-three, with the average being twenty-four days.

5. To respond to stays of enforcement in a timely fashion (D-6.0103).

There were eight during the period of this report.

a. Time between receipt by OGA of a request for a stay of enforcement and forwarding the same by OGA to the executive committee should not exceed an average of three working days.

The shortest time was same day to executive committee, longest was one day.

b. Time between receipt by the executive committee of a request for a stay of enforcement from OGA and their determination of the preliminary matters as described above should not exceed an average of five working days.

Data exist for only three cases; shortest time lapse was two days and longest was five days; average three days. These dates need to be recorded on the case logs.

c. Time between the executive committee’s determination of the preliminary matters described above and the forwarding of the request for a stay of enforcement accompanied by a communication from the executive committee regarding this determination to the commissioners should not exceed an average of five working days.

Shortest time lapse was same day; longest was fourteen days; average six days. Case logs show significant improvement in this turnaround.

6. To decide challenges to the findings of the moderator and clerk (D-6.0306, D-8.0302); rulings of the moderator (D-7.0303a, D-11.0304); and the composition of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (D-7.0303b, D-7.0401a and b, D-11.0402).

a. In each applicable case, parties should be given the opportunity to present evidence and arguments on any challenges made to findings of the moderator and clerk on preliminary questions.

There were eight challenges to Preliminary Orders for Dismissal; two parties settled and six hearings on challenges were held.

b. In each applicable case, parties should be given the opportunity to object to the composition of the commission.

There were no challenges to the composition of the commission.

c. In each applicable case, the GAPJC should address any challenges and/or objections raised by the parties.

Not applicable.

7. To issue citations as deemed necessary (D-7.0202, D-11.0201).

None were requested.
8. To appoint counsel when necessary (D-11.0302).

None were requested.

9. To conduct pretrial and pre-hearing conferences when necessary (D-6.0310, D-10.0405, D-13.0307).

While pretrial conferences are common, data on how many were held does not exist.


Trials and hearings should be conducted formally with full decorum in a neutral place suitable for the occasion.

In all cases full decorum was maintained; all locations were neutral.

11. To read aloud D-1.0101 and D-1.0102 at the beginning of each trial (D-7.0401a and D-11.0402a).

This requirement was met without exception.

12. To control the conduct of trials and hearings (D-7.0303, D-11.0304).

The moderator is deft in controlling the conduct of trials and hearings; in one instance the hearing had to be interrupted briefly for a cell phone issue. Participants and visitors have been advised about cell phones in all subsequent cases.


In every case the commission held private deliberations. The commission follows a format whereby commissioners are given the opportunity to begin initial deliberations immediately following a hearing and before the next scheduled hearing begins. This provides an opportunity to begin that process while thoughts are fresh. After full deliberation, separate votes are taken on every specification of error; sometimes specifications of error are combined for efficiency and clarity. Decisions are always filed with the Stated Clerk immediately following the meeting of the commission.

14. To write, amend, proofread, and finalize written decisions with the signatures of the moderator and clerk while in session, and immediately disseminate and timely file those decisions (D-7.0402, D-8.0404, D-11.0403, and D-13.0404); For each case in which a decision has been rendered, a written decision should have been prepared while the commission was in session.

This criterion was met without exception.

(1) A copy of the decision should have been delivered to the parties by personal service or certified mail.

This requirement was also met without exception.

(2) The decision should have been filed with the Stated Clerk within thirty days of the hearing.

This requirement was met without exception.

On the external survey, 68 percent of respondents replied that the Office of the Stated Clerk had informed them about the GAPJC decision in the case very promptly, and 11 percent promptly. In a previous survey, 58 percent replied that they were informed very promptly, and 37 percent replied that they were informed promptly, thus demonstrating significant improvement in this area.

15. To prepare and process records of proceedings following a trial before the GAPJC (D-7.0600, D-11.0600).

Following a hearing or trial the records of the case are sent to the Presbyterian Historical Society where they are preserved.

III. Compliance with Non-Constitutional Standards

The administration of justice is “the church’s exercise of authority given by Christ;” therefore, the GAPJC adopted non-constitutional standards that describe the spiritual dimension of the commission’s work as a function of the church as the Body of Christ. Other non-constitutional standards deal with the effectiveness of the commission’s work both internally and externally.

1. To participate in daily corporate worship for the duration of GAPJC meetings.

Prayer is mandated by the Constitution (G-3.0105. W-3.6103); however, daily worship is not. The practice of daily worship and prayer has as its purpose the building up of the body and creation of community (koinonia, mutual partnership in Christ). Worship is offered morning and evening of everyday while the GAPJC is in session. Currently the vice-moderator of the commission requests members to conduct daily worship; both ruling elders and teaching elders lead worship. These short
services are rich and varied and keep the commission grounded in its ministry of Christ. Evaluations after meetings reveal the depth and unanimity of the commissioners’ appreciation of daily worship. Participants have also orally commented that worship prior to oral arguments is appreciated.

On Sundays the commission aspires to worship with a local Presbyterian congregation; yet when the press of business is heavy, the commissioners plan and conduct a Service of Word and Sacrament at the meeting place.

According to the Book of Order, every meeting of a council shall open and close with prayer (G-3.0105) and should provide for adequate occasions of prayer during the course of its deliberations. The prayers should express praise and thanksgiving, confession, intercession, and supplication in relation to proceedings of the council (W-3.6103). While GAPJC is not technically a council, we understand ourselves to be governed by similar mandates, and so open and close every meeting with prayer that expresses all of the above.


In October 2008, GAPJC Moderator appointed a new committee to review and revise the Manual. This committee undertook a major revision and reordering of the Manual, following these principles:

a. A logical overall flow, following the traditional order for such documents as described in Robert’s Rules of Order.

b. The numbering system that is consistent and leaves plenty of room for future changes.

c. Easy to manipulate formatting, since the document is likely to be regularly amended.

d. The text itself will include all items that require the full body’s consent to change; appendices will include items like forms, check lists, etc.

The revised Manual was adopted in August 2009. Following each General Assembly the Manual Committee offers revisions on the basis of the actions of the assembly. The adoption of the Foundations of Presbyterian Policy and Form of Government have not necessitated revisions in the Manual.

3. To build community among the members of the GAPJC.

Review criteria for this item is that each meeting of the GAPJC will include time for sharing of personal joys and concerns, time for intercessory prayer for one another, and time for fellowship. The first session of each meeting includes a time for sharing and fellowship, usually in connection with dinner the first evening. Mealtime are informal fellowship occasions, as are gatherings after adjournment in the evening. During one meeting we gathered for dinner at the home of one of the commissioners; the Halloween themed party was marked by hilarity and good spirit; the Super Bowl party was marked by mutual forbearance (F-3.0105), despite commissioners rooting for different home teams.

Obviously commissioners build relationships during the formal and informal business meetings and case committee meetings. Meetings are characterized by long hours dealing with difficult and potentially divisive issues. Commissioners develop relationships marked by mutual respect and genuine affection. The commission seeks always to be a community guided by the Holy Spirit. Liturgical and fellowship occasions of officer installations and parting deepen our sense of mutual purpose.

4. To orient newly elected Commissioners.

The orientation and socialization begin with a letter from the moderator welcoming them to the work of the commission and inviting them to participate in an online technology training session. Formal technology training begins before the first meeting. More general and specific orientation occurs for several hours at the beginning of the first meeting attended by new commissioners. The executive committee plans the orientation and it is led by members of the commission and the manager of Judicial Process. Orientation serves as continuing education for returning commissioners.

5. To communicate with the greater church by various means including writing headnotes for each decision and ensuring that the decisions are disseminated in a timely manner.

a. In 2002, on exceptionally complicated or lengthy cases, the commission began writing headnotes summarizing the salient points of the decision. While the intent was to help church members untrained in legal analysis find the applicable cases, it became clear that the headnotes themselves were being cited as authoritative opinions. Because of this issue, the commission has not written headnotes in the last few years.

b. Case decisions are disseminated to parties within seven days after adjournment of each meeting. Decisions are proofread and signed before the moderator and clerk leave the meeting site; they are then given to the manager of Judicial Process who distributes the decisions to parties by overnight service or other means. Dates of transmittal are noted on case logs which attest that this standard is met. External surveys reveal that 68 percent of respondents believe that they received the GAPJC decision very promptly and an additional 11 percent believed that they received the decision promptly. (This question was only asked of respondents who remembered how they were informed of the GAPJC decision.)
c. The cases are thus transmitted to the OGA whose staff then posts the decisions on the PC(USA) website, after the decisions have been received by the parties.

6. To implement an ongoing self-evaluation program that will include completion of evaluation forms by commissioners at the conclusion of each GAPJC meeting; and a triennial self-study conducted in accordance with the Standards for Review as approved by the General Assembly.

The commission is faithful in evaluating each meeting as to location (accommodations, food, etc.), flow of work, work of case committees, worship. The evaluations are reviewed by the executive committee. In 2008, the Moderator added a Delta evaluation, assessing what worked and what needs to be improved, to the mix. A triennial self-study was developed and considered by the commission in 2011. This self-study accomplishes the dual purpose of a triennial study and the six year self-study required by the General Assembly.

7. To engage in continuing education programs involving matters relevant to the work of the GAPJC.

The commission spent substantial time before both the (218th and 219th) General Assemblies (2008 and 2010) reviewing and evaluating proposals for constitutional amendments. Before the 218th General Assembly (2008) the commission developed several proposed amendments, based on our previous self-study. Careful planning and long discussions preceded each assembly. Other than these polity discussions, the commission engaged in formal continuing education on the new Form of Government. The commission also regularly reviews the basics of Presbyterian legal process and educates itself on issues that arise in particular cases.

8. Maximize GAPJC meeting attendance through several means.
   a. All members should attend all GAPJC meetings unless excused.

   Commissioners exhibit a high degree of commitment to their work on GAPJC. Attendance figures show that the greatest number absent was three and that occurred only once. More often there is only one or no absences.

   b. All members should be present at the time when the meeting is initially convened.

   Most commissioners are present by dinner on Thursday evening, unless travel complications delay their arrival. Two commissioners once came a day early to avoid a blizzard. All commissioners (except for those who are recused) are present and participate in all deliberations and all stages of the decision.

   c. All members should remain in attendance until the meeting is adjourned and no members should leave before the meeting is concluded.

   During the period of this study only one member left after a case was voted on but before the meeting had adjourned; his home was threatened by a hurricane. The commission makes every effort to complete its work in the time set for the meeting; Commissioners are enjoined not to leave before the scheduled adjournment.

   d. GAPJC meetings should be scheduled at least one year in advance in order to provide commissioners with adequate time to arrange their schedules.

   The minutes reveal that meetings are scheduled at least one year, often two years, in advance. The only exception occurs when new commissioners are elected by the General Assembly. While the meeting immediately following the General Assembly has been scheduled in advance, the next year’s following meetings are scheduled with the new commissioners present.

   e. The GAPJC meetings should be held at locations that minimize commissioner travel time on a rotating basis while weighing the attendance or convenience of the parties and the funds available for meetings.

   During the period of this study, meetings were held in Louisville (eleven times), San Diego (two times), Indianapolis (two times), Baltimore and San Antonio (one time each). Three meetings were held by conference call. Two-thirds of the meetings were held in Louisville for reasons of economy. Indianapolis is the preferred back-up site to Louisville for times such as Kentucky Derby week, when Louisville is not economical.

   f. Travel arrangements should be made so as to facilitate the work of the commission, while accommodating the health, safety, and reasonable personal needs of commissioners.

   Meeting evaluations show a general satisfaction with meeting sites and travel arrangements. Commissioners have expressed some dissatisfaction with meetings in February in Louisville because of potential for nasty weather.

9. To keep minutes of GAPJC meetings.

   The clerk keeps full and accurate minutes of all meetings. Minutes are on file in the Office of the Stated Clerk.

   The parties in a judicial proceeding that makes its way to the GAPJC necessarily require significant contact with the staff of the Office of Stated Clerk. In response to an open-ended question, many respondents praised the GAPJC and the Office of the Stated Clerk for their expertise and professionalism.
Members of the commission, in their own evaluations of their meetings, unanimously and enthusiastically praised the Louisville staff for the clerical and other assistance which was competently and cheerfully rendered.

IV. General Assembly Criteria for Evaluation

Effectiveness in Serving the Church

The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is a reactive body; that is, the commission responds to cases referred to it. Our constitutional mandate is “to serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline,” thus the commission is not a body that proposes mission initiatives, plans programs, or generates strategies.

The GAPJC undertakes the judicial function of the General Assembly in order that the other work of the General Assembly might move forward more expeditiously. In the past the entire General Assembly dealt with judicial matters as the highest court of the Presbyterian church. Presently the judicial function is assigned to this commission and it is on the basis of that assignment that its effectiveness must be judged. The GAPJC operates within strict constitutional boundaries, which were analyzed in Chapter II above. The commission also adheres to non-constitutional standards that were described in Chapter III. In this chapter, the commission seeks to evaluate its effectiveness: that is, how well does it do that which it is assigned to do?

1. The commission has a defined and consistent process for completing its work.

This commission follows judicial processes defined in the Rules of Discipline. When a case is referred to the GAPJC, first the moderator and clerk, in consultation with the executive committee, make preliminary determinations following an examination of the papers files, deciding whether the case is properly before the body. These findings are reported to the parties and the full commission. If they are challenged, briefs may be received and a hearing held; then the commission will make a decision on the preliminary questions. If the commission has established jurisdiction, the case is accepted and scheduled for hearing (or occasionally, trial). The commission will then conduct a hearing or a trial on all of the issues of the case.

Most cases before the GAPJC are on appeal from lower courts. When General Assembly entities or synods are parties to judicial action, the GAPJC acts as a court of original jurisdiction.

The GAPJC has a defined process in the Manual of the GAPJC for the commission to deal with matters that come before it; this process is defined by the appropriate sections of the Rules of Discipline. After a case has been accepted, the moderator appoints a case committee, whose responsibilities are detailed in the Manual of the GAPJC. The ability of the commission to work effectively toward the decision is directly related to the quality of the work of the case committee. Since 2008 the moderator has been meeting with case committee chairs before the first formal session convened; this practice has helped clarify issues prior to the hearing.

Because the issues in some cases are often complex and controversial, the process for reaching decisions is neither easy nor quick. The predetermined adjournment time focuses commissioners’ minds on the work at hand and the decisions are completed on time. Management of the docket is essential if each case is to be thoughtfully decided, clearly written, and carefully edited; the moderator must possess nimble leadership skills, including a sense of humor.

Although this standard deals with process, the GAPJC is effective in fulfilling its constitutional mandate because of the spirit of collegiality and mutual respect among the commissioners. As noted above, the commission is careful to spend time at each meeting building community and sharing joys and concerns. The commission is intentional about daily worship in the mornings and evenings and is regular in prayer for each other and the work before it. While there is not unanimity of opinion on issues before the body, there is firm agreement that all are servants of the Church who seek to build up the Church.

In order to be effective, the commission needs a careful balance of commissioners with vision and dedication to the Church as a whole; moreover, this balance must include (in addition to teaching and ruling elders) attorneys and non-attorneys, persons with stated clerk experience, and individuals with knowledge of church history. Moreover, because of our current practice of working together with a strong emphasis on the utilization of technology, we recommend that all future members must either be electronically enabled, or able and eager to learn. A consistent practice of this commission has been to meet with representatives of the General Assembly Nominating Committee before commissioners’ terms conclude.

2. The commission has a regular process of self-evaluation of its services.

At the conclusion of each meeting, commissioners complete an evaluation form covering the meeting arrangement, work of case committees, staff support, individual work before and during the meeting, conduct of the meeting, and worship. The executive committee reviews these surveys and makes adjustments accordingly. In addition, commissioners participate in a Delta-style verbal evaluation, which responses are also reviewed by the executive committee.

The commissioners’ evaluations reveal that they hold themselves and their colleagues to a high standard of performance. They most commonly rate the preparation done by the case committees, the quality of the questioning done at hearings, and the extent to which they feel prepared to deliberate after reading the records in the “very good” range, although they have not...
hesitated, at times, to evaluate themselves less favorably. One area in which they rate themselves more highly—usually as "excellent"—is in showing "appropriate courtesy and respect" to the parties in the way that questions are asked at hearing.

The moderators (three during the course of this review period) consistently received high marks for their leadership of the meetings. The technical expertise offered by the clerk of the commission is also highly valued by the commission members.

This self-study is the other dimension of the self-evaluation. This study includes material from external surveys of parties. Survey results are included as an appendix.

3. The commission employs a strategy for effective communication with the church-at-large.

Following each meeting, the executive committee meets with the stated clerk. The commission then formally forwards its decisions to the clerk, who posts them on the PC(USA) website within seven days of the conclusion of each meeting. Immediately at the close of the meeting, the decisions are sent by certified mail and/or email to the parties.

The Constitution requires that the deliberations of the GAPJC are closed and confidential. The Permanent Judicial Commission’s Code of Ethics requires that commissioners not comment publicly on decisions; only the moderator or someone he/she designates shall speak for the commission. Commissioners are free to comment on the procedures of the commission, including the atmosphere of collegiality and trust that mark our work.

4. The commission utilizes current and emerging technologies to enable it to fulfill its mission.

The commission has made remarkable progress in utilizing technology in the past six years. New commissioners participate in intensive technology training before their first meeting. All commissioners participate in ongoing technology training prior to each meeting and occasionally between meetings via conference call. Commissioners are adept at using Adobe Acrobat to gain electronic access to the cases. Like Google Documents, Acrobat provides a platform where an opinion can be written, edited, and shared in real time by multiple approved users. Acrobat retains a history of all earlier versions. The primary criticism of Acrobat is that it is not compatible with iPads. Given the increasing use of tablets, this may be an area for review.

5. The commission has developed a vision and plans for its work in light of its historic mandate and the emerging issues before and in the context of the PC(USA).

The GAPJC is not mandated to “develop a vision;” rather we are mandated to be faithful in upholding the Constitution of the PC(USA).

The task of faithful constitutional interpretation has posed many demands on commissioners. The church recently adopted an extensively revised Form of Government and a new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity. Other significant constitutional changes occurred around the ordination standards. The legalization of same-gender marriage in several secular jurisdictions raised substantial controversy about the Presbyterian constitutional definition of marriage. Congregations leaving the denomination raised questions about the interpretation of G-4.0203, the “Property Clause.” All these changes, both within and without the church, were tested in multiple disciplinary and remedial cases. The commission was challenged to schedule enough time to do its work in a manner that balanced the need for economy with the need for self-care. Exhaustion does not contribute to wisdom.

The shared vision of the commission is that we remain faithful to our work as described in the Constitution. We understand that “the purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings” (D-1.0101). Therein lies our vision and our hope.

V. Follow-up from Previous General Assembly Review

A recommendation from the previous self-study report (2008) elicited a response from the General Assembly Review Committee. The Office of the Stated Clerk responded as follows. [The following is excerpted from the Stated Clerk’s responses.]

The Report on the Review of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) brought to the 218th General Assembly (2008) included a recommendation that the GAPJC and the Office of the Stated Clerk compile an electronic digest of all cases adjudicated from 1983 to the present. This recommendation was referred to the Office of the General Assembly (OGA)—Referral Item 14-Report2 recommendation 2. An electronic Topical Digest is being developed to gather GAPJC cases under overarching or recurring topics. Commissioners are working to revise and complete a “precedents paper” which was begun several years ago.

In response to this referral, the OGA reviewed what is already available electronically relating to GAPJC adjudicated cases. All the GAPJC cases since reunion (1983) are available on line (http://oga.pcusa.org/section/committees/gapjc/permanent-judicial-commission-decisions/#1214); as well as hyperlinked in the online and disc form of the Annotated Book of Order.
The cases are electronically searchable by key words and phrases. The search tool allows a wide variety of search parameters to be used.

Additionally, cases relating to specific section(s) of the Book of Order are cross referenced in the Annotated Book of Order under that section(s). The Annotated Book of Order is on-line and in disc format. The cross-references for a given section also include General Assembly authoritative interpretations, if any.

Further, there are already two sources of periodic commentary on constitutional topics. Under Standing Rule G.2.e. of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk issues advisory opinions on the meaning of particular provisions of the Book of Order. These opinions are found and indexed on the PC(USA) web site (http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/constitutional-services/advisory-opinions/). The Office of Constitutional Services offers comments on constitutional topics in Constitutional Musings. These are also found and indexed on the PC(USA) web site (http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/constitutional-services/constitutional-musings/).

In view of the existing electronic search capabilities for the GAPJC cases and Annotated Book of Order, an electronic digest of all adjudicated GAPJC cases seems unnecessary. However, as a compliment to the electronic subject matter search tools and the periodic commentary in the Advisory Opinions and Constitutional Musings, the OGA is developing an electronic digest (Topical Digest) of overarching or recurring, substantive or procedural topics, e.g., Governing Body Responsibility and Authority, Due Process in Disciplinary Cases, Ordination Issues. Gathered under each topic are selected GAPJC cases relevant to the topic, particularly cases where the GAPJC has taken the opportunity to provide significant background and rationale for the decision. By its nature, the Topical Digest can be expanded as new cases are adjudicated. An initial edition of the Topical Digest will be available on line and in disc format later this year.

VI. Looking Ahead

If this self-study is to be anything more than an idle exercise, the commission must seriously consider its findings. In six years the General Assembly Review Committee will want to know how this self-study affected the commission’s work. While in general it would appear that the GAPJC is functioning well, there is always room for improvement.

The self-study team, therefore, challenges itself and our colleagues:

… to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings. … (D-1.0101).

And may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.


Appendix
General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission
Survey of Participants in Cases Closed During 2012

Summary
During summer 2012, Research Services emailed an invitation to complete a web survey to parties in cases the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) had closed in 2012, members of committees of counsel or others who represented parties in these cases, and stated clerks of presbyteries and synods in which these cases had originated. The survey was requested by the GAPJC Self-Study Committee to gather evaluative information on the commission’s services.

Those individuals who did not respond to the initial email invitation received up to three email reminders and, if the person still had not responded, a postcard reminder. [At the time the postcard reminder was sent, a mailed survey invitation that included a web address for taking the survey was sent to a synod stated clerk who didn’t have an email address provided.]

Among those invited to participate in the survey, 21 of 31 (67 percent) responded. More than one in three (38 percent) were attorneys or counsels for a party in a case, while slightly fewer (34 percent) were stated clerks of a synod or presbytery where a case originated. Fewer than two in ten report being either members of a committee of counsel (19 percent, synod stated clerks whose permanent judicial commission heard an appeal (15 percent), or parties in a case (10 percent). (Four respondents reported filling more than one of these roles.)

Two in ten respondents (20 percent) indicate that, once the GAPJC began to consider the cases in which they were involved, the commission conducted the cases “very promptly.” Nearly half (45 percent) said their case was conducted “promptly.” Three in ten report that their case was conducted less than promptly (“somewhat promptly,” 20 percent; “not promptly, 10 percent).

Nearly all respondents who communicated with the Office of the Stated Clerk while the GAPJC was considering their case believe the office was “very helpful” (33 percent) or “helpful” (58 percent) in communications with them.

Large majorities believe that:
06 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH POLITY AND ORDERED MINISTRIES

- The GAPJC treated parties in their case “very fairly” (70 percent) or “somewhat fairly” (20 percent).
- The Office of the Stated Clerk staff informed them about the GAPJC’s decision in the case “very promptly” (68 percent) or “promptly” (11 percent). (This question was asked only of respondents who remember how they were informed about the GAPJC’s decision.)

Additional information is found in the Survey Questions and Responses section of this report, which includes respondents’ verbatim answers to open-ended comments (edited for confidentiality).

Prepared by: Research Services
A Ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville KY 40202-1396

Survey Questions and Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of survey invitations sent</th>
<th>31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of surveys completed</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You have been asked to complete this survey because you were:

A party in a case that the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) closed during 2012. A member of the committee of counsel or another person who represented a party in a GAPJC case closed during 2012.

The stated clerk at the time the case was closed of a presbytery or synod out of which at least one such case arose.

Q1. In how many cases that the GAPJC closed during 2012 did you serve in each of the following roles? (Please write “0” in the box if you did not serve in a particular role.)

a. A party in a case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text response</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. A member of a committee of counsel that represented a party in a case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text response</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. A stated clerk (at the time, during 2012, when the GAPJC closed the case) of the synod or presbytery where the case originated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text response</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>101%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sum is larger than 100% due to rounding.
d. An attorney or counsel for one of the parties but not a member of the committee of counsel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text response</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>21 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e. A stated clerk of the synod whose Permanent Judicial Commission heard an appeal in the case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text response</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>21 101%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sum is larger than 100% due to rounding.

f. Serving in another role not listed above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text response</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>21 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>21 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you answered “1” or more to Q1f above, please specify the other role(s) in which you served:

[No responses]

If you served in a role in more than one case that the GAPJC closed during 2012, please respond to the questions that follow with reference to the case that the GAPJC closed most recently.

Q2. From the time that the GAPJC began to consider the most recent case in which you were involved, how promptly was the case conducted?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very promptly</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptly</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat promptly</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not promptly</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3. Did you communicate with the staff of the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly about this case at any time while the GAPJC was considering it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NoÆskip to Q5</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t rememberÆskip to Q5</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4. Overall, how helpful were staff in the Office of the Stated Clerk in your communications with them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q5. Regardless of the outcome of your case, in your opinion how fairly or unfairly did the GAPJC, on the whole, treat the parties in the case in which you were involved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very fairly</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat fairly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat unfairly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unfairly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6. How were you informed about the decision in the case in which you were involved? (Please check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through a written document I received by overnight delivery</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through a written document I received by certified mail</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through a written document I received, though I don’t remember how it was delivered</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through other means (please specify):</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was not informed Æ skip to Q8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t remember Æ skip to Q8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through other means (please specify)
- I was able to download it soon after release.
- Verbal and hostile
- Also received the opinion via the internet although I don’t recall the source.
- I believe I received the first copy as an e-mail attachment
- Email
  - Email w/attachment
  - Received copy of decision by email—this came even before the written document and made it possible for me to share the decision electronically downloaded
- Email
  - The document sent by certified mail was also sent by email.
- Email
  - Email attachment
  - E-mail after decision was mailed
- Others on the committee of counsel received the decision directly, I did not

Q7. How promptly after the decision did the staff of the Office of the Stated Clerk inform you about the GAPJC’s decision in the case in which you were involved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very promptly</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptly</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat promptly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not promptly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8. Please use the space below to provide more details about any of your responses or to make additional comments. Verbatim response
The GAPJC was hostile; did not listen; used the [deleted] excuse to get rid of the case; did not [deleted]. The GAPJC is made up of mostly Clerks who back each other up even when wrong. Horrible reflection of the church and our confessions.

I really appreciate getting the decision electronically so that I may include it in our presbytery packet and minutes without having to do duplicate work to type or scan it.

The case was [deleted]. The appellant was party in [deleted] Presbytery and [deleted] was by time of trial a member of [deleted]. I assume the formal decision was sent (properly) to the stated clerk of [deleted] Presbytery. [deleted] share with me...did not come from GAPJC

I was not happy that a member of the GAPJC, who had served as [deleted] in a previous case against another [deleted], was assigned the lead in questioning and writing our case. The previous case involved a test of his interpretation of the BOO. I do not know that it made a difference, but it was obvious from his first question, that he would [deleted].

I like the time of worship together and look forward to it.

I don’t like the cost saving measures imposed on the church’s justice system. This is too important to both sides in every case. Your questions don’t dig deep enough to unmask the deep concerns. Most of us have in dealing with the GAPJC, but they do address the surface. As asked, I doubt you will get much criticism and a fully developed critique of the court.

I attended the hearing on the advice of an experienced colleague, though the GA staff had not recommended coming. I am glad I went and found it instructive to see the way the questioning went and the specifics of what was asked. The parties appreciated my presence on behalf of the Synod as well. It would have been helpful if the staff had let me know these advantages to coming as well as the fact that it’s not necessary to be present. I was impressed by how the matter was handled and the way in which the GAPJC conducted itself.

In a perhaps excessive attempt to give weight to all parties’ claims, the GAPJC answered all issues in the appeal it received, but [deleted]. Although [deleted], this further step led to an [deleted]-month process once the GAPJC had [deleted].

I was having trouble [deleted], and appreciate the assistance of staff in this regard.

I was not happy that a member of the GAPJC, who had served as [deleted] in a previous case against another [deleted], was assigned the lead in questioning and writing our case. The previous case involved a test of his interpretation of the BOO. I do not know that it made a difference, but it was obvious from his first question, that he would [deleted].

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In a perhaps excessive attempt to give weight to all parties’ claims, the GAPJC answered all issues in the appeal it received, but [deleted]. Although [deleted], this further step led to an [deleted]-month process once the GAPJC had [deleted].

I was having trouble [deleted], and appreciate the assistance of staff in this regard.

Extremely helpful, thorough, and thoughtful in all they do! Thank you for serving in this very important work.

---

**Item 06-Info**

**A. General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission**

1. **Roster of Former Members (D-5.0206b)**

   a. **Class of 2012**

      Susan Cornman, 10045 W. 73rd Place, Arvada, CO, 80005; Gregory A. Goodwiller, 24 CR 231, Oxford, MI, 38655; Yun Jin Kim, 954 Nicklaus Drive, Newport News, VA 23602; Tony Cook, 2120 E. Beautiful Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85042.

   b. **Class of 2010**

      Fred L. Denson, 789 John Glenn Blvd., Webster, NY, 14580; Fane Downs, 206 Red Oak, Ingram, TX, 78025; Mary Eleanor Johns, 1270 N. Negley Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206; Judy L. Woods, 111 Monument Street, Ste 2700, Indianapolis, IN, 46204.

   c. **Class of 2008**

      Catherine Borchert, 13415 Shaker Blvd, #9C2, Cleveland, OH, 44120; Ernest E. Cutting, 3145 40th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55406; Wendy Warner, 139 Corson Avenue, Modesto, CA 95350; Mildred Morales, URB Punto Oro, 4018 Calle El Anaez, Ponce, Puerto Rico, 00728, Leon Fanniel, 5588 Village Green, Los Angeles, CA 90016.

2. **Final Decisions of the Permanent Judicial Commission**

   The Permanent Judicial Commission met in Louisville, Kentucky, July 26–28, 2012; in Louisville, Kentucky, October 25–29, 2012; in Louisville, Kentucky, May 30–June 1, 2013; and by electronic meeting with conference calls on October 25–29, 2013. Having received the final decisions from the commission from its clerk, Jay Lewis, the Stated Clerk now reports to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the final decisions received in the following cases and advises the General Assembly that they will be included in the Minutes:

   a. **Remedial Case 221–01**

      Thomas Priest, Jr., Appellant/Appellee (Complainant), )
      v. ) Order on Challenge of the
      Presbytery of Detroit, Preliminary Questions and Appeal )
      Appellee/Appellant (Respondent). ) Remedial Case 221-01

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221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
Arrival Statement

These remedial cases come before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on appeal GA2011-109 filed by Appellant/Appellee Thomas Priest, Jr. (Appellant), on appeal GA2011-110 filed by Appellee/Appellant Presbytery of Detroit (Presbytery or Appellee), both from a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant (SPJC) rendered on November 15, 2011, and on a challenge to the Executive Committee of this Commission (GAPJC EC), rendered January 31, 2012. For the purpose of judicial economy, the two appeals and the challenge are herein combined.

Jurisdictional Statement

As appeals from the decision of a synod permanent judicial commission, Remedial Cases GA2011-109 and GA2011-110 are properly before the GAPJC, were timely filed, and raise one or more of the grounds for appeal contained in D-8.0105.

Appearances

Appellant appeared in person and was represented by Archibald Wallace III. Appellee appeared through its counsel, Mark Schneider.

History

Appellant was a candidate for ministry under the care of Presbytery, as well as a member of Calvary Presbyterian Church (Calvary). On April 20, 2010, an individual sent a letter addressed to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) complaining about Appellant’s conduct. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery was sent a copy of the letter. The Stated Clerk notified the author of the letter that CPM does not have disciplinary jurisdiction over Appellant. On April 21, 2010, the author sent the same or a similar letter to Calvary’s session. After an investigation, Calvary’s session determined that no charges should be brought against Appellant.

After receiving the letter, CPM appointed a sub-committee to investigate the grievances in its role of determining Appellant’s fitness for ministry. The sub-committee conducted interviews and collected related information. On January 18, 2011, the sub-committee recommended to the full CPM that Appellant participate in mediation training and assessment.

A hearing was scheduled for the purpose of determining whether the CPM would accept the recommendations of the sub-committee. The hearing was originally scheduled for February 1, 2011, but was rescheduled for March 1, 2011, at the request of Appellant so that he could have counsel present. At the close of the hearing, CPM voted to accept the recommendations of the sub-committee. CPM advised Appellant of the decision.

On June 9, 2011, Appellant filed a complaint with SPJC. On August 19, 2011, the Executive Committee of the SPJC (SPJC EC) found: Appellant did not have standing, the complaint did not state a claim upon which relief could be granted, the complaint was untimely, and SPJC did not have jurisdiction over the matter. Appellant challenged the decision of SPJC EC.

On October 4, 2011, CPM met with Appellant and approved him as ready to pursue a call.

On November 15, 2011, SPJC overruled SPJC EC and found that Appellant did have standing, but affirmed SPJC EC’s dismissal based on a lack of timeliness, lack of jurisdiction, and failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. On December 19, 2011, Appellant appealed SPJC’s decision on timeliness, jurisdiction, and failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. On December 21, 2011, Presbytery appealed SPJC’s decision on standing.

On January 31, 2012, the GAPJC EC found that Appellant did not have standing to file the original complaint and dismissed the complaint. On February 29, 2012, Appellant challenged the decision of the GAPJC EC. Therefore, all four preliminary questions are before this Commission.

Specifications of Error

There are four specifications of error raised by the appeal, cross-appeal, and the challenge.

1. **SPJC erred in finding there was no jurisdiction to hear the complaint (GA2011-109).**

   **This specification is not sustained. See the Decision below.**

2. **SPJC erred in finding the complaint was not timely filed (GA2011-109).**

   **This specification is not sustained. See the Decision below.**

3. **SPJC erred in finding the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted (GA2011-109).**

   **This specification is not sustained. See the Decision below.**
4. **SPJC erred in finding that complainant had standing to file the case (GA2011-110).**

This specification is not sustained. See the Decision below.

**Decision**

Jurisdiction: Since this is a remedial case alleging an irregularity by a presbytery, the complainant must show that the presbytery acted and that the action taken was irregular. Appellant argued that the action taken by CPM constituted a final act of Presbytery. This argument lacks merit. The only action taken was that of CPM, which is not a governing body (D-2.0102).

Even if the facts alleged in the complaint are true, at most the action by CPM was made in the course of its responsibilities to guide the complainant as he prepared for ordained ministry pursuant to then applicable G-14.0405 and G-14.0412. Having decided that CPM was not acting as Presbytery and is not a governing body, there was no basis for the exercise of authority through the judicial process. The party complained of, Presbytery, took no action.

Timeliness: Presbytery did not act and, hence, there was no triggering event for timeliness. See D-6.0202a.

Relief: CPM directed Appellant to take additional steps to prepare himself for ministry, which CPM has the authority to do. [2006, PJC 217-1, Hope v. Presbytery of San Francisco] Since Presbytery as a governing body never acted, there is no basis for relief.

Standing: This Commission finds that Appellant had standing to file a remedial case with SPJC. However, since the other three preliminary questions have been answered in the negative, the issue of standing is immaterial.

**Order**

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision on the preliminary questions by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant is affirmed and its dismissal of the case is affirmed. Consequently, the dismissal of the case by the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is also affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this Decision to the Synod of the Covenant at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Covenant enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Detroit report this Decision to the Presbytery of Detroit at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Detroit enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

b. **Disciplinary Appeal 221-02**

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Newark
Appellant (Complainant),

v.

Laurie McNeill,

Appellee (Accused).

**Arrival Statement**

This disciplinary case came before General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on an appeal filed by Appellant, Presbytery of Newark (Presbytery or Appellant), from a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast (SPJC) dated December 9, 2011.

**Jurisdictional Statement**

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, Appellant has standing to file the Appeal, the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal in D-13.0106 of the *Book of Order*.

**Appearances**

Presbytery was present through a member of the appointed Prosecuting Committee, Patricia B. Fish, and was represented by Whitman H. Brisky. Laurie McNeill (McNeill or Appellee) was present and was represented by Mark A. Robertson and Todd R. Hambidge.
On October 17, 2009, McNeill, a minister of the Word and Sacrament, Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in Montclair, New Jersey, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ((PC(USA)), and member of Presbytery, was married under the state law of Massachusetts to Ms. Lisa Lynn Gollihue. The ceremony took place at Christ Episcopal Church in Harwich Port, Massachusetts, and was officiated by a minister of the United Church of Christ and two priests of the Episcopal Church, according to a modified marriage rite from the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church.

On November 14, 2009, their marriage was publicly announced at a regular meeting of Presbytery, preceded by articles in the public and religious press. Subsequent to that meeting, Presbytery stated clerk received a written statement that alleged specific offenses made by McNeill.

On February 5, 2010, Presbytery called a special meeting for the purpose of establishing an Investigating Committee (IC). The special meeting took place on February 16, 2010, and an IC composed of five persons (four ruling elders and one teaching elder) was elected.

On September 21, 2010, the IC filed the following two charges against McNeill:

**Charge 1:** You, Laurie McNeill, on or about October 17, 2009, did commit the offense of participating in a same-sex ceremony, in which two women, namely yourself and Lisa Lynn Gollihue, were married under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in violation of W-4.9001 of the Book of Order, and thereafter representing to your then congregation and others that such ceremony was a “marriage” all in violation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**Charge 2:** You, Laurie McNeill, during the period beginning at least as early as October 17, 2009 and continuing until the date hereof, did commit the offense of being involved in a relationship described as a “happy marriage” with Lisa Lynn Gollihue, a person of the same sex as yourself, in violation of G-6.0106(b) of the Book of Order, in failing to live a life either in fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman [sic] or chastity in singleness, all in violation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Following a trial on January 29, 2011, the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Newark (PPJC) issued its Decision and Order finding McNeill not guilty on all charges. Appellant filed a Notice of Appeal with SPJC on March 22, 2011, citing multiple errors of constitutional interpretation by the PPJC. On the same date, Appellant filed a request that the SPJC issue a stay that would bar McNeill from a transfer of her membership from Presbytery to the Presbytery of Hudson River. In the absence of the required three signatures of the SPJC in the allotted time period, the stay request was denied.

On April 6, 2011, the Executive Committee of SPJC determined that all preliminary questions were satisfied and, after challenges and rescheduling, a hearing was set for December 9, 2011, in Latham, New York. Following this appeal hearing, SPJC affirmed the Decision and Order of PPJC.

The Notice of Appeal of Appellant was submitted to this Commission on January 25, 2012.

**Specifications of Error**

**Specification of Error No. 1:** The SPJC erred in determining that W-4.9001 of the Book of Order does not prohibit someone who is a minister of the Word and Sacrament (now a teaching elder) to be the subject of a marriage ceremony, that, while legally recognized by the state in which it took place, was not a contract, covenant, and commitment between a woman and a man, in accordance with Scripture and Confessions. (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 5, 8, 9, 10, 26, 28)

This specification of error is not sustained.

See Discussion under Specification of Error No. 2.

**Specification of Error No. 2:** The SPJC erred in determining that the Constitution of the PC(USA) does not regulate the conduct of ordained officers of the PC(USA) in services conducted outside the auspices of the PC(USA). (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 6, 29)

This specification of error is not sustained.

The Directory for Worship “... sets standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” In this case the service of worship did not occur in a PC(USA) church nor was it conducted under the auspices of the PC(USA); therefore, the Directory for Worship does not apply. The Constitution is silent regarding the marriage of an officer of the PCUSA in civil marriage ceremonies. Further, Scripture and Confessions were not argued as part of the trial record and, therefore, could not be considered on appeal.
Specification of Error No. 3: The SPJC erred in determining that it is not an offense against the Constitution of the PC(USA) for someone who is a minister of the Word and Sacrament (now a teaching elder) to describe a lawful same-gender marriage as a marriage. (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 5, 7, 27)

This specification of error is not sustained.

The stipulated facts from the record reflect that, although Appellee did describe herself as married, she made it clear that the PC(USA) did not recognize her marriage.

Specification of Error No. 4: The SPJC erred in determining that it is not an offense against the Constitution of the PC(USA) for a minister of the Word and Sacrament (now a teaching elder) to conduct a marriage ceremony, that, while legally recognized by the state in which it took place, was not a contract, covenant, and commitment between a woman and a man. (Appellant’s Specification of Error 2)

This specification of error is not sustained.

There is no evidence in the record that a PC(USA) minister conducted a same-gender ceremony under the facts of this case. In fact, the parties stipulated that “No Presbyterian minister of Word and Sacrament officiated in any part of the marriage ceremony.”

Specification of Error No. 5: The SPJC erred in determining that it was not clear in what circumstance or to whom G-6.0106b applied and that G-6.0106b was only applicable in the context of an examination and, therefore, could not be enforced in a disciplinary process. (Appellant’s Specification of Error 17)

This specification of error is not sustained.

See Discussion under Specification of Error No. 6.

Specification of Error No. 6: The SPJC erred in determining that the evidence presented and stipulated to was insufficient to determine that the accused was in violation of G-6.0106b. (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 30)

This specification of error is not sustained.

The record does not reflect that the PPJC’s Decision was “plainly wrong or manifestly unjust” (GAPJC 218-06, Presbytery of Wyoming v. Gordon King) in determining that the evidence did not support a finding beyond a reasonable doubt that McNeill committed an offense.

Specification of Error No. 7: The SPJC erred in failing to interpret G-6.0106b and W-4.9001 in light of Scripture and Confessions. (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 20, 24, 27, 30, 31, 32)

This specification of error is not sustained.

See Discussion under Specification of Error No. 9.

Specification of Error No. 8: The SPJC erred in determining that there was no specific reference to Scripture or Confessions in the record. (Appellant’s Specification of Error 22)

This specification of error is not sustained.

See Discussion under Specification of Error No. 9.

Specification of Error No. 9: The SPJC erred in determining that, by failing to offer evidence of specific references to Scripture and Confessions at trial, Appellant waived such arguments. (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 21, 23, 25)

This specification of error is not sustained.

Appellant charged Appellee for violating two specific provisions of the Book of Order. In the trial before PPJC, Appellants neither argued nor presented evidence of violations of Scripture or Confessions. An appellate body cannot find that a trial court erred by not considering argument or evidence when neither the argument nor the evidence was presented to the trial court. Further, it is impermissible for an appellate body to consider new arguments and evidence on appeal, except on application as set out in D-14.0502. No such application was made in this case. By not arguing or presenting evidence of violations of Scripture or Confessions at the trial level, Appellant waived making such arguments and presenting such evidence on appeal.

Specification of Error No. 10: The SPJC erred in determining that a violation of the Constitution must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, based on the facts, to support a finding of an offense. (Appellant’s Specification of Error 1)
This specification of error is not sustained.

See Discussion under Specification of Error No. 11.

Specification of Error No. 11: The SPJC erred in determining that the facts as stipulated did not prove beyond a reasonable doubt the commission of an act or omission by an officer of the church that is contrary to the Scriptures or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (Appellant’s Specifications of Error 3, 4, 11, 16, 18)

This specification of error is not sustained.

D-11.0401 states that “The accused in a disciplinary case is presumed to be innocent until the contrary is proved, and unless guilt is established beyond a reasonable doubt, the accused is entitled to be found not guilty.” Further, “Factual determinations made by a trier of fact are accorded a presumption of correctness. These determinations are not to be disturbed on appeal unless they are ‘plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust.’” King, Disc. Case 218-06, p. 312 (GA PJC 2007) (quoting Chesterbrook Taiwanese Presbyterian Church v. National Capital Presbytery, Minutes, 2006, p. 493, and Hardwick v. Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of North Carolina, Minutes, 1983, p. 45).

Decision

This case illustrates the tortuous place in which the PC(USA) finds itself on the matter of same-gender marriage. Previous cases, which dealt with teaching elders officiating at such services, state that unions between same-gender couples, whether legally recognized or not, cannot be declared to be marriages under the current interpretation of W-4.9001. Our Constitution, specifically this section of the Directory for Worship, did not anticipate the range of issues facing the church today surrounding same-gender relationships. In light of the number of cases coming before this Commission and the convoluted grounds upon which cases are brought and decided, it would be beneficial for the church to provide a definitive position regarding participation of officers in same-gender ceremonies whether civil or religious.

Charges in this case were filed solely under W-4.9001 and G-6.0106b. Based on the charges filed, the record does not reflect that PPJC’s Decision was “plainly wrong, without supporting evidence or manifestly unjust.” (King). The facts of this case do not support disciplinary action under these provisions of the Book of Order. Nothing in this decision modifies standards and norms of the church’s understanding of marriage.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Newark report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioners Mary Charlotte McCall and Patrick Notley did not participate in the deliberations.

Concurring Opinion of Michael Lukens, Meta Cramer and Terry Epling

We concur with the majority in this Decision.

Within a strong affirmation of the majority opinion, it must, nonetheless, be asserted once again that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) needs to respond to the urgent need for definitive legislation on issues regarding marriage. For too long, this

Commission has been burdened across a large range of conflicts with argumentation based on oblique, obfuscating, and indirect citations rather than clear directive, which is frustrating to the Commission as it seeks to promote the peace, unity and purity of the church and confusing to the whole church. This range encompasses the Reformed theological understanding of the nature of marriage, the authority and boundaries of teaching elders in conducting and participating in marriage ceremonies within the life of the church and in secular life, and the framing bases in Scripture and Confessions for assessing pastoral accountability.

Given the enormous cost for the spiritual health of the church, the strife that tears at the unity of the church, and the excessive expenditure of limited resources in the adjudication of a continuing stream of cases, it is critical that the General Assembly exercise its responsibility to deal definitively with these questions.
We concur with the majority decision. However, the lack of action by the General Assembly on the definition of marriage, while frustrating, is not the point of this case.

There was no evidence of sexual activity here. Appellee entered into her civil marriage on October 17, 2009, when former G-6.0106b was in effect. Since PPJC refused to presume sexual activity, there was no evidence that G-6.0106b had been violated. While it is tempting to assume that “happily married” persons are engaging in sexual activity, it would be inappropriate to reach a guilty verdict exclusively on a presumption. See Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church, Minutes, 2002. Defendants in disciplinary cases are presumed innocent until proven guilty (D-11.0401), and have a right to remain silent. (D-10.0203c). If a rebuttable presumption of sexual activity were allowed, a defendant would have to waive the right to remain silent in order to rebut the presumption. The PPJC verdict was therefore supported by the evidence and was properly sustained by SPJC.

Concurring Opinion of Meta Cramer

We concur totally with the Decision in this case and support all the arguments provided. Clearly the Directory for Worship does not reach to services of worship held outside of Presbyterian Churches without absurd consequences. For example, some faithful Presbyterians choose to be married in a civil ceremony only, or under the auspices of a church which may define marriage in a slightly different way. Presbyterians may worship in churches that do not share our theology of the Word or the sacraments without being accused of an offense.

However, “the Directory for Worship reflects the conviction that the life of the church is one, and that its worship, witness, and service are inseparable. .... [I]t describes the theology that underlies Reformed worship.” (Preface, Directory for Worship) Here is suggested an integrity of theology, worship, and life.

It is troubling that the Appellee in this case, by virtue of being a subject in a marriage ceremony held in a church over which the Directory for Worship has no jurisdiction, succeeded in doing for herself what she would be unable (under Spahr and Southard) to do for others, i.e., enter into a marriage that, while not recognized by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is legally recognized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

This Commission is bound by the charges brought by the Complainants/Appellants. Therefore, this case is limited to considering the application of W-4.9001 and G-6.106b. The Commission was restricted to these particular matters of polity and could consider neither Scriptural and Confessional arguments nor standards of pastoral accountability rooted in the Constitutional questions for ordination. It is conceivable that, had the charges referenced Scripture and/or Confessions or the ordination question concerning the peace, unity, and purity of the church, the argument and outcome of this case may have been different.

Dissent of Flor Vélez-Díaz and Robin Roberts

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is, and has been for quite some time, conflicted with respect to the topic of marriage. There is great appreciation for the faithfulness, respect and love that all Presbyterians share for the Word of God; however they may interpret it. There is equal concern for the peace and future of our church, mission and witness, when faced with difficult cases such as this one. A great deal of the issues presented in this case, creates a struggle within our soul.

First of all, it would make sense to presume that married people do engage in sexual acts with one another. All presumptions are rebuttable with evidence to the contrary, but in the context of a disciplinary case, it cannot be expected that such evidence would be provided given that the person alleged against has the right to remain silent. (D-10.0203c)

Second, the argument that the Directory for Worship, which is an integral part of our Book of Order, does not provide grounds for which to regulate the conduct of our officers outside the context of worship, is also troublesome given that “This Directory for Worship reflects the conviction that the life of the Church is one, and that its worship, witness and service are inseparable.” (Preface). It also states in Section W-1.1005 that “a Christian’s personal response to God is in community” and that “the Christian community worships and serves God in shared experiences of life, in personal discipleship, in mutual ministry, and in common ministry in the world.” How can any officer of the church, or any member for that matter, separate his or her life as being within the church in part, and outside the church in part, or as was argued in this case, single in the eyes of the church and married in the eyes of the state? Our life as Christians is integrally a part of the church, or as stated in W-1.1005, “A Christian’s personal response to God is in community.”

Third of all, although the controversial G-6.0106b provision in our Book of Order is no longer in place, it was when the charges were brought in this case. It is perfectly understandable that not all Presbyterians can agree with all aspects of our Constitution and that there is, and must be, freedom of conscience within our community to foster discussion and growth within its members. By the same token, all officers and members of the PC(USA) have willingly agreed to uphold the Constitution of the PC(USA) as a manifestation of order based in Scripture. Any and all differences and objections that we may have with the expressions within that document must be channeled in such a way as to continue fostering upholding it. Ef-
forts to amend the Constitution should be made in a way that builds the body of Christ as a whole. There is concern that the divisions within the church which have brought about cases like this one, might not encourage conversation within the church, more likely, bring about division of the body of Christ.

Christians have a responsibility, in fact a duty, to our brothers and sisters in Christ, to promote the peace, unity and purity of the church. This responsibility is a two way street and is better achieved by dialogue than by litigation.

Although we cannot agree with the outcome of the case, we are convinced of the integrity of all the members of this Commission and of the faithful and prayerful consideration that was given to this matter in reaching the decision.

May Christ be with us always.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Disciplinary Case 221-02, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Newark, Appellant (Complainant) v. Laurie McNeill, Appellee (Accused) made and announced at Louisville, KY this 29th day of October 2012.

c. Remedial Case 221-03

Wilber Tom, David Hawbecker and Thomas Conrad )
Appellants (Complainants), )
v. )
Presbytery of San Francisco, )
Appellee (Respondent). )

Arrival Statement

This filing before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an appeal of a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Pacific (SPJC) rendered on March 23, 2012. The Notice of Appeal was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on May 10, 2012.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Appellants have standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

Appearances

Wilbert Tom, David Hawbecker, and Thomas Conrad (Appellants), were represented by JoAn Blackstone. Presbytery of San Francisco (Presbytery or Appellee) waived its appearance at the hearing and chose to rely on its written submissions.

History

Presbytery formed a workgroup on December 11, 2008, to develop a policy regarding any church located in the Presbytery that wished to be dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)). Scott Farmer (Farmer), Senior Pastor, Community Presbyterian Church of Danville (Danville) served on that workgroup. While the exact date is unknown, it is not disputed that Danville had begun discussions regarding the dissolution of their relationship with the PC(USA) at the time of Farmer’s selection to the policy workgroup.

Presbytery, at its September 15, 2009, stated meeting, adopted what was known as the “Gracious Dismissal Policy” (GDP) as a result of the recommendation of the policy workgroup. While the GDP acknowledged Book of Order G-8.0201 (now G-4.0203) (the Trust Clause) that provides all property held by or for a congregation “is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” the GDP interpreted the Trust Clause “to reflect the church’s organic unity as it fulfills ‘The Great Ends of the Church,’ strengthening its ability to guide its member churches into their witness to the broader community.” The GDP found that it was “the right of a congregation to seek and request dismissal with its property to another reformed denomination.” The GDP also set forth that the Trust Clause was not to be used as a weapon to threaten civil action against a congregation over issues of conscience.

To mitigate financial impact on mission and ministry of Presbytery, the GDP requested the congregation seeking dismissal to pay Presbytery annually for five years: (1) funds to offset declining per capita and (2) funds to offset a declining contri-
bution to the mission budget. The GDP did not mention payment of any other funds to Presbytery, such as payment for the value of the congregation’s real property and other assets.

Five months after the adoption of the GDP by Presbytery, the session of Danville, of which Farmer was moderator, notified Presbytery in February 2010 of its intention to seek dismissal to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). Pursuant to the GDP, a Presbytery Engagement Team (PET) was appointed by Presbytery during its stated meeting on April 13, 2010, to work with the session and congregation of Danville to effect reconciliation, if possible, or to negotiate the terms of the dismissal. Also pursuant to the terms of the GDP, Danville formed a Special Committee of the Congregation (SCC), on which Farmer participated, to negotiate with PET. During a called congregational meeting on September 12, 2010, Danville voted to seek dismissal from the PC(USA) pursuant to the terms negotiated by PET and SCC. The terms of the negotiation were subject to approval by Presbytery.

According to the testimony of members of PET, the GDP did not include a requirement to consider the value of the congregational property for the use and benefit of the PC(USA). Under the terms of the final agreement reached with PET, Danville agreed to make a lump sum payment of $108,640 to Presbytery to compensate for declining per capita. Additionally, Danville agreed to pay $42,000 per year for five years to support targeted PC(USA) ministries, missions and ministers. No other monies were contemplated or discussed by PET with SCC.

At its November 9, 2010, stated meeting, Presbytery conditionally approved the terms of the dismissal as set forth by PET and SCC. The resolution provides:

“The effective date of [Danville’s] dismissal will be November 10, 2010. If there is no stay or filing of a complaint during a 90-day waiting period, consistent with the interval identified in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order for the filing of stays and complaints, full implementation will occur on February 9, 2011.

At that same meeting, Presbytery voted to suspend the GDP. Subsequently, Presbytery adopted a new GDP which is not relevant to this appeal.

On February 2, 2011, within the 90-day time frame approved by Presbytery, Appellants filed a remedial complaint against Presbytery with the SPJC. On June 4, 2011, SPJC answered all the preliminary questions affirmatively under D-8.0105. An amended complaint was filed on October 14, 2011.

Trial was held on March 22, 2012. At the beginning of the trial, Appellants moved to disqualify a commissioner pursuant to D-7.0401b(2), alleging that the commissioner was predisposed to rule against Appellants as evidenced by the “tenor of his comments” set forth in an October 6, 2011, email. The motion was denied by SPJC.

During the trial a number of documents were offered for inclusion in the record. These documents included the PC(USA)’s Amicus Curiae Brief before the California Supreme Court and the Annual Statistical Report of Danville which had been sent to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery. The moderator sustained Presbytery’s objections to the admission of these documents. The Appellants objected to the admission of other documentary evidence, including an email from a PET member summarizing her conversation with a representative of the Department of Constitutional Services within the Office of the Stated Clerk. Appellants’ objections were overruled.

Additionally, while questioning a witness, a commissioner stated, “The agreement that you struck between the Presbytery and CPC Danville, my home church, also referred to as CPC, so Central, however, has several points in it with sub points.” Neither party made an objection regarding disqualification of this commissioner at that time for any possible conflict of interest, if the commissioner meant by his comment that Danville was his “home church.”

On March 23, 2012, SPJC ordered that the action of Presbytery on November 9, 2010, dismissing Danville pursuant to the terms of the agreement, be affirmed.

On May 7, 2012, Appellants mailed their Notice of Appeal to the GAPJC and all other appropriate recipients. During the Presbytery stated meeting on May 8, 2012, the PET reported that the new implementation date of the agreement would fall between May 21 and May 26, 2012. Appellants believe that PET, at this stated meeting, was aware of the Notice of Appeal to the GAPJC.

On May 18, 2012, the GAPJC issued its preliminary order finding that it had jurisdiction, that the Appellants had standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal stated one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-8.0105. Notice of such GAPJC decision accepting the Appeal was timely mailed to the parties. On May 21, 2012, Presbytery executed quitclaim deeds to Danville and Danville paid the per capita and mission funds pursuant to the agreement.

Specifications of Error

Specification of Error No. 1: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 1) The proceedings of the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission (SPJC) were irregular, in that the decision is inconsistent with substantial evidence from the testimony of
witnesses at the trial, that in determining the terms of its dismissal of a large suburban church the Presbytery of San Francisco (Presbytery) failed to consider or to understand the meaning of the property trust clause (G-4.0202, formerly G-8.0201) or that the church property in question was in fact unequivocally owned by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).

This Specification of Error is sustained.

See the rationale below Specification of Error 7.

Specification of Error No. 2: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 10) The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation, in that it failed to apprehend or give effect to the plain meaning of the language of the express trust now at G-4.0203 (formerly G-8.0201) in the context of a church seeking dismissal, that all property held by a congregation “is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

This Specification of Error is sustained.

See the rationale below Specification of Error 7.

Specification of Error No. 3: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 11) The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation, in that it failed to consider or give effect to a relevant Authoritative Interpretation (AI) of the Book of Order (Request 9-88), an answer provided by the General Assembly of 1988 on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) which, in the context of a presbytery’s response to a church seeking dismissal, interprets the property trust clause to require proper consideration to be given to the interests of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as provided in Chapter VIII. This AI goes on to say, “in particular, G-8.0201 recognizes the principle that all property for or by a particular church is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Thus the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a party in interest when a presbytery takes action with respect to a request to dismiss a church with its property.”

This Specification of Error is sustained.

See the rationale below Specification of Error No. 7.

Specification of Error No. 4: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 12) The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation, in that it failed to consider or give effect to a subsequent AI of the property trust clause, in an answer provided by the General Assembly in 1989 on the recommendation of the ACC: “When dealing with a request by a church for dismissal with its property pursuant to G-11.0103i and G-11.0103y, the presbytery is responsible for exercising the express trust provisions of G-8.0201 recognizing and protecting the interests of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Separate consideration should be given to the questions of dismissing the congregation, the disposal of property, and the relationships of ministers of Word and Sacrament. Each request for dismissal should be considered in the light of the particular situation and circumstances involved.”

This Specification of Error is sustained.

See the rationale below Specification of Error No. 7.

Specification of Error No. 5: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 13) The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation, in that it disregarded testimony of members of the Presbytery’s PET who had negotiated the terms of dismissal of the CPCD and whose recommendation the Presbytery had adopted. This testimony demonstrated, among other things, a consistent failure to understand the meaning of the property trust clause as expressed in the Book of Order, a failure to have read or considered relevant Authoritative Interpretations of the Constitution, an apparent failure to understand that the PC(USA) owned the church property, a failure to grasp the fact that a transfer of the real property without consideration amounted to a gift, an exclusive reliance on the Presbytery’s previously approved dismissal policy as understood by members of the PET, a failure to understand how to apply the trust clause other than in the context of specific process steps in the policy, and a belief that the policy precluded even having a discussion about having the church property remain in the hands of the denomination or asking for any payment for the property upon its transfer.

This Specification of Error is sustained.

See the rationale below Specification of Error No. 7.

Specification of Error No. 6: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 14) The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation, in that it upheld the Presbytery’s action as being within its discretion as trustee of the church property, based on Presbytery’s contention that the transfer of the property without consideration would serve “the Great Ends of the Church” and further the “total ministry and witness for Christ,” thus making any further recognition of the property trust unnecessary or inappropriate.

This Specification of Error is sustained.
See the rationale below Specification of Error No. 7.

**Specification of Error No. 7: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 15)** The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation, in that its decision would indicate that a presbytery has unfettered discretion with respect to church property being used by a congregation seeking dismissal to another Reformed denomination, while the Book of Order places the fiduciary and related responsibilities of a trustee of the property on the presbytery.

This Specification of Error is sustained.

Presbytery voted to approve the transfer of the valuable Danville property unless a complaint or stay was filed within 90 days. A complaint was so filed. Following the ruling by SPJC, a new implementation date for the agreement was set. In the interim, an appeal was filed to this Commission and accepted with a preliminary order being entered May 18, 2012. Nevertheless, on May 21, 2012, Presbytery executed a quitclaim deed to Danville before this Commission was able to conduct the hearing on this appeal.

Presbytery, having transferred title while this case was pending, argued that the transfer of title renders the case moot because the quitclaim deed had been signed and could not be revoked.

Notwithstanding the transfer of title, in cases where circumstances prevent a remedy, this Commission may exercise its declaratory authority to provide guidance to lower councils and prevent future violations. *Daniel J. McKittrick v. The Session of the West End Presbyterian Church* (Remedial Case 215-5, 2003).

The *Book of Order* provides in G-8.0201 (now G-4.0203) that:

> All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Under the Trust Clause, a presbytery’s discretionary authority to determine property rights, while broad, must be guided by the presbytery acting as a fiduciary for the benefit of the PC(USA), the beneficiary of the Trust Clause. A congregation’s financial and all other assets are also understood to be covered by the Trust Clause. *Chesterbrook Taiwanese PC v. National Capital Presbytery*, Remedial Case 217-12, 2006.

Under the fiduciary obligations inherent in the Trust Clause, a presbytery must take into consideration the PC(USA)’s use and benefit of the property in every decision concerning its disposition. To comply with the Trust Clause, the presbytery must consider the interest of PC(USA) as a beneficiary of the property. Payments for per capita or mission obligations are not satisfactory substitutes for valuations of the property held in trust. (G-4.0203)

The Trust Clause reflects our understanding of the church as a communion of saints across time, with responsibilities both to those who came before and those who will follow. When a congregation seeks to leave the PC(USA), it is breaking what is often a significant historic relationship; it is also departing from a fellowship in which its officers have participated, by whose polity they have pledged to be governed, and with which many members may feel bonds of affection.

Based on an examination of the record, this Commission finds that the GDP developed by Presbytery, its implementation, and SPJC in its trial decision, failed to duly consider the economic interests of the PC(USA). Such consideration is essential. SPJC’s exclusion of documents which were the most convincing evidence of the position of PC(USA) in regard to the Trust Clause and of the financial position of Danville, strongly supports the allegation of erroneous interpretation. Failure to consider the property value and the PC(USA)’s beneficial interest in the property was a fatal omission of the trustee’s duty to the PC(USA).

The justification given by Presbytery for dismissal of the Danville church with property, which included only “Great Ends of the Church” and avoidance of litigation, was erroneously upheld by SPJC. While certainly valid, such considerations alone are not sufficient to satisfy the due diligence requirement imposed by the Trust Clause. SPJC erred in finding that due consideration had been given to the interest of the PC(USA) as the trust beneficiary under the *Constitution*. Due diligence, of necessity, will include not only the spiritual needs of the congregation and its circumstances, but an examination of the congregation’s financial position and the value of the property at stake. It is undisputed that Presbytery failed to make such an examination. SPJC erred in failing to require that financial due diligence be undertaken by Presbytery.

**Specification of Error No. 8: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 2)** The proceedings of the SPJC were irregular, in that one of its commissioners made a comment, before a witness could answer a question, to the effect that the attorney-client privilege would preclude answering the question, and cast doubt on the witnesses’ ability to waive the privilege.

This Specification of Error is not sustained.
There was no error in having the question of attorney-client privilege raised by a commissioner. If the moderator was incorrect in finding that the witness could not waive the privilege, such ruling was harmless because ultimately the witness was allowed to testify concerning the information objected to.

**Specification of Error No. 9:** (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 3) The proceedings of the SPJC were irregular, in that in questioning a witness one of its commissioners made reference to, and quoted, a provision of the Book of Order that was not in effect at the time of the disputed action (G-4.0201), thus providing misleading support for the Presbytery’s position.

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

References to provisions of the Book of Order are not evidence. They may be incorrect or untimely but they have no impact without a determination or decision being based on the provisions that are considered.

**Specification of Error No. 10:** (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 4) The proceedings of the SPJC were irregular, in that one of its commissioners belatedly revealed, near the conclusion of the trial in which he had materially participated as described at 2. and 3., above and at other times during the proceedings, that the “Danville church” (the church that was to have been dismissed by the Presbytery under the disputed terms), was his home church. In addition, there is nothing from the record that would indicate other than the same commissioner’s full participation in the SPJC deliberations that followed the trial, despite the appearance of a significant conflict of interest.

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

Having reviewed the record, it is clear the commissioner was not referring to Danville as his home church. Support for this conclusion can be found in that there was no objection or question of conflict of interest raised by anyone after his statement.

**Specification of Error No. 11:** (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 5) The SPJC erred in declining to receive as proper evidence the Amicus Curiae Brief of Clifton Kirkpatrick et al. in support of the position of the Episcopal Church before the Supreme Court of California in the Episcopal Church Cases. This brief sets forth the official legal position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with respect to church property as provided in the property trust clause in the Book of Order.

This Specification of Error is sustained.

Failure to receive the Amicus Curiae Brief into the record was an abuse of discretion in that it was a clear statement of the legal position of the PC(USA) as it related to the Trust Clause. Recognition of the legal position of the PC(USA) as the beneficiary under the Trust Clause is integral to any presbytery analysis concerning disposition of church property.

**Specification of Error No. 12:** (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 6) The SPJC erred in declining to receive as proper evidence the Annual Statistical Report for the Community Presbyterian Church of Danville (CPCD), which was sent by its Clerk of Session to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco. Appellants believe this report provides useful information concerning the number of members and financial strength of CPCD, matters which the Presbytery failed to consider but should have considered in negotiating the terms of its dismissal.

This Specification of Error is sustained.

The failure to receive the report on Danville was an abuse of discretion because it provided relevant information which should have been considered as part of the dismissal.

**Specification of Error No. 13:** (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 7) The SPJC erred in receiving as proper evidence a copy of an E-mail communication from a member of the Presbytery Engagement Team (PET), the ad hoc committee that was charged with negotiating the terms of dismissal with representatives of CPCD, to the other members of the PET, describing her telephone conversation with a third party, despite her testimony that there was no follow-up discussion of its contents on the part of the PET and hence no indication that the PET based its actions on that conversation or E-mail message.

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

There was no abuse of discretion by SPJC in receiving such evidence.

**Specification of Error No. 14:** (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 8) The SPJC erred in receiving as proper evidence a copy of an E-mail communication from a member of the PET to the other members of the PET in which she related her understanding of the reasons for the CPCD Sessions’ desire to leave the PC(USA). At no time was any evidence testimony produced to suggest that the Presbytery’s terms of dismissal were influenced in any way by the matters discussed in that communication.

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

There was no abuse of discretion by SPJC receiving such evidence.
Specification of Error No. 15: (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 9) For the reasons stated at 10 (Appellants’ 4) and 14 (Appellants’ 8), above, there was a manifestation of prejudice in the conduct of the case.

This Specification of Error is not sustained.

This Commission did not sustain either Specifications of Error No. 10 or No. 14 (Appellants’ No. 4 and No. 8). Therefore, there was no manifestation of prejudice as a result of the conduct alleged in those Specifications of Error.

Decision

When the lower council’s actions cannot be undone, this Commission may exercise its declaratory authority to provide guidance to lower councils and to prevent future violations.

When a congregation seeks dismissal under G-11.0103i (now G-3.0301a), it is the responsibility of the presbytery to fulfill its fiduciary duty under the Trust Clause. This fiduciary duty requires that the presbytery exercise due diligence regarding the value of the property of the congregation seeking dismissal. Due diligence, of necessity, includes not only an evaluation of the spiritual needs of the congregation and its circumstances but also financial analysis of the value of the property at stake. Payments for per capita or mission obligations are not satisfactory substitutes for the separate evaluation of the value of the property held in trust.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Pacific Permanent Judicial Commission is affirmed in part and reversed in part as set forth above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this Decision to the Synod of the Pacific at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Pacific enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco report this Decision to the Presbytery of San Francisco at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of San Francisco enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Mary Charlotte McCall was not present and did not participate in this decision. Commissioner Patrick Notley did not participate in this decision.

Concurring Opinion of H. Clifford Looney and Terry Epling

We concur in the majority decision.

We transfers of property remain within the discretion of Presbytery but the Presbytery must be mindful of the interest of the PC(USA) in maintaining the presence of the denomination to meet the needs of that affected Community including that portion of the church membership that wishes to remain within the PC(USA).

We also join in the majority’s conclusion that the language of the Gracious Dismissal Policy adopted by the Presbytery of San Francisco did not require adequate consideration of property retention issues. The needs of future congregations, the involved debt, the probability that a substantial number of dissenting members may be enabled to continue a PC(USA) congregation would compel retention of a property or equity facilitating those or similar interests are all matters to be considered to be involved in the Presbytery trustee’s decision. The Gracious Dismissal Policy did not require the PET to deal with those aspects of the dismissal decision.

However erroneous the omissions of the GDP, and the construction given by its PET, it may well have been within the discretion of the Presbytery to dismiss the Danville church with its property.

Many factors other than the attempt to be “gracious” with the Danville congregation may have been considered. Those include:

This Danville congregation acquired these assets and had been paying on them and had been successful in meeting the need of a Presbyterian witness for the Christian faith in this community for many years;

The church had tried development of other PC (USA) churches in the area without success;

Only 4% of the congregation voted against the dismissal decision;

The PET felt, apparently with substantial basis, that the needs of the community for Presbyterian witness to the faith would be met by this church as it was constituted, and that no plan for an additional church was presently feasible, so that there was no need to use any of the equities of the proper-
ty interests of the church for that purpose; and that no resources of the denomination had been used in the form of loans, nor was there any remaining indebtedness which was not being assumed by the Danville church.

In short, there may have been no apparent reason to require retention by the PC (USA) of any property interest. With the evidence in that stature, the burden of proof that the Complainant would have to have met to show an abuse of discretion by the Presbytery would have been heavy.

The testimony of Lois Quick (record p. 262 & 286) indicates that the properties were encumbered by about three million dollars in debt that the Danville congregation agreed to pay in accepting the property. Rev. Kathy Runyeon indicates at page 174 of the record that the Presbytery had no competing plans for the property.

The facts here presented to the PET are not ones that suggest that there would be substantial benefit from retaining the property. What the Presbytery did in securing additional mission and per capita payments may or may not have been sufficient to “balance the books” in this particular scenario, but it was within their discretion once they exercised due diligence and considered all the factors inherently required by the fiduciary duty of a trustee.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 221-04, Wilbert Tom, David Hawbecker, and Thomas Conrad, Appellants (Complainants), v. Presbytery of San Francisco, Appellee (Respondent), made and announced at Louisville, KY this 28th day of October 2012.

Dated this 28th day of October, 2012.

d. Remedial Case 221-04

Gerald J. Larson, Gary L. Collins, Rebecca B. Prichard, R. Winston Presnall, Margery McIntosh, Michal Vaughn, Lucy Stafford-Lewis, Julie Richwine, Jerry Elliott, Sara McCurdy, Gregory Vacca, Gail Stearns, Steve Wirth, Suzanne Darweesh, Jane Parker, Darlene Elliott, Frances Bucklin, Deborah Mayhew, James McCurdy, Judith Anderson, Susan Currie, Complainants/Appellants,

v.

Presbytery of Los Ranchos, Respondent/Appellee.

Decision and Order

Remedial Case 221-04

Arrival Statement

This remedial case comes before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on appeal filed by Appellants, Gerald J. Larson, Gary L. Collins, Rebecca B. Prichard, R. Winston Presnall, Margery McIntosh, Michal Vaughn, Lucy Stafford-Lewis, Julie Richwine, Jerry Elliott, Sara McCurdy, Gregory Vacca, Gail Stearns, Steve Wirth, Suzanne Darweesh, Jane Parker, Darlene Elliott, Frances Bucklin, Deborah Mayhew, James McCurdy, Judith Anderson, and Susan Currie (Appellants), from a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii (SPJC) rendered on May 4, 2012.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, Appellants have standing to appeal, the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and the Appeal states one or more grounds for appeal under Book of Order, D-8.0105.

Appearances

Appellants were represented by Douglas A. Nave and Susan Currie. The Presbytery of Los Ranchos (Presbytery) was represented by Judy L. Woods, H. Neal Wells III, and Emily McColl.

History

On September 15, 2011, Presbytery adopted the following resolution by majority vote (the Resolution):

Moved: That the Presbytery of Los Ranchos adopt the following statement interpreting this presbytery’s understanding of certain behavioral expectations of members.
Affirming that ‘The gospel leads members to extend the fellowship of Christ to all persons.’ (G-1.0302) The Presbytery of Los Ranchos, meeting on September 15, 2011, affirms that the Bible, the Book of Confessions and the Book of Order (including G-2.0104b and G-2.0105 1 & 2) set forth the scriptural and constitutional standards for ordination and installation. Los Ranchos Presbytery believes the manner of life of ordained Ministers should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world, including living either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness and will so notify candidates for ordination/installation and/or membership in the presbytery. In obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our confessions, this presbytery will prayerfully and pastorally examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office, including a commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions of ordination and installation.

On October 14, 2011, twenty-one members of Presbytery filed a complaint with the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii (Synod), claiming the Resolution was irregular and requesting that Presbytery be ordered to rescind the Resolution. At the same time, Appellants filed with Synod a request for a stay of enforcement of the Resolution, which was granted by the SPJC on October 24, 2011.

The SPJC hearing was held on May 4, 2012, and a Decision and Order was entered which (i) lifted the Stay of Enforcement; (ii) ordered that “[t]he Presbytery of Los Ranchos may proceed as it sees fit to communicate its Resolution to current and future teaching elder members;” and (iii) further ordered that “the Presbytery of Los Ranchos be admonished that while this PJC considers the resolution constitutional, the use of specific language known to be divisive and inflammatory flies in the face of the responsibility to seek the peace, unity, and purity of the church.” (Record pg. 32)

A Notice of Appeal and a Request for Stay of Enforcement were filed by Appellants with the GAPJC on May 29, 2012. On June 1, 2012, the GAPJC accepted the appeal and on June 4, 2012, a Stay of Enforcement was granted pursuant to D-6.0103d.

Specifications of Error

Specification of Error No. 1 (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 1): The SPJC failed to address the allegations stated in the Complaint.

This Specification is sustained.

While the SPJC erred in its consolidation of the allegations, such error did not preclude a full consideration of this case and was therefore harmless.

Specification of Error No. 2 (Appellants’ Specifications of Error Nos. 3, 4): The SPJC failed to acknowledge the plain meaning and inherent practical effect of the Resolution.

This Specification is sustained. See Decision below.

Specification of Error No. 3 (Appellants’ Specifications of Error Nos. 2, 4a, 4b, 6, 7, 8): The SPJC failed to recognize and correct Los Ranchos’ improper restatement of the Constitution.

This Specification is sustained. See Decision below.

Specification of Error No. 4 (Appellants’ Specifications of Error Nos. 9, 10, 10a): The SPJC erred in its interpretation and application of G-3.0102 and F-3.0209.

This Specification is sustained. See Decision below.

Specification of Error No. 5 (Appellants’ Specifications of Error Nos. 4c-h, 10b): The SPJC erred by disregarding the constitutional guarantees of freedom of conscience and concomitant duty to show one another mutual forbearance.

This Specification is sustained. See Decision below.

Specification of Error No. 6 (Appellants’ Specification of Error No. 5): The SPJC failed to correct Appellee’s defiance of an established position of the church.

This specification is not sustained.

While there was overreaching, there was not deliberate defiance by Presbytery.

Decision

This Commission strongly affirms the right and obligation of an ordaining, installing, and enrolling council, in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and guided by the Confessions, to prayerfully and pastorally examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office on a case by case basis (G-2.0104b). This Commission further affirms that individual commissioners in assessing persons for ordination on a case by case basis have the freedom to vote their conscience. The mutual forbearance required by F-3.0105 does not preclude the beliefs expressed in the Resolution. Such forbearance is best demonstrated by making ordination, installation, and admission decisions
on a case by case basis, after the candidate has been presented and has declared his or her beliefs and stated his or her motives personally and after the examining body has had full opportunity to judge the individual as well as abstract questions of doctrine. (See Swearingen Commission Report, Minutes, PCUSA, 1927, pp. 78–79.)

The issue before this Commission is whether the resolution adopted by Presbytery is an appropriate use of a presbytery’s authority in issuing statements that “bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in life, resolve questions of doctrine and discipline, give counsel in matters of conscience, and decide issues properly brought before them under the provisions of [the] Book of Order.” (G-3.0102)

This Decision is informed by Presbytery of West Jersey v. The Synod of the Northeast, Remedial Case 205-15, 1993). (West Jersey) In West Jersey, the Synod of the Northeast adopted two resolutions, one declaring itself to be a More Light Synod and the second urging the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to repent of its sin of homophobia and rescind the definitive guidance of 1978. This Commission determined that the Synod of the Northeast’s resolutions constituted an expression of opinion rather than compelling or directing any action. The present case is distinguishable from West Jersey, in that in West Jersey the resolutions were addressed, or understood to be addressed to the church as a whole, whereas the resolution in the present case is addressed, to “candidates for ordination/installation and/or membership in the presbytery.” Herein lies the difference.

This Commission determines, therefore, that by directing the notification specifically to those who would potentially seek admission into Presbytery, the Resolution would have the practical effect of discouraging those seeking ordination or membership prior to the required case by case evaluation or examination. In so doing, Presbytery exceeded its authority and duty to “bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in life, resolve questions of doctrine and discipline, give counsel in matters of conscience …” (G-3.0102) and its right and obligation to “nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ … includ[ing] ordaining, receiving, dismissing, installing, removing, and disciplining its members who are teaching elders …” (G-3.0301c).

As in Randall Bush et al. v. The Presbytery of Pittsburgh (Remedial Case 218-10, 2008) and Barlow J. Buescher et al. v. The Presbytery of Olympia (Remedial Case 218-09, 2008), when Presbytery combined current Book of Order language from G–2.0104a with former Book of Order language G-6.0106b, it created at least a perception of an improper restatement of the Constitution. As this Commission stated in both Bush and Buescher, “[r]estatements of the Book of Order, in whatever form they are adopted, are themselves an obstruction to the same standard of constitutional governance no less than attempts to depart from mandatory provisions.”

This Commission declares that the Resolution as written is unconstitutional and, therefore, void.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii is reversed, and the Resolution adopted by the Presbytery of Los Ranchos is void.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii report this decision to the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii at the first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii enter the full decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos report this decision to the Presbytery of Los Ranchos at the first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Los Ranchos enter the full decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Mary Charlotte McCall did not participate in the hearing or deliberations.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 221-04, Gerald J. Larson, Gary L Collins, Rebecca B. Prichard, R. Winston Presnall, Margery McIntosh, Michal Vaughn, Lucy Stafford- Lewis, Julie Richwine, Jerry Elliott, Sara McCurdy, Gregory Vacca, Gail Stearns, Steve Wirth, Suzanne Darweesh, Jane Parker, Darlene Elliott, Frances Bucklin, Deborah Mayhew, James McCurdy, Judith Anderson, Susan Currie, Appellants (Complainants), v. Presbytery of Los Ranchos, Appellee (Respondent) made and announced at Louisville, KY this 29th day of October 2012.

Dated this 29th day of October, 2012.
Arrival Statement

These remedial cases come before the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC or this Commission) on appeals filed by Appellant, Session of First United Presbyterian Church of Tecumseh, Michigan (Appellant or Tecumseh). The appeals challenge Decisions of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant (SPJC) to dismiss SPJC Remedial Cases 2012-01 & 2012-02, rendered on July 17, 2012, for failing to meet all of the required Book of Order preliminary questions in D-6.0305 and from Appellant’s Challenge of the Preliminary Order of Dismissal issued by the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC-EC) on July 17, 2012.

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, the Appellant has standing to appeal, the appeals were properly and timely filed, and the appeals state one or more grounds for appeal under Book of Order D-8.0105.

Appearances

Appellant was represented by Bruce A. McIntosh. Maumee Valley Presbytery. Respondent was represented by James A. Wilson, Marcy St. John, and James Friedmeyer.

History

In 2007, Presbytery adopted a “Process for Separation” (Dismissal Policy). In May of 2010, Tecumseh unanimously voted to call a congregational meeting to vote on whether to seek dismissal to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). Pursuant to the Dismissal Policy, Tecumseh notified Presbytery’s Stated Clerk and a Pastoral Team was formed. On September 21, 2010, Presbytery dissolved the Pastoral Team and installed an Administrative Commission.

On October 10, 2010, Tecumseh held a congregational meeting at which the motion to seek dismissal to the EPC was approved.

On April 1, 2012, Tecumseh filed its first remedial complaint with SPJC (SPJC 2012-01 or GA2012-106). Among other specifications of error, Tecumseh alleged that Presbytery erred in failing to abide by its Dismissal Policy. On April 4, 2012, SPJC declined to grant a stay of enforcement.

On May 15, 2012, Presbytery voted that First United Presbyterian Church (First Church) was in schism. Presbytery voted to treat those wishing to remain within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as the “Foundation Group” and to direct Presbytery’s support to that group.

On May 23, 2012, Tecumseh filed a second remedial complaint (SPJC 2012-02 or GA2012-107), reiterating the first remedial complaint and adding an allegation that Presbytery erred in declaring First Church to be in schism and in dividing it without consultation with its members. On June 4, 2012, SPJC issued a stay. Presbytery objected and a hearing was held on June 28, 2012, at which SPJC voted to lift the stay subject to certain modifications. Tecumseh appealed this action to GAPJC and on July 17, 2012, GAPJC-EC rejected the appeal stating that only final decisions are subject to appeal. On August 10, 2012, Tecumseh filed a Challenge to GAPJC-EC’s Preliminary Order.

On July 17, 2012, SPJC dismissed both SPJC 2012-01 and SPJC 2012-02 on the grounds that both failed to “state a cause on which relief can be granted.” Tecumseh filed notice of appeal to GAPJC on both matters on July 31, 2012.

On August 3, 2012, GAPJC-EC accepted the appeals. On August 16, 2012, GAPJC-EC found Appellant had properly challenged the GAPJC-EC’s July 17, 2012, Preliminary Order that rulings prior to final decisions cannot be appealed.

Specifications of Error

Specification of Error No. 1: (Appellant’s Specification of Error #1, GA2012-106; Appellant’s Specification of Error #1 and #7, GA2012-107). SPJC erred in dismissing SPJC Cases 2012-01 and 2012-02 for failing to state a claim upon which relief could be granted by refusing Appellant a reasonable opportunity to be heard or to obtain or present evidence (D-
8.0105b), hastening to a decision before the evidence or testimony is fully received (D-8.0105d), causing an injustice in the process or decision (D-8.0105f), and erroneous constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g).

This specification is not sustained.

Specification of Error No. 2: (Appellant’s Specification of Error #2, GA2012-107). SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation (D-8.0105g) in both terminating and modifying the terms of the stay issued in SPJC Case 2012-02.

This specification is not sustained.

Specification of Error No. 3: (Appellant’s Specification of Error #3, GA2012-107). SPJC’s decision to lift the stay issued in SPJC Case 2012-02 resulted in an unjust decision (D-8.0105f).

This specification is not sustained.

Specification of Error No. 4: (Appellant’s Specification of Error #4, GA2012-107). SPJC erred by receiving improper evidence (D-8.0105c) in its hearing on the Motion to Challenge the Stay of Enforcement in SPJC Case 2012-02.

This specification is not sustained.

Specification of Error No. 5: (Appellant’s Specification of Error #5, GA2012-107). SPJC exceeded its constitutional authority to modify, terminate, or continue a stay (D-6.0103g) when it acted to “lift with modifications” the stay issued in SPJC Case 2012-02.

This specification is not sustained.

Specification of Error No. 6: (Appellant’s Specification of Error #6, GA2012-107). SPJC exceeded its constitutional authority to modify, terminate, or continue a stay (D-6.0103g) when it included in its Decision in SPJC Case 2012-02 positive injunctive relief “[prohibiting] the existing Session and/or newly elected officers ... from meeting outside the presence of the Administrative Commission; and ordering existing officers, staff and pastor to immediately provide the Administrative Commission with all documents, minutes and financial records requested in the past or which may be requested in the future.”

This specification is not sustained.

Appellant’s Challenge to the Preliminary Order of the GAPJC-EC of July 17, 2012.

This challenge is not sustained.

Decision

The central focus of these two cases is a review of the decisions of SPJC to dismiss the Complaints on the preliminary question of failure to state a claim upon which relief could be granted (D-6.0305d). Upon review of the Complaints and the record and in the absence of sufficiently pleaded constitutional irregularities, this Commission concurs with SPJC that Appellant failed to state any claim upon which relief could be granted. [See Anderson, et. al., v. Phy of Scioto Valley, Minutes, 1998, p. 134, 12.0106.]

This Commission notes that the record does not include transcripts from any of the hearings conducted by SPJC. Thus, this Commission has no ability to review additional information that SPJC may have considered in making its determination to dismiss.

Because of the above Decision, this Commission finds that it does not need to reach the issues concerning the stays of enforcement and appeals on rulings prior to final decisions.

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decisions of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant are hereby sustained, and the cases are dismissed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this Decision to the Synod of the Covenant at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Covenant enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley report this Decision to the Presbytery of Maumee Valley at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Maumee Valley enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.
The full Commission participated in this Decision.

Concurring Opinion of Clifford Looney, Barbara Bundick, Michael Lukens, and Robin Roberts

The majority opinion reaches the correct result for this case. The language, “in the absence of sufficiently pleaded constitutional irregularities” is, however, suggestive that the Complaints involved could have been formulated to successfully state a claim. That result would not have been possible on the facts alleged, which we must consider to be correct for the purpose of this decision.

The parties apparently agree that the primary question is whether the Presbytery could reject the work of the Pastoral Committee, appoint an Administrative Commission with original jurisdiction which could declare a schism, and identify the “true Church,” contrary to the wishes of the majority of the congregation. The Presbytery clearly can (G-3.0301a) and did. Alleging that they did what they have the power to do does not state a claim upon which relief can be granted. That legal status of our polity ends the inquiry.

The decision of the SPJC is correct and should be affirmed.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 221-05 and 221-06, Session of First United Presbyterian Church of Tecumseh, Michigan, Complainant/Appellant, v. Maumee Valley Presbytery, Respondent/Appellee made and announced at Louisville, KY this 1st day of June 2013.

Dated this 1st day of June 2013

f. Remedial Case 221-07

Ji Suk Kim, In Hyuk Park, Gil Bong Kim, Jong Soo Park, Suk Ho Lee, Yong Sung Lee, Jae Geun Lee, Jong Sik Lim, and Tae Doo Chong, Complainants/Appellants,

v.

Administrative Commission of The Synod of Lincoln Trails acting as The Midwest Hanmi Presbytery, Respondent/Appellee.

Decision and Order

Remedial Case 221-07

Arrival Statement

The matter now before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is a Challenge to an April 29, 2013, Preliminary Order of the Executive Committee of GAPJC (GAPJC EC) to Dismiss Appellants’ Appeal of a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Lincoln Trails (SPJC).

In its required examination of the papers, GAPJC EC found that since SPJC was not the correct forum within which to file Appellants’ remedial case, GAPJC had no jurisdiction to hear an Appeal of that SPJC Decision.

Appellants’ Notice of Challenge under D-8.0302a was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on May 30, 2013.

Parties

The Appellants are: Ji Suk Kim, In Hyuk Park, Gil Bong Kim, Jong Soo Park, Suk Ho Lee, Yong Sung Lee, Jae Geun Lee, Jong Sik Lim, and Tae Doo Chong.

The Respondent is the Administrative Commission of the Synod of Lincoln Trails acting as The Midwest Hanmi Presbytery.

Jurisdictional Statement

The Commission finds that the Challenge was properly filed by Complainant within thirty days after receipt of GAPJC EC’s Preliminary Order of Dismissal.
Appearances

Appellants are represented by W. Dan Lee. Respondent is represented by Linda L. Long. Appellee waived personal appearance, and Appellants were deemed to have waived personal appearance by reason of non-response.

History

This remedial case first came before this Commission upon an Appeal by Appellants from a March 9, 2013, Decision and Order of SPJC.

In its March 9, 2013 Decision and Order, the full SPJC, referencing Book of Order Article G-3.0109, concurred with a Preliminary Order for Dismissal of SPJC’s Moderator and Clerk and determined “that the Synod PJC is not the appropriate commission to hear this remedial complaint because ‘the action of a Commission shall be regarded as an action of the Council that created it.’” SPJC sustained the Preliminary Order for Dismissal, and dismissed the case. This Appeal followed.

Appellants stated in the Appeal that their underlying Complaint filed with SPJC arose from a May 21, 2012, action of an Administrative Commission of the Synod of Lincoln Trails “acting as the [Midwest Hanmi] Presbytery.” [Emphasis original.]

The Appeal was received by GAPJC on April 22, 2013, and was referred to GAPJC EC for initial review.

In their preliminary review of the Appeal, the Moderator and the Clerk of GAPJC concurred with SPJC’s analysis that under provisions of G-3.0109 the actions of an administrative commission are the actions of the council that appointed it, from and after the time the administrative commission’s actions are taken. They determined that, since SPJC had no original jurisdiction over the Complaint, GAPJC did not have jurisdiction to hear an Appeal of the matter from SPJC. GAPJC EC issued a Preliminary Order dismissing the case.

Appellants filed a Challenge to that Preliminary Order, and on May 3, 2013, this Commission’s officers found that the Challenge was properly and timely filed and they directed a hearing on the Challenge be set for a time and place determined by this Commission. That hearing was scheduled for Friday, October 25, 2013. A briefing schedule was prepared for the parties. On August 16, 2013, the Office of Constitutional Interpretation was informed by Counsel for Appellants that by reason of a conflicting trial schedule Counsel was unable to appear at the scheduled hearing. In response to such information, on August 19, 2013, the officers of GAPJC issued a Pre-Hearing Order directing that Appellants be permitted; if they chose, to have other counsel appear for them at the Challenge hearing. Alternatively, the officers of GAPJC urged both parties to submit the case on papers and briefs alone without personal appearance, as had been done at the Synod-level hearing. GAPJC officers directed that a response to the Pre-Hearing Order be made by both parties not later than August 27, 2013.

On August 26, 2013, Appellee waived personal appearance at a hearing contingent upon Appellants doing so as well. Appellee also noted that Appellants had not submitted a brief by Appellants’ August 16, 2013, required briefing deadline; Appellee requested it be permitted an extension of time to submit its brief within 30-days after Appellants had done so.

Appellants neither submitted a brief by their August 16, 2013, briefing deadline nor entered a response to the August 19, 2013 Pre-Hearing Order within the time directed by the officers of GAPJC. The Office of Constitutional Interpretation staff made repeated attempts to contact Appellants’ Counsel. All attempts went unanswered.

Due to the lack of response from Appellants’ Counsel, on September 3, 2013, GAPJC EC issued a Second Pre-Hearing Order finding that under provisions of D-8.0302b Appellants waived a hearing on this Challenge since (1) Appellee has contingently waived a personal appearance at a hearing, (2) Appellants’ Counsel has advised that Counsel cannot appear at the scheduled hearing because of a trial scheduling conflict, (3) Appellants, after repeated requests, have not timely responded to GAPJC’s suggested alternatives for a hearing, and (4) both parties waived personal appearance on this matter at the Synod of Lincoln Trails hearing.

GAPJC EC ordered that no in-person hearing would be held by GAPJC on this Challenge and the Challenge would be decided by the full GAPJC on documents so far submitted and briefs, if any, to be filed. Appellee was directed to file a brief not later than its September 16, 2013, original briefing date. A brief was filed by Appellee, but Appellants did not file a brief or provide a response of any kind.

Decision

Under the provisions of G-3.0109, the actions of an administrative commission are the actions of the council that appointed it, from and after the time the administrative commission’s actions are taken. The case of Sundquist, et al. v. Heartland Presbytery [Remedial Case 219-03 (formerly 218-18)] confirms this interpretation (citing provisions to the same effect of a former constitutional Article G-9.0505a).

In the present case, a claimed action of the administrative commission created by Synod of Lincoln Trails would have been the action of Synod from and after the date of the action. Any complaint about that action properly should have been
filed with GAPJC against Synod and not with SPJC. Because SPJC had no original jurisdiction over the Complaint, GAPJC does not have jurisdiction to hear an Appeal of the matter from SPJC.

GAPJC confirms the decision of GAPJC EC and confirms that the case is dismissed. In addition, GAPJC notes that D-8.0304c provides: “Failure of appellant to file a brief within the time allowed, without good cause, shall be deemed by the permanent judicial commission an abandonment of the appeal.” Given that Appellants failed to file their brief by the August 16, 2013, briefing deadline, never sought an extension of the date to file the appeal, and never responded to the August 19, 2013, Pre-Hearing Order, this Commission finds such failure constitutes an abandonment of the appeal by Appellants (D-8.0304c).

Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the dismissal of the Complaint is hereby sustained. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lincoln Trails report this decision to the Synod of Lincoln Trails at the first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Lincoln Trails enter the full decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi report this decision to the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi at the first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi enter the full decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

The full Commission participated in this Decision.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 221-07, Ji Suk Kim, In Hyuk Park, Gil Bong Kim, Jong Soo Park, Suk Ho Lee, Yong Sung Lee, Jae Geun Lee, Jong Sik Lim and Tae Doo Chong, Complainants/Appellants, v. Administrative Commission of the Synod of Lincoln Trails acting as The Midwest Hanmi Presbytery, Respondent/Appellee made in a telephone conference call meeting under provisions of Article 3.01.30 of the GAPJC Manual this 24th day of October, 2013.

DECISION AND ORDER

Remedial Case 221-08

Arrival Statement

This filing before the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly (GAPJC or this Commission) is an appeal of a Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast (SPJC) rendered on September 11, 2013. The Notice of Appeal was received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly on September 23, 2013.

Parties

Jurisdictional Statement

This Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that Appellants have standing to file the Appeal, that the Appeal was properly and timely filed, and that the Appeal states one or more of the grounds for appeal under D-8.0105.

Appearances

Appellant/Respondent was represented by John Griem and Reade Ryan. Appellees/Complainants were represented by Tee Gee Wilson and Lisa Borge.

History

On February 13, 2013, the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast received a Remedial Complaint from Ruling Elder Mildred McGee, et alia, alleging that the action of the PNYC in adopting and implementing its Gracious Dismissal Policy (GDP) was irregular in regard to constitutional requirements of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)].

The development of the GDP by the PNYC began early in 2012, informed by Resolution 04-28, GA Minutes (2008, Part II, pp. 284–285) of the 218th General Assembly (2008) (GA) urging presbyteries to formulate a gracious and pastoral response to churches requesting dismissal from the PC(USA). This GA resolution, although not an authoritative interpretation, was used as the basis for the development of the GDP. Just after that Assembly, in October 2008, the PNYC through its Committee on Mission and Finance, which also served as the Board of Trustees (BoT), obtained a realtor’s opinion of value of the properties held by all its congregations. Almost four years later, in July 2012, the BoT created a draft GDP that was distributed to the PNYC for its meeting on July 28, 2012. There was no discussion of the draft at that meeting. A later draft was given a first reading and discussion at the December 6, 2012, meeting of the PNYC. After two open hearings on December 13 and 20, 2012, the present GDP was approved by the PNYC on January 29, 2013, by a vote of 56 in favor and 49 against.

The SPJC summarized the GDP in the following way:

... [T]he PNYC GDP allows sessions to request initiation of the dismissal process following a 2/3 vote. Upon receipt of the notice, the stated clerk then calls one or more meetings between the Special Resolutions Committee of the presbytery and the session (or its representatives), as well as the BOT (or its representatives) during the 120-day period following receipt of the notice. If the filing notice is not withdrawn at the end of the period, a congregational meeting is called (50% quorum) and dismissal is approved if confirmed by a 3/4 congregational vote. Financial arrangements include payment of any arrears in per capita, five years of per capita payments on a declining scale, and compensation for church property of 10% of the assessed value that exceeds $1,000,000, with a cap on the compensation of $2,000,000.

In addition, the policy allows for a downward adjustment or waiver in the case of hardship.

With the remedial complaint, Complainant also requested a Stay of Enforcement. The Executive Committee (EC) of the SPJC answered the Preliminary Questions in the affirmative and the Stay of Enforcement was subsequently granted by the SPJC.

Respondent requested an extension of the deadline for filing its response and the SPJC granted this extension. Respondent submitted a motion to the SPJC on April 29, 2013, to refer the case to the GAPJC, to which Complainants responded on May 14, 2013. The SPJC denied the motion on May 23, 2013. Respondent filed a second motion on July 2, 2013, asking the SPJC to reconsider its decision to deny the earlier motion to refer the case to the GAPJC, to which Complainants again responded on July 16, 2013. The SPJC EC denied this motion on July 27, 2013.

Complainant filed for relief on February 13, 2013, and this remedial case was decided by the SPJC on September 11, 2013. In its decision, the SPJC sustained five of the seven specifications of error by Complainant and ordered that the GDP of the PNYC shall be set aside and shall have no force or effect.

Specifications of Error

Specification of Error No. 1: The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by holding that the Presbytery GDP conferred a unilateral right on a congregation to depart from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in violation of G-4.0207 and Sundquist v. Heartland Presbytery, GA PJC 219-03.

This specification of error is not sustained.

While it may be understandable for a presbytery to develop a policy dealing with congregations considering dismissal with the intention of avoiding costly litigation, the GDP at the center of this case breaches the bounds of the Constitution of the PC(USA). The PNYC GDP exhibits substantial constitutional flaws in at least three ways concerning this specification of error. First, the GDP establishes a dismissal process that, as the SPJC notes, is “self-executing,” whereby fulfillment of a series of steps and conditions automatically enacts dismissal upon their completion. A final vote by the PNYC is purposefully denied in the GDP in order to avoid divisive and argumentative response to a dismissal request, as admitted by the PNYC in the record and during arguments. Even though the process contains provisions for consultation with the PNYC and congrega-
tional input, it is in fact a predetermined and formulaic mechanism that replaces a final specific review and vote by the PNYC. The Constitution at G-3.0301a reserves as a direct act of the presbytery the authority to dismiss a church, a polity provision explicitly reasserted by G-4.0207.

As the SPJC noted, the PNYC does not need an independent policy in order to accomplish a just and effective dismissal:

The Respondent has asserted that an order by this Commission to set aside this GDP would leave the presbytery in limbo and render it unable to reach any agreements on dismissal agreements, leaving only the option of costly litigation. This is a seriously over-reaching assessment. We are sensitive to the difficult situation in which the PNYC finds itself and appreciate its sincere desire to deal with that as well as it can...[A dismissal agreement] can be achieved, either through Administrative Commissions appointed in each case that presents itself and is empowered to do so, or, indeed, by a Special Resolutions Committee, preparing the proposal for presbytery action. Considering that the presbytery mustered a majority vote, however slim, for the GDP under consideration in this case, and with the case-by-case requirement satisfied in these cases, it ought to be possible for the PNYC to reach agreement on approval for such dismissal arrangements.

The second constitutional error in the GDP is its provision that the vote by a congregation effectuates the dismissal process. This vote terminates the process and has the authority to effect dismissal without any constitutional authority so to act. The final certification by the PNYC is merely perfunctory. Further, such a congregational vote is not authorized within the permitted functions of a congregation in G-1.0503 and is specifically prohibited in Sundquist et al. vs. Heartland Presbytery: “Withdrawal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not a matter that can be considered at a congregational meeting” and the consultations of presbytery with members of the congregation “are not meetings at which business of the congregation may be conducted.” Sundquist 219-03, 2008. [GA Minutes, (2010, Part II, pp. 362–367).] It should also be noted that the General Assembly in 1991 declared: “Nowhere is written that the congregation is permitted to make the decision that the presbytery commits itself in advance to confirm.” GA Minutes (1991, Req. 91-24, Part I, p. 411). In spite of this stream of clear constitutional interpretation, the GDP portrays a self-implementing dismissal rooted in a congregational decision in violation of the exclusive right and responsibility of a presbytery to dismiss a congregation.

The third constitutional error of the GDP is that a predetermined, formulaic mechanism runs counter to constitutional provisions for mutual dialogue and particular discernment. This Commission has previously rejected such approaches in matters related to ordination and membership Larson 221-04, 2012. The presbytery’s right and responsibility for specific review and the necessity of individualized consideration on sensitive matters in the life of the church remain a core concept of PC(USA) polity.

Specification of Error No. 2: The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by holding that the GDP does not give effect to the Trust Clause (G-4.0203) as required by Tom v. Presbytery of San Francisco, GA PJC 221-03 and G-4.0204.

This specification of error is not sustained.

The Book of Order provides in G-4.0203 that “[a]ll property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), ... is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” The Trust Clause was interpreted by this Commission in Tom, et al., v. Presbytery of San Francisco, as it related to that presbytery’s gracious dismissal policy, in the context of a number of factors including both spiritual and pecuniary aspects of the fiduciary responsibility. In Tom, this Commission said:

When a congregation seeks dismissal under G-11.0103i (now G-3.0301a), it is the responsibility of the Presbytery to fulfill its fiduciary duty under the Trust Clause. This fiduciary duty requires that the Presbytery exercise due diligence regarding the value of the property of the congregation seeking dismissal. Due diligence, of necessity, includes not only an evaluation of the spiritual needs of the congregation and its circumstances but also financial analysis of the value of the property at stake. Payment for per capita for missions obligations are not satisfactory substitutes for the separate evaluation of the value of the property held in trust. Tom, et al., v. The Presbytery of San Francisco, Remedial Case 221-03, 2012.

This Commission is again called upon in this case to clarify the parameters of the Trust Clause. The Trust Clause creates an express trust in favor of the PC(USA) as a whole and not for the presbytery, the congregation, or any other body. Therefore, the presbytery, acting in the role of trustee, must exercise due diligence such that its determination is both reasonable and evident in the record. While presbytery is entitled to deference in making the fiduciary decisions under the Trust Clause, such deference is limited by the fiduciary obligations owed to the whole church.

Under the facts of this case, the PNYC argues that the requirement of due diligence under the Trust Clause has been met by adopting a formula for determining the value of the property at the time of enacting the GDP by the PNYC. However, the fiduciary nature of the Trust Clause requires an individual determination of the facts and circumstances related to dismissal of any church rather than a set formula, which may not be appropriate to the particular circumstances of a congregation. As stated by the SPJC, there must be an “individual assessment and valuation of the church’s unique situation, finances, history, spiritual needs and financial needs” when considering dismissal.

In addition, the exercise of the fiduciary duty must be carried out during the course of discernment of a particular church’s request for dismissal. A formulaic predetermination fails to account for the individualized requirement demanded by proper application of the fiduciary duty incumbent upon a presbytery. The SPJC correctly determined that the PNYC, acting
as a fiduciary, may not abdicate this role (G-4.0207 and G-3.0303b). The record shows that the PNYC sought to avoid conflict and litigation. However, concern about conflict and litigation cannot justify abandonment of constitutional mandates.

Thus, the presbytery, in exercising its authority to perform due diligence under the fiduciary duties required by the Trust Clause, is required to make an appropriately timed, individual, unique determination of the circumstances applicable to any church requesting dismissal. In accountability to the PC(USA) as the beneficiary under the Trust Clause, such determination must be reasonable and based on documented facts. The GDP enacted by the PNYC fails to meet these requirements and, therefore, is unconstitutional.

**Specification of Error No. 3:** The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by holding that the GDP did not provide specific guidance regarding discernment of theological differences as a basis for dismissal, in violation of F-1.0302a and F-1.0301.

This specification of error is not sustained.

The PNYC adopted the GDP “to provide for reconciliation and resolution within the Presbytery of New York City” and to permit their congregations to be dismissed to join another Reformed denomination for theological reasons. The policy did not seek reconciliation and resolution as the initial step in the process (G-4.0207). The policy accepts notice from a congregation of perceived theological differences as sufficient for dismissal without concern for mutual discernment and dialogue (Sundquist). It is the nature and weight of theological difference that is critical in a justification for dismissal. The mere presence of theological differences does not preclude coexistence within the PC(USA). As stated in F-3.0105 “there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.” The GDP contains no procedures to encourage early discussion with the PNYC about a congregation’s perceived differences. As indicated in F-3.0204 “Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ.” Without dialogue there cannot be a mutual understanding of the will of the people. Without joint discernment councils can misunderstand the will of Christ. The SPJC rightly concluded it was important that the PNYC “ensure that dismissal is the only viable remedy for the relevant theological differences.”

**Specification of Error No. 4:** The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by holding that the GDP did not provide an opportunity for the minority of a church in schism to retain the property of a congregation, in violation of G-4.0207.

This specification of error is not sustained.

The PNYC GDP ignores the constitutional requirement under G-4.0207 to “determine if one of the factions is entitled to the property because it is identified by the presbytery as the true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” The GDP process is initiated when the PNYC receives a written notice from the session. At that point, the PNYC automatically surrenders its constitutional obligation to determine whether a loyal faction exists and is entitled to the property. Under the GDP provisions, there is no attempt to identify the true church within the PC(USA). A fully implemented GDP effectively guarantees the property for those seeking dismissal.

It is clear what a presbytery must do when confronted with a property issue. Under G-4.0207, a presbytery is obligated to serve the interests and guard the rights of the “true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” regardless of who is in the majority of any session or congregational vote. The presbytery shall determine if one of the factions is entitled to the property because it is the “true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” majority notwithstanding. Any negotiation and decision about the disposition of the property must consider this interest of the true church. The GDP failed to comply with G-4.0207.

**Specification of Error No. 5:** The SPJC erred in constitutional interpretation by holding that the GDP allowed a dismissed congregation to retain its records, in violation of G-3.0107.

This specification of error is not sustained.

According to G-3.0107, when a congregation is dismissed to another denomination its session ceases to exist as a council of the PC(U.S.A.). The successor to a former church council is the presbytery and upon dismissal of the congregation the minutes and registers of the session become the property and responsibility of the presbytery. The presbytery may make provision for the departing congregation to retain copies of the records for historical purposes.

**Decision**

For the reasons set forth above, this Commission finds that The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast did not err and affirms its decision.
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Northeast Permanent Judicial Commission is hereby sustained in its entirety and that the Gracious Dismissal Policy of The Presbytery of New York City be set aside and shall have no force or effect.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this Decision to the Synod of the Northeast at the first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Northeast enter the full Decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of New York City report this Decision to the Presbytery of New York City at the first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of New York City enter the full Decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

Absences and Non-Appearances

Commissioner Mary Charlotte McCall did not participate in the hearing or deliberations.

Certificate

We certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Remedial Case 221-08, The Presbytery of New York City, Appellant (Respondent), v. Ruling Elder Mildred McGee, Teaching Elder Flora Wilson Bridges, Ruling Elder Douglas Howard, Teaching Elder Lonnie Bryant, Ruling Elder Daniel Amiot Priso, Teaching Elder Phillip Newell, Ruling Elder Emmanuel Gouad Njayick, Teaching Elder George Todd, Ruling Elder Estella Taylor, and Ruling Elder Norita Chisolm, Appellees (Complainants), made and announced at San Antonio, Texas, this 4th day of May 2014.

B. Mid Council Statements of Compliance with the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions

Section IV.B.2.d. of the Organization for Mission requires that when a decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission contains an order directed to another council, the Stated Clerk report to the General Assembly a statement of the council’s compliance. Below is a report of the statements of compliance received by the Stated Clerk from the councils for cases decided by the Permanent Judicial Commission during the year 2012–2014.

1. GAPJC Remedial Case 221-01, Thomas Priest, Jr., Appellant/Appellee (Complainant), v. Presbytery of Detroit, Appellee/Appellant (Respondent).

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the decision on the preliminary questions by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Covenant is affirmed and its dismissal of the case is affirmed. Consequently, the dismissal of the case by the Executive Committee of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission is also affirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant report this Decision to the Synod of the Covenant at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Covenant enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Detroit report this Decision to the Presbytery of Detroit at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Detroit enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Presbytery of Detroit stated meeting on August 28, 2012, and the Synod of the Covenant stated meeting on August 8, 2013.

2. GAPJC Disciplinary Case 221-02, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Presbytery of Newark Appellant/Complainant, v. Laurie McNeill, Appellee/Accused.

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of the Northeast is hereby sustained.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Newark report this Decision and Order to the Presbytery at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.
The decision was reported at the Synod of the Northeast October 20, 2012, stated meeting. The Presbytery of Newark has not yet provided confirmation of compliance.

3. GAPJC Remedial Case 221-03, Wilbur Tom, David Hawbeker and Thomas Conrad, Appellants (Complainants) v. Presbytery of San Francisco, Appellee (Respondent).

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of the Pacific Permanent Judicial Commission is affirmed in part and reversed in part as set forth above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Pacific report this Decision to the Synod of the Pacific at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Pacific enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Covenant August 8, 2013, stated meeting and the Presbytery of Maumee Valley at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of the Covenant enter the full Decision upon its minutes and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The following orders were entered by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Decision of the Synod of Lincoln Trails is affirmed in part and reversed in part as set forth above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Lincoln Trails report this Decision to the Synod of Lincoln Trails at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of Lincoln Trails enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii at its first meeting after receipt, that the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii enter the full Decision upon its minutes and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of the Covenant August 8, 2013, stated meeting and the Presbytery of Maumee Valley at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Maumee Valley enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Lincoln Trails at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Lincoln Trails enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Lincoln Trails at its first meeting after receipt, that the Presbytery of Lincoln Trails enter the full Decision upon its minutes, and an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

The decision was reported at the Synod of Lincoln Trails stated meeting on March 22, 2014. The Midwest Hanmi Presbytery has not yet provided confirmation of compliance.
C. *Vote of Presbyteries on Proposed Amendments.* [See votes listed by presbytery on p. 436, electronic version.]

### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

**Approved By The 220th General Assembly (2012)**

Approval of Heidelberg requires 116 affirmative votes;
all other amendments require 87 affirmative votes.

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D. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Agency Summary

1. Assigned Responsibilities

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (“ACC”) is composed of nine voting members as established by the Book of Order, G-3.0501c and G-6.02. The nine voting members, teaching and ruling elders, are required by the current Manual of the General Assembly to be stated clerks or former stated clerks of synods or presbyteries, former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly, polity professors, or other qualified persons with knowledge of and experience with the Constitution and polity of the church. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is a member ex-officio without vote.

With regard to questions requiring an interpretation of the Book of Order, the ACC’s responsibilities are set out in G-6.02 as follows:

All questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the Book of Order arising from councils of the church shall be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such questions of interpretation to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, except those pertaining to matters pending before a judicial commission. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall communicate its report and recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly, no less than sixty days prior to the General Assembly.

With regard to proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the ACC’s mandated responsibilities are set out in G-6.04b, as follows:

b. The Stated Clerk shall refer all such proposals to amend the Book of Order to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (G-6.02), which shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At least sixty days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly, the advisory committee shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the committee. The General Assembly shall not consider any amendment until it has considered the report and any recommendations from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

2. Process and Procedures, Responsibilities and Relationships

The ACC does not interpret the Constitution. The role of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, as its title suggests and as its constitutional mandate clearly establishes, is to advise the General Assembly. The ACC’s advice has no authority until and unless it is approved by the General Assembly. With respect to proposed amendments to the Constitution, the ACC focuses on clarity of proposed language and consistency of the proposed amendment with the Constitution. The ACC occasionally finds that the intent of the proposal is already inherent in other provisions of the Constitution or that it could be achieved by slight changes in language, by placing the amendment in a different section, or by different language entirely. On occasion, the ACC has suggested such changes in order to avoid inconsistencies within the Book of Order, and also to make as few changes as possible in existing paragraphs and in section numbering. At least sixty days prior to each General Assembly, the ACC is required to report its findings to the assembly, which findings may include advice for amended versions of any proposed changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the ACC.

With respect to requests for interpretation, as well as advice on overtures, the ACC seeks to provide advice that is based on constitutional issues, not on the substance of the issues at hand. In many circumstances, the question has been answered by earlier interpretations and does not require action by the General Assembly. In these cases, the inquirer is notified of the standing interpretation. In order to make clear the questions raised, the ACC has modified its past practice of reprinting the entire request received (which in some instances contained material not germane to the question itself), and has focused the presentation of the request on the question presented, together with the ACC’s findings and advice. If the question was not clear from the request received, the ACC has sought clarification from the individual transmitting the request.

All overtures and reports containing proposed amendments and all requests for interpretation of the Book of Order by the General Assembly must be communicated in writing to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly (Book of Order, G-6.02, G-6.04a). This 120-day time period allows the ACC time to consider and research carefully each proposed amendment and request. Those requests that the ACC brings to the General Assembly are those that it believes meet this constitutional criterion.

The ACC completed its preparatory work for the 221st General Assembly (2014) in two meetings. At a two-day fall meeting, September 28–29, 2013, the ACC began work on the task of preparing for the 221st General Assembly (2014). At its spring five-day meeting, March 14–18, 2014, the ACC concluded its work of preparing responses to constitutional issues to be considered by the 221st General Assembly (2014).

After it has received and considered the advice of the ACC, the General Assembly is free to take whatever action it deems wise on proposed amendments, requests for interpretations, and referrals.

The primary focus of the ACC is to fulfill its constitutional function to provide advice to the General Assembly concerning overtures that seek to amend the Constitution, and concerning requests for interpretation of the Constitution.
3. Editorial Corrections

The Organization for Mission provides, at Section IV.B.2.c., that the Stated Clerk shall prepare editorial changes in the Book of Order, which should be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, provided the changes do not alter the substance of the text approved by the presbyteries. The following editorial changes have been made by the Stated Clerk and approved by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution:

a. Editorial Change to F-1.0302, F-1.0302a, and F-2.03

There are three editorial corrections to remove the commas from the phrase “the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.” The removal of the commas is to align these three sections with the Book of Confessions, Nicene Creed, 1.3, to which the phrase in F-1.0302a. and F-2.03 is footnoted. The editorial change has these sections now reading:

F-1.0302:

“F-1.0302 The Marks of the Church

“With all Christians of the Church catholic, we affirm that the Church is ‘one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.’”

F-1.0302a:

“a. The Unity of the Church

“Unity is God’s gift ... .

“Because in Christ the Church is one, it strives to be one. To be one with Christ is to be joined with all those whom Christ calls into relationship with him. To be thus joined with one another is to become priests for one another, praying for the world and for one another and sharing the various gifts God has given to each Christian for the benefit of the whole community. Division into different denominations obscures but does not destroy unity in Christ. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity, and is willing to seek and to deepen communion with all other churches within the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.”

F-2.03:

“F-2.03 THE CONFESSIONS AS STATEMENTS OF THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH CATHOLIC

“In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) witnesses to the faith of the Church catholic. The confessions express the faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church in the recognition of canonical Scriptures and the formulation and adoption of the ecumenical creeds, notably the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds with their definitions of the mystery of the triune God and of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus Christ.”

b. Editorial Change to G-2.0610

An internal discrepancy of the use of three-fourths was found within G-2.0610 and with another section in the Book of Order. The following editorial correction is made by striking out “three-quarters” and replacing it with “three-fourths” to maintain internal consistency within this section and with another citation using “three-fourths” in G-2.0504c.

“G-2.0610 Exceptions

“By a three-fourths vote, a presbytery may waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-quarters three-fourths vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for exception shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”

c. Editorial Change to D-2.0101a and D-2.0202

The use of “the Presbyterian Mission Agency” is redundant to the phrase “entity of the General Assembly.” The editorial change is:

“D-2.0101 Church Discipline

“Judicial process is the means by which church discipline is implemented within the context of pastoral care and oversight. It is the exercise of authority by the councils of the church for
“a. the prevention and correction of irregularities and delinquencies by councils, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, or an entity of the General Assembly (Remedial Cases, D-6.0000);”

“D-2.0202 Remedial

“A remedial case is one in which an irregularity or a delinquency of a lower council, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, or an entity of the General Assembly may be corrected by a higher council.”

d. Editorial Change to D-6.0101

There were a series of amendments to the 2013 Book of Order allowing for two or more synods sharing common boundaries to form a shared permanent judicial commission. One of those amendments was to D-6.0101, which appeared to be taken from the advice of the ACC, but the word “that” in the ACC advice was changed to “the” in the final action, making it less clear to which clerk the complaint was to be transmitted. The editorial change is to the original ACC advice approved by the assembly:

“D-6.0101 Initiation of a Remedial Case, Method of Initiation, was amended in 2013 to read:

“A remedial case is initiated by the filing of a complaint with the stated clerk of the council having jurisdiction. If a different clerk has been designated to process judicial cases for a shared judicial commission, the stated clerk having jurisdiction shall immediately transmit the complaint to the that clerk.”

e. Editorial Change to D-11.0502

In 2011, D-13.0102 Initiation of Appeal (of Disciplinary Case) was amended to read: “Only the person found guilty may initiate the first level of appeal by the filing of a written notice of appeal.”

However, D-11.0502, Provisions for Appeal (of Disciplinary Case) was not also amended at that time to be in alignment with D-13.0102. The editorial change is:

“D-11.0502 Appeals

“Either party. Only the person found guilty may initiate the first level of appeal. Either party may initiate an appeal of the appellate decision. Rules of appeal are found in D-13.0000.”

4. ACC Membership and OGA Staff Support

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution was saddened at the sudden death of the Reverend Stewart Pollock, our faithful moderator since 2012, on March 5, 2014. Stewart shared his intellect, compassion, and commitment with us as he served the church on the ACC. We were blessed to have known Stewart and to work alongside him, and we give thanks to God for his life and witness.

Following Stewart’s death, Vice Moderator Therese Howell became moderator of the ACC. Neal Presa, Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012), appointed the Reverend Steven Plank, stated clerk/communicator for the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, to fill the two years remaining on Stewart’s term of service on the ACC. Steve brings his experience serving as a stated clerk in three different presbyteries to the work of the ACC.

On behalf of the 221st General Assembly (2014), the Advisory Committee on the Constitution expresses its thanks and appreciation to Teaching Elders Heahwan Rim and Keith Geckler and Ruling Elder Susan Evans for their dedicated service to the church and through their work on the ACC. Each has brought profound gifts and deep dedication to the work of the ACC.

The ACC is grateful for the staff assistance of the Reverend Joyce Lieberman, associate for Constitutional Interpretation, and Diane Minter, Mid Council Ministries administrative assistant.

Finally, the ACC is deeply grateful for the wisdom and counsel of Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, who serves as an ex officio member of the ACC. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve with him.

E. Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) Agency Summary

I. Narrative

Assigned Responsibilities

The Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL) is composed of six Presbyterian attorneys. Each year the General Assembly elects one member to a six-year term. Each member is eligible for reelection to an additional term, but in no case may a
member serve for a period exceeding twelve consecutive years of service. The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates persons for the ACL who fit the criteria for eligibility. The Advisory Committee on Litigation was established by the 200th General Assembly (1988) to advise the Stated Clerk on matters relating to litigation.

The consultations typically take place via telephone conference calls after committee members have been provided copies of all pertinent pleadings, orders, and information. The committee ordinarily meets face-to-face at least once each year. It is normally consulted whenever the Stated Clerk is asked to participate in litigation involving matters of civil and religious liberty, church and state relations, and other matters related to the mission and interests of the church.

The Advisory Committee on Litigation reviews each of the cases, amicus briefs, and General Assembly policy and constitution based on seventeen criteria and advises the Stated Clerk whether or not to file an amicus brief in the particular case.

II. Disposition of Cases Reported in (2010–2012)

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta v. Timberridge Presbyterian Church, Inc.

On April 11, 2011, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief to the Supreme Court of Georgia in support of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta in *Presbytery of Greater Atlanta v. Timberridge Presbyterian Church, Inc.* The amicus brief stated that the Georgia court of appeals had misapplied federal first amendment constitutional law when determining whether a congregation of PC(USA) holds property in trust for the denomination. The amicus brief described the trust inherent within the PC(USA) denomination as well as the express trust found within the Constitution of the PC(USA).

On November 21, 2011, the Georgia Supreme Court issued a decision that found that there was an implication that local church property was held in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) when the court applied “neutral principles of law” and when the court looked to documents ordering the relationship between the congregation and the denomination.

On March 6, 2012, Timberridge Presbyterian Church of Atlanta filed a petition for a writ of certiorari (review) in the U.S. Supreme Court. The petition for a writ of certiorari was denied on June 18, 2012.

Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC, et al

On June 20, 2011, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several faith partners to the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC, et al.* The amicus brief stated that the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution precludes governmental intervention into the selection by religious entities of clergy and other religiously significant employees. The amicus brief further affirmed the Courts of Appeals that had interpreted antidiscrimination laws and other laws to include a “ministerial exception” to preserve the intent of the First Amendment.

On January 11, 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision that found the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment bar suits brought on behalf of ministers against their churches that claim termination in violation of employment discrimination laws.

Health Care: DEPT. OF H&HS, ET AL. V. FLORIDA, ET AL

On February 13, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into a faith amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of Medicaid expansions in the Affordable Care Act with many faith partners about the moral perspectives that have led the faith communities to support the Medicaid expansions and improvements in the Affordable Care Act. The brief reiterated that all of the faith partners agree that it is the calling of government to bring justice and protection to the poor and the sick and thus have been supportive of Medicaid and its expansions.

The U.S. Supreme court held oral arguments on the case on March 28, 2012.

On June 28, 2012, in a 5-4 decision, the U.S. Supreme court held that the Affordable Care Act’s “individual mandate” provision, which requires virtually all Americans to obtain health insurance or pay a penalty, is a valid exercise of Congress’s power under the Taxing Clause. However, the Medicaid expansion provision of the ACA violates the Constitution by threatening states with the loss of their existing Medicaid funding if they decline to comply with the expansion.

*Masterson et al v. Diocese of Northwest Texas et al.*

On February 21, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several faith partners to the Supreme Court of Texas in support of the Episcopal Church of America Diocese of Northwest Texas in *Masterson et al v. Diocese of Northwest Texas et al.* The brief stated that there are two federal constitutionally valid methods for resolving intra-church property disputes. The brief described the two approaches that can be used by state court: the neutral principles analysis to determine whether there is a trust inherent within hierarchical denominations or applying deference to any express trust found with a denominational constitution.
On August 20, 2013, the Supreme Court of Texas issued an opinion that held Texas courts should use the neutral principles methodology to determine property interests when religious organizations are involved. To reduce confusion and increase predictability in this area of the law where the issues are difficult to begin with, Texas courts must use only the neutral principles construct.

**Arizona v. U.S.A.**

On March 26, 2012, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with several partners including the United Catholic Conference of Bishops, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service on behalf of the United States in *Arizona v. U.S.A.* to the U.S. Supreme Court. The amicus brief argued that the comprehensive Federal Immigration law preempts Arizona statute 1070. The brief argued that federal immigration law creates a comprehensive balance of competing interests including the interests of the churches in family unity and human dignity. The brief also argued that the state statute provided a serious threat to religious liberty in that it impedes and criminalizes the church’s moral imperative to provide help, including food and shelter, to all persons who have need. The federal government is prohibited from enforcing immigration laws in a manner that imposes substantial burdens on religious exercise however state and local governments are not.

The U.S. Supreme court held oral arguments on the case on April 25, 2012.

On June 25, 2012, the U.S. Supreme court held in a 5-2 decision that three of the four provisions of Arizona statute 1070 were preempted by Federal Immigration law because they either operated in areas solely controlled by federal policy, or they interfered with federal enforcement efforts. Nullified were sections making it a crime to be in Arizona without legal papers, making it a crime to apply for or get a job in the state, or allowing police to arrest individuals who had committed crimes that could lead to their deportation. The Court left intact—but subject to later challenges in lower courts—a provision requiring police to arrest and hold anyone they believe has committed a crime and whom they think is in the country illegally, and holding them until their immigration status could be checked with federal officials.

### III. Cases Joined (2012–2014)

**Episcopal Church Cases**

**Virginia Supreme Court**

On December 21, 2009, Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons entered into an amicus brief with a variety of denominational religious partners to the Virginia Supreme Court challenging an old Virginia statute on U.S. Constitution 1st Amendment issues. The 1867 Virginia statute that was challenged delineates a process by which a congregation may determine which branch of a denomination to which it will belong or how an independent congregation will organize itself to own and hold property.

The amici argued that the Virginia state statute violated the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in that it displaced a church’s own rules of self-governance in determining property ownership and voting rights, it required civil courts to conduct an extensive inquiry into fundamentally religious questions, and it was neither “generally applicable,” “neutral,” nor was it the least restrictive means to serve a compelling state interest.

On June 10, 2010, the Virginia Supreme Court issued a decision that found that the state statute did not apply to the facts in the case and thus the court did not need to rule on the constitutionality of the state statute. The Virginia Supreme Court remanded the case to determine whether declaratory judgment in favor of the Diocese was final. On January 10, 2010, the Circuit Court of Fairfax County found for the Episcopal Church and Diocese in their Declaratory Judgment actions and, among other relief, ordered that all real property conveyed by forty-one deeds, as well as all personal property acquired by nine congregations up to the filing date of the Declaratory Judgment be promptly conveyed to the Diocese. The congregations have appealed the order and the execution of the order during appeal.

On January 22, 2013, Gradye Parsons, the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), joined the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia and Abingdon Presbytery, the Episcopal Diocese of Southern and Southwestern Virginia, the United Methodist Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America urging the Virginia Supreme Court to hold the state statute unconstitutional but otherwise uphold their decision of June 10, 2010.

On April 18, 2013, the Virginia Supreme Court issued a decision that used neutral principals of law analysis to impose a constructive denominational trust on the property of the congregations withdrawing from the Episcopal Church.

On October 9, 2013, the congregations filed a petition for a writ of certiorari with the U.S. Supreme Court. On March 10, 2014, the petition for certiorari was denied.

**Town of Greece v. Susan Galloway and Linda Stephens**

On September 23, 2103, Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), entered into an amicus brief with the Baptist Joint Commission on Religious Liberty arguing that the practice of opening town meetings with a faith-
specific, communal prayer violates the Establishment Clause because it infringes the freedom of conscience guaranteed to each person. Although people of faith often pray collectively—for example, in churches, synagogues, and mosques—they make a voluntary decision to do so, exercising their constitutional right to form a congregation of persons who have the same approach to worshiping God. In contrast, attendees at a town meeting have not agreed to join a government formed congregation. They come to participate in local government, not communal prayer.

The U.S. Supreme issued a 5-4 decision on May 5, 2014, in which it held that the town’s practice of opening its town board meetings with a prayer offered by members of the clergy does not violate the Establishment Clause. The Court found that the practice is consistent with the tradition long followed by Congress and state legislatures, the town does not discriminate against minority faiths in determining who may offer a prayer, and the prayer does not coerce participation with non-adherents.

_Holt v. Hobbs_

On May 29, 2014, Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), entered into an amicus brief with a variety of faith entities as amici stating that religious liberty is a basic and therefore essential principle of human freedom codified in the right to free exercise of religion clause in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and by Congress in the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). RLUIPA does this by ensuring that the core principle of religious freedom—i.e., that the government should not impose burdens that interfere with the religiously informed conscience of its citizens—is protected for even the least politically powerful. In this case, the religious liberty of an observant Muslim prisoner, who seeks merely to grow a one-half inch beard in accordance with his religious beliefs, is not overridden by security and safety concerns.
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*Voted on by the synod administrative commission acting as the Presbytery of Alaska.*
**Item 07-01**

[The assembly disapproved Item 07-01 with comment. See p. 34.]

[Comment: Though the committee voted not to approve Item 07-01, we take the matter of language, and specifically the tension around the use of the term “Israel,” very seriously. We hope the discussion and education about the use of language continues.]

_On Distinguishing Between Biblical Terms for Israel and Those Applied to the Modern Political State of Israel in Christian Liturgy—From the Presbytery of Chicago._

The Presbytery of Chicago overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church, (U.S.A.), to

1. distinguish between the biblical terms that refer to the ancient land of Israel and the modern political State of Israel;

2. develop educational materials, with the help of our Presbyterian seminaries, for clergy, church musicians, worship leaders, and Christian educators regarding the “ancient Israel/modern Israel” distinction; and

3. inform our ecumenical partners of this action, nationally and globally—particularly within Israel and Palestine.

_Rationale_

This overture was prompted by the publication of the beautiful new publication of _Glory to God, The Presbyterian Hymnal_, 2013, which has a section of hymns under the unfortunate heading: “God’s covenant with Israel.”

The use of the phrase “God’s covenant with Israel,” is open to interpretation by the reader/singer. Is this “biblical Israel”? Is it the “modern State of Israel”? As one Palestinian American Presbyterian who is a ruling elder said in a letter to those responsible for the publication of the new hymnal:

“Because I am a Palestinian Christian, I am uneasy with the word “Israel” in “God’s Covenant with Israel”—I am always told, however, that what is meant by “Israel” is Biblical Israel and not today’s Israel; but do all Christians know this? With the prevalence of Christian Zionism, which the G.A. repudiated in 2004, I highly doubt it. Even if not intentional, this language is inflammatory, misleading, and hurtful” (Open Letter, October 2, 2013).

One response would be to rephrase it as “God’s covenant with Ancient Israel,” or, as Thomas Are, retired Presbyterian minister, said in a recent blog, “God’s covenant with the Poor, or even “Our Covenant with the Oppressed” [11.26.13; http://thomas-l-are.blogspot.com/2013_11_01_archive.html], but there are other examples of the problem. In Advent, we sing “O Come, O Come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel. …” Does that justify the modern political State of Israel? At the least, it is confusing and unclear. Our Christian Palestinian brothers and sisters call us to make this distinction clearly.

Mitri Raheb, pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, says: “The establishment of the State of Israel created … an intended confusion. … Huge efforts were put by the State of Israel and Jewish organizations in branding the new State of Israel as a “biblical entity” (The Invention of History: A century of interplay between theology and politics in Palestine, Mitri Raheb, editor, 2011; Diyar Consortium, pp. 18–19).

We need to make distinctions between biblical Israel and the modern state. Joshua Ralston writes, in Religion and Ethics:

One way that the recurring challenge of balancing pro-Palestinian advocacy and the rejection of anti-Semitism could be addressed is by avoiding using ancient Israel, Jews and the modern nation-state of Israel largely interchangeably. … The best way for Christians to avoid this bind is to more clearly question the direct correlation between ancient Israel, Jews across space and time, and the modern political state of Israel and its occupation of the Palestinian Territories, even as Christians affirm the importance of land for Judaism. (Ralston teaches theology at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2013/05/13/3758316.htm)

Words shape our reality. Linguists have shown this for some time now. The unnamed are largely invisible. That’s why we Presbyterians and others revised the sexist language in our hymns to be inclusive. We learn much of our theology from singing hymns! That is the theme of Bill Tammeus’ column in _The Presbyterian Outlook:_

Most of us have heard the possibly apocryphal story of theologian Karl Barth answering a student’s question about the most important thing he’s learned in his decades of study. Barth responded with words from a Sunday school hymn: “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” What always struck me about the story was that in his answer Barth affirmed that we learn lots of theology through the words of hymns. It’s still true. (10.14.2013)

In the early days of identifying and changing sexist language in hymns, words were crossed out and new words were written in. It is not so easy to do that with biblical terms that have come to be associated with the modern political State of Israel.

That is why this overture requests the help of our Presbyterian seminaries in clarifying the use of these terms and how to use them appropriately to reference biblical Israel and how to use them appropriately.
Concurrence to Item 07-01 from the Synod of the Covenant.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 07-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee advises that this overture be answered with the following action:

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) instructs the Office of Theology and Worship of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop a short insert or sticker for publications used in congregational worship and study with wording similar in meaning to the following:

“Please note in using these texts that the biblical and liturgical “land of Israel” is not the same as the State of Israel established in 1948, which is a contemporary nation state. The Bible contains differing descriptions of the parameters of Israel. Promises of land generally come with obligations to God for justice to be practiced with all inhabitants. Later in Scripture, the Gospel is to be preached to ‘all nations’; in Jesus Christ all peoples are included in God’s promise. Similarly, ‘Zion’ is frequently used in the Bible as a reference to the city of Jerusalem, but in Christian tradition this does not refer primarily to a specific geographical location or political entity but to ‘the city of God’ found throughout history and to the completion of God’s purpose in the age to come. Presbyterian General Assemblies have affirmed the principle that the current physical Jerusalem be shared by Jews, Christians, and Muslims, both Palestinians and Israelis, living in peace with justice.”

“Further, the General Assembly directs that the Office of Theology and Worship and the Office of the General Assembly share the insert language with an explanatory letter encouraging its use within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and among our church partners internationally, particularly in Israel and Palestine, noting where fuller treatment of the concern may be found.”

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that commissioners answer this overture with the proposal to instruct the Office of Theology and Worship to develop an insert or similar brief guidance for use not only in hymnals but in other printed and online resources where it is important for God’s purposes not to be identified with any particular nation state. In the words of The Confession of 1967, “Although nations may serve God’s purposes in history, the church which identifies the sovereignty of any one nation or any one way of life with the cause of God denies the Lordship of Christ and betrays its calling” (https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/theologyandworship/pdfs/confess67.pdf).

In 1987, the General Assembly approved for “provisional” study a report called, “A Theological Understanding of the Relationship between Christians and Jews,” which states: “The State of Israel is a geopolitical entity and is not to be validated theologically” (under affirmation 6; http://www.pcusa.org/resource/theological-understanding-relationship-between-chr).

A careful treatment of God’s relation to the land in the Bible is found in the biblical background section of the 2010 social witness policy on the Middle East, “Breaking Down the Walls” (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/report-middle-east-study-committee/). A treatment of related aspects of Christian and Jewish relations can be found in “Christians and Jews: People of God,” a paper developed by the Office of Theology and Worship working with Jewish partners. To be posted along with it is a paper by a Lebanese Christian respondent to “People of God,” George Sabra, who illustrates questions and issues at stake raised in a dialogue process. Neither “Christians and Jews: People of God,” nor the Sabra response, possess official standing. [See Item 01-02, II. Final Responses to Referrals, F. Presbyterian Mission Agency, Referral 17, 2010 Referral: Item 08-09].

Because divine authorization is often claimed by settlers who occupy land designated by treaty for a Palestinian state, the matter addressed by the overture is likely to remain relevant for some time. The Church of Scotland addressed similar concerns in its 2013 assembly statement: http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/ data/assets/pdf_file/0010/14050/The_Inheritance_of_Abraham.pdf. A further brief treatment of this matter by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is found in the 2004 Resolution on Confronting Christian Zionism: http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/resolution-confronting-christian-zionism/.

Particularly in light of the treatments of this matter in “Breaking Down the Walls” and the Scottish Church’s, “The Inheritance of Abraham? A Report on the ‘Promised Land’,” the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy believes the approach recommended above can meet the serious concern of the presbyteries sponsoring this overture. The use of the insert language would, of course, be voluntary, but does reflect the position of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 07-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 07-01 with amendment as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]
“1. [Draft] Distinguish between the biblical terms that refer to the ancient land of Israel and the modern political State of Israel[s] [This distinction should be made by worship leaders whenever ‘Israel’ is used in a worship setting, whether in hymns, prayers, confession, or sermon.]”

“2. [Direct ACSWP to] develop educational materials [that define ‘Israel’ and related terms such as Zion and Promised Land], with the help of our Presbyterian seminaries, for clergy, church musicians, worship leaders, and Christian educators regarding the ‘ancient Israel/modern Israel’ distinction; and [provide them before the 222nd General Assembly (2016)].”

“3. [Direct the Stated Clerk to] inform our ecumenical partners of this action, nationally and globally—particularly within Israel and Palestine [in the Middle East—as soon as possible].”

The ACREC acknowledges with thanks the work of the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song (PCOCS) who produced the beautiful new hymnal, *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*. We are grateful for their careful and deliberate work to avoid language “that stereotypes persons according to categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, age, or disabilities…”

However, ACREC agrees with the National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus (NMEPC) that the section heading “God’s Covenant to Israel” included in the new hymnal is problematic. In the “Theological Vision Statement” in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, Appendix 1, the new hymnal expresses concern about people who have been separated from the centers of power, and declares an intention to “inspire and embolden” to create a “peace that is beyond understanding,” so as to appeal to “worshipers who have not had life-long formation by Scripture and basic Christian doctrine, much less Reformed theology” (*Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, 2013, Westminster John Knox Press, p. 926). This intention is very welcome, but falls short, as ACREC sees it.

The ACREC believes that for the PC(USA), which is a denomination committed to peace for Israelis and Palestinians alike, it is problematic in the pluralistic setting of the 21st century to use terminology from another era that has taken on new meanings today, without explaining what all the meanings are. The ACREC supports the intent of this overture and believes we are in need of new educational materials to clarify meanings of words that come to us with multiple layers and meanings in today’s pluralistic setting.

For many worshipers today, the word “Israel” has taken on political and military connotations and the original scriptural meanings are almost lost. Just as PC(USA) adopted inclusive and expansive language for racial and gender justice, ACREC believes it is important and timely to be intentional and well-informed with language that has taken on political meanings beyond the walls of church and worship.

Littlefield Presbyterian Church in Dearborn, MI has used the following paragraph for several years in their worship bulletin:

“ISRAEL” LANGUAGE IN WORSHIP—We want to be sensitive to the pain of our Palestinian-American friends and others when they encounter “Israel” in the language of scriptures, hymns and liturgy. In our worship, “Israel” is referring to ancient Israel, not the modern political state. At various times in history it meant the collective name of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob, “the people of Israel,” the nation of Israel as a whole, or, during the period of the Divided Monarch, to the Northern Kingdom. We want to be faithful hearers and interpreters of the scripture and recognize that Jesus was a Jew, a descendent of David, King of the United Monarchy, and that what we know as the Old Testament was Jesus’ scriptures.

On PALM SUNDAY, we need to remember that the people who waved palm branches in Jerusalem lived under the yoke of occupation and oppression by the Roman Empire. Over the centuries other oppressed peoples have identified with the plight and the longings of the people of Israel when they were enslaved, exiled, and occupied and also with the message of deliverance and freedom they found in the scriptures. We pray fervently for the day when the Palestinian people no longer live under occupation, a day when Palestinians and Israelis find a way to live together in peace, with justice for all.

COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 07-01

Comment on Item 07-01—From the Committee on Theological Education.

This item seeks the help of Presbyterian theological seminaries in the development of educational materials. The Committee on Theological Education (COTE), which includes among its members the presidents of all PC(USA)-related seminaries as well as elected teaching and ruling elders, notes that although COTE provides a major link between the seminaries and the General Assembly, the schools are independent entities whose activities cannot be directed by General Assembly action. The schools serve the denomination in a wide variety of ways, but they do not provide educational resources directly to the assembly. When such resources are required, the usual mechanism is the Presbyterian Mission Agency, through its Theology, Worship, and Education ministry area. The faculty and staff of the Presbyterian seminaries frequently serve as advisors on projects, when invited and as time permits.

Comment on Item 07-01—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Integral to the narrative of salvation history in the Scriptures is particularity. Christians have long dealt with the so-called “scandal of particularity” that roots God’s relation with humankind as one mediated through particular individuals and peoples, most importantly through Jesus of Nazareth. This unfolding of salvation history means that God’s covenant with Israel cannot be dispensed with by contemporary Christians. Israel is part of our spiritual and theological vocabulary.

At the same time, the General Assembly has articulated a number of times that Christians should distinguish between the people Israel in the Scriptures and the modern state of Israel. The distinction between ancient Israel and the modern State of Israel is important, one that helps us make sense of our faith and its relationship to Judaism and the Jewish people.

The importance of these distinctions was recognized and articulated by our denomination in the document “A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews,” which was commended by the 199th General Assembly (1987) for study and reflection. That document makes the distinction in this way: “Both Christianity and Judaism claim relationship with the ancient people Israel; the use of the ‘Israel’ in this study is restricted to its ancient reference. When referring to the contemporary State of Israel this document will use ‘State of Israel’” (Section on “Definitions and Language”). The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved a resolution on Christian Zionism that expressed that “Christian Zionism does not represent the majority of American Christians and the faith of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” [http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/resolution-confronting-christian-zionism/]. Among other things, Christian Zionism is the belief that Christians are required by their faith to support the policies of the modern state of Israel.

At the same time we must also be careful not to claim that God’s covenant is strictly limited to ancient Israel. While it is a danger to confuse the biblical narrative of Israel with the modern state, there is also a danger in declaring that God’s particular relationship with the people Israel ended in the time of the New Testament.

In our present situation congregations and individual Presbyterians will hear the language of “Israel” in multiple different ways. In some cases, “Israel” will be understood to be the present day State of Israel. In other cases, talk about “Israel” and the Old Testament narratives of the people of Israel will be a way of entering into God’s work of deliverance from oppression, living life as sojourners, and God’s promise of entry into a place of abundance.

This overture is a call for educational help in having a clear understanding of important distinctions, the distinctions articulated in “A Theological Understanding of the Relationship Between Christians and Jews.” The distinctions made in that document can help Presbyterians speak of “Israel” (both as an ancient people and a contemporary nation) with clarity, insight, and faithfulness. Any additional educational materials on this subject would need to be contextually sensitive to congregations and their particular conversation partners.

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**Item 07-02**

[The assembly approved Item 07-02 with amendment. See p. 34.]

*The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Approve “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” as a policy statement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [see below].

2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

   Shall G-5.0102 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks new will be open to [and will seek] opportunities for conversation and understanding respectful dialogue and mutual relationships with non-Christian [entities and persons from other] religious [entities] and persons outside the Christian tradition [traditions]. It does this in the faith that the church of Jesus Christ, by the power of the [Holy] Spirit, is a sign and means of God’s intention for the wholeness of all human-kind and all creation.”

3. [Affirm the commitment of] Confessing the history of Christian domination and supremacy over other religions, which included forced conversions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [affirms a commitment] to work for the common good in society together with people of other faiths and interreligious bodies at all levels; and direct the
Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to appropriately support emerging partnerships for this purpose.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate and work toward meeting human needs, seeking [justice and] reconciliation, and pursuing peace through interreligious peacemaking, disaster assistance, and solidarity efforts that attend to respectful interactions with persons of different cultural and religious traditions in both the United States and international contexts; and encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels to do the same.

5. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to the work of congregations and mid councils by helping them to share with one another existing models of interreligious relationship building (including attention to lived experiences, models of dialogue and witness, models of education, models of interreligious peace building and social justice work, models of support for interreligious families, and models of neighborhood).

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to build capacity for strong and mutual interreligious relationships throughout its ministry areas, to develop and promote resources that support the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels in the church’s efforts to build and strengthen those relationships, and facilitate cooperative efforts with other religious traditions for social justice, recognizing that not all people of a particular faith tradition share the same positions on social issues, and endeavor to include as many positions and voices as possible from those faith traditions. With humility, recognize that people from traditions other than ours, and Christians from other parts of the world can also be our teachers for this work.[]. Among these [new] resources would be “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and an accompanying study guide.

7. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to cooperate with youth and young adults in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in their interreligious engagements that support the larger efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in respectful and mutual interreligious relationships on behalf of [justice, peace, reconciliation, and] the common good.

8. Direct the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations to provide support and guidance towards the accomplishment of these objectives and to report back to the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

9. Express its’ thanks to the planning committee for the Consultation on an Interreligious Stance, the writing team, and all those who attended the consultation, for their work in developing “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Introduction

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) long has advocated positive relationships with people of other religious traditions. We have seen these relationships as a specific instance of Christ’s universal command to “… love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” and to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:37, 39). This statement affirms that tradition.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) often has fostered a love for people of other religious traditions, but many times we have not. The first is cause for celebration, thanking God for the grace to be faithful. For the second, the church resolves to do better.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has not always agreed on how to do better. Disagreements over how to respect people of other religious traditions often have been sharp. Yet as we become increasingly aware of the world’s religious diversity, all areas of the church are called to relate positively to people of other religious traditions.¹

Many things draw us together in respect for those who have religious commitments different from our own, including the example and person of Jesus Christ, the evident need for religious peace, the necessity of meeting human needs in a world of poverty and want, and the biblical call to solidarity amid our diversity.

Other things, though, work to pull us apart, including our sometimes self-serving theologies (both pluralist and exclusivist), misplaced goals (such as an overemphasis on statistical growth), and triumphalistic attitudes.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) acknowledges that among ourselves we will disagree on how to relate to others even as we strive together to understand Jesus’ commandment amid a world with people of many different religious traditions. The stance offers help to chart the way forward.

Biblical Backgrounds and Teachings

Interreligious appreciation must arise out of one’s most profound religious beliefs. For Presbyterians it must arise out of interpretation of the Bible, the church’s confessional statements, Reformed theology, and the lived experiences of the church.
In the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, the Israelites found themselves dwelling with Canaanite, Moabite, Babylonian, and Persian peoples among others and influenced by their religious understandings. The stories of God’s gracious activities through Abraham (Genesis 12–17), Joseph (Genesis 37–50), prophets, matriarchs, and patriarchs toward other peoples of the region are part of a growing understanding of God’s love. God’s love is particularized later to cities such as Nineveh (Jonah 3) and to empires such as Assyria and Egypt (Isaiah 19:23–25). And teachings abound: all humans are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27), all have access to God through God’s covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:8–17), strangers are to be treated with hospitality (Leviticus 19:33–34), and God has province over all the nations (which the Psalms tell us repeatedly, e.g., Psalms 47:8).

As the followers of Jesus spread to the cultures of the Roman Empire, they were challenged and influenced by Greek philosophies, Roman emperor worship, Gnostic teachings, and mystery religions of the day. In this setting the writings of the New Testament made crucial contributions that continue to be our guides. As we have indicated above, Jesus’ Great Commandment sets the standard for all of our relationships; furthermore, the Gospel writers and letter writers all expand on the language of God’s love (e.g., 1 John 3, 5).

Much of what we learn about how to relate to people of other religious traditions comes from the letters of Paul. Paul focused on taking the gospel to all people. Paul’s sermon to the Athenians in Acts 17 has provided many with insights helpful to interreligious relationships. As a missionary, Paul encountered a great diversity of religions. Paul took seriously the question: What claims do people of different religions make on one another as they live in accordance with what they believe to be true? Paul’s answer was to honor both our commitments to Christian conscience and our commitments to Christian hospitality.

These passages come to us in the context of other biblical texts. Not all references are loving. Israelites are instructed to destroy Canaanite religious shrines (Deut. 12:2–3), and Paul uses negative terms to describe religious ideas of Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor. 1:22). Some Christians use similar statements to condone disrespecting the religions of other people. Overall, however, the biblical intent is clear: God loves all people—and we are to do likewise.

To be sure, not all the religious resources of the Presbyterian tradition were written to address our current interreligious context. Consider, for example, parts of the Book of Confessions. As might be expected, little is written in the confessions that acknowledges the religious plurality in which most of us live today. In fact, the-confessions contain elements of polemics, even between Christians, that are inappropriate to today’s context. Moreover, The Second Helvetic Confession makes direct negative references to our Jewish and Muslim neighbors, their beliefs and practices (Book of Confessions, 5.014, 5.019–5.020, 5.176, 5.225).

To move in a positive direction in our interreligious relationships and dialogue, these particular texts and the perspectives of our religious neighbors must be acknowledged. As God alone is the Lord of the conscience, the church renounces human judgment in favor of repentance over the harm we have caused our religious neighbors. We repent, but we do not forget, lest we perpetuate unhealthy relationships of division among our neighbors and ourselves.

It is important to reject harmful stereotypes of Jews and Muslims. We also must acknowledge the importance of authentic relationships with people of any religion. Although the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to this point has invested most of its interreligious efforts in relationships with Jews and Muslims, the PC(USA) believes in the importance of relationships with people of every religion.

The Confession of 1967 marked a turning point for Presbyterians in their quest to have loving relationships with people of other religions. It discusses the positive engagement of the church with people of other religions. It reminds the church that in its encounter with other religious traditions it may discover “parallels between other religions and his [sic] own and must approach all religions with openness and respect” (Book of Confessions, 9.42). The confession calls the church to a greater spirit of reconciliation, part of which is an acceptance of human difference.

Foundations for the Future

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been active in interreligious efforts during at least the past four decades as religious plurality has become an issue of prime importance in North America. The general approach to interreligious relations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has given priority to relationships with people rather than traditions—with Muslims rather than Islam, for example. Statements by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have provided direction to church leaders and guidance to local congregations.

The guidance and direction these statements offered have been and continue to be supported by an Office of Interfaith Relations, which was established in 1988 and has functioned since as a catalyst and a platform for affirming and commending the efforts of Presbyterians in interreligious engagement. Together these actions of successive General Assemblies have established six basic building blocks that serve as a foundation for today’s interreligious initiatives:

Building Block #1: The Church. In our pluralistic society, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes that it must work with others because of the sure faith that the church, through the power of the Spirit, is a sign and means of God’s intention for the wholeness and healing of humankind and of all creation.
In A Brief Statement of Faith (1991) the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirmed, “In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image . . . to live as one community” (Book of Confessions, 10.3, Lines 29–32). The ecclesial implications of this affirmation inform one of the “Presbyterian Principles for Interfaith Dialogue” (211th General Assembly [1999]): “We are called to work with others in our pluralistic society for the well-being of our world and for justice, peace, and the sustainability of creation. We do so in the faith that, through God’s Spirit, the Church is a sign and means of God’s intention for the wholeness and unity of humankind and of all creation.”

At its best, the Christian Church makes God’s gift of community visible in human life, recognizing that God is at work in all of God’s creation. This requires relationships with people belonging to a multiplicity of faith commitments as well as those belonging to none.

**Building Block #2: Ecumenical and Interfaith.** Presbyterians develop relationships with people of various faiths in ecumenical and interfaith contexts wherever possible.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s interest in interfaith relations has been intimately related to its ecumenical commitments. The 199th General Assembly (1987) called for engagement with those of other religious traditions through “ecumenical and interfaith channels and organizations whenever possible” (Minutes, 1987, Part I, p. 494, “A Study on Islam,” B.3.e.). This was an extension to interreligious relationships of the historic Lund Principle that churches should do all things together except where differences of conscience require their acting separately.

**Building Block #3: Mission, Dialogue, and Evangelism.** Presbyterians approach others in a spirit of openness and trust as they follow Jesus Christ in respecting and affirming the freedom of others. Thus the church affirms that dialogical (i.e., mutually interactive) relationships are an authentic and appropriate form of witness in which we share ourselves and our commitments and also listen intently to what others express to us.


All witness must be led by a discernment born of the Holy Spirit, offering opportunities for both speaking and listening. Allegiance to Christ is not compromised in dialogue when we (1) do not bend or trim our faith in order to reach artificial agreement with doctrines of another; (2) learn from other religions insofar as it enriches our relationship with the God revealed in Christ; and (3) express our faith as a part of authentic dialogue (Minutes, 1987, Part I, p. 452, “The Nature of Revelation in the Christian Tradition from a Reformed Perspective,” IX.F., Christians in Interfaith Dialogue).

**Building Block #4: Peace, Justice, and Ecology.** Presbyterians are called by God to work with those of other religions for peace, justice, and the sustainability of creation. Experience has taught that the most fruitful interfaith relationships often develop when people of different faiths explore concrete ethical concerns and unite to act on them together.

In 1987, Presbyterians were counseled that “the most fruitful interreligious relationships are likely to develop where persons of different faiths share concrete ethical concerns and can unite to put them into action, with mutual acknowledgment of the religious motivation for action” (Minutes, 1987, Part I, p. 452, “The Nature of Revelation in the Christian Tradition from a Reformed Perspective,” IX.F., Christians in Interfaith Dialogue).

The practical aspects of human well-being have led to a series of recommendations concerning advocacy and action. “Guidelines for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Participation in Interfaith Bodies” (204th General Assembly [1992]) recommended establishment of relationships with multifaith bodies whose “goals, grounded in spirituality, … enable common work toward justice, peace, and the integrity of creation” (Minutes, 1992, Part I, p. 600, Recommendation 6.c.).

**Building Block #5: Modesty in Witness.** Presbyterians urge a humble modesty in witness that recognizes God’s Spirit is at work in ways we often least expect. Whatever the form of witness—mission, dialogue, evangelism, peace, justice, environmental issues—the church affirms that it is not called to respond to others in judgment but in awareness of the limitless grace of God.

Statements about God’s ways with humankind have urged upon Presbyterians a humble modesty in witness. “Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation” (paragraph 43) declared that “… [t]he Spirit of God is constantly at work in ways … that to us are least expected. … Christians seek to discern the unsearchable riches of God and the way he [sic] deals with humanity” (Minutes, 1983, Part I, p. 551). Yet “The Study Catechism” (answer to question 38), says, “The limits [of] salvation … are known only to God” (Minutes, 1998, Part I, p. 613).
A modesty of claims is present in the statement on “Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ” (section on “We Believe in One Lord, Jesus Christ,” 214th General Assembly [2002], Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 525) when it affirms that grace, love, and communion belong to God and are not ours to determine. Modesty leads to rejection of judgmental attitudes toward others. The PC(USA) evangelism document “Turn to the Living God” (section on “People of Many Religions,” 203rd General Assembly [1991]) reads, “As our Christian affirmation meets the faith of others, we are not called to respond in judgment but in awareness of the limitless, saving presence, power, and grace of God” (Minutes, 1991, Part I, p. 676).

Building Block #6: Unfinished Conclusions. Presbyterians acknowledge the unfinished nature of our conclusions about relationships with people of different faiths, in recognition of the limits of our knowledge, our sinful nature, and the mystery of God’s workings in human lives.

Not all questions are humanly answerable. Thus, an element of interreligious relationships has been a commitment to be unfinished in our conclusions.

Spheres of Relationship

Interreligious interactions are not limited to just one aspect of living. The implications of loving our religious neighbors as ourselves must pervade all areas of our life together. Following are nine spheres of life in which interreligious understandings are challenging us and need to be acted on by the people of God. These spheres and the suggestions offered are areas for attention and reflection as we implement the policy implications of the building blocks. Each sphere ends with actions that can be undertaken by church agencies, congregations, and individuals.

1. Human Needs

Human need is everywhere. Often the religions of the world are called on to meet the needs of hunger, natural disasters, poverty, and disease. In meeting human needs around the globe, the religions need one another. We can do more together than we can do apart. How do Presbyterians engage in an interreligious response to human need from our position of historical religious and cultural privilege? How can we collaborate with faith partners to meet these pressing challenges?

Actions:

• Engage in self-reflection through education on seminary and college campuses and in congregations to examine breakdowns in existing paradigms of poverty relief.

• Listen to and incorporate the voices of the marginalized and underrepresented, many of whom have led and are leading the way in meeting human needs.

• See ourselves as friends, not competitors, with people and institutions of other religious traditions as we meet human needs around the globe.

• Be willing to be the gracious recipients of humanitarian and spiritual aid from our neighbors of other religious traditions, especially recognizing God’s concern for the poor.

2. Social Justice

The search for social justice in the world today is one of the most compelling reasons for interreligious activity. Global challenges—such as forced migration, human rights violations, unjust imprisonment, militarism, and totalitarianism—cannot be solved by any single segment of the world’s people or any single religion. Social justice cannot be achieved without the cooperation of the world’s religions.

Actions:

• Explore interreligious opportunities for truth and reconciliation work, including formal acts of repentance for unjust actions of the church, past and present.

• Participate at all levels in established multireligious groups working toward the common good.

• Encourage all the PC(USA)’s entities to do social justice work on an interreligious basis, as appropriate.

• Remember that those in need of social justice, including those of other religious traditions, often have much to teach us about how the gospel manifests itself in cultures different from our own.

3. Mission and Evangelism

Mission and evangelism are central to the Reformed tradition. In our relationships with people of other faiths, dialogical interreligious conversations promote the virtues of mutual respect and mutual understanding. This is an appropriate form of
witness in the sense that we are as “living letters” that others can read, which Paul wrote about (2 Cor. 3:1–3). We witness because God, the creator of life in all its diversity, acted first.

As we consider witness through mission, evangelism, and dialogue, we commend for study the 2013 World Council of Churches document, “Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes.” This document states, “Authentic evangelism takes place in the context of the dialogue of life and action, and in ‘the spirit of dialogue’: ‘an attitude of respect and friendship.’ Evangelism entails not only proclamations of deepest conviction, but also listening to others and being challenged and enriched by others” (“Together Towards Life,” paragraph 95).

In the context of interreligious interactions, we witness to our faith with humility, knowing that what we know about God is limited by our human condition. We accept the challenge of expressing our faith in dialogue, often in spite of the fact that we may not feel as articulate as we would hope, but knowing that peaceful and fruitful relationships with others is surely what God intends as we witness to a truth that is beyond ourselves.

Actions:
• Recognize that the relationship between dialogue and evangelism is not an either/or choice for the church but a both/and requirement.
• Commit to having no hidden agendas in our interactions with people of other religious traditions.
• Have a humble modesty of witness in all our mission and evangelism efforts.

4. Conflict

Too many of the world’s conflicts have a religious component. Religion is used by governments and nongovernmental groups alike either to justify war or to motivate people to fight wars, practice religious discrimination, or engage in acts of persecution. Too often religious people stand by and watch their religions being used to justify conflicts that run counter to the values of love and justice that our traditions espouse.

Actions:
• Advocate justice and peace in all levels of human activity, especially involvement in interreligious peacemaking efforts.
• Work for reconciliation, identifying and resisting destructive interreligious conflict wherever possible.
• Recognize that sometimes Christians may be the cause of conflict; such complicity urges us to repent and change.
• Be open to learn from our religious neighbors.
• Stand with and support, where appropriate, those suffering religious persecution.

5. Families

Interreligious families are common in many of our communities. Challenges can arise for interreligious families as they seek meaningful religious expression across multiple narratives and traditions, work through disagreement and division over religious beliefs, and make choices about how to raise children. Congregations can help families engage issues that likely will arise in their life together.

Actions:
• Engage the whole congregation in important conversations about topics such as: “Families of Origin,” “Life-Cycle Rituals,” “Planning Your Wedding,” “Death and Grief,” “Holiday Observances,” and “Talking with Your Children about God and Values.”
• Draw on spiritual resources to help family members articulate religious values, beliefs, and practices they cherish most and to seek ways to be faithful to them in their family life.

6. Education

Challenges for education in contexts of religious plurality are many. Christians must become self-aware about the assumptions they hold and the habits of mind that guide their thinking about religious neighbors. Christians should know more about the history, beliefs, and practices of our neighbors’ religious traditions.

Actions:
• Articulate a broader definition of education that includes and values lived experiences as a way to engage with people of different religions.
• Develop opportunities for multilevel, interreligious engagement. This might include local, area, or regional conferences involving networks of interreligious people.
• Work to make interreligious dialogue less specialized and more normative, integrated into church members’ lives.
• Identify and share examples of churches engaged in doing interreligious interactions well.
• Train congregational leaders in interreligious work as a way to introduce it to congregations.
• Encourage PC(USA)-affiliated seminaries to expand curriculum that prepares students for ministry in a religiously plural world.
• Reflect more deeply on the interrelationships between mission and evangelism and interreligious work.

7. Communities

Many neighborhoods and communities across the United States are welcoming of greater religious and cultural pluralism. Many are not. People from non-Christian, non-white, non-Western backgrounds often experience discrimination due to religio-cultural bias. Note especially the rise in Islamophobia. Religiously based violence has risen throughout the United States. This violence divides communities and discourages the neighborliness advocated in Scripture and modeled in the life of Jesus Christ.

Actions:
• Reach across religious borders to create community alliances to address social problems in ways congruent with the church’s identity and mission.
• Promote public education regarding religions and the diversity of religious communities.
• Advocate for the rights, protection, and safety of all.

8. Congregations

Even as many congregations are becoming more racially, culturally, and socioeconomically plural, the diversity of the culture at large continues to create challenges: our children develop friendships with their non-Christian acquaintances; our sons and daughters proclaim love for someone from another religious background; our interreligious neighbors invite us and our families to visit their religious services.

In the midst of such opportunities and challenges, the church must make efforts to interact with other religious communities. In the past, we have tended to relate to people of other religions in one-way modes of witness; we now are challenged to forge new relationships of friendship and collegiality that respect our neighbors’ religious search.

Actions:
• Build interreligious relationships not just as a response to crises and conflict, but also as a sign of hospitality and neighborliness.
• Visit our neighbors’ houses of worship when invited, even as we invite our neighbors to visit ours.
• Equip members to appropriately engage religious and social situations involving people of different religious traditions and to receive people from these traditions in Christian contexts.
• Explore what it means to be a Christian community in the midst of multiple faith communities.
• Look for ways to be in dialogue and relationships of mutuality.
• Develop a mutual agreement with another religious community that involves concrete ways in which the two congregations will be in relation.
• Recognize that enduring interreligious alliances can be built around social issues and that people of different religious traditions can work together to address them.

9. Workplace

The interreligious reality of today’s workplace cannot be ignored. Often, the workplace is a space where people for the first time are asked to work across lines of religious difference. Presbyterians have the opportunity to model and express an environment of respect and love for people of other religions in their workplace settings, including respect for holiday observances, time and space for prayer, religious dress, and articles of faith.

Actions:
• Recognize the importance and validity of individuals’ freedom to choose their religious identity and commitments, and advocate that employers work to accommodate the religious practices and observances of employees, knowing that it may not be possible in every case.
• Allow for deeper cooperation and respect among coworkers; education about religious diversity is needed to address much of the prejudice and hatred that exist.

Trust between religious communities is hard-won. In our efforts to build such trust in all these spheres, we will not always see eye-to-eye, especially on issues born from histories of conflict. At times, we may unintentionally misunderstand, disappoint, and hurt one another. Only within a framework of commitment to people of other religious traditions can we remain faithful to these relationships despite such differences and misunderstandings. Following is an affirmation of our commitment to interreligious interactions.

An Affirmation of Interreligious Commitment

We believe the Bible proclaims God’s love for all people, that Christ’s Great Commandment sets the standard for all of our relationships: “… ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,’” and, empowered by the Holy Spirit, “… ‘love your neighbor as yourself’” (Mt. 22:37, 39).

We confess
that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has sought to live up to its commitment to
love people of other religious traditions, but many times we have not;
with God’s help we resolve to do better;
that self-serving theologies and goals and triumphalistic attitudes pull us apart;
with God’s help we resolve to do better;
that some of our confessions and the dated perspectives of our religious
heritage have resulted in patterns of unhealthy relationships with people of other religions;
with God’s help we resolve to do better.
We resolve to do better and not perpetuate divisive relationships among our neighbors and ourselves.

God calls us to have loving relationships with people of other religions.

God calls us to approach others in a spirit of openness and trust as we follow Jesus Christ
in respecting and affirming the freedom of others.

God calls us, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to work with people of other religions
for peace, justice, and the sustainability of creation.

Guided on our way by the Holy Spirit, we will
meet human needs,
work for social justice,
participate in mission and evangelism,
pursue peace,
strengthen families,
educate for greater understanding,
nurture diverse communities,
value hospitality in our congregations, and
respect one another in our workplaces.

We follow Christ’s call to work for God’s kingdom; we believe that God will complete what we leave incomplete. To God be the glory!

Endnote for “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Throughout this document, religion and religious practices include organized religions, folk religions, and indigenous religions and spiritualities practiced throughout our world.

Appendix A: Background to the Interreligious Stance

In our era, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues to reflect on questions about faithful and effective interreligious interactions. In a number of documents, studies, and statements, we have addressed a broad array of specific interreligious topics, from our relationship with particular traditions such as Judaism and Islam, to interactions with newer religious move-
ments such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), to more general questions about mission, evangelism, dialogue, and universalism.

In many ways, the issues raised as a result of interreligious interactions parallel those raised by intrareligious interactions—that is, ecumenism. At the 218th General Assembly (2008), the PC(USA) approved “The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” The PC(USA) had discerned a need for a major document to substantively articulate its relationship to others within the broad Christian household and charged the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) to produce such a statement. One of the findings of the ecumenical stance was that “there was particular energy in the conversation related to interfaith relations and a strong sense that this topic will need to be addressed more fully in another forum” (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 517).

Partly in response to this recommendation, the 219th General Assembly (2010) broadened the work of GACER to include interreligious relations, and the committee became GACEIR: the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligions Relations. This broadened committee was charged to act on the recommendation to more fully address interreligious relations. In the spring of 2013, a planning team created the format for a consultation that was held September 19–21, 2013. At that meeting, more than sixty-five church leaders, scholars, and interreligious experts met and identified crucial issues. A writing team began drafting a statement based on the input of the consultation, which included a diverse group of Presbyterians with a range of perspectives on interreligious issues. They were drawn from different theological perspectives, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and church vocations (denominational staff, pastors, lay leaders, and academics). Also participating were representatives from our global and ecumenical partners and from non-Christian religious traditions.

Recent research done by the Office of Interfaith Relations of the PC(USA) shows that interreligious engagement is a nearly universal experience among Presbyterians in the United States and for many of our partners around the world. Multiplicity of cultures and religious understandings is increasing in large cities and small towns alike, and our relationships—our involvement and collaboration—with adherents of other traditions increasingly are taking place close to home: in our families, neighborhoods, and workplaces.

Consultation on an Interreligious Stance participants: Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta; Sr. Aisha Al-Adawiya, Women in Islam; Scott Anderson; Gary Angleberger; Judy Angleberger; Wesley Ariarajah, United Methodist Church; John Azumah, Presbyterian Church of Ghana; David Baak, Reformed Church in America; Randall Bailey, Progressive National Baptist Convention; Randy Benn; Satanun Boonyakiat, McGillvray College of Theology, Payap University, Thailand; Holly Haile Davis; Shelly Dawson; Shelley Donaldson; Arlene Gordon; Krystin Granberg, chair, GACEIR; Marco Grimaldo; Heidi Hadsell; Sherri Haussler; Lisa Hesl David Jensen, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Kathy Jones; Jin Kim; Yehzekel Landau, Hartford Seminary; Gun Ho Lee; HakJoon Lee; Christopher Leighton; David Leslie; Eugene March; Robert Mark; Mary Mikhael, National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon; Terry Muck, chair, Writing Team; Cruz Negron-Torres; Damayanthi Niles; Tyler Orem; Rodney Petersen, co-chair, Interreligious Consultation Planning Committee; Shanta Premawardhana, Alliance of Baptists; Paul Rader; Kathy Randall; Annie Rawlings, In Memoriam: we give thanks for the light and life of Annie Rawlings, for her passion for interreligious relationships, and for her service as co-chair of the Interreligious Consultation Planning Committee; Juan Sarmiento; Nanette Sawyer; Joyce Shin; Simran Jeet Singh, The Sikh Coalition; Aaron Stauffer; Margaret Orr Thomas; Reginald Tuggle; Rick Ufford-Chase; Marlene Van Brocklin; Dianna Wright; Raafat Zaki.

PC(USA) Staff: Laura Cheifetz; Roger Dermody; Raafat Girgis; Charles Hardwick; Christine Hong; Sara Lisherness; Shannon Beck; Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly; Toya Richards, OGA Communications Office; Charles Wiley; Annette Winsett; Robina Winbush; Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 07-02

Advice on Item 07-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 07-02.

The committee recommendation does not indicate how the proposed language strengthens or clarifies G-5.0102. Section F-1.03 and F-1.0404 more completely address the intent of the recommendation.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 07-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 07-02 with amendment to Recommendations 3, 4, 6, and 7 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]
“3. [Affirm the commitment of] Confessing the history of Christian domination and supremacy over other religions, which included forced conversions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms a commitment to work for the common good in society together with people of other faiths and interreligious bodies at all levels; and direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to appropriately support emerging partnerships for this purpose.

“4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate and work toward meeting human needs, seeking justice, reconciliation, and pursuing peace through interreligious peacemaking, disaster assistance, and solidarity efforts that attend to respectful interactions with persons of different cultural and religious traditions in both the United States and international contexts; and encourage the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels to do the same.

“5. [Text remains unchanged.]

“6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to build capacity for strong and mutual interreligious relationships throughout its ministry areas, to develop and promote resources that support the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels in the church’s efforts to build and strengthen those relationships, and facilitate cooperative efforts with other religious traditions for social justice, recognizing that not all people of a particular faith tradition share the same positions on social issues, and endeavor to include as many positions and voices as possible from those faith traditions. With humility, recognize that people from traditions other than ours, and Christians from other parts of the world can also be our teachers for this work.] Among these [new] resources would be “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and an accompanying study guide.

“7. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to cooperate with youth and young adults in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in their interreligious engagements that support the larger efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in respectful and mutual interreligious relationships on behalf of [justice, peace, reconciliation, and] the common good.”

The ACREC agrees that in our pluralistic world, Presbyterians need to reach out to other faith communities and we need to do this more and do it better. Given some of the interreligious issues facing the denomination, we need to recognize that playing it safe can lead to complacency. Dialogue for the sake of dialogue alone is not necessarily the way forward and can and has led to difficult impasses.

The ACREC agrees that we need to “stand with and support, where appropriate, those suffering religious persecution and active oppression and violence.” In the tradition of tochecha—Hebrew, sacred rebuke—we need to be aware that sometimes, working for justice can create difficult impasses, but these should be seen as opportunities that challenge us and our partners to rise to higher ground. We should study, reflect, and discern how to ensure resolution not only to our disagreements, but to resolving active oppression and violence in the world around us.

The ACREC urges congregations, councils, and seminaries to study “The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and give careful consideration to the obstacles that stand in the way of meaningful interaction with people of other faiths. What would challenge Presbyterians to reflect on the attitudes and behaviors of our congregations and pastors that hinder progress in difficult conversations? Careful identification of past (and future) obstacles will help us find a productive, active path forward that is loyal to justice rather than giving mere lip service to a sentiment of openness and dialogue.

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**Item 07-03**

[The assembly approved Item 07-03. See pp. 14, 35.]

**Review of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A.**

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Continue PC(USA) participation in Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. (CCT). There is no compelling reason to abandon the promise it continues to show as long as there is substantive progress toward addressing identified challenges. The PC(USA) should invest in CCT to help shape its necessary continued development.

2. Encourage CCT to develop a strategy for greater involvement of African American communions.

3. Continue work to ensure substantive participation in leadership and governance by women.

4. Direct the PC(USA) to work within CCT to help it discover what CCT can do beyond issuing public statements. Ecumenical life is more than a shared public voice.
5. Request the Stated Clerk to communicate these recommendations and report to Christian Churches Together and its member organizations.

Rationale

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2010 Referral. Item 08-10. Recommendation 1. That the PC(USA) Become a Full Participant in Christian Churches Together (CCT) for a Period of Four Years, at Which Time a Review of Participation Will Be Done by GACER and Reported to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 627)

A. Assigned Task and Process

At the 212th General Assembly (2000), and in response to concerns voiced within the General Assembly Council (GAC), the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) was asked to design a process “for review of councils and other ecumenical alliances to which the PC(USA) belongs.” The 213th General Assembly (2001) approved the decision. The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. are being reviewed this year. The GACEIR appointed the following review team: Scott Anderson (TE), Michael Livingston (TE), Mary Elva Smith (RE), and Y. Dianna Wright (RE). The financial review was done by Ruling Elder Kathy Luekart and Robina Winbush (TE) served as staff.

The review committee examined constitutional documents, websites and transitional documents for both organizations. They also invited PCUSA staff and elected persons involved in both organizations, ecumenical partners, staff, persons involved in governance of both organizations to complete surveys and then followed up with telephone interviews. An in-depth review of the finances of both organizations was also completed.

B. History of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. (CCT) and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Relationships

Formed in 2006, Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. (CCT) is a fellowship of thirty-six national communions, including: African American, Catholic, Pentecostal, Historic Protestant, and Orthodox Churches; and seven national organizations, including American Bible Society, Bread for the World, Evangelicals for Social Action, Habitat for Humanity, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, Sojourners, and World Vision.

National leaders of the participant churches and organizations meet annually for mutual support, to foster Christian unity and evangelism, and to speak to society with a common voice whenever possible.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) authorized the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to become a provisional participant in CCT for a four-year period. At the time of this action, the General Assembly recognized the “unique vision that informs Christian Churches Together is that a hospitable space for growing together must be inclusive of the diversity of Christian families in the United States, including Evangelicals, Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Pentecostals, historic African American Churches, and other racial and ethnic churches” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 575).

Between 2006 and 2010, CCT formalized its organizational structure, acquired staff, held annual gatherings and regular steering committee meetings, and been actively engaged in building fellowship and addressing core commitments of evangelism and poverty in the context of the United States. Over these four years, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) actively participated, sending representatives to the annual CCT gathering, steering committee, and other forum meetings of the CCT.

In consideration of next steps in the relationship between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and CCT, the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) appointed a review committee in 2009. Interviews were conducted with representatives from CCT participant bodies and with representatives of churches that have been ecumenically engaged but are not participants. Interviews were also conducted with leadership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and an open call for comments on the matter was made through the Presbyterian News Service.

The 2009 review committee found that participation in CCT is consistent with the policies of the church, including the policy statement, “The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” However, the committee also noted that some of the concerns about CCT that existed in its formation remained, specifically about whether women can be fully represented in its leadership, and CCT’s ability to address and place a priority on combating racism in the church and in the larger society.

Though there are some exceptions, by 2009 few of the historic African American churches were still not actively participating in CCT, especially those that held membership in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. In interviewing those familiar with CCT, there were many who expressed disappointment that CCT has not taken up addressing the history of racial relationships and division within the church and explicitly addressing racism in the larger society.

In preparing its report to the 219th General Assembly (2010), GACEIR concluded that the limited success of CCT in explicitly addressing racism and in creating a structure that limits the possibility of greater inclusion of women in leadership
had the potential of undermining the very goal of CCT, to “offer a space that is inclusive of the diversity of Christian families in the United States.” In its own life, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues to struggle with concerns for empowerment of women and building a multicultural church community, and while CCT holds potential for being a forum where such concerns could be claimed, that potential was not yet realized. Nevertheless, GACEIR concluded—and the 219th General Assembly (2010) concurred—that it is not yet time to withdraw our support and participation from CCT. The PC(USA)’s commitment to ecumenical partnerships calls us to continue to engage and be active in CCT despite our concerns, and to work to strengthen CCT as we are called by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved GACEIR’s recommendation that the PC(USA) become a full participant in CCT for a period of four years, and in that time GACER would conduct another review of CCT and bring recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014). That review and the recommendations that flow from it are included in this report.

C. Independent Financial Snapshot of CCT

The CCT relies on contributions from member communions (79.6 percent), gifts (9.6 percent), and friends/benefactors (10.8 percent). According to the auditor’s reports, CCT ran deficits of $2,808 in 2009 and $42,528 in 2008. In 2010, CCT used net assets ($31,000) to offset a deficit. In 2011 income exceeded expenses by around $5,000. In 2012, there was a gap between income and expenses of around $1,000.

The CCT is completely dependent on contributions from member communions and other gifts as may be received to support operating expenses. Through May 2013, it had received only 13 percent of the income expected to support expenses; however, operating expenses to date were 32 percent of the overall amount budgeted. The CCT assumes that the costs of the annual meeting will be met by registration fees. This does not seem to be the case in 2013. The gaps between income and expense, in addition to lack of income to support the meeting costs, conceivably could lead to additional use of net assets at the end of the 2013.

Christian Churches Together is a young ecumenical organization. Barely eight years old, CCT still holds promise for significant development while struggling with issues and concerns that were present at its inception and remain unresolved at present.

D. Challenges and Opportunities within Christian Churches Together

Relevant opportunities and challenges have been identified as follows:

Opportunities to:

• represent a rich ecumenical context for PC(USA) engagement with the broadest representation of the Christian community in the United States;
• realize the promise of CCT since its inception: it is a table where a wide spectrum of denominations can gather to seek and express consensus while preserving integrity of each tradition;
• have smaller Christian communions play a more prominent role than was possible in the NCCC (because of a more favorable formula for representation);
• have representatives of participant communions share an expectation that all board members will actively engage in raising research dollars for common work;
• have this diverse national ecumenical organization include some church bodies that have not participated in the traditional historic ecumenical movement;
• have CCT develop statements on social issues and benefit from inclusion and participation by a broader table, including those who haven’t been engaged in such action in the past;
• keep the financial costs of running CCT to a minimum;
• engage top communion participation in an ecumenical organization that is relational in nature; and
• connect Roman Catholic and Orthodox communions with more conservative protestant churches that they would not ordinarily be in relationship with.

Challenges to:

• maintain annual communion cost for participation is a minimum to encourage participation while answering the challenge of long-term sustainability;
• deal with the weaknesses of head of communion leadership: top down, narrowly defined leadership who are predominantly male;
• dramatically grow the CCT membership base;
address the participation of African American communions, which is marginal and does not include communions that have been long-time participants in the ecumenical movement;

- broaden the narrow issue focus and a lack of programmatic substance. The only demonstrable outcomes are the issuance of public statements and accompanying study resources;

- address the CCT’s “Issue of the day feel”—tied to annual meeting themes—there are no implementation strategies for responses to shared concerns;

- address the tacit assumption that simply meeting together and speaking with one voice is enough;

- CCT and NCCC, which both need to strategize for joint witness;

- address the reality that congregations are focused on both ecumenical and interfaith engagement;

- the CCT commitment to partner with other justice-related organizations;

- address the CCT’s relational nature, which is both a strength and a weakness;

- learn how to negotiate differences on major society dividing issues;

- better clarify and define CCT’s unique voice;

- holding infrequent meetings, which hamper CCT’s relational goals and deepening connections to African American and other churches not traditionally involved in the ecumenical movement.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 07-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 07-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 07-03.

Item 07-04

[The assembly approved Item 07-04 with amendment. See pp. 14, 35.]

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) invite the following churches to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the 222nd General Assembly (2016):

- International: Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa, Church of Bangladesh, [Church partner in] [National Christian Church of] Sri Lanka, Methodist Church in Bolivia, Guyana Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in Grenada, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia and Other States, and Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt (Synod of the Nile).

- United States and/or Canada: Orthodox Church in America, International Council of Community Churches, Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.

Rationale

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations nominates to each General Assembly churches to be invited to send ecumenical advisory delegates to the subsequent assembly (Standing Rule B.2.g.). Ten overseas churches and five churches from within the United States are recommended. Of the overseas churches, we recommend at least one church from each area staffed by the Worldwide Mission area. Of the churches within the United States, we recommend at least two churches from full communion and/or covenant relationships, and at least one church in our conciliar relationships.

Item 07-05

[The assembly approved Item 07-05. See pp. 14, 35.]

The Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Dialogue

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. receive the interim report from The Episcopal Presbyterian Dialogue and authorize continuation of the dialogue;
2. request that a final report of the dialogue be given to the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

**Rationale**

Episcopal/Presbyterian Ecumenical Dialogue

Interim Report to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations and to the Episcopal Church General Convention Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

“Has Christ been divided?”

First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, 1:13

God established the unity of the church. In our recognition of this unity we of the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continue in our journey toward making that unity a more concrete reality for our two worship communities. In our work together over the past three years, we have identified areas of shared ministry that we encourage our churches to undertake.

A. **Introduction**

The Episcopal Church (TEC) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have had a long history of ecumenical relationship and dialogue. Between 1960 and 1999, the Consultation on Church Union provided the primary venue for multilateral dialogue on matters of ministry and mission. Upon the recommendation of the COCU Plenary Session in 1999, the PC(USA) General Assembly and TEC General Convention authorized our two churches to enter a period of bilateral dialogue focused on unresolved issues of ministry. Between 2002 and 2008, we engaged in this dialogue and while we were not able to resolve the issues sufficiently to move us into full recognition and reconciliation of ministers, we did reach an agreement that would facilitate ministers from churches serving in each other’s churches. This agreement, which is attached as Appendix A, was approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) and ratified by our presbyteries in 2009. The 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church approved the agreement in 2009. Both churches authorized another round of dialogue to continue to address theological and missional issues.

The Episcopal Church appointed the following persons to serve on the dialogue: the Right Reverend Dr. Eugene Sutton (co-chair), the Reverend Amy Coultas, the Reverend Dr. Timothy Mulder, the Honorable Joanne O’Donnell, and the Reverend Dr. Joseph Pagano. The Reverend Margaret Rose served as staff.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) appointed the following persons to serve on the dialogue: Teaching Elder Dr. Dennis Hughes (co-chair), Ruling Elder Anne Bond, Teaching Elder Dr. Christian Boyd, Teaching Elder Kamal Hassan, and Ruling Elder/Deacon Gordon Zerkel. Teaching Elder Robina Winbush served as staff.

The dialogue team met six times on the following dates, November 2010 (Louisville), May 2011 (Washington, D.C.), December 2011 (San Diego), May 2012 (Chicago), May 2013 (Seattle), and January 2014 (Chicago). One meeting had to be cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy in November 2012.

B. **Issues Addressed**

In our search for greater understanding of each other’s history, polity, and practice, we explored many topics, including:

1. Demographic similarities and dissimilarities of our denominations;
2. Historical, cultural, and social factors that shape our understanding of one another;
3. Our varied understandings of liturgy and its role in worship;
4. Local opportunities for shared congregational ministry;
5. Understanding of our ordered ministries;
6. Historic episcopate—personal, collegial, corporate;
7. Polity;
8. Understanding of the sacraments;
9. Christian formation and theological education;
10. The nature of the church;
11. Our current ecumenical engagements.
In accordance with the mandate given us in the agreement approved by the PC(USA) General Assembly in 2008 and ratified by the presbyteries in 2009, and the TEC General Convention in 2009, we focused our discussions on paragraphs 3, 4, and 7 of the agreement. This included extended conversations about:

- Threefold ordered ministry;
- The historic episcopate;
- Personal and corporate expressions of episcope;
- Our understanding of each other’s ordered ministry, with recognition that these orders, although different, are valid expressions of apostolic ministry;
- Use of the CUIC Eucharistic liturgy as a vehicle for shared Eucharistic ministry;
- Examples of shared congregational ministry; highlights being our conversation with a joint Episcopal/Presbyterian congregation in Minnesota and our meeting with the bishop of the Chicago Diocese and the executive of the Presbytery of Chicago.

C. **Issues That Still Need to Be Addressed or Addressed More Fully**

- Immigration from the global south; integration of new traditions into our churches;
- Expression of ordered ministries at the local level (congregation v. diocese);
- Continued discussion of the embodiment of episcope (personal, collegial, corporate);
- Necessity for re-ordination;
- How we can help each other further appropriate gifts we already have (proclamation of the word, liturgical theology, and practice) in accordance with paragraph 2 of the agreement;
- How ecumenism can help us address the demographic and cultural changes that are contributing to declining membership in both our denominations;
- Opportunities for shared theological education and formation for ministry.

D. **Conclusion**

We have discovered that in our conversations we have gained much from the opportunity to spend extended time in dialogue, building trust, learning from each other, and finding the ability to be bold in questioning and challenging our own and each other’s assumptions. We believe that continuing our conversation and exploration holds the promise of yielding enhanced understanding and guidance for our two denominations to explore in moving toward greater implementation and celebration of the unity God has already established in the Body of Christ, our common home.

**Appendix A**

**Agreement Between The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

*(Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 541)*

1. We acknowledge one another’s churches as churches belonging to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
2. We acknowledge that in our churches the Word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist are duly administered.
3. We acknowledge one another’s ordained ministries as given by God and instruments of grace, and look forward to the time when the reconciliation of our churches makes possible the full interchangeability of ministers.
4. We acknowledge that personal and collegial oversight (*episcope*) is embodied and exercised in our churches in a variety of forms, episcopal and non-episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church’s unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.
5. We agree that authorized ministers of our churches may, subject to the regulations of the churches and within the limits of their competence, carry out the tasks of their own office in congregations of the other churches when requested and approved by the diocesan bishop and local presbytery.
6. We agree that The Episcopal Church will invite members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to receive Holy Communion in their churches and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will invite members of The Episcopal Church to receive Holy Communion in their churches. We encourage the members of our churches to accept this Eucharistic hospitality and thus express their unity with each other in the one Body of Christ.
7. We agree to continue to dialogue in the areas such as diaconal ministries, historic episcopate, the office of elder, etc., that would lead to full reconciliation of our ministries and interchangeability of our ministers.

8. We encourage diocesan bishops and presbyteries to provide regular occasion for planning, discussing, resourcing for missional, educational, and liturgical life together. In addition, to explore possibilities for new church development and redevelopment together.

9. We agree to develop a process to support and implement the above recommendations.

10. We affirm these proposals mark an important step in moving toward the full, visible unity of the Church. We know that beyond this commitment lies a move from the recognition to the reconciliation of churches and ministries within the wider fellowship of the universal Church.

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**Item 07-06**

[The assembly approved Item 07-06 with amendment. See pp. 14, 35.]

*World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly Delegation Report—From the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations.*

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send a letter of appreciation to the World Council of Churches (WCC) staff and leadership for their organization and facilitation of the 10th Assembly.

2. Celebrate the election of the Moderator Agnes Aboum as the first woman moderator of the Central Committee.

3. Commend the WCC efforts in strengthening relationships of understanding and collaboration with interfaith partners.

4. Direct the Stated Clerk to send letters of appreciation to the local host committee and our partner churches in Korea for their gracious hospitality.

5. Encourage PC(USA) congregations and members to continue to pray for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. [In addition, we encourage the PC(USA) to pray for the Christians in North Korea currently imprisoned for proclaiming the gospel of Christ and to advocate for their release.]

6. [Commend to the PC(USA) the] [Encourage congregations and members to study the PC(USA)] policy statement on climate change, [which was] approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) ([http://www.pcusa.org/resource/power-change-us-energy-policy-global-warming](http://www.pcusa.org/resource/power-change-us-energy-policy-global-warming)).

7. Commend the Bible studies, worship, and music resources from the 10th Assembly to the church for use in the agencies of the General Assembly, mid councils, congregations, and seminaries.


9. Encourage the agencies of the General Assembly to consider ways it may support the work of the WCC as an extension of our own mission and support for mission of ecumenical partners in the WCC.

10. Acknowledge that the PC(USA) struggle for full participation of all members of the Body of Christ is also shared with the WCC and the ecumenical family and continue to pray and look for resources that will help the PC(USA) and the WCC in this endeavor.

**Rationale**

Narrative Report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Delegation to the Tenth Assembly of the World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches held its 10th Assembly October 30–November 8, 2013, in Busan, South Korea. The 220th General Assembly (2012) nominated Teaching Elders Laura Cheifetz, Everdith Landrau, Gradye Parsons, and Robina Winbush to represent the PC(USA). Ruling Elder Sara Lisherness replaced Robina Winbush on the delegation when Ms. Winbush was unable to attend.
Along with delegates from the 349 member churches of the WCC, the assembly also included representatives from specialized ministries, regional and national councils of churches, leaders of world communions and partner ecumenical agencies. The Global Ecumenical Theological Institute brought seminarians and young pastors to Busan to accompany the assembly and study the global ecumenical movement. The assembly also welcomed representatives from other religious traditions as interfaith guests. With delegates and representatives coming from a wide diversity of Christian traditions and more than 140 countries, the assembly is the broadest and most diverse Christian global gathering of its kind. While the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the WCC, they send a significant delegation and participated fully in the assembly.

The assembly of the World Council of Churches convenes every seven years and is charged with setting the future agenda for the WCC until the next assembly. The Tenth Assembly’s theme, “God of Life, Lead Us to Justice and Peace” framed the gathering in prayer, bible study, fellowship, discernment, and witness.

The assembly was marked by the remarkable hospitality shown by the Korean churches. The Korean churches were wholeheartedly welcoming and very generous. Although there was some disagreement among a few Korean churches regarding the WCC, as evidenced by the presence of protesters outside the convention hall, hospitality and generosity were very much lived and experienced by the attendees of the assembly. Over the weekend, Korean churches and communities hosted thousands of attendees on excursions to explore peace and conflict, and to attend local churches. Participants left aware of and filled with gratitude for the great gift to global Christianity that are Korean Christians.

The multiple spaces for the assembly were places of grace-filled encounter and sometimes struggle, whether they were the Madang, which was home to various exhibits, cultural performances, and gathering spaces; the hall where the participants gathered for prayer; the auditorium, which hosted thought-provoking, difficult, and beautiful daily plenary presentations; the hall in which the delegates engaged in business sessions; committee rooms, where delegates worked on statements and policies to bring to the larger body; the rooms that hosted daily Bible study, ecumenical conversations, pre-assembly events for marginalized communities, regional gatherings, or confessional gatherings; or the spaces throughout Busan, Seoul, and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to which participants traveled for the weekend Pilgrimage for Peace.

The assembly in Busan provided a view into the value of struggling through difficult ecumenical relationships. Ecumenism is central to the Presbyterian identity, and at the assembly, ongoing conversation and statements made by some communities indicated both the strong commitment among member churches to the work of ecumenism, and the challenge ecumenism poses internally to other member churches.

The WCC continued to live into its commitment to be inclusive of the whole church, with special attention to women, youth, indigenous persons, and persons with disabilities. The WCC is committed to ensuring regional and confessional diversity as well. In formal and informal conversation, it became clear that the ministry by/to/with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer persons are not specific to the PC(USA), but are global issues. This conversation was fraught with the very real disagreements and the pain of genuine struggle to define how the churches will respond to rising recognition of sexual minorities.

In a context where churches such as the PC(USA) are culturally dominant, sitting in the vulnerability of difference, of communication missteps and misunderstandings, was important for the delegates.

Music and art was an important component of the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan, South Korea. The songs we sang in worship and the performances we saw elaborately interpreted the pain and hope of God’s people. The music created unity and crossed barriers of language, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, etc. In the opening presentation our host, Korean brothers and sisters, recreated their painful history of oppression and liberation through songs, visual arts, dance, and a life symphony. Their expressive body movements could remind us of our own healing journey in Christ Jesus, creating solidarity with people from all over the world and connecting us in spirit with our Korean brothers and sisters.

Music and art in all their diverse forms are a gift from God that the Church can continue to reclaim for the healing of the nations. While in Busan, we represented the nations! There we witnessed how music and art were used creatively to express God’s love, reconciliation, and forgiveness. After challenging conversations on justice, peace, presentations on poverty and the state of our world, we reclaimed our hope in Jesus Christ and trust in God’s sovereignty with singing and dancing.

Our ecumenical journey with sisters and brothers from all over the world reminded us that music/art is embedded in all of us! The ecumenical community and the PC(USA) can continue to use music/art in all their distinct forms as a witness to God’s activity in the world. As part of the global church, we can continue to open our local churches to healthy and appropriate uses of multicultural art/music to cross barriers and bring encouragement to burdened hearts. Indeed, many hearts were encouraged in Busan by a youth and adult theater ministry from the Philippines. They led the assembly in singing and dancing to a melody, “We are one, we are one in mission, we seek, and we seek the fullness of life.”

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches addressed a number of critical social issues facing the world today; many of them have a direct impact on the global church.
The theme of the assembly, “God of Life, Lead Us to Justice and Peace,” provided a rich platform for addressing peace and justice concerns in worship, plenary, Bible study, ecumenical conversations, and through the pilgrimage that took participants to a number of locations on the Korean peninsula, including the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea and nuclear power plant sites. The location of the assembly in Busan served as a constant reminder of the need for peace in the Korean Peninsula and raised awareness about the continued militarization of the Asia Pacific region.

Other issues receiving consideration at the assembly included concerns for peace in the Middle East, unrest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and civil conflict in South Sudan. Other justice concerns brought to the assembly included the politicization of religion, climate change, and human rights, particularly for stateless people, people with disabilities, and religious minorities.

The Public Issues Committee (PIC) was tasked with considering and recommending the statements that would be made by the assembly. It received proposals from the Central Committee, and the executive committee of the WCC. Additionally, it received twenty-two new proposals that it was asked to consider, all related to current peace and justice issues facing communities around the world. Many of these proposals did not meet the criteria set forth for consideration by the committee or were included in other statements.

The PIC received four statements from the WCC Central Committee that emerged from a series of reflections and consultation over the course of two years. These substantive statements include:


In addition to these four statements, the assembly also approved statements that addressed the situation in Abeyi in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the 100th anniversary of Armenian Genocide, U.S.-Cuba relations, the rights of indigenous peoples, and climate change. All of these statements can be found at http://wcc2013.info/en/resources/documents

The assembly expressed a deep hope that these statements would take on a life of their own, as it invited member churches and ecumenical partners to continue the journey, committing to “work together as a fellowship in a ‘Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace’”

The delegates to the assembly heard the challenge of the structure and witness of ecumenical bodies, with ongoing emphasis on the fact that the WCC is not an organization but a fellowship of churches. The WCC is moving away from serving as a program agency to instead working to facilitate the cooperation of the work of its member churches in fulfilling their shared mandates and witness.

One of the significant actions of the assembly was the adoption of a new statement on mission: “Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes.” The International Missionary Council (IMC) was formed in 1921 and in 1961 became part of the World Council of Churches, founded in 1948 out of the other two major strands of 20th century inter-church cooperation, the Life and Work and Faith and Order movements. All three movements trace their origins to the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910.

The IMC was one of the most significant Christian groups of its era. It brought together significant church leaders from around the world, it commissioned the best missiological studies of the day, and it facilitated the formation of national councils of churches in newly evangelized countries and the West. The heir of that work is the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. The commission presented a new affirmation on mission and evangelism that was adopted by the 10th General Assembly of the WCC in Busan, South Korea. The last official statement on World Mission and Evangelism was approved in 1982.

The statement underscores new realities and new understandings of the church in the 21st century. It recognizes the fact that most Protestant Christians live in the global south and east. It underscores that God’s will is to restore humanity and creation. The statement replaces a key preposition in mission focus. The goal is not mission to the margins but mission from
the margins. There is also the common thread back to Edinburgh that witness takes concrete form in evangelism—the communication of the whole gospel to the whole of humanity in the whole world.

The long history of the missionary movement has often been defined by the traditional Eurocentric Christian endeavors that often traveled with or before the country that was expanding its economic interest in a global south or east country. The long-term results were often a mixed appreciation and resentment of those endeavors. The statement is trying to help the church understand that while the physical resources may still be in the northern parts of the globe, the spiritual vitality is in the south and east. For those of us in the Reformed tradition it is the recognition that today the largest denominations are in Africa and South Korea. The call is for the church to receive the insights, wisdom, and cultural understandings of the new center with respect and thanksgiving.

The mission from the margins challenges the church in a number of ways. “Mission from the margins seeks to counteract injustices in life, church, and mission. It seeks to be an alternative missional movement against the perception that mission can only be done by the powerful to the powerless, by the rich to the poor, or by the privileged to the marginalized.” What are the gifts of the margins? Their gifts can be insight to privileged on where the good news and the good life have become enmeshed. Their gifts can be the challenging questions of how neglecting the restoration of creation as well as humanity imperils the planet. The margins can help the church once again listen the Christ as one of the 5,000 without food. Jesus promises that “the last shall be first” (Mt. 20:16). To the extent that the church practices radical hospitality to the estranged in society, it demonstrates commitment to embodying the values in the reign of God (Is 58:6).

The call to recommit to God’s will is to save humanity and creation is reflected in the growing concerns about the environment. “The God of life protects, loves and cares for nature. Humanity is not the master of the earth but is responsible to care for the integrity of creation.” In the presentation of the statement a man from a South Pacific island country shared that the highest point of his island was just a few feet. The theoretical debates about global warming and rising oceans were not theoretical to his people. That is the point. Environmental justice may be debated by a part of the world where it can be discussed with little pain. But in most of the world where the prayer for daily bread is a reality the pain is real. There is an even stronger call to understand evangelism of souls and the world they live in.

Mission and evangelism are at the core of how we understand church. “The church in history has not always existed but, both theologically and empirically, came into being for the sake of mission. It is not possible to separate church and mission in terms of their origin or purpose.” In one of the stronger statements in the paper “Starting with God’s mission leads to an ecclesiological approach” from below.” In this perspective it is not the church that has a mission but rather the mission that has a church. This understanding puts the church as God’s instrument toward God’s aims.

“Evangelism while not excluding the different dimensions of mission, focuses on explicit and intentional articulation of the gospel including the invitation to personal conversion to a new life in Christ and to discipleship.” The statement wrestles with living in a religious plural world. It wrestles with persecution because of religious belief or minority status in a country. One of the affirmations could have been penned at the 1910 Edinburgh conference “We affirm that the gospel of Jesus Christ is good news in all ages and places and should be proclaimed in the Spirit of love and humility.”

Individually and collectively, it was a privilege to represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the Tenth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. We offer this report and recommendations with the prayer that it will both strengthen the PC USA and our ecumenical witness with our sisters and brothers in the World Council of Churches.

**Item 07-07**

[The assembly approved Item 07-07. See pp. 14, 34, 35.]

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. Receive the report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Seventh Day Adventist Dialogue.

2. Refer the joint recommendations (found in G., below) to the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations for facilitation within the PC(USA).

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) AND SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST DIALOGUE REPORT

2010–2013

A. Preface

“So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as
the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom also you are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God” (Eph. 2:17–21).

B. The Charge

In 2010 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church commissioned a formal dialogue between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (hereafter referred to as PC(USA) and SDA). This would be the first official denomination-to-denomination dialogue for the SDA church. The given purposes of the dialogue were to promote understanding between the two churches, remove stereotypes, explore possible areas for cooperation, and discover what the churches might helpfully learn from each other. From the outset it was understood that organic unity of the two churches was not the goal.

Two other Reformed denominations—the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Reformed Church of America—were invited to send observers to the dialogue’s proceedings. The Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRC) accepted the invitation, sending an observer with full participation privilege in all conversations.

The dialogue groups appointed by both churches consisted of the following persons:

PC(USA): Sheldon W. Sorge (co-chair), General Minister, Pittsburgh Presbytery; David Cortés-Fuentes, pastor, Emmanuel Hispanic Presbyterian Church, Claremont, California; Eileen Lindner, pastor, Tenafly Presbyterian Church, Tenafly, New Jersey; Barbara Wheeler, president (retired) and director of the Center for the Study of Theological Education, Auburn Seminary, New York, New York; Staff: Robina Winbush and Carlos Malave, Louisville, Kentucky.

SDA: William Johnsson (co-chair), editor, Adventist Review (retired), Silver Spring, Maryland; Kenneth Denslow, assistant to the president, North American Division, Columbia, Maryland; Denis Fortin, professor of Historical Theology, Andrews Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan; Teresa Reeve, associate professor of New Testament Contexts, Andrews Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan; Halvard Thomsen, assistant to the president, North American Division (retired), Apple Valley, California.

CRC: Douglas Bratt, pastor, Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church, Silver Spring, Maryland.

It should be noted that the dialogue group included ministers, laypersons, pastors, professors, and administrators, as well as persons of various racial ethnic backgrounds. This variety proved invaluable in generating a robust set of conversations.

This dialogue built on the work begun by a series of informal annual conversations between PC(USA) and SDA representatives from 2006 to 2008. Topics of discussion included the following:

- history and organization of both churches;
- authority of Scripture and the authority of non-canonical writings, especially the PC(USA) Book of Confessions and the writings of Ellen G. White;
- religious freedom and divine election;
- law and gospel;
- Sabbath-keeping;
- social justice;
- health advocacy.

C. Dialogue Meetings

The dialogue group met for conversation, worship, and fellowship four times:

- October 26–28, 2010—Chicago, Illinois. Hosted by the PC(USA) at the national headquarters of its full-communion partner Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- November 5–8, 2011—Silver Spring, Md. Hosted by the SDA church at its world headquarters. This meeting included participation in the education hour and Sabbath worship of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Maryland, on November 5, as well as participation in the education hour and Sunday worship at the St. Mark Presbyterian Church in Rockville, Maryland, on November 6.
- September 10–12—Grand Rapids, Michigan. Hosted by the PC(USA) and CRC at the Prince Conference Center of Calvin College.
- October 22–25—Battle Creek, Michigan. Hosted by the SDA church at the Yarrow Conference Center.
D. Conversation Topics

Conversations continued around the topics already raised in the exploratory conversations, as listed in B. above. In addition, the following topics were engaged with formal presentations and follow-up discussions:

2010

• Biblical hermeneutics
• Current pressing theological, discipleship, and institutional issues for each church
• Church demographics

2011

• Worship and sacraments, Saturday and Sunday services
• Congregational life
• Denominational trajectories

2012

• Ministerial vocation
• Christian discipleship
• Church education

2013

• Ecclesiology
• SDA Michigan heritage
• Distinctive doctrinal foci
  —SDA: The heavenly sanctuary and pre-Advent judgment
  —PC(USA): Predestination and election

E. Discoveries

Our primary discovery must be stated with utmost clarity: The members of this group unanimously and heartily affirm each other as true Christians. Based on our study and experience, we declare unreservedly that our respective churches are part of the one church of Jesus Christ.

We make this affirmation on the basis of many things we hold and do in common, and yet we acknowledge real and significant differences between our denominations. We addressed these as candidly as we did charitably.

1. Differences of Practice and Doctrine

a. Sabbath—Presbyterians usually worship on Sunday, the day of our Lord’s resurrection, while Seventh-day Adventists always worship on Saturday, the seventh day Sabbath of creation. In the PC(USA) the day of worship is considered an item of adiaphora (something over which disagreement is non-consequential), while for the SDA it is integral to identity and mission. In the SDA church, Sabbath is more scrupulously observed as a day of rest than Sunday is in the PC(USA). While the SDA church holds Sabbath-keeping precious and believes calling for Sabbath observance is part of its core mission, it does not hold it as essential for salvation.

b. Righteousness—Presbyterians consider witness to public social justice as essential to mission. Seventh-day Adventists place personal righteousness at the center of practice and belief. There are exceptions to these generalizations: Adventists are strong advocates for public health and religious freedom, and Presbyterians place considerable value on disciplined living.

c. Advent—Seventh-day Adventists place the hope of Christ’s imminent return at the core of their life and mission, while for Presbyterians Advent hope is far less prominent. Eschatology, a primary theological locus for the SDA church, carries relatively minor emphasis in the PC(USA). Adventists are correspondingly more deeply engaged with biblical apocalyptic.

d. Election—Presbyterians are strongly committed to an understanding of divine sovereignty that acknowledges human salvation and service as flowing entirely from God’s gracious election. Seventh-day Adventists maintain an Arminian understanding that highlights human freedom and responsibility in responding to God’s saving grace that has been made available to all.
e. Worship—While both denominations understand public worship to revolve around prayer, Word, and the Lord’s Table to which all Christians are invited, there are significant differences in actual practice. The SDA church prefers the word “ordinance” where the PC(USA) speaks of “sacrament,” and the SDA church adds foot-washing to the service of the Lord’s Supper. The SDA church practices and recognizes only believer’s baptism by immersion, while the PC(USA) practices infant baptism with profession of faith following confirmation, and considers the amount of water a matter of adiaphora. PC(USA) worship typically follows the historical ecumenical order and is closely scripted, while SDA worship is typically more context-oriented and less scripted.

f. Ecclesiology—Presbyterians affirm an ecclesiology that is inherently catholic, while Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology focuses its primary attention not on the church catholic but on the remnant of believers who accept and live in accordance with the message of end-time preparation for the second coming.

g. Physical wholeness and creation care—Seventh-day Adventists are highly attentive to cultivating personal health through diet and disciplined living, while Presbyterians pay relatively little attention to members’ personal diets and health practices. Seventh-day Adventists do not understand particular diet and health regimens as essential to salvation, but see them rather as good stewardship of our God-given bodies. For Presbyterians, stewardship of creation, by contrast, focuses primarily on ecological concerns.

h. Ecclesiastical scope—The SDA church is a world church whose policies are established by a general conference composed of members from around the world, of which members in North America are a small minority. The PC(USA) is an American church, and as such sets its own policy without the need for global ratification.

i. Denominational unity—Presbyterians have a history of dividing and forming new denominations when disagreements arise, sometimes followed, after long intervals by reunions and mergers. Despite many internal disagreements, Seventh-day Adventists have experienced no major division since their mid-nineteenth century founding.

j. Social diversity—Presbyterians consider diversity a core theological value, and invest themselves heavily in issues of public justice related to socioeconomic diversity. The Seventh-day Adventist church has not generally engaged in public social justice advocacy, but in practice its congregations typically are more socially and racially diverse.

k. Religious freedom—Although both denominations advocate publicly for religious freedom, this theme is much more central to SDA public witness than it is for the PC(USA).

l. Public government—Presbyterians are significantly more involved as participants and advocates in public government than are Seventh-day Adventists.

m. Ordination—The PC(USA) ordains both men and women to all offices of the church; the SDA church is studying but has not yet permitted women to be ordained as clergy, though SDA female elders may serve as pastors. The PC(USA) has made it possible for jurisdictions that so wish to consider GLBT persons for ordination, whereas the SDA church has not.

n. Biblical hermeneutics—In the PC(USA), doctrinal warrants are constructed by comparing scripture with scripture in deep consultation with the historical stream of Christian interpretation. The SDA church also constructs doctrinal warrants by comparing scripture with scripture, but does not correspondingly refer to Christianity’s historic confessional traditions in shaping its doctrines.

o. Ecumenical engagement—The PC(USA) has been at the forefront of the ecumenical movement among Christian churches, and has adopted full communion agreements with several denominations. The SDA church has sought no such agreements with other denominations, yet it has participated as an observer in many ecumenical events, and has engaged in several dialogues with church coalitions such as the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. Until this dialogue with the PC(USA), it had engaged in no formal church-to-church conversations.

2. Commonalities in Practice and Doctrine

a. Christian orthodoxy—Both the PC(USA) and the SDA church are firmly committed to the essentials of biblical Christian faith as summarized in the Apostles’ Creed. The SDA is not a creedal church, and thus does not subscribe to the Apostles’ Creed per se, but it joins the PC(USA) in affirming it as a faithful exposition of essential Christian teaching.

b. Missionary vocation—Both churches believe themselves called to bear joyful public witness to God’s saving work for all humanity through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. For Adventists, evangelism has a special urgency, given their strong expectation of the Lord’s imminent return. For Presbyterians, evangelistic mission goes hand-in-hand with engagement of social issues.

c. Scripture alone—While both churches look to the testimony of trusted witnesses for guidance in matters of Christian faith and practice (e.g. the PC(USA) Book of Confessions or the writings of Ellen G. White), any authority these
witnesses bear derives only from their faithful witness to Scripture. All Christian doctrine is rooted in the testimony of the sixty-six books of the Bible.

d. Grace alone—Both churches fully affirm that salvation is rooted entirely in divine grace rather than human merit.

e. Faith alone—Both churches acknowledge that salvation cannot be earned by keeping God’s law, and that our only pathway to salvation is through faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ.

f. Law and gospel—Both the Presbyterian tradition and Seventh-day Adventist doctrine emphasize the moral law of the Old Testament as having continuing benefit and force for Christians. Presbyterians speak of the “third use of the law”; Adventists emphasize the permanence of the Decalogue as revealing God’s intention for how we should live.

g. Stewardship—Both churches believe themselves called by God to a stewardship of life and nature that shuns ostentation. Seventh-day Adventists feel a special sense of call to honor God by stewarding their own bodies responsibly and carefully.

h. Governance—The PC(USA) and the SDA have similar systems of representative governance, with interconnected local, regional, and national governing bodies. Both churches are governed by councils composed of laity and clergy. Both churches recognize the three offices of deacon, elder, and pastor as forming the core leadership of the church.

i. Racial reconciliation—The PC(USA) and SDA churches are fully committed to promoting and embodying racial reconciliation in the church.

j. Openness to new things—The SDA church maintains openness to the guidance of new prophetic insights under the authority of Scripture, and the PC(USA) is committed to embracing the ongoing reformation of the church by the word of God.

k. Promotion of public health and welfare—Medical mission service, hunger relief, and disaster relief are hallmarks of both PC(USA) and SDA world outreach.

l. Emphasis on education—Both the PC(USA) and SDA church emphasize the importance of education, as reflected in the establishment of scores of thriving colleges, universities, and seminaries. The SDA church is also committed to offering church-related primary and secondary schools to as many of their children as possible.

m. Internal challenges—Both denominations have spent recent years in struggles about who may be ordained to the ministry of the Gospel. Both find it difficult to retain their youth, even as many folk in both churches resist changes that may be necessary for their churches to thrive.

F. Significance of This Dialogue for Both Denominations

The discovery and engagement of genuine mutually-edifying fellowship in Christ is the most important outcome of the dialogue. Even as we profited much from our time together, we urge Seventh-day Adventists and Presbyterians everywhere to engage in the activities that brought us so much benefit: sharing our faith journeys and our primary faith commitments, discussing our respective hopes and challenges, seeking out that which we hold in common, being honest about our differences, praying together, worshiping in each other’s churches, and enjoying extended table fellowship. If our dialogue encourages other Presbyterians and Seventh-day Adventists to begin gathering locally for such purposes, we believe it will have made a real and important difference for our churches.

As we journeyed together, both sides discovered several things we would do well to learn from each other. Presbyterians indicated several places where they believe the PC(USA) could significantly benefit from the SDA witness:

- Developing an eschatology that nurtures a more robust hope for the second Advent, and with it a more acute sense of the church’s missionary urgency.
- Nurturing more vital multicultural congregations by focusing more on mission and less on ourselves.
- Urging members to be more diligent in the practice of Sabbath-keeping.
- Becoming more attentive to God’s call to be a community set apart from the ways of the world.
- Promoting healthy personal life choices as a Christian norm.

Adventists also highlighted several areas where they believe the SDA church could be strengthened by the witness of the PC(USA):

- Becoming more engaged with other churches to strengthen common bonds in the Lord.
Relying more fully on historic church texts and liturgical orders in planning worship.

Developing a stronger theology of church governance.

Educating the church for engaging more broadly in transformative social justice work.

Emphasizing the church’s primary purpose as glorifying God, from which all its mission then flows.

Through this dialogue, we learned that our distinctive areas of faith and practice, rather than separating us, can offer opportunity to learn from each other. This requires our relearning what we thought we already knew about each other. By delving more fully into the biblical, historical, and theological bases for SDA teachings on Sabbath and Advent, Presbyterians were able to set aside misconceptions about these SDA emphases, and came to realize how much the PC(USA) could benefit from them. Likewise, the Adventists learned better the Presbyterian understanding of divine sovereignty and election, the theological roots of its ecumenical and social justice commitments, and how those concerns could helpfully inform their church also.

G. Recommendations

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Seventh-day Adventist dialogue group recommends:

1. That both denominations extend invitations to representatives from the other church to attend their national meetings as observers.

2. That seminaries of both denominations be urged to invite representatives from the other denomination to lecture on their campus, and that seminarians from both denominations be recruited to form interdenominational fellowship and study groups.

3. That both denominations urge their local pastors and regional judicatory leaders to make special efforts to gather with each other regularly for prayer, mutual learning, and table fellowship.

4. That the SDA church be encouraged to seek church-to-church dialogue engagement with other denominations.

H. Benediction

With great gratitude for the opportunity to engage each other in learning more fully what our Lord would have us to do, we commend to our churches these study findings, and we commend each other to the grace and peace of our Lord.

“Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen” (Jude 24–25).

Item 07-08

[The assembly approved Item 07-08. See pp. 14, 35.]

Review of National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Approve that membership and participation in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC) be continued. [“To be Presbyterian is to be ecumenical.” This has long been in the forefront of our commitment and we continue to be instrumental leaders in the ecumenical movement.]

2. Direct the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to continue to assess and evaluate our financial commitment to the NCCC.

3. Affirm our PC(USA) intent to seek to sustain a basic level of support to NCCC both through financial and human resources.

4. Acknowledge the complex work of Church World Service and its separation from the NCCC, and commend membership and financial support of Church World Service for consideration by the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

5. Direct that an accounting by NCCC at a defined interim before the next full General Assembly review be requested with regard to the redesigned governance with the Heads of Communion involvement, the current state of the budget, and the work of the convening tables in effectiveness and breadth of participation by the member communions.
6. Direct that word of appreciation be given to the staff and leadership for taking a hard look at the current realities of ecumenical ministry in this era and seeking a plan designed to better facilitate its work, direction, and budget.

7. Request the Stated Clerk to communicate these recommendations and report to the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and its member communions.

**Rationale**

A. **Assigned Task and Process**

At the 212th General Assembly (2000), and in response to concerns voiced within the General Assembly Council (GAC), the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER) was asked to design a process “for review of councils and other ecumenical alliances to which the PC(USA) belongs.” The 213th General Assembly (2001) approved the decision. The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. are being reviewed this year. The GACEIR appointed the following review team: Scott Anderson (TE), Michael Livingston (TE), Mary Elva Smith (RE), and Y. Dianna Wright (RE). The financial review was done by Ruling Elder Kathy Luekart and Robina Winbush (TE) served as staff.

The review committee examined constitutional documents, websites and transitional documents for both organizations. They also invited PCUSA staff and elected persons involved in both organizations, ecumenical partners, staff, persons involved in governance of both organizations to complete surveys and then followed up with telephone interviews. An in-depth review of the finances of both organizations was also completed.

B. **Changing Ecumenical Landscape**

The purpose of the ecumenical movement is to help make manifest God’s intention for the household of God. In the past, churches have often limited that vision to a unified Church that would help bring about a unified world or even unify the world within it. The ecumenical vision that is part of God’s vision is actually much larger. John 10:10b describes the vision as God’s desire that the inhabitants of the household of God “may have life, and have it abundantly.” This is a vision of justice and peace that allows space for all of God’s creation to live in its fullness. God is continually active in bringing loving wholeness to creation, where all can live in peace. God is especially attentive to those who have been excluded from the fullness of life and calls the church to cooperate in this process.

The ecumenical movement in the United States has sought to give visible expression to this theological imperative, but at the present moment is being challenged and reshaped as a result of our dramatically changing landscape. The churches that have traditionally participated in North American conciliar bodies like the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC), for example, find themselves in numerical decline, with sense of diminished identity and a growing set of internal tensions.

We have also witnessed the dramatic growth of new church bodies, some of which are “post denominational” and most of which have not participated in the traditional conciliar organizations like the NCCC. These churches are helping to create cooperative ecumenical ties across a broader spectrum of the Christian family, such as Christian Churches Together (CCT) here in the United States.

Our contemporary ecumenical witness becomes ever more urgent in a culture that is increasingly polarized, both politically and socioeconomically. Together with the countervailing forces of racial and ethnic diversity and religious pluralism, this unique moment in history cries out for U.S. Christians to speak and act in ways that transcend denominational identity and are faithful to the high priestly prayer of Jesus, “that all may be one” (John 17).

C. **History of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC) and Presbyterian Relationships**

Founded in 1950 as a successor to the Federal Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC) was born in hope and faith in the aftermath of World War II. The NCCC welcomes all churches that meet the basic requirement of confessing Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, as Savior and Lord into a mutual search for and response to the will of God in today’s world. Currently, thirty-six communions are members of the NCCC that presently include mainline Protestant, Episcopal, Orthodox, historic African American, and peace churches.

From the beginning, Presbyterians have been at the heart of this endeavor to “covenant with one another to maintain ever more fully the unity of the Church, responding to the gospel revealed in the Scriptures, confessing together Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, as Savior and Lord” (NCCC Preamble).

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is consistent with the Preamble of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. as it affirms that “Unity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ. Just as God is one God and Jesus Christ is our one Savior, so the Church is one because it belongs to its one Lord, Jesus Christ. The Church seeks to include all people and is never content to enjoy the benefits of Christian community for itself alone. There is one...
Church, for there is one Spirit, one hope, ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all’ (Eph. 4:5–6)” (Book of Order, F-1.0302a).

Historically, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. has brought churches into regular fellowship, theological dialogue, and joint social and programmatic action. Three major streams of activity have characterized the central ministry of the NCCC: (1) Faith and Order, (2) Life and Witness, and (3) Christian Education.

Through sixty-three years of struggle to be faithful churches in times of plenty and times of crisis, the NCCC has responded to challenges of war and nuclear threat, provided the best current scholarship through preparation of the Revised and New Revised Standard Versions of the Bible (RSV and NRSV), engaged in efforts to ameliorate poverty and racism, advocated for human rights, supported environmental justice, linked public policy advocacy to the needs and concerns of church councils around the world, prepared the ongoing Uniform Lesson Series for church schools, held conferences and done research on issues as diverse as evangelism, radio/TV communications, gender, and family issues.

As a courageous and prophetic voice, the NCCC has at times engendered controversy around unpopular positions, including some, like urging the recognition of the People’s Republic of China that were simply ahead of their time. The NCCC rigorously questioned a preemptive strike in Iraq in 2003, for example, and urged United Nations involvement in peaceful initiatives for change. Church partners around the world have turned to the NCCC to respond to international issues that are vital to these partners’ life as churches. Advocating on their behalf may be in tension with policies that serve only our national interests. Presbyterian participation in the world of the NCCC has been so strong and consistent that, as one elected official of our church once remarked, a critique of National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. social witness policy is also a critique of PC(USA) social witness policy!

Many denominations that are not members of the NCCC participate and have contributed financially in many ministry areas and programs of the NCCC, such as Faith and Order Commission; the Education, Leadership Ministries Commission; and the Communications Commission. Although there has been much collaboration between some NCCC commissions and programs and the Roman Catholic Church, and Pentecostal denominations, no step that would lead to full membership in the council has been successful to date.

Church World Service (CWS) was structurally a part of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. since the NCCC’s inception. In the late 1990s, CWS sought greater autonomy over its own funds and programming and reorganized itself as a separate nonprofit corporation. Separation of CWS from the NCCC was seen as necessary to enable clearer bookkeeping and tighter control over the monies designated for the advocacy, relief, and development work of CWS, as distinct from NCCC programming funds. In 2013, the boards of CWS and NCCC took actions to cease the General Assembly, thereby completing the separation between the two organizations.

Like the denominations that comprise the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the NCCC has undergone financial hardships and the winnowing of staff in recent years. With the departure of NCCC General Secretary Michael Kinnamon at the end of 2011 and the election of President/General Secretary James Winkler at the end of 2013, the NCCC is now in a watershed period of transition and reinvention.

D. **NCCC Revisioning and Restructuring**

In September 2012, the NCCC governing board adopted a revisioning and restructuring plan that calls for the member churches and other partners of the NCCC to seek visible unity in Christ and work for justice and peace, but with a different organizational pattern functioning in a dramatically changed context:

Yet amidst a rapidly changing ecclesial, ecumenical, and inter-religious world we find ourselves ill-equipped to live into this vision. The institutional structures and presuppositions of our past too often have become an obstacle to our future. Therefore, the primary question [the NCCC plan] seeks to address is: How do we transition from a structure that is rigid, siloed, and outdated to one that is agile, integrated, and flexible, all while building a culture based on collaboration, transparency, dignity, and trust?

The contours of the restructure call for:

Three areas of ministry: The new structure envisions a future in which the NCCC focuses on three integrated areas of work: theological study and dialogue, interreligious relations and dialogue, and joint action and advocacy for justice and peace. Cross-cutting work on education, formation, and leadership development will enhance each of these core areas, and bolster the special role of the NCCC within the ecumenical landscape for communicating the faith through education and Scripture.

NCCC’s Primary Role as Convener: The NCCC will organize itself as convener of the churches so that the member churches and other partners might work toward visible unity in Christ and galvanize prophetic public witness through joint action and advocacy of the churches. The work will be organized at overlapping tables that integrate the three-pronged focus and draw upon synergies with partners, especially local and regional ecumenism.

A Rapid Response Table: comprised of advocacy, policy, and communications staff from the churches will give the
member churches a stronger voice in today’s public square. Creative partnerships with seminaries will be explored for their potential to enhance the NCCC’s theological work while providing ecumenical formation for the next generation of church leaders. The NCCC’s historic commitment to the work of Faith & Order will be renewed in light of today’s church-dividing issues; and its engagement with people of other faiths will be reinforced in light of today’s rapidly changing religious landscape. The NCCC’s witness for racial justice, economic justice, and justice for women in church and society will be revitalized, beginning with how the churches relate to one another as the NCCC.

An Annual Christian Unity Gathering: The NCCC will provide space through a periodic gathering for the churches to deepen relationships; to discern strategic, time-limited priorities; and to define specific goals, outcomes, and timelines for collaborative action and advocacy for justice and peace. This gathering will be comprised of all constituents and partners of the NCCC, including heads of communion, ecumenical officers, and staff of the member communions, along with participants in NCCC tables, emerging ecumenists, academicians, and local and regional ecumenical leaders.

Financial Sustainability: A formula will be developed so that every communion is able and will be expected to financially support the NCCC to be considered a member. The NCCC funding streams will be streamlined, with a certain percentage of designated giving going to support the ministry of the whole. A dues structure for the categories of affiliation will be created. A process for seeking grants related to the strategic priorities will be developed. As the royalties return from the Bible translations, the NCCC will begin building back its reserves.

Streamlined Governance: The NCCC’s governance will be clearly differentiated. The heads of communions will constitute a smaller governing board, at least for an interim period. Committees of the board will be comprised of ecumenical officers, church staff, local and regional ecumenical leaders, emerging ecumenists, and partners. An intergenerational think tank will be formed, serving in an advisory capacity to the board and staff, with emerging ecumenists comprising at least 60 percent of membership.

Stronger Partnerships: Strategic partnerships and collaborations with others will be a given in the restructure. New categories of affiliation for partner organizations, congregations, interfaith partners, and local and regional ecumenical bodies and leaders will be created. Crucial conversations with other leading ecumenical bodies in the U.S. will continue. Beyond existing member communions—legacy members as it were—membership will be open to all churches that are national in their presence, and who profess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior as revealed in the Bible.

Implementation of the NCCC restructure plan will be phased in through mid 2014, with a new executive director in place before the end of 2013.

E. **NCCC Financial Snapshot**

The NCCC has been in a prolonged period of contraction and transition that continues to this time. The NCCC had an operating deficit of $1.3 million in 2011, and $1.1 million in 2012, compelling the governing board to draw down board designated funds to cover the shortfall. At the time of writing, no information was available about the calendar year 2013 budget.

The primary sources of NCCC operating revenues are contributions from member communions (44 percent), sales (26 percent), foundation grants (14 percent), fundraising (6 percent), interest income (3 percent), and fees from Church World Service (6 percent). Operating revenues decreased by 36 percent from 2011 to 2012.

The NCCC has taken steps to manage its budget, reducing operating expenses by 18 percent from 2011 to 2012. It is reducing office space by closing the New York office. It reduced staff and instituted staff furloughs. It worked on recovering receivables from Church World Service, which in 2012 was more than $400,000. However, these actions were not enough to close the gap between revenues and expense in 2012.

A significant impact on the NCCC’s current and future budgets is the cost of retiree health care and pension obligations for employees hired before January 1, 2000. In 2012, the auditor reported that the NCCC’s retiree health plan was underfunded.

Without final 2013 budget numbers it cannot be determined if the steps taken in 2012 to reduce operating expenses and increase operating revenues have been fruitful. It is clear from a review of the meeting notes of the NCCC’s Administration and Finance committee, the executive committee, and the governing board that all are aware of the difficult financial situation of the NCCC. The cost of retiree health and pension benefits will continue to be a drag on the mission of the NCCC, as will its current organizational model. At some point the governing board will run out of assets to draw down to continue to fund the organization.

F. **Challenges and Opportunities within the NCCC**

In light of the opportunities and challenges facing the NCCC a revised mission statement was developed: “The NCCC is a community of communions called by Christ to visible unity and sent forth in the Spirit to promote God’s justice, peace, and the healing of the world.” The NCCC governing board and its various parts now have before them the living into and fulfilling of that mission.
The GACEIR Review Team identified the following opportunities and challenges facing the NCCC:

Opportunities to:

- Rebuild the national ecumenical conciliar expression.
- Engage heads of communion (HOC) in leadership in life of the council.
- Involve a new generation of young people in the life and work of the council.
- Draw from leadership new stamina and willingness to take risks in the current era. Work within a smaller, more flexible, less complex structure.
- Develop a more integrated approach to the issues identified as focus.
- Invest time, energy, and money in more narrowly focused justice and witness issues.
- Rebuild and develop partnership with other organizations working on same or related issues; e.g. peace, mass incarceration, and others as identified over time.
- Create a way for smaller and less involved communions to find a place at the table.
- Realign the budget in light of the new structure and continuing mission of the council.
- Build stronger commitment for participation of member communions through both human and financial resources.
- Work with other councils around the world on common issues; e.g. peace in the Middle East.

Challenges to:

- Give attention to the uniqueness of NCCC as new forms of ecumenism are opening; e.g. Christian Churches Together (CCT).
- Work within constraints of a changing world; e.g. generational and cultural shifts that raise questions about the reality of developing a unified budget at this time. Will lose much of the cognate giving through this practice.
- Recognize the loss of public voice and credibility and the need to work to rebuild it.
- Be aware of the denominational tendency to think of NCCC as “them,” forgetting that we are indeed not only “us” but fully a part of “them.”
- Recognize that budgeting through denominations may appear simpler and more direct through unified giving but that it has not been working for denominations and is unlikely to be adequate for the NCCC budget as well.
- Address the declining interest in church among young people and people of other generations yet who are invested in various social issues of justice but not the church.
- Recognize the loss of voices of people of color, women, youth, broad-based stakeholders at the council table when the heads of communion (HOC) make up the council and the general secretary/president become one office.
- Pay attention to the inclination of old postures and patterns to reemerge; e.g. cynicism, distrust, skepticism, and counterproductive critique.
- Be aware of denominations diminished capacity in the justice and witness arenas and that the role of the NCCC has potential for a stronger voice.
- Note carefully the impact of a non-programmatic model as the new design is put into effect.
- Solicit responses from the grassroots via state councils of churches and member participants in the NCCC as to the acceptance and value of current work.
- Evaluate the sustainability of the model from a conciliar, justice and witness, and financial perspective as the NCCC moves into the new framework.

Given the work completed in reviewing, evaluating, and designing a plan for work and structure we commend those within the NCCC who are leading and participating in the process and pray with and for them as the work of the NCCC moves forward.
Item 07-A

[The assembly approved Item 07-A. See p. 35.]

Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

Item 07-Info

General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Agency Summary

1. Purpose

The General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (GACEIR) is composed of twenty-four members who are either elected or appointed. Sixteen elected are members of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mid council and involved in ecumenical relations at the local level. These elected members are active in a local congregation and possess an understanding of Presbyterian and Reformed theology, as well as how this perspective impacts denominational responsibilities toward ecumenical and interfaith partners. Four members are appointed by our ecumenical partners at the invitation of the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA), two are appointed by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the remaining members are the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of Presbyterian Mission Agency. All members have voice and vote in matters before the committee.

The GACEIR has its work rooted in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, the Book of Order, and General Assembly action. Together, these documents charge the committee with providing a point of connection for the ecumenical efforts of all governing body levels for Presbyterians, as well as other ecumenical and interreligious bodies. The GACEIR undertakes many tasks to keep local congregations abreast of ecumenical involvement and encourage the use of resources developed by ecumenical councils and organizations. In addition, GACEIR advises the General Assembly to help ensure policy reflects the call to ecumenism found in Scripture, the Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order.

In addition to working within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), GACEIR oversees the dialogues with other denominations and ecumenical bodies in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has membership, such as World Council of Churches and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (formerly World Alliance of Reformed Churches). These dialogues serve various purposes, including but not limited to, determining official relationships with denominations that allow for the orderly exchange of ministers and finding common points of ministry and a unified position on matters of importance either within the church or in the world.

Historically the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and its antecedents, has had a leadership or founding role in ecumenical councils and agencies. In order to ensure that denominational participation in these bodies continues to be shaped by a reformed understanding of Scripture and the church, the 212th General Assembly (2000) was asked to design a process “for review of councils and other ecumenical alliances to which the PC(USA) belongs.” The GACEIR undertakes review of ecumenical councils on a rolling basis. At the 221st General Assembly (2014), a review of the National Council of Churches and Christian Churches Together will be submitted.

The GACEIR is responsible for nominating and inviting ecumenical and advisory delegates to the General Assembly. At each General Assembly approximately seventeen representatives from our partner churches attend and participate in deliberations and worship. This participation serves two purposes: provides insight and new perspectives on specific business that the assembly may be considering and facilitates understanding among the ecumenical community of Presbyterian polity and governance. While delegates and representatives do not vote at the General Assembly, their feedback and commentary on issues before the assembly is invaluable in helping commissioners consider the full impact of some policy decisions. Often these leaders bring greetings to the assembly or participate in worship through the offering of prayer or liturgical assistance.

2. Ministry and Accomplishments

During 2012–2013, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (GACEIR) delved deeper into engaging ecumenical partnerships at the grassroots level, which included the revitalization of the Ecumenical Liaison Network and reinstitution of the Ecumenical Service Recognition Award. In addition to improving engagement with mid councils and congregations, GACEIR devoted time and resources to discerning a faithful response to our call to love persons of other faiths by hosting an interfaith consultation and preparing the document, The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Below is a summary of the ministry and work of GACEIR since 220th General Assembly (2012).

a. Mid Council Liaisons

The GACEIR is working to strengthen ecumenical formation at the congregational level by deploying an Ecumenical Network for mid council liaisons. The liaisons serve as a resource for local denominational ecumenical work, as well as a
resource for the broader church by communicating ecumenical activities at the local level. This two-way communication serves to ensure the wider church informs the ecumenical stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and is effective in facilitating the local ecumenical work of Presbyterians.

b. The Ecumenical Service Recognition

At the urging of GACEIR, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reinstituted the Ecumenical Service Recognition in 2013. This is a way to recognize individuals and mid councils seeking to give visible expression to the unity of the Church and express a commitment to unity and reconciliation in our world. It is awarded every other year and presented at the General Assembly.

The nominations’ reviewing committee is particularly interested in recognizing ministry that is creative or innovative, effective, broadly inclusive, and could serve as model for others. The Ecumenical Service Recognition and the publicizing of recipients’ activities provide Presbyterians with examples and inspiration for local ecumenical involvement. In addition, through the recognition, the General Assembly

- bears testimony to the belief that the Church of Jesus Christ is one, holy, catholic and apostolic; that the Lord of the Church wills that it be visibly one in the world; and that it is the duty of believers to be obedient to that Divine will;
- affirms its commitment as mid councils as the most appropriate means whereby the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may demonstrate its obedience to the divine will that the Church be Visibly one in each place and in all places;
- gives help and encouragement to those within the church who are seeking practical ways the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can move beyond affirmation to action in manifesting the unity that we both have and seek in Jesus Christ.

At the 221st General Assembly (2014), Central Presbyterian Church in Lafayette, Indiana; Chinook Presbyterian Church in Chinook, Montana; the Reverend Jose Luis Casal in Tres Rios Presbytery; and the Reverend Clark Lobenstine in National Capital Presbytery will be recognized for their ecumenical involvement. Profiles of the recipients and their ecumenical work can be found at http://www.pcusa.org/news/2014/3/18/committee-affirms-pcusas-commitment-interfaith/.

c. Consultation with Committee of the General Assembly

In March 2013, GACIER engaged in a conversation with representatives of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) with the purpose of establishing an ongoing conversation between GACEIR and COGA. Such a conversation will move the church forward in its ecumenical relationships and financial commitments, as well as offer the opportunity to explore interfaith relations in a changing world. The Organization for Mission calls GACEIR to engage with all agencies of the PC(USA) regarding ecumenical and interreligious partners (Organization for Mission, IV.C.8.d.9).

The consultation with COGA focused on the role of the ecumenical commitments of PC(USA) and the evolving relationships with interreligious partners. In particular, the two bodies noted the conversion of work around ecumenical and interfaith delegates and representatives to the General Assembly and possible continued collaboration on guidelines for invitees as well as expectation of the PC(USA) delegates to the General Assembly. A second area of agreement that resulted was to have future discussions around COGA representative appointments to GACEIR.

Representing GACEIR: Scott Anderson, Judy Angleberger, Krystin Granberg, Gun Ho Lee.

Representing COGA: Vince Thomas, Marcia Mount Shoop, Jerrod Lowery, and Alexandja Haddad who is the COGA representative to GACEIR.

Staff: Gradye Parsons, Robina Winbush, and Loyda Aja.

d. Interreligious Stance and Interfaith Consultation

In 2013–2014, GACEIR studied and consulted with a diverse group of individuals to develop a draft document that outlines the Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which is to be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). This preparation included a survey of Presbyterians by Research Services for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), biblical reflection, and culminated with an Interfaith Consultation in September 2013 at Stony Point Conference Center. More than sixty-five people attended this event and represented diverse communities, congregations, schools, and interreligious experiences and expertise throughout the PC(USA).

The two-and-a-half day consultation included many opportunities for worship, orientation, and an opportunity to be in dialogue with the members of the Community of Living Traditions, individuals from different faiths living in an intentional community at Stony Point. The consultation asked participants to explore themes within interreligious engagement drawn from their lived experiences and respond to presentations of ecumenical and interfaith guests.
Participants were asked to spend their time speaking to one another about issues of interreligious engagement that they saw as emerging and being pertinent to the Church and its future. Just as importantly, participants had opportunities to connect with and share their experiences with one another. Their work at the consultation, and the emerging conversations, eventually became the backbone of the interreligious stance.

Following the consultation, members of GACEIR continued to work with a team of writers to draft a stance that was reviewed at the January 2014 committee meeting.

3. Work of Ecumenical Councils

Part of GACEIR’s mandate is the support of and participation in national and international ecumenical councils and dialogues, including the National Council of Churches of Christ (U.S.A.), the World Council of Churches, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, among others. Delegates and participants from the PC(USA) have attended councils and events, engaged in dialogues, served as resource persons, and monitored the ministries of various ecumenical bodies.

Since the 220th General Assembly (2012), shifts in the ecumenical landscape have continued. As reported in the GACEIR Review of NCC and CCT, “The churches that have traditionally participated in North American conciliar bodies like the National Council of Churches (NCC) … find themselves in numerical decline, with sense of diminished identity and a growing set of internal tensions.” The resulting changes and restructuring in the National Council of Churches, a long-standing partner of the PC(USA), are explained more fully in the review, but a few points deserve brief mention here. Of particular note is the dismantling and reformulating of the previous “commissions” of the NCC, and the shift in the NCC to a structure that leans more heavily on heads of communion as a governing board. The latter in particular is of concern to the PC(USA), as it limits broad participation in leadership, especially voices of women, youth, and people of color. In all its ecumenical partnerships, the PC(USA) is committed to lifting up diverse and marginalized voices, and will continue to advocate for such diversity and breadth in the leadership of partner ecumenical bodies. Specific recommendations in relationship to the NCC and Christian Churches Together (CCT) are included in the review.

In October 2013, four members of the PC(USA), Laura Cheifetz, Gradye Parsons, Everdith Landrau, and Sara Lisherness, served as delegates to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which was held in Busan, South Korea. The World Council of Churches Assembly takes place every seven years, and continues to be the broadest and most diverse Christian gathering of its kind. A report from the delegates was provided for the committee.

In addition to engagement with these and other ecumenical bodies, the PC(USA) also participated in the following bilateral dialogues with other denominations and communions: Roman Catholic/Reformed (Christian Reformed Church in North America, Reformed Church in America, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and United Church of Christ); Episcopal Church/PC(USA); Seventh Day Adventist and Reformed (PC(USA) and CRCNA).

In general, the changing ecumenical landscape, which is described in more detail in various reports, has led to fairly dramatic reorientations for our ecumenical endeavors. While much remains in flux (such as the restructuring of the NCC), more change is anticipated and there is a need to continue to reimagine and re-envision how to live out ecumenical commitments in the midst of the transformation of denominations and councils. The means and modes of engagement in ecumenism institutionally in the last century may be changing, but the call and commitment to the unity of Christ’s church remains strong and unwavering. Both within and among PC(USA) churches, the need to bridge divides and seek common mission in unity has not waned; in many ways, the importance of ecumenical engagement in a broken church has only grown. Thus, even as the future of ecumenical councils is uncertain, the PC(USA) and GACEIR boldly look to the leading of the Spirit in this new season.

4. Moving Forward

The GACEIR will continue to nurture and grow the Ecumenical Liaison Network to ensure it meets its stated purpose, publicize the Ecumenical Service Award and activities of nominees, prepare to receive WCC reports into the life of the PC(USA), and, finally, ensure a strategic and timely roll out of the Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
Item 08-01

[The assembly approved Item 08-01. See pp. 14, 40.]

On Support for the Institut Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) Endowment and the Endowment Concept—From the Presbytery of New Castle.

The Presbytery of New Castle respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issue the following statement to all synods, presbyteries, congregations, and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) hereby takes note of and endorses efforts by the organization known as ‘Friends of IMCK’ (FIMCK) to raise a permanent endowment for the Institut Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK), or Kasai Christian Medical Institute. FIMCK is a group of former and current PC(USA) missionaries and missionary offspring who are deeply involved with IMCK and who formed themselves into this organization for purposes of raising the IMCK endowment in late 2011. The IMCK was first established as a nursing school by Presbyterian missionaries in the Congo (then Belgian Congo, now Democratic Republic of the Congo—DRC) in 1954. The component hospital, the Good Shepherd Hospital, was built largely with the Presbyterian Women’s Birthday Offering and completed in 1975. A large, downtown, multifaceted clinic, a university-level nursing degree program, research facilities, medical internships and residencies, and many public health and nutrition outreach programs have been added in the years since then.

“The General Assembly notes that after surviving almost sixty years of war, pillage, and political disruption to become one of the foremost institutions of its kind in the Congo, the IMCK now, ironically, struggles financially for its existence in the current economic climate and is often unable to pay backlogged salaries or purchase needed medicines and supplies. This being a legacy institution among fellow Christians in one of the world’s poorest and most war-torn countries, the General Assembly welcomes the efforts of FIMCK to do for a developing country institution what most nonprofit schools and hospitals in America—many associated with the PC(USA)—have done to establish firmer financial foundations; that is, to establish a permanent endowment fund.

“Accordingly, the General Assembly hereby urges and encourages all synods, presbyteries, congregations, and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to favorably consider the inclusion of donations to this endowment in their budgets, their bequest planning, their special collections, their memorial gifts, and in any other ways that may practically present themselves. It is noted that instructions can be found online at www.IMCK.org.

“Beyond the financial advantages that this particular endowment, or that any endowment in any such institution, may provide for the beneficiary institution, the General Assembly wishes to further recognize the concept of permanent endowments for third world institutions as a useful tool and one that may provide a degree of independence and dignity in situations where earmarked donations for immediate needs may have developed cultures of dependence and what has become popularly known as ‘toxic charity.’ The General Assembly believes that these beneficial effects may result from the regular, automatic, and unconditional nature of periodic payments that flow from the earnings of endowments and the fact that this can lead to a sense of ownership and responsibility in the benefited institution, and to the self-esteem that comes from the freedom to make their own decisions on spending across all the needs in their budgets, including those mundane items that are typically overlooked in restricted gifts. Therefore, the General Assembly endorses and recommends the endowment model in other mission situations where it is deemed applicable and useful.”

Rationale

The rationale is embodied in the recommended statement. In summary it is as follows:

1. The Institut Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) is a legacy Presbyterian institution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), founded by Presbyterian missionaries in 1954 and expanded with the Presbyterian Women’s birthday offering in 1975.

2. Today, IMCK is one of Presbyterian World Mission’s top priorities and one of the foremost such institutions in the DRC, yet it is struggling financially and is unable to keep up with salaries because of declining donations in the current economic climate.

3. Nonprofit institutions, even in the developed world, find it important or necessary to raise permanent endowments in order to provide financial stability, underpin operating expenses, and reduce their dependence on current donations. No less is needed for such mission institutions in the developing world.

4. Such an endowment has been established by an organization, Friends of IMCK (FIMCK), in partnership with General Assembly recognized and validated partners, such as the Presbyterian Foundation and the Medical Benevolence Founda-
tion. The principal of this endowment is securely placed in U.S. investments and investment decisions are under the control of the FIMCK Board of Directors. However, they have had difficulty raising money for this endowment from within the denomination because of their lack of perceived status and approval by PC(USA).

5. In view of these difficulties and inasmuch as this seems to be a promising method for providing financial stability, self-direction, and dignity to this and perhaps other legacy Presbyterian mission institutions, the endorsement of the General Assembly is hereby requested.

6. Although there are no budget implications, this overture may be appropriately referred to Presbyterian World Mission for response.

Concurrence to Item 08-01 from the Presbyteries of Abingdon, Coastal Carolina, Florida, Glacier, Heartland, Nevada,Scioto Valley, Western North Carolina, and Whitewater Valley.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-01

Comment on Item 08-01—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Institute Médical Chrétien du Kasai (IMCK) is an important partner of Presbyterian World Mission. Its ministry of compassionate Christian care and training of medical professionals is greatly needed in the DR Congo where WHO health indicators are among the worst in the world with alarming rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, and maternal mortality http://www.who.int/gho/countries/cod.pdf. In the past, Presbyterian World Mission was able to provide substantial support of IMCK through the contributions of PC(USA) congregations and individuals, but this support has decreased in recent years. We believe that an endowment is a faithful and effective way of addressing the pressing need for financial sustainability for IMCK. This is especially true in a country as impoverished as DR Congo, which ranks at the bottom of the Human Development Index, https://data.undp.org/dataset/Table-1-Human-Development-Index-and-its-components/wxub-qc5k, where national health insurance is nonexistent and individuals cannot pay a fee for service to cover the operating expenses of the institution.

In addition to financial support, PC(USA) World Mission believes strongly in the “ministry of presence” to accompany our partners as they serve in Christ’s name. Financial support in itself is not enough; we have committed ourselves to providing mission personnel to serve side-by-side with Congolese medical professionals as they serve in one of the most difficult contexts in Africa. PC(USA) Mission Co-worker Dr. John Fletcher serves at IMCK and Dr. Martha Sommers is planning to begin service later this year. Other mission personnel serve on the board. In addition to support of this endowment we also encourage PC(USA) to support the sending of our mission personnel.

Item 08-02

[There is no recommendation assigned to Item 08-02.]

Item 08-03

[The assembly referred Item 08-03 to the Presbyterian Mission Agency with comment. See pp. 14, 40.]

[Comment: Refer Item 08-03 back to Presbyterian Mission Agency, with the following comment: Consult with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).]


The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the revisions to the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (revisions shown in Appendix 1).

Rationale

In 1983 the General Assembly and the Book of Order assigned the Presbyterian Mission Agency, formerly known as the General Assembly Council, with the responsibility for “instituting and coordinating a churchwide plan for equal employment opportunity for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, and for persons with disabilities.” A Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity was developed in 1985, and Equal Employment Opportunity goals were established by the General Assembly Council for the church. In 1994 the document was revised to include Affirmative Action and was thus retitled, “The Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.”
For many years the General Assembly Council (now the Presbyterian Mission Agency) continued in a superintendent role as directed by the General Assembly with responsibility for overseeing the implementation of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action in each of the General Assembly agencies. In 1987 the associate for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity was employed by the General Assembly Council to coordinate the implementation of the denomination’s commitment to inclusiveness through equal employment opportunity. The associate was a liaison between the General Assembly Council and the General Assembly Committee on Representation and provided data for the General Assembly Committee on Representation to carry out its work. Over the course of time it became apparent that each General Assembly agency was in the best position to oversee their own affairs, and their own implementation of the church’s commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. In 2006 the Presbyterian Mission Agency brought a recommendation to the 217th General Assembly (2006) requesting that it no longer have superintendent responsibilities for overseeing the other agencies, and the General Assembly concurred.

The General Assembly Council’s change in its name to Presbyterian Mission Agency (throughout the document).

The new listing of protected categories of persons at the beginning of Section One (page 1).

The change in language in sections on inclusiveness and diversity and unity in the previous editions of the Book of Order to the current language (pages 1–2).

The reference to mid councils instead of presbyteries and synods and governing bodies (throughout the document).

Clarification of the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s role as it relates to the plan (pages 1 and 3).

Description of the role of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (page 2).

Clarification that the responsibility for administering and implementing the plan rests with each General Assembly agency (pages 3–4).

Explanation of how General Assembly agencies work in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to determine if changes need to be made to the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (page 3).

Responsibilities of the General Assembly Committee of Representation as listed in the Organization for Mission (IV. C.5.b) (page 6).

Revisions reflecting that each agency have responsibility for implementing its own plan for equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and supplier diversity (pages 6–9).

The Presbyterian Mission Agency provided extensive opportunities for the General Assembly Committee on Representation to participate in the review of this policy. Much of the feedback was very helpful and resulted in changes to the document that is being presented.

Appendix 1

Proposed Revisions to the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action

TOWARD INCLUSIVENESS IN EMPLOYMENT: A CHURCHWIDE PLAN POLICY FOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

SECTION ONE: TOWARD INCLUSIVENESS IN EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide equal employment opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons; to prohibit discrimination in employment based upon race/ethnicity, color, national origin, gender, age (40 and over), marital status,
The foundation for this commitment is our acceptance of the Word of God as central to our life of faith and action, and our willingness to be guided by the Holy Spirit speaking through Scripture as we seek to be inclusive in our employment practices. Hiring procedures within the church must be established within the context of our faithfulness to God’s will for all of humanity.

We begin with the biblical declaration that God created all that is and declared it to be good. Despite our rebellion and our unwillingness to live in conformity with God’s original creation, God has not broken relationships with humanity. Men and women of faith have repeatedly received and accepted the call to live lives characterized by justice and righteousness. In Jesus we see the incarnation of God’s inclusion; it is imperative that we live as one with those who are excluded. Jesus’ love for all is God’s love. In Jesus’ resurrection the rule of God over all people is announced and inaugurated.

It is our belief that our life together as Presbyterians, manifested through our employment policies and practices, bears witness to our commitment to do God’s will. Accomplishing such a mission in today’s world requires, as a first step, the elimination of discriminatory practices in the church. The time is upon us when we can and shall demonstrate that Christ’s promises of reconciliation, justice, and love are true.

II. GOVERNING BODY COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gives repeated instructions to the governing bodies of the church regarding the nature of its intended inclusiveness and the implementation and maintenance of an equal employment opportunity plan. For example:

“The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.” (F-1.0403)

“The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, and different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision-making of the church.” (G-9.0104FF.) (G-4.0403.)

The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403). In fulfilling this commitment, councils shall...
section G-II.0504 states that “the presbytery’s committee on ministry may look to synod and General Assembly for information and assistance in the matter of ministers and pastoral relations.” In support of this provision “the General Assembly shall create the necessary agency to facilitate and support the work of the presbyteries and the synods in this matter.”

C. Mid Councils Synods and Presbyteries

G-3.0110 states: “Councils higher than the session may employ such staff as is required by the mission of the body in accordance with the principles of unity in diversity (F-1.0403). Councils may, in consultation with the next higher council, share staff as required by the mission of the body. A council shall make provision in its manual of administrative operations (G-3.0106) for the process of electing executive staff and the hiring of other staff, the description of the responsibilities of the positions, the method of performance review, and the manner of termination of employment. (G-3.0104)”

Section G-9.0704 states that “administrative positions in all governing bodies above the sessions shall be filled in accordance with the principles of participation and representation found in G-9.0104.”

D. Ministry Committees

The Book of Order places responsibility for the implementation of equal employment opportunity practice in the call of ministers and the employment of candidates with the presbyteries. “The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403).” (G-3.0103). “To facilitate the presbytery’s oversight of inquiries and candidates, reception and oversight of teaching elder members, approval of calls for pastoral services and invitations for temporary pastoral services, oversight of congregations without pastors, dissolution of relationships, dismissal of members, and its close relationship with both member congregations and teaching elders, it may delegate its authority to designated entities within the presbytery. Such entities shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in approximately equal numbers, bearing in mind the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403. All actions carried out as a result of delegated authority must be reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting.” (G-3.0307). “According to the process of the presbytery and prior to making its report to the congregation, the pastor nominating committee shall receive and consider the presbytery’s counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call.” (G-2.0803).

Section G-II.0501 states that the committee on ministry of the presbyteries “may look to synod and the General Assembly for information and assistance in the matter of ministers and pastoral relations.” In support of this provision “synods shall create the necessary agency to coordinate the work of presbytery committees.”
D. Committees on Ministry

The Book of Order (G-II.0502f) places responsibility for the implementation of equal employment opportunity practice in the call of ministers and the employment of candidates with the committee on ministry as follows: “It shall provide for the implementation of equal employment opportunity for ministers and candidates without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, age or marital status. In the case of each call, it shall report to the presbytery the steps in this implementation taken by the calling group.” (G-II.0502f.)

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROGRAM POLICY FOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Each council governing body and church-related institution or service organization is encouraged to develop its own policy implementation plan for administering its commitment to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. The policies of the six agencies are offered as a model for parallel structures in councils, church-related institutions, and service organizations. This Implementation Plan for the General Assembly is offered as a model for parallel structures in other governing bodies, church related institutions, and service organizations. All such plans optimally include, but are not limited to the following elements:

- Councils which implement such plans should consider including the following elements:
  
  (a) Equal employment opportunity goals and objectives, which are continuously updated and reviewed.

  (b) Personnel policies, practices, and procedures, which as a minimum will include:

  1) Involvement of persons from the Identified Categories identified groups in search and recruitment procedures;

  2) Search and recruitment procedures to locate and consider for employment persons regardless of their inclusion in the Identified Categories race, sex, age, or disability;

  3) Selection, promotion, and upgrading procedures and career development activities to preclude and to correct patterns of discrimination on the basis of inclusions in the Identified Categories race, sex, age, or disability;

  4) Career development activities without regard to race, sex, age, or disability;

  5) Development of realistic position descriptions based upon job related qualifications and standards to insure that the description does not contain qualifications or selection criteria based on inclusions in an Identified Category race, sex, age, or disability that disproportionately screen out individuals;

  6) Public advertisement of openings in selected media and contact of specific agencies, organizations, and associations;

  7) Annual workforce review and analysis to determine:

     a) if patterns of discrimination exist and (b) if the hiring practices are bringing the church to a greater level of inclusiveness; and

     b) Identification of the point of accountability and responsibility for the implementation and continuous review of the equal employment opportunity program.

  (c) Commitment as a purchaser to contract or purchase goods and services whenever possible from businesses that have committed themselves to the goal of equal employment opportunity and which are willing to cooperate with Project Equality, Incorporated. Such cooperation includes utilizing the Project Equality process so that whenever a reasonable choice exists validated meeting facilities are used and suppliers listed in the Buyers Guide and Supplements are selected.

  (d) Commitment as an investor, to invest whenever possible in businesses that are committed to equal employment opportunity.

In addition to the elements listed above, the following are listed for guidance:

A. Mid Councils Synods and Presbyteries

In implementing their responsibilities in relationship to the filling of administrative staff positions (G-9.0104 G-3.0103), synods and presbyteries mid councils are urged to develop and establish equal employment opportunity policies and implementation plans based upon the following:

1. Recruiting, hiring, calling, training, and promoting persons within all job classifications without regard to inclusion in an Identified Category racial ethnic group, sex, age, or disability;

2. Ensuring that all other personnel policies and practices such as compensation, benefits, transfers, leaves of absence, performance evaluations, reduction in force and return to service, educational opportunities, tuition assistance, and termination are administered in accord with equal employment opportunity policies;

3. Annually collecting and reviewing employment data and conducting analyses, reporting their findings to the next higher governing body council, and taking such corrective actions as are necessary under their own equal employment opportunity commitments.

The governing body mid council’s manual of administrative operations should include its equal employment opportunity implementation plan and the procedures by which employment data will be gathered for review by the next higher council governing body.
In consulting with presbyteries regarding the election of an executive presbyter, presbytery leaders (G-9.0701; G-3.0110) and in developing guidelines for personnel reviews, synods are encouraged to review routinely the inclusiveness of election processes and the incumbents’ fulfillment of their overall responsibilities to initiate and carry out the provisions of the churchwide plan for equal employment opportunity. Synods shall be similarly reviewed by the General Assembly. Neglect by executive presbyters and mid council leaders in carrying out such responsibilities should be grounds for dismissal.

B. Congregations

The witness of congregations is the basis for all other expressions of the church’s life. Each congregation is urged to implement its procedures of calling, recruiting, hiring, and promoting for all job classifications without regard to a candidate’s being a member of one or more Identified Categories. Each congregation is urged in all phases of employment, for all job classifications, to follow the equal employment opportunity program of its presbytery. These commitments to equality should include but not be limited to compensation, benefits, leaves of absence, performance evaluations, reduction in force and return to service, continuing education opportunities, and termination.

C. Church-Related Institutions

Church-related institutions including schools, theological institutions, and service organizations are encouraged to develop and establish equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies and implementation plans based upon the following:

1. Recruiting, hiring, calling, training, and promoting persons within all job classifications without regard to inclusion in an Identified Category, racial ethnic group, sex, age, or disability.

2. Ensuring that all other personnel policies and practices such as compensation, benefits, transfers, leaves of absence, performance evaluations, reduction in force and return to service, educational opportunities, tuition assistance, termination, and any others are administered in accordance with equal employment opportunity policies.

3. Annually collecting and reviewing employment data and conducting analyses of all personnel policies and practices, reporting to the appropriate General Assembly agency, and making such corrective actions as are necessary under their equal employment opportunity commitments.

IV. CONCLUSION

Motivated by the gospel and not by law, we seek to improve our record of hiring not only on the General Assembly level, but also in congregations, presbyteries, and synods and mid councils. In Luke 13 Jesus says men and women will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the realm of God. The time has come for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to model this joyful feast and to reflect inclusiveness in all areas of its life. No longer shall we be a pale reflection of secular society, but a beacon of light showing by our unity and our diversity that all are one in Christ.

SECTION TWO: TOWARD INCLUSIVENESS IN EMPLOYMENT: A CHURCHWIDE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEVEL

In implementing the policies established by “Toward Inclusiveness in Employment: A Churchwide Plan Policy for Equal Employment Opportunity” the following procedures and responsibilities are assigned to the indicated units of the General Assembly.

I. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY’S COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

The responsibilities of the General Assembly Committee on Representation are outlined in the Organization for Mission (IV.C.5.b) and the Book of Order, and include participation in any review of the Churchwide Policy for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action. The General Assembly’s Committee on Representation, in consultation with the General Assembly Council, shall develop and establish guidelines for use by Committees on Representation in providing advice to the governing bodies in the area of employment. (G-9.0105.)

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COUNCIL AGENCIES

In addition to its responsibilities as an employing unit employers, the General Assembly Council Agencies has have a leadership role in coordinating the churchwide plan. These responsibilities include the components delineated below:


Each General Assembly Council agency shall:

(a) develop and implement an overall plan for coordinating the equal employment activities of the General Assembly Level within their agency,

(b) share a copy of that plan to be in the files of the General Assembly Committee on Representation; and

(c) recommend report periodically to the General Assembly: (1) equal employment opportunity goals; (2) annual summaries prepared by the General Assembly Council encompassing, but not limited to the their equal employment opportunity performance of the...
(d) participate in periodic consultation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation who will recommend equal employment opportunity goals to the General Assembly.

B. Support and Advocacy

The General Assembly Council shall encourage the development of support and advocacy groups for those who have been affected by past discrimination.

C. Celebration of Progress

The Each General Assembly Council agency shall encourage the celebration of progress in equal employment opportunity.

D. Consultation with Employing Units

The General Assembly Council shall ensure consultation with all agencies, councils, boards, commissions, and committees of the General Assembly (hereafter referred to as employing units) regarding their designation of an equal employment officer; implementation of personnel procedures and policies, and equal employment opportunity plans; dissemination of policies to employees; and appropriate corrective action.

E. Consultation with Synods

Following consultation with synods regarding the election of an executive (G-9.070 I) the General Assembly Council shall provide an evaluation of the inclusiveness of this process to the next General Assembly.

F. Participation in the Review of Chief Administrative Officers

General Assembly Council participation in the annual review of work of the chief administrative officer of each hiring unit of the General Assembly shall include provision to the hiring unit of an analysis of the unit’s equal employment opportunity performance.

G. Guidelines for the Employment of Persons in the Identified Groups

The General Assembly Council shall publish and disseminate guidelines for the employment of women, racial ethnic persons, persons with disabilities and persons of various ages. (G-9.0104.)

H. Resolution of Discrimination Grievances

The Each General Assembly Council agency shall include in its uniform personnel policies provisions for handling equal employment opportunity grievances and for the review of allegations of employment discrimination.

I. D. Operational Implementation

1. PURCHASING

The Each General Assembly Council agency shall instruct its purchasing agents of the denomination to notify all subcontractors, vendors, and suppliers of goods and services of the church’s equal employment opportunity policy asking them to share a copy of their equal employment opportunity policy with the church agency. Copies of these policies shall be forwarded to the General Assembly Council by the purchasing agents for review and filing. Review and comment on these vendor plans will be included in the annual report of the General Assembly Council to the General Assembly.

2. DISSEMINATION

A brochure website shall be prepared developed and curated by the General Assembly Council Presbyterian Mission Agency, in cooperation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation on the subject of full participation and equal employment opportunity which will be used by all employing units and institutions of the General Assembly and governing bodies of the church.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

The chief administrative officer of each agency employing unit of the General Assembly shall be responsible for the agency’s unit’s implementation and administration of the equal opportunity policies as adopted by the General Assembly and shall ensure that the agency’s unit’s administrative manuals include guidelines and procedures for the implementation of these policies at the unit level and with other governing bodies served by them. Neglect of this responsibility shall be grounds for dismissal.

The Executive Director of the General Assembly Council shall be the principal equal employment opportunity officer for the General Assembly.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYING UNITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCIES

A. Designation of an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer

Each agency employing unit of the General Assembly shall designate an equal employment opportunity officer who shall be responsible for the implementation and management of the unit’s agency’s equal employment opportunity program.
B. Development of Policies and Implementation Plans

In consultation with the General Assembly Council each agency employing unit shall:

1. Ensure that all personnel guidelines, policies, procedures and practices are implemented in accordance with the church’s policy on equal employment opportunity;

2. Initiate special actions required to “provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices to correct patterns of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age or disability” (G-9.0104 G-3.0103); and

3. Develop an equal employment opportunity implementation plan in support of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and participation, as stated in F-1.0403 G-1.0403 of the Book of Order, and provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices to correct any existing patterns of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age or disability also stated in G-9.0104 G-3.0103. Each unit’s agency’s implementation plan shall be approved and maintained in the official files of both the General Assembly Committee on Representation and the agency General Assembly Council.

C. Operational Implementation

Each agency employing unit shall:

1. Disseminate the General Assembly equal employment opportunity policy statement to all employees and include it in all appropriate General Assembly-level manuals of operations and employee handouts as well as post it on employee bulletin boards and include it in employee orientations;

2. Include each new employee at the supervisory level and above in an orientation and training program designed in conjunction with the General Assembly Council’s appropriate staff person; and

3. Advise prospective employees of the church’s equal employment opportunity policies through advertisements, publications, and other public statements.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPECIFIC AGENCIES

The responsible General Assembly agency or agencies shall:

1. Develop equal employment opportunity performance guidelines for the annual performance review and evaluation of synod executives and executive presbyters as prescribed by the Uniform Personnel Policies (16.00). (Examination of the executive’s initiative in carrying out the provisions of the churchwide plan for equal employment opportunity should be included in the annual performance review process); and

2. Report to the General Assembly Council on the equal employment opportunity performance of synods, presbyteries, and related schools and theological institutions.

IV. HIRING PROCEDURES

The search for and recruitment of persons from racial ethnic groups, persons of all ages, persons with disabilities, and women the Identified Categories is critical to the implementation of an effective equal employment opportunity plan. An effective program of search and recruitment shall include at least the following:

1. Recognizing that involvement of persons from the identified groups Identified Categories in the search and recruitment process is necessary;

2. Identifying resources related to the identified groups Identified Categories that will yield positive results, e.g., electronic media, newspapers, networks, caucuses, educational institutions, and employment agencies; and

3. Utilizing the internal employment resources of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Position descriptions should be kept current through review and alteration whenever significant change(s) in responsibilities are evident. Ample opportunity shall be given for the employee to participate fully in the process of suggesting changes in the position description. Modifications made to position descriptions must be submitted for refactoring. Position descriptions for all vacant positions authorized for filling will be prepared as outlined in the “Personnel Policies for Agencies and Guidelines for Governing Bodies,” paragraph 09.04 and 09.05. The position description shall be examined carefully to determine what functional and personal qualifications as to educational attainment, skills, physical ability (e.g. able to lift ten pounds), experience, knowledge, characteristics, etc., are actually required by the position so that qualification factors that discriminate against racial ethnic persons in the Identified Categories, various age groups, women, or persons with disabilities are eliminated.

IV. EVALUATION, REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Evaluation, review, and analysis are essential components of any effective equal employment opportunity implementation plan. The General Assembly Council shall include detailed churchwide data and analyses in its report to the General Assembly. Such data will be secured from each employing unit of the General Assembly, each governing body above the session (presbytery reports are forwarded by the appropriate presbytery), and General Assembly-related schools and theological institutions. Each General Assembly agency such entity is expected to conduct an annual evaluation of its workforce to determine the status of its performance in actualizing the denomination’s
commitment to inclusiveness as outlined in G-9.0104 G-3.0103, according to timelines and procedures developed in consultation with the General Assembly Council or by the General Assembly appropriate governing body and with the corresponding General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The annual evaluation will indicate whether numerical goals and timetables to correct patterns of discrimination are necessary, and if they are, what these goals and timetables should be. It is expected that each agency employing unit of the General Assembly will define its equal employment opportunity problems or needs by first examining the numbers and levels at which it employs members of the identified groups. Members include racial ethnic groups, women, persons of all ages, and disability (see G-13.0201 b). Results of the annual work force review and analysis will be forwarded to the General Assembly Council.

This work force analysis encompasses four components: (1) employment analysis, (2) recruitment analysis, (3) utilization analysis, and (4) goals and objectives.

GLOSSARY

Affirmative Action any measure, beyond simple termination of a discriminatory practice, that permits the consideration of race/ethnicity, national origin, sex, or disability, along with other criteria, and which is adopted to provide opportunities to a class of qualified individuals who have either historically or actually been denied those opportunities and/or to prevent the recurrence of discrimination in the future.

Chief Administrative Officer the “chief executive” of each GA agency, synod, or presbytery. By virtue of office this person is responsible for administering EEO and is held accountable for implementation in each annual performance review.

Consult or Consultation the receiving of information or opinion in order to assure that views and interests of others are known.

Disability a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities.

Discriminate Discrimination to deny equal opportunity treatment in any phase of employment because a person is a member of one of the Identified Categories on the basis of race, sex, age, or disability. Marital status is an additional protected group in the calling of pastors, while disability is not so included.

Equal Employment Opportunity the taking of steps necessary to ensure employer neutrality with regard to membership in a Identified Category racial ethnic group, sex, age, or disability.

Employment the total relationship of employer and employee including pre-employment, employment, and post-employment.

Exempt Staff the Fair Labor Standards Act provides for nonexempt and exempt positions with respect to overtime. Those persons employed in exempt positions are not paid overtime wages for hours worked either in excess of the normal work schedule or 40 hours a week. Such employees are expected to manage their schedules to provide them with a minimum of one day off each week.

Genetic Information the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defines genetic information as: Genetic information includes information about an individual’s genetic tests and the genetic tests of an individual’s family members, as well as information about the manifestation of a disease or disorder in an individual’s family members (i.e. family medical history). Family medical history is included in the definition of genetic information because it is often used to determine whether someone has an increased risk of getting a disease, disorder, or condition in the future.

Good Faith Efforts the “faithful and sincere” efforts to achieve accepted goals through the implementation of specific steps.

Handicapped a person is handicapped if he or she (1) has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities; (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Identified Groups Categories for purposes of this Policy, the Identified Categories include: race/ethnicity, color, national origin, gender, age (40 and over), marital status, sexual orientation, creed, protected disability status, citizenship status, genetic information, uniformed service or veteran status or religious affiliation (except where religious affiliation is a bona fide occupational qualification), or any other characteristic protected by law persons with disabilities, women, persons of all ages, and Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans.

Job Classification a grouping of positions according to responsibility or function within a total structure.

Nonexempt Staff the Fair Labor Standards Act provides for nonexempt and exempt positions with respect to overtime. Persons employed in nonexempt positions shall be paid overtime wages for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

National Origin the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defines national origin discrimination as: National origin discrimination involves treating people (applicants or employees) unfavorably because they are from a particular country or part of the world, because of ethnicity or accent, or because they appear to be of a certain ethnic background (even if they are not).

Position Description description of job: its responsibilities (functions to be performed); accountabilities; fit into total organization; personal requirements; experience deemed necessary to perform in position, such as education or previous work.

Race/ Racial Ethnic Group Ethnicity persons who are members of four specific racial ethnic groups. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission recognizes six race and ethnic designations: Asian (not Hispanic or Latino), Black or African American (Not Hispanic
Recruitment—the process of seeking applicants for positions. It can be “passive” or “aggressive” in seeking those who might not apply without special efforts.

Underutilization having fewer persons in the identified groups in a particular job classification than would reasonably be expected by their availability in the work force.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 08-03.

This report proposes significant changes to the Churchwide Plan on Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, which has been the church policy for almost thirty years. One major change, for example, places the responsibility for each agency to create its own individual Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policy, and to administer and implement its own plan. The Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) in essence is asserting that it will no longer provide any administrative assistance, except for establishing a website, but that it will continue to “approve[e] and monitor” the Plan. The proposed changes also appear to advocate six different policies instead of one national policy. The ACREC’s experience with the six agencies over the past several years has revealed that the smaller agencies depend heavily upon the PMA to perform several administrative functions, such as the implementation of minority vendor/supplier diversity policy. Can the smaller agencies effectively administer and implement the EEO and AA policies as well? The Churchwide Plan also is now called a “policy” and the reasons for this change are not made clear in this document.

The changes proposed by this report will have a great impact on church membership, particularly racial ethnic people. There has been no discussion with ACREC nor with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC). The ACREC is aware that at least one racial ethnic caucus has not been consulted, and it is suspected that none of the other caucuses have been consulted. The revised Churchwide Plan-now-Policy provides that any proposed changes to the plan/policy would be made to the General Assembly for approval, after consultation with ACREC, ACWC, and the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR). In making these proposed changes, the PMA did not follow its own proposed consultation process.

In addition, this report closely resembles the comments and counterproposals made by PMA (formerly GAMC) in response to the 2012 Climate for Change Task Force Report: “Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer.”1 The recommendations of the task force report were passed by the General Assembly as amended, and the counterproposals made by PMA were rejected. We ask that this report, now being reintroduced as changes to the Churchwide Plan, be rejected again. The ACREC recognizes that changes have occurred since 1984 when the Churchwide Plan became church policy, and some revisions may be necessary. What ACREC objects to is the failure to consult with the relevant church entities that will be directly affected by these changes. At most, this report should be tabled until the appropriate agencies in the church, including ACREC and ACWC, have had a chance to study the impact of these changes and have meaningful input on the proposed changes.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 08-03

Comment on Item 08-03—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The task of revising the Churchwide Plan was long overdue and particularly timely after the 220th General Assembly (2012)’s approval of the report “Privilege, Power, and Policy: The Church as an Employer.” The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) consulted with the Presbyterian Mission Agency on two occasions before this revision of the Churchwide Plan was presented to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The document before commissioners reflects some of the changes suggested in that consulting process. The constitutional reforms of 2011 are reflected in this document and some of the losses of explicit protections are a result of losses in specificity in the Book of Order regarding employment of personnel and council responsibilities. The more flexible constitutional language does not constrain the assembly entities from retaining these protections in a document for its own council. The GACOR lifts up for commissioners the following concerns/comments:

Where councils do not have a standing committee on representation, they are still required to address the mandated functions described in G-3.0103 and must find ways to demonstrate them to the council itself and to the higher council for review. Though councils and agencies have responsibilities for themselves, the plan may provide common elements that will be helpful to lower councils in their own formulation of equal employment standards, principles, and practices. These efforts are in

1 Climate for Change Task Force, Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer, Item 11-17 of the 220th General Assembly (2012), <http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%2Bl%3B2g8%3B3qgau22aajj11kxyt%29q29%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3951&promoid=239>
place to correct patterns of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, and/or disability. GACOR suggests that the plan be revised to include a requirement that agencies demonstrate making “good faith efforts” to fulfill these principles and that those be reported regularly. The revisions of “Toward Inclusiveness in Employment,” Section II, should be looked at carefully. GACOR is concerned that the former responsibilities regarding support and advocacy (B) and participation in the review of officers (F) are removed in this document.

The complimentary roles of different standing committees of the General Assembly are reflected helpfully in the revised document. The cooperation GACOR experienced with the Presbyterian Mission Agency in the process of revising this document is one they would like to repeat in future efforts.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

Item 08-04

[The assembly approved Item 08-04. See pp. 14, 41.]

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the revised Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations. [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY
MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

I. Introduction

A. As an agency of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency implements policies established by the General Assembly, coordinates the work of the General Assembly Ministries in light of General Assembly mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities; works in partnership with synods and presbyteries; and develops and proposes a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly. Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board are elected by the General Assembly and are representatives of synods, presbyteries, and the church at-large. [See Organization for Mission, Section I., History of the Structure for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)]


The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board may change those appendixes to the Manual of Operations that are within its purview following a first reading, which may be electronic, and adoption at a subsequent plenary session. First reading and action may take place during the same session of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendixes to the next General Assembly (See Appendix 11 for the Process and Procedure for Submitting Changes to the Manual of Operations.)

B. Use of Robert’s Rules of Order (Revised)

The meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and related bodies are held in accordance with the provisions of the Book of Order. As specified in G-9.0302, “... the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order ...” is used.

II. Composition of the Board

A. Membership:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is currently composed of 57 members (40 voting and 17 non-voting). Elected members of the Board serve a six-year, non-renewable term:

1. Voting Members
   a. Elected Membership (36)
      • 6 General Assembly commissioners (2 from current assembly, 2 from the two immediate past assemblies)
08 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON MISSION COORDINATION

- 4 young adults (ages 18-35)
- 3 ordained presbytery staff
- 2 ordained synod staff
- 21 from recommendations of presbyteries

b. Ex-officio Members (4)
- Current Moderator of the General Assembly
- Immediate past Moderator of the General Assembly
- The current Moderator of the Churchwide Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women
- A representative from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, Inc.

2. Non-Voting Members—with voice:
   a. Corresponding Members (15)
      - Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
      - Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency
      - Representative from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA)
      - Chair of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)
      - Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)
      - Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)
      - Representative from the Committee on Theological Education (COTE)
      - Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) President
      - Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Chair or designee
      - Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation President
      - Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Chair or designee
      - Presbyterian Publishing Corporation President
      - Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Chair or designee
      - Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. President
      - Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Chair or designee

Corresponding members are not assigned to a committee and may attend any committee meeting that is conducting business of interest to them. Corresponding members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board have voice but not vote in Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and committee meetings.

b. Ecumenical Advisory Members (2)

Ecumenical advisory members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee for election by the General Assembly for two-year terms, with eligibility for two additional terms, on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. One ecumenical advisory member shall serve on the Justice Committee and one shall serve on the Worshipping Communities Committee, with voice and vote in committee. Ecumenical advisory members to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall not be elected to the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

3. At-large Committee Members

The General Assembly Nominating Committee nominates for General Assembly election, in consultation with the committees, two persons to serve on the Audit Committee and two persons to serve on Finance Committee, with voice and vote. These at-large members serve a two-year term, and are eligible for re-election twice. These members are nominated from the church at-large for their special expertise in each of these areas. While they are not members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, they are granted the privilege of the floor during Presbyterian Mission Agency Board plenary sessions on matters related to their special expertise.
B. Inclusiveness and Diversity

General Assembly policies ensure that elected bodies represent the wealth of diverse gifts found in the church and provide a means to share responsibilities and decision making. The General Assembly Nominating Committee provides for diversity and inclusiveness in the Board’s membership. The General Assembly Committee on Representation monitors their work as well as the appointment of committees and task forces by the Board.

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to use expansive language when referring to God and inclusive language when referring to God’s people.

C. Areas of Service:

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board may change the names, number, and structure of Board committees in order to carry out the goals and objectives of the Mission Work Plan using the process delineated in Appendix 11. The work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is carried out by elected members who may serve on Board committees as well as in liaison relationships.

III. Role of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall have the following responsibilities

A. To cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church.

B. To provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities.

C. To develop and propose for GA approval, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for GA approval, an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

D. To act in those specific matters assigned to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board by the General Assembly, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions.

E. To perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, in consultation with appropriate individuals and groups, establishes such committees, task forces, and work groups as are necessary to conduct its business. Current committees are recorded in Appendix 1 of this manual.

The Executive Director reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee and the Board itself. The Executive Director shall provide direction, leadership, and coordination for the total mission program and shared services including review and evaluation.

IV. Citation of Major Documents

The following documents guide the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and are maintained in offices engaged in work related to their subject matter. Unless appended, these documents are available on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Website, with printed copies available by request.

A. Mission Policy Guide: Text of policies is available in the Minutes of prior General Assemblies. The guide is prepared by the Presbyterian Mission Agency.


C. “Policies Regarding Public Statements by the Board” approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (Appendix 3).

D. Current Mission Work Plan.

E. Organization for Mission.

F. Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement.
V. Presbyterian Mission Agency Staffing

A. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board fulfills its work, in part, through staff led by the Executive Director. The Executive Director carries out responsibilities with staff in the following ministries: Mission, Communications and Funds Development, Shared Services, and the Office of the Executive Director. For the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff organization, refer to Appendix 2A.

B. Between meetings of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, upon recommendation of the Executive Director, is authorized to restructure the staff organization, always in alignment with the mission direction of the General Assembly. Any such organizational changes will be reported to the next General Assembly.

VI. Election and Confirmation of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director

The Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency shall be elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year term subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly. (Organization for Mission, Section V.G.)

Rationale


The proposed changes are in compliance with the Book of Order, the General Assembly Deliverances, the Organization for Mission, and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

The Manual of Operations is clear that “… the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is authorized to restructure the staff organization, always in alignment with the mission direction of the General Assembly.” It is also clear that the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board must report such changes to the General Assembly.

However, other phrases, in this same section, obscure that authority, by detailing the high-level structure of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (Mission, Communications and Funds Development, Shared Services, and the Office of the Executive Director) in a section of the Manual that only the General Assembly can amend.

The proposed change brings the Presbyterian Mission Agency in line with the other five General Assembly agencies. In each case, the high-level structure of the staffing organization is determined by either the agency’s board (elected by the General Assembly) or by the senior executive (elected or confirmed by the General Assembly.)

Item 08-05

[The assembly referred Item 08-05 with comment. See pp. 14, 41.]

[Comment: To refer to the already established Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Task Force. The committee would like the task force to have at least six (6) people.]

A Resolution to Define and Interpret Standards for PC(USA) Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, in consultation with the Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges Presidents Roundtable, to convene a racially diverse special task force of six people with expertise in the field of education to define and interpret the standards for racial ethnic schools related to the PC(USA). The task force should conduct most of their business via electronic means, meeting one time face-to-face, and they should consult with current PC(USA)-related racial ethnic schools on what characteristics in a school produce racial ethnic leaders in today’s multicultural society. The task force should report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) on their findings.

Rationale

Having been assigned this referral from the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) consulted with the presidents of the PC(USA) racial ethnic schools and colleges and after much consideration and deliberation determined this important task outside the scope of ACREC’s expertise.

The ACREC suggests the following criteria be considered by the proposed task force on what makes a successful racial ethnic school:

*What effectively generates new and positive racial ethnic leadership within our church and our communities?*

A. **Core Mission**

1. **Commitment to Diversity**
   
   Students should be met “where they are” on the playing field.
   
   - Not enough to have a commitment to diversity in numbers; the school needs to recognize where the students are on the playing field and meet them there with the support that is needed.

2. **Living into Society**
   
   School should help diverse student body live into society rather than work with students who are diverse

3. **Correct Emphasis**
   
   a. The mission of the school should be defined by how they meet the needs of students of color and not by how many attend.
   
   b. Criteria should not be based on the quantity of racial ethnic students, but on the quality of education and support provided to racial ethnic students by the school.
   
   c. Does the school meet the needs of men and women who are otherwise underserved?

B. **Curriculum**

   Specific programs tailored to student body.
   
   a. Are there courses that meet the specific needs of the diversity in the student body?
   
   b. Do the classes empower students in today’s multicultural settings?

C. **Faculty**

   1. Does the racial ethnic composition of the faculty/staff reflect the student population?

      Important for leadership to be diverse because they also serve as role models.

   2. Are staff and faculty multilingual? Multicultural?

D. **Culture on Campus**

   1. Is the population/culture diverse or inclusive?
      
      I.e., is there diversity in all strata of groups on campus?
      
      - In faculty? In staff? In academic and extracurricular groups and activities?

   2. Is racial ethnic *identity* valued, supported, and are genuine relationships formed within communities?

   3. Does the school develop and deliver *contextually relevant* education and training?

      E.g. Does curriculum meet the students where they are and make it a level playing field or do they make the students make up ground to do the “catch up” with a/the dominant culture?

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**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-05**

*Comment on Item 08-05—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.*

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB) approved at its February 2014 meeting that the chairperson of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board “appoint a task force consisting of representatives from the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREI) and representatives from other Presbyterian-related racial ethnic educational institutions. The task force will determine how the church can be true to its commitment to the HPREI, with whom it has covenanted,
while considering how other racial ethnic educational institutions can be in relationship with the PC(USA) and be considered for support."

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board suggests that the resolution on defining and interpreting standards for PC(USA) racial ethnic schools and colleges from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) be referred to the task force appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board chairperson, in order to avoid duplicative efforts. Both proposed task forces include many of the same people, and the work is similar. The task force appointed by the chairperson of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board will meet at the fall Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges Presidents Roundtable meeting, which is included in the current PMAB budget, so there are minimal additional financial implications for the meeting of this task force. During this meeting, the task force will have the expertise and the time to complete the work assigned by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the work in ACREC’s resolution.

**Item 08-06**

[The assembly approved Item 08-06 with amendment. See pp. 14, 41.]

*A Resolution to Develop a Churchwide Antiracism Policy—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency[, using existing racial ethnic ministries, consultation with the Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force, the Advocacy Committee for Racial-Ethnic Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and engagement with experienced practitioners as appropriate] to [develop] [update and revise] churchwide antiracism [policy] [policies and develop implementing procedures] similar to the existing antidiscrimination policies [and procedures].

2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop [procedures and evaluation criteria for the implementation of a] [and implement criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of current] churchwide antiracism program[s] [ The Presbyterian Mission Agency will] [and to] report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) regarding [its findings and any corrective] actions taken [or proposed] and results achieved.

3. Consistent with the 220th General Assembly (2012) mandate regarding mandatory antiracism training (*Climate for Change Task Force Report[2]*) , recommend that all mid-level councils and congregations provide antiracism training and dialogue.

4. Recommend that mid councils provide antiracism training and dialogue for staff, teaching elders, committee members, and congregations.

5. Recommend that congregations provide antiracism training and dialogue for staff and members, to strengthen evangelism and mission, to increase awareness of racial justice issues in their communities, and to discern racial justice issues in their own staffing.

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop tools, assessment instruments, and training materials for the presbyteries and congregations in order to develop clear and effective understanding of systemic racism, including white privilege, power, and prejudice in relation to race.

**Rationale**

Racism and white privilege exist in the church and in society. Racism is the “interlocking systems of advantage (as well as disadvantage) based on race. Unless we learn to recognize the interlocking effects of privilege at these levels we will not recognize how easily some of us enjoy privileges because of our racial identity that are not equally available to all our neighbors.”

Systemic racism has significantly impacted our society and our church for many years in the ways we gather for worship, the ways we function and relate as the Body of Christ, and the ways we build trust and engage individually with one another. Racism has directly or indirectly influenced the allocation of our limited resources for mission, the staffing of leadership positions within our church, the calling of leaders to serve in local congregations, as well as the process of ordination and preparation towards our ordered ministry.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) received and approved the Climate for Change Task Force report and approved the recommendation made that “cultural proficiency and anti-racism training be mandatory for all employees of all six agencies, and provide periodic or continuing education courses or training in this area, which will be monitored by ACREC.”

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As a country, we have made progress regarding the understanding of race and the reality of racism. However, there is still staggering evidence of the continuing reality of white privilege—as seen in comparisons of wealth, education, health care, and mortality rates between the so-called races in the United States. As long as this disparity exists, the church must continue antiracism training and so bear witness to the conviction that all people are made in God’s good image.

While some progress has been made in society at large, the church continues to struggle. In some locations within the church there is little evidence that the sin of racism has been identified or that privilege and power are appropriately shared between people of different “races.”

Over the years, segments of the PC(USA) have made conscious efforts in addressing such concerns. ACREC believes that an overarching church-wide policy is now needed in order to effectively address systemic racism in the church and live as faithful, accountable witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the spirit of the Confession of Belhar, we believe that “the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream; that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.”

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve the resolution with amendments as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency[, using existing racial ethnic ministries, consultation with the Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force, the Advocacy Committee for Racial-Ethnic Concerns, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, and engagement with experienced practitioners as appropriate, to [develop a] [update and revise] churchwide antiracism [policy] [policies and develop implementing procedures] similar to the existing antidiscrimination policies [and procedures].

“2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop [procedures and evaluation criteria for the implementation of a] [and implement criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of current] churchwide antiracism training program[s][]. [The Presbyterian Mission Agency will] [and to] report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) regarding [its findings and any corrective] actions taken [or proposed] and results achieved.

“3. Consistent with the 220th General Assembly (2012) mandate regarding mandatory antiracism training (Climate for Change Task Force Report[1]), recommend that all mid-level councils and congregations provide antiracism training and dialogue.

“3. Recommend that mid councils provide antiracism training and dialogue for staff, teaching elders, committee members, and congregations.

“5. Recommend that congregations provide antiracism training and dialogue for staff and members, to strengthen evangelism and mission, to increase awareness of racial justice issues in their communities, and to discern racial justice issues in their own staffing.

“4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop tools, assessment instruments, and training materials for the presbyteries and congregations in order to develop clear and effective understanding of systemic racism, including white privilege, power, and prejudice in relation to race.”

Item 8-06, from the Advocacy Committee on Racial/Ethnic concerns, recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve measures to deepen the church’s understanding of the false idea of race, the reality of racism, and the impact of these forces on the faithfulness of the church as well as the just organization of society. The changes suggested by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy are intended to strengthen the proposal and its relationship to the recommendation from the Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force for consultations that may uncover and address patterns of inequality and racism within the church (see Item 09-14, see p. 655, electronic version). As we see it, the issue is partly about existing policies (both preventing discrimination ourselves and more actively opposing racism) and partly about the effectiveness of our current approaches that implement those policies.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a mixed record on addressing racism and pursuing racial justice. Despite high points of action on behalf of civil rights and in support of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, the church has been complicit, often too unwittingly, in the creation and maintenance of white privilege and structural racism in our nation’s life, including in the church’s own life. As the 211th General Assembly (1999) policy statement “Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community,” states: “The PC(USA) rejoices in its witness of resistance to racism provided by past and current PC(USA) leaders and individuals and echoed by congregations and governing bodies. The PC(USA) recognizes that it has not spoken boldly enough, nor acted courageously or creatively enough in response to racism.”

The church has approved policies, created resources, equipped facilitators, offered trainings, engaged in public witness, and prayed. For example, from the 1970s into the 2000s, the church was part of Project Equality, seeking to do its national agency purchasing with companies that voluntarily shared their AA/EEO data with a coordinating body. Item 9-19 before this assembly would affirm the work of the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) in developing updated diversity guidelines for purchasing. Such intentional hiring, training, and purchasing has sought to dismantle racism, overcome privilege, and build the beloved community in the name of Jesus Christ. Moreover, as the Presbyterian Mission Agency points out in its comment on this item, the church has continued to develop its understanding of racism and provides a number of materials as well as opportunities for workshops and antiracism training. However, more work remains.

As the resolution notes (and as discussed in Item 8-08), tragic disparities of wealth, education, health care access, and mortality rates remain among the races in the United States. The larger church, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), continues to reflect segregation in many places and ways with privilege and power inequitably shared. Despite the theological power of the church’s statements, the PC(USA) remains a church in which 94 percent of the members are white as are 91 percent of its ministers. These realities point to the ongoing strength of white privilege. They point to the need for the church to reevaluate its practices, its policies, its training materials and assessment tools in our on-going efforts to dismantle the unjust power of race and to involve our congregations more effectively in diverse communities.

The 1999 policy statement, “Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community,” has served the church well and continues to be an important part of the church’s witness.

Our revised recommendations would allow the church to update the definition of racism upon which its antiracism work is based. “Facing Racism” uses the definition of “prejudice plus power” for racism. Alternatively, racism may be defined as an institutionalized system that provides advantages to some and disadvantages others as it operates according to the well-intentioned and taken for granted norms of those with greater institutional power. “Prejudice plus power” does not reflect the lack of personal prejudice many of us feel nor the hidden power within institutional practices that assumes opportunities and choices that are not equally available to members of traditionally racialized groups. Hidden institutional power assumes customs and values, even theological perspectives, that are not necessarily shared by traditionally racialized groups. Consequently, new study and new practices are needed to help the church see whether our best intentions have unjust racial outcomes.

In addition, further development of the church’s antiracism policies and strategies could incorporate new understanding of the concept of racial and ethnic identity at a time in which the population of the U.S. is quickly becoming “majority minority.” Significant theological and sociological reflection and writing has been done on both whiteness and racial identity development in the fifteen years since “Facing Racism” was adopted. An updated antiracism policy could incorporate insights from this work as well as address new manifestations of racism, recognizing that racism takes different forms in different communities.

The resolution also provides an opportunity to develop tools and processes to evaluate the work the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has done on dismantling racism and becoming an antiracist institution. This evaluation will help the church identify additional resources, tools, and processes to engage in this task.

The recommendations that mid councils and congregations provide antiracism training reaffirm calls from in “Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community” and were echoed in “A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012). Perhaps at base, commissioners will need to decide how much the church’s ministries with persons of non-majority background are strengthened by effective witness and action for racial justice.
Advice and Counsel on Item 08-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-06.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns fully supports the Advocacy Committee for Racial and Ethnic Concerns “Resolution to Develop a Churchwide Antiracism Policy.” One priority of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is considering the intersection of gender and race. We hope that this policy will take into specific account the particular experiences of women of color.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 08-06

Comment on Item 08-06—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation respectfully advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve this resolution to develop a churchwide antiracism policy.

This resolution would have an important positive impact on the work committees on representation do both at the mid council and general assembly levels.

The Book of Order in F-1.0403 sets forth principles of unity and diversity. Race and ethnicity are identified categories of persons or groups for which there is no place for discrimination in the life of the church. It states, “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

The development of a wide antiracism policy will help the church in its expressed concern about understanding and practices across race and ethnicity. Having wide antiracist conversations help equip all bodies in the church to improve our work across racial and ethnic divides and to live more faithfully what we confess in A Brief Statement of Faith, the Spirit helps us “to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, [and] to hear the voices of peoples long silenced” (Book of Confessions, 10.4, Lines 69–70).

Committees on representation are concerned about racism and its impact in the church. And they have skilled persons at mid council and national levels to serve as resources in creating this antiracism policy.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-06

Comment on Item 08-06—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Comment on Recommendation 1


The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly distributed the comprehensive policy document churchwide.

As policy already exists, the Presbyterian Mission Agency calls for more action to implement the vision of the beloved community as set forth in the existing policy.

Since 1999, Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW has provided antiracism training at General Assemblies. Antiracism training has also been offered at The Big Tent, National Presbyterian Multicultural Church Conferences, Multicultural Church Institutes, and in presbyteries and congregations, as requested.

Comment on Recommendation 2

Churchwide antiracism trainings are offered by the office of Gender and Racial Justice in Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW. Racial justice training opportunities include:

http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/racialjustice/training/
Building the Beloved Community—Understanding the dynamics of privilege and systemic racism.

Faces of the Enemy—A guided discussion based upon the documentary “Faces of the Enemy.” This course explores enemy making, the media, propaganda, racism, and war.

Gender, Race and Class: Exploring Intersectionality—How class and gender intersect with systemic racism in social organizations and institutions.

Internalized Oppression—This course uses biblical characters to explore the effects of internalized oppression.

Power and Privilege—This workshop explores the issues of power and privilege and creates a safe place to discuss how they affect our lives and church.

Worship Where Faith and Culture Meet—This workshop includes an introduction to African American, Latino/Latina, Asian, Middle Eastern, Native American, and Euro-American cultures in the United States.

Cultural Proficiency 101—An overview of the gender and racial justice components: anti-racism, anti-sexism and power and privilege.

Equipping the Church for Ministry with God's Diverse Family—This conversation focuses on the tools and resources available for Presbyterians who seek to face and dismantle racism.

A Conversation on Inclusive and Expansive Language and Cultural Diversity—This conversation focuses on utilizing bias-free and culturally-responsive communication, for the purpose of promoting transformation in individuals and in the larger church.

Comment on Recommendation 4

The office of Gender and Racial Justice provides antiracism training materials, tools, and resources for Presbyterians who seek to continue the Presbyterian Church’s long-standing commitment to face and dismantle racism. This training is designed to assist individuals, mid councils, agencies, and worshipping communities with their efforts to understand the dynamics of privilege and systemic racism.

The Antiracism Manual, as well as a roster of antiracism trainers, is located in the office of Gender and Racial Justice. The practice is to provide the antiracism manual to nationally trained facilitators and to send the facilitator with training materials to mid councils, congregations, General Assembly, the Big Tent, General Assembly agencies, and to other groups, as training is requested.

The Antiracism Manual was recently expanded. New modules include:

- The Intersectionality of Race, Gender and Class (completed in 2010),
- a module on Internalized Oppression (Race & Gender) (completed in 2011), and
- a module on White Privilege and Male Privilege (coming in 2014).

Item 08-07

[The assembly approved Item 08-07 with amendment. See pp. 14.41–42.]

Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals

In light of the downward trends in compensation for many in an increasingly unequal society [and as a result of its written response to the referral from the 220th General Assembly (2012) (such response herein referred to as “this Report”)], the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. request the Presbyterian Mission Agency to review churchwide ministerial salary data as context for its review of Presbyterian Mission Agency salaries;
2. encourage mid council staff and elected leaders to review this report [and the recommendations found at the end of the first section] to assess the benefits of intervention and term call structure for declining congregations; and
3. direct the Office of the General Assembly’s church leadership office to post this report among its resources.
These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:


This response to two referrals contains four sections. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) is tasked to study matters of Christian conscience within and outside the church and to recommend measures that reflect the values and message of Jesus Christ. At core, the advisory committee believes that ministers share much the same motivation and should share much the same reward, as they serve the same church, a shared enterprise founded on God’s self-giving love in Jesus Christ. God’s solidarity with us in Christ in turn calls us to solidarity with the cause of Christ in the world, which is still to be turned upside down (Acts 17:6). A key measure of that solidarity is greater equality in compensation. Yet we all know that improving salaries in any part of our unequal society is hard. It will finally depend on whether the church can combine faithfulness and effectiveness in responding to God’s call to share more equitably, while calling more people to Christ’s cause.

This response includes reports on three actions of the advisory committee that may illuminate the challenges to compensation fairness within current church structures and trends. We do not focus simply on the poorer churches in poorer areas, but on the dynamics of the whole church in an increasingly stratified low wage society. A key question for commissioners is whether changing ministerial compensation models would affect those trends toward diminishing membership and resources. This means looking at the vocational incentives within the professional employment structures of the church (presbyteries, mid councils, and General Assembly agencies) as well as the parishes. While this response looks at indicators of the lack of parity in compensation among ministers, based mainly on size of congregation and data from the Richard Hammar organization, limitations on the advisory committee’s access to information prevented a fully “comprehensive review” of the salary differentials that are presented.

The overall 2012 report of the Special Committee on the Church for the 21st Century made recommendations in ten areas. The causes of church decline are both external (cultural, demographic, and economic) and internal (morale, leadership, organizational ecology). The recommendation for improving compensation for the lowest paid was part of strengthening internal factors over which the church has some control. Other measures included new ministries, bi-vocational ministers, solidarity among those serving as pastoral leaders, and ways for all members to witness with integrity and impact in a 21st century world.

The four sections of this response include:

I. Approaches to strengthening ministerial salaries near or below presbytery minimums, including Board of Pensions dues and medical costs and housing;

II. Revisiting Neither Riches, Nor Poverty: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church, (2010) and related study documents and policy statements on compensation, community, and justice;

III. Review of indicators of lack of parity in compensation based on class, gender, ethnicity, and type of service to the church. (Limits to comprehensiveness noted);

IV. Current practice and proposals within the General Assembly Agencies.

There is no answer to this question that is simply economic as, almost by definition in our current system, churches unable to pay adequate pastoral salaries have limited financial resources and there are few sources of potential subsidy. As a practical response in the absence of such subsidies, congregations in financial difficulty are encouraged to consider “New Beginnings,” a Disciples of Christ self-study program made available by the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area. Presbytery executives are experienced in advising congregations and pastors on practical options. In broad context, ministerial salaries should not be a vow of poverty, but they are already below market for similarly educated professionals. More important, they are inadequate to sustain family life. Like many striving to remain in the “middle class,” pastors’ families gen-
erally depend on two incomes. Younger pastors, furthermore, are often burdened by student debt and high childcare costs. The costs of inequality can be seen in the exit of approximately 30 percent of ministers (including higher numbers of women) from the ministry within ten years of ordination.

This first and longest section starts by recognizing that the lowest salaries represent a weakness of the whole system that allows the internal “market” of the church to reflect too much the economy around us. The church has much to teach the marketplace. Part of that teaching is to value nonfinancial incentives: joy in service, collegiality and trust over competition and insecurity, and a stronger witness to the distinctiveness of the church. However, many proposals for “new” and “post-institutional” church structures seem to simply capitulate to the marketplace by abandoning many smaller congregations striving to be faithful. Yet, on the other end of the economic spectrum, we are told that high salaries are necessary to attract pastors and church leaders with the skills required to lead or to minister in affluent neighborhoods. We recognize that measures to increase equality in compensation need to go with measures to increase accountability for results, but we want the Gospel to be the final measure. Trusting in God’s call to go and make disciples, we call for the development of strategies of shared sacrifice and substantial change, not simply for greater solidarity, but to allow the gifts of more new ministers to carry the Gospel into all neighborhoods, especially those in economic need, bearing fruit for God’s Kingdom and its servant, the church.

Reformed churches in France, Italy, and other places pay all ministers on the same basis with differences according to need, like the mission personnel who serve through the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s World Mission ministry area. That centralized solution does not match the market model characteristic of U.S. Protestantism. In its absence, several other attempts have been made to develop resources to support ministries in areas where local financial resources are too weak. The possibility of raising the lower salaries through gifts by Presbyterians of significant wealth should be encouraged, but it has not yet had significant results, possibly confirming the primary loyalty of most members to their local churches.

Similarly, although the 2010 and 2012 General Assemblies voted to encourage presbyteries to establish voluntary salary equalization or enhancement funds, none are reported. Such funds would be based on contributions from congregations with pastors whose higher salaries would exceed presbytery maximums. Contributions would be recommended to match the amount by which a pastor’s salary package would exceed a formal or informal maximum number. This strategy seems unlikely to take hold without significant structural changes even though high differentials in pastoral salaries do affect relations within presbyteries and among members of church staffs. In practice many presbyteries receive less in contributions of any kind and some have cut back on their executive, support, and especially program staff. The 2010 Report on the Theology of Compensation found only three presbyteries, two in Iowa and one in New York State, that had stated presbytery maximums. The slightly higher pension dues paid on higher pastoral salaries to the Board of Pensions is thus the most significant current financial embodiment of solidarity among ministers, although there remains a cap on dues payments on salaries of over $179,000, giving the best paid pastors a kind of exemption or bonus.

Another source of outside support for many congregations, primarily in the past, has been presbytery “aid to fields” or other grants. In the case of one New Jersey presbytery, such funding had gone for many years to several congregations of varied racial ethnic membership. No significant growth occurred in these congregations during more than twenty years of subsidy, although overall economic decline marked most of the areas where these churches are. The presbytery itself experienced declining revenue. Hence a decision was made to phase out this support, although the presbytery assists with training in targeted growth strategies. Did those subsidies keep the churches’ ministries alive, even if they did not grow in members? Did that presbytery (and others) require any accounting of ministry activities and their results from churches given help? Did the presbytery executives and general council members hold themselves accountable for mission or membership goals across the presbytery? What counts as “success” and does it differ depending on the local context? Are we asking such questions and striving to carry out ministries wherever they are needed?

A somewhat similar process called “circulating funds” existed in the United Presbyterian Church by which more prosperous synods helped support financially weaker ones, sharing assistance for presbytery staffing costs. It could be argued that the initial spread of congregations, presbyteries, schools, and hospitals had been due to strong central mission boards, but once presbyteries were established the institutional momentum eventually shifted direction. In the case above (and others) such subsidies were held essential to receiving pastoral leadership, and pastoral leadership was held essential to congregational survival. Yet, too often, indirectly subsidized pastors in smaller congregations have frequently been tentmakers or semiretired and their approach has often necessarily been maintenance rather than renewal or growth due to lack of time or resources.

In other forms of subsidy, support is given directly to pastors who may be selected jointly by the presbyteries and other funding bodies, increasing accountability and congregational planning. Any external funding model faces the challenge of measuring pastoral performance. Structuring calls for specific terms (two to five years) with formal renegotiation procedures (designated pastorates) has helped both pastors and sessions get clearer about their particular responsibilities. The “For Such A Time As This” program of the Presbyterian Mission Agency has for several years selected and subsidized pastors for rural churches. On the other side of the size spectrum, the Lilly Endowment has funded a pastoral fellows program for starting ministers in large teaching churches. Seminary field education arrangements have also helped supplement pastoral care in many cases.
Since the last General Assembly, the most significant large-scale factor affecting less well-paid and generally younger pastors with families was the Board of Pensions’ plan that would have shifted and raised medical dues. That plan (announced right after the assembly) was delayed and amended after a large-scale protest, but continued medical cost pressure seems likely to put less well-paid pastors, ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service (formerly known as commissioned lay pastors), and other church employees into some form of Affordable Care exchanges, affecting the “community nature” of the Board of Pensions’ service to installed pastors who have normally been required to be part of the plan. Facing a large shortfall in healthcare funding, the Board of Pensions continues to project that in 2015 it will charge Plan members themselves 23 percent of effective salary and an additional 1.5 percent for spouses and children, payable by member, hiring body, or combination of the two. Because of the ERISA-reinforced firewall between pension and medical benefits, the pension part of the Board of Pensions is quite strong and well-managed but cannot be used to offset medical costs.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, while not in total agreement with the Board of Pensions’ own compensation structure, strongly supports the widest possible membership in the Board of Pensions and values the “community nature” of some of its provisions. Thus the prospect of a two- or even three-tier categorization of pastors within the Plan arouses concern, as do any disincentives for having children or supporting other dependents. The Board of Pensions has considered the administrative and actuarial issues in having a universal or standard plan onto which additions could be purchased but has not chosen this option. Would there be greater opportunity for equalization or partial subsidy to the less well-paid, however, under a system that makes entry into a basic Plan less a hurdle but fuller medical coverage an additional cost? In principle, ACSWP would favor as universal a plan as possible.

Due to past earning power of its membership and recent investment skill, the Presbyterian pension plan and its medical program are stronger than other denominational plans and hence would be weakened by any ecumenical combination. The ultimate goal of a single-payer system, endorsed by past General Assemblies as the most just and cost-effective way to provide healthcare to our nation, would end the need for the Board of Pensions’ medical program. Whether the Board of Pensions should put all ministers and church staff into a dedicated Presbyterian Affordable Care Act Exchange or into a hybrid program is another question beyond the scope of this response to referral.

Within the religious marketplace, it is frequently recommended that mainline congregations and ministers need to become more “entrepreneurial” for the sake of the gospel, and the word “missional” is sometimes used almost in this sense. Often accompanying this proposal is the belief that the value (and “quality control”) represented by the denominational “brand” is decreasing. Setting aside for the next section theological consideration of the nature of church, there is enormous literature on the challenges of redeveloping congregations slipping below critical mass in terms of members or resources, and lacking a clear enough sense of call or mission. Some are called hospice churches and their pastors are often part-time or commissioned lay pastors (CLPs, or now “commissioned ruling elders to particular pastor service,” a category not mentioned in the wording of the referrals under consideration, but to which some of this summary would apply).

In the absence of a direct salary support arrangement, the connectional system may still be able to encourage positive changes in the intra-Presbyterian marketplace. In order to give existing congregations a greater hope of sustainability (and decent pastoral livelihoods), regional bodies with oversight capacity can help congregations and pastors to help develop alternatives before decline becomes largely irreversible. Such intervention, triggered perhaps when membership declines for three consecutive years, could obviously be resisted by sessions and by pastors, who might feel they have no ability to find other calls if a term contract were suggested. Some of the lack of mobility in the system is also due to the number of pastoral arrangements actually supported by spouses’ work. But the momentum of decline tends to bond pastoral and institutional survival with lowering expectations and a “taking care of” mode of pastor and congregation ministering to each other (and to their buildings). The irony is that in taking care of a particular long-serving pastor, a congregation may limit its own future prospects; the reality is that intervention focuses on the future Christian witness without guaranteeing current pastor or building. Again, external demographic factors play an enormous role in any congregation’s “success,” and the most faithful congregations and pastors may decide to conduct vibrant ministries even in areas abandoned by business and government.

Without some measures of accountability that provide performance or even “market” information to congregational leaders, it is unlikely that our decentralized system will provide significant assistance to “steady-state” or declining congregations. And without proactive capacity in the mid-councils to help congregations and pastors change, market forces will continue to lead us toward an archipelago of larger suburban congregations with minimal rural and urban presence.

One radical and somewhat costly proposal would be to allow pastors who wanted to retire a year early to do so without penalty. This would open up a number of pulpits for younger/newer pastors, although it would entail a significant cost in pension credits. This would be a system-wide, if still partial answer, and could not be repeated too frequently. The bottom-up version of this is being practiced by some larger congregations that are assisting neighboring congregations by sharing full or part-time ministers whose costs they cover.

Another option for increasing pastoral support is to address the cost of housing by both encouraging cooperatives (possibly on the young adult volunteer site model) and shifting back toward manses, regardless of tax benefits. The provision of housing by religious bodies does provide for flexibility and mobility as well as ease of entry for new pastors. (It has similar effects in the military, which has its version of the manse allowance to compensate for the lack of home equity on military bases).
To sum this longest section, the realities of the market are not to be ignored even as Christian and Reformed values require new measures to:

1. Expand the sense of loyalty of Presbyterians beyond their own congregations to help support joint ministries in their presbyteries or regions. Traditionally such ministries have included camps and conference centers as well as mission projects; new ventures include increased numbers of intentional communities for young adult volunteers and others committed to mission service, and sponsorship of new worshipping communities. Beyond the specific ministry or shared site, the goal would be to give members whose own congregations may close another place of continuing church connection;

2. Share pension and medical cost burdens as universally as possible, including the payment of dues on effective salaries over $179,000 (the current cap);

3. Readdress housing costs in light of potential tax changes and living patterns, including renewal and redevelopment of church properties and ecumenical partnerships;

4. Strengthen the accountability of pastors and congregations through the increased use of time-limited terms and renewal processes, conditioning presbytery approval of terms of call and support (including shared insurance, grants, student loan debt reduction, etc.) on careful mission planning and collegial participation in presbytery life (overall, this would shift the weight of presbytery scrutiny from the processes of ministerial entry to on-going mutual accountability among pastors and congregations);

5. Strengthen the accountability of mid council staff to short- and longer-term strategic plans that would include conversations with “full communion” partners and specific attention to those in ministry with lowest compensation in their jurisdictions (including bi-vocational ministers and those in nontraditional worshipping communities);

6. Engage larger congregations in regular conversations with presbytery/synod representatives on their use of resources, including salaries, mission giving, and building projects, to share information and help coordinate plans for area witness.


In 2010, the General Assembly approved recommendations in the report, Neither Riches, Nor Poverty: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church, which summarized the Reformed tradition’s concern that each person’s calling serve the common good, and that excessive inequality tended to accept poverty and weaken communities of all kinds, including in the church. In a society characterized by increased inequality, it is important for the church to resist this trend and not simply reflect the communities and assumptions where it finds itself. Earlier compensation studies had developed principles and sets of criteria to guide salary setting, acknowledging the balance between merit and equality and the Reformed conviction that everyone has a calling, so that the ministry is a specific but not a special vocation (not a “higher calling to receive lower pay”). An important study in the former Presbyterian Church in the United States done in 1983 included a theological paper by Walter Brueggemann contending that a bigger contrast than that between merit and equality was that between Christian community values and those of the “world” or “market system.”

The Report of the Special Committee on the Church in the 21st Century asked Theology and Worship to do a somewhat similar task to what had been done in Neither Poverty, Nor Riches in 2010: “Charge the General Assembly Mission Council, through its Office of Theology, Worship and Education, to articulate a Reformed understanding of just compensation based on our theology of God’s providence and the grace in which we all live and serve.” The Theology and Worship website will post resources on this subject.

The 2010 study process looked at both the grounding of historic Reformed thinking on compensation and the actual patterns of compensation in congregations and within the General Assembly agencies. Salary data for pastors and other church-employed workers in the Board of Pensions plans is not released on an individual basis, but synod-wide aggregate data is available (http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/salaries_parish_ministry_2013.pdf).

Based on the church’s historical commitment to solidarity and accountability of its leadership, the salaries of all presbytery, synod, and General Assembly agency staff are printed in the Minutes of the General Assembly, Part II, although (for a variety of reasons) they are not posted online. Generally speaking, the larger congregations and those with endowments pay higher salaries. On the institutional level, the salary structure for the General Assembly Mission Council (now Presbyterian Mission Agency) staff used to be contained within a 3.5:1 ratio of highest to lowest salaries for all employees. Beginning with the hire of a head of the Board of Pensions to serve as executive director of the General Assembly Mission Council in 1998, a specific ratio was removed and the ratio of highest to lowest salaries widened.

In 2008, the advisory committee did a study of pay equity in the church entitled, God’s Work in Women’s Hands. The title intentionally recalled a major 1996 policy approved by the General Assembly on work, God’s Work in Our Hands. The 2008 report confirmed the difficulties faced by women and persons of racial ethnic heritage other than Caucasian in receiving comparable salaries to those of white male pastors. While limitations on publically available data make direct comparisons
difficult, a tool for assessing pay equity on a presbytery basis was provided. Widespread anecdotal evidence seems to confirm that the conclusions of that report remain valid.

The advisory committee stands by the conclusions of the 2010 report, most of which were approved by the assembly. The assembly voted down the committee’s recommendation that a 5:1 salary range be established or reinstituted for General Assembly agency staffs, although the Office of the General Assembly continues to keep that framework (depending partly on Presbyterian Mission Agency staffing for some administrative functions). Of the top agency leadership, the Stated Clerk is both elected most broadly by commissioners of the General Assembly and paid the least of the six boards. The ACSWP continues to believe that the examples set by leadership influence the attitude and loyalty of the broader membership and the body of ministers toward the national agencies.

III. Review of Lack of Parity in Compensation Based on Class, Gender, Ethnicity, and Type of Service to the Church.

Each presbytery has a listing of terms of call and, by sampling these, it is possible to confirm that ministers in smaller congregations are generally paid less than those in larger churches. Further, it is possible to confirm that most women and racial ethnic pastors serve, on average, smaller congregations than white male pastors. This is in part due to second career starts for a higher percentage of women and racial ethnic pastors, so that they have less accumulated experience. At the same time, though harder to measure, many report that pastors over the age of 60 find it difficult to relocate and may move into doing interim pastorates.

The easiest confirmation of the female/male salary differential is found in the 2014-2015 Compensation Handbook for Church Staff produced by Richard Hammar’s Church Law & Tax firm. According to Marian V. Liautaud, “Across all paid church positions, men are paid 28 percent more than women.” Further, they report:

“Results from Christianity Today’s biannual survey of 4,600 churches nationwide, which are featured in the new 2012-2013 Compensation Handbook for Church Staff, reveal the top paid positions based on gender.” It should be recognized, then, that their data sets are based on self-submissions, and may tend toward better paid ministers in secure situations. For men, the highest paying salaries are: senior pastor, executive pastor, adult ministry pastor, administrator, associate pastor, worship pastor (or leader), children’s pastor. For women, the line-up is a bit different: senior pastor, executive pastor, associate pastor, solo pastor, worship pastor, administrator, and children’s pastor. Clearly many of these positions presume a multi-staff church.

Here is their financial summary:

Male or female, it pays to be the senior pastor. However, male senior pastors typically are compensated more than their female counterparts. Some of this may be explained on the basis of church income, which proved to be the biggest factor affecting compensation and benefits in the study. For example, in churches with male senior pastors, church income (i.e. revenue) averages about $710,000, while church income where women serve as senior pastors hovers at about $487,000. This gap in revenue could explain, in part, why women senior pastors tend to be paid less. (For comparison to these Hammar numbers in the PC(USA), the frequency of women holding senior pastor positions in congregations with over 1,000 or more members is only 4.7 percent. The majority of women serve in congregations of fewer than 300 members).

Male executive pastors earn nearly 50 percent more than women in this same role. Additionally, even though women make up 69 percent of full-time children’s pastors, men serving in this role full-time earn nearly $12,000 more on average than women.

The gender pay gap closes for solo pastors. Although 92 percent of solo pastors are men (paid an average of $57,452), they earn only slightly more than women solo pastors (paid an average of $54,102).”

The upshot of this brief overview is to confirm the need for solidarity in closing gaps that still exist, the data on solo pastors suggests that most of those serving smaller churches do not see the potential for significantly higher salaries.

IV. Current Practice and Proposals within the Presbyterian Mission Agency and Other Agencies of the General Assembly

The employment structure of the General Assembly agencies, like that of the presbyteries and synods, is relevant to the overall compensation of ministers or teaching elders in the church. It should be noted, however, that most of the employees of the national agencies are not ministers; most professional staff are specialists, and many are not Presbyterians. It may also be noted that most assembly staff live in the Louisville, Kentucky, area, and thus do not live in a high cost-of-living environment. (Costs and limits on air travel to a midsize city may be noted, however, as frequent travel is a burden on many of the middle to senior staff). For those ministers who do serve the church in the assembly agencies, however, there clearly is a salary range that compares to the spectrum in the parish, with relatively few in the highest ranks but proportionately fewer in positions near presbytery minimums.

At the 2010 General Assembly, the commissioners approved all of the recommendations in Neither Poverty Nor Riches except the one calling for a limit on the agency salary spectrum of a 5:1 ratio. Executives from the agencies contended that such a low ratio would make it impossible to attract high-level talent, particularly in finance, investing, law, and other disciplines favored by the market. The Office of the General Assembly itself maintains the 5:1, top to bottom, salary scale, which reflects the 3.5:1 salary scale of the General Assembly Council that lasted into the 1990s. Commissioners interested in seeing
the scale of pay differentials are directed to the Minutes of the General Assembly, Part II, Section 8, though this section is only available in print form. The advisory committee continues to believe that this section serves an important accountability function within the church.

The advisory committee has engaged in several additional dialogues within the Presbyterian Mission Agency. One, with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, was to follow up on God’s Work in Women’s Hands and encourage a thorough pay equity study of the agency. That work was completed last year and showed women of color to be in some predictable places in the organization, as support staff, but also showed women to be in leadership positions throughout the organization. The advisory committee was pleased that Human Resources conducted this study and is maintaining the data sets and position analysis to monitor hiring patterns. The results of that study can be found at http://www.presbyterianmission.org/media/uploads/game/pdf/13september/information/b.211.pdf.

Another dialogue had to do with health insurance benefits for security and cleaning staff employed by outside contracting firms. Presbyterian Mission Agency senior staff were agreeable to putting healthcare benefits in as one of a number of criteria to be reviewed in the renegotiation of the two contracts, though the successful roll-out of the Affordable Care Act in Kentucky now provides those near-minimum wage employees considerably better alternatives than they had. This dialogue continues and is appreciated by ACSWP; past General Assemblies have endorsed access to healthcare for all, and have in fact specified “single payer” as the preferred approach for public efficiency and equality.

A third area of concern for the advisory committee has been the new compensation system of the Presbyterian Mission Agency itself. Because this program includes across-the-board raises, it naturally will tend to increase the inequality of reward, as 3 percent on $50,000 is a lot less than 3 percent on $150,000. A proposal from the Justice Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for making the raise structure more proportionate or “progressive,” however, was defeated by the board as a whole (http://www.pcusa.org/news/2013/9/27/pmab-rejects-pay-raise-modifications-center-employ/). Thus the board has endorsed the current program on two recent occasions.

In response to a request from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, however, the Human Resources office is taking measures to ensure that all salaries meet “living wage” standards, which are considerably more than minimum wage.

We end this response to referral with a question to the commissioners as to how important they consider solidarity in salary structure to be? How important to people in the pews is the salary structure of the ministry, much less the relation of the salaries in the national agencies to those in the presbyteries? Theologically and as a matter of morale, it seems important to us that, as inequality continues to grow in our society, the church be organized along different lines.

Although the differentials within the church pale in comparison to the inequality between hedge fund manager salaries and those of the working poor, the church must always ask itself whether we are called to conform to the economic structures in this world or to organize ourselves as the Body of Christ, in which “the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you.’” The compensation structure of the PC(USA), both in terms of its parish ministers and its national agencies, seems to have continued room for growth before it reflects the equal importance of diverse gifts to which our Scriptures witness.

Endnotes

2. In 2006 a dedicated Presbyterian business person clearly wanted to make such a transformative gift but was unable to muster the funds to carry through a pledge. We would strongly support a large-scale gift targeted to ministerial compensation, noting that the infusion of major support could be done in several ways.
3. Many commissioned lay pastors have retired from previous occupations; the thrust of this response to referral was fairness for persons seeking to devote their whole employed lives to ministry.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-07.

The recommendations presented within Item 08-07 are brought forth as directed by the 220th General Assembly (2012) following approved referrals from the Report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century. Thus, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy’s (ACSWP) recommendations come following extensive research
and data gathering regarding sustained pay inequality and the need to recognize such as an ongoing issue both in society and within the church. They also acknowledge the need to organize the church along different lines than current societal norms.

The ACSWP highlights lack of parity in compensation for teaching elders, as well as for Presbyterian Mission Agency staff, and the need for continued work at all levels of the church until all people receive a “living-wage” income. Cited for further information is the 2014–2015 Compensation Handbook for Church Staff (Richard Hammar), which articulates “Across all paid church positions, men are paid 28 percent more than women.”

The concurrence of ACWC with ACSWP's Item 08-07 further emphasizes ACWC's concern for pay equity for all women.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 08-07

Comment on Item 08-07—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) respectfully advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve this Recommendation on Fairness in Ministerial Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity, a Response to Two Referrals, and advises that the assembly consider the following comment for more information.

This recommendation addresses the compensation structure of the PC(USA), both in terms of its parish ministers and its national agencies. It concludes that the church’s compensation structure “seems to have continued room for growth before it reflects the equal importance of diverse gifts to which our Scriptures witness.”

Section III reviews lack of parity in compensation based on two identified categories of persons or groups on which Committees on Representation promote, review, advise, advocate, and consult with church entities, committees, councils, and divisions in order to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness and diversity are implemented: gender and ethnicity.

The following findings highlight areas that seem to have continued room for growth and should concern commissioners:

• Most women and racial ethnic pastors serve, on average, smaller congregations than white male pastors.
• Across all paid church positions, men are paid 28 percent more than women.
• Male or female, it pays to be the senior pastor. However, male senior pastors earn nearly 50 percent more than women in this same role.
• The gender pay gap closes for solo pastors. Although 92 percent of solo pastors are men (paid an average of $57,452), they earn only slightly more than women solo pastors (paid an average of $54,102).
• The upshot of this review confirms the need for solidarity in closing gaps that still exist, especially since the data on solo pastors suggests that most of those serving smaller churches do not see the potential for significantly higher salaries.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-07

Comment on Item 08-07—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is grateful for the persistent advocacy of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. It is through such deliberate encounters that we are all drawn to greater faithfulness. Despite our many conversations, the request raised in Recommendation 1 is a new one for our dialogue, as it already reflects a current practice. Currently the Presbyterian Mission Agency follows a comparative pricing compensation approach, which aligns pay with equivalent individual positions in comparable religious/faith-based, nonprofit and some for-profit organizations. Internal equity within the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the larger church is also a consideration, as is avoiding excessive compensation at the upper end of the scale. This approach readily accommodates organizational and job/role changes and recognizes performance and competency.

This practice is consistent with the Churchwide Compensation Guidelines, which include:

In maintaining a relationship between the highest and lowest salaries, lower levels of compensation should be comparable to or better than the average salaries paid in the marketplace, but not so far above the average that good stewardship of the church’s funds is compromised. Salaries at the top levels should reflect a tempering of excessive compensation. In establishing compensation plans and/or individual salaries, comparable salary data may include data from other national church organizations, including pension boards and foundations, academic institutions, the publishing field, pastors’ salaries, and other sources as deemed appropriate by the elected bodies of the entities or the employing organization.
The Presbyterian Mission Agency seeks to be clear that churchwide ministerial salary data is only one component of the compensation system, and a relatively minor one, since few Presbyterian Mission Agency employees are serving in roles that require the traditional skills of a teaching elder: pastoral care, preaching, administration of the sacraments, leading a congregation, etc. While this experience is very useful in our work, the Presbyterian Mission Agency is equally dependent upon specific skills in program administration, mission administration, office administration, writing/editing/formatting, policy development, advocacy, law, finance, distribution, payroll, human resources, coaching and conference planning, often with national/international dimensions. Many positions at the agency are not filled by ministers of the PC(USA) or of other denominations. The Churchwide Compensation Guidelines direct that “Factors to be considered when setting compensation should include the nature, purpose, scope, and responsibility of the position; the experience, knowledge, and skills required; the challenge of the work to be done and its impact on the effectiveness with which the church achieves its mission.”

If churchwide ministerial salary data is used as the sole context for compensation, it will be impossible to fulfill the Churchwide Compensation Guidelines (initially developed by the General Assembly in 1988 and most recently reaffirmed in 2002).


Item 08-08

[The assembly referred Item 08-08 with comment. See pp. 40, 42.]

[Comment: To refer Item 08-08 to the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to convene an urban ministry roundtable with groups and individuals engaged in urban ministry including, but not limited to, ACSWP, ACWC, ACREC, and racial ethnic caucuses for the purpose of developing a method of fulfilling the goals of Item 08-08 and to report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).]

The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing the Church’s Urban Vision

Affirming God’s call to seek the welfare of the city and to organize God’s people for the proclamation of the Gospel and the promotion of racial, economic, and social equity and justice for all citizens of Detroit and other cities of the United States of America, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) take the following actions in both mission strategy and public witness:

1. Commend the efforts of Presbyterians in city congregations and presbyteries that embody an urban Christian vision; who see the urban poor as clearly as the glittering skyscrapers; who seek to understand urban trends theologically and ethically; and who unite ministries of mercy and justice with evangelism, education, and cultural outreach, recalling our heritage of urban mission leadership and working to renew or build new worshiping communities grounded in a creative Reforming spirit.

2. To strengthen the church’s witness and outreach “on the ground,” the General Assembly encourages presbyteries to (a) examine their own histories and statistics of city congregations in the way Detroit Presbytery’s are analyzed (see Appendix A to this resolution, p. 512) and (b) renew their own urban strategies in response to existing racial and economic inequity and to new urban demographic, economic, and transportation dynamics, including the promising movement of more young people into cities.

3. Strengthen the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to bear the gospel of Jesus Christ to the cities of this nation and to support mid council efforts by renewing its urban mission strategy and designating a staff position dedicated to the coordination of General Assembly resources related to metro/urban ministry, including ministries of racial and economic equity; that this position to be lodged in the Presbyterian Mission Agency; that this position be funded through 2020, and that it carry out the following functions:

   a. Work with presbyteries, congregations, and synods to organize local, regional, and national networks of metro/urban ministry practitioners.

   b. Coordinate Presbyterian Mission Agency resources and programs related to metro/urban ministry (that have been located in several ministry areas).

   c. Develop partnerships with other faith-based and community-based organizations, especially those creating multiracial and multiclass constituencies that support metro/urban ministry.

   d. Develop a catalog of resources that are available to support metro/urban congregations and ministries, such as grants, training, and volunteer opportunities.

   e. Provide technical assistance and training to those engaged in metro/urban ministries and to those partnering in the creation of new intentional communities of Presbyterians engaged in such ministries of witness and service.
f. Work with presbyteries, synods, seminaries, and other related metro/urban ministry organizations to develop training and networking opportunities, particularly with attention to racial and economic justice.

g. Be an advocate for metro/urban ministry at the congregational, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly level.

4. Equip new ministries and worshiping communities, by directing:

   a. Presbyterian Mission Agency to organize ongoing regional conversations on “Race, Class, and the Current Challenges of Urban Ministry,” gathering the rich resources of those who have significant experience in urban ministry, particularly the rich resources of people of color; that the collective wisdom of such conversations be edited, organized, and published periodically in the print, video, and digital media of the PC(USA) for wide availability;

   b. the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in collaboration with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACREC and ACWC) and the racial and ethnic caucuses of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to review the social teachings of the church on urban mission, including the challenges of race and class, solicit input from significant leaders in metro/urban ministry, and develop a resource of theological and practical experience-based guidance for all engaged in metro/urban ministry, and that this guide be made available to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

In Public Witness:

5. Faced with the application of bankruptcy law to Detroit and other cities, to state its concern that democratic governance not be over-ridden by measures more appropriate to corporate receivership; to urge that state laws recognize the mutual dependence of healthy cities and suburbs and rural areas and seek measures to reduce tax competition; to require rigorous cost/benefit analysis of all tax giveaways to distinguish between units of civil government and private/for-profit enterprises; to provide transparent and objective analysis and comparative data on the performance of city and state investment agencies; to otherwise seek to share benefits and burdens across metropolitan areas; and to prevent the dismantling of public assets, infrastructure, and social protections.

6. In view of court decisions and legislation that could allow public employee pension benefit programs to be considered as unsecured creditors (rather than deferred compensation contracts), to state its concern that such precedents tend to weaken rather than strengthen public trust, to devalue public employees and their collective bargaining rights, and to add to problems of economic inequality and therefore urges federal and state lawmakers to improve statutory protections for all public employee pensions and to improve the oversight, disclosure, and administration of public pension funds.

7. In view of the need to protect both retirees and taxpayers from poor pension fund administration, to recommend that governments be legally required to make pension contributions every year, that state and municipal employees be included in the Social Security system for efficiency and fairness, that any cuts in current salaries and benefits be distributed with intergenerational equity, and that when public and corporate pension benefits must be adjusted to ensure viability, they not be converted to 401(k)s, which substantially increase market risk for workers.

8. To support national and state urban policies that favor redevelopment rather than sprawl, efficiency in transportation and energy use, holistic, sustainable, and accountable approaches to “promise zones,” and other targeted strategies to assist abandoned or distressed areas.

9. That the Stated Clerk be requested to post the full text of this resolution and its appendix online, and that a limited number be printed for members and for communication to state, city, and federal lawmakers and regulatory agencies by the Stated Clerk and the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Rationale

The following pages begin with a brief theological rationale for the above recommendations and the history of hope and crisis in Detroit. They continue with an analysis of how the story of Detroit has played out and continues to play out in cities across the nation. The report concludes with the Gospel from Detroit—a proclamation of the good news of God’s presence in the midst of deep personal and institutional suffering.

A. Introduction

   Habari gani?: a Swahili greeting whereby one encounters another with the question—“What news?” What is the news coming out of Detroit; what is the news being brought to Detroit? As preparations proceeded for the convening of the 221st General Assembly (2014) in Detroit, Michigan, a voice cried out in the wilderness … “Habari gani?”

   A compelling story is told of this city in the documentary, “Abound in Hope,” inviting the General Assembly to our city. A likewise compelling story is told by the actions of the Michigan Black Presbyterian Caucus, which has identified its constituent congregations as “Urban Churches in Crisis.” It has been said that there are three sides to a story: my side, your side,
and the truth. In this case, we consider the side of those who abound in hope, the side of those who see themselves in crisis, and the third side. In our quest for the third side, we are called to consider the question of the day—“Habari gani?”

“… Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1–2, NRSV). The sharing of the glory of God is part and parcel of the Great Ends of the Church: “the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world” (Book of Order, F-1.0304), and the Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Mt. 28:19–20, NRSV). This sharing is at the heart of the prophetic ministry of the church in Detroit. So for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gathering in Detroit, does hope abound or is hope in crisis? Habari gani?

B. The History of Detroit: Hope and Crisis in our Cities

1. A City of Hope

Detroit has its own unique history, but the forces that shaped it are forces that have shaped every part of our country. In the beginning of the 20th century, Detroit was the symbol of the promise of America: a place of opportunity where Henry Ford’s business practice imagined prosperous workers increasing consumer demand to support profitable industrial growth. Despite mixed motives, Henry Ford was one of the very few industrialists willing to hire black workers and put them into skilled jobs, creating hope and the beginning of a black middle class in the 1920s.1

Like many cities, Detroit grew with the rise of industrialization. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, Detroit boomed with the manufacturing of cars, and then, in World War II, this “Arsenal of Democracy” built tanks, airplanes, armored vehicles, and guns. The promise of manufacturing jobs drew hopeful men, women, and their families to the city, black and white. However, as the timeline below shows,2 a dramatic reversal began at the close of World War II. This great reversal was created by government policies, corporate decisions, and individual choices. National trends of urban deindustrialization and suburbanization were carried out in the context of rigid racial segregation, leading to Detroit’s loss of white population, increased racial isolation, and plummeting economic resources.

2. The Birth of Crisis

Fearing the possibility of another Pearl Harbor, the Federal Government encouraged the decentralization of American manufacturing as a strategy of national defense. It supported a massive expansion of the highway system as part of that strategy. Beginning in the late 1940s, the homes, businesses, and civic institutions of the black urban population in Detroit were devastated by the construction of new highways that carried folk from suburban ring to city center and back again.3 Automobile companies, along with their interconnected suppliers, were eager to take advantage of government incentives to move out of the city for cheaper land, cheaper workers, and cheaper taxes. The G.I. Bill of Rights and Federal Housing Administration (FHA) policies enabled white families to choose to move to homes in the new suburbs around those relocated factories and businesses.

By 1960, Detroit had lost half its manufacturing jobs—more than 134,000 jobs—including thousands of defense-related jobs that paid middle-income wages. From the late 1940s to the mid-1960s, 500,000 white Detroiters followed those jobs to the suburbs, leaving behind poor whites and virtually all African Americans. Legal residential segregation, FHA red-lining that denied mortgages for properties in black or mixed race neighborhoods as well as to black families moving into white neighborhoods, and restrictive racial covenants barring home sales to Jews and non-whites kept blacks in a city of increasing despair. With the exodus of work, the unemployment rate of Detroit’s African American workers in 1960 was a devastating 15.9 percent, about three times that of white workers.4 Blacks became the first “long-term unemployed,” a new term and topic for researchers. By 1960, there was a new urban landscape in crisis:

Only fifteen years after World War II, Detroit’s landscape was dominated by rotting hulks of factory buildings, closed and abandoned, surrounded by blocks of boarded up stores and restaurants. Older neighborhoods … were now pockmarked with the shells of burned-out and empty buildings, lying among rubbish-strewn vacant lots.5

City leaders responded with a variety of urban renewal projects, clearing blighted (black) neighborhoods to build middle-income housing to attract white residents or create large tracts of open land for private development projects. To keep property taxes low for developers, the city adopted an income tax in 1962. The tax continued to rise as the city struggled to pay for basic services. More residents fled.6 Racial segregation, legal or illegal but customary, combined with a shrinking housing market in an increasingly segregated city, and inadequate access to financial resources continued to deny black residents the option of flight.

3. A City in Crisis

Detroit now wears a devastating triple crown: the poorest big city in the U.S., the nation’s murder capital, and its most racially segregated metropolitan area; a city that in 2013 Forbes named “America’s Most Miserable City.”7 It is also the home of 700,000 souls where 50.4 percent of the children live in poverty and the official unemployment rate is 17.7 percent.8
It is a city where 31.1 percent of all families live below the official federal poverty line, including almost half of both white and black families with children under eighteen. Can we hear the cry of the people? Detroit infants die at twice the infant mortality rate of the state of Michigan. Adults suffer asthma at a rate 50 percent higher than the rate for all Michigan adults. The asthma rate of Detroit’s children is two times as high as that of Michigan. As a result, the death rate in Detroit due to asthma is twice that of Michigan. Detroit’s zip code 48217 is the most polluted in the state, but the residents (white, black, and Latino) are too poor to move—who would buy? The majority of Detroit’s public schools do not meet federal adequacy standards; and in 2009, the overall death rate for Detroit children one to fourteen years of age was 116 per 100,000 children, compared with the state average of 18 per 100,000. Yet, when misery abounds, God hears the cry of the people—and comes to deliver. So we welcome you to Detroit knowing that God is here and believing that this is where God summons the PC(USA) to be: sharing hope and hearing anew the good news of God’s grace. Habari gani?

C. Racial and Economic Inequity in Urban America

1. Cities in Crisis

Detroit is not alone in this struggle. Deindustrialization and suburbanization, combined with residential racial segregation, continue to shape urban America. Of the twenty largest cities in 1950, more than half have lost at least one-third of their population, including Baltimore, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland. Our cities bear a greater burden of poverty. 20.9 percent of city populations are poor compared to 11.4 percent of suburban populations. Each of the ten poorest big cities in America (more than 250,000) has a poverty rate above 25 percent (Detroit, Buffalo, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Miami, St. Louis, Newark, Philadelphia, Memphis, and Milwaukee). Seven of these cities are also among the ten largest U.S. cities with the greatest racial segregation. Because poor Hispanics and poor whites tend to be more suburbanized than poor blacks, it is in urban centers that poor African Americans are highly concentrated, racially segregated, and economically isolated, facing unprecedented levels of joblessness. In his book, When Work Disappears, sociologist William Julius Wilson called this “the new urban poor.”

However, while cities continue to bear the greater burden of poverty, in the last decade inner-suburban poverty has increased at a greater rate than urban poverty. The Great Recession caused poverty rates to rise in 79 of the 100 largest metropolitan areas and incomes to fall in 91 of them. Almost twenty years ago, urban pastor Bob Brashear warned that cities were the canary in the coal mine. What he saw happening in cities then, he argued, was a precursor for what Christian ministries everywhere would face in the future. The suburbanization of poverty in the “edge cities” of metro areas is now occurring in areas as diverse as Atlanta and Phoenix. The issue of racial segregation continues amid the nation’s growing cultural diversity. In 2012, despite increased suburbanization of black and Latino families, 80 percent of Latino students and 74 percent of black students attend “minority-majority” schools reflecting the re-segregation of education in the U.S. As the gap between rich and poor grows, so does educational inequality, inadequate public transit, housing insecurity, food insecurity, poor health, addictions, crime, and the inability of local governments inside and outside city limits to respond to growing human needs as revenue sources shrink.

Everywhere America’s cities struggle to provide basic services and honor the pensions of city employees. Everywhere American workers struggle to achieve economic security for their families. Cities and their families struggle in the context of a country that has chosen to respond to economic challenges with a great tolerance for economic inequality. The U.S. is the
most unequal country in income and wealth distribution among the advanced countries of the world.\textsuperscript{21} Of these modern countries, the U.S. has the highest poverty rate and the highest child poverty rate.\textsuperscript{22} The percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) that goes to social expenditures, including Social Security and Medicare, is one of the lowest among modern nations.\textsuperscript{23} Everywhere, despite significant advances following the Civil Rights Movement, people of color suffer these conditions disproportionately, affected by the many forms racism continues to take.

2. Hope for the Future

Yet, the Detroit metropolitan area is not impoverished. In 2005, prior to the great recession, Metro Detroit’s gross domestic product (GDP) placed it as the 22nd richest metropolitan area in the world, just above Madrid.\textsuperscript{24} In terms of GDP per capita, it placed 35th among the top 100 world metropolitan regions. Oakland County, just on the other side of 8 Mile Road, is consistently ranked as one of the wealthiest counties in the country. In 2009, Oakland County was the fourth wealthiest county in the United States among counties with more than one million people.\textsuperscript{25}

And, like many other cities, Detroit is beginning to experience a process of focused re-gentrification in midtown and downtown, along the Woodward corridor where a Whole Foods just opened up to accommodate young, well-educated adults seeking city lights and denser, walkable city life. The Millennial Generation of 80 million people is about to change the housing and transportation patterns created by older generations. Those born between 1980 and the early 2000s are returning to the urban core, to public transportation and affordable apartments, and to diverse cultures. The real estate industry, city planners, and transportation authorities are all predicting and preparing for what some call “the next migration”—back to cities. The Millennials want to be more connected and less isolated than previous generations. They manifest this desire in their full-on embrace of social media and their desire to live in places where they can be around others; i.e., the densest, most active, areas of cities.”\textsuperscript{26}

In fact, 80 percent of the U.S. population now lives in urban areas. According to new Census Bureau data, in 51 percent of the nation’s largest cities, city centers grew faster than the suburbs in 2010–2011.\textsuperscript{27} Six cities have seen their core populations grow more in total numbers than their surrounding suburbs: New Orleans, Louisiana; New York, New York; San Jose, California; Providence, Rhode Island; Columbus, Ohio; and San Antonio, Texas. “Most of the fastest-growing big cities since 2007 are of the sprawling post-1945 Sun Belt variety, including Charlotte, North Carolina (No. 4); Ft. Worth, Texas (No. 6); Austin, Texas, (10th); El Paso, Texas (11th); Raleigh, North Carolina (12th); and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (18th).”\textsuperscript{28} And, according to the global business consulting company, McKinsey & Company, fully 85 percent of the U.S. GDP in 2010 was generated in 259 large U.S. cities. The 21st century, they argue, will be a century of global cities in which the large and middleweight cities of the U.S. will be a major force.\textsuperscript{29}

Will the PC(USA) be there to proclaim the gospel for the salvation of humankind; to shelter, nurture, and provide spiritual fellowship for the children of God; to maintain divine worship; to preserve the truth; to promote social righteousness; and to exhibit the Kingdom of Heaven to the world? Habari gani?

D. The Church in the City

1. Churches of Hope

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the predecessors of the PC(USA) carried out urban ministry shaped by the example of Calvin’s holistic ministry in Geneva: a ministry for the salvation of individuals integrated with a ministry to redeem social structures and create a just community that enabled the growth of human capabilities and Christian values. In the 19th and 20th centuries, urban Presbyterian churches in the U.S. were built to provide services to the poor such as education, job training, and shelter. They were active in developing housing projects and medical facilities. In the 1940s and 1950s, the training of many Presbyterian pastors included time spent working in factories and living in working-class neighborhoods in order to understand the forces affecting urban families’ lives. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, as white populations moved out of the cities, a national focus to create new suburban congregations grew.\textsuperscript{30} Over six decades white Presbyterians, like other white Christians, left city neighborhoods for life in the new suburbs, taking their churches with them. The result, intended or not, was to gradually withdraw the church’s ministry from urban black and Latino neighborhoods, as well as from the urban neighborhoods of low-income white families, as the impact of growing economic and racial isolation deepened.

2. Churches in Crisis

As in many other cities, and like other mainline white denominations, the dwindling presence of the Presbyterian church in Detroit since 1960 has mirrored the loss of the white city population (See Appendix A, p. 512, electronic version). In 1960, when the population of Detroit was about 1,600,000 and 70 percent white, forty-five Presbyterian churches served the city. Thirty-seven had at least one full-time pastor.\textsuperscript{31} In 1990, the population of Detroit had fallen to 1,027,000, 22 percent white and 76 percent black. Twenty Presbyterian churches, sixteen with at least one full-time pastor, served the city. Responding to this trend in 1992, the Presbytery of Detroit brought an overture to the General Assembly urging that proceeds gained by the sale of urban churches remain in the city: 80 percent locally and 20 percent to be used at the national level for urban ministries projects around the country.\textsuperscript{32} By 2013, the population of Detroit had fallen to 700,000: 10 percent white, 83 percent black, and 7 percent His-
panic. The Presbytery of Detroit lists twelve churches within the city. However, only four have full-time pastors. Five are “vacant” and three others have part-time leadership through a stated supply, temporary supply, or commissioned ruling elder. Of these eight, only two report a membership over 100. We have gone from supporting one church for every 35,500 city residents to one church (most not fully functioning) for every 58,350 city residents. Since only four of these can support a full-time pastor, we have essentially abandoned this city: one full-time pastor for every 175,000 city residents.

The Michigan Black Presbyterian Caucus Statement (MBPC), “Churches in Crisis,” (Appendix B), reports that only two of nine MBPC member urban churches have full-time called teaching elders and the remaining seven cannot afford to call a full-time pastor or even enter into a contractual relationship with a stated supply. They ask, “How can these churches grow and become healthy without strong consistent spiritual leadership?” And they answer: “MBPC member churches without full-time called teaching elders require full-time called competent Presbyterian spiritual leadership who are called and able to minister in an urban context. … Without leadership how are the people to discern what God is calling them to be and do?”

If we believe that worshipping communities can only have the pastoral leadership they can afford, have we not turned the gospel of Jesus Christ into a commodity only for those with the money to buy? How can we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God?

3. Hope Remains

Yet, where our urban ministries remained, those involved in ministry on the streets of the cities, our urban pastors and worshipping communities, continued to work and develop strategies to respond to the deepening urban crisis: substandard housing and irresponsible landlords, racial profiling and police violence, deteriorating schools, job loss and job discrimination, red-lining, poverty-level wages, and non-responsive city departments, utilities, and private businesses. Urban ministry strategies were twofold: (1) providing immediate assistance to individuals in need, and (2) community organizing to enable communities of low-income residents to unify, defining their issues, developing their leaders, and taking action to hold city and corporate entities accountable to addressing their needs at a structural level.

In 1981, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States adopted “A Joint Urban Policy.” This policy recognized that in the biblical witness, “the city” is frequently a metaphor for human arrogance, a place of prideful struggle for self-interested power. For some Christian Americans, the city is still a place of frightening hetrodoxy and blatant immorality where every type of belief and desire is pursued without restraint: a place of violence in many forms. However, “A Joint Urban Policy” also pointed out that sin and violence are not the Bible’s only or final urban vision. In the biblical witness, the city is also a vision of hope and a place of redemption. In the Psalms, Zion is a symbol of the just and peaceful city, the city of God (Psalm 48). The redeemed city, the New Jerusalem, is that place where God dwells, establishing justice and wiping every tear away (Rev. 21: 3–4, RSV). “A Joint Urban Policy” challenged the church to understand that as the U.S. and the world become increasingly urban, the church’s response to the city and the souls within it will be a test of its faithfulness to Christ.

Christ’s agenda compels us to work for the deliverance of those presently held captive by the ‘principalities and powers’ of this world, to ‘bind up the brokenhearted,’ to ‘raise up the former devastations,’ to ‘give garlands instead of ashes’ (Isaiah 61:1–4). We believe that God’s agenda compels us to work on behalf of a just community wherein the needs of the poor, the alienated, and the dispossessed are the first priority:

‘God has shown strength with God’s arm, and has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, God has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree; God has filled the hungry with good things, and has sent the rich empty away.’ (Lk. 1:51–52, RSV Inclusive)

The 207th General Assembly (1995) approved the report of the Urban Strategy Taskforce, “Urban Strategy to the Year 2005.” In recognition of declining membership at a time when the U.S. was becoming increasingly urban and ethnically diverse, the church adopted an urban ministry model based on the conviction that any effective metro-urban strategy must be (1) person-centered and interpersonal, (2) congregationally enacted and interacted, (3) community partnered, (4) nurtured and connected through governing bodies, (5) seminary equipped, and (6) envisioned and experienced in worship. The new emphasis was on the need for urban ministries to grow locally from a process of listening, action, reflection, and revision; that to address the structural causes of issues, alliances would be built among congregations organizing across denominational and religious lines and between congregations and nonprofit organizations. Seminaries were called to prepare students for ministries in the urban context, with the skills and knowledge that would require.

And it recognized that such local, partnered, congregational initiatives must be supported with local presbytery or regional leadership. A national staff for urban ministry would be needed, not to develop programs, but to coordinate resources already existing, develop networks and information sharing systems, provide training opportunities, pilot projects, volunteer opportunities, and collaboration with ecumenical partners.

Urban ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) during the twenty-first century will call us to know and love our neighbor. It will realize that it takes a community infused by the Spirit not only to know and raise a child or an adult, but to raze and raise structures. It will recognize that the city and those who inhabit it are the dwelling place of God.

As if in response, in 1999, just on the cusp of the new century, the Reverend Dr. Nile Harper documented the powerful impact of twenty-eight urban churches in twelve different cities where “a positive movement beyond individual acts of Chris-
tian charity toward more organized, collaborative action for justice” was remaking urban neighborhoods. He identified an embryonic energy of renewal:

From within the churches, and especially within African-American churches, there has emerged a passionate vision and push for redevelopment of city neighborhoods that is deeply rooted in religious faith and practical wisdom. … Faithful vision and spiritual power are at the center of the movement.37

Fifteen years later the desperate crisis and the potential promise of our cities are even more clear. The need to proclaim the gospel, to shelter and nurture the spiritual fellowship of the children of God, and to maintain divine worship in the city could not be more compelling. Our responsibility to preserve the truth, promote social righteousness, and exhibit the Kingdom of Heaven as cities become the energetic core of the 21st century could not be more demanding. The research has been done, the policies are in place, and we hear God’s call to heal and to rebuild.

“The Gospel from Detroit” calls upon the church to embrace the prophetic mandate of Jer. 29:7 (NRSV)—“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” Jesus had the welfare of a city at heart when He gave instructions to His disciples—“And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49, NRSV). The church in Jerusalem, as found in Acts (Chapters 2–4), was a church that truly abounded in hope. Sadly, many churches in Detroit do not abound in hope. Instead of seeking the welfare of the city, many of these churches are forced to seek out their own welfare as they operate from a perspective of crisis, not power. Habari gani?

4. Money, Power, and Politics

From theories of community organizing, we learn a fundamental principle of how people become empowered: organized people + organized money = power. A church established upon such a principle is a church that can truly live out the prophetic mandate of Jeremiah. The church in Jerusalem was a church with organized people: “Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common” (Acts 4:32, NRSV). The church in Jerusalem was a church of organized money: “There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need” (Acts 4:34–35, NRSV).

The constituent churches of the Michigan Black Presbyterian Caucus are in crisis largely because they lack people and money. They also lack called pastors to live and pray among them. It is because of these factors that churches in crisis lack power; lack hope. A church in crisis in a city in crisis; a church that lacks power in a city that, under the decision of the Michigan governor and the actions of an emergency manager, has had the power of its elected officials neutered.

In 2011, the citizens of Michigan voted to repeal a 1990 law authorizing “emergency financial managers.” A month later the state legislature passed and the governor signed into law Public Act 436, which allows the governor to appoint such managers when a city or school district is in deep financial distress. Detroit is not alone in being in financial distress, nor is it alone in having an unelected emergency financial manager running the city.38 A recent survey by the University of Michigan found 30 percent of the cities across Michigan reporting an increasingly harder time meeting their financial obligations. Six other Michigan cities, and 49 percent of the state’s black population, are under the control of an unelected emergency financial manager with the authority “to dismiss elected officials, abrogate labor contracts, sell off public assets, and impose new taxes on residents.”39

On January 1, 2014, a newly elected mayor took office after six weeks of negotiating “a power-sharing agreement” with the emergency manager who was appointed by the governor of Michigan in the spring of 2013. Under this agreement, the mayor will have no authority over the police force or any of the city’s financial obligations. The mayor will have no standing as the emergency financial manager negotiates to repay two global bank creditors (who are customers of the same law firm the manager is using to represent the city of Detroit and with whom he worked until becoming an EFM) between 75 and 82 percent of their debt, while targeting the pensions of city employees (averaging $19,000 annually) and the art collection of the Detroit Institute of Art as sources of revenue. The emergency manager determined that the bank debts were “secured” but that the pensions of city employees were not. Under such laws and legal practices democracy is crippled, the will of the people is thwarted, and the welfare of the city becomes even more shattered.

The case of Detroit has raised considerable discussion of municipal and state pension fund management, prompting several recommendations.40 Like many state and municipal governments and private companies, some contributions to pension funds were deferred and the true size of liabilities not fully understood.41 Combined with the after-effects of de-industrialization noted above, the city of Detroit had little room to maneuver and little help from either state or federal sources.42

In the absence of significant amounts of new public infrastructure investment (as in China), the U.S. government is also going forward with “promise zones” and other initiatives involving public and private partnerships. These are distinguished from “enterprise zones” by greater accountability for tax rebates and other expenditures and greater attention to community involvement in planning and design, intending greater community benefit.43 These are worth testing, but seem unlikely to stimulate big declines in the number of unemployed and discouraged workers who would benefit from public infrastructure investments.

221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
E. The Gospel from Detroit

So here we have it. The story of Detroit. Every story has three sides. One side abounds in hope; one side in crisis. And then there’s the truth. Habari gani? Does the faith of the PC(USA) justify hope in the city of Detroit, or does it justify crisis? As the 221st General Assembly (2014) gathers in the city of Detroit, it does so in a quest for the truth of Rom. 5:1–5 (NRSV)—“Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us ….” As the 221st General Assembly gathers in the city of Detroit under the banner Abound In Hope, the question demands an answer—Habari gani?

The news from Detroit is a gospel that comes from those who know not only personal suffering, but also the social suffering that comes from the experience of living in a society that has failed to share access to the resources that support human dignity and equal opportunity. From the experience of unjust suffering grows a tradition of Christian faith that knows deep down, in its bones, in every family’s history, that no one could have survived this history and no one survives these conditions except for the grace of God. In the context of personal and social suffering where only the power of God stands between us and the principalities of this world that can kill in a blink of an eye or ever so slowly over generations of deprivation, this grace is experienced daily. Out of the experience of unjust suffering, a faith grows that knows its utter dependence on God alone. And with that understanding devotes its life to serving God with love, hope, courage, and strength that is foolishness to the wise and the satisfied and the keepers of accounts.

So, today in communities struggling with the breakdown of schools, the absence of jobs, inadequate city services, higher fees and predatory loans, the constant presence of poverty, and excessive rates of illness and death, the Gospel from Detroit assures and affirms that in this suffering God is here with us, Immanuel. In the face of social indifference, or even human hatred, God calls us “child,” hears our cries, loves us so much, and calls us to share this Gospel with the audacity of faith that creates ways where there are no ways, lives in hope when they say there is no way, no hope.

The Gospel from Detroit is good and joyous news: it announces faith in God, not governments or corporations or any human institutions, who calls us out of the world in order to reshape us to radically reengage this world with the startling message of a just God who denounces the bondage of social, political, economic, and racial injustice (Lk. 4:18, Lk. 6:20f, Mt. 25:31f, Mic. 6:6f, Ex. 3:7f, and others). Standing in this grace we have received through Jesus our Christ, our faith becomes active and powerful as it does justice, loves mercy, and walks humbly with God (Mic. 6:8).

Endnotes
4. Ibid., 144.
5. Ibid., 147–48.
13. For example, among others, see Colin Gordon, Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City (PennPress, 2008); Jennifer Hammer, Abandoned in the Heartland: Work, Family and Living in East St. Louis (University of California Press, 2011); Mark Gor-


30. This count includes Highland Park, an incorporated community within the city of Detroit. Data from Presbytery records.


33. Todd, Ibid.

34. Todd, Ibid.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethany</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>Leadership: Vacant Size: 79 Racial Composition: 79 African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12227 Findlay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12065 Broadstreet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadillac Blvd.</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5090 Cadillac Blvd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8240 Grand River, now 19125 Greenview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin East</td>
<td>1 pastor Full-time</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>Leadership: PT CRE Size: 105 Racial Composition: 54 African, 51 White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6125 Cadieux</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin West</td>
<td>3 pastors Full-time</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14221 Southfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Northwest</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16776 Southfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Master</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16601 Tireman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>740 E. Grand Blvd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delfray Community House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>800 Contrell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dodge Community House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6201 Farr Ave.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Detroit, Covenant 19300 Stephens Dr.</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>No Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastminster</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>937 Manistique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen Village 20021 W. Chicago</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Presbyterian 2930 Woodward</td>
<td>2 Pastors Full-time</td>
<td>Stated Supply Interim</td>
<td>Clustered with Westminster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Street</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>1 Pastor; 1 Christian Educator 600 members</td>
<td>Leadership: Full-time Pastor Size: 240 Racial Composition: 2 Asian, 71 Black, 5 Hispanic, 162 White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>631 W. Fort Street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Creek NCD 897 Philip</td>
<td></td>
<td>X 1987 18 members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace 15340 Meyers in 1960 18391 Morang</td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td>1984 merger of Bethany and St. James created Grace PC with 1 Pastor; Stated Supply in 1990</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandale</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>1981 merger: Grandale and Church of the Master; 1990 Stated Supply</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15727 Plymouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratiot Avenue 8549 Gratiot</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>Temporary supply</td>
<td>Leadership: Vacant Size: 50 Racial Composition: 49 Black, 1 White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope 15340 Meyers</td>
<td>1971 merger of Grace and St. Marks created Hope PC; 1990 1 Pastor and one Christian Educator</td>
<td>Leadership: PT Stated Supply Size: 89 Racial Composition: Composition: 88 Black, 1 White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immanuel</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340 W. Grand Blvd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Ave 8625 Jefferson Ave.</td>
<td>4 Pastors</td>
<td>1 Pastor and 1 Christian Educator</td>
<td>Leadership: 3 Pastors Size: 505 Racial: 12 Asians, 85 African Americans, 8 Africans, 400 White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knox 3952 Dickerson</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leith Memorial</td>
<td>No pastor</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601 S. Colonial</td>
<td></td>
<td>750 members in 1950’s</td>
<td>200 members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Avenue</td>
<td>No pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1002 N. Military</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montefith Memorial</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19125 Greenview</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivet</td>
<td>707 Lawrence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer Drive</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4849 Outer Drive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer Park</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>642 W. McNichols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redeemer</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2784 W. Grand Blvd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redford</td>
<td>4 Pastors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17226 Redford</td>
<td>3,500 members in 1960’s</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22122 W. McxNichols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Org. 2011; ended ???</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4455 Second Ave.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrew's</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12735 12th St.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18391 Morang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John’s</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1410 Jos. Campau</td>
<td></td>
<td>1919 first African-American PC in Detroit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961 E. Lafayette</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interim Pastor</td>
<td>Leadership: Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Marks</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Size: 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9321 12 St</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Racial Composition: 152 Black, 3 Native American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scovel Memorial</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5740 Williams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest United</td>
<td>1970 merger of Immanuel, Olivet, and Trinity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7354 Whittaker</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity</td>
<td>No Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7354 Whittaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity</td>
<td>No Pastor</td>
<td>1979 merger of Outer Drive and St. Andrew’s creates Trinity; nearly 300 members; Interim Pastor</td>
<td>Leadership: PT Temporary Supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4849 W. Outer Drive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Size: 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumbull Avenue</td>
<td>No Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Racial Composition: 95 White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1435 Brainard &amp; Trumbull</td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td>No Pastor</td>
<td>Leadership: Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village United</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Size: 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25350 W. Six Mile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Racial Composition: 37 African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward Memorial</td>
<td>3 Pastors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12850 Plymouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne University Campus</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welch</td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2504 Monterey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>5 Pastors</td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td>Leadership: FT Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17567 Hubbell</td>
<td>2,000 members in 1950’s;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Size: 302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodward Ave</td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td>1 Pastor</td>
<td>Racial Composition: 207 African American, 15 African, 80 White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 W. Philadelphia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8501 Woodward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Highland Park United:</strong></td>
<td>2 Pastors</td>
<td>No pastor</td>
<td>Leadership: Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Cortland</td>
<td>82 members</td>
<td></td>
<td>Size: 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Racial Composition: 4 Black, 42 African American</td>
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</table>

Sources:
URBAN CHURCHES IN CRISIS
Statement by the Michigan Black Presbyterian Caucus (2013)

The need and importance of strong spiritual leadership in predominantly African American urban Presbyterian churches.

Statement of Need:
MBPC member churches without full-time called teaching elders require full-time, competent Presbyterian spiritual leaders who are called and able to minister in an urban context. Churches without full-time called teaching elders are not able to afford to call full-time teaching elders.

Statement of Importance:
MBPC member churches can no longer afford to let the urgent needs of the congregation drive out or overshadow the important needs. Demands on the session and other church members to repair infrastructure, maintain the worship space, monitor giving consumes most of the available time. Therefore little time is available for ministry, and long term planning, also important to the life of a healthy church, rarely gets the attention it needs.

What is important? Having full-time, dedicated, called, and competent spiritual leadership serving our churches. Without leadership, how are the people to discern what God is calling them to be and do? Without competent leadership how are sessions able to discern what is required of them? Without competent leadership, how is the session held accountable?

The urgent matters of maintaining the infrastructure now take priority over the spiritual well-being of the congregation.
With all the challenges facing urban churches it becomes even more difficult to face them without strong spiritual leadership.

Supporting Data:
Only two (2) of nine (9) MBPC member urban churches have full time called teaching elders.
The other seven (7) cannot afford a full-time minister, and in many cases churches cannot afford a contracted stated/pulpit supply teaching elder. How can these churches grow and become healthy without strong consistent spiritual leadership?

Concerns:
• Lack of consistent session leadership.
• Who teaches the faith?
• Who leads the saints for the work of ministry?
• Who preaches and teaches the faith of the church over time and within context?
• Who provides training and teaching of members, deacons and ruling elders?
• Who provides for the teaching of scriptures through Bible study, Sunday school, etc.?
• Lack of leadership in spiritual discernment, “what is God calling us to do as a church?”
• Lack of a facilitator or leader to lead the church through times of disagreement.
• Lack of a leader to help reconcile brothers and sisters to Christ and each other.
• Urban churches are under siege by high cost of maintaining older infrastructures and declining membership.

Considerations:
Churches without full time called teaching elders have a difficult time discerning the spirit of ministry. What ministry is God calling us to do? Where is this ministry? Why this ministry? Churches without full-time called teaching elders know how to pay their bills, maintain the infrastructure but lack a sense of ministry and belonging.

How is the relationship with the presbytery nurtured without a member of presbytery to provide this connection? Churches without full-time called teaching elders are not afforded as many opportunities to work collaboratively with the presbytery as those who have full-time called teaching elders.

These churches are often given a list of stated and pulpit supply pastors to preach and moderate sessions. This cannot be the model of Christ’s Church. After a period of time the churches become accustomed to this method and develop a false sense of “we are OK” when in reality they continue to lose their sense of community and relationship with the presbytery and other worshipping communities.
When we make it easy to obtain a preacher to lead worship by paying $125/service, what incentive do these congregations have to minimize this scenario when they look at their budget and see the money they can save?

But what about the quality of relationships and spiritual health of the congregations? Who assesses the spiritual health? What stated or pulpit supply teaching elder or ruling elder has spent enough time with the congregation to preach contextually to the congregation? What good is a sermon if it does not speak to the people? How can a stated or pulpit supply pastor speak to the context of the congregation when they do not live day to day or week to week with the congregation?

Pope Francis recently said he wanted church leaders to “smell like sheep.” How can temporary stated supply or pulpit supply or half-time call teaching elders “smell like sheep” if they don’t live and pray among them? How can half-time, part-time, pulpit supply teaching elders “feed my sheep?”

Without full-time called spiritual leaders to nurture and feed the flock how can congregations expect to grow and do ministry?

Churches who can only afford to call half time teaching elders only experience marginal improvement. Many half-time teaching elders either must have current employment or have multiple jobs to sustain a decent quality of life. If not managed appropriately churches expect full-time attention at half-time pay. This is not sustainable over the long term.

Request:

A new model of church leadership is needed to meet the changing needs of urban congregations. Funding is needed to help churches call a full-time or dedicated less than full-time teaching elder.

The Ranney-Balch fund of the Presbytery of Detroit is one source of support. Many of the urban African American churches in the Presbytery of Detroit not only cannot afford full-time spiritual leadership they cannot afford to sustain musicians and other staff needed to support a healthy church. The Ranney-Balch Fund of more than a million dollars is one current and available source of support. The Ranney-Balch Fund was willed to the Presbytery of Detroit by Ms. Elizabeth Ranney-Balch for work among Italian, Negro, and aged poor of the congregations.

This problem must not be overlooked and treated with anything other than a sense of importance. We cannot afford to “let urgent drive out what is important.” At stake is a faithful walk with Christ.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-08

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-08—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-08.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-08

Comment on Item 08-08—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-08

Comment on Item 08-08—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board affirms the direction of “The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing the Church’s Urban Vision” and commends the report and the in-depth analysis to the church for study and engagement. It encourages the church, especially mid councils and congregations, to consider urban ministry as a priority for national mission efforts.

Recommendations 3. and 4.a. would require additional funding from the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Recommendation 4.b. would require additional per capita funds, unless the advocacy committees, the advisory committee, and the racial ethnic caucuses subsume this work into their existing work plans. Additional funds, at this point in time, from either budget, are not available, as available funds have been prioritized in the budgets presented for approval by this assembly.

Recommendation 3. seeks to recreate an office of urban ministry—an office reconfigured in 2011 (along with the former office of rural ministry) as the Office of Church Growth and Transformation. The new approach seeks to resource congregations, whatever their locale, to be faithful communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. Resources appropriate to each locale are available on the Church Transformation website: (http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/church-growth/church-transformation/).

There is also an Urban Ministry Network in the Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry area that has been meeting twice a year for more than fifteen years. Creating a new office within the Compassion, Peace, and Justice ministry area would
be redundant and have considerable financial implications through 2020, necessitating the reduction of other ministry programs and staff.

Recommendation 4.a. calls on the Compassion, Peace, and Justice ministry area to organize and publish the results of ongoing regional conversations regarding urban ministry, particularly as informed by issues of race and class and the voices of persons of color. Compassion, Peace, and Justice does not have the staff or funding for this type of regional ministry of dialogue and publishing. With the change in the way the church is engaging in mission, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board thinks that regional ministry is best done by synods and presbyteries where the geographic needs can align with the regional conversations. Adding an additional ministry function to the Compassion, Peace, and Justice area would require the eliminating of existing ministry programs and staff.

Overall, we applaud the renewed focus on urban ministry and would invite commissioners to advise and encourage congregations to utilize the resources of the church transformation area rather than creating another office at the national level.

**Item 08-09**

[The assembly approved Item 08-09. See pp. 40, 42.]

*For-Profit Prisons, Jails, and/or Detention Centers Be Added to the List of Companies for Divestment and/or Proscription of Investment Ownership*

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends to the 221st General Assembly (2014) that the category of publicly traded corporations that directly manage or operate for-profit prisons, jails, and/or detention centers be added to the list of companies from which the General Assembly urges divestment and/or proscription of investment ownership.

**Rationale**


**Response:** The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) noted that the 215th General Assembly (2003) approved a comprehensive resolution declaring that “for-profit private prisons should be abolished” (Minutes, 2003, Part I, p. 439.) While efforts could be made through shareholder advocacy (where stock is owned in a publicly traded company), such efforts might improve some prison conditions, but would not address the fundamental contradictions identified by the 215th General Assembly (2003):

... Since the goal of for-profit private prisons is earning a profit for their shareholders, there is a basic and fundamental conflict with the concept of rehabilitation as the ultimate goal of the prison system. ...  

The question of whether human beings should be incarcerated, of how they should be treated while in prison, of when they will be released, cannot be answered by whether or not these steps will create profit for a corporation. (Ibid)

Thus, MRTI came to the conclusion that ownership in publically traded companies managing or operating for-profit prisons, jails, or detention centers is incompatible with General Assembly policy. It should be noted that the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church speak to the criminal justice system. In recognition of this guidance from the Social Principle, in 2012, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church also proscribed investments in such companies.

There are two corporations that would be fall into this category should it be approved by the General Assembly. They are Corrections Corporation of America and the GEO Group, Inc., a private corrections detention and mental health treatment provider.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-09**

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee advises that this recommendation be approved.
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved a clear and compassionate policy on “Restorative Justice” in 2002. In 2003, as noted by the Mission Agency Board, it approved the forthright “Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Private Prisons” (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-calling-abolition-profit-private-prison/). The normal work of corporate social responsibility is to seek to reform corporate practice from “within” the corporation as a shareholder. Concerned investors can work through the mechanisms of shareholder democracy, holding conversations with management, filing shareholder proposals to be voted on at annual meetings, building coalitions when possible to reform specific behavior. If corporate behavior is unlikely to change, and others (in this case, the United Methodist Church and other church and civil rights bodies) share the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s concern, then divesting of and refraining from holding securities is seen as a legitimate way to contribute to change. Given the position of the General Assembly against the overall practice of for-profit private prisons, the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is correct in stating that the usual methods of corporate engagement are unlikely to change the practice and that not profiting from such prisons would be more consistent with the church’s position.

The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment was developed in 1972 to bring together representatives of the investment holding, mission program, and social policy bodies of the church to coordinate fulfillment of the policies of the assembly. As the committee’s name states, financial investment is not only about financial return. Investment is also “an instrument of mission and includes theological, social, and economic considerations” (Minutes, 183rd General Assembly [1971], UPCUSA; the PCUS adopted a similar policy in 1976). Conversations were held with leadership in the two primary countries affected when the policy was initially proposed; subsequent tracking and correspondence indicates that the basic direction of the companies is fundamental to their business model and this depends on a steady supply of inmates, whether convicts or immigrants being held in detention. Thus the 2003 resolution’s position that profit motivation would be in tension with rehabilitation and transparency has been reinforced by the concern to reduce “mass incarceration” (General Assembly, 2012). The 220th General Assembly (2010) had authorized the development of a new criminal justice volunteer network to be part of the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association, and this body has also sought to reduce the overall number of prisoners and the role of for-profit private prison operations.


A brief summary article focusing on difficulties in the for-profit prison industry can be found at: http://truth-out.org/news/item/20880-for-profit-prisons-eight-statistics-that-show-the-problems.

A series of problems in Colorado prompted a call to phase out such prisons in the Denver Post: http://www.denverpost.com/ci_22682465/git-rid-profit-prisons. To the extent that our political system provides avenues of influence for private enterprise, however, corporations profiting from current laws on immigration or drugs are naturally active in seeking to retain streams of inmates, whether violent or nonviolent.

The Advisory Committee notes that MRTI has focused on a class of firms that consists primarily of the two major publicly-held companies that run prisons in several states. There are other privately-held companies (whose stock is not available for public purchase) that provide a wide range of services in prisons or use prison labor, while other states (such as New York) have not privatized significant parts of their prison system: http://www.thenation.com/prison-profiteers. Thus MRTI’s proposal is focused and manageable, though in principle Reformed Christian concern for public accountability and the reform of corporate engagement are unlikely to change the practice and that not profiting from such prisons would be more consistent with the church’s position.

Emphasis should be placed on the reference to Michelle Alexander’s book “The New Jim Crow” with its incredible statistics highlighting the horrific impact, particularly the “failed War on Drugs” has inflicted, disproportionately on racial ethnic communities, specifically the Black and Hispanic communities, with the undeniable impact on voter suppression, an issue addressed by Item 09-15, an ACREC resolution.  

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-09

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-09.

Emphasis should be placed on the reference to Michelle Alexander’s book “The New Jim Crow” with its incredible statistics highlighting the horrific impact, particularly the “failed War on Drugs” has inflicted, disproportionately on racial ethnic communities, specifically the Black and Hispanic communities, with the undeniable impact on voter suppression, an issue addressed by Item 09-15, an ACREC resolution.
Item 08-10

[The assembly approved Item 08-10 with amendment. See pp. 14, 42.]

Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, on behalf of the Women of Color Consultation team, recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to plan a Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) that focuses on the inclusion of women of color of all ages in leadership and decision-making in presbyteries and synods and/or their successor bodies. The next WoCC shall be held no later than the fall of 2015 and be reported to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) with recommendation for further action and study.

2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to make available print and electronic resources on cultural competency, antiracism, and antisexism to mid councils and the larger church.

3. [Direct] [Urge and resource] mid councils to provide training and education on cultural competency, antiracism, and antisexism to its committees on ministry and committees on preparation with an expectation that issues which are addressed in this training will be disseminated throughout the presbytery at least once every three years beginning in 2015.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to collect information from mid councils on the implementation of cultural competency, antiracism, and antisexism training for committees on ministry and committees on preparation for ministry and to report its findings to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

5. [Direct] [Urge and resource] mid councils to promote gathering opportunities for women of color within synods and presbyteries for prayer, study, fellowship, and networking by providing financial, technological, space, and other support.


Rationale

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2012 Referral: Item 10-16. Women of Color Consultation Committee Report. Recommendation 4. Direct the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/PW Ministry Areas, in Consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, to Plan a Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) That Focuses on the Inclusion of Women of Color of All Ages in Leadership and Decision-Making in Presbyteries and Synods, and/or Their Successor Bodies. the Next WoCC Shall Be Held No Later Than the Fall of 2013 and Be Reported on to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—From the General Assembly Mission Council (Minutes, Part I, pp. 61, 75–76, 854–57 of the CD; p. 230 of the printed copy).

Women of Color Consultation Committee Report

“Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of ‘Hearing and Singing New Songs to God’” was the theme of the 2013 Women of Color Consultation held at the Presbyterian Center and the SpringHill Suites/Fairfield Inn Hotel in Louisville, Ky., on Friday, October 11, to Sunday, October 13. The consultation fulfilled the action of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to call for the creation of a fourth Women of Color Consultation to “be held no later than the fall of 2013” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 854, electronic copy), and was conducted through the Office of Gender and Racial Justice in the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministry Area in consultation with the Joint Working Group of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial and Ethnic Concerns.

The goals of the consultation were:

• To lift up and affirm the voices, vision, and leadership of women of color in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as the church celebrates the 2009–2022 season of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Singing New Harmonies, which calls for the transformation of the church by focusing on the intersections of race, gender, and class in its common witness;

• To identify both areas of progress and continuing challenges in the transformation of the church as a beloved community that models equity, mutuality, justice, and accountability;

• To build community, promote healing and wholeness, and foster professional, spiritual, and personal networks among women of color.
These goals supported the objectives of developing a report to the 221st General Assembly (2014) that would include recommendations for furthering the work of equipping the church at all levels to fulfill its gospel witness of equity and inclusion.

Thirty-four women of color served as participants in the consultation. Participants represented a nearly equal representation of African American, Asian American, Latina/Chicana, and Native American individuals from all regions of the United States. Roughly ten participants represented first- and second-generation immigrant groups, and more than half were fluent in languages other than English including Korean, Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese. They included teaching elders, ruling elders, deacons, leaders in mid council/national Presbyterian Women, seminarians, and lay leaders of caucuses and councils. Twelve attendees were young adult women ages 21–40; two were teaching elders honorably retired. Another twelve participants were first-time attendees; the remaining number participated in previous General Assembly-sponsored Women of Color Consultations in 2004, 2008, and/or 2011. Additional personnel included four keynote presenters, a consultation chaplain, two preachers for opening and closing worship, a staff consultation coordinator, and an administrative assistant.

The format of the consultation embodied four key elements: worship, presentations, dialogue, and fellowship. Opening worship Friday evening featured the Word proclaimed by the Reverend Dr. Diane Givens Moffett; Saturday and Sunday opened with devotions shared by participants Mary Jane Miles and Danielle Palomino, and a closing worship service marked the end of work completed by the consultation and included a sermon delivered by the Reverend Dr. Rhashell Hunter. The Lord’s Supper was celebrated on each day of the consultation. Contributing a ministry of presence and counsel was the role of a chaplain for the event, fulfilled by the Reverend Un Joo Kim.

Keynote presentations focused on each of the four themes lifted up in 2008 report, *Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies*. The themes and keynote speakers included:

- Gender Lens and Intersectionality—understanding gender-specific needs and realities as they intersect with race, class, and other social realities by Laura Cheifez
- Making Visible the Leadership of Women of Color—developing, nurturing, and supporting the leadership and gifts of women of color within the church—beyond token representation by Elona Street-Stewart
- Church as a System of Privilege and Discrimination—recognizing and dismantling the ways that the church perpetuates systems of privilege within its own structures and ethos by Gloria Tate
- Commitment to Inclusivity with Justice—promoting equity and mutuality as elements of a whole and welcoming beloved community that fosters shared power and access to opportunity by Magdalena García

Each 45-minute presentation was followed immediately by hour-long roundtable dialogues that explored the keynote themes in depth. The dialogues centered on a series of two-to-three questions developed by the keynote presenters, and the substance of these dialogues was recorded by note-takers identified among participants at each roundtable.

Questions explored at roundtable discussions included:

- On Intersectionality:
  - How does it transform your relationships to see others and ask to be seen in the fullness of all your identities?
  - What kinds of coalitions/collaborations would women of color be able to build if we were moving forward out of an understanding of the mutual constitution of oppression?
  - What are concrete recommendations for action?
- On Making Visible the Leadership of Women of Color:
  - Recognize your own expertise: Where have you been able to use it in the Church? Where has it been denied?
- On Church as a System of Privilege and Discrimination:
  - What forums have been created or exist in your area (presbytery/synod) that provide an opportunity for interaction of women of color? How are you involved? If not, why not?
  - If there are not any forums for women of color, in or near the location of your ministry, what barriers have created this void?
  - Are there remedies that can be employed, individually, collectively, via middle governing bodies or General Assembly?
• On Commitment to Inclusivity with Justice:

—How can we practice truth telling without losing hope? What are some truths that the church resists? What are some illusions that need to be destroyed?

—How can we build a church that is a beloved community: divested from greed and invested in the common good?

—How can the church foster cultural transformation through its leadership, policies, structures, and processes?

The roundtable dialogues generated valuable responses and insights. The content was both descriptive, in the form of sharing stories and illustrations drawn from personal experiences, and prescriptive, calling for the transformation of church and society to dismantle systems of oppression and to support systems of and efforts toward inclusion.

The following themes emerged as sources of positivity, transformation, and hope for women of color—as individuals, in relationships with others, and within the structures and systems of church and society:

“When We Are Telling the Truth, We Are Keeping Hope:”
The Value of Sharing Our Stories

Participants overwhelmingly celebrated the opportunity to tell their stories, hopes, fears, and joys, unencumbered by concerns for “politeness,” yet committed to the preservation of a “safe space” in which they could “speak the truth in love.” In the words of one participant, “Truth-telling isn’t losing hope. When we keep truth silent then we are dead inside. If we don’t share it, our bodies spoil inside. When we are telling the truth, we are keeping hope.” Of particular significance was the positive effect of intergenerational dialogue. Young adult women expressed appreciation for hearing the wisdom and experience of older participants, while women of advanced ages treasured the perspectives and commitment of younger women to the church. That each roundtable was comprised of women from different racial and ethnic backgrounds made for meaningful cross-cultural exchanges. On the community-building nature of telling and listening to stories, one participant remarked, “I do feel that people call me back to ‘home.’”

Though truth-telling often involved sharing painful stories, it also fostered jubilation over the progress and accomplishments made within the life of the church since the ordinations of the first African American woman, Katie Geneva Cannon, in 1974; the first Latina clergywoman, Blanqui Ontario-Rivera, (1975); the first Asian American clergywoman whose ordination was received by the denomination (1979), Elizabeth Kwon, and the first Native American clergywoman, Holly Haile-Davis (1986).

“I Empty Myself Before I Relate With Others, So That I May See Them More Fully:”
The Value of Authenticity and Trust

Along with worshiping the divinity of Jesus Christ, participants drew inspiration for developing trust-based, authentic relationships with one another from the personhood of Jesus. “Jesus had real relationships with real people, but [the church] often removes Jesus from his incarnation,” shared one participant. To be transformed by the personhood of Jesus Christ was seen as a model for the power of Jesus to transform human relationships with one another, as people recognize and regard their authentic selves. “Being authentic is risky,” was a sentiment acknowledged among many participants, but the risk of vulnerability was regarded overall as valuable in building community, especially among women of color. The processes of truth-telling and story-sharing required participants to demonstrate courage in speaking out, as well as energy and commitment through listening actively to one another. As one Native American participant observed, “I draw strength from being here. All of our stories are so different yet we’re [persevering]. We laugh, we cry, and we know the Indians have different ways of doing things. This type of getting together is curious for me; I want to know what my sisters are going through. We are telling our story. We need to understand ourselves. We don’t need to be paid for our home. We need to let people know who we are. We need to be proud of how we are. We are proud of our descendants.”

To the extent that trust-based, authentic relationships foster solidarity, one participant remarked, “mutual support and love is what will make things transformed, and transformative love is the most compelling thing. Full support of one another makes it possible for love to win.” In the words of another participant, “our common humanity is our call.”

“Seeing Life Through Various Lenses:”
The Value of Differences

Opportunities to learn more about other cultures and to celebrate their contributions to the life and witness of the connectional church were considered major benefits to consultation participants. Unity, as opposed to uniformity, emerged as a desirable goal, not only as the bedrock of solidary among women of color, but also for the church as a whole. The concept of intersectionality, deepened to explore the notion of mutual constituencies, added to the ways in which participants perceived and understood aspects of their identities. Many participants recognized the value of differences, both among groups of people and contained within individuals, given that individual identities are made up of many parts that include such things as race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, class, and physical and mental ability. Said one participant, “I value the lenses through
which others perceive themselves and my own lenses of self-perception; we gain much when we see one another as multi-
dimensional beings.”

The mutual support required for valuing differences was affirmed in another’s reflection: “to be asked to be seen in my
fullness requires of others to be accepting of the “other” on all levels and dynamics of social constructionism … it would
require them to accept me as an equal, created in the image of God, no less, no more, than another. …”

The following themes emerged as pernicious sources of challenge and opposition for women of color—as individuals, in
relationships with others, and within the structures and systems of church and society:

“\textbf{I Don’t Know What I Don’t Know:}”
\textbf{Sources of Non-Disclosure and Lack of Guidance}

Many participants illuminated personal experiences of receiving incomplete, incorrect, or even no information about
navigating the systems and structures within the church. This was most often experienced at every stage of preparation for
and engagement in ministries as teaching elders, though this was also true for those involved in other leadership capacities.
“\textquoteleft\textquoteleft There seems to be this ‘hidden’ network of ‘secret’ knowledge about being mentored to move through processes that my
white male colleagues somehow receive to which I’ve never been exposed,\textquoteright\textquoteright expressed one participant, a sentiment reiterated
by many others.

For women who worship and/or serve in predominately nonwhite congregations, the impact of the disconnection be-
tween some presbyteries and some racial ethnic congregations compounds this “knowledge vacuum.” While a number of
programs and initiatives exist throughout the church that lift up opportunities for mission and service that may be of particu-
lar interest to women of color, many women lamented the fact that they are rarely mentioned, advertised, or promoted within
their contexts.

\textbf{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft We Are Always Forced to Compete for the Crumbs Under the Table:”} 
\textbf{The Fear of Scarcity of Resources}

Nearly all participants lamented the lack of support networks, particularly within presbyteries. More than a few partici-
pants recalled networks, groups, organizations, and programs that existed previously for and were created by women of color,
but noted that with shrinking budgets and frequent restructurings, many of those opportunities and initiatives disappeared.
Mid councils have experienced difficulties in recent years in maintaining and/or supporting ministries that equip women of
color in overcoming isolation and marginalization within the systemic structures of the church. What little financial or other
resources that \textit{are} allocated often position marginalized groups in competition with one another for limited offerings.

On the notion of dwindling resources, one participant voiced dismay that the problem, as she experienced it in her con-
text, was \textit{not} that resources were scarce within her mid council, but that the way in which it manages resources was what was
crippling its witness among marginalized people. Similarly, one seminary student cited “how we distribute scholarship mon-
ney in seminars—[I’m] always amazed by the fact that my really wealthy friends get the same financial aid as friends who
have to work two full-time jobs and be full-time students to attend seminary.” A sentiment expressed by more than a few
participants was concern about what they perceived as the “corporatization” of the church, in that it appears to them to rely
too heavily on corporate models for direction (with “the bottom line \textit{as} the bottom line,” so to speak) instead of a sense of an
ecclesiological mission rooted in the promotion of the realm of God.

Yet another perspective that resonated among many was the impact of shifting demographics within the United States on
the “culture of fear” perceived among those in the church who belong to the dominant culture. Many sensed a reaction of
panic, anxiety, jealousy, and fear among some in the dominant culture as the country becomes populated increasingly by La-
tino, Chicano, Asian, Black, and other nonwhite groups, as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is currently 91.8 percent White.
These reactions are seen as fueling a “hoarder” mentality that, as one participant observed, “reinforces a myth of scarcity
instead of recognizing the God of abundance. God’s love and grace are sufficient.”

Scarcity of material resources was not the only plague identified by participants. Tremendous strains on their time and
energy were also identified as barriers to promoting networks and connections among women of color: “In my context in
which I am over-worked and over-committed, especially as I am one of the only people of color in my mid council region, I
have no extra time or energy free to give to building new networks.” Burnout was cited as a significant burden among many.

\textbf{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft I\textquoteleft m Done Making Tacos for Christ:”} 
\textbf{Tokenism and the Lack of Accountability for Inclusion and Equity}

“\textquoteleft\textquoteleft…I don’t mind, but I refuse to [make tacos at diversity potlucks] if we won’t have serious dialogue,” insisted one partic-
ipant, speaking to the inclination of her worshipping community to strive simply for symbolic diversity instead of systemic
transformation for the achievement of inclusivity and equity. Much frustration was expressed by participants over the disturbing
 trend among many structures within the life of the church to solicit one or two participants of color to serve, only to ig-
nore their perspectives or fail to utilize their gifts or skills. In some cases, the opposite danger of under-utilization was over-
burdening of the few women of color in predominately white contexts with multiple responsibilities for addressing “all things diversity-related.”

Another frustration voiced by participants was their invisibility within mid councils in the processes of nomination to committees and task forces dealing with mission and ministry not related to diversity: “I have an accounting degree and work in financial services and I’ve not once been asked to serve on the presbytery’s budget committee,” one participant expressed. Many others noted that Committees on Ministry and other “power” committees within presbyteries were not swift to include their participation.

One of the most prevalent sources of discontent among participants was the lack of accountability within the systems of the church for upholding actions, policies, and commitments related to inclusivity and equity. While the denomination has denounced the sins of racism and sexism through various confessions and resolutions, some question to what extent the church recognizes the pain, violence, and harm that these “isms” inflict: “[Mid councils] have not neglected to implement mandatory trainings on clergy sexual abuse and child abuse policies, for fear that not doing so would make them liable to lawsuits. Isn’t discrimination abuse? Why hasn’t the church upheld trainings to prevent the abuses of racism and sexism? Is it that there hasn’t yet been a lawsuit that might cause worry? Is it only then that it will become a priority?”

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-10

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-10.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-10

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-10—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-10.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises approval of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Report with Recommendations, “Measure for Measure: Assessing the Effectiveness of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.” The Women of Color Consultation is vital in continuing to grow the gender and racial justice awareness of the church through education, training, and support of racial ethnic women. The recommendations included in the report also provide for needed resources and educational opportunities within the mid councils that address a variety of racial justice concerns.

One correction to the report that ACWC would note: Though the report includes 2008 as a year when a Women of Color Consultation was held, this was actually a meeting of the Task Force on the Women of Color Consultation, who submitted the report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies” to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

Item 08-11

[The assembly approved Item 08-11. See pp. 14, 42.]

Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (shown below).

Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions

Prologue

The strong investment of the Presbyterian church in education reflects John Calvin’s conviction that education should be an integral part of the church’s mission. Since colonial times the American Presbyterian church, reflecting Calvin’s conviction, has sought: (1) to develop an educated clergy and provide educational service to the community of faith, and (2) to educate for responsible citizenship and to serve the public good through education. Many schools, colleges, and universities in the United States owe their beginnings to this heritage and were founded for these two purposes.
Westward expansion, the American Civil War, and Reconstruction gave rise to new obligations and opportunities. The church expanded its mission by providing access to education for those persons previously excluded. The establishment of African American, Native American, and Hispanic/Latino-a educational institutions became a central mission thrust of the Presbyterian church.

Through the schools and colleges it established, the Presbyterian church provided educational opportunities that racial ethnic people had been denied. The institutions developed racial ethnic leaders who served society at large, the church, as well as their own racial ethnic constituency. These leaders espoused the Christian faith and the Presbyterian tradition. This mission has become a sacred trust for the church and an investment in young people and adults who are challenged to serve the church, the community, and society as a whole.

The Presbyterian church’s commitment to this historic mission produced more than 150 educational institutions, of which five racial ethnic educational institutions continue to relate directly to the General Assembly through an institutional relationship agreement. These Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools and Colleges</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cook Native American Ministries</td>
<td>Tempe, Az.</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knoxville College</td>
<td>Knoxville, Tenn.</td>
<td>1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menaul School</td>
<td>Albuquerque, N.M.</td>
<td>1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Pan American School</td>
<td>Kingsville, Tex.</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillman College</td>
<td>Tuscaloosa, Ala.</td>
<td>1876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this institutional relationship agreement is to define, strengthen, and inform the missional relationship between the General Assembly (GA), through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions (HPREIs). The HPREIs educate and equip women and men for lives of committed leadership within society and the church. The HPREIs seek to guide and challenge individuals and to affirm them in their quest for values, knowledge, and truth. And, they endeavor to provide students with the knowledge and understanding to make ethical decisions and to be responsible to family, community, church, and nation. Each HPREI integrates faith and learning in a Christian environment, and each is committed to meeting special needs in order to develop the unique potential of its students.

The purpose of this institutional relationship agreement is to define, strengthen, and inform the missional relationship between the General Assembly (GA), through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the HPREIs. This institutional relationship agreement expresses the partnership in mission between the GA and the HPREIs, a long-standing partnership based upon common history, shared beliefs, complementary visions, and a relationship of mutual respect and collaboration.

The GA and the HPREIs uphold education as a continuing priority of the church. The GA names the Presbyterian Mission Agency as its representative for program administration and ongoing relations, and recognizes the Presidents Roundtable as the association through which the relationship of the HPREIs is affected.

The parties to this institutional relationship agreement therefore mutually affirm that:

- Our involvement in education is rooted in the Bible and the Reformed tradition and grows out of our commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord.
- Our common mission is guided by the Constitution of the PC(USA), “The Great Ends of the Church,” and by this institutional relationship agreement.
- Our continuing commitment is to be involved together in service to God and society through education.
- Our continuing partnership in mission is declared in this institutional relationship agreement, setting the framework for the relationship between the GA, through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the HPREIs through their association, the Presidents Roundtable.

2. **Principles of the Institutional Relationship**

The HPREIs seek to maintain a warm and active relationship with the church and its mid councils. Legally, the HPREIs are independent and autonomous institutions. This institutional relationship agreement describes a missional partnership, not a contract. It is based on relationships and trust with specific responsibilities for the GA, through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the HPREIs, through the Presidents Roundtable. It is agreed that each entity assumes sole responsibility for its own actions and this document does not hold either party legally liable for the actions of the other.
An important purpose of the HPREIs are to provide educational experiences for people of color within institutions that are open to all. The HPREIs also nurture the relationships between Presbyterian churches and students, faculty, alumni/ae, and board members, sharing the educational mission of the institutions and providing mission interpretation of educational ministry in the church.

The missional relationship of the GA and the HPREIs is expressed in several documents of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Specifically, Article 8.4 of the Articles of Agreement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the document that guided the church in the Reunion of the two streams in 1983, reads:

Racial ethnic educational institutions have been the primary source from which racial ethnic church leadership has developed. Consistent with the dire need for racial ethnic church leadership, the General Assembly Council shall propose to the General Assembly ways whereby the General Assembly shall be able to fulfill its responsibility for education through colleges and secondary schools and for meeting the operational and developmental needs of those Presbyterian schools that historically have served Black Americans and those serving other racial ethnic groups.

The HPREIs align with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s mission of educating and equipping young people and adults for lives of committed leadership within society and the church. Annually, the HPREIs report to the Office of Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges in the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries ministry area of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The report includes activities to support this goal.

In order for the HPREIs to use the PC(USA) name, seal, or symbol, a written license must be secured from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. This institutional relationship agreement does not confer the use of these.

3. Core Functions and Mutual Responsibilities

The GA, through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the HPREIs agree to relate in the following manner.

The HPREIs will:

• Continue the church’s commitment to education and maintain the heritage of the racial ethnic mission of each school by emphasizing quality educational experiences for people of color within institutions that are open to all. We will continue the commitment through programs that teach and model Christian values, that adhere to standards of academic freedom, that maintain high standards of education, and that emphasize individual and corporate service to humankind.

• Interpret our collective and individual missions on behalf of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Throughout the church, we will lift up this institutional relationship agreement in publications and other communications of each HPREI and will collaborate with efforts that provide interpretation of and advocacy for the HPREIs within the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

• Provide opportunities for the guidance and interpretation of the mission and program of each HPREI by having members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on each school’s board of trustees as appropriate to each HPREI.

• Demonstrate commitment to the HPREIs mission and to the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Mission Work Plan 2013–2016, especially the directional goals to inspire, equip, and connect the church to engage and join with young adults in reforming the church for Christ’s mission and the compassionate and prophetic discipleship goal to make, receive, and send disciples who demonstrate and proclaim God’s justice, peace and love in an increasingly globalized world.

• Share the accomplishments and concerns of each HPREI in fulfillment of its mission and this agreement through an annual report to the Office of Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges in the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries ministry area of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

• Develop relationships with other entities within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for mutual support and affirmation. These relationships include but are not limited to the synods and presbyteries within which the HPREIs are located, the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries ministry area of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, and the Board of Pensions, as well as Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We will encourage them to explore avenues of mutual partnership.

• Exercise responsible stewardship of the resources provided through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), via the Christmas Joy Offering and other designated funds and continue the pursuit of financial strength for ongoing fiscal operations. We will document our efforts through annual independent audits and annual program reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

• Encourage use of the facilities, faculty, and staff of each HPREI by various entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The GA, through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, will:
• Report biennially to the GA and other appropriate bodies on the mission of the HPREIs and the progress made toward fulfilling its responsibility for education through the racial ethnic schools and colleges.

• Support and advocate the mission of the HPREIs within the national church. The Presbyterian Mission Agency will also encourage mid councils to establish and maintain supportive relationships with the HPREIs for continued mutual support.

• Provide information regarding opportunities for funds development and opportunities to engage in the emerging priorities of the church.

• Support and articulate the unique challenges and blessings of educating poor people and be a partner in enhancing the success of the Christmas Joy Offering.

• Provide transparent stewardship of funds intended for this mission and audit-based reports of the Christmas Joy Offering to the Presidents Roundtable on an annual basis.

• Provide avenues of interpretation of the mission of the HPREIs, both as a group and as individual institutions, throughout the church. The Presbyterian Mission Agency will also seek to utilize the expertise and facilities of the HPREIs to resource the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

4. Implementation, Consultation and Reporting

This institutional relationship agreement will be implemented by the HPREIs through the Presidents Roundtable and by biennial reports to the GA. The HPREIs shall also report annually to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Reports shall include activities, programs, mission interpretation efforts, and financial reports of these HPREIs. The agreement will be implemented by the GA through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and in particular the Office of Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges in the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries ministry area. It is the Office of Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges that has the primary responsibility for day-to-day activity in reference to this agreement. These responsibilities include the administration and disbursement of Christmas Joy Offering and endowments for the HPREIs, administrative support to the Presidents Roundtable, and periodic visits to the HPREIs. The associate for Educational and Financial Support/Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges also serves as an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees of the HPREIs.

5. Approval, Review and Evaluation

This agreement shall be effective when it is approved by the Presidents Roundtable, the boards of trustees of the HPREIs and the GA. The agreement shall be formally reviewed by the Presidents Roundtable and Presbyterian Mission Agency staff and elected representatives at least every four years to coincide with biennial general assemblies and with the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s mission planning cycle. The GA, through the Office of Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges in the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries ministry area of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the HPREIs, through the President’s Roundtable, shall review, and when necessary, suggest revisions of this agreement. A written agreement shall ensue with copies to the GA through the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the boards of trustees of the HPREIs through the Presidents Roundtable. The next renewal is expected in 2018. Either missional partner may request a review at any time.

A part of the review and renewal process shall include the reaffirmation and celebration of the benefits of this missional relationship along with the reiteration of mutual support.

Written notice of a request to alter or dissolve the agreement shall be submitted to each missional partner, providing a three-month period for both partners to discuss the request. Following that period, a formal meeting of representatives of the missional partners will create a proposal to be submitted to each partner for action.

HISTORICALLY PRESBYTERIAN RACIAL ETHNIC INSTITUTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COOK NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES</th>
<th>PRESBYTERIAN PAN AMERICAN SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Suanne Ware Diaz, Executive Director</td>
<td>Dr. Doug Dalglish, President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOXVILLE COLLEGE STILLMAN COLLEGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Evelyn Hallman, President</td>
<td>Dr. Peter Millet, Acting President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENAUL SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Lindsey Gilbert, President/Head of School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rationale

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through the Presbyterian Mission Agency, has institutional relationship agreements with institutions that have shared common purpose and sought strength in partnership with the national church offices. Some of these relationships have been formalized with covenants in the past, but as the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board restructured into a smaller body and committed itself to providing mission direction and governance at a high level, the covenants for these institutions have changed into institutional relationship agreements. An institutional relationship agreement is one between the General Assembly and other institutions. In this case, the Presbyterian Mission Agency is responsible for cultivating the relationship and requesting General Assembly approval; however, the relationship is not limited in scope to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The Institutional Relationship Agreement between the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and the Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions places the relationship in the context of the church’s missional directives and describes expectations and responsibilities as part of the relationship. Institutional relationship agreements are approved by the General Assembly, upon recommendation by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, for a four-year term.

Item 08-12

[The assembly approved Item 08-12. See pp. 14, 42.]

The Institutional Relationship Agreement Between Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. and the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the Institutional Relationship Agreement between Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc., and the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Institutional Relationship Agreement between Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. and the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

I. Preface

This agreement expresses the partnership in mission among Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. (PW) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA). PW and the PMA have had a longstanding partnership based upon shared beliefs, complementary visions and commitments, common history, and a relationship of mutual respect and cooperation. While this covenant is specifically for the relationship between PW and the PMA, it is commended as a model for Presbyterian Women in relation to other corresponding governing bodies and councils.

II. The Covenant-Based Relationship

A covenant is essentially an agreement between two or more parties committing themselves to certain responsibilities. The idea of covenant is at the heart of the biblical story and is generally understood as different from a contract. A contract is about legal and economic transactions while a covenant depends on trust and fidelity and focuses more on the quality of the relationship. It is agreed that PW and the PMA will each assume responsibility for their actions, and the signing of the Institutional Relationship Agreement does not hold any party liable for the actions of another party. As reflected in this covenant, the PMA does provide various services to PW. PW supports the mission of the PMA, especially the directional goals to inspire, equip, and connect the church through transformational leadership, compassionate and prophetic discipleship, new worshiping communities, and young adult participation.

A. Background

PW is a tax-exempt national women’s organization related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), hereinafter PC(USA). Its members are, first and foremost, members of the PC(USA).
Presbyterian Women came into being in 1988, five years after the reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. PW incorporated in 2009 as a mission entity related to the PC(USA) as an integrated auxiliary. PW’s bylaws link PW closely to the Constitution of the PC(USA). PW’s members participate in leadership coordinating teams at all governing body levels from the congregation to the General Assembly.

From reunion in 1983 until the organizing Business Meeting of Presbyterian Women in 1988, a working team of Women of the Church (WOC) and United Presbyterian Women (UPW) proposed designs to their constituencies that culminated in the approval of the present structure. The 198th General Assembly (1986) received the Presbyterian Women Purpose and Principles of Organization as information only, pending approval by the uniting constituencies. The General Assembly action affirmed the independence and responsibility of Presbyterian Women to make its own decisions concerning leadership, program, and budget. Membership in Presbyterian Women is open to all women who choose to participate in or be supportive of the PW organization in any way. The PW Purpose states: “Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, to support the mission of the church worldwide, to work for justice and peace, and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God’s kingdom.” In 1986, UPW and WOC, as they looked ahead to becoming Presbyterian Women (PW), willingly became a part of the Women’s Ministry Unit where they were in partnership with Justice for Women, Women Employed by the Church, and the Committee of Women of Color. In 1993, the Women’s Ministry Unit was reorganized into the Women’s Ministries program area of the National Ministries Division.

In 2007, the Women’s Ministries program area was reorganized into Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries (RE&WM). PW continues to be in programmatic partnership with RE&WM. PW supports the PC(USA) ministries that advance the role of women in the church and society. With each restructure or reorganization of the denominational staff, the PW organization has made the decision to be lodged with women’s constituency groups and emphases. In April 2014, PW staff is no longer lodged with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, which removed the need for ministry area lodgment. PW continues to be in partnership with the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries ministry area.

B. The Covenant Responsibilities of Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women will

1. conduct all mission and ministry according to the PW Purpose:
   a. nurture [their] faith through prayer and Bible study,
   b. support the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (which includes the Presbyterian Mission Agency),
   c. work for justice and peace,
   d. build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

2. work cooperatively with Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries as a whole and with other offices and areas within the PMA and other related entities;

3. be an active presence on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board through the PW Moderator’s membership, voice and vote, and vice moderators’ attendance at Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB) meetings as observers;

4. be faithful stewards of the money given by Presbyterian women from throughout the church, whether that money is given for the general mission of the church, for ongoing work of PW, or for projects of Creative Ministries offerings;

5. ensure editorial autonomy for Horizons magazine, the annual Bible study, and all other publications of PW;

6. be guided by the general policies of the PMA (for example: contract procedures, minority vendor policies, and travel and meeting policies).

C. Covenant Responsibilities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency

The PMA will

1. support the Purpose of Presbyterian Women;

2. recognize and respect PW’s autonomy and status as a separate corporation, self-determining in its leadership, budget, and program;

3. provide support to PW;
   a. honor the relationships as stated in the PMA Manual of Operations, recognizing the full membership, with voice and vote, on the PMAB, of the moderator of PW Churchwide;
b. appoint a member of the PMAB to serve with full voice and vote on the Corporate Board (CCT) of PW;

c. acknowledge and ensure editorial autonomy for all PW publications, including *Horizons* magazine and the annual Bible study;

4. seek ways to build tangible partnerships and share resources with PW for joint programming with various mission areas of the PMA in which the mission priorities of the church are served;

5. through the RE&WM ministry area director, maintain close connections with PW and the PW staff and be responsive to changes, new developments and program options;

6. ensure that collaborative women’s ministries work remains a focus of PMA and ongoing work is supported.

### III. Accountability

In the following ways, PW and PMA will stay in communication, as each party attempts to be faithful to the covenant promise:

A. PW will provide an annual report to the PMAB, through RE&WM, of its programs, services, and policies, and PW’s mission giving will appear in the General Mission Budget.

B. A member of the PMAB will sit with full voice and vote on the CCT of PW and report on the policies and activities of the PMA at the triennial Churchwide Gathering Business Meeting of PW.

C. A representative group from each body will meet on a two-year cycle to review the Institutional Relationship Agreement and propose any changes. The term of this agreement will be four years, commencing June 30, 2014, and expiring June 30, 2018.

Any party may propose changes in the Institutional Relationship Agreement at any time upon prior written notice to the other party.

**Rationale**

Over the years it became apparent that a clear understanding about the relationship between Presbyterian Women and the national church structure needed to be articulated. The Churchwide Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women (CCT) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly Council, now known as the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, approved the original covenant in August 2001.

### $Item 08-13$

[The assembly approved Item 08-13 with amendment. See pp. 40, 42.]

*Report of the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force*

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. **Continue its commitment to the churchwide goal of $20 million by 2020, by affirming**

   a. The implementation and use of new, creative, and innovative fundraising strategies to reach our $20 million by 2020 goal, including the new Presbyterian Giving Catalog.

   b. The work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency in fostering missional collaboration among and within program areas and advisory committees, particularly the ministries supported by One Great Hour of Sharing.

   c. The Presbyterian Mission Agency’s work in conducting a program evaluation process that measures critical success factors and assesses whether programs supported by the offerings are accountable for achieving goals and intended outcomes.

   d. The work done by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to clarify the role of One Great Hour of Sharing ministry advisory committees.

   e. The great potential of the Special Offerings as a way of expressing our collective witness to the love of Jesus Christ. We celebrate the history and connectedness of Special Offerings and recognize that the offerings represent God’s call to be present to the world as a connectional church in the name of Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Encourage every congregation to increase its participation in Special Offerings by receiving one additional offering and increasing Special Offerings giving by 10 percent in each year, as part of our shared commitment to achieving the churchwide goal of $20 million by 2020.

3. Enact or maintain the following structural arrangements with respect to each of the offerings:
   a. One Great Hour of Sharing: Affirm the current purpose and distribution of the offering. Additionally, we encourage new and continuing collaboration between recipient ministries.
   b. Peacemaking Offering.
      (1) Direct the transition to a Peace and Global Witness Offering during the season leading up to World Communion Sunday. The Peace and Global Witness Offering will be
         (a) promoted to the entire church, beginning with the 2014 offering, and
         (b) distributed for peace and global witness ministries as follows: 50 percent to the Presbyterian Mission Agency, 25 percent to presbyteries, and 25 percent to congregations.
      (2) Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to designate gifts from established Peacemaking Offering donors for current peacemaking efforts through 2016 and designate gifts from new donors to collaborative efforts in the area of peace and global witness. Beyond 2016, the offering will be devoted to ministries that specifically include peacemaking, as well as [of peace and] global witness.
   c. Pentecost Offering
      (1) Affirm the current purpose and distribution (60 percent for the Presbyterian Mission Agency and 40 percent for congregations) of the offering.
      (2) Encourage congregations to empower youth and young adults to lead the promotion of this offering on Pentecost Sunday and the season following, with a goal of increasing support for ministries with children, youth, and young adults throughout the church.
   d. Christmas Joy Offering.
      (1) Affirm the current purpose and distribution (50 percent for the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and 50 percent for Presbyterian Mission Agency ministries in racial ethnic education) of the offering.
      (2) Recommend that an Advisory Committee on the Allocation of Racial Ethnic Leadership Funds from the Christmas Joy Offering be established by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB), reporting back to the PMAB by the end of 2015, to examine the implications of how the church can best
         (a) be true to its commitment to the Historically Presbyterian Racial-Ethnic Institutions with whom it has covenanted;
         (b) ensure adequate provisions for an effective program of racial ethnic leadership development for the future racial ethnic leadership needs of the church.
      (3) Until the task force responds, direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to
         (a) continue its relationships with already recognized and qualified historically racial ethnic Presbyterian schools and colleges and distribute funds at no more than the current percentage levels; and
         (b) allocate funds formerly committed to now ineligible institutions to other Presbyterian Mission Agency racial ethnic leadership development opportunities.
   4. Recommend that the next Special Offerings Review Task Force
      a. review progress toward attaining the $20 million by 2020 goal;
      b. align offering recipients with the strategic objectives of the Presbyterian Mission Agency;
      c. examine the timing and programmatic emphases within each offering based on theological soundness, the liturgical calendar, and fundraising strategy; and
      d. evaluate progress on the aforementioned recommendations.

Recommendation 1. Since reunion, Special Offerings have raised more than half a billion dollars for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s collective witness to Jesus Christ around the globe. The ministries supported by gifts to Special Offerings are some of the most beloved ministries of our denomination. Despite the success of the offerings, and their place of significance in our denomination, gifts to Special Offerings have declined drastically in the last decade. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force applauds the work being done by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to slow and stop this decline. With the continuance of their work, we believe the goal of $20 million in annual gifts to Special Offerings by 2020 remains very attainable. The innovative new fundraising strategies (including the Presbyterian Giving Catalog), the sense of collaboration among ministries supported by One Great Hour of Sharing, and the development of a comprehensive program evaluation process are just some of the ways the Presbyterian Mission Agency is fostering a climate for Special Offerings growth.

Recommendation 2. As we strive to reach our goal of $20 million in annual gifts to Special Offerings by 2020, the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force believes it is important to challenge every congregation to be part of the vision. If each PC(USA) congregation committed to taking one additional offering or increasing current gifts by just 10 percent, we would attain the goal of $20 million in annual receipts as early as 2017—greatly magnifying the impact of our ministries around the globe.

Recommendation 3.a. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force (SOATF), impressed with the culture of collaboration among One Great Hour of Sharing ministries, including new collaborative projects in response to the typhoon in the Philippines, recommends no changes to the purposes supported or the distributions of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering at this time.

Recommendation 3.b. The Peacemaking Offering, as currently structured, has played an important role in fostering cultures of peace around the world. While the offering has maintained a very loyal support network, participation in the offering has remained stagnant over much of the last two decades, with about 20 percent of PC(USA) congregations contributing around $2 million annually. Inspired by conversations with leadership and staff in both the Peacemaking Program and World Mission ministry area, we believe an offering focused on collaborative efforts of peacemaking and global witness, especially in reconciliation in cultures of violence, more accurately reflects the needs of the denomination—and the world—at this time. Restructuring the offering as the Peace and Global Witness Offering will allow greater collaboration at the cross-section of justice and evangelism and empower congregations and mid councils to use their portions of the offering in ways consistent with the current trends for mission engagement at those levels. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force further believes structuring the offering in this way has the potential to double (or more) the total proceeds of the offering within the next five years: in confidence that the greater missional impact fostered by the change would stir renewed interest in the offering, and congregations not yet participating in the offering would be inspired to reconsider. Research done by the former SOATF supports this change. Finally, we believe current peacemaking efforts will always be able to be funded within this new structure and recommend current efforts in peacemaking be funded at current levels (if offering receipts allow) for at least the next three years. As is true with all offerings, any specific designations and restrictions will be honored.

Recommendation 3.c. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force encourages the Pentecost Offering to be taken on Pentecost Sunday and during the season after Pentecost, celebrating the many ministries with children, youth, and young adults that happen during this season, such as vacation Bible school, youth mission trips, Presbyterian Youth Triennium, and summer camps.

Recommendation 3.d. We affirm the current purposes and distributions of the Christmas Joy Offering (CJO): half to racial ethnic education and half to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. We believe clarifications are needed in the current interpretation of the portion designated for racial ethnic education. We have recognized that a changing world demands a new look at best practices for spending these mission dollars. Many of the schools that have historically received benefits from the offering are no longer in operation, no longer accredited, or no longer focus on the development of future leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as one of their core mission objectives. Therefore, we believe the allocation of these dollars be used to fund new efforts at creating leaders for the church. As an example, most of the 1,001 new worshiping communities being developed have some sort of racial ethnic makeup, making education for church leaders in that context a critical mission need of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. We believe schools that are fully qualified and accredited and currently receiving CJO funds should continue to receive offering funds at percentage levels equal to their current funding. As new dollars become available through increased offering receipts or attrition of existing schools, they should be spent on racial ethnic leadership development efforts that are congruent with the critical needs of developing racial ethnic leadership within and for our church.
Recommendation 4. The Special Offerings Advisory Task Force, through its research and work over the past two years, recommends that the next iteration of the Special Offerings Task Force review these issues in an effort to ensure that Special Offerings remain a vehicle capable of funding the critical missional needs of the church and that effective progress is being made toward our $20 million by 2020 goal.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 08-13

Advice and Counsel on Item 08-13—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 08-13.

While ACREC advises approval, it is not without some serious questions.

The ACREC concurs with the Special Offerings Advisory Task Force’s (SOATF) affirmation of the current purpose and distribution of the Christmas Joy Offering (CJO) as described in Recommendation 3.d.(1). The ACREC also affirms the need to clearly define the standards of what constitutes a historically Presbyterian racial ethnic institution, a task the 220th General Assembly (2012), in fact, referred to ACREC. As a response to this referral from the 220th General Assembly (2012), ACREC responded with Item 08-05, A Resolution to Define and Interpret Standards for PC(USA) Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges. This resolution would address all of the concerns regarding clarity of standards, if the 221st General Assembly (2014) approves it.

Of serious concern to ACREC is a shift in the discussion surrounding the distribution of the CJO that occurs in the rationale of Item 08-13, in the section that addresses Recommendation 3.d. As noted above, the clarifications asked for with regards to standards for racial ethnic schools and colleges would be addressed in their entirety via Item 08-05. However, while the recommendations of the report of the SOATF regarding the distribution and purpose of the CJO affirm its current state, the rationale addressing Recommendation 3.d. seems to call this into question. In fact, the rationale suggests that the allocation of any new funding should be used for “new efforts at creating leaders for the church,” citing the 1001 New Worshiping Communities Initiative (1001 NWCI) as an example of a place where that funding could be utilized.

Some questions raised by this suggestion include but are not limited to:

1. What will be and who will establish the criteria for determining what a 1001 New Worshiping Community Initiative entity qualifies as an appropriate racial ethnic recipient of funding?

2. Is the suggestion to allocate “any new funding” to identified racial ethnic entities (i.e. worshiping communities, educational institutions, etc.)?

3. What are or will be the “new efforts” [aimed] at “creating” what category of “leaders for the church” (teaching elders, ruling elders, ecclesiastical administrators, etc.), and will they be racial ethnic leaders?

The ACREC’s concern is the ambiguity contained in the recommendation and the continued diminishing of funding and staff support for racial ethnic ministry.

$Item 08-14

[The assembly approved Item 08-14 with amendment. See pp. 40, 43.]

A Resolution to Address Child/Youth Protection Policies and Resources in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to create new/updated resources concerning Child/Youth Protection measures in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that can be available for synods, presbyteries, and individual churches. (We request that these resources be from the PC(USA) and not just direction to other denominational resources.)

2. Direct the Stated Clerk to send [the following] proposed amendment[s] [to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:] [to the Book of Order regarding the requirement of all councils of the PC(USA) to adopt and implement a child/youth protection policy [to be determined by the 221st General Assembly (2014)] to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes.]

[Amend the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]
“All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child protection policy.”

[Financial Implications: $2,500 (2015), $2,500 (2016) PMA]

Rationale

Currently the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and Child Advocacy Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has provided some extremely helpful resources regarding Child/Youth Protection measures and policies, which are available online. One such resource can be found under Creating Safe Ministries through pcusa.org. However, many of these resources are focused primarily on sexual harassment policies and procedures and not adequately on the broad scope of child/youth protection. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) asks that the Presbyterian Mission Agency direct that new/updated resources be created for synods, presbyteries, and particular church use that are from the PC(USA) and address child youth protection measures and policies – including and expanding beyond the focus of sexual harassment. There are many issues that have evolved with working with children/youth which need to be addressed in the work of the church.

The focus of child/youth protection policies is to ensure a safe, thriving, and nurturing environment for children and youth in our churches and church-sponsored events. These policies address screening child and youth workers and volunteers, how to implement mandatory training, simple rules involving transportation, adult/youth/child ratios, minimum age requirement of volunteers, facility security and safety, etc. It is important to understand in developing these policies that these policies and procedures are completely separate from sexual misconduct policies, and there is a need to differentiate between these resources and policies. That is why we request an amendment in the Book of Order to require all councils of the PC(USA) to make this differentiation and adopt and implement a child/youth protection policy alongside a separate sexual harassment policy.

It is the church’s responsibility to provide a safe, thriving, and nurturing environment for children and youth, and we must take seriously how our faith informs this responsibility. Our theology of the child is reflected in how we care and nurture children and youth who are under the care of the church. This theology must reflect the love, care, and high regard for the humanity and dignity of the child reflected in the Gospels.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 08-14

Comment on Item—From the Office of the General Assembly.

The Stated Clerk advises that Recommendation 2 could be accomplished as follows:

The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Amend the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child protection policy.”

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 08-14

Advice on Item 08-14—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

If it is the intent of the assembly to require each council to adopt and implement a child protection policy, the ACC believes the language of the proposed amendment, as shown in the OGA comment above, is clear and concise.

Item 08-15

Recommendation Pertaining to Budgetary and Financial Concerns of the Church

A. Relating to Budgets for Presbyterian Mission Agency

[The assembly approved Item 08-15, Recommendation A.1. See pp. 15, 43.]


The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) incorporate into the Minutes the report of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Receipts and Expenditures Actual Compared to Budget for 2012 and 2013.

[The display that is found in pma-budget-charts-A-1.pdf is the report of actual revenue and expenditures for the years 2012 and 2013. See pp. 572–75, electronic version.]

Rationale

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

B. The General Assembly Council shall:
   1. Report to each General Assembly:
      a. Actual total financial resources used to support the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program and the expenditures during the most recently completed year. (Minutes, 1990, Part I, p. 375)

[The assembly approved Item 08-15, Recommendation A.2. See pp.43, 82.]


The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) receive the revised report of the 2014 Presbyterian Mission Agency Budget in the total amount of $79,946,530.


Rationale

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

B. The General Assembly Council shall:
   1. Report to each General Assembly: ...
      b. Adjustments, if any approved by the General Assembly Council for the current budget year.
   2. Adjust if necessary the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program as adopted by the General Assembly. ... (Minutes, 1990, Part I, p. 375)

[The assembly approved Item 08-15, Recommendation A.3. See pp. 43, 82.]


The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the 2015 Presbyterian Mission Agency Budget in the total amount of $73,671,744 and the 2016 Presbyterian Mission Agency Budget in the total amount of $78,226,389.


Rationale

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted Policy Governing Mission Budgets at the General Assembly Level. That policy provides that:

B. The General Assembly Council shall: ...
   3. Recommend to the General Assembly the General Assembly Mission Budget and Program for the next succeeding budget cycle. Displayed in the recommendation shall be:
      a. All projected financial sources; and

The Presbyterian Mission Agency is required by the Constitution to prepare and submit a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly. (G-3.0113).
B.  Relating to Reserved or Committed Funds

Unrestricted and Committed Funds

The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) receive the report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, regarding unrestricted and committed funds as of December 31, 2013.

Rationale

The report of the unrestricted funds is divided between uncommitted and committed funds. The display, found in gamc-budget-charts-B.pdf, indicates those funds as well as the activity of those funds and the status of the total reserves as of closing December 31, 2013. See pp. 579–84, electronic file. The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted the following policy:

A. Presbyterian Mission Program Fund

1. A fund composed of all unrestricted and uncommitted receipts and assets intended for the support of the General Assembly mission program.

2. Sources to maintain this fund shall include all unified revenue available for the General Assembly Mission Program, including but not limited to:
   a. unified income including receipts from congregations, presbyteries, or individuals;
   b. unrestricted gifts, legacies, bequests
   c. unrestricted investment income;
   d. gift annuity excess reserves;
   e. such nonrecurring income as the General Assembly Council shall direct by general or specific policy statement; and
   f. under expenditure of the unified portion of the General Assembly Mission Budget.

3. The Uncommitted Funds portion of the Presbyterian Mission Program Fund at year end must be equal to at least 30% of the Unified portion and direct mission support of the General Assembly Mission Budget, which minimum provides for:
   a. Cash flow needed for mission purposes;

C.  Relating to Support for Presbyterian Mission Agency Mission

1. John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds

The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) allocate the annual income realized in 2013 and projected for 2014 from the John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds in support of the budget for the general mission work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Rationale

Current practice is to recommend to each General Assembly the allocation of annual income from these two funds in light of wording in the donors’ wills that requires this annual process.

Portion of the will of Edmund P. Dwight (May 23, 1903):

I will and bequeath to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, to be used for the establishment of the Christian Religion, that the light of the gospel may be made to join more perfectly ...

Portion of the will of John C. Lord (January 2, 1873):

... to the Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., for religious and charitable uses, to be called the John C. Lord Fund, the annual interest of which is to be disposed of and distributed by the said General Assembly at each annual meeting for the furtherance of the Gospel of our Blessed Saviour, at home or abroad, as the Assembly may deem best. ...

The applicable provisions of the two wills facilitate the annual income realized from these funds to be used in the Presbyterian Mission Agency General Mission Budget.

Income from these funds in 2013 were $14,434.20 and it is projected that the income from these funds in 2014 will be approximately $13,497.84.

2. Special Offerings 2013

The Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) incorporate into its Minutes the following summary of receipts from Special Offerings for the years 2012 and 2013.
The charts that are found in pma-budget-charts-C-2.pdf show the summary of receipts for Special Offerings for the years 2012 and 2013. See p. 585, electronic file.

**Rationale**

Special Offerings enable an important part of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. In 2012, income from these offerings totaled approximately 21 percent of total income for the mission program of the church and 33 percent of the mission gifts from congregations. In 2013, income from these offerings totaled approximately 20 percent of total income for the mission program of the church and 33 percent of the mission gifts from congregations.

**Item 08-16**

[The assembly approved Item 08-16. See pp. 28, 43.]

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) confirm the election of Ruling Elder Linda Bryant Valentine to a third, four-year term as Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

**Rationale**

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, based on a process described in its *Manual of Operations*, reviews the performance of its Executive Director, at least annually. The board’s executive committee conducts the review, and then shares a summary of the review with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board at its next meeting.

Specific instructions are provided for first, second, third, and fourth year reviews. The third-year review was conducted in August 2013, and shared with the board at its September 2013 meeting. The fourth-year review was completed in early April, and presented to the board at its spring meeting.

The fourth-year review evaluates the performance of the entire four-year term and prepares for the next term. In addition, if appropriate and warranted, the fourth year review includes goals and objectives for the next four-year term.

At the third year review, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voted to “commend Linda Valentine with thanks and appreciation for three years of leadership.”

The fourth-year review found continued excellent performance by Linda Valentine throughout the four-year term; and the board concluded that it would be in the best interest of the Presbyterian Mission Agency for it to continue to benefit from the vision and leadership of Linda Valentine.

The *Organization for Mission* includes a complete description of the election/confirmation process as well as the responsibilities of the Executive Director:

The Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency is elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The Executive Director is accountable to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Upon election, the Executive Director serves with the full authority of the office until confirmed by the next General Assembly following election. Should the General Assembly refuse to confirm any Executive Director, the position becomes vacant immediately. Periodic in-depth reviews of the Executive Director are the responsibility of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The Executive Director is elected for a term of four years and may be reelected for additional terms. Initial four-year terms start on the date that work commences following election. Subsequent four-year terms commence on the day following expiration of the prior term. The Executive Director may be dismissed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board in conformity with current personnel policies and procedures.

Responsibilities—The responsibilities of the Executive Director include:

a. enabling the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, in response to mission directions and policies set by the General Assembly, to lead the whole church in the implementation of directions for the life and mission of the church;

b. supporting the organizational health of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

c. enabling the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities;

d. providing oversight of the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency as a whole and the linkages among the various parts that carry out its work;

e. providing leadership and administrative oversight to the staff and to the staffing and personnel decision process of the Presbyterian Mission Agency;

f. leading and supervising the staff lodged in the office of the Executive Director including a staff rationale, position description, selection of staff, annual performance reviews and staff development;

g. bearing direct responsibility for the coordination of planning and budgeting for the Presbyterian Mission Agency;

h. leading the Presbyterian Mission Agency in implementing policies and procedures related to inclusiveness, affirmative action, and equal employment opportunity; and
Item 08-A

[The assembly approved Item 08-A. See p. 43.]

Minutes, Presbyterian Mission Agency

Item 08-B

[The assembly approved Item 08-B. See p. 43.]

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation: Consolidated Financial Statements


Item 08-C

[The assembly approved Item 08-C. See p. 43.]

Minutes, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

Item 08-Info


Background

The PCCMP shall report annually to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and biennially to the General Assembly. The report shall include the programs, activities, fund-raising and interpretation efforts, and financial summaries of its work.

PCCMP Annual Report 2012–2014

The PCCMP has been extraordinarily active in its support of chaplains since the 220th General Assembly (2012). Our chaplains have been deployed to warzones up to six times. At least two have been wounded. Several have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) diagnoses including two who received medical retirements. Chaplains, their families, and their congregations have served well and are strained and tired from this long war. Since 9-11, reserves and National Guard have been mobilized in large numbers. That has slowed substantially with the Iraq War over and the Afghan one drawing down; from 2012–2014, at least twenty-two reserve and National Guard chaplains have been mobilized. We have been in near constant contact with most of them—assisting in their entry in the active military; speaking with their families, churches, and presbyteries; helping explain pension and United States Employment and Reemployment Rights; providing support when they returned from the military. Disasters like the Japanese earthquake and Tsunami, Philippine flood, and Pakistani flood have only added to the call for military assistance. We’ve enjoyed assisting individuals, churches, presbyteries, and General Assembly offices in supporting deployed military members and chaplains. We’ve been gratified to see prayers offered, care packages sent, and chaplains “adopted” by churches.

Approximately thirty of our active duty chaplains were deployed into Southwest Asia for actions regarding Iraq and Afghanistan from 2012 to 2014. Several are in Afghanistan at this writing. Our military chaplains suffer the same hardships as other military; their ministry is often in harm’s way. Some of them are quite exhausted after a war tour; some have symptoms of post-traumatic stress. We seek to be with them and find appropriate support. We hold annual retreats for chaplains attended by 60–110 chaplains and family members; they’ve been at Montreat the past two years. We were at funerals for several retired chaplains. We look forward to contacts after chaplains redeploy and are reunited with their families.

All military branches have again stated recently their gratitude for the service provided by Presbyterian chaplains. They also are in need of female chaplains and minority chaplains. We believe the PC(USA) can be a wonderful source for some of these chaplains. This is a great opportunity for our female and minority teaching elders in a time when there are many more teaching elders than churches needing support.

The Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad (KPCA) joined our council several years ago and now has eight active duty chaplains.
The PCCMP has two core functions:

- The ecclesial duty of endorsement of clergy for service in the military and Veterans Administration chaplaincies.
- The pastoral function of supporting those same clergy during their time of service.

Over the past two years, we approved nine for military chaplain candidate (seminarian) programs. We endorsed 102 for the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and VA; some are in the reserves while others went immediately to active duty chaplaincy. Each approval or endorsement requires a collection of application, transcripts, presbytery approval, and letters of reference. After the documents are gathered, we interview the candidates.

Our current data on chaplains by denomination is below. We provide endorsement and support to 14 seminarians and 234 clergy. Twenty-three of the military chaplains are female as are seven of our VA chaplains. Most of our presbyteries have participants in one or more of the chaplaincy programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaplain Candidate</th>
<th>Reserve/ Guard*</th>
<th>Active Military</th>
<th>Full-Time VA</th>
<th>Part-Time VA</th>
<th>Civil Air Patrol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PC(USA)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland in America</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>76</strong></td>
<td><strong>89</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Of these Reserve/Guard, fourteen are currently mobilized

We attended general assemblies or general synod for all of our denominations. The chaplain ministry is well-received and supported by each denomination. We also participate in the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) of the PC(USA) without vote because of our covenant relationship.

The ongoing pastoral care for chaplains is an extension of what presbyteries do through committees on ministry. We expect our chaplains to maintain a sound relationship with the PCCMP and their presbytery. We seek to keep a semiannual written contact with each active duty chaplain. That contact is augmented with email and telephone. We also make personal contact with each chaplain at least every other year with a visit to their duty station or a meeting at a gathering of chaplains. We also respond very quickly when chaplains and families are in crisis. The PCCMP works hard to serve chaplains who are changing commands, moving from the USA overseas or the reverse. Quite a few stop by the office in the District of Columbia while in a move or when in Washington for military duty. The PCCMP also hosts an annual retreat for chaplains and families; this facilitates networking and mutual support for our Presbyterian clergy who are often isolated from other Presbyterian contact.

The PCCMP works to interpret its mission and needs to the church. We had good support from the Cumberland, Presbyterians Today, Horizons, and the Presbyterian News Service to explain what chaplains do. We have also been published in several seminary publications, the Outlook, and the Layman. We made visits to seven seminaries these past two years and to many presbyteries to interpret the chaplain story and PCCMP mission.

The PCCMP also maintains sound working relations with the chiefs of chaplains’ offices for each branch of the military and the Veterans Administration. It offers leadership in the Military Chaplain Association, the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF), and the Endorsers Council for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC). The NCMAF is the advisory body to the secretary of defense on religion.

Keeping the ministry vital with adequate funding has been difficult. We have redoubled our development efforts, using several regional volunteer assistants. We recently hired an associate director, Chaplain Don Wilson, who has responsibilities for development and endorsing. We participate in the Combined Federal Campaign. However, the bedrock of our financial health remains with the PC(USA). We are most appreciative of our covenant relationship and the inherent financial support of this ministry and function of the church. We greatly appreciate the PC(USA) telling the story of chaplains and the PCCMP on their webpage and in mailings.

The PCCMP Board is elected from our four denominations. The executive leadership is about to change. Chaplain Brogan retired on May 31, 2014, after thirteen years as our director. On June 1, 2014, he was succeeded by Captain Lawrence P. Greenslit, United States Navy (retired). Chaplain Greenslit will share leadership with Lieutenant Colonel Donald R. Wilson, United States Air Force (retired), our associate director.
Anyone wishing more information can check at our website: www.pccmp.org or call our office in Washington, D.C., 202-244-4177. We will also gladly mail a DVD showing our chaplains and agency at work with the military. It is very helpful to those contemplating military chaplaincy as a call and for churches including the PCCMP in their mission budgets.

Yours in Christ’s Service,

The Reverend Edward T. Brogan, DMin, Director
Chaplain, Colonel, United States Air Force (Retired)
Phone (202)244-4177
Fax: (202)237-0983
Web: www.pccmp.org


As instructed by the 204th General Assembly (1992), the Presbyterian Mission Agency presents to the General Assembly annually, the work of all task forces, work groups, ad hoc committees, and similar bodies established by the Presbyterian Mission Agency, its divisions, or other assembly entities (Minutes, 1992, Part I, pp. 144, 147, 277–78.)

All ministries and the Executive Director’s Office were requested to disclose information on how many task forces, work groups, ad hoc committees, and similar bodies were currently at work in their entity. Of the entities responding, sixty-four such groups are currently operating. Fifty-three of the groups were reported as having ongoing responsibilities. The other eleven groups have set completion dates with a written report expected by the entity, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, or the General Assembly itself. Whenever it is possible, the Presbyterian Mission Agency assigns tasks to an existing part of its structure. All persons serving on a board, committee, task force, or work group with an expected life of more than two years are selected through the General Assembly Nominating Committee process.

1. Deputy Executive Director for Mission

Ongoing responsibility: Domestic Mission Task Force DREAM Team.

2. Evangelism & Church Growth


3. Compassion, Peace & Justice

Ongoing responsibilities: Mission Responsibility Through Investment, Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee, Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People, Jarvie Commonweal Service Committee.

Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

a. Peace Discernment Steering Team—Provisional Report to 221st General Assembly (2014). (A confirming vote is projected to take place in 2016, but the Steering Team will not be active or receive funding during the 2014 and 2016 period.)

b. Tax Reform Study Team—Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

c. Advisors for Unbound: An interactive journal of Christian Social Justice, both from the church more broadly and from staff in the building. Face-to-face meetings of outside church advisors only at General Assembly and Big Tent, with staff advisors meeting periodically in Presbyterian Center.

4. Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women

Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth [ends with 221th General Assembly (2014)]. African American Church Growth Consultation [ends with 221th General Assembly (2014)].

5. **Theology Worship & Education**

Ongoing responsibilities: Committee on Theological Education

Reporting to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—Special Committee on Funding of Theological Institutions, Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar.

6. **World Mission**


7. **Communications and Funds Development**


8. **Executive Director’s Office:**

   Presbyterian Mission Agency Self-Study Steering Committee—end in spring 2015.

   On-going responsibility: The Mid Council Advisory Board is a representative group of mid council leaders who meet with Presbyterian Mission Agency staff leaders to discuss ways that the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the mid councils can work together in partnership.

   Presbyterian Mission Agency and Presbyterian Foundation Working Group was formed to strengthen the working relationship between the two agencies.

   **Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**


The *Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations* states that, “The Presbyterian Mission Agency may change those appendices to the *Manual of Operations* that are within its purview. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall submit a written report of changes to the appendixes to the next General Assembly.”

In accordance with the above, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee reports the following changes to the appendices of the *Manual of Operations*, as approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board between the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Amend Appendix 1: Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Organization by dividing it into eight appendixes as follows: Appendix “IA Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Organization,” “Appendix 1B Officers of the Board,” “Appendix 1C Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees,” “Appendix 1D Election Procedures,” “Appendix 1E Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation,” “Appendix 1F Other Committees,” “Appendix 1G Missional Relationships,” “Appendix 1H Guidelines for Liaisons to Other Entities.” The text of Appendix 1A through 1H will read as follows with additional amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

   **Appendix 1A**

   “*Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Organization*

   “Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly for six-year, non-renewable terms.

   “I. Responsibilities of the Board

   The responsibilities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board are listed in the *Organization for Mission and the Board* Section III of this Manual.
II. Board Meetings

A. Meetings

1. Stated Regular Meetings—[Text remains unchanged.]

2. Special Called Meetings—[Text remains unchanged.]

B. Quorum [Text remains unchanged.]

C. Development of the Agenda

1. The Executive Director, in conjunction with the Board Chair, … [Text remains unchanged.]

2. Each agenda shall include an opportunity for members of the Board … [Text remains unchanged.]

“We, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, … [Text remains unchanged.]

• a. Seek God’s will, … [Text remains unchanged.]

• b. Relate to one another … [Text remains unchanged.]

• c. Be faithful stewards, … [Text remains unchanged.]

• d. Worship and pray … [Text remains unchanged.]

D. Closed Meetings

Closed meetings shall be held in accordance with the General Assembly Open Meeting Policy (see Appendix 4). In closed meetings, only voting members of the Board, at-large members of the Stewardship Finance Committee, and the Audit Committee, and other persons explicitly invited by the Board are to be present. … [Rest of text remains unchanged.]

E. Recording Secretary

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, or designee, shall be the Recording Secretary of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

G. Elected Member Job Description

1. Expectation:

   a. Every elected Presbyterian Mission Agency Board member will be a member of one of the four standing mission committees (except the Board Chair and Vice-chair).

   b. Additionally, Board members will serve the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the church in a variety of ways, whether it be through internal committees and task forces, national committees and task forces, or appointed liaison relationships.

2. Attendance:

   a. Attendance at regular meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board must be given a high priority, as the Board only has five regular meetings in each two year cycle.

   b. One absence from a regular meeting of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or its related committees, without prior notification to the Office of the Executive Director shall be a basis for a review of the member’s standing with the Board.

   c. Upon two consecutive absences, or three absences in a three year period, for any reason, the Board chair to recommend to the Stated Clerk that the position be declared vacant.

3. Member Responsibilities:

   In addition to adherence to the Board covenant, to be faithful and accountable in the following ways:

   a. Active involvement in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation and commitment to a personal discipline of spiritual growth

   b. Knowledge of and commitment to the mission, goals, and policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbyterian Mission Agency and its Board.

   c. Openness to new vision and direction emerging within the life of the church

   d. Informed and honest participation, including appropriate inquiry, in all meetings of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and its related committees to fulfill the member’s duties of loyalty, care, and of providing fiduciary, generative, and strategic leadership necessary for guiding and directing the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s work.
“e. Attendance and participation in all events on the agenda of board meetings.

“f. Faithful discipleship regarding stewardship, confidentiality, and leadership roles, acting in the best interests of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

“g. Positive and active interpretation of the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to congregations and councils of the church through presentations and other communications.

“h. Provide and promote financial support through gifts to some or all of the following: congregation or presbytery, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (including any of its ministries).

“i. Provide constructive feedback in response to surveys and evaluations relating to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“G. 4. Resignation

“A member of a General Assembly entity who finds it necessary to resign shall send his or her resignation to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, who shall notify the entity and the nominating committee or other body that originated the person’s nomination or election. When any member of an entity of the General Assembly shall resign or become unable to serve because of chronic or permanent physical or mental illness or disability, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall declare the position vacant. (Organization for Mission, IV. B.2.o.)

“Additionally, any Board member resigning shall send a copy of the resignation to the Office of the Executive Director.”

“Appendix 1B

“III. Officers of the Board

“A. I. Chair

“The duties of the chair are to:

“A. Duties

“1. [Text for 1, 2., and 3. remain unchanged.]

“4. Appoint the chair and members a member of the Executive Committee and three Board members to serve with the Board vice-chair as members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee’s Personnel Subcommittee. The Board vice-chair will serve as chair of the Personnel Subcommittee.

“5. [Text remains unchanged.]

“6. Appoint members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee Board Nominating and Governance Sub-Committee for two-year, non-renewable terms.

“7. [Text for 7. through 11. remain unchanged.]

“12. In agreement with the vice-chair, review and approve requests to celebrate Holy Communion between regular meetings of the Executive Committee and report any approvals at the next meeting.

“B. Term:

“The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall elect its chair at the first Board meeting of the calendar year in which there is a General Assembly from among its voting members. The chair-elect shall serve as a corresponding member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee (voice but not vote) until assuming office upon the adjournment of the assembly. The term shall be for two years without renewal. The chair-elect may continue to hold offices requiring election by the Board, with the exception of chair or vice-chair of any committee, if he or she was already serving in such positions upon his or her election. The chair may not be elected to an additional office by the Board during the term of office, but is eligible to serve in appointed positions and will serve in ex-officio positions as mandated by the Manual of Operations. During Board meeting dates, the chair serves as an ex-officio member of all Board Committees with voice and no vote.

“B. II. Vice-Chair

“The duties of the vice-chair are to:

“A. Duties:

“1. [Text for 1. and 2. remain unchanged.]
“3. Lead the Executive Committee in all personnel matters as listed in Section IV.A.1.d.(15). Serve as chair of the Personnel Subcommittee.

“4. [Text remains unchanged.]

“5. In agreement with the chair, review and approve requests to celebrate Holy Communion between regular meetings of the Executive Committee and report any approvals at the next meeting.

“B. Term:

“The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall elect its vice-chair at the first Board meeting of the calendar year in which there is a General Assembly from among its voting members. The vice-chair elect shall serve as a corresponding member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee (voice but not vote) until assuming office upon the adjournment of the assembly. The term shall be for two years without renewal. The vice-chair elect may continue to hold offices requiring election by the Board, with the exception of chair or vice-chair of any committee, if he or she was already serving in such positions upon his or her election. The vice-chair may not be elected to an additional office by the Board during the term of office, but is eligible to serve in appointed positions and will serve in ex-officio positions as mandated by the Manual of Operations.

“C. Terms of Office

“1. Chair [Text has been moved to Appendix 1B, I.B.]

“2. Vice-Chair [Text has been moved to Appendix 1B, II.B.]

“APPENDIX 1C

“Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees and Task Forces

“IV. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees

“A. Mission Administration Committees

“1. Executive Committee

“The basic operating principle guiding the work of the Executive Committee is that of resourcing and facilitating decision-making by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“a. Membership

“The Executive Committee shall be composed of members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, including the Board chair, Board vice-chair, chair of each of the Mission Committees, and two voting members elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. (See section VI. Election Procedures, D.2. Appendix 1D.). The Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee (voice, but without vote). The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall be chaired by the Board chair.

“b. Scheduling Schedule of Meetings [Text in b.1) and b.2) remain unchanged] …

“c. Quorum

“A quorum (40%) must be present for the Executive Committee to conduct business for the called meeting (See Section II.B.).

“d. Responsibilities

“The responsibilities of the Executive Committee shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

“[Text for d.1) through d.3) remains unchanged.]

“4) Appoint Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members, which may include an at-large member of the Stewardship Finance Committee, to serve at a called meeting of a Joint Budget Table for resolution of unresolved per capita budget matters (See Appendix 10.)

“5) Review and act upon all requests to celebrate Communion. In between regular meetings of the Executive Committee, the chair and vice-chair of the Board are authorized to re-
view and approve requests to celebrate Holy Communion and report any approvals at the next meeting.

“6) [Text in 6) through 10) remains unchanged.]

“(11) Nominate voting members for the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee for election by the Board at its fall meeting. (See Section VI.B.2.)

“(12) Recommend biennially … [Text remains unchanged.]

“(13) Act as publisher … [Text remains unchanged.]

“(14) Act regarding personnel matters of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, with input from the Personnel Subcommittee, as follows:

“a) … [Text for a) through e) remains unchanged.]

“f) Recommend for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board action:

“• 1) Personnel policies and procedures for the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff.


“• 3) Compensation guidelines within which salaries are administered.

“• 4) Salary adjustments for the Executive Director

“• 5) Other appropriate actions.

“(15) Meet with the Committee … [Text remains unchanged.]

“(16) Coordinate the plan … [Text remains unchanged.]

“(17) Develop a process for orientation of new Board members, with input from the Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee.

“18) Provide for regular meetings with mid council personnel. Review Presbyterian Mission Agency materials and other agency reports being forwarded to the General Assembly.


“20) Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by another General Assembly entity, task force or committee requiring joint action, concurrence, and/or comment by Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Such review shall ordinarily be in consultation with the appropriate offices of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

“21) Review the minutes of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns annually for consistency with established guidelines and report findings to the Advocacy Committees and the Board Executive Committee.

“e. Subcommittees of the Executive Committee

“(1) Procedures Subcommittee

“(a) Membership:

“The Procedures Subcommittee shall consist of two voting members of the Executive Committee, one of whom shall be chair, and three voting members of the Board not presently serving on the Executive Committee, to be appointed annually by the Board chair.

“(b) Function:

“Review and report to the Executive Committee on Presbyterian Mission Agency materials and other agency reports being forwarded to the General Assembly. Review and report to the Executive Committee on the Manual of Operations, the Organization for Mission, Mission Ministries, Communications and Funds Development Ministry, Shared Services Ministry, Audit, Advocacy and Advisory
Committees’ manuals of operations for consistency with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Manual of Operations and relevance within the current context.

“(c) Responsibilities

“Work of the subcommittee shall include but not necessarily be limited to:

“i Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by Presbyterian Mission Agency in the course of its regular work.

“ii Review of reports to General Assembly prepared by another General Assembly entity, task force or committee requiring joint action, concurrence, and/or comment by Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Such review shall ordinarily be in consultation with the appropriate offices of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.


“iv Review the minutes of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns annually for consistency with established guidelines and report findings to the Advocacy Committees and the Board Executive Committee.

“1) Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee

“a) Function

“The Board Nominating and Governance committee is a sub-committee of, and therefore reports to, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee. The sub-committee is responsible for ongoing review and recommendations to enhance the quality of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“b) Membership

“The committee will have staggered terms of two years and 5–7 members. Members may serve a second term. Up to two members at any time may finish out the last year of their term on the committee after their service on the Board ends.

“c) Nominating Responsibilities:

“(Note: When no current member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board has the gifts or abilities required to serve on particular boards or entities that require Board representation, the Board Nominating Committee may select nominees from past Board members. Ordinarily the term is for four years, non-renewable.)

“1) Nominate three voting Board members, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to one-year at-large terms on the Executive Committee. Those so elected shall begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat. Ordinarily, these at-large members shall serve no more than three years as at-large members. An annual election provides for continuity, balance, and fair representation.

“2) Nominate three voting Board members, for election by the General Assembly, to four-year non-renewable terms on the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. Those so elected shall assume their responsibilities at the end of the General Assembly.

“3) Nominate one Board voting member for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year non-renewable term on the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

“4) Nominate one Board voting member for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year, non-renewable term on the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.
“5) Nominate one Board voting member from the Finance Committee for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

“6) Nominate one Board voting member from the Finance Committee, and one Board voting member from the Worshipping Communities, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.’s Board of Directors, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly.

“7) Nominate one Board voting member from the Finance Committee, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions.

“8) Nominate one Board voting member, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to any selection committee for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions President. (Organization for Mission, Appendix D, Section 7).

“9) Nominate one Board voting member, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to a four-year non-renewable term on the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel.

“10) Nominate two Board voting members, with election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to four-year non-renewable terms on the Committee on Theological Education.

“11) Nominate one Board voting member for appointment by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to a four-year non-renewable term on the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.

“12) Nominate two members, at least one of whom shall be a current Board voting member, to three-year term with eligibility to one additional term, to the Mountain Retreat Association, Inc.’s Board of Directors for approval by the General Assembly.

“13) Nominate one Board voting member to the Stony Point Conference Center Board of Directors, and one Board voting member to Ghost Ranch Conference Center Board of Directors to a four-year non-renewable term, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“14) Nominate for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board election, one Board voting member to the Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. Board of Directors for a three-year non-renewable term.

“15) Prepare and distribute biographical information for any nominee who is not a current member of the Board.

“16) Nominate for other positions as requested by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“17) Work in consultation with the Committee on Representation to provide for inclusiveness to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church. (Book of Order, G-3.0103.)

“18) Coordinate the nomination and election process for chair and vice-chair. (See Appendix 1D, Election Procedures.)

“19) Nominate Board voting members, for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, to two-year terms on the Mission Committees, with eligibility for two additional terms. Those so elected shall assume their responsibilities at the beginning of the fall meeting.
"a) Process:

“The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee shall consult with members, prior to nomination, in the following ways:

“1) All new members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be requested to provide a list of committee preferences. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee shall consider the preference ranking and committee needs in preparing nominations, with the understanding that a person must serve one year on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board before being elected to serve on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee. Nominations shall be made without further consultation.

“2) After completing a two-year term on a committee, members shall provide a list of committee choices in order of preference for service. In preparing nominations, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee shall consider the preference ranking and the committee needs when the continuing member is assigned to a new committee.

3) Election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall take place at the first Board meeting following General Assembly.

“d) Governance Responsibilities:

“1) Defining Board roles and responsibilities

“a) Regularly review and recommend updates to the board's description of its roles and areas of responsibility and what is expected of individual board members.

“b) Recommend periodic updates to the primary areas of focus for the board, and help shape the board’s agenda for the next two years, based on the strategic plan.

“2) Supporting efforts to ensure diverse and effective Board composition

“a) Lead in assessing current and anticipated needs related to board composition, determining the knowledge, attributes, skills, abilities, influence, and access to resources the board will need to accomplish future work of the board.

“b) Develop a profile of the Board as it should evolve over time.

“c) Relate to the General Assembly Nominating Committee in the following ways:

“d) Identify potential Board member candidates to the General Assembly Nominating Committee based upon Board needs.

“e) Make use of the General Assembly Nominating Committee whenever possible;

“f) Report annually to the General Assembly Nominating Committee records of attendance and participation of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members;

“g) Work through General Assembly process in selecting persons to serve on boards, committees, task forces, work groups, and initiative teams to ... 'ensure fair and open access from all areas of our denomination and to ensure a valid and enriching diversity within all work groups' ... (Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201, para. 15.113). This procedure applies to all working groups with a lifespan of more than two years.
“h) Nominate individuals to be elected by the Board to serve in liaison roles to related entities.

“3) Encouraging board development

“a) Provide candidates with information needed to understand the role of Board members prior to election or appointment to the Board.

“b) Design and oversee a process of Board orientation, sharing information needed during the early stages of Board service.

“c) Design and implement an ongoing program of Board information, education, and team building.

“4) Assessing Board effectiveness

“a) Initiate periodic assessment of the Board’s performance, and propose, as appropriate, changes in Board structure and operations.

“b) Provide ongoing counsel to the Board chair and other Board leaders on steps they might take to enhance Board effectiveness.

“c) Regularly review the Board’s practices regarding member participation, conflict of interest, confidentiality, and so on, and suggest needed improvements.

“d) Periodically review and update the Board policy and practices.

“5) Developing Board leadership

“a) Take the lead in succession planning, taking steps to recruit and prepare for future Board leadership.

“b) Nominate Board members for election to Board committees and as Board officers.

“2) Personnel Subcommittee

“a) Description of the Subcommittee

“The Personnel Subcommittee, in its role as a mission subcommittee, reviews, provides advice and recommends for action to the Executive Committee of the Board regarding employment-related policies, procedures and initiatives, including but not limited to:

1. personnel policies and procedures of the Board;
2. compensation guidelines within which salaries are administered;
3. equal employment and affirmative action guidelines;
4. recruitment and leadership development; and
5. any other employment-related assignment from the Executive Committee or the Board.

“b) Authority

“The Subcommittee’s responsibility is one of review, advice and recommended action to the Executive Committee of the Board within the duties of the Subcommittee listed above. The Subcommittee reports to the Executive Committee of the Board, and in such capacity provides regular reports to the Executive Committee. It is the responsibility of the management of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to administer employment-related programs, manage the program budgets and provide any required or requested expertise to the Board and/or the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee is entitled to rely on the expertise of the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff and its outside consultants, as well as the work of other committees of the Board, as to matters within their authority and expertise. The Subcommittee will receive reports from the Human Resources Department and the Legal/Risk Management Services Office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The Subcommittee will invite its
equivalent committee of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to meet biennially to collaborate on matters of common interest.

“c) Membership and Meetings

“The Personnel Subcommittee consists of five (5) members with voice and vote: two (2) Executive Committee members and three at-large members, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency a corresponding member with voice and without vote. Each member will serve a term of two (2) years commencing at the next meeting after appointment by the Chair of the Board and expiring the earlier of two (2) years after appointment or the end of the member’s term on the Board. The Subcommittee generally meets quarterly by phone or in conjunction with the meetings of the Board. During these meetings, the Subcommittee provides reports on its activities and may make recommendations for action to the Executive Committee of the Board. The Subcommittee serves as a consultative body to the Executive Director in the Executive Director’s staff management role. The Subcommittee is resourced by staff members of the Human Resources Department and the Legal/Risk Management Services Office.

“d) Purposes

“To further the fulfillment of the vision, mission, values and directional goals of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Personnel Subcommittee is called to assist and support the Executive Committee’s work and ministry toward ensuring and envisioning a work community for the Presbyterian Mission Agency that is: built on faith; culturally proficient; legally compliant; dynamic; and appropriately positioned to meet the needs of a changing organization.

“2) 3) Restricted Funds Oversight Committee

… [The text in 3)a) through3)d) remains unchanged.]

“2. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee

“…[Text in 2. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nomination Committee has been deleted.]

“3) 4) Audit Committee

“a) Purpose: ... [Text in a) remains unchanged.]

“b) Composition and Membership: … [Text in b) through b)3) remains unchanged.]

“Each member of the Committee shall be independent and may not accept directly or indirectly any consulting, advisory, or other compensatory fee from either the Presbyterian Mission Agency or Office of the General Assembly (OGA). All members of the Committee shall have a working familiarity with basic finance and accounting practices and the two at-large members of the Committee shall have accounting or related financial management expertise determined by the Stewardship Mission Finance Committee and the Audit Committee Chairs.

“… [The last two paragraphs of b) remain unchanged.]

“c) Duties and Responsibilities

“… [Text in c)1) through c)4) remains unchanged.]

“5) Ethics Policy Violation Reports

“a) The Audit Committee has duties under the “Ethics Policy for COGA and Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Members.” It also has duties under the “Ethics Policy for Presbyterian Mission Agency and Office of the General Assembly Employees”. These policies are attached as Appendix 6 and can be viewed at (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/ethics-policy-elected-and-appointed-members-general/).

“b) [Text remains unchanged.]

“6) General

“a) Review the Committee’s charter annually, reassess the adequacy of this charter and, considering any new laws or regulations, and recommend any proposed changes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.
“b) [Text in b) through g) remains unchanged.]

“B. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Mission Committees

[The text in this section was stricken and new text inserted as shown below.]

“1. Context:

“The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board oversees the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency as it inspires, equips and connects the PC(USA) in its many expressions to serve Christ in the world through new and existing communities of faith, hope, love and witness.

“2. Committees:

“The Board’s mission is advanced through four primary committees:

“a. Leadership Committee

“The Leadership Committee focuses on the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency that inspires, equips and connects individuals for leadership in Christ’s church and in the world. In this work, the Leadership Committee seeks to discern God’s direction as it guides ministries which identify, develop and resource diverse transformational leaders. Areas of ministry typically within the purview of the Leadership Committee include:

“1) Chaplains
“2) Elder and leader development
“3) Financial Aid for Studies
“4) Leadership trends and response
“5) Mission Personnel
“6) Racial Ethnic and Women’s Leadership
“7) Theological Education
“8) Theology

“Relationships

“The work of the Leadership Committee connects in relationship with a variety of other groups, including Board-related committees, missional relationships, committees/boards where the Board has a representative, and ecumenical advisory members.

“1) Board-related committees

“a) None

“2) Missional relationships:

“a) Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel—PCCMP
“b) Association of Presbyterian Church Educators—APCE

“3) Committees/Entities where the Board has a representative:

“a. Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc., Board of Directors
“b. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Board of Directors

“4) Ecumenical Advisory Members:

“a. None

“b. Worshiping Communities Committee

“The Worshiping Communities Committee focuses on the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency that inspires, equips and connects congregations and other worshiping communities as centers of discipleship. In this work, the Worshiping Communities Committee seeks to nurture spaces for the myriad expressions of Christ’s church that allows for creative, dynamic and moving connections. Areas of ministry typically within the purview of the Worshiping Communities Committee include:

“1) Christian education and curriculum
“2) Church growth
“3) Collegiate ministries
“4) Conference Centers
“5) Equipping the church for mission
“6) Evangelism and disciple-making ministries
“7) Racial Ethnic and cross cultural congregational support
“8) Worship
“9) Youth and Young Adults

“Relationships

“The work of the Worshipping Communities Committee connects in relationship with a variety of other groups, including Board-related committees, missional relationships, committees/boards where the Board has a representative, and ecumenical advisory members. The Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program may occasionally relate to this committee on programmatic matters.

“1) Board-related committees
   “a) Mission Development Resources Committee (MDRC) reports to the Worshipping Communities Committee.

“2) Missional relationships:
   “a) Association of Presbyterian Church Educators—APCE

“3) Committees/Boards/Advisory Boards where the Board has a representative:
   “a) Mission Development Resources Committee—MDRC
   “b) Montreat Conference Center Board of Directors
   “c) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Board of Directors

“4) Ecumenical Advisory Members:
   “a) One of the Board’s Ecumenical Advisory Members is assigned to the Worshipping Communities Committee, with voice and vote in committee.

“c. Justice Committee

“The Justice Committee focuses on the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency that inspires, equips, and connects Presbyterians and others in witness to God’s justice in the world. In this work, the Justice Committee seeks to equip the church for compassionate-prophetic ministries through advocacy and networking for mission. Areas of ministry typically within the purview of the Justice Committee include:

“1) Advocacy efforts
“2) Ministries of compassion, peace and justice
“3) World Mission Networks

“Relationships

“The work of the Justice Committee connects in relationship with a variety of other groups, including Board-related committees, missional relationships, committees where the Board has a representative, and ecumenical advisory members.

“1) Board-related committees
   “a) Jinishian Memorial Program Governance Commission relates to the Justice Committee.
   “b) Mission Responsibility through Investment Committee reports to the Justice Committee.
   “c) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee reports to the Justice Committee.
   “d) Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee reports to the Justice Committee.
   “e) Presbyterian Self-Development of People Committee relates to the Justice Committee.
“2) Missional relationships:
   “a) Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association—PHEWA

“3) Committees where the Board has a representative:
   “a) Jarvie Commonweal Service Committee
   “b) Jinishian Memorial Program Governance Commission
   “c) Mission Responsibility through Investment Committee
   “d) Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association Board of Directors
   “e) Creative Ministries Offering Committee of Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc.

“4) Ecumenical Advisory Members:
   “a) One of the Board’s Ecumenical Advisory Members is assigned to the Justice Committee, with voice and vote in committee.

“d. Finance Committee

“The Finance Committee focuses on the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency that undergirds its ministries with responsible stewardship and transparent reporting. In this work, the Finance Committee is called to support the mission and ministry of the other committees through the application of broad-based services necessary to enable, equip, account and serve. Areas of ministry typically within the purview of the Finance Committee include:

“1) Financial reporting and policies
“2) Information Technology
“3) Monitoring and financial projections
“4) Other financial and legal matters not specifically related to individual programs
“5) Oversee the financial reporting relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, where the medium and long-term funds of the Presbyterian Mission Agency are invested.
“6) Oversight of budget development
“7) Property

“Relationships

“The work of the Finance Committee connects in relationship with a variety of other groups, including Board-related committees, missional relationships, committees where the Board has a representative, and ecumenical advisory members. This committee has primary relationship with the Presbyterian Foundation, the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Board of Directors.

“1) Board-related committees
   “a) None

“2) Missional relationships:
   “a) None

“3) Committees/Boards where the Board has representatives:
   “a) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Board of Directors
   “b) Presbyterian Mission Agency Conference Center Advisory Boards (Programmatic concerns may be referred to other committees as needed.)
   “c) Ghost Ranch Conference Center
   “d) Stony Point Conference Center

“4) Ecumenical Advisory Members:
   “a) None

“5) At-large committee members
“3. Authority

“Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees are responsible for oversight of programs within the duties of the Committee listed above. It is the responsibility of the executive management of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to administer these programs, manage the program budgets and provide any required or requested expertise to the Board and/or the Committee. The Committee is entitled to rely on the expertise of the Presbyterian Mission Agency staff and its outside consultants, as well as the work of other committees of the Board, as to matters within their authority and expertise. From time to time committees may meet together on issues of mutual concern.

“All committee actions, apart from the Executive Committee and routine administrative functions, require the approval of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“4. Membership and Meetings

“Committee size is determined by the Board during the nomination process each year. If needed, committees may vary in size. Committees generally meet in conjunction with the meetings of the Board. During these meetings, committees will receive:

“a. reports and recommendations from staff

“b. reports from liaisons to other committees.

“II. Temporary Special Committees, Task Forces or Work Groups

If Board Committees, Finance Committee, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee or two or more of these committees determine a need for a temporary special committee, task force or work group that will involve Presbyterian Mission Agency Board membership and/or non-Presbyterian Mission Agency Board membership, a proposal shall be submitted to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board through the Executive Committee for approval. All proposals for temporary special committees, task forces and work groups shall include the following information:

“A. Temporary special committee, task force or work group name.

“B. Statement of purpose and tasks to be accomplished.

“C. Explanation as to why these tasks cannot be accomplished by the current Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Committees.

“D. Expertise, skills and experience needed by the members.

“E. Duration of the committee, task force or work group shall not exceed two years.

“F. Size of the committee, task force or work group. Ordinarily not to exceed seven members.

“G. Annual budget with the source of funding.

“H. Proposed names of the committee, task force or work force members with sensitivity to diversity.

“V. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

“[Text in this section has been moved to Appendix 1E.]

“APPENDIX ID

“Election Procedures

“VI. I. Election Procedures (Approved by GAMC September 2007 for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Chair and Vice-Chair (See Appendix 1B.)

“A. Election Procedures for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Chair and Vice-Chair (See Section III. Officers of the Board, C. Terms of Office, C., 1. 2.)

“1. A. Only Presbyterian Mission Agency Board voting members who have served at least two years on the Board before taking office are eligible for election as chair or vice-chair.

“B. Nominating Process:

“2. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee will use a nominating process approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, as follows:
1. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee will compile a list of gifts, abilities, and skills that they believe will be needed by the Board leadership during the ensuing biennial period. It will also draft two or three questions to be answered by potential candidates for Board leadership. The questions will address the anticipated key challenges facing the Board during the ensuing biennial period.

2. Staff to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee will identify all Board members eligible for election to Board leadership and prepare for each of them a résumé form that includes the person’s personal information from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board biography form, a summary of their Board experience, and the questions drafted by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee. The letter will:
   a. Inform the Board member of his or her eligibility for Board leadership.
   b. Ask if the Board member feels called to be considered for nomination to a Board leadership position.
   c. If the response is affirmative, request that he or she verify the résumé form information and answer the leadership questions, and
   d. Ask that the completed form be returned to Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee staff.

3. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee will review all the submitted forms and will also go through a discernment process as to whether or not eligible Board members who have not submitted forms have leadership gifts that justify an invitation to consider a call to candidacy for Board leadership. If so, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee will extend the invitation to submit a completed résumé form and answers to the leadership questions.

4. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee will evaluate the final list of Board leadership candidates who have submitted résumé forms and completed the questions to identify a candidate who it wishes to nominate for Board chair and a candidate it wishes to nominate for Board vice-chair for the ensuing biennial period. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee chair will notify the selected candidates that they are the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee’s and Governance Subcommittee’s nominees for the appropriate Board leadership positions.

5. The names of the nominees, along with their résumés and their responses to the questions, will be communicated to all Board members a minimum of three weeks prior to the winter/spring Board meeting.

6. The Board leadership election will be conducted during the winter/spring Board meeting. The Board vice-chair election will be held following the election of the Board chair. Nominations from the floor will be accepted for both elections. The elections will be by written ballot.

7. The two-year term of office will begin with the close of the upcoming General Assembly meeting and end with the close of the next General Assembly meeting.

8. In the event of vacancy during the term of the chair, the vice-chair assumes the chair. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee is empowered to appoint an interim vice-chair upon nominations by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee. Election to the position shall occur at the next full meeting of the Board.

B. Election Procedures for Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee Members

1. Each member shall be elected for a term of two years. (Also see Section IV.A.2a).

2. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee shall nominate members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee for election by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board at its fall meeting. (See Section IV.A.d.12).}

3. No person shall be eligible for reelection to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee.

4. Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee members shall elect their own chair.
“5. Members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee are eligible to serve on other committees.

“G. II. Election Procedures for Chairs of the Board Mission Committees, and Audit Committee

“1. A. The committees shall nominate and elect their chairs, and may elect a vice-chair, during the first Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meeting in the calendar year and notify the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee.

“2. B. The chairs shall begin their service at the end of the General Assembly, or in non-Assembly years, with the Executive Committee Retreat.

“3. C. Committee chairs shall be elected for one-year terms, renewable for one additional term.

“4. D. Board voting members completing at least two consecutive years on a committee are eligible for election as committee chair.

“5. E. Ordinarily, committee chairs shall make appointments and assignments of committee members to work groups, task forces, and other subcommittees as necessary, giving consideration to experience, interest, and representation.

“D. General Assembly Nominations

“In keeping with the action of the 208th General Assembly (1996), (Recommendation G, Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201), the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall:

“a. make use of the General Assembly Nominating Committee whenever possible;

“b. report annually to the General Assembly Nominating Committee records of attendance and participation of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members;

“e. work through the General Assembly process in selecting persons to serve on boards, committees, task forces, work groups, and initiative teams to ensure fair and open access from all areas of our denomination and to ensure a valid and enriching diversity within all working groups” (Minutes, 1996, Part I, p. 201, para. 15.113). This procedure applies to all working groups with a life span of more than two years.

“APPENDIX 1E

“V. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

“[Text has been moved from Appendix 1, Section V.]

“By corporate action of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is also the Executive Committee of the Corporation (GAC, September 1997). A quorum of a majority 40% of voting members is required to conduct business.

“By corporate action of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, the Stewardship Finance Committee, or its successor, is also the Property, Legal, and Finance Committee of the Corporation (Corporate Minutes, September 26, 1998). International property matters requiring approval by the Board of Directors are referred to the Board via action of the Evangelism Committee, or its successor. (Corporate Minutes, March 16, 2007). (As of July 2012, the Justice Committee is the successor to the Evangelism Committee.)

“APPENDIX 1F

“Other Committees

“VII. General Assembly Advisory and Advocacy Committees

“The 205th General Assembly (1993) approved the creation of one advisory committee and two advocacy committees. They are:

“A. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

“B. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns

“C. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns
“An advisory committee is related to an entity or agency of the General Assembly that is formed for the purpose of providing advice, recommendations, resources, information, or counsel to its parent body.

... [Text in the next six paragraphs remains unchanged.]

“A. Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

1. Accountability

   a. [Text remains unchanged.]

   b. The committee shall be accountable for the content of its work to the General Assembly in accordance with the Manual of the General Assembly, pg. Forming Social Policy, 2.a.: ‘The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy will be responsible for the process of developing and recommending social witness policy to the General Assembly. If any other entity is involved in processes of developing and recommending social witness policy, then appropriate consultation and linkage with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy shall be undertaken.’

   c. [Text remains unchanged.]

   d. [Text remains unchanged.]

2. Search Procedures

   “[Text in 2.a. through 2.c., 3. through 4. remains unchanged.]

5. Access

   “Access to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Leadership Team for planning and consultation shall be on invitation of the Executive Director or at the request of the coordinator for the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. At least annually, there will be a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and representatives of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee for strategic reflection and anticipation regarding social witness policy concerns.

   “The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee’s Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

6. Liaisons

   “[Text in 6. Through 7. remains unchanged.]

8. Assigned Functions

   “a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions study papers, social involvement reports, or Advice and Counsel Memoranda on the church’s social witness for study and recommendation to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or on its own initiative; seek concurrence of the council Board relative to financial implications on plans for studies.

   “b. [Text in 8.b. through 8.i. remains unchanged.]

“B. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC)

“This advocacy committee shall consist of the following persons:

• 2 Two African American (*)
• 2 Two Asian American (*)
• 2 Two Hispanic (*)
• 2 Two Middle Eastern (*)
• 2 Two Native American (*)
• 1 At-large member elected with consideration for special expertise, fast-growing racial ethnic segments, geographic diversity and ethnic balance.
• 1 Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Member nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Advocacy Committee.

“(*) [Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]
“1. Accountability and Lodgment

“Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the Office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director through the Executive Administrator Racial Ethnic Leadership Development Manager.

“2. Budget

“Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Administrator Racial Ethnic Leadership Development Manager.

“3. Access

“The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. In accordance with the recommendation of the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall meet at least once every two years with the elected leadership of the advocacy committees for strategic reflection and anticipation concerning racial ethnic concerns.

Access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, racial involvement reports, a yearly narrative report, Advice and Counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence. Advice and Counsel Memoranda shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate.

The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee’s Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“4. Assigned Functions

“[Text in 4.a. through 4.g. remains unchanged.]

“C. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)

“This Advocacy Committee shall consist of:

• 2 Two clergywomen
• 1 One woman church lay employee
• 1 One Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team Vice Moderator for Justice and Peace
• 7 Seven members at-large, chosen to balance the committee geographically, racially and ethnically, and with consideration to age and expertise.
• 1 One Presbyterian Mission Agency Board nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Advocacy Committee.

• At least four members of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns shall be racial ethnic women. At least two members of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns will be men, but no more than three members may be men.

“1. Accountability and Lodgment

“Staff responsible for the planning and coordination work of the committee shall be appointed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director in consultation with the Advocacy Committee. The staff shall be lodged within the office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director, unless the Advocacy Committee consents to staff being lodged outside that office. Such staff shall be accountable for the work of the committee to the Office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Director through the Executive Administrator Racial Ethnic Leadership Development Manager.

“2. Budget

“Funding for the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns comes from the per capita budget except for the staffing costs which are accounted for in the budget of the office where the staff
member is lodged. The Advocacy Committee shall propose a yearly budget to the office of the Executive Administrator Racial Ethnic Leadership Development Manager.

“3. Access
“The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns shall have direct access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. In accordance with the recommendation of the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall meet at least once every two years with the elected leadership of the advocacy committees for strategic reflection and anticipation concerning women’s concerns.

“Access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board shall be in the form of policy statements, resolutions, study papers, a yearly narrative report, Advice and Counsel Memoranda. Advice and Counsel Memoranda, and other appropriate correspondence shall be developed in consultation with other advisory and advocacy committees as appropriate.

“The committee shall submit its General Assembly report to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee’s Procedures Subcommittee for review and possible comments by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

“4. Assigned Functions
“(Text in 4. Remains unchanged.)

“VIII. Committee on Theological Education
[The text of the first two paragraphs remains unchanged.]

“A. Committee Membership
“This committee of the General Assembly will consist of:
“(Text remains unchanged.)

“Two Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and Governance Subcommittee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to four-year non-renewable terms;

“B. Staff Accountability and Lodgment
“(Text remains unchanged.)

“C. Budget
“(Text remains unchanged.)

“D. Access
“(Text remains unchanged.)

“E. Assigned Functions
“(Text remains unchanged.)

“F. To relate the governing bodies, councils and agencies of the PC(USA), particularly those which have responsibilities for theology and worship, for education, for candidacy, and for leadership development for pastors and church members.

“(Text remains unchanged.)
IX. III. Other Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Related Committees

“The following committees have reporting relationships … [Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]

“A. Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI)

“The Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is responsible for implementing General Assembly policy related to mission responsibility through investment. MRTI assists the church at all levels to utilize its investments as key instruments to promote its mission goals in society. MRTI provides leadership for effective engagement of the private sector in partnership with ecumenical colleagues in the United States, and in collaboration with indigenous churches, ecumenical bodies and local groups in other nations. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Justice Mission Committee.

“1. Budget

“The budget for MRTI is developed by staff and proposed to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for approval by the General Assembly.

“2. Composition:

“MRTI is composed of:

“• two elected representatives named by each of its member agencies:
  “◦ Presbyterian Mission Agency Board,
  “◦ Board of Pensions and
  “◦ Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation/New Covenant Trust Company, and

“• one representative each from the elected membership of:
  “◦ the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy,
  “◦ the Advocacy Committee on Women’s Concerns and
  “◦ the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns.

“In addition, the General Assembly elects three At-Large members bringing MRTI’s total membership to 12 persons.

“3. Relation to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

“Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Justice Committee.

“4. Staffing Relationship and Lodgment:

“Staffing for MRTI is provided by Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Area of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

“5. Assigned Functions:

“MRTI’s primary function is to develop and implement a coordinated strategy for the General Assembly’s Investment Policies and Guidelines for the General Assembly and for subsequent General Assembly action related to investment or divestment. Specific assigned functions include:

“1) recommend, as needed, revisions or additions to the General Assembly’s Investment Policies and Guidelines (for use by the Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Inc., New Covenant Trust Company; and other fiduciaries within the church family) designed to reach mission goals of the General Assembly;

“2) recommend to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board specific actions on the exercise of investor rights and responsibilities such as proxy voting, initial filing of shareholder resolutions, and joining with other shareholders in litigation calling for regulatory oversight or other forms of redress,

“3) recommend to appropriate ministry areas or related bodies, middle governing bodies, institutions and communicant members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ways and means to carry out General Assembly investment policies respecting social concerns, including the voting of proxies on shareholder resolutions,
“4) appoint representatives to ecumenical organizations through which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to advance its work in the area of mission responsibility through investments, and (5) assist Compassion, Peace and Justice in coordinating corporate responsibility concerns with mission program and strategies on economic and social justice.

“B. Mission Development Resources Committee (MDRC)

“The Mission Development Resources Committee makes decisions on Church Loans, Walton Awards for New Church Development and Mission Program Grants (New Church Development, Congregational Transformation and Specialized Ministries). Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Evangelism-Mission Worshiping Communities Committee.

“1. Budget

“MDRC provides input on the work of the Mission Program Grants, Church Loans and the Sam and Helen R. Walton Award. The budget for these items is displayed in the Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area.

“2. Staff Relationships and Lodgment

“The Office of Mission Program Grants staff that is responsible for planning, coordinating, and supporting the work of MDRC shall be answerable to the Director of Evangelism and Church Growth Ministry Area or designee.

“3. Search Procedures for Staff

“The Associate and Administrative Assistant staff members within the Office of Mission Program Grants shall be appointed by the director of Evangelism and Church Growth in accordance with The Presbyterian Mission Agency Employee Handbook.

“4. Relation to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

“MDRC reports to the Worshiping Communities Committee, typically in the form of action items, information reports and changes to the MDRC Manual of Administrative Operations.

“5. Liaisons

“A member from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Worshiping Communities Committee shall be named as liaison to the MDRC.

“6. Assigned Functions

“The primary focus of the MDRC is to respond faithfully to the church growth commitment of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This work is conducted in partnership with synods and presbyteries engaged in church growth mission through the allocation of grants and loans.

“The MDRC implements its work through the following functions:

“a. Allocating grants for new church development, new worshiping communities, and presbytery support for continual congregational transformation;

“b. Originating and overseeing the payment and repayment of Presbyterian Mission Agency loans to new and existing congregations for site acquisition, building construction, renovation, and other related projects;

“c. Recommending policies, procedures and guidelines that govern the grant and church loan programs;

“d. Interpreting the purpose and availability of the grant and church loan programs to the whole church, instilling hope for future ministry to keep the church alive and growing;

“e. Responding in partnership with mid councils to new and emerging ministries;


“C. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee (PDA PDAAC)

“1. Purpose

“The purpose of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee Error! Bookmark not defined. is to review the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and give policy advice, review the work, assist in setting strategic program direction and planning, and recommend an annual budget.
This ministry, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, is a ministry of relief and response to national and international disasters, aid to refugees and displaced persons, refugee resettlement and efforts toward development. This ministry is carried out through ecumenical partnerships, related church agencies, middle governing bodies, and congregations. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Justice Mission Committee.

2. Budget

“The budget for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is developed by staff and proposed to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for approval by the General Assembly.

3. Composition

“The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee is comprised of seven (7) At-Large members, nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly. Members serve a one four-year term and are eligible for consideration to one additional term.

4. Accountability

“This committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Justice Mission Committee.

5. Staff Accountability and Lodgment

“Staff responsible for planning and coordinating the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance are appointed by and accountable to the Director of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry Area.

6. Assigned Functions

“1) Assist in setting strategic program direction

“2) Contribute knowledge and expertise in disaster relief

“3) Ensure that Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is strategically aligned with the priorities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

“4) Promote and interpret the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering;

“5) Provide advice concerning expenditure of designated funds over $500,000 in response to large scale disasters.

“6) Provide input on the development of an annual budget

“7) Work with staff to develop and implement communication and fund-raising strategies.

D. Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee (PHP, PHPAC)

1. Purpose

“The purpose of the Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee is to guide the church’s response to hunger and its underlying causes. The committee carries out the following tasks: 1) recommending Presbyterian Hunger Program operating guidelines, 2) making and reporting funding (grant) decisions within the approved guidelines; and 3) suggesting the development of programs and strategies for implementing the “Common Affirmation on Global Hunger,” and other General Assembly policies related to hunger and poverty. Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Justice Mission Committee.

2. Budget

“The budget for the Presbyterian Hunger Program is developed by staff and proposed to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for approval by the General Assembly.

3. Staff Relationships and Lodgment

“Staff responsible for planning and coordinating the work of the Presbyterian Hunger Program are appointed by and accountable to the Director of Compassion, Peace and Justice.

4. Relation to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

“Nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly, this committee reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board’s Justice Committee, typically in the form of minutes and changes to the PHP Advisory Committee Operating Guidelines.
5. Assigned Functions

The committee carries out the following tasks:

a. Recommend Presbyterian Hunger Program operating guidelines in concordance with PMA goals and work plan.
b. Recommend policies, procedures and guidelines that govern the Presbyterian Hunger Program grant process.
c. Review grant requests and make funding (grant) decisions within the approved guidelines.
d. Promote the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering through highlighting the work of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of Peoples and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.
e. Promote Presbyterian Hunger Program initiatives in congregations and presbyteries.
f. Suggest the development of programs and strategies for implementing the "Common Affirmation on Global Hunger," and other General Assembly policies related to hunger and poverty.

E. Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP PCSDOP)

The National Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People provides the opportunity … [Rest of text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]

1. Direction & Accountability

The Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People (PCSDOP) receives direction for its work through the Mission Work Plan, and the Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People Manual of Operations, which are approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People reports to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board through the Board’s Justice Committee.

2. Staff Accountability and Lodgment

Staff responsible for planning and coordinating work of the committee shall be appointed by the Director of the Compassion Peace & Justice Ministry in consultation with the Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People (PCSDOP). When seeking a new coordinator for SDOP, an interview team will be identified in consultation with the PCSDOP Steering Committee. At least two members of the PCSDOP shall serve as a part of the interview team. The staff shall be lodged within the Compassion Peace & Justice Ministry and be directly accountable to the Director of the Compassion Peace & Justice Ministry.

3. Assigned Functions (to be performed with accountability to the Justice Committee and/or the Compassion Peace and Justice Ministry area, and subject to available funds).

a. SDOP shall be responsible for creating and maintaining its own Manual of Operations.
b. SDOP shall provide program, strategy and oversight for the church’s mission of self-development with poor, oppressed and disadvantaged people.
c. SDOP will implement the criteria and guidelines for funding local projects.
d. SDOP will be responsible for receiving, reviewing and approving/rejecting local project proposals.
e. SDOP will be responsible for training and certifying local SDOP committees.
f. SDOP will work in collaboration with PDA and PHP to carry out joint projects consistent with the mandate of each committee.
g. Work cooperatively with ecumenical partners in carrying out SDOP’s mandate.
h. Educate the church on the condition and status of poor and oppressed communities and train the church in theological issues related to poverty.
i. Promote and Interpret the OGHS offering within the church at both the congregational and mid-council levels.

F. Finishian Memorial Program Governance Commission

[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]
APPENDIX 1G

XI. Missional Relationships

There are four categories of formal Presbyterian Mission Agency missional relationships:

A. Institutional Relationships

B. Professional Associations

C. Presbyterian Mission Agency Organization-wide Missional Partnerships

D. Presbyterian Mission Agency Partnerships

APPENDIX 1H

Guidelines for Liaisons to Other Entities

The General Assembly elects individuals to serve as members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. As part of their call to service on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, some members or former members will be invited to represent the board on other entities (committees or boards). These additional assignments are secondary to the purpose for which the General Assembly has called members into service on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. In each of these roles, members are to represent the concerns and established interests of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

The following guidelines are designed to help members cultivate the connection between their work on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and their service on other boards and committees. In this document, “liaison” refers to anyone who serves on another committee by virtue of first having been elected to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Liaisons may be voting members or corresponding members, depending upon the particular assignment.

I. Prior to committee meetings:

Liaisons will review the agenda for the upcoming committee meetings, and seek input from the designated staff liaison regarding:

• Background materials that may be helpful for the committee discussion
• Presbyterian Mission Agency Board interests that might relate to the discussion.

II. After committee meetings:

Liaisons will keep the Presbyterian Mission Agency apprised of the work of the other committees they serve. Following each committee meeting, liaisons will send a brief note to the Board chairperson and the designated staff liaison, outlining significant items from the meeting.
III. Prior to Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meetings:

Liaisons will prepare a written report for distribution to board members as means of keeping the board informed about the committee’s work. The report will be posted online as an information item for the board meeting. (Information items are due in the Executive Director’s office four weeks prior to a board meeting.)

IV. During Presbyterian Mission Agency Board meetings:

Board committee chairs may, at their discretion, highlight an information item for further discussion in committee. If this is anticipated, the board committee chair will notify the liaison in advance that her or his presence may be needed during the committee session.

2. Amend Appendix 2: Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff Organization by dividing it into two appendixes as follows: Appendix “2A Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff Organization,” “Appendix 2B General Assembly Ministries. The text of Appendix 2A and 2B will read as follows with additional amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

APPENDIX 2A

Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff Organization

The Executive Director carries out responsibilities with staff in the following ministries: the Office of the Executive Director, Mission, Shared Services, Communications and Funds Development.

I. Mission Administration

A. Office of the Executive Director

The primary purpose of the office is to provide overall leadership and support for the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) working with and through the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the General Assembly Ministries. The office is divided into mission administration areas, one of which is shared with the Office of the General Assembly:

1. Executive Administrator’s Office Advocacy Committee Support which includes, Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns, and Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, and Human Resources.

2. Human Resources

3. Internal Audit

4. Legal & Risk Management

5. Policy, Administration and Board Support

B. Shared with the Office of the General Assembly

1. Mid Council Relations

B. C. Deputy Executive Directors

The General Assembly Ministries are led by three Deputy Executive Directors and two Senior Directors, reporting to the Executive Director.

1. Deputy Executive Director for Mission

a. Evangelism and Church Growth

b. Compassion, Peace and Justice

c. Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women

d. Ministry, Worship and Education

e. Vocation World Mission

f. Research Services

2. Deputy Executive Director for Communications & Funds Development

a. Creative Services

b. Relationship and Development Operations

c. Executive Office on Policy Communications
“d. Funds Development
“e. Mission Communications
“f. Mission Resources
“g. Presbyterian News Service
“h. Stewardship

“3. Deputy Executive Director for Shared Services
   “a. Finance and Accounting
   “b. Information Technology
   “c. Presbyterian Center Services
   “d. Presbyterian Distribution Services

“3. Senior Director for Communications
   “a. Mission Communications
   “b. Communications Services

“4. Senior Director for Funds Development Ministry
   “a. Major Gifts
   “b. Church Support
   “c. Special Offerings and Appeal
   “d. Relationship and Development Operations

“II. Changes to the staff structure

“A. Changes to the ministry area structure of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (Communications, Funds Development, Mission, Office of the Executive Director, and Shared Services) must be approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, upon recommendation by the Executive Committee and the Executive Director.

“B. Changes to the structure within a ministry area must be approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Executive Committee, upon recommendation by the Executive Director.

“APPENDIX 2B

“I. General Assembly Ministries

“A. Mission Ministries
   “1. Evangelism and Church Growth
      “[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]”
   “2. Compassion, Peace and Justice
      “[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]”
   “3. Racial Ethnic and Women Ministries/Presbyterian Women
      “[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]”
   “4. Theology, Worship, and Education
      “[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]”

“3. Vocation

“The Office of Vocation is a shared ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly. Its mission is to provide ecclesiastical and programming support related to vocation and leadership for Presbyterian individuals, congregations, mid-councils, and other partners. Its ministry includes support for presbyteries and congregations in the nurture of Christian Vocation; the preparation, credentialing, and support of church professionals; and the PCUSA call system.”
“E. World Mission

[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]

II. General Assembly Support Ministries

A. Communications and Funds Development Ministry

“Communication and Funds Development Ministry communicates the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the role and activities regarding mission in the PC(USA). Communication and Funds Development encourages, implements, and guides stewardship and giving to fund the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the mission and ministry of connectional entities and agencies of the PC(USA).

B. Funds Development Ministry

“Funds Development Ministry encourages, implements, and guides stewardship and giving to fund the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the mission and ministry of connectional entities and agencies of the PC(USA).

C. Shared Services

[Text in this paragraph remains unchanged.]

III. Amendments to these Descriptions

“Amendments to these descriptions of the staff structure components may be approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Executive Committee upon recommendation by the Executive Director.”

[APPENDIX 3: Public Statements by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board remains unchanged.]

3. Amend Appendix 4 by dividing it into two appendixes as follows: Appendix “4A Open Meeting Policy,” “Appendix 4B Media and Visitor Policy for Non-Business Gatherings. The text within this appendix remains unchanged.

“APPENDIX 4A

Open Meeting Policy

[Text in this section remains unchanged.]

“APPENDIX 4B

Media and Visitor Policy for Non-Business Gatherings

[Text in this section remains unchanged.]

[APPENDIXES 5 through 11 remain unchanged.]

4. Add a new Appendix 12 to read as follows:

“APPENDIX 12

Program Evaluation Process

“The Program Evaluation Process is a systematic method to review and evaluate the goals, objectives, and activities of all programs and program areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. All programs and program areas will be reviewed at least once within a 4-year rotation period to determine how well the goals and objectives are being achieved and if they are in alignment with the Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Mission Work Plan.

“The following data will be gathered to complete the evaluation:

• the purpose statement of the program,
• the Mission Work Plan objectives/activities related to this program/program area
• financial data,
• feedback from constituency groups (NOTE: Constituent groups will include both those who are using and benefiting from the program and those who are not using and benefiting but potentially could be), Re-
search Services will invite the constituents, peers, and at least two Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members to complete the survey. Responses will be returned directly to Research Services for compilation and summary of the results.

"Once the above data has been compiled, the supervising director for the area being evaluated will convene appropriate staff to discuss the following questions:

"a. How well is the program accomplishing its purpose?
"b. What impact is the program having?
"c. Is the program cost effective? How so? Or why not?
"d. Is the program well managed? How so? Or why not?
"e. Is the program adequately resourced (funds, staff, etc.)? How so? Or Why not?
"f. To what extent does the program help the PMA achieve its directional goals?
"g. If $100,000 in new funds were available, would we invest in this program? Why or why not?
"h. Is the PMA best suited to do this work or does it/can it be done at another level?
"i. What recommendations are noted and need to be shared from this program's evaluation?

"Using the responses to the above nine questions, the supervising director will prepare an executive summary to be discussed cross-functionally at a meeting of the Strategy Coordination Leadership Team.

"Discussion will:

"a. acknowledge the program’s progress/accomplishments with gratitude
"b. recommend program improvement(s)
"c. initiate a more extensive evaluation, if necessary
"d. determine any further follow-up actions

"The executive summary of each Program Evaluation will be available to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board as requested through the Executive Director's Office."

**Background for Addition of Appendix 12**

Interest in program evaluation has a long history in the Presbyterian Mission Agency. In early 2005, a task force of Presbyterian Mission Agency Board members explored a variety of options for “Performance Excellence at All Levels,” but none were good fit with the full variety of Presbyterian Mission Agency programs.

The design of a program evaluation process was referred to staff for follow-up. A placeholder for the description of the process was created as an appendix to the Manual of Operations.

In the years that have followed, staff have been perfecting a program evaluation process, consistent with the mandate to review each Presbyterian Mission Agency program on a quadrennial basis.

As of August 2013, the program evaluation process has been tested through six cycles, including twenty-two programs. Five reviews are underway, in the seventh cycle of the process. Staff have refined the process through the cycles and are ready to fill that placeholder spot in the Manual of Operations with this brief description.

[APPENDIX 13 remains unchanged.]

**D. 2013 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis**

*Overview*

By action of the 197th General Assembly (1985), the General Assembly Mission Council (now Presbyterian Mission Agency) is required to report annually the equal opportunity information of all PC(USA) agencies, theological institutions, presbyteries, and synods.

At the request of the Office of Human Resources, Research Services handled the collection of data for the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis for 2013. Based on the success of web-based data collection for previous years, we followed similar procedures for 2013.
The web-based data collection instrument was developed, tested, and deployed by Research Services. A point of contact in each organization or entity was invited by email to provide data for the organization. (The original invitation is included here as Attachment A.) An initial email invitation was sent January 9, 2014. Three reminder emails were sent to all non-responding organizations on January 16, 2014, January 21, 2014, and January 24, 2014. Responses were accepted until January 27, 2014.

**Invited Organizations**

The following agencies and organizations were requested to provide their workforce analysis data: Board of Pensions; Presbyterian Mission Agency; Hubbard Press; Jarvie Commonweal Service; Presbyterian Church Foundation; Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program; Presbyterian Publishing Corporation; Office of the General Assembly; and all conference centers, theological institutions, presbyteries, and synods associated with the PC(USA).

**Response Rate**

Of 211 invited organizations, data were received from 116 organizations, for a response rate of 54 percent. (Two email invitations to presbyteries were returned as bad email addresses for which no other working email address could be found.) Attachment B shows organizations that provided their data. Of responding organizations, a majority (93 percent) used the web form, and 6 percent (or 7) submitted hard copy by fax, email, or interoffice mail.

**Results**

Attachment C shows the results for responding organizations and presents the percentages of employees by gender and racial ethnic category.

Table 1 (next page) summarizes this information and provides similar data for 2005 for comparison. It is interesting that in all but one category covered by the report, the number of employees has decreased since 2005—in many cases a substantial reduction. The exception is the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, which increased by one staff person between 2005 and 2013. In terms of the percentage of racial-ethnic staff (non-white) and women, there has been little change overall among all PC(USA) staff, but substantial changes within some categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
<th>% Racial-Ethnic</th>
<th>% Women</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>% Racial-Ethnic</th>
<th>% Women</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>% Racial-Ethnic</th>
<th>% Women</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<td>35%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
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<td>464</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>-142</td>
<td>+1%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of the General Assembly</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
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<td>105</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>69%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+13%</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>58%</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>+2%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
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<td>60%</td>
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<td>All reporting (4/2)*</td>
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<td>62%</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>-103</td>
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<td>62%</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>59%</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<td>All reporting (133/91)*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>All reporting (12/6)*</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>-31</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean per reporting organization</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2%</td>
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<td>Theological Institutions:</td>
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<tr>
<td>All reporting (5/7)*</td>
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<td>54%</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<td>54%</td>
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<td>Total…………………………………….2,795</td>
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<td>63%</td>
<td>1,930</td>
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<td>61%</td>
<td>-865</td>
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*Numbers in parentheses show the number of organizations in the category that reported in 2005 and in 2013. Looking at change when the number of reporting entities has changed could lead to inaccurate conclusions and should be done cautiously.
Recommendations for the Future

The data collection process went smoothly again this year. Inquiries from organizational representatives focused primarily on one topic: racial-ethnic categories (e.g., how to report employees who have not specified their race-ethnicity and those who self-identify as Middle Eastern).

Instructions for next year should include answers to such questions.

Requesting this information in January seems to be more effective than doing so in December. This year, we received no complaints about being a bad time of year for this process.

Prepared by: Research Services
A Ministry of the General Assembly Mission Council Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
January 27, 2014

Attachment A
Original Email Invitation and Sample Form

Important 2013 EEO/AA Workforce Analysis Information Needed for {ORGANIZATION} Dear {FNAME/LNAME} at {ORGANIZATION} ID Number: {ID#}


We are compiling this information electronically again this year. Please follow the instructions below. We suggest downloading a copy of the form so you can gather the needed information before you access the survey on the Web. To view the survey (in Adobe Acrobat format) before you submit your answers, click on this link.

Alternately, send an email to research@pcusa.org requesting a copy of the form and we’ll send it as an attachment.

Please forward this information to the appropriate person in your organization if you are not the person responsible for your organization’s workforce analysis data. You may have received multiple emails if you are responsible for reporting on several organizations. Each one will have a unique link and ID number, so please be aware of that when entering your information.

- Go to the survey Web site at: {LINK}
- Enter the ID number {ID#} assigned to your organization.
- Complete the workforce analysis form. (Definitions are provided within the survey and on the downloadable form.)
- If you prefer, complete the downloadable form and fax it back (502-569-8736).

The deadline for your organization’s information is Tuesday, January 27, 2014.

If you need additional information or have questions, please contact me (800-728-7228, ext. 5710, or Lisa.Robbins@pcusa.org).

If you have trouble with the survey Web site, please contact Research Services (800-728-7228, ext. 2040 or research@pcusa.org).

We appreciate your assistance and cooperation. Lisa Robbins

Human Resources Director Presbyterian Mission Agency

Racial Ethnic Categories: These are current categories defined by the federal government for EEO AA reporting. Note that each employee can be counted in only one category.

- American Indian and/or Alaska Native (not Hispanic and/or Latino): All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.
• **Asian (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

• **Black and/or African American (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

• **Hispanic and/or Latino:** All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

• **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

• **Two or More Races (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons who identify with more than one of the other racial categories.

• **White (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

**Other Definitions:**

• **Exempt:** Employees who are not entitled to overtime pay (i.e., professional staff including clergy).

• **Non-exempt:** Employees who are entitled to overtime pay (e.g., secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff).

• **Full-time:** Employees who work at least 30 hours weekly.

• **Part-time:** Employees who work fewer than 30 hours weekly.

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**EEO/AA End-of-Year 2013 Report**

[For text of EEO/AA End-of-Year 2013 report, see eeo-aa2013end-of-yr-report.pdf, p. 618, of the electronic file.]

**Definitions for Use in Completing the Form**

**Racial Ethnic Categories:** These are current categories defined by the federal government for EEO AA reporting. Note that each employee can be counted in only one category.

• **American Indian and/or Alaska Native (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.

• **Asian (not Hispanic and/or Latino):** All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

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**Other Definitions:**

• **Exempt:** Employees who are not entitled to overtime pay (i.e., professional staff including clergy).

• **Non-exempt:** Employees who are entitled to overtime pay (e.g., secretarial, clerical, and custodial staff).
**Full-time**: Employees who work at least 30 hours weekly.

**Part-time**: Employees who work fewer than 30 hours weekly.

**Questions? Call Lisa Robbins at 800-728-7228, ext. 5710**

**Trouble with the survey? Call Research Services at 800-728-7228, ext. 2040**

Completed forms may be returned by fax. Please provide your contact information:

- **Organization:**
- **Your name:**
- **Telephone:**

Fax completed form to: (502) 569-8736.

**Thank you for your help!**

**Attachment B**

2011 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Analysis

**Responding Presbyteries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responding Presbyteries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver-Butler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackhawk</td>
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<td>Boise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carlisle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cayuga-Syracuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Florida</td>
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<td>Central Washington</td>
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<td>Cincinnati</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal Carolina</td>
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<td>de Cristo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Iowa</td>
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<td>Eastern Oregon</td>
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<td>Eastern Virginia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastminster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flint River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foothills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Canyon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Rivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holston</td>
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<td>Homestead</td>
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<td>Hudson River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Nations</td>
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<td>The Inland Northwest</td>
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<td>John Calvin</td>
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<td>Kendall</td>
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<td>Kiskiminetas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maumee Valley</td>
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<td>Mid-Kentucky</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Hope</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Northern New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Plains</td>
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<td>Northern Waters</td>
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<td>The Pacific</td>
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<td>Pittsburgh</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>The Redwoods</td>
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**Non-Responding Presbyteries**

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570 221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
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<td>Synod of The Pacific</td>
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<td>Synod of The Northeast</td>
<td>Synod of The Sun</td>
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<td>Ghost Ranch—Abiquiu</td>
<td>Stony Point Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding Agencies and Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pensions</td>
<td>Presbyterian Mission Agency</td>
<td>Jarvie Commonweal Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)</td>
<td>Hubbard Press</td>
<td>Office of the General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presbyterian Investment &amp; Loan Program, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presbyterian Publishing Corporation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attachment C:**

2013 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Restricted</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Support from Congregations &amp; Presbyteries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Mission Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Mission Support</td>
<td>9,800,000</td>
<td>7,681,295</td>
<td>8,812,103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directed Mission Support</td>
<td>3,410,143</td>
<td>3,559,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Churchwide Spec. Offerings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Joy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Great Hour of Sharing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Supplementary Support (Beyond Budget)</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Congregations &amp; Presbyteries &amp; Individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Specific Appeals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency and Disaster Relief</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Initiative Joining Hearts &amp; Hands</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Missionary Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theological Education Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AddT Forms of Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women</td>
<td>498,604</td>
<td>199,192</td>
<td>409,798</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requests and Annuities</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>3,656,215</td>
<td>728,216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Gifts</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Validated Mission Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants from Outside Fdns.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Endowments, Interest and Dividends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC (USA) Restr. Endow. Fds.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pby. Mission Program Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Trusts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinishian Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Short Term Investment</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>1,234,964</td>
<td>621,763</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Churches and Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubbard Press</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales: Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales: Program Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales: Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL RECEIPTS</td>
<td>20,560,422</td>
<td>20,909,736</td>
<td>19,132,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Prior Year Accumulations</td>
<td>2,245,211</td>
<td>(350,958)</td>
<td>1,002,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</td>
<td>22,805,633</td>
<td>20,558,778</td>
<td>20,134,628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presbyterian Mission Agency Receipts
Actual Compared to Budget as of December 31, 2012

572
### Presbyterian Mission Agency

**Expenditures by Entity**

**For the Period Ended December 31, 2012**

*(After Cost Allocation)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MISSION BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BUDGETED ENTITY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Communications and Funds Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Financial Campaign Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Executive Director Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology Worship and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion, Peace and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Shared Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Distribution Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail, Print Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Fund Allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECO Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenditures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY

### Receipts

For the Period Ended December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Revenue</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Restricted</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YTD Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>YTD Actual</strong></td>
<td><strong>% of YTD Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>YTD 2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Support from Congregations and Presbyteries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Mission Support</td>
<td>8,500,000</td>
<td>7,086,556</td>
<td>(16.63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed Mission Support</td>
<td>8,500,000</td>
<td>7,086,556</td>
<td>(16.63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Joy</td>
<td>4,200,000</td>
<td>3,921,296</td>
<td>(6.64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>1,063,139</td>
<td>11.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>824,323</td>
<td>(8.41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness</td>
<td>1,723</td>
<td>2,749</td>
<td>(37.32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Endowments, Interest and Dividends</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (USA) Unres. Endow. Fds</td>
<td>5,863,402</td>
<td>5,918,280</td>
<td>0.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pby. Mission Program Fund</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>8,972</td>
<td>(95.51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Trusts</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>1,415,190</td>
<td>57.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term Investment</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>608,661</td>
<td>1.44%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>23,684</td>
<td>18,729</td>
<td>81.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td>20,413,482</td>
<td>18,755,555</td>
<td>(16.45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</strong></td>
<td>22,243,508</td>
<td>19,628,448</td>
<td>(15.61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REPORTS</strong></td>
<td>28,685,990</td>
<td>24,404,003</td>
<td>(32.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utilization of Prior Year Accum'ns</strong></td>
<td>4,310,166</td>
<td>5,552,447</td>
<td>(12.63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TTL RCPTS, PY ACCUM &amp; ADJS</strong></td>
<td>24,253,024</td>
<td>24,051,860</td>
<td>(99.36%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PRESBYTERTERIAN MISSION AGENCY
### Expenditures (After Cost Allocation)
### For the Period Ended December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MISSION BUDGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUDGETED ENTITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Communications and Funds Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Executive Director Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology Worship and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion, Peace and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Shared Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Distribution Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail, Print Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Fund Allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECO Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenditures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- YTD Budget, YTD Actual, and % of YTD budget refer to the year-to-date budget, actual expenditure, and percentage of the budget, respectively.
- Parentheses indicate a percentage decrease from the previous period.
- Bold numbers indicate significant changes or highlights.

**Total Expenditures:**
- 20,243,508
- 16,887,893 (16.58%)
- 20,558,778 (17.86%)
- 64,909,682
- 59,617,118 (8.27%)
- 56,869,102 (4.83%)
- 85,233,190
- 76,505,011 (10.24%)
- 77,427,880 (1.19%)
# Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

**Presbyterian Mission Agency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue, gains and other support</th>
<th>2013 Actual</th>
<th>2014 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contributions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregations</td>
<td>$7,086,556</td>
<td>$6,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts and bequests</td>
<td>674,883</td>
<td>155,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>405,915</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special offerings</td>
<td></td>
<td>560,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Joy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Great Hour of Sharing</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific appeals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency and Disaster Relief</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Commitment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9,100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Initiative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>464,775</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Missionary Support</td>
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<td>379,101</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>600,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theological Education Fund</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Contributions</strong></td>
<td>7,761,439</td>
<td>8,755,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from endowment funds held by the Foundation</td>
<td>5,918,280</td>
<td>5,482,823</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from investments</td>
<td>617,633</td>
<td>609,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from funds held by others</td>
<td>1,415,190</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
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<td>Hubbard Press</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of resources and services</td>
<td>8,004</td>
<td>14,112,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue, Gains, and Other Support</strong></td>
<td>7,974,107</td>
<td>7,566,823</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Office of the Executive Administrator</td>
<td>434,455</td>
<td>685,638</td>
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<td>Mission Resources</td>
<td>134,938</td>
<td>179,027</td>
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<td>Office of the Deputy Executive Director</td>
<td>699,161</td>
<td>716,679</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theology Worship and Education</td>
<td>2,204,414</td>
<td>2,584,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
<td>2,176,079</td>
<td>2,640,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion, Peace and Justice</td>
<td>1,753,210</td>
<td>2,253,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Mission</td>
<td>5,311,247</td>
<td>2,253,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries</td>
<td>2,054,878</td>
<td>2,548,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,208,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2,119,511</td>
<td>3,529,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>16,887,893</td>
<td>18,279,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>($1,152,347)</td>
<td>($1,958,168)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Includes $2,559,887 for Youth Triennium*
### Revenue, gains and other support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributions</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregations</td>
<td>$5,532,000</td>
<td>$3,254,000</td>
<td>$8,886,000</td>
<td>$5,125,000</td>
<td>$3,421,000</td>
<td>$8,546,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>411,072</td>
<td>566,072</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>411,072</td>
<td>566,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts and bequests</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>409,000</td>
<td>1,159,000</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>417,000</td>
<td>1,167,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special offerings</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,103,620</td>
<td>4,103,620</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,389,800</td>
<td>4,389,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Great Hour of Sharing</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,167,100</td>
<td>7,167,100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,677,000</td>
<td>7,677,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peacemaking</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,115,160</td>
<td>1,115,160</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,191,400</td>
<td>1,191,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>872,120</td>
<td>872,120</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>956,800</td>
<td>956,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific appeals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Commitment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,700,013</td>
<td>8,700,013</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,811,199</td>
<td>8,811,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Initiative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Missionary Support</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>488,000</td>
<td>488,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>483,000</td>
<td>483,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theological Education Fund</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Contributions</td>
<td>6,437,000</td>
<td>30,790,085</td>
<td>37,227,085</td>
<td>6,030,000</td>
<td>31,658,271</td>
<td>37,688,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from endowment funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>held by the Foundation</td>
<td>5,206,763</td>
<td>8,466,055</td>
<td>13,672,818</td>
<td>5,359,842</td>
<td>8,649,801</td>
<td>14,009,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from investments</td>
<td>1,009,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>1,309,000</td>
<td>1,009,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>1,209,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from funds held by others</td>
<td>1,132,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>1,252,000</td>
<td>1,126,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>1,246,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubbard Press</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>155,119</td>
<td>255,119</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>156,976</td>
<td>281,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of resources and services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14,508,133</td>
<td>14,508,133</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18,063,780</td>
<td>18,063,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>134,000</td>
<td>134,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>111,000</td>
<td>111,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7,447,763</td>
<td>23,683,307</td>
<td>31,131,070</td>
<td>7,619,842</td>
<td>27,301,557</td>
<td>34,921,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total revenue, gains, and other support</td>
<td>13,884,763</td>
<td>54,473,392</td>
<td>68,358,155</td>
<td>13,649,842</td>
<td>58,959,828</td>
<td>72,609,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2015 Budget</th>
<th>2016 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Executive Administrator</td>
<td>388,913</td>
<td>1,637,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Resources</td>
<td>128,973</td>
<td>1,631,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Deputy Executive Director</td>
<td>537,192</td>
<td>518,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology Worship and Education</td>
<td>2,579,724</td>
<td>4,901,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
<td>2,061,545</td>
<td>8,300,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion, Peace and Justice</td>
<td>1,722,082</td>
<td>11,666,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Mission</td>
<td>6,249,612</td>
<td>19,899,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries</td>
<td>2,339,024</td>
<td>3,260,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Services</td>
<td>2,402,028</td>
<td>2,402,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,892</td>
<td>3,443,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>16,008,957</td>
<td>57,662,787</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in net assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 Budget</th>
<th>2016 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$ (2,124,194)</td>
<td>$ (3,189,395)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Includes $3,091,200 for Youth Triennium**
### Presbyterian Mission Program Fund as of December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNDESIGNATED FUNDS</th>
<th>DESIGNATED FUNDS</th>
<th>PROGRAMMATIC FUND</th>
<th>COMBINED TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance as of January 1, 2013</strong></td>
<td>11,777,418</td>
<td>9,871,081</td>
<td>821,042</td>
<td>22,469,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market value adjustment in investments</strong></td>
<td>(238,787)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(238,787)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net increase (decrease) in loans/receivables</strong></td>
<td>(133,579)</td>
<td></td>
<td>133,579</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New allocation</strong></td>
<td>(1,000,000)</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of allocations</strong></td>
<td>(286,142)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(286,142)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unused allocations restored</strong></td>
<td>3,547,965</td>
<td>(3,547,965)</td>
<td>133,579</td>
<td>(524,929)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase (Decrease) YTD</strong></td>
<td>2,175,598</td>
<td>(2,834,107)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(524,929)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>13,953,016</td>
<td>7,036,974</td>
<td>954,621</td>
<td>21,944,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excess unrestricted revenues/(expenditures) from PMA Budget</strong></td>
<td>(1,152,347)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,152,347)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance as of December 31, 2013</strong></td>
<td>$13,953,016</td>
<td>$5,884,627</td>
<td>$954,621</td>
<td>$20,792,265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Reserve Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unrestricted Receipts</strong></td>
<td>15,269,179</td>
<td>16,321,823</td>
<td>13,884,763</td>
<td>13,649,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directed Mission Support Receipts</strong></td>
<td>3,648,184</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>3,354,000</td>
<td>3,421,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$18,917,363</td>
<td>$19,821,823</td>
<td>$17,238,763</td>
<td>$17,070,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>30% Reserve Requirement</strong></td>
<td>$5,675,209</td>
<td>$5,946,547</td>
<td>$5,171,629</td>
<td>$5,121,253</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Capital Reserve Fund as of February 28, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INVESTMENTS</th>
<th>COMMITMENTS</th>
<th>COMBINED TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance as of January 1, 2014</strong></td>
<td>1,088,186</td>
<td>(337,920)</td>
<td>714,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Earnings/(loss)</strong></td>
<td>(26,695)</td>
<td>(26,695)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Replacement reserve</strong></td>
<td>64,660</td>
<td>64,660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net allocations</strong></td>
<td>(352,541)</td>
<td>(352,541)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of allocations</strong></td>
<td>(119,732)</td>
<td>119,732</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cancellation of allocation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase (Decrease) YTD</strong></td>
<td>(81,767)</td>
<td>(232,848)</td>
<td>(314,615)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance as of February 28, 2014</strong></td>
<td>$1,066,419</td>
<td>($606,768)</td>
<td>$399,651</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2014 Projected Income</strong></td>
<td>380,035</td>
<td>(65,000)</td>
<td>(535,000)</td>
<td>(325,000)</td>
<td>(30,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2014 Projected Allocations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2015 Projected Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016 Projected Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projected Balance as of December 31, 2016</strong></td>
<td>$2,246,454</td>
<td>($2,114,768)</td>
<td>$131,686</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 PDC-Electric Pallet Jack-5,000; 5th Floor Relamping-20,000; IT-MAC server upgrade-20,000; IT-CTRESXEXT Warranty replacement-20,000
2 Elevator Modernization(2of4)-232,000; Restroom Remodel(3W,LL)-100,000; Barrell Roof-50,000; Energy Mgmt upgrade-50,000; Carpet Tile(1000 yds)-34,000; Google Search Appliance-29,000; 4th Floor Relamping-20,000; IT-VMware Server Upgrade-20,000
3 Elevator Modernization(freight)-135,000; Restroom Remodel(1W,1E)-100,000; 3rd Floor Relamping-40,000; Kitchen Remodel(cabinets)-30,000; IT-WiFi Device Replacement-15,000; PDC-Electric Pallet Jack-5,000
### Presbyterian Mission Program Fund as of December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNDESIGNATED FUNDS</th>
<th>DESIGNATED FUNDS</th>
<th>PROGRAMMIC FUND</th>
<th>COMBINED TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance as of January 1, 2013</td>
<td>11,777,418</td>
<td>9,871,081</td>
<td>821,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market value adjustment in investments</td>
<td>(238,787)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net increase (decrease) in loans/receivables</td>
<td>(133,579)</td>
<td></td>
<td>133,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New allocation</td>
<td>(1,000,000)</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New allocation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of allocations</td>
<td>3,547,965</td>
<td>(286,142)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unused allocations restored</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,175,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase (Decrease) YTD</td>
<td>13,953,016</td>
<td>7,036,974</td>
<td>954,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess unrestricted revenues/(expenditures) from PMA Budget</td>
<td>5,884,627</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance as of December 31, 2013</td>
<td>$13,953,016</td>
<td>$5,884,627</td>
<td>$954,621</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2013 Unused Budget Restored
662,759

### 2014 Budget Allocation Restored
3,878,809

### 2014 Adjusted Budget Allocations
(1,958,168)

### World Mission Allocation for Contingencies
(1,000,000)

### DREAM Fund Allocation
(500,000)

### 2015 Budget Allocation
(2,124,194)

### 2016 Budget Allocation
(2,439,886)

### Projected Balance as of December 31, 2016
$10,472,336

---

### Capital Reserve Fund as of February 28, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESERVE REQUIREMENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Projected Income 2013
430,000

### Projected Income 2014
(243,000)

### Projected Income 2015
(340,000)

### Projected Income 2016
340,000

### Projected Income 2017
(325,000)

### Projected Balance as of December 31, 2016
$2,246,454 (1,114,768 $131,686

1 PDC-Electric Pallet Jack-5,000; 5th Floor Relamping-20,000; IT-MAC server upgrade-20,000; IT-CTRESXEXT Warranty replacement-20,000

2 Elevator Modernization(2of4)-232,000; Restroom Remodel(3W,LL)-100,000; Bell Roof-50,000; Energy Mgmt upgrade-50,000; Carpet Tile(est 1000 yds)-34,000; Google Search Appliance-29,000; 4th Floor Relamping-20,000; IT-VMWare Server Upgrade-20,000

3 Elevator Modernization(freight)-135,000; Restroom Remodel(1W,1E)-100,000; 3rd Floor Relamping-40,000; Kitchen Remodel(cabinets)-30,000; IT-WiFi Device Replacement-15,000; PDC-Electric Pallet Jack-5,000

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579
## Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
### Presbyterian Mission Program Fund
#### Funds Committed for Special Projects
##### as of December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNCOMMITTED FUNDS</th>
<th>COMMITTED FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS</th>
<th>PROGRAMMATIC LOAN FUND</th>
<th>COMBINED TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Balance as of January 1, 2013</td>
<td>11,777,418</td>
<td>9,871,081</td>
<td>821,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Market value adjustment in investments</td>
<td>(238,787)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Net increase (decrease) in loans/receivables</td>
<td>(133,579)</td>
<td>(1,000,000)</td>
<td>133,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>New allocation</td>
<td>(1,000,000)</td>
<td>(286,142)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Use of allocations</td>
<td>3,547,965</td>
<td>(3,547,965)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Unused allocations restored</td>
<td>2,175,598</td>
<td>(2,834,107)</td>
<td>133,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Increase (Decrease) YTD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>13,953,016</td>
<td>7,036,974</td>
<td>954,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Excess unrestricted revenues/(expenditures) from PMA Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,152,347)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Balance December 31, 2013</strong></td>
<td>13,953,016</td>
<td>5,884,627</td>
<td>954,621</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reserve requirement:**
- **Unrestricted receipts** 15,269,179
- **Directed Mission support receipts** 3,648,184
- **Total** 18,917,363

30% Reserve requirement 5,675,209
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Mission Program Fund
Funds Committed for Special Projects
as of December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRANTS</th>
<th>Original Designation</th>
<th>Balance 1/1/13</th>
<th>Designated</th>
<th>Payments</th>
<th>Restored</th>
<th>Balance 12/31/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Balance of allocations of $1,093,000 (4/03), $814,210 (2/04), $150,000 (12/04), and reallocations (9/06), (2/08), (10/08), (5/10), &amp; (2/12) to support the Independent Abuse Review Panel</td>
<td></td>
<td>116,574</td>
<td>161,052</td>
<td>(74,415)</td>
<td></td>
<td>86,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sales of Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>432,511</td>
<td>(136,940)</td>
<td>295,571</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Allocation of $174,900 for World Mission from sale of Morningside Gardens Apartments (9/09)</td>
<td>174,900</td>
<td>27,786</td>
<td>(27,786)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Allocation (5/10),(10/10) and (9/11) to balance the 2012 Mission Budget (3/11), (5/12)</td>
<td>1,597,759</td>
<td>2,596,170</td>
<td>(2,596,170)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Transfer from Plant Fund to Black Pipe SD Property</td>
<td>34,859</td>
<td>7,852</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,852</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Allocation (5/12) to balance the 2013 Mission Budget (9/12), (4/13)</td>
<td>2,117,865</td>
<td>2,383,865</td>
<td>(1,152,347)</td>
<td>568,759</td>
<td>662,759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Allocation (5/12) to balance the 2014 Mission Budget (9/12), (4/13)</td>
<td>4,014,845</td>
<td>4,261,845</td>
<td>(383,036)</td>
<td>3,878,809</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 2013-2014 New Initiatives Allocation (4/13)</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>(47,001)</td>
<td>952,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,871,081</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>(1,438,489)</td>
<td>(3,547,965)</td>
<td>5,884,627</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
#### Sales of Resources
##### as of December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Directors Communications and Development</th>
<th>Balance 1/1/13</th>
<th>Additions</th>
<th>(Payments)</th>
<th>Budgeted</th>
<th>Balance 12/31/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>145,277.87</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Education &amp; Promotion</td>
<td>341,093.55</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>195,815.68</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Financial Campaign</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds Development</td>
<td>3,967.57</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,967.57</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>345,061.12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>145,277.87</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>199,783.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deputy Executive Director - Mission</th>
<th>Balance 1/1/13</th>
<th>Additions</th>
<th>(Payments)</th>
<th>Budgeted</th>
<th>Balance 12/31/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>70,151.43</td>
<td>14,843.07</td>
<td>(2,822.78)</td>
<td>82,171.72</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Witness Policy</td>
<td>17,298.56</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(3,682.27)</td>
<td>13,616.29</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87,449.99</td>
<td>14,843.07</td>
<td>(6,505.05)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>95,788.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL                                           | 432,511.11     | 14,843.07 | (151,782.92) | -        | 295,571.26      |
## Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
### Programmatic Loan Fund
#### as of December 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECEIVABLE</th>
<th>Balance 1/1/13</th>
<th>Increase (Decrease)</th>
<th>Balance 12/31/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receivable from Congregational Ministries Publishing</td>
<td>821,042</td>
<td>133,579</td>
<td>954,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PMPF</td>
<td>821,042</td>
<td>133,579</td>
<td>954,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER RECEIVABLES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghost Ranch Conference Center (Abiquiu &amp; Santa Fe)</td>
<td>2,236,766</td>
<td>423,715</td>
<td>2,660,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stony Point Center</td>
<td>1,489,583</td>
<td>191,116</td>
<td>1,680,698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER RECEIVABLES</strong></td>
<td>3,726,349</td>
<td>614,831</td>
<td>4,341,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Balance as of 1/1/13</td>
<td>5,337,533</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Revenues:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Income from investments</td>
<td>54,681</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unrealized gain (loss)</td>
<td>709,201</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Total revenues</strong></td>
<td>763,882</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Expenditures:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Foundation investment fees</td>
<td>(380)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Shared Services management fees</td>
<td>(10,000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Risk Management recoveries</td>
<td>(57,171)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Insurance claims paid</td>
<td>(23,840)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>Total expenditures</strong></td>
<td>(91,392)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>Funds available 12/31/13</strong></td>
<td>6,010,024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

**SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

*Years Ending December 31, 2011, 2012 & 2013*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offerings</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One Great Hour of Sharing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian World Service</td>
<td>2,232,688</td>
<td>2,011,102</td>
<td>-9.92%</td>
<td>1,611,900</td>
<td>-19.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Development of People</td>
<td>2,213,776</td>
<td>1,979,566</td>
<td>-10.58%</td>
<td>1,601,978</td>
<td>-19.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Hunger Program</td>
<td>2,479,562</td>
<td>2,213,711</td>
<td>-10.72%</td>
<td>1,789,019</td>
<td>-19.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>385,816</td>
<td>476,098</td>
<td>23.40%</td>
<td>725,871</td>
<td>52.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Fee</td>
<td>383,853</td>
<td>351,546</td>
<td>-8.42%</td>
<td>775,978</td>
<td>120.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>7,695,695</td>
<td>7,032,023</td>
<td>-8.62%</td>
<td>6,504,746</td>
<td>-7.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Christmas/Joy Offering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pensions</td>
<td>1,834,980</td>
<td>1,748,704</td>
<td>-4.70%</td>
<td>1,547,796</td>
<td>-11.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Education</td>
<td>1,805,110</td>
<td>1,734,005</td>
<td>-3.94%</td>
<td>1,425,298</td>
<td>-17.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Cost</td>
<td>278,032</td>
<td>309,686</td>
<td>11.39%</td>
<td>502,590</td>
<td>62.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Fee</td>
<td>206,218</td>
<td>199,496</td>
<td>-3.26%</td>
<td>445,612</td>
<td>123.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,124,340</td>
<td>3,991,891</td>
<td>-3.21%</td>
<td>3,921,296</td>
<td>-1.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peacemaking Offering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking</td>
<td>770,365</td>
<td>635,748</td>
<td>-17.47%</td>
<td>457,341</td>
<td>-28.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Cost</td>
<td>189,236</td>
<td>276,582</td>
<td>46.16%</td>
<td>429,970</td>
<td>55.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Fee</td>
<td>49,570</td>
<td>48,223</td>
<td>-2.72%</td>
<td>115,828</td>
<td>140.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,009,171</td>
<td>960,553</td>
<td>-4.82%</td>
<td>1,003,139</td>
<td>4.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Witness Offering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Mission Unit</td>
<td>1,483</td>
<td>1,306</td>
<td>-11.94%</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>-41.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Congregational Nurture</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>-41.35%</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>-45.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism &amp; Church Development</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>32.04%</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>-42.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Cost</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Fee</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,122</td>
<td>2,749</td>
<td>-11.95%</td>
<td>1,723</td>
<td>-37.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pentecost Offering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>561,915</td>
<td>529,201</td>
<td>-5.82%</td>
<td>367,108</td>
<td>-30.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Costs</td>
<td>158,455</td>
<td>250,066</td>
<td>57.82%</td>
<td>363,628</td>
<td>45.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Fee</td>
<td>37,914</td>
<td>40,950</td>
<td>8.01%</td>
<td>93,587</td>
<td>128.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>758,284</td>
<td>820,217</td>
<td>8.17%</td>
<td>824,323</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>13,590,612</td>
<td>12,807,433</td>
<td>-5.76%</td>
<td>12,255,227</td>
<td>-4.31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designations</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>726,328</td>
<td>408,770</td>
<td>-43.72%</td>
<td>366,895</td>
<td>-10.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Relief</td>
<td>5,655,457</td>
<td>4,188,232</td>
<td>-25.94%</td>
<td>5,807,839</td>
<td>38.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This report reflects actual receipts and all related adjustments and pass through donations.
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),
A CORPORATION

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
December 31, 2013 and 2012
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),
A CORPORATION

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
December 31, 2013 and 2012

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CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS .................................................. 4

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS ........................................................................... 6

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT

The Board of Directors
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation
Louisville, Kentucky

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation and its constituent corporations, which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of December 31, 2013, and the related consolidated statement of activities and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor’s judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity’s preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

(Continued)
Opinion

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation as of December 31, 2013, and the changes in their net assets and their cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Other Matters

The 2012 consolidated financial statements of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), A Corporation, were audited by other auditors whose report dated July 23, 2013, expressed an unqualified opinion on those statements.

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The consolidating statements of financial position, statement of activities, and changes in net assets are presented for purposes of additional analysis of the consolidated financial statements rather than to present the financial position, changes in net assets, and cash flows of the individual companies, and are not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the consolidated financial statements and certain other procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements or to the consolidated financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the consolidated financial statements as a whole.

Crowe Horwath LLP
Louisville, Kentucky
April 23, 2014
# PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),
## A CORPORATION
### CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
#### December 31, 2013 and 2012

### ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$3,983,386</td>
<td>$9,543,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments (Notes 4 and 13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interests in investments and accrued income held by the Foundation</td>
<td>52,389,914</td>
<td>62,553,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments and accrued income</td>
<td>60,022,462</td>
<td>61,211,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total investments</td>
<td>112,412,376</td>
<td>133,308,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions from congregations</td>
<td>4,679,396</td>
<td>5,323,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgages and loans on churches and manses, including accrued interest, less allowance of $2,250 and $2,850, respectively (Note 7)</td>
<td>2,146,986</td>
<td>2,830,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans, less allowance of $2,158,889 and $2,005,546, respectively (Note 9)</td>
<td>4,301,022</td>
<td>5,232,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due from the Foundation</td>
<td>1,100,864</td>
<td>579,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other accounts receivable</td>
<td>659,296</td>
<td>221,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total receivables</td>
<td>12,887,564</td>
<td>14,187,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets</td>
<td>1,118,109</td>
<td>1,316,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net (Note 10)</td>
<td>17,000,051</td>
<td>18,456,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments held by the Foundation – long-term (Notes 4 and 13)</td>
<td>337,819,087</td>
<td>305,726,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments held by the Foundation (Notes 4 and 13)</td>
<td>6,242,362</td>
<td>5,462,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts (Note 5)</td>
<td>68,575,320</td>
<td>62,954,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets</td>
<td>$560,038,255</td>
<td>$541,413,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

#### Liabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$7,789,288</td>
<td>$9,415,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts received from congregations and designated for others</td>
<td>520,594</td>
<td>650,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts held for missionaries and committed for projects</td>
<td>2,774,891</td>
<td>2,915,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts due to other agencies (Note 16)</td>
<td>5,927,434</td>
<td>6,558,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to the Foundation (Note 16)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,777,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>983,741</td>
<td>743,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>38,751</td>
<td>201,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities</td>
<td>18,034,699</td>
<td>26,263,077</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Net assets (Note 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undesignated</td>
<td>17,201,545</td>
<td>12,580,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated</td>
<td>39,326,017</td>
<td>43,584,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total unrestricted</td>
<td>56,527,562</td>
<td>56,165,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
<td>214,190,120</td>
<td>195,783,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently restricted</td>
<td>271,285,874</td>
<td>263,202,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>542,003,556</td>
<td>515,150,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities and net assets</td>
<td>$560,038,255</td>
<td>$541,413,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),
A CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
Year ended December 31, 2013
(With comparative 2012 totals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporary</th>
<th>Permanently</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, gains, and other support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregations</td>
<td>$20,285,475</td>
<td>$3,696,240</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11,815</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts, bequests, and grants</td>
<td>1,922,766</td>
<td>2,990,940</td>
<td>2,014,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special giving and special offering</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28,963,878</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total contributions</td>
<td>22,208,241</td>
<td>35,662,873</td>
<td>2,014,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from endowment funds</td>
<td>1,808,392</td>
<td>2,704,605</td>
<td>29,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income on investments</td>
<td>1,028,469</td>
<td>290,447</td>
<td>49,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized and unrealized gains on investments, net</td>
<td>5,591,909</td>
<td>24,800,333</td>
<td>5,781,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in value of beneficial interest in life income funds</td>
<td>1,415,190</td>
<td>199,817</td>
<td>263,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total investment return</td>
<td>9,843,960</td>
<td>27,995,202</td>
<td>6,124,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest income from loans</td>
<td>17,543</td>
<td>52,209</td>
<td>129,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hubbard Press</td>
<td>1,527,413</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of resources and services</td>
<td>17,528,679</td>
<td>19,194</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,051,241</td>
<td>(21,207)</td>
<td>(184,611)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52,177,077</td>
<td>63,708,271</td>
<td>5,781,620</td>
<td>8,083,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>43,405,710</td>
<td>(43,405,710)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total revenue, gains, and other support</td>
<td>95,582,787</td>
<td>20,302,561</td>
<td>8,083,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Executive Administrator</td>
<td>1,569,774</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and Funds</td>
<td>1,833,986</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>1,223,984</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Deputy Executive Director</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology, Worship and Education</td>
<td>7,748,657</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
<td>8,644,957</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,051,241</td>
<td>(21,207)</td>
<td>(184,611)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Mission</td>
<td>23,362,921</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries</td>
<td>4,843,237</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Services</td>
<td>1,973,839</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the General Assembly</td>
<td>6,583,399</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Mission Agency</td>
<td>3,752,481</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Historical Society, Inc.</td>
<td>676,742</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Center – Ghost Ranch</td>
<td>4,859,892</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Center – Stony Point</td>
<td>2,364,511</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hubbard Press</td>
<td>1,154,998</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Bodies and Other Programs</td>
<td>2,062,790</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>1,676,522</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>2,011,824</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2,751,504</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>97,116,132</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>(1,533,345)</td>
<td>20,302,561</td>
<td>8,083,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinstate endowment funds with deficiencies</td>
<td>1,895,721</td>
<td>(1,895,721)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>362,376</td>
<td>18,406,840</td>
<td>8,083,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets at beginning of year</td>
<td>56,165,186</td>
<td>195,783,280</td>
<td>263,202,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets at end of year</td>
<td>$56,527,562</td>
<td>$214,190,120</td>
<td>$271,285,874</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
Year ended December 31, 2012

Revenue, gains, and other support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributions</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregations</td>
<td>$ 20,969,088</td>
<td>$ 3,410,143</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 24,379,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women</td>
<td>199,192</td>
<td>95,559</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>294,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts, bequests, and grants</td>
<td>4,912,739</td>
<td>2,286,075</td>
<td>594,656</td>
<td>7,793,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special giving and special offering</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26,259,135</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26,259,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total contributions</strong></td>
<td>26,081,019</td>
<td>32,050,912</td>
<td>594,656</td>
<td>58,726,587</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investment income

| Income from endowment funds                | 2,176,566    | 2,445,107              | 44,389                 | 4,666,062   |
| Income on investments                      | 1,372,550    | 429,404                | 62,014                 | 1,863,968   |
| Realized and unrealized gains              | 5,766,713    | 20,527,455             | 3,301,689              | 29,595,857  |
| **Total investment return**                | 10,766,719   | 23,489,776             | 4,753,399              | 39,009,894  |
| Interest income from loans                 | 25,119       | 65,216                 | 165,828                | 256,163     |
| The Hubbard Press                          | 1,418,906    | -                      | -                      | 1,418,906   |
| Sales of resources and services            | 14,479,676   | 40,856                 | -                      | 14,519,532  |
| Other                                      | 565,325      | (27,648)               | (78,622)               | 457,055     |
| **Total revenue, gains, and other support**| 53,335,764   | 55,619,112             | 5,435,261              | 114,390,137 |

Expenses

| Office of the Executive Administrator      | 1,198,954    | -                      | -                      | 1,198,954   |
| Communications and Funds Development        | 2,187,412    | -                      | -                      | 2,187,412   |
| Office of the Deputy Executive Director     | 999,655      | -                      | -                      | 999,655     |
| Vocation                                   | 1,714,832    | -                      | -                      | 1,714,832   |
| Theology, Worship and Education            | 6,366,492    | -                      | -                      | 6,366,492   |
| Evangelism and Church Growth                | 5,451,413    | -                      | -                      | 5,451,413   |
| Compassion, Peace and Justice              | 19,013,671   | -                      | -                      | 19,013,671  |
| World Mission                              | 24,415,108   | -                      | -                      | 24,415,108  |
| Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries       | 5,793,599    | -                      | -                      | 5,793,599   |
| Shared Services                            | 2,143,229    | -                      | -                      | 2,143,229   |
| Office of the General Assembly             | 11,652,103   | -                      | -                      | 11,652,103  |
| Presbyterian Mission Agency                | 2,554,246    | -                      | -                      | 2,554,246   |
| Presbyterian Historical Society, Inc.       | 429,543      | -                      | -                      | 429,543     |
| Conference Center – Ghost Ranch            | 4,276,828    | -                      | -                      | 4,276,828   |
| Conference Center – Stony Point            | 1,973,869    | -                      | -                      | 1,973,869   |
| The Hubbard Press                          | 1,313,004    | -                      | -                      | 1,313,004   |
| Related Bodies and Other Programs          | 2,813,297    | -                      | -                      | 2,813,297   |
| Shared                                    | 1,752,872    | -                      | -                      | 1,752,872   |
| Depreciation                               | 2,467,230    | -                      | -                      | 2,467,230   |
| Other                                      | 2,075,207    | -                      | -                      | 2,075,207   |
| **Total expenses**                         | 100,592,564  | -                      | -                      | 100,592,564 |

Change in net assets before transfer

| (3,680,768) | 12,043,080 | 5,435,261 | 13,797,573 |

Reinstate endowment funds with deficiencies

| 4,168,126 | (4,168,126) | - | - |

Change in net assets

| 487,358   | 7,874,954   | 5,435,261 | 13,797,573 |

Net assets at beginning of year

| 55,677,828 | 187,908,326 | 257,766,826 | 501,352,980 |

Net assets at end of year

| $56,165,186 | $195,783,280 | $263,202,087 | $515,150,553 |

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
Years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash flows from operating activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>$ 26,853,003</td>
<td>$ 13,797,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>2,011,824</td>
<td>2,467,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net recoveries for losses on church loans</td>
<td>(600)</td>
<td>(900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and revolving loan fund investment earnings restricted for long-term investment</td>
<td>(2,753,734)</td>
<td>(788,265)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized and unrealized gains on investments, net</td>
<td>(36,173,862)</td>
<td>(29,595,857)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in fair value of annuity and life income funds</td>
<td>(1,878,919)</td>
<td>(2,884,007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions to annuity and life income funds</td>
<td>(4,256,305)</td>
<td>(1,826,831)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in operating assets and liabilities:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables from congregations</td>
<td>644,262</td>
<td>(258,293)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to/from the Foundation</td>
<td>(6,299,093)</td>
<td>6,987,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other accounts receivable</td>
<td>(437,482)</td>
<td>79,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventories, prepaid expenses and other assets</td>
<td>198,691</td>
<td>(113,973)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>(1,626,196)</td>
<td>1,362,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts received from congregations and other liabilities</td>
<td>(432,633)</td>
<td>(2,049,576)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amounts due to other agencies</td>
<td>(631,558)</td>
<td>(45,555)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>239,848</td>
<td>6,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cash used in operating activities</td>
<td>(24,542,754)</td>
<td>(12,863,263)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Cash flows from investing activities |                 |                 |
| Purchases of investments           | (88,730,352)    | (39,652,922)    |
| Sales of investments               | 103,384,387     | 49,591,559      |
| Payments received on church loans  | 687,069         | 489,693         |
| Change in accrued interest receivable on church loans | (2,934)         | (1,995)         |
| Net change in receivables from related entities, mortgages and loans | 931,338         | 632,882         |
| Acquisition of property and equipment | (555,129)      | (893,403)       |
| Maturities of annuity and life income funds | 514,369        | 561,506         |
| Net cash from investing activities | 16,228,748      | 10,727,320      |

| Cash flows from financing activities |                 |                 |
| Contributions and revolving loan fund investment earnings restricted for long-term investment | 2,753,734       | 788,265         |
| Net cash from financing activities  | 2,753,734       | 788,265         |

Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents | (5,560,272)     | (1,347,678)     |

Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year | 9,543,658       | 10,891,336      |

Cash and cash equivalents at end of year | $ 3,983,386      | $ 9,543,658     |

Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donated stock</td>
<td>$ 92,578</td>
<td>$ 14,819</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.
NOTE 1 – ORGANIZATION AND NATURE OF OPERATIONS

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), (“PCUSA”) is an unincorporated body of Reformed Christians, who have agreed to conduct worship and other religious activities in conformity with the then current version of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitution, which contains among other things, in its Book of Order, a Form of Government setting forth a detailed formal structure of the Church. As an ecclesiastical organization, PCUSA does not exist under any federal law. Central to the structure of PCUSA is the concept of mid councils (formerly referred to as governing bodies). At the national level, the council is the General Assembly. The ecclesiastical work of the PCUSA at the General Assembly level is carried out by a number of ministry units and related agencies.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (“PCUSA, A Corporation”) is a corporate entity of the General Assembly of PCUSA, and is the principal corporation of the General Assembly. All voting members of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board are members of the Board of Directors of PCUSA, A Corporation. PCUSA, A Corporation receives and holds title and/or maintains and manages property and income at the General Assembly level related to mission activities; generally maintains and manages all real and tangible property not held for investment, including the insuring of such property; effects short-term investment of funds prior to either their disbursement or transfer to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (the “Foundation”) for longer-term investment; acts as the disbursing agent for all funds held for the General Assembly and for other governing bodies and entities upon their request; and provides accounting, reporting, and other financial and related services as the General Assembly or Presbyterian Mission Agency Board may direct or approve.

PCUSA, A Corporation is a tax-exempt religious corporation under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Presentation: The accompanying consolidated financial statements reflect the consolidated operations of PCUSA, A Corporation and its constituent corporations, which are presented on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The constituent corporations of PCUSA, A Corporation are the following: General Assembly Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Inc.; The Hubbard Press; Pedco, Inc.; The Presbyterian Historical Society, Inc.; Presbyterian Life, Inc.; Presbyterian Publishing House of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc.; The Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and The Woman’s Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). All intercompany transactions have been eliminated in consolidation.

In order to ensure the observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of available resources, PCUSA, A Corporation maintains its financial accounts in accordance with the principles and practices of fund accounting. This is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting purposes into funds established in accordance with their nature or purpose.

(Continued)
NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES
(Continued)

For external reporting purposes, however, PCUSA, A Corporation’s financial statements have been prepared to focus on the organization as a whole and to present balances and transactions classified in accordance with the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Net assets and related activity are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, and permanently restricted as follows:

- **Unrestricted Undesignated** - net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Unrestricted undesignated net assets consist of the accumulation of certain contributions, gifts, bequests, and related income thereon, which are available for general church purposes.

- **Unrestricted Designated** - net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. Unrestricted designated net assets consist of the accumulation of certain contributions, gifts, bequests, and related income thereon that have been designated for specific purposes by the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the General Assembly.

- **Temporarily Restricted** - net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions that may or will be met either by actions of PCUSA, A Corporation or the passage of time. Temporarily restricted net assets primarily consist of contributions and related investment income.

- **Permanently Restricted** - net assets that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions to be maintained permanently by PCUSA, A Corporation. Generally, the donors of these assets permit PCUSA, A Corporation to use all or part of the income earned on related investments for general or specific purposes. Permanently restricted net assets consist primarily of endowment funds and revolving loan funds.

**Cash Equivalents**: For purposes of reporting cash flows, PCUSA, A Corporation considers investments with an original maturity of three months or less when purchased to be cash equivalents.

**Investments**: Investments are recorded at fair value. Investment transactions are recorded on a trade-date basis. Realized gains and losses are recorded using the specific identification of securities sold on funds held by the Foundation and using the historical cost of securities sold on funds held by other investment managers.

The Trustees (“Trustees”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (the “Foundation”) believe that the carrying amount of its alternative investments is a reasonable estimate of fair value as of December 31, 2013 and 2012. Since alternative investments are not readily marketable, the estimated value is subject to uncertainty and therefore may differ from the value that would have been used had a ready market for the investments existed, and such differences could be material.

Long-term investments held by the Foundation represent General Assembly endowment funds, which are generally not available for immediate use.

**Contributions from Congregations**: Contributions from congregations include amounts in-transit at year-end.
NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(Continued)

Allowance for Loan Losses: The allowance for loan losses is maintained at a level considered by management to be adequate to provide for loan losses inherent in the loan portfolio. Management determines the adequacy of the allowance based upon reviews of payment history, recent loss experience, current economic conditions, the risk characteristics of the various categories of loans, and such other factors, which in management’s judgment deserve current recognition in estimating loan losses. The allowance for loan losses is increased by the provision for loan losses and reduced by net loan charge-offs.

Annuity and Life Income Funds: PCUSA, A Corporation is an income beneficiary of trust funds held by the Foundation. In accordance with current accounting standards, PCUSA, A Corporation has recorded, as an asset, the net present value of the future income to be received from the funds.

Inventories: Inventories represent books, periodicals, and curriculum produced by PCUSA, A Corporation for distribution. These items are stated at average cost.

Property and Equipment: Property and equipment consists principally of the PCUSA, A Corporation headquarters building and related land and equipment, domestic properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land, and property held for disposition.

The PCUSA, A Corporation headquarters building and related land and equipment are stated at cost or fair value at the date of donation, if donated. The domestic properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land, and other properties are recorded based on fair value at the date of donation, appraisal value, or replacement cost. Expenditures greater than $5,000 which increase values or extend the useful lives of the respective assets are capitalized. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

PCUSA, A Corporation holds title to various other foreign properties. Such properties include properties used for mission work, cemeteries, undeveloped land, and property held for disposition. PCUSA, A Corp. has administrative responsibility for property taxes, insurance, maintenance, and improvements for these properties. Generally, it is PCUSA, A Corporation’s policy to exclude the cost or donated value of foreign properties from its financial records.

PCUSA, A Corporation reviews for the impairment of long-lived assets subject to depreciation and amortization, including property and equipment, whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of these assets may not be recoverable. If this review were to result in the conclusion that the carrying value of long-lived assets would not be recoverable, then a write down of the assets would be recorded through a charge to net assets equal to the difference in the fair market value of the assets and their carrying value. No such impairment losses were recognized for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012.

Deferred Revenue: PCUSA, A Corporation holds special events each year. Monies received to support future special events are recorded as deferred revenue.
NOTE 2 – BASIS OF PRESENTATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES
(Continued)

Collections: PCUSA, A Corporation’s collections consist of works of art, ecclesiastical objects and papers, historical treasures, archeological specimens, and other assets. The collections, which were acquired through purchases and contributions since PCUSA, A Corporation’s inception, are not recognized as assets on the consolidated statements of financial position. Purchases of collection items are recorded as decreases in unrestricted net assets in the year in which the items are acquired or as temporarily or permanently restricted net assets if the assets used to purchase the items are restricted by donors. Contributed collection items are not reflected on the consolidated financial statements. Proceeds from deaccessions or insurance recoveries are reflected as increases in the appropriate net asset classes.

Use of Estimates: The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements. Estimates also affect the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. The more significant estimates made relate to the valuation of mortgages, loans, contributions receivable, and valuation of investments. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Income Taxes: The Internal Revenue Service has determined that PCUSA, A Corporation is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. However, PCUSA, A Corporation is subject to federal income tax on any unrelated business taxable income.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America prescribe recognition thresholds and measurement attributes for the financial statement recognition and measurement of a tax position taken or expected to be taken in a tax return. Tax benefits or liabilities will be recognized only if the tax position would "more-likely-than-not" be sustained in a tax examination, with a tax examination being presumed to occur. The amount recognized will be the largest amount of tax benefit or liability that is greater than 50% likely of being realized on examination. For tax positions not meeting the more-likely-than-not test, no tax benefit or liability will be recorded. Management has concluded that it is unaware of any tax benefits or liabilities to be recognized at December 31, 2013, and does not expect this to change in the next 12 months.

PCUSA, A Corporation would recognize interest and penalties related to uncertain tax positions in interest and income tax expense, respectively. PCUSA, A Corporation has no amounts accrued for interest or penalties as of December 31, 2013 and 2012. PCUSA, A Corporation is no longer subject to examination by taxing authorities for the years before December 31, 2010.

Subsequent Events: Management has performed an analysis of the activities and transactions subsequent to December 31, 2013 to determine the need for any adjustments to and/or disclosures within the audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2013. Management has performed their analysis through April 23, 2014, which is the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

Reclassification: Certain reclassifications have been made to the 2012 consolidated financial statements to conform to the 2013 consolidated financial statement presentation. These reclassifications had no effect on the change in net assets.

(Continued)
NOTE 3 – NET ASSETS

Temporarily restricted net assets at December 31, 2013 and 2012 are available for the following purposes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church loans</td>
<td>$2,919,833</td>
<td>$2,878,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinishian Memorial Program</td>
<td>23,010,093</td>
<td>20,940,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational seminars and publications</td>
<td>22,600,966</td>
<td>21,144,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission work</td>
<td>21,596,104</td>
<td>19,705,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Disaster Assistance</td>
<td>13,568,413</td>
<td>14,323,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
<td>15,428,829</td>
<td>14,402,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>15,779,665</td>
<td>14,317,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary support</td>
<td>38,668,331</td>
<td>36,261,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian education</td>
<td>12,490,941</td>
<td>11,710,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking/Justice</td>
<td>1,766,859</td>
<td>1,920,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>2,140,180</td>
<td>2,463,689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in Perpetual Trusts</td>
<td>1,552,100</td>
<td>1,448,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic</td>
<td>197,428</td>
<td>149,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>638,765</td>
<td>609,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Foundation/per capita</td>
<td>1,315,870</td>
<td>1,248,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General endowments</td>
<td>38,837,624</td>
<td>30,261,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Development of People</td>
<td>695,789</td>
<td>1,078,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>982,330</td>
<td>915,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$214,190,120</strong></td>
<td><strong>$195,783,280</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Permanently restricted net assets at December 31, 2013 and 2012 are available for the following purposes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church loans</td>
<td>$19,932,701</td>
<td>$19,344,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinishian Memorial Program</td>
<td>10,057,618</td>
<td>9,796,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational seminars and publications</td>
<td>21,322,720</td>
<td>21,004,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission work</td>
<td>4,735,043</td>
<td>4,664,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
<td>6,695,612</td>
<td>6,595,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>12,997,871</td>
<td>12,803,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary support</td>
<td>15,363,363</td>
<td>15,133,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian education</td>
<td>14,659,655</td>
<td>14,448,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking/Justice</td>
<td>86,359</td>
<td>85,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>415,317</td>
<td>409,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in Perpetual Trusts</td>
<td>67,023,221</td>
<td>61,506,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Ethnic</td>
<td>225,562</td>
<td>222,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>103,804</td>
<td>102,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Foundation/per capita</td>
<td>784,629</td>
<td>784,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General endowments</td>
<td>95,885,877</td>
<td>95,320,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>996,522</td>
<td>981,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$271,285,874</strong></td>
<td><strong>$263,202,087</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE 3 – NET ASSETS (Continued)

Net assets released from restrictions during the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012 consisted of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jinishian Memorial Program</td>
<td>$ 1,554,483</td>
<td>$ 1,503,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational seminars and publications</td>
<td>2,803,865</td>
<td>3,735,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission work</td>
<td>6,489,138</td>
<td>8,646,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Disaster Assistance</td>
<td>9,437,853</td>
<td>8,332,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism and Church Growth</td>
<td>6,253,437</td>
<td>3,941,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>2,957,854</td>
<td>2,629,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary support</td>
<td>1,973,167</td>
<td>6,264,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian education</td>
<td>4,701,392</td>
<td>2,717,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacemaking/Justice</td>
<td>2,039,298</td>
<td>1,154,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>2,897,159</td>
<td>2,533,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Development of People</td>
<td>2,298,064</td>
<td>2,117,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>43,405,710</strong></td>
<td><strong>43,576,032</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE 4 – INVESTMENTS

Investments, including long-term investments, are primarily held in common funds managed by the Foundation on behalf of PCUSA, A Corporation. A summary of PCUSA, A Corporation’s ownership of the investments held at December 31, 2013 and 2012 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pooled investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>$ 52,389,914</td>
<td>$ 62,553,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>337,819,087</td>
<td>305,726,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total beneficial interest in pooled investments</td>
<td>390,209,001</td>
<td>368,280,206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other investments held by the Foundation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equities</td>
<td>2,442,300</td>
<td>2,036,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares in New Covenant Mutual Fund</td>
<td>3,800,062</td>
<td>3,425,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total other investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>6,242,362</td>
<td>5,462,618</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other investments</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash equivalents</td>
<td>3,418,937</td>
<td>2,525,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. treasury securities</td>
<td>20,679,538</td>
<td>23,521,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. agency securities</td>
<td>20,513,619</td>
<td>3,440,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate debt securities</td>
<td>2,398,284</td>
<td>18,067,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage-backed securities</td>
<td>2,916,152</td>
<td>3,667,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fixed income securities</td>
<td>35,949</td>
<td>353,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity securities</td>
<td>58,115</td>
<td>62,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>denominational account receipts</td>
<td>10,001,868</td>
<td>9,572,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total other investments</td>
<td>60,022,462</td>
<td>61,211,174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total investments | $ 456,473,825 | $ 434,953,998 |

(Continued)
NOTE 4 – INVESTMENTS (Continued)

PCUSA, A Corporation invests a majority of its funds in the Foundation’s common investment portfolio. Investment balances held by the Foundation are allocated monthly by the Foundation’s management based on the portion of PCUSA, A Corporation’s funding to the total funding of the portfolio. The Foundation’s investment portfolio as of December 31 comprised the following types of investments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preferred and common stock</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed income</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative investments</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Income received by PCUSA, A Corporation from the Foundation is net of administrative fees of outside managers.

NOTE 5 – BENEFICIAL INTEREST IN PERPETUAL TRUSTS

Funds held in trust by others represent resources neither in the possession nor under the control of PCUSA, A Corporation, but held and administered by outside trustees, with PCUSA, A Corporation deriving only income from such funds. Such investments are recorded in the consolidated statement of financial position at the fair value of the principal amounts, which represents the estimated present value of the expected future cash flows, and the income, including fair value adjustments, is recorded in the consolidated statement of activities and changes in net assets.

NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION

In accordance with the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA), the Organization considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

1. The duration and preservation of the fund.
2. The purposes of the donor-restricted endowment fund.
3. General economic conditions.
4. The possible effect of inflation and deflation.
5. The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments.
6. Other resources of the Organization.
7. The investment policies of the Organization.

Appropriation of Endowment Assets: PCUSA, A Corporation has a spending formula agreement with the Foundation whereby PCUSA, A Corporation receives investment income from unrestricted and restricted endowments held by the Foundation on behalf of the General Assembly for mission use.

(Continued)
NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION (Continued)

The current policy calls for a 4.25% annual total return payout rate of the average market value based on the 20-quarter rolling average with an eighteen-month lag. Pursuant to this policy, the Foundation will pay and paid the beneficiaries of certain endowments 4.6% (based on the December 31, 2012 market value) and 5.4% (based on the December 31, 2011 market value) in 2013 and 2012, respectively. The spending formula will be monitored to determine the effects of changing return and inflation expectations on the preservation of purchasing power and the generation of appropriate levels of spendable income.

Investment Policies: The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation are charged with the responsibility of managing the endowment assets of the Church. The overall goal in management of these funds is to generate a long-term total rate of return that provides sustainable distributions to support the mission within reasonable levels of risk.

The Trustees adhere to modern portfolio theory, which has as its basis risk reduction through diversification. Diversification is obtained through the use of multiple asset classes as well as multiple investments within these asset classes. Asset classes that may be used include (but are not limited to) domestic and international stocks and bonds, hedge funds, private equity (venture capital and corporate finance), and real property (real estate, minerals, and timber). The investment strategy is implemented through the selection of external advisors and managers with expertise and successful histories in the management of specific asset classes.

The Trustees believe their role is one of setting and reviewing policy; and retaining, monitoring, and evaluating advisors and investment managers. It is the Trustees’ desire to find ways to invest these funds in accordance with the social witness principles of the PCUSA. The Trustees will review the investment policy statement at least annually.

The primary financial objectives of the investment funds (“Fund”) are to (1) provide a stream of relatively stable and constant earnings in support of annual budgetary needs and (2) to preserve and enhance the real (inflation-adjusted) purchasing power of the Fund.

The long-term investment objective of the Fund is to attain a real total annualized return of at least 5% The calculation of real total return includes all realized and unrealized capital changes plus all interest, rent, dividend, and other income earned by the portfolio, adjusted for inflation, during a year, net of investment expenses, on average, over a five-to-seven year period. Secondary objectives are to (1) outperform the Fund’s custom benchmark, a weighted average return based on the target asset allocation and index returns and (2) to outperform the median return of a pool of endowment funds with broadly similar investment objectives and policies. The Fund’s objective is to attain estimated nominal compound return of 7.8% with a standard deviation of 10.9% of the current portfolio.
### NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION (Continued)

Endowment net asset composition as of December 31:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor-restricted endowment funds</td>
<td>(3,615,235)</td>
<td>175,044,929</td>
<td>271,285,874</td>
<td>442,715,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board-designated funds</td>
<td>39,326,017</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39,326,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total endowment net assets</td>
<td>35,710,782</td>
<td>175,044,929</td>
<td>271,285,874</td>
<td>482,041,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets other than endowment</td>
<td>20,816,780</td>
<td>39,145,191</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>59,961,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>56,527,562</td>
<td>214,190,120</td>
<td>271,285,874</td>
<td>542,003,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor-restricted endowment funds</td>
<td>(5,510,956)</td>
<td>157,156,798</td>
<td>263,202,087</td>
<td>414,847,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board-designated funds</td>
<td>43,584,864</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>43,584,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total endowment net assets</td>
<td>38,073,908</td>
<td>157,156,798</td>
<td>263,202,087</td>
<td>458,432,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets other than endowment</td>
<td>18,091,278</td>
<td>38,626,482</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>56,717,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total net assets</td>
<td>56,165,186</td>
<td>195,783,280</td>
<td>263,202,087</td>
<td>515,150,553</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NOTE 6 – ENDOWMENT COMPOSITION (Continued)

Changes in endowment net assets for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning balance, January 1, 2013</strong></td>
<td>$ 38,073,908</td>
<td>$ 157,156,798</td>
<td>$ 263,202,087</td>
<td>$ 458,432,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment return</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>356,924</td>
<td>2,722,676</td>
<td>207,936</td>
<td>3,287,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net appreciation</td>
<td>1,372,533</td>
<td>24,847,819</td>
<td>6,045,532</td>
<td>32,265,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total investment return</strong></td>
<td>1,729,457</td>
<td>27,570,495</td>
<td>6,253,468</td>
<td>35,553,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>1,247,883</td>
<td>2,348,029</td>
<td>2,014,930</td>
<td>5,610,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation of endowment assets for expenditure and other changes</td>
<td>(6,340,466)</td>
<td>(12,030,393)</td>
<td>(184,611)</td>
<td>(17,555,470)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ending balance, December 31, 2013</strong></td>
<td>$ 35,710,782</td>
<td>$ 175,044,929</td>
<td>$ 271,285,874</td>
<td>$ 482,041,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning balance, January 1, 2012</strong></td>
<td>$ 30,077,003</td>
<td>$ 147,950,877</td>
<td>$ 257,766,826</td>
<td>$ 435,794,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment return</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>516,611</td>
<td>2,469,552</td>
<td>272,231</td>
<td>3,258,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net appreciation</td>
<td>252,137</td>
<td>20,487,626</td>
<td>4,646,996</td>
<td>25,386,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total investment return</strong></td>
<td>768,748</td>
<td>22,957,178</td>
<td>4,919,227</td>
<td>28,645,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>1,256,524</td>
<td>1,887,078</td>
<td>594,656</td>
<td>3,738,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation of endowment assets for expenditure and other changes</td>
<td>5,971,633</td>
<td>(15,638,335)</td>
<td>(78,622)</td>
<td>(9,745,324)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endowment net assets, December 31, 2012</strong></td>
<td>$ 38,073,908</td>
<td>$ 157,156,798</td>
<td>$ 263,202,087</td>
<td>$ 458,432,793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Funds with Deficiencies:** From time to time, the fair value of assets associated with individual donor restricted endowment funds may fall below the level the donor requires PCUSA, A Corporation to retain as a fund of perpetual duration. Deficiencies of this nature that are reported in unrestricted and designated net assets were $3,615,235 and $5,510,956 as of December 31, 2013 and 2012.
NOTE 7 – MORTGAGES AND LOANS ON CHURCHES AND MANSES

A summary of the activity relating to mortgages and loans on churches and manses during the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receivables at January 1</td>
<td>$2,827,441</td>
<td>$3,317,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayments</td>
<td>(681,201)</td>
<td>(489,693)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables at December 31</td>
<td>2,146,240</td>
<td>2,827,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add accrued interest receivable</td>
<td>2,996</td>
<td>5,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less allowance for loss</td>
<td>(2,250)</td>
<td>(2,850)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net receivables at December 31</td>
<td>$2,146,986</td>
<td>$2,830,521</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ability of each borrower congregation to pay PCUSA, A Corporation for the loan(s) made to the congregation may depend on the contributions the congregation receives from its members. Therefore, payments to PCUSA, A Corporation may depend on the continued growth in membership of the borrower congregations, and on the maintenance of adequate contributions by individual members to their congregations, as well as on prudent management by those congregations of their finances. The following is a summary of the gross loan balances for each Synod at December 31, 2013 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
<td>$257,836</td>
<td>$342,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Trails</td>
<td>352,746</td>
<td>367,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Atlantic</td>
<td>53,335</td>
<td>60,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>190,422</td>
<td>232,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>262,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>896,311</td>
<td>1,053,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California/Hawaii</td>
<td>274,691</td>
<td>279,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>78,285</td>
<td>131,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>9,333</td>
<td>17,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity</td>
<td>33,281</td>
<td>80,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross mortgages and loans receivable</td>
<td>$2,146,240</td>
<td>2,827,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued interest receivable</td>
<td>2,996</td>
<td>5,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less allowance for loan losses</td>
<td>(2,250)</td>
<td>(2,850)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgages and loans receivable, net</td>
<td>$2,146,986</td>
<td>$2,830,521</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE 8 – ALLOWANCES FOR LOAN LOSSES AND IMPAIRMENT OF LOANS

The outstanding principal balances of loans to churches, students, and Presbyterian schools and colleges for which an impairment has been recognized at December 31, 2013 and 2012 were $74,163 and $77,749, respectively, and the related allocated allowances for loan losses at December 31, 2013 and 2012 were $0, resulting in no additional provision for loans for December 31, 2013 or 2012. There was no interest received by PCUSA, A Corporation, on the impaired loans during 2013. The total average impaired loan balances were approximately $3,371 and $3,380 at December 31, 2013 and 2012, respectively.

NOTE 9 – RECEIVABLES FROM RELATED ENTITIES

A summary of the activity relating to receivables from related entities, which includes unsecured student loans of approximately $2 million and $2.3 million, during the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receivables at January 1</td>
<td>$ 7,237,906</td>
<td>$ 8,279,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments and other</td>
<td>13,442,021</td>
<td>13,842,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collections of assessments and other</td>
<td>(12,517,801)</td>
<td>(13,075,964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New loans</td>
<td>312,304</td>
<td>228,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan repayments</td>
<td>(518,937)</td>
<td>(463,992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge-offs</td>
<td>(1,495,582)</td>
<td>(1,573,353)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables at December 31</td>
<td>6,459,911</td>
<td>7,237,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less allowance for loss</td>
<td>(2,158,889)</td>
<td>(2,005,546)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net receivables at December 31</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 4,301,022</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 5,232,360</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE 10 – PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

The components of property and equipment at December 31, 2013 and 2012 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>$ 3,881,120</td>
<td>$ 3,878,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and building improvements</td>
<td>43,777,808</td>
<td>43,586,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>14,083,681</td>
<td>15,773,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and fixtures</td>
<td>552,583</td>
<td>544,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less accumulated depreciation</td>
<td>(45,295,141)</td>
<td>(45,327,251)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 17,000,051</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 18,456,746</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE 11 – BENEFITS DATA

As explained below in the following paragraphs, PCUSA, A Corporation through the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church USA offers a defined benefit pension plan, long-term disability plan, death benefit plan, a major medical plan, and a retirement savings plan to eligible employees.

Substantially all employees of PCUSA, A Corporation participates in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Benefits Plan”) which is administered by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Board of Pensions”). The Benefits Plan is a comprehensive benefits program, which provides a defined benefit pension plan, a long-term disability plan, a death benefit plan, and a major medical plan. The assets of the Benefits Plan are commingled for investment purposes; however, accounting for each plan is separately maintained.

The defined benefit pension plan's total net assets available for benefits, as reported by the Board of Pensions, were $7,640,065 and $6,764,686 at December 31, 2013 and 2012, respectively. The defined benefit pension plan's total Accumulated Plan Benefit Obligations, as reported by the Board of Pensions, were $5,162,644 and $5,915,483 at December 31, 2013 and 2012, respectively. Since the Benefits Plan is a Church Plan under the Internal Revenue Code, PCUSA, A Corporation has no financial interest in the Benefits Plan assets nor does it have any liability for benefits payable, contingent or otherwise, under the Benefits Plan or its components.

PCUSA, A Corporation pays the entire cost associated with the major medical plan. Employees have the option to purchase additional coverage such as dental, long-term care, and life insurance.

In addition, PCUSA, A Corporation sponsors a retirement savings plan. The employer contribution is designed to provide equalization of the impact of tax differences between clergy and lay personnel. All exempt lay employees are eligible to participate in the employer portion of the plan. PCUSA, A Corporation pays an amount based upon a calculation of tax differences. Contributions to the Plan were $626,789 and $556,484 for 2013 and 2012, respectively.

PCUSA, A Corporation’s expenses for the plans for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administered by Board of Pensions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension plan</td>
<td>$3,773,918</td>
<td>$3,571,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major medical plan</td>
<td>7,038,556</td>
<td>6,454,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,812,474</td>
<td>10,025,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administered by others - retirement savings plan</td>
<td>626,789</td>
<td>556,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$11,439,263</td>
<td>$10,582,436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE 12 – CONCENTRATION OF RISKS

Revenue Risk: PCUSA, A Corporation’s primary source of revenue is contributions from Congregations, Presbyteries, Synods and individuals. The majority of these contributions are transmitted via the Presbyteries that are grouped into 16 Synods comprised of a total of 172 Presbyteries. The following is a summary of the contributions by each of the Synods during the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska-Northwest</td>
<td>$ 773,823</td>
<td>$ 773,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant</td>
<td>2,674,230</td>
<td>2,641,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakes and Prairies</td>
<td>2,295,906</td>
<td>2,349,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Trails</td>
<td>2,153,212</td>
<td>2,469,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Waters</td>
<td>1,474,172</td>
<td>1,578,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-America</td>
<td>1,239,284</td>
<td>1,219,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Atlantic</td>
<td>3,909,904</td>
<td>4,360,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>2,864,660</td>
<td>2,884,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>2,007,180</td>
<td>1,927,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>24,984</td>
<td>34,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>2,940,061</td>
<td>2,825,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California/Hawaii</td>
<td>1,250,499</td>
<td>1,372,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>554,731</td>
<td>726,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rocky Mountains</td>
<td>700,474</td>
<td>720,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>2,384,043</td>
<td>2,249,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity</td>
<td>3,824,546</td>
<td>3,920,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Synods</strong></td>
<td>$31,071,709</td>
<td>$32,055,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals and Other Church-Related</td>
<td>10,912,653</td>
<td>11,188,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$41,984,362</td>
<td>$43,243,822</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Risk: PCUSA, A Corporation maintains cash and cash equivalents with various financial institutions. At times, such cash and cash equivalents may be in excess of the FDIC insurance level.
NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE

United States generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) define and establish a framework for measuring fair value and expand disclosures about fair value measurements. GAAP emphasizes fair value is a market-based measurement and enables the reader of the financial statements to assess the inputs used to develop those measurements by establishing a fair value hierarchy for ranking the quality and reliability of the information used to determine fair values. The assets and liabilities carried at fair value are classified and disclosed in one of the following three categories:

Level 1: Valuations for assets and liabilities traded in active exchange markets, such as the New York Stock Exchange. Valuations are obtained as of the measurement date from readily available pricing sources for market transactions involving identical assets or liabilities (market approach).

Level 2: Valuations for assets and liabilities traded in less active dealer or broker markets. Valuations are obtained from quoted prices by third party pricing sources for similar assets or liabilities; quoted prices in markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated. The valuation methodology for Level 2 investments consists of both income and market approaches, as appropriate for the specific investment.

Level 3: Valuations for assets and liabilities are unobservable and significant. Valuations reflect management’s best estimate of what market participants would use in pricing an asset or liability at the measurement date.

In many cases, a valuation technique used to measure fair value includes inputs from multiple levels of the fair value hierarchy. The lowest level of significant input determines the categorization of the entire fair value measurement in the hierarchy.

Treasury bonds, equities and mutual funds are valued at the closing price reported in the active market in which the bonds are traded (Level 1 inputs). Corporate bonds and agency bonds are valued at quoted prices for identical or similar assets in non-active markets since these bonds trade infrequently (Level 2 inputs - market). Mortgage backed securities are valued using matrix pricing, which is a mathematical technique widely used to value debt securities without relying exclusively on quoted prices for the specific securities, but rather by relying on the securities' relationship to other benchmark quoted securities (Level 2 inputs - market).

The fair value of the certificates of deposit, equity investment, and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment & Loan Program, Inc. denominational accounts were recalculated by applying the interest rate to the initial investments, and no discounts for credit quality or liquidity were determined to be applicable (Level 2 inputs).

The investment in the unitized pool is managed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation. The investment objectives of the fund are to (1) provide a stream of relatively stable and constant earnings in support of annual budgetary needs and (2) preserve and enhance the real (inflation-adjusted) purchasing power of the fund. The Foundation’s investment policy is documented in the Statement of Investment Policies and Objectives for the Endowment Fund amended November 14, 2013.
NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE (Continued)

The underlying investments in the unitized pool are held in accordance with specific guidelines set forth by the Foundation and various targets have been established with regard to allowable investments purchased by the unitized pool. At December 31, 2013, the underlying investments of the unitized pool consist of the following asset classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Class</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stock</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Income</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedge Funds</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Equity</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Withdrawals from the unitized pool are available within 90 days with prior written notice. Pursuant to U.S. GAAP, management has considered redemption restrictions to assess classification of the fair value inputs. As a result, unitized pool assets with redemption periods of 90 days or less are considered Level 2 fair value measurements.

The fair value of the beneficial interests in the perpetual trust assets (life income funds and funds held in trust by others) is based on a valuation model that calculates the present value of estimated distributed income. The valuation model incorporates the fair value of investment holdings, which are readily marketable securities valued at quoted prices and incorporates assumptions that market participants would use in estimating future distributed income. PCUSA, A Corporation is able to compare the valuation model inputs and results to widely available published industry data for reasonableness. PCUSA does not have the ability to redeem the investment within 90 days (Level 3 inputs - market).
NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE (Continued)

Assets and Liabilities Measured on a Recurring Basis

Assets and liabilities measured at fair value on a recurring basis are summarized below for 2013 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets</th>
<th>Significant Other Observable Inputs</th>
<th>Significant Unobservable Inputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total (Level 1)</td>
<td>(Level 2)</td>
<td>(Level 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooled investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>$390,209,001</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$390,209,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments</td>
<td>$390,209,001</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$390,209,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>2,442,300</td>
<td>2,442,300</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equities</td>
<td>2,442,300</td>
<td>2,442,300</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares in New Covenant Mutual fund</td>
<td>3,800,062</td>
<td>3,800,062</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash equivalents</td>
<td>3,418,937</td>
<td>3,418,937</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. treasury securities</td>
<td>20,679,538</td>
<td>20,679,538</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. agency securities</td>
<td>20,513,619</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,513,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate debt securities</td>
<td>2,398,284</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,398,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage-backed securities</td>
<td>2,916,152</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,916,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fixed income securities</td>
<td>35,949</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity securities</td>
<td>58,115</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>58,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>68,575,320</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$515,047,277</td>
<td>$30,340,837</td>
<td>$416,131,120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE 13 – FAIR VALUE (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Category</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significant Other Observable Inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significant Unobservable Inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Level 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Level 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Level 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooled investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>$368,280,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>$2,036,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares in New Covenant Mutual fund</td>
<td>$3,425,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash equivalents</td>
<td>$2,525,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Treasury securities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. agency securities</td>
<td>$3,440,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate debt securities</td>
<td>$18,067,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage-backed securities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fixed income securities</td>
<td>$353,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity securities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>$62,954,465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below presents a reconciliation of gains and losses for all assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3) for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Category</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quoted Prices in Active Markets for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significant Other Observable Inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significant Unobservable Inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Level 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Level 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Level 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooled investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>$368,280,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments held by the Foundation</td>
<td>$2,036,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares in New Covenant Mutual fund</td>
<td>$3,425,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash equivalents</td>
<td>$2,525,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Treasury securities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. agency securities</td>
<td>$3,440,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate debt securities</td>
<td>$18,067,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage-backed securities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fixed income securities</td>
<td>$353,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity securities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>$62,954,465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certain reclassifications were made in levels in 2012 and 2013; however, there were no transfers during 2012 or 2013.
NOTE 14 – FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

A summary of PCUSA, A Corporation’s operating expenses by functional classification for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program expenses</td>
<td>$ 86,985,945</td>
<td>$ 88,580,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and general expenses</td>
<td>6,140,066</td>
<td>8,449,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising expenses</td>
<td>3,990,121</td>
<td>3,562,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 97,116,132</td>
<td>$ 100,592,564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The amount of fundraising expenses as a percentage of funds raised was 11% and 9% for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012, respectively.

NOTE 15 – COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

PCUSA, A Corporation holds and participates in an insurance fund (the “Fund”) that exists to provide a source of funds for that portion of certain losses not covered by commercial insurance to cover deductibles on commercial insurance and for certain classes of uninsured losses. Various General Assembly-level agencies and corporations are included in the Fund. The largest possible loss to be assumed in any one event or occurrence is $250,000, with $1,000,000 as the largest potential aggregate of all claims in a single calendar year.

The minimum balance of the self-insurance fund shall not fall below $5,000,000 as a result of claims paid. In the event this happens, an assessment will be made to the insured entities to return the fund to the $5,000,000 minimum balance. The assessment will be based on each insured entity’s 5-year loss ratio. A 1% minimum assessment will be made by the entities that have not experienced any losses in the 5-year period. The balance of the Fund reflected as designated net assets by PCUSA, A Corporation was $6,010,024 and $5,337,534 at December 31, 2013 and 2012, respectively.

During the ordinary course of business, PCUSA, A Corporation is subject to pending and threatened legal actions. Management of PCUSA, A Corporation does not believe that any of these actions will have a material adverse effect on PCUSA, A Corporation’s consolidated financial position or change in net assets.
NOTE 16 – RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Foundation

The Foundation provides certain investment, custodial, and deferred giving services to PCUSA, A Corporation. The Foundation recoups the cost of those services not covered from the income of its own endowment funds and the annual grant from the General Assembly by quarterly charges against the investment pools in which the funds administered by the Foundation are invested. These charges were recovered equally from the principal and income of these pools. Such costs consist of salary and benefits (50% of the Foundation’s operating expenses); outside investment services (23% of the Foundation’s operating expenses); and other operating expenses (27% of the Foundation’s operating expenses).

The income received by PCUSA, A Corporation from the Foundation is net of administrative fees of outside managers as described previously. PCUSA, A Corporation’s investments and unrestricted and restricted endowment funds held by the Foundation on behalf of the General Assembly at December 31, 2013 and 2012, totaled approximately $396,000,000 and $374,000,000, respectively.

The Foundation’s custodial cost recovery and investment management fees are assessed daily based on the prior day’s market value against the total fund.

Board of National Missions

There are certain church loan funds whereby the fiduciary ownership belongs to the Board of National Missions, a constituent corporation of the Foundation. PCUSA, A Corp. is the disbursing agent for those funds under a limited power of attorney from the Foundation. PILP administers the Loan Program under an administrative services agreement with PCUSA, A. Corp. Accordingly, these funds are not reflected in the consolidated financial statements but are administered by PCUSA, A Corporation. These loan funds were approximately $237,000,000 and $220,000,000 at December 31, 2013 and 2012, respectively.

Board of Pensions

PCUSA, A Corporation served as a receiving agent for funds designated for the Board of Pensions. PCUSA, A Corporation received $1,496,769 and $1,748,704 for the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012, of which $408,409 and $933,631 was yet to be remitted to the Board of Pensions.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc.

PCUSA, A Corporation leases office space and provides administrative support to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. (“PILP”) by contract. For the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012, administrative support charged to PILP was $140,736 and $137,976, respectively. Office space charged to PILP was $57,039 and $55,932 for 2013 and 2012, respectively.

On June 29, 2000, PCUSA, A Corporation entered into an operating agreement with PILP under which PILP will provide administrative services (e.g., origination and loan servicing) for PCUSA, A Corporation’s church loan program at cost in an effort to streamline the coordination process between PCUSA, A Corporation’s church loan program and PILP’s loan program. PCUSA, A Corporation reimbursed PILP $309,960 and $289,325 for the actual costs of such services during 2013 and 2012, respectively.
NOTE 16 – RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (Continued)

PCUSA, A Corporation and PILP have issued joint loans through a participation arrangement. For the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012, total loans outstanding were $36,286,837 and $36,417,627, respectively, under this participation arrangement.

The current commitment, effective May 1, 2010, to PILP is a five-year commitment to invest up to $5,000,000 in short and intermediate term accounts called denominational account receipts (DAR). As of December 31, 2013 and 2012, investments with PILP were $9,685,868 and $9,572,287, respectively. At December 31, 2013 and 2012, fixed interest rates ranged from 0.65% to 2.03% and 0.80% to 2.27%, respectively, and the adjustable rate ranged from 0.45% to 0.90% and 0.90% to 1.19%, respectively. For the year ended December 31, 2013, the Foundation did not invest with PILP from PCUSA, A Corporation’s unrestricted endowment funds.

Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

PCUSA, A Corporation leases office space to Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (“PPC”) under an operating lease. For the years ended December 31, 2013 and 2012, rental income was $152,693 and $140,860. Future minimum rental income under the operating lease, which expires in December 2014 with an option to renew, is $156,770 annually.

Other related expenses charged to PPC for telephone, postage, and copy services were $106,187 and $66,760 in 2013 and 2012, respectively.

PPC pays PCUSA for supplemental warehousing and distribution services. Fees paid by PPC under this agreement in 2013 and 2012 were $43,939 and $29,436 for fulfillment fees and $241,016 and $140,194 for freight, respectively.

PPC publishes various pamphlets, magazines, and books for PCUSA, A Corporation during the year on a project-by-project basis. Expenses related to this type of work in 2013 and 2012 were $241,871 and $0, respectively. PPC also pays PCUSA, A Corporation for advertising space in various church publications. Advertising expense under such arrangements was $13,690 and $135 in 2013 and 2012, respectively.

Insurance

PCUSA, A Corporation participates in commercial insurance programs, whereby premiums are negotiated and paid by PCUSA, A Corporation. The Board of Pensions, Foundation, PILP, and PPC reimburse PCUSA, A Corporation for expenses paid on their behalf. Expenses incurred for commercial insurance paid by PCUSA, A Corporation for December 31, 2013 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>$110,048</td>
<td>$104,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pensions</td>
<td>463,480</td>
<td>461,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PILP</td>
<td>77,074</td>
<td>52,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPC</td>
<td>82,809</td>
<td>75,568</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ASSETS

**Cash and cash equivalents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments held by the Foundation - short-term</td>
<td>$3,349,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments and accrued income</td>
<td>($7,779,923)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other investments held by Foundation</td>
<td>$6,242,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>$68,575,320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contributions receivable from congregations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments held by the Foundation - long-term</td>
<td>$301,507,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mortgages and loans on churches and manses, including accrued interest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in pooled investments held</td>
<td>$433,261,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accounts payable and accrued expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>$449,663,796</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Amounts held for missionaries and committed for projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>$459,644,285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Deferred revenue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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**Total liabilities and net assets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>$542,003,556</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

**Liabilities:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Amount</th>
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**Net assets:**

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</tbody>
</table>
## Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a Corporation

**Year ended December 31, 2013**

### Revenues, gains, and other support

#### Contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Revenues, Gains, and Other Support</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
<th>Presbyterian Women</th>
<th>Gifts, bequests, and grants</th>
<th>Special giving and special offering</th>
<th>Total Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$10,762,796</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,815</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,125,604</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17,411,654</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33,137,889</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Investment return

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Investment Return</th>
<th>Investment Return</th>
<th>Investment Return</th>
<th>Investment Return</th>
<th>Investment Return</th>
<th>Total Investment Return</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$3,772,785</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$1,019,298</td>
<td>$25,560</td>
<td>$37,930,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,815</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,090</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>308,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,125,604</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,019,298</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>308,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17,411,654</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25,560</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>308,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33,137,889</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25,560</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>308,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Interest income from loans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Interest Income from Loans</th>
<th>Interest Income from Loans</th>
<th>Interest Income from Loans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$2,314,258</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$2,314,258</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Total expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$55,271,858</td>
<td>$1,981,116</td>
<td>$1,367,982</td>
<td>$1,394,096</td>
<td>$2,649,543</td>
<td>$1,317,969</td>
<td>$8,015,654</td>
<td>$1,948,413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Change in net assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$406,959,648</td>
<td>$-239,328</td>
<td>$10,231,485</td>
<td>$1,870,784</td>
<td>$2,620,420</td>
<td>$949,438</td>
<td>$795,348</td>
<td>$2,242,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$26,201,819</td>
<td>$-120,391</td>
<td>$609,129</td>
<td>$159,079</td>
<td>$80,035</td>
<td>$28,937</td>
<td>$49,372</td>
<td>$128,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$406,959,648</td>
<td>$-239,328</td>
<td>$10,231,485</td>
<td>$1,870,784</td>
<td>$2,620,420</td>
<td>$949,438</td>
<td>$795,348</td>
<td>$2,242,522</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Change in cash and cash equivalents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents</th>
<th>Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents</th>
<th>Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents</th>
<th>Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents</th>
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<th>Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents</th>
<th>Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Change in capital stock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
<th>Change in Capital Stock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Change in retained earnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Change in Retained Earnings</th>
<th>Change in Retained Earnings</th>
<th>Change in Retained Earnings</th>
<th>Change in Retained Earnings</th>
<th>Change in Retained Earnings</th>
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<th>Change in Retained Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of sales</td>
<td>726,001</td>
<td>457,211</td>
<td>283,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and benefits</td>
<td>32,050,884</td>
<td>1,104,176</td>
<td>767,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>1,257,208</td>
<td>58,363</td>
<td>1,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>449,099</td>
<td>7,085</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>4,954,840</td>
<td>230,379</td>
<td>1,367,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>5,253,945</td>
<td>123,922</td>
<td>2,620,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource development</td>
<td>141,397</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,367,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,394,394</td>
<td>230,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>$55,271,858</td>
<td>$1,981,116</td>
<td>$1,367,982</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Change in net assets

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$26,201,819</td>
<td>$-120,391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Net assets at beginning of year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Net Assets at Beginning of Year</th>
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### Net assets at end of year

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<th>Net Assets at End of Year</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$433,261,467</td>
<td>$-15,607,387</td>
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### Notes to the Financial Statements

1. The above financial statements have been prepared in accordance with United States generally accepted accounting principles.
2. The above financial statements reflect all significant transactions and adjustments necessary to present fairly the financial position and results of operations of the organization.
3. The above financial statements include all significant notes and partial year adjustments.

### Summary

The above financial statements present the financial position, results of operations, and cash flows of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a corporation, for the year ended December 31, 2013. The organization's fiscal year is the calendar year. The financial statements are presented in accordance with United States generally accepted accounting principles. The statements include all significant notes and partial year adjustments. The financial statements reflect all significant transactions and adjustments necessary to present fairly the financial position and results of operations of the organization.
First, provide data about your organization’s exempt employees, those not eligible for overtime pay.

Q-1a. Please report your total number of exempt male employees in each category below—regular full-time and regular part-time exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Exempt Males:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic and/or Latino males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q-1b. Please report your total number of exempt female employees in each category—regular full-time and regular part-time exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Exempt Females:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic and/or Latina females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second, provide data about your organization’s non-exempt employees, those eligible for overtime pay.

Q-2a. Please report your total number of non-exempt male employees in each category below—regular full-time and regular part-time non-exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Non-exempt Males:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic and/or Latino males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not Hispanic/Latino) males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q-2b. Please report your total number of non-exempt female employees in each category below—regular full-time and regular part-time non-exempt employees. If you have no employees in a given category, enter “0” (zero).

Non-exempt Females:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and or Native Alaskan (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and/or African American (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic and/or Latina females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not Hispanic/Latina) females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exempt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Racial Ethnic</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Racial Ethnic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figures include data received as of 1/27/2014.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Non-Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Non-Exempt</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
<th>Grand %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or More Races</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>66</td>
<td>146</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>158</td>
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<td>304</td>
<td>32</td>
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</table>

**Totals** 96 75 171 30.2% 99 79 178 31.4% 349 61.6% 34 22 56 9.9% 81 81 162 28.6% 218 38.4% 567 100.0%

**Theo Total Racial Ethnic** 16 9 25 4.4% 14 6 20 3.5% 45 7.9% 2 6 8 1.4% 7 14 21 3.7% 29 5.1% 74 1.4%

**Women** 169 9 178 32.4% 81 81 162 28.6% 297 54.1% 141 25.7%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Non-Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Non-Exempt</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
<th>Grand %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Part Time</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>16.6%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</td>
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<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or More Races</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>133</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>47</td>
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</table>

**Totals** 164 2 166 30.2% 169 9 178 32.4% 344 62.7% 71 9 86 15.7% 93 26 119 21.7% 205 37.3% 549 100.0%

**Theo Total Racial Ethnic** 33 0 33 6.0% 42 4 46 8.4% 79 14.4% 30 3 33 6.0% 23 6 29 5.3% 62 11.3% 141 25.7%

**Women** 0 0 0 0.0% 16 9 178 32.4% 29 5.1% 141 25.7%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Non-Exempt Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Non-Exempt</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
<th>Grand %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUBBARD PRESS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pac. Isl.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or More Races</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals** 12 0 12 38.7% 16 2 18 58.1% 30 96.8% 0 1 1 3.2% 0 0 0 0.0% 1 3.2% 31 100.0%

**Women** 2 0 2 6.5% 5 1 6 19.4% 8 25.8% 0 0 0 0.0% 8 25.8% 18 58.1%

---

Note: Figures include data received as of 1/27/2014.
### Attachment C: 2013 Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Workforce Staff Analysis Report

#### Exempt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PILP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or More Races</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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</table>

#### Non-Exempt

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<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOP</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.7%</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
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Note: Figures include data received as of 1/27/2014.
Item 09-01

[The assembly answered Item 09-01 by the action taken on Item 09-07. See pp. 32, 36.]

On Taking Meaningful Action to Reduce Gun Violence—From the Presbytery of National Capital.

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve the following resolution:

The PC(USA) and its constituent parts recommits itself to work with federal, state, and local legislators to pass laws that will:

• require licensing, registration, and waiting periods to allow comprehensive background checks, and cooling-off periods;
• close the “gun show loophole” by requiring background checks for all gun buyers;
• ban semiautomatic assault weapons, armor piercing handgun ammunition, and .50 caliber sniper rifles;
• advocate for new technologies to aid law-enforcement agencies to trace crime guns and promote public safety;
• raise the age for handgun ownership to the age of twenty-one;
• following the recommendation of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, support laws to “require judges and law enforcement to remove guns from situations of domestic violence, as well as from people whose adjudicated mental illness, drug use, or previous criminal record suggests the possibility of violence,” and to increase police training in nonviolent proactive intervention.”

Rationale

The entire nation is mourning the senseless loss of human life in Newtown, Connecticut; in Blacksburg, Virginia; in Portland, Oregon; in Aurora, Colorado; in Tucson, Arizona; in Tulsa, Oklahoma; in Oak Creek, Wisconsin; and elsewhere caused by gun violence.

Our president asked God “to honor the memory of the victims and, in the words of scripture, to heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds” and implored the nation to “take meaningful action to prevent this from happening again, regardless of the politics.”

In 2010, the 219th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved a recommendation that all PC(USA) congregations take seriously the pervasive use of gun violence in our country and take various measures to educate our membership and our public officials. (See Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 39, 41–42, 830ff.)

As a church, we, the PC(USA), confess that we have not responded strongly enough to the continuing number of killings and repent our failure to demand more of ourselves to ensure that adequate laws are passed to reduce gun violence.

Concurrence to Item 09-01 from the Presbyteries of Chicago and Detroit.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that this item be answered by the action taken on Item 09-07.

While agreeing with the proponent presbyteries that the measures they cite have generally not been enacted, these measures have been approved by General Assemblies relatively recently. Item 09-07 presents both an opportunity to affirm a more comprehensive approach and specific new strategy related to gun free zones.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-01.

It is an irrefutable fact that gun violence of all kinds occurs more frequently, and has an unbridled and devastating impact on racial ethnic families and communities than any others—particularly the African American and Hispanic communities in our country. For the PC(USA) not to overwhelmingly approve and support this overture would reflect a dispassionate and
perceptibly aggressively insensitive attitude toward “the least of these ...” constitute a default on our obligation to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the Gospel mandate. If the PC(USA), one of the “White Mainline Denominations,” remains, perceptibly, and by people of color, conspicuously silent on an issue that screams out in racial overtones, that silence would represent a totally illogical and deceptive position coming for a church that imposed a decade-long mandate (2000–2010) to increase racial ethnic membership by 20 percent while simultaneously shifting its focus from a mono-cultural to an arguably ambiguous “multicultural” emphasis.

The ACREC would like to draw attention to the need to expand the list of locations affected by gun violence offered in the rationale to include cities and states such as Los Angeles and Oakland, Calif., Jacksonville and Sanford, Fla., Chicago, Ill., Detroit, Mich., Newark, N.J., New York, and Philadelphia, Pa., just to name a few. With the amount of worldwide notoriety each has gained in its own right with regard to gun violence, the mere omission of each place, again, speaks volumes about the church’s lack awareness or its gross insensitivity towards the people of color most victimized by gun violence. A church espousing a genuine desire for diversity and inclusiveness can ill afford this characterization.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-01

Comment on Item 09-01—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries are engaged in addressing the issues related to eradicating gun violence in the United States in response to the 219th General Assembly (2010): http://www.pcusa.org/resource/gun-violence-gospel-values-mobilizing-response-god/. The Presbyterian Mission Agency has developed numerous resources to equip congregations to respond to concerns about gun violence (http://www.presbyterianmission.org/gunviolence/).

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Peacemaking Program, and the Office of Public Witness are working collaboratively to both raise awareness and promote the passing of commonsense gun laws in local communities, states, and the U.S. Congress. The promotion of effective advocacy strategies and ways that congregations can become involved in reducing gun violence are being promoted through the collaborative efforts of these three programs. The PC(USA) documentary, Trigger, is being promoted through mid councils, local congregations, and community-based organizations across the country (http://triggerdoc.com/). A petition drive calling for commonsense gun laws is continuing until national legislators pass commonsense gun laws.

Item 09-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 09-02. See pp. 35, 36.]

On Entering a Two-Year Season of Reflection on the Plight of Unwanted Children, and Appointing a Special Committee on Abortion Review—From the Presbytery of South Alabama.

The Presbytery of South Alabama overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to do the following:

1. Call for the Presbyterian Mission Agency and member congregations to enter a two-year season of reflection upon the plight of children unwanted by human society, both born and not-yet born, and to purposefully seek to enter the pure worship of God by offering aid, comfort, and the Gospel to those responsible for the care of our most desperate orphans (including those who survive abortion procedures): parents, siblings, church and community leaders, and the medical profession.

2. Direct the Moderator of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk to issue statements that denounce the practice of killing babies born live following an abortion procedure, such as was revealed in the Dr. Kermit Gosnell clinic in Philadelphia.

3. Direct the Moderator to appoint a Special Committee on Abortion Review, carefully balanced with members representing both pro-life and pro-choice viewpoints, to

   a. Conduct a thorough assessment of the financial, in-kind, lodging, publicity, and staff support that the PC(USA) provides to organizations such as Planned Parenthood, Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options, Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and other abortion providers or pro-choice organizations. A similar review should be made of denominational support provided for pro-life organizations and pro-life crisis-pregnancy support centers.

   b. Review existing policies and, if needed, propose new policies that will more accurately represent the PC(USA) in its breadth of conviction about abortion, taking into account our churches’ desire to worship God in purest form (Jas. 1:27). Any new policies shall incorporate more fully the voices of pro-life Presbyterians, who have to this point largely been kept silent in denominational advocacy.
Most, if not all, of the special committee meetings should be conducted in virtual conferences using appropriate audio-visual technology. The Special Committee on Abortion Review shall report its findings and recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Rationale

The blood of little children cries out to God and to Christ’s Church for protection and justice.

The 2013 trial and conviction of Philadelphia abortion doctor Kermit Gosnell has placed Planned Parenthood abortion clinics and similar organizations under suspicion for tolerating medical abuse of both mothers and infants (see http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/wp/2013/05/30/nurses-describe-unsafe-conditions-at-delaware-abortion-clinic/).

Neither the PC(USA) Stated Clerk in Louisville nor the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office have called for corrective medical regulations (federal or state) for Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers, nor have our denominational representatives offered a single word of protest against the taking of innocent life at Planned Parenthood and other abortion clinics.

The clear teaching of Scriptures reveals that human life is sacred to God primarily because human life is created in God’s image (Gen. 1:27). Ancient Israel was taught to value life while it was still in the womb (Ex. 21: 22–23); the glory of the Creator’s handiwork in the womb is profoundly revealed by the Psalmist (Psalm 139); Jesus taught God’s especially tender love for innocent and defenseless children (Mk. 10:14–16; Mt. 19:13–15; Lk. 18: 15–17). Numerous Old Testament passages (Lev. 18:21; Jer. 19:4 and 32:35; Ps. 106: 37-39) clearly warn against offering children as sacrifices to please the god(s) of pagan culture (today, the gods of convenience and pleasure).

The New Testament scriptures clearly teach that the purest expression of religion in the sight of our God and heavenly Father is to care particularly for orphans and widows during their times of distress, and to keep ourselves unstained by the world (Jas. 1:27).

The Presbytery of South Alabama recognizes the spiritual duty of church councils to be faithful in carrying out their constitutional responsibility of being proactive, “warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community” (Book of Order, G-3.0201c)

Concurrence to Item 09-02 from the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 09-02.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the grave moral issues raised by Item 09-02 have received, and continue to receive, significant attention, concern, and action by the church. With brevity, we describe some of these actions.

In response to (1) in Item 09-02, ACSWP advises that the concern expressed for the well-being of born children, as well as for the unborn, reflects longstanding church policies that call Presbyterians to reflection and action. In 1950 the PCUSA assembly declared the church’s responsibility for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of children. Throughout subsequent decades, assemblies have adopted innumerable policies, resulting in programs and advocacy, directed to the multitude of conditions that compromise and threaten the well-being of children: inadequate healthcare, including prenatal care; inadequate nutrition; unsafe housing; and lack of good, affordable childcare, among others. With 22 percent of U.S. children living in poverty today, these issues remain critical. Recent Federal legislation cutting food stamps to low-income families reminds us of the need for constant vigilance on behalf of children and their mothers. The PC(USA) has also consistently encouraged Presbyterians to become involved in adoption and foster parenting, especially for children with special needs. (See “Adoption of Children with Special Needs,” 211th General Assembly (1999).)

While acknowledging that “we do not have substantial agreement on when human life begins,” (Minutes, 1992, Part I, paragraph 27.102) the church’s concern for the unborn is clearly stated in its current policy on problem pregnancies and abortion, “Do Justice, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly,” (204th General Assembly, 1992). Here the church calls upon Presbyterians to address the concerns that bring women to contemplate abortion: “poverty, unjust social realities, sexism, racism, and inadequate supportive relationships” (Ibid. 27.101). In addition, this policy urges churches to support women by providing various alternatives to abortion:
Presbyterian churches are urged to consider expanding or offering such resources as adoptive services, homes for pregnant women who lack the necessary financial and emotional support for childbirth and child rearing, and pregnancy counseling. In 1986, the General Assembly of the PC(USA) took a step in this direction in recommending that resource centers be set up for alternatives to abortion within each presbytery (Minutes, 1992, Part I, p. 372).

In response to (2), the ACSWP advises that as recently as 2006, the 217th General Assembly clarified the churches policy on late-term abortions or miscarriages:

> We affirm that the lives of viable unborn babies—those well-developed enough to survive outside the womb if delivered—ought to be preserved and cared for and not aborted. In cases where problems of life or health of the mother arise in a pregnancy, the church supports efforts to protect the life and health of both the mother and the baby. When late-term pregnancies must be terminated, we urge decisions intended to deliver the baby alive.7

Regardless of one’s support or opposition to legal abortion, the case of Dr. Gosnell is abhorrent to all. While statements in opposition to Dr. Gosnell’s actions would accurately reflect church policy, as well as the standards of our society and the practices of the medical community, the Moderator and Stated Clerk do not typically comment on criminal cases.

In response to (3.b), the ACSWP advises that Item 09-02 contains basic misunderstandings of the church’s policies and actions related to problem pregnancies and abortion. At its core, the church’s policy affirms that, in face of the “complicated and insolvable circumstances” surrounding problem pregnancies, it has “neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decide each situation” for women (Ibid. 27.090). Therefore, it affirms “... the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies” (Ibid. 27.091). The position of the church is not pro-abortion. However, the PC(USA) recognizes that there are circumstances when abortion may be a responsible choice within a Christian ethical framework. Thus, to support women’s reproductive choices, the church advocates for women’s access to family planning services, including fertility aid, contraception and, as a last resort, abortion. This position is consistent with longstanding Presbyterian affirmations of freedom of conscience informed by the Holy Spirit.

The positions expressed in the Rationale to Item 09-02 would, in fact, require a radically different policy on problem pregnancies and abortion. Perhaps for this reason, Item 09-02 calls for the appointment of a Special Committee on Abortion Review. However, the development of social witness policy for the denomination cannot be accomplished with a simple for or against discussion. Any study to reconsider the social witness policy of the PC(USA) would need to conform to the standards and procedures established for making social witness policy by the 205th General Assembly (1993). These require that the task force assigned this responsibility develop a plan for the involvement of the whole church. It must also listen to the biblical text, theological views, Reformed Confessions, sociopolitical disciplines, past policy statements, the advice of members and governing bodies, the counsel of ecumenical partners, and the insights of those who are poor or victims of existing policies. (See “Why and How the Church Makes a Social Policy Witness,” 205th General Assembly (1993)). Appropriately, this is an extensive process over several years, which in this case, would involve serious medical and theological/ethical expertise. The current 1992 policy involved a committee of fourteen working for three years. It also seems inappropriate to the subject matter and depth of concern to consider doing such a study by “audio-visual technology,” though the desire to save money can be appreciated. In fact, if the General Assembly were to approve the development of a new policy according to its current standards, which include circulating a church-wide study document and holding a consultation with representatives of all synods, the financial implications would be quite a bit higher than those attached to this Item.

We note that a similar proposal for a new study was brought to the 220th General Assembly (2012). The committee considering the proposal made the following comment describing the church’s current (1992) policy:

> This noteworthy study brought twenty years of relative peace on a matter that has been a source of intense conflict in the PC(USA) for many years prior to the study. The study accomplished no mean feat in setting forth common ground that Presbyterian can gather around; common ground that eschews partisanship on either side of the cultural divide. We found insight and guidance in this document that was both eloquent and relevant to our work; therefore we do not see the need for a new study but rather commend the existing study to our church.7

The 220th General Assembly (2012) followed the committee’s advice and did not approve a new study.

Item 09-02 itself does not seem convinced that a new study would be needed. In section (3.b.), it states “Review existing policies and, if needed, propose new policies” [italics added]. While repeated General Assemblies have supported full reproductive rights for four decades, any review and proposed changes in church policy would need to be based on the well-grounded theological and bioethical discernment as noted above.

In response to (3.a), the ACSWP advises that this information is readily available. Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options (PARO) is one of the ten networks of the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association (PHEWA), a ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency established by the General Assembly in 1956 (168th General Assembly, United Presbyterian Church (USA)). One staff position in the PMA supports the work of PHEWA’s ten networks. As a PHEWA network, PARO is composed of volunteers committed to promoting, explaining, and defending the problem pregnancies and abortion policies of the PC(USA). As of the 2014 budget of the PMA, PHEWA networks no longer receive the small grants ($2,500 each in 2013) that were made available by dedicated funds which have now been depleted.
As with other social justice policies, General Assembly entities, such as the Office for Social Witness, may join in partnership with other religious and secular groups that have mutual concerns. Thus, both the PMA and PARO are members of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, an organization of almost thirty member religious organizations whose denominational policies support women’s access to reproductive choices. The PC(USA) provides no financial support to RCRC. The PC(USA) has no connection to Planned Parenthood and makes no financial contributions.

Endnotes


ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 09-02.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy’s (ACSWP) Advice and Counsel Item 09-02.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-02

Comment on Item 09-02—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-02

Comment on Item 09-02—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) affirmed the monitoring report from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), which reviews the implementation of problem pregnancies and abortion policies. Presbyterian Mission Agency ministries preparing resources on problem pregnancies and abortion strive to reflect a diversity of opinion in the resources that are produced. Resources revised in 2010 prepared by Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries cover the range of faithful responses in these difficult situations, and they include: Problem Pregnancy: When No Choice Is Easy—For the Pregnant Woman; There’s Always A Father—Does the Father Have a Problem, Too?, When Pregnancy Involves Loss—Helping Others Face Pregnancy Loss; When You Need Wisdom—Helping Others Face Problem Pregnancy.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) reiterated the role of the church in individual and families’ lives as they face problem pregnancy issues:

The church has a responsibility to provide public witness and to offer guidance, counsel, and support to those who make or interpret laws and public policies about abortion and problem pregnancies. Pastors have a duty to counsel with and pray for those who face decisions about problem pregnancies. Congregations have a duty to pray for and support those who face these choices, to offer support for women and families to help make unwanted pregnancies less likely to occur, and to provide practical support for those facing the birth of a child with medical anomalies, birth after rape or incest, or those who face health, economic, or other stresses. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 905)

The 1992 policy states,

Problem pregnancies are the result of, and influenced by, so many complicated and insolvable circumstances that we have neither the wisdom nor the authority to address or decide each situation. Christians seek the guidance of Scripture in the midst of relationships and circumstances of awesome proportions that affect their interpretation and decision making.

We affirm the ability and responsibility of women, guided by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, in the context of their communities of faith, to make good moral choices in regard to problem pregnancies.

We call upon Presbyterians to work for a decrease in the number of problem pregnancies, thereby decreasing the number of abortions.

The considered decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy can be a morally acceptable, though certainly not the only or required, decision. Possible justifying circumstances would include medical indications of severe physical or mental deformity, conception as a result of rape or incest, or conditions under which the physical or mental health of either woman or child would be gravely threatened.
The Christian community must be concerned about and address the circumstances that bring a woman to consider abortion as the best available option. Poverty, unjust societal realities, sexism, racism, and inadequate supportive relationships may render a woman virtually powerless to choose freely. (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 368)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) continues to be guided by the 204th General Assembly (1992) policy on abortion and problem pregnancies and encourages the church to continue to approach this challenging issue with the atmosphere of “open debate and mutual respect” for a variety of opinions (*Minutes*, 1992, Part I, p. 374).

In 2014, there were no funds budgeted in the form of grants from the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to any of the ten networks of Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association, including Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options (PARO). No funds from the PMA were given to Planned Parenthood or the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC).

**Item 09-03**

[There is no recommendation assigned to Item 09-03.]

**Item 09-04**

[The assembly approved Item 09-04. See pp. 15, 36.]

*Regarding a National Moratorium on the Imposition of the Death Penalty—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.*

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

1. Join the 171st (1959), 177th (1965), and the 189th (1977) General Assemblies of the United Presbyterian Church, the 106th General Assembly (1966) of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., and the 197th General Assembly (1985), 212th General Assembly (2000), and 219th General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and declare its continuing opposition to capital punishment.

2. Call for an immediate moratorium on all executions in all jurisdictions that impose capital punishment.

3. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to communicate the call for an immediate moratorium and our continuing opposition to capital punishment to the president of the United States, our representatives in Congress, as well as the governors and legislators of the thirty-four states with persons incarcerated while awaiting execution.

*Rationale*

We are meeting in the State of Michigan, the first English-speaking government in the world to abolish capital punishment in 1846.

This is the fourth anniversary of the last resolution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding capital punishment.

Since 2007, six more states, New Jersey, New York, New Mexico, Illinois, Connecticut, and Maryland, have abolished the death penalty.

We give thanks that the death penalty has been abolished in a total of eighteen states.

Both as Christians and as citizens of the United States of America, we believe that one of the greatest tragedies that can occur is the execution of an innocent person by the state, yet we know that this has occurred repeatedly throughout history.

Human judgment is always fallible, including the judgments of juries and judges deciding death penalty cases.

It has been recognized by numerous authoritative sources that the death penalty has been imposed in a racially discriminatory manner.

No state yet has met standards developed by the American Bar Association for appointment, performance, and compensation of counsel for indigent prisoners.

We recognize that the death penalty is a moral issue that demands paramount discernment by legislative and judicial bodies. Since 1973, 142 people have been released from death row with evidence of their innocence, 58 of these since 2000. From 1973–1999, there was an average of three exonerations per year, nationally. From 2000–2011, there has been an aver-
age of five exonerations per year, nationally (Death Penalty Information Center, Facts about the Death Penalty, current as of September 10, 2013). Given these rates, it is reasonable to assume that judges and juries will continue to make such errors in future death penalty cases. Yet such errors are not morally defensible.

Nor can the legal system, as presently structured, provide any assurance against innocent persons being subjected to the death penalty. In recent years, prisoner appeals have actually been curtailed, increasing the risk of the execution of innocent people. In 1996, new legislation drastically limited federal court review of death penalty appeals and gutted public funding of legal aid services for death row prisoners (PC(USA), 212th General Assembly [2000]).

Further, human judgment is flawed and influenced by human sinfulness. For example, in 1990, the United States General Accounting Office reported a pattern of evidence indicating racial disparities in charging, sentencing, and imposition of the death penalty.

In 82 percent of their studies, race of the victim was found to influence the likelihood of being charged with capital murder or receiving a death sentence, i.e. those who murdered whites were found to be more likely to be sentenced to death than those who murdered blacks. This finding was remarkably consistent across data sets, states, data collection methods, and analytic techniques. The finding held for high-, medium-, and low-quality studies (U.S. General Accounting Office, Report GGD-90-57, Death Penalty Sentencing: Research Indicates Pattern of Racial Disparities, February 26, 1990, 5).

A comprehensive study of the death penalty in North Carolina found that the odds of receiving a death sentence rose by 3.5 times among those defendants whose victims were white (Professor Jack Boger and Dr. Isaac Unah, “Preliminary Report on the Findings of the North Carolina Death Penalty Study 2001,” University of North Carolina, April 16, 2001). A study in California found that those who killed whites were more than three times more likely to be sentenced to death than those who killed blacks and more than four times more likely than those who killed Latinos (Glenn Pierce and Michael Radelet, “The Impact of Legally Inappropriate Factors on Death Sentencing for California Homicides, 1990–1999.” Santa Clara Law Review, Vol. 46. 2005). As of September 10, 2013, among the 1,343 people who have been executed in the United States since 1977, 282 have been executed for interracial murders. Of these, 20 involved white defendants and black victims and 262 involved black defendants and white victims (Death Penalty Information Center, Facts about the Death Penalty, current as of September 10, 2013).

Our legal system does not currently assure that persons accused of crimes receive full economic justice. The right to effective counsel is recognized as one of our most fundamental rights, and one of our most important protections against wrongful convictions. However, about 90 percent of those persons facing capital charges cannot afford their own attorney.

As Christians, we recognize God as sovereign in all spheres of human life, including the political sphere. We declare that God’s commandment against killing is still good law. We follow a Lord who taught us to go beyond “an eye for an eye.” We believe that human individuals and institutions are sinful and make mistakes. And, as humans, we lack any power to correct our errors if we wrongly execute another human being.

Concurrence to Item 09-04 from the Presbytery of Baltimore.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 09-04, a National Moratorium on the Imposition of the Death Penalty, be approved.

Anytime a person is killed by our penal system for a crime they did not commit, a tragedy has occurred. Since advances made in DNA analysis, dozens of prisoners have been cleared of criminal charges after spending decades in prison—most recently in New York in early April, 2014. The data cited in the rationale of the overture provide overwhelming evidence of the inadequacies of our system with regard to providing “equal justice for all.” The deterrent value of the death penalty has also been largely discounted as the United States has among the harshest penal systems—including the death penalty—and yet also has one of the highest murder rates in a country not at war within its territory.

At the deepest level, the initial horror and tragedy of any violent death are not rectified by the addition of another violent death administered—often with erratic cruelty—by the state. Even in cases that approach 100 percent certainty of guilt, the Christian remembers that “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God,” and that yet God desires all to be saved, according to St. Paul. These and other considerations are part of prior General Assembly actions providing theological bases for the choice of mercy even for unrepentant murders—in hope that repentance may come through the work of the Spirit, chaplains, and other dedicated persons who answer the call to visit those in prison.
If the commissioners are in agreement with the basic position of the church in this matter, they might wish to add language encouraging congregations, presbyteries, and synods to work with the Criminal Justice network of the Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association in seeking to extend the abolition of the death penalty to more states and to support federal strategies.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-04.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concern advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-04.

As articulated within Item 09-04, General Assemblies from 1959 to 2010 have declared continued opposition to the death penalty, and while six states have abolished the death penalty between 2007 and 2014, for the remaining thirty-two states, execution is still prevalent. It is recognized that the imposition of the death penalty continues to be “... a moral issue that demands paramount discernment by legislative and judicial bodies” (Rationale for Item 09-04), and that within the judicial system racial disparities in charging, sentencing, and imposition of the death penalty are known (as reported by the United States General Accounting Office and noted within Rationale for Item 09-04).

Furthermore, through the lens of gender justice, an execution, when not affecting a woman herself, affects the remaining family members, e.g. mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, whose loved one lived his final days on death row, and finally, quite possibly, was actually executed. Paradoxically, a sentence of life in prison affords the inmate a greater possibility of rehabilitation and redemption, and affords the inmate’s family members to be a part of his life throughout his life in prison. While incarceration is a very difficult reality for family members, it remains the better scenario when the only other option is death by execution.

Through the lens of Christianity, the ACWC concurs with the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, recognizing God as sovereign in all spheres of human life, and that God’s commandment against killing is still good law. We are all fallible human beings, dependent upon God, and as such, we make mistakes and we are sinful. And, yet, God is good, forgiving, steadfast, and faithful, and we are called to be as Christ-like as humanly possible, especially when considering those for whom these disparities are reality.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-04

Comment on Item 09-04—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Church has opposed the death penalty by action of previous General Assemblies as outlined by this summary, http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/101/capital-punishment/.

The Office of Public Witness (OPW) continues efforts to eliminate the death penalty through active engagement in fair sentencing discussions within ecumenical and interfaith settings. The OPW is connecting to grassroots communities that are organizing around these issues as a majority of the efforts to eliminate the death penalty are taking place in local communities and at the state level.

The recommendations outlined in this overture affirm current policies and raise the visibility of this issue.

Item 09-05

[The assembly approved Item 09-05. See pp. 35, 36.]

On a Two-Year Study to Discern How to Advocate for Effective Drug Policies—From the Presbytery of San Francisco.

The Presbytery of San Francisco overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to call for a two-year study by the governing bodies and members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to discern how to advocate for effective drug policies grounded in science, compassion, and human rights, and to this end, do the following:
1. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, in consultation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, to appoint a Drug Policy Task Force to promote study, discussion, and engagement among church members and congregants and develop a plan of concrete actions and policy recommendations for the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

   a. The task force shall consist of seven to nine selected volunteer members representing the following stakeholders/disciplines: policy analyst/advocate; subject matter specialists in addiction science, criminal justice, and international relations; law enforcement; judicial representative; formerly incarcerated drug offender/drug user activist; defense counsel/community litigator; theologian.

   b. The task force will serve as a clearinghouse for information and discussion of relevant issues; it will create an online presence with diverse, creative, and fact-based information in support of local church study groups.

   c. The task force shall conduct four hearings in different parts of the country (rural, urban, suburban, border) in collaboration with presbyteries to receive a broad range of perspective and stimulate dialogue.

   d. As opportunities for policy reform may arise before possible General Assembly action, the task force will keep individual members, churches, and presbyteries within the PC(USA) informed of relevant policy reform initiatives or action for which they may want to exercise democratic advocacy on their own.

2. Urge all publications and other communication vehicles of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to develop articles, reports, and other materials designed to educate, motivate, and activate church members and congregants to learn about the history, development, and implementation of U.S. drug policies.

3. Recommend that the Criminal Justice Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association focus Criminal Justice Sunday in 2015 on issues related to the impact of drug prohibition.

4. Urge Presbyterian Women (PW) to make drug policy education and reform part of their ongoing work.

5. Urge Presbyterians who are ecumenical staff to advocate for making the impact of punitive drug policies a critical focus of the Summer 2015 meeting of the National Association of Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Staff.

6. Recommend that congregations and councils of the church, as well as the task force designated above, consider the following questions and concerns:

   a. What are the roles, responsibilities, and limits of the state and citizenry in relation to our bodies, particularly with respect to what we market and sell for consumption and what we consume? What does Christian theology suggest about current drug policies, and our social responsibility to ensure health for members of our communities? What are the spiritual and ethical implications of: massive and disproportionate incarceration of drug offenders, especially people of color, and of the militarization of relations with the nations involved in illicit drug cultivation and/or trafficking?

   b. Does current U.S. drug policy achieve its stated goal to reduce production and consumption of illegal drugs, or does it serve other policy goals, institutional interests, societal norms, or systemic forces? If so, how do we define those other goals, interests, norms, and forces?

   c. What laws, policies, programs, and treaties currently govern our nation’s responses to the production, transit, and use of illicit drugs?

   d. What are the consequences of maintaining current punitive drug policies? What might more effective and humane drug policies look like, with regards to the following:

      (1) militarization of law enforcement and the erosion of distinctions between civilian police and military, especially with respect to drug law enforcement;

      (2) relationship between prohibition of drugs and organized crime;

      (3) communities’ use of illegal drugs and the disparate impact that enforcement of drug prohibition has on poor people and racial minorities;

      (4) distinction between harmfulness, addictiveness, and illegality as it relates to use of psychoactive and/or addictive substances;

      (5) allocation of public resources required to enforce current drug policies and effectiveness in addressing underlying problems relating to substance abuse and addiction while programs for social needs such as health, education, and community development are underfunded;
(6) rates of illicit drug use, abuse, and addiction; health effects and impacts on special populations—e.g. mentally ill, homeless, ‘at-risk’ youth, immigrants, victims of sexual violence.

[Financial Implications: Per Capita—$380 (2014); $32,240 (2015); $13,750 (2016)]

Rationale

At the heart of Jesus’ mission is the proclamation of restoration, liberation, and new beginnings. Jesus began his ministry by reading from the prophet Isaiah (Lk. 4:18–19) and identifying his life’s work with transforming the situation of the poor, the oppressed, and the outcast. Following his mission entails participation in very concrete actions of social renewal. Drug prohibition has had a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable members of society—particularly poor blacks and Hispanics. Even though whites outnumber blacks five to one and both groups use and sell drugs at similar rates, African Americans comprise 35 percent of those arrested for drug possession; 55 percent of those convicted for drug possession; and 74 percent of those imprisoned for drug possession. As a result of the more than forty-year-long “war on drugs,” the United States has become the world’s greatest incarcerator—with 5 percent of the global population, we imprison 25 percent of the world’s prisoners, almost half of these are for drug-related crimes. Drug prohibition also has been the primary rationale as well for more than $20 billion spent in the last decade on U.S. military operations and aid in Latin America, where related violence has caused devastating human damage.

Prior General Assemblies have sought to speak to many of these issues, such as the 1971 statement by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) on drug use; the 1993 statement on Freedom and Substance Abuse (Minutes, 1993, Part I, p. 758); the 2002 Resolution on Restorative Justice (Minutes, 2002, Part I, p. 576); the 2003 Resolution Calling for the Abolition of For-Profit Prisons (Minutes, 2003, Part I, p. 439); the action of the 218th General Assembly (2008) calling for withdrawing military support to the government of Colombia (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 1180); the Resolution on Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call of 2010 (Minutes, 2010, part I, p. 334 of the printed copy, p. 830 of the electronic copy), and the Resolution on Racism, Incarceration, and Restoration of 2012 (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 32 of the printed copy, p. 1053 of the electronic copy). Our recognition of the institutional racism in how our drug laws are written, administrated, enforced is a continuation of the need for racial reconciliation identified in the Confession of 1967.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has clearly recognized the moral mandate to reexamine our nation’s current approach to substance abuse and drug-related crime with all its consequences. However, we have not yet dealt directly with our policy of prohibition of, and criminalization for, drug use. Unexamined assumptions in drug policy and in many people’s responses to drugs, as well as the extensive institutional structures and incentives that support current drug policies, mean that efforts to modify or transform policy can be controversial and difficult. The issues are complex, and serious change pushes us into unknown territory. Therefore, we call for a broad-based, all-church study that explores what is practically possible while holding up that which still needs the light of the Gospel.

Concurrence to Item 09-05 from the Presbyteries of Cimarron, New York City, Sacramento, and Santa Fe.

Concurrence to Item 09-05 from the Presbytery of West Virginia (with Additional Rationale).

The reasons and statistics in the overture rationale are equally, if not more, pronounced in West Virginia.

West Virginia is in the top three for per capita use of prescription painkillers and other addictive drugs. Statewide, nearly one-fourth of the newborns whose umbilical cords have been tested for the presence of un-prescribed drugs test positive for drug exposure. Some are permanently injured. Many experience difficult withdrawal symptoms. Well over 90 percent of the crimes handled in West Virginia courts have significant drug and alcohol components. The state has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of children who are victims of abuse and neglect due to substance abuse by their custodians. The majority of the school truancy and dropout cases handled by the courts have substance abuse as one of the root causes.

Research demonstrates the impact of substance abuse on public safety, personal health, and health-care costs, the spread of communicable disease, educational performance and attainment, workforce reliability and productivity, family safety, and financial stability. We are therefore called to engage in study, discussion, and action among church members and church bodies to formulate action and policy recommendations for the 222nd General Assembly (2016) and public policy makers.

Concurrence to Item 09-05 from the Presbytery of Hudson River (with Additional Rationale)

This is supported by the below references:

The Attorney General, Eric Holder, *The Guardian*, August 12, 2023:

- Our system is in many ways broken.
- We cannot simply prosecute or incarcerate our way to becoming a safer nation.
Since the War on Drugs, there have been huge developments in drug courts and drug treatment but mandatory sentencing has acted against those.

In the Christian Science Monitor of September 2, 2013, Mr. Holder is quoted calling for sentencing and other reforms, particularly for those convicted of drug-related crime.

The AFL-CIO at its 2013 convention:

- “We cannot organize a society that provide shared prosperity if we don’t also end mass incarceration.”
- “[W]e support treating drug use as a public health issue and focus on treatment of users.”
- “Impoverish neighborhoods lose thousands of working-age men, families become strained, income streams are lost and families are broken up.”

Michelle Alexander, in The New Jim Crow:

- “There are more African American adults under correctional control today than were enslaved in 1850.”
- “The impact of the drug war has been astounding. In less than thirty years, the U.S. penal population exploded from around 300,000 to more than 2 million, with drug convictions accounting for the majority of the increase.”

The Harvard Magazine, 201/03, “The Prison Problem”:

- Bruce Western, faculty professor says: “A crime-control strategy of locking up more people, and keeping them locked up longer, isn’t working.” He is determined to help the American public understand how crime is shaped by poverty, addiction, and histories of family violence, in an effort to promote a more humane—and more effective—prison policy.

Jesus of Nazareth: “... He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives” (Lk. 4:18).

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-05 with the following comment:

“The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes the urgency and magnitude of addressing from a Christian perspective the legalization and/or decriminalization of certain drugs, the nature and spread of addiction, the need for drug law sentencing and rehabilitation reform, and the tragic legacies of past ‘drug war’ policies both within the United States and in other nations involved in the international drug trade. The impact of substance abuse upon our culture, economy, and religious life is massive. The careful and comprehensive design of this study calls for cooperation across our church, perhaps particularly in states where changes in law are reflecting and changing public attitudes and practices. Given limitations on the number of persons to be appointed, certain important areas of expertise are inevitably underrepresented among the dedicated volunteers specified for the task force (medical specialists in pain management, regulatory agency experts, and advocates for children and youth are among those not mentioned). Similarly, the length of time and range of mobilization are inevitably limited in a two-year process. Thus, if additional resources can be obtained consistent with the commitments, values, and policies of the church, the study task force and appropriate staff are authorized to explore any additional ways to address these limitations to the scope of the study and church engagement.”

The problems of the U.S. policies on illegal drugs are multiple including ineffectiveness in the control of illegal drugs and substances, institutionalized racism and injustice, militarization of law enforcement, escalation of community violence, fostering organized crime, mal-distribution of public resources, and mounting transnational tensions. The overture attempts to target all of these issues with theological and pastoral understanding and a particular concern for institutional racism and the failed attempt to control addictions and punish illegal drug use.

As encompassing as the overture is, it does not address the fact that those same ineffective policies apply collaterally to the illegal medically-related uses of drugs. The problems in the system do not reside exclusively in the justice system and the Drug Enforcement Administration. The weaknesses and failures of the Federal Drug Administration, particularly where rulings are contrary to scientific evidence, bend to the will of industry, or politics, are also at fault and work synergistically to amplify the failures of the “war on drugs.”

In addition, the overture intrinsically focuses on policies that affect adults, leaving outside its scope children and teens who use or distribute illegal drugs. Given the scope of the issue, two years is likely to be a very tight timeframe within which to complete this work. Yet, understanding the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to be recommending no increase in per capita (which would customarily include 10–12 cents for studies of matters of Christian conscience), the Ad-
visory Committee on Social Witness Policy proposes the comment to explain the situation to the broader church and others whose cooperation would be sought if the study were approved.

The overture proponents are correct in the social witness policies that they cite. It may be helpful for commissioners to know also that the former Health Ministries office did produce some resources on addiction in conjunction with the Presbyterian Health, Education, and Welfare Association. See Church & Society magazine issue on “Substance Abuse and the Church” (May/June 1992) [http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/acswp/order-back-issues-church-and-society/]

Clearly, much good work has been done by substance abuse counselors and others within and outside the church since that time, and other relevant work has been done on the relations between mental illness and addiction. Thus, in determining whether to support funding the proposed study, commissioners may take into account the last significant treatment of the matter by the church and how significantly such a study and report might assist the church’s outreach, ministry, adult education and public advocacy.

Endnotes


ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-05.

The establishment of a two-year study and dissemination of information about the impact of U.S. drug policy are important steps in exposing how society has continued to maintain a perpetual second-class citizenry among people of color, especially Blacks and Hispanics. Michelle Alexander, in her seminal book, The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, describes how this has happened. 1 Despite the passages of civil rights legislation, the “War on Drugs”—which was introduced under the Reagan Administration and institutionalized by legislation under the Clinton Administration—has resulted in the arrest, conviction, and incarceration of more blacks and Hispanics than in any other period of time in U.S. history. As a result, the U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world. According to the Sentencing Project, as of 2012, 2.2 million people are incarcerated in the U.S., a 500 percent increase over the past thirty years. 2 The second-class citizen label is no longer couched in openly racial terms, but by use of allegedly racial-neutral terms such as “convict,” “prisoner,” or “offender.” When these words, however, are used in public discourse, the media and other institutions generally show the face of a black or Hispanic person, such that the public equates criminals with persons of color. Moreover, after these persons served their prison sentences and paid their debt to society, many are prohibited from living in public housing or from obtaining honest work. Many also are barred from applying for scholarships or public benefits and very few are ever allowed to vote. With the intentional refusal to or neglect in reintegrating these persons into society, it is no surprise that many return to jail.

Establishing a study group that encompasses all of the major stakeholders—from law enforcement to the formerly incarcerated offender—will stimulate honest and transparent discussion in the church, in areas such as: (1) what each stakeholder's role has been—whether intentional or unintentional—in supporting or continuing to support institutional racism; (2) how the “War on Drugs” used and continues to use fear and race to pit Whites and Blacks/Hispanics/people of color against other blacks/Hispanics/other people of color; and, (3) developing strategies to deconstruct institutionalized behavior and policies that are the underpinnings of perpetuating the second-class citizenship of what is now called the “New Jim Crow.” The Obama Administration recently supported and/or initiated some changes such as a reduction in sentencing disparities between crack cocaine and powder cocaine, to not prosecute persons for simple possession of marijuana, and to consider parole for prisoners convicted of nonviolent drug offenses. While these actions are commendable and deserve the support of the church, they do not completely dismantle a system that has been entrenched for decades nor do they address reentry into society of our returning citizens. The church and society must do more. The ACREC advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-05.

Endnotes


Advice and Counsel on Item 09-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-05.

Item 09-05 and concurrences from the Presbyteries of Cimarron, Hudson River, New York City, Sacramento, Santa Fe, and West Virginia ask for a two-year study with the goal of developing action and policy recommendations for the 222nd General Assembly (2016) regarding a drug policy for the denomination.

The ACWC recognizes the effects on racial ethnic women and their families since the forty-year “war on drugs” has resulted in a disproportionate incarceration of African American males. The result of the incarceration, women who then become single parents, suffer significant financial and care burdens. The costs to society are both financial and social.

As the overture points out, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has addressed related concerns in various statements, but has no comprehensive policy to provide resources for study and advocacy for Presbyterians in congregations. Both policy and resources are needed to assist Presbyterians in efforts to reform unjust and socially costly laws and procedures currently designed to deal with the drugs.

Concurrences from the presbyteries make it clear there is agreement among legal and labor organizations and communities that the present system needs revision and seek guidance from the church to make this a reality.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-05

Comment on Item 09-05—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

Item 09-06

[The assembly approved Item 09-06 with amendment. See pp. 15, 36.]

On Advocating for Financial and Political Reform — From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

[The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures][t][T]he 221st General Assembly (2014) [to] direct[s] the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for [the following:]

1. [f][F]inancial and political reform[s][,] [a] aimed at eliminating and/or regulating closely the practices of the financial sector, which caused the Great Recession; such as support for the full implementation of Dodd-Frank financial reform, the implementation of the Volcker Rule, and the restoration of Glass-Steagall (aimed at separating commercial banks from securities firms); and [b] affirmative efforts by the Department of Treasury, Securities and Exchange Commission, and other regulatory bodies to protect ordinary citizens, particularly consumers, borrowers, and investors of modest means, to revise bankruptcy laws to protect borrowers and those holding “underwater” mortgages, and to enable national, state, and local efforts to provide refinancing through repurchasing and restructuring mortgages and public capital projects.

2. Appropriate investigations and prosecutions of individuals, companies, and industries engaged in fraudulent behaviors, regardless of position or size, that justice may be applied equally to all.] This will include advocating for strategies that address the lack of prosecution of the individuals and financial institutions responsible for the 2008 meltdown of the U.S. economy.

3. Campaign finance reform and other efforts to reduce the influence of special interest money in politics (including that of the financial sector, the gun lobby, the oil industry, etc.).]

Rationale

One of the main tenets of our faith is to do justice. “Transform the structures of society that exploit the poor and trample on human need” (Stephen W. Plunkett, This We Believe: Eight Truths That Presbyterians Affirm, 144).
The present day collusion of the regulators, the legislatures, and the financial industry permits the lack of prosecution of individuals responsible for the financial crisis of 2008. The church community needs to advocate on behalf of the poor for accountability from civil servants and elected officials. Such accountability would protect the economic interests of all citizens. We need a system that holds responsible the legislators, public servants, and other individuals who reneged on their oath of office through such irresponsible actions.

As concerned taxpayers, we take note of reports about the massive and growing federal debt. If the millions of dollars amassed by the individuals and companies involved in the 2008 financial crisis could be recouped, these dollars could be a start toward repaying the national debt.

There are published investigative reports and documentation that identify by name the responsible individuals and institutions, but the lack of prosecution allows them to continue holding high, powerful offices and receiving financial gain. The voices of those demonstrating for the need for reform are being ridiculed, ignored, and demeaned.

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**Concurrence to Item 09-06 from the Presbytery of Nevada.**

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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-06**

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

In concurrence with the intent of the overture, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 09-06 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Santa Fe overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the [Presbyterian Mission Agency] [Office of Public Witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)] to advocate for [the following:]

‘[1.] [F]inancial and political reform[s (a) aimed at eliminating and/or regulating closely the practices of the financial sector, which caused the Great Recession; such as support for the full implementation of Dodd-Frank financial reform, the implementation of the Volcker Rule, and the restoration of Glass-Steagall (aimed at separating commercial banks from securities firms), and (b) affirmative efforts by the Department of Treasury, Securities and Exchange Commission, and other regulatory bodies to protect ordinary citizens, particularly consumers, borrowers, and investors of modest means, to revise bankruptcy laws to protect borrowers and those holding ‘underwater’ mortgages, and to enable national, state, and local efforts to provide refinancing through repurchasing and restructuring mortgages and public capital projects.]

‘[2. Appropriate investigations and prosecutions of individuals, companies, and industries engaged in fraudulent behaviors, regardless of position or size, that justice may be applied equally to all.] This will include advocating for strategies that address the lack of prosecution of the individuals and financial institutions responsible for the 2008 meltdown of the U.S. economy.

‘[3. Campaign finance reform and other efforts to reduce the influence of special interest money in politics (including that of the financial sector, the gun lobby, the oil industry, etc.)]

The pain caused by the collapse of the financial markets, commonly referred to as “The Great Recession,” is difficult to over-estimate. Foreclosures (one house every 1.7 seconds during these years) and underwater mortgages led to loss of consumer power that led to job loss across the economy as families reduced their purchasing. According to the Federal Reserve, the median net worth of American families fell 38.8 percent between 2007 and 2010, from $126,400 to $77,300—driven primarily by the collapse in housing prices. The median net worth for the poorest 20 percent of Americans fell to zero. Jobs have simply disappeared, creating what the Brookings Institute calls “six million missing workers.” What caused all this was what the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission called a “systemic breakdown in accountability and ethics.”

From the speculators who flipped houses to the mortgage brokers who scouted the loans, to the lenders who issued the mortgages, to the financial firms that created the mortgage-backed securities, collateralized debt obligations (CDOs), CDOs squared, and synthetic CDOs: no one in this pipeline of toxic mortgages had enough skin in the game. When borrowers stopped making mortgage payments, the losses—amplified by derivatives—rushed through the pipeline. As it turned out, these losses were concentrated in a set of systemically important financial institutions.

The commission concluded that the recession was avoidable. But decades of deregulation “stripped away key safe guards” and “opened up gaps in oversight” as major financial institutions took on too much risk, too much debt, with too little capital. Its final report uses variations of the word “fraud” 157 times. Yet, prosecutions have been few and limited to mortgage brokers on the fringes who were complicit in writing “liars” mortgages and predatory subprime loans. As of this writing, a report by the inspector general of the Justice Department has charged that the F.B.I. has made the pursuit of mortgage fraud cases a low priority, resulting in charges against only 107 people in 2012.
Some argue that the lack of prosecution of high-level management officials of big banks is due to the long and expensive process this would require for gathering evidence of intentional misconduct and fraud. Some regulators argue that achieving settlements with companies, such as the $13 billion settlement with JPMorgan for overstating the value of its mortgage-backed securities, is preferable to pursuing individual cases of fraud. However, examples of successful prosecutions in the past include the 1970s junk bonds fraud (Michael Milkin), the 1980s savings and loan crisis (Charles Keating), and the 1990s accounting frauds (Enron). Moreover, the doctrine of willful blindness is well-established in criminal law. Since many criminal statutes require proof that a defendant acted knowingly or willfully, courts can apply the doctrine of willful blindness holding that defendants cannot escape prosecution by deliberately shielding themselves from clear evidence of critical facts that are strongly suggested by the circumstances.

Currently a number of members of Congress, particularly Senator Elizabeth Warren, have called for prosecutorial action, questioning what appears to be a “too big to jail” approach and advocating that equal justice, as well as future deterrence, requires such prosecution. The amendments suggested focus particularly on measures to improve home mortgage and personal bankruptcy practices that continue to penalize citizens and depress markets in many areas. The goal here is to encourage not only accountability for “moral hazard” for all economic actors, but positive action by public institutions that have focused more on rescuing banks than on rescuing families and communities which are still in need.

Recent policy bases for such actions can be found in “World of Hurt, Word of Life,” a report approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) that carries the subtitle: “Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction” (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/world-hurt-word-life/). Among the principles approved in that report: “We affirm that all citizens have the right to basic economic goods and to meaningful work, and that government, representing the whole community, is ultimately responsible for seeing to the provision and protection of these rights from unjust concentrations of market or political power.” One application of the set of principles was: “Financial sector reconstruction, through such measures as ... public banks and endowment funds for infrastructure development, local business development, and community wealth building; restoring regulatory firewalls between investment and retail banking to minimize public risk. ...” This resolution would address elements of economic reform not specified by but in keeping with that report of the last assembly.

In the area of campaign finance reform, this was given prepared attention by the General Assembly in 2008 in the resolution, “Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform” (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/lift-every-voice-democracy-voting-rights-and-elect/). That resolution favors “legislation and appropriate support for judicial cases that distinguish between campaign contributions and ‘free speech,’ allowing meaningful regulation of special interest groups and individuals who are currently expected to spend approximately $400 million of the $1.5 billion 2008 election cycle.” Clearly the problem has gotten worse in the six years since. If commissioners wished, they might consider affirming a statement from the Office of Public Witness as an updating of concerns for the integrity of U.S. political life:

“The need for campaign finance reform and other efforts to reduce the influence of money in politics has intensified due to the recent shifts in electoral politics that have produced vastly increased levels of campaign spending, secrecy in political giving, extending the rights of individuals to corporations, and the demise of giving caps that were intended to place a control on the amount of influence a single person may have in a given election cycle. These shifts largely reflect Circuit and Supreme Court decisions that have weakened the regulation of political money, including Citizens United v. FEC and McCutcheon v. FEC. Indeed, this undue influence, which represents values contrary to those of Presbyterian social witness policy, has contributed to a marked decrease in the level of business carried out by the U.S. Congress and an unprecedented increase in gridlock. In order to achieve any policy ends, whether they be financial reform, tax reform, climate legislation, or gun violence reduction, among others, the undue and undemocratic influence of special interest money must be significantly reduced if not removed from the political process.”

Endnotes

09 ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES
ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-06.

While the financial recession of 2008 had a negative impact on Americans of all races, the recession had a much greater impact on racial ethnic Americans than it had on White Americans. In the years just prior to the recession, the wealth gap between White and Black Americans was approximately 10 to 1. By the midst of the recession (2009), the wealth gap had doubled, as documented in the aptly titled report of the Pew Research Center: “Twenty-to-One: Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics.” The median net worth of White households fell 16 percent between 2005 and 2009, while the net worth of Hispanic households fell 66 percent, and that of Black households fell 53 percent over the same years. The great disparity of the negative impact of the recession is reflected in these numbers: the median net worth of White households fell from $134,992 in 2005 to $113,149 in 2009, while the median net worth of Black households fell from $12,124 to a mere $5,677 in 2009 (Rakesh Kochar, Richard Fry, Paul Taylor, “Twenty to One: Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Black and Hispanics,” Pew Research Center, Social & Demographic Trends, 2011 http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2011/07/SDT-Wealth-Report_7-26-11_FINAL.pdf). The recession made the existing profound inequality in our country significantly worse.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) voted overwhelmingly in favor of “On Economic Justice in These Troubled Times”—which called for condemnation of corporate as well as personal greed and support for policies that meet the needs of everyone rather than benefiting only the most powerful. The present overture is offered in the same spirit, urging continued advocacy and the additional specific strategy of addressing the prosecution of those responsible for the 2008 financial recession.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-06.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Presbytery of Santa Fe on Item 09-06, “On Advocating for Financial and Political Reform.” We believe we are called as a church to stand up and advocate for all who have been marginalized and oppressed by the greed-centered and corrupt political, corporate, and economic structures and systems. The PC(USA) Washington Office of Public Witness would be a good place to begin in this advocacy effort.

We also note as ACWC that many times women have been more heavily affected in these systems of oppression and injustice. We fully support this overture and are particularly concerned with how the corrupt systems and structures that created the economic recession have affected the lives of women.

Item 09-07

[The assembly approved Item 09-07 with amendment. See pp. 32, 36–37.]

[Comment: Process Rationale—This text is an integration of Item 09-01 from the Presbytery of National Capital, and Item 09-21 (commissioners’ resolution) into Item 09-07.]

On Gun Violence Prevention—From the Presbytery of Hudson River

In response to Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call, which calls us to “encourage the church at every level—from individual member to congregation, presbytery, synod, and national church—to become informed and active in preventing gun violence” and urges that “the church take responsibility to build public awareness of gun violence and the epidemic of preventable gun-related deaths” (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 830ff, electronic version), the Presbytery of Hudson River, Synod of the Northeast, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to
   a. provide models for congregational and local ecumenical forums to explore the dynamics of gun violence in their areas, and to select appropriate initiatives for witness and action in their communities, and
   b. assist in the formation of support, healing, and advocacy groups for those who have experienced gun violence in their families.

2. Encourage synods, presbyteries, and seminaries to develop educational programs that include
a. the theological and pastoral care issues raised by murder, suicide, domestic violence, and wounding by gun violence,

b. a means of public acknowledgement of grief and repentance in worship and in communal events, and

c. links between those who have suffered from gun violence and existing support, healing, and advocacy groups.

3. Command Presbyterian Mission Agency for the development and dissemination of the film *Trigger: The Ripple Effects of Gun Violence*, and the inclusion of mass shootings among the disasters addressed by PDA disaster response teams; and encourage the continuation of these important efforts.

4. Direct the [Presbyterian Mission Agency to urge state and local Presbyterian leaders] [PC(USA) and its constituent parts to recommit itself to work with federal, state, and local legislators] to:

a. oppose legislation that exempts gun manufacturers and marketers from legal liability and/or financial accountability for the medical and security costs of predictable gun misuse and availability to criminals, the unstable, and the self-destructive;

b. support the disclosure of funds spent by gun manufacturers on lobbying, campaign contributions, and other legislative strategies that serve to undermine the protection of U.S. citizens from the highest rates of gun violence in the world;

c. oppose “stand your ground” and other legislation that may entitle gun owners to shoot before taking alternative measures (such as relying on law enforcement and/or other de-escalation techniques) in perceived defense of persons or property; [and]

d. oppose legislation designed to permit and encourage the carrying of weapons in all areas of life, including houses of worship, noting that those in possession of guns are four times more likely to experience gun violence[.][;]

e. support legislation to require licensing, registration, and waiting periods to allow comprehensive background checks, and cooling-off periods;

f. support legislation to close the ‘gun show loophole’ by requiring background checks for all gun buyers;

g. support legislation to ban semiautomatic assault weapons, armor piercing handgun ammunition, and .50 caliber sniper rifles;

h. support legislation to advocate for new technologies to aid law-enforcement agencies to trace crime guns and promote public safety;

i. support legislation to raise the age for handgun ownership to the age of twenty-one;

j. following the recommendation of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, support laws to ‘require judges and law enforcement to remove guns from situations of domestic violence, as well as from people whose adjudicated mental illness, drug use, or previous criminal record suggests the possibility of violence,’ and to increase police training in nonviolent proactive intervention;

k. advocate that federal and state governments enact legislation to regulate ammunition, guided by Gun Violence Gospel Values, as approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010);

l. Support the development, promotion, and use of ‘smart gun’ and ‘smart ammunition’ technologies that will help to prevent unintended and accidental shootings and aid law enforcement in reducing gun violence.

5. Consistent with *Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call*, Recommendation 9 (page 2; see also Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 831, electronic version), which reads “we recommend that churches and other entities prominently display signs that prohibit carrying guns onto their property,” we strongly encourage

a. the session of each PC(USA) congregation to declare their particular premises and gatherings to be gun-free zones by voting to adopt the following (or similar) policy and recording it in their minutes: “Individuals (other than active law-enforcement officers) are prohibited from carrying guns onto this property,” and to publicize this policy by prominently displaying appropriate signage, such as one of the samples attached (Appendix A, ovt038-appA&B.pdf), which can be downloaded from a website such as the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, etc.;

b. all PC(USA) entities that own property (including but not limited to the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), synods, presbyteries, camps and conference centers, educational institutions, etc.) to declare their particular
premises and gatherings to be gun-free zones by adopting the following or a similar policy as indicated by official vote and recorded in the minutes: “Individuals (other than active law-enforcement officers) are prohibited from carrying guns onto this property,” and to publicize this policy by prominently displaying appropriate signage, such as one of the samples attached (Appendix A, ovt038-appA&B.pdf), which can be downloaded from a website such as Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, etc.;

c. individual Presbyterians to bear witness to the gospel value of peacemaking and to build safer and more secure communities by advocating for similar gun-free zone policies in their workplaces, schools, neighborhood businesses, and gathering places. Free downloadable signage for general use (see attached, Appendix B, ovt038-appA&B.pdf) is available at www.gunfreespaces.org.

Rationale

This rationale reaffirms the two basic arguments for church involvement in the matter of gun violence: the scale of this ongoing tragedy and the biblical and theological bases for engagement by Presbyterians.

The Scale of the Ongoing Tragedy

The scale of gun violence in the United States includes, annually, the deaths of at least 3,000 children (often underreported) and 25,000 adults (with suicides underreported), with more than 100,000 wounded, often seriously. Beyond the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s booklet, Gun Violence; Gospel Values, extensive data and detailed policy considerations can be found in the recent book, Reducing Gun Violence in America.

Biblical Basis

Christian opposition to gun violence begins with Jesus’ teaching and example: that we should love our neighbors, love our enemies; that all who take the sword will perish by the sword; that peacemakers are blessed and will be called children of God. These (and other) statements are echoed in the New Testament letters: that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit; that we should be holy in all our conduct; that we should love righteousness and hate wickedness; and leave vengeance to the Lord. Further, the prophetic tradition identifies the need for broader social change: that we should turn our swords (guns) into plowshares and our spears (rocket launchers) into pruning hooks and learn war no more. Overall, through the Spirit, we hear the blood of those senselessly slain crying out from the ground for us to act and not be weary.

The first letter of John challenges us not to love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. We must struggle with how to implement the vision, a challenge that was taken up by John Calvin as well. At the very core of his theology was an understanding that the intentions of God should be implemented on earth.

Theological Basis

The theological position that guns are idols in our society is put forward most directly by former PC(USA) missionary, Jim Atwood, a hunter and gun owner himself, in America and Its Guns: A Theological Expose. Atwood and others seek to explain why it has been so difficult to pass responsible legislation, despite public opinion polls showing large majorities in favor. This theological explanation does not claim that all gun owners are idolatrous, but that economic and ideological (and politically polarized) explanations are not enough, and that gun violence must be put under the sovereignty of the Lord of life. It is not necessary, of course, to subscribe to any particular theological account to seek to reduce gun violence in the U.S. and in the world.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been concerned about the frightening gun violence phenomenon, and has consistently spoken out about it for three decades, as have our sisters and brothers in virtually every other faith tradition. This overture expands upon the existing policy of the General Assembly by providing specific ways for individuals and congregations to have a voice and take action in confronting the gun violence crisis. As stated in the last paragraph of Gun Violence, Gospel Values, “The Call to Action” (pp 19–20; see also Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 842, electronic version),

God has provided us with the elements to be agents of change in the world. The change needs to be comprehensive: we need to address the idolatry of guns, the violence that permeates our culture, our obsessions with personal rights over public responsibility, the practices of widespread and indiscriminate sale of military style weapons, as well as the legislation necessary to regulate the accessibility and sale of military weapons disguised as “sporting guns.” We must keep our “eyes on the prize,” of preventing gun violence and the unnecessary deaths and injuries that result. Enough blood has been spilled. We affirm that through good organizational effort, animated by the passion for justice that comes to the people of God through the Holy Spirit, gun violence can be dramatically reduced.

So far, our denomination’s efforts to affect change have been largely focused outside the church walls on advocacy efforts toward gun-shop owners and legislative change. Sadly, in 2013, we have seen how unwilling our legislators are to carry out the will of the American public regarding background checks and other laws that would restrict the ownership of assault weapons and ammunition. We believe that we need to provide a stronger witness in the world by living out our commitment to nonviolence within our buildings and equipping our members with resources to effect change in their local communities.
Recent expanded provisions in concealed carry laws in many states now allow guns to be carried into places never before considered appropriate, including into houses of worship. It is important that our churches, at the grassroots level, stand firm against the deception that more guns in more places makes us somehow safer and more secure. Gun manufacturers and guns rights advocates routinely claim that more guns in the hands of “good guys” will make the world safer. However, statistics actually show that where there are more guns, there is more violence. It is time for the faith community to have its say.

Gun violence can be a difficult subject to talk about in any context, but it finds particular resistance within the walls of the church, where many people believe “political” issues should not be discussed. (Jim Atwood’s America and Its Guns: A Theological Expose, Chapter 2, “Closing the Door on Discussion,” discusses the particular difficulty of talking about gun violence as a spiritual rather than political issue.) As a result, very little meaningful discussion is happening in the church or elsewhere. We are hopeful that this overture will boldly stimulate healthy and helpful conversation, as well as create “constructive, nonviolent tension” as encouraged by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in his Letter from a Birmingham Jail:

You may well ask: “Why direct action?... Isn’t negotiation a better path?” You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word “tension.” I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth. (http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)

In recent months an advocacy group called “Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America” started an on-line campaign asking Starbucks to prohibit guns in their stores. It only took a short time for the company to change its policy. This demonstrates the power of average citizens to claim their right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Encouraging individual Presbyterians to build safer and more secure communities by advocating for similar gun-free zone policies in their workplaces, schools, neighborhood businesses, and gathering places, allows them to bear witness to the gospel value of peacemaking with concrete action.

Similarly, in A Social Creed for the 21st Century, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved the following, which also shows a strong commitment to working together for peace in our country:

We—individual Christians and churches—commit ourselves to a culture of peace and freedom that embraces non-violence, nurtures character, treasures the environment, and builds community, rooted in a spirituality of inner growth with outward action. We make this commitment together—as members of Christ’s body, led by the one Spirit — trusting in the God who makes all things new. (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 925)

Endnotes
3. For a review and purchase information, see http://justiceunbound.org/action-alerts/action-news/america-held-hostage-by-gun-violence/.  

Concurrence to Item 09-07 from the Presbyteries of Albany, Genesee Valley, Geneva, National Capital, New Hope, and Western Reserve.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-07—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved with amendment as shown below:

1. Amend Recommendation 4 as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency [to urge] [encourage] state and local Presbyterian leaders to [urge elected officials to]”

2. Add a new section “e.” to Recommendation 4 to read as follows:

   “[e. support Friend of Court briefs and public interest litigation to expand public protections against gun violence permitted under the District of Columbia v. Heller and McDonald v. Chicago, and to support measures such as retired Justice John P. Stevens’ proposed addition to the 2nd Amendment that would restore and clarify its meaning in line with traditional interpretation that understands gun ownership to have been authorized to help maintain state militias, reflecting the original Bill of Rights debate.]”
The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy salutes the creative thinking involved particularly in Recommendation 5, and affirms that the positions of previous General Assemblies are accurately rendered and built upon. While also affirming the good work and clear invocation of previous gun violence policy in Item 09-01 initiated by National Capitol Presbytery (which quotes recommendations 11 and 12 from the 2010 policy, “Gun Violence, Gospel Values”), this overture addresses the spiritual life and peacemaking ethos of the church as a Christian community.

The concept of gun-free zones seems intuitively obvious for some, both for safety and for the practice of calm presence in worship. This is to recognize that those who carry sometimes-loaded weapons may experience a heightened alertness to potential threat or an enhanced sense of power, both of which may weaken a prayerful awareness. Leaders within the Heeding God’s Call movement, while strongly supporting the overture’s intent, wondered if there might be another phrase than “gun-free,” but proposed no specific alternate wording. It should be understood by every commissioner that attitudes toward guns vary considerably by region and that the measures recommended may take far more courage in some jurisdictions.

The new suggested provision reaffirms earlier Second Amendment jurisprudence that the church had long supported. While progress at reducing gun violence may be blocked at the national level by legislative gridlock and judicial innovation at this time, the Office of Public Witness would be asked to monitor developments and, if appropriate, recommend that the Advisory Committee on Litigation consider amicus curiae (friend of court) briefs dealing with Second Amendment interpretation.

The language suggested by former Supreme Court Justice John P. Stevens is noted below: “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms when serving in the Militia shall not be infringed” [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-five-extra-words-that-can-fix-the-second-amendment/2014/04/11/f8a19578-b8fa-11e3-96ae-f2c36d2b1245_story.html].

For more than 200 years following the adoption of that amendment, federal judges uniformly understood that the right protected by that text was limited in two ways: first, it applied only to keeping and bearing arms for military purposes, and second, while it limited the power of the federal government, it did not impose any limit whatsoever on the power of states or local governments to regulate the ownership or use of firearms. Thus, in United States v. Miller, decided in 1939, the court unanimously held that Congress could prohibit the possession of a sawed-off shotgun because that sort of weapon had no reasonable relation to the preservation or efficiency of a “well regulated Militia.”

In 2008, by a vote of 5 to 4, the Supreme Court decided in District of Columbia v. Heller that the Second Amendment protects a civilian’s right to keep a handgun in his or her home for purposes of self-defense. And in 2010, by another vote of 5 to 4, the court decided in McDonald v. Chicago that the due process clause of the 14th Amendment limits the power of the city of Chicago to outlaw the possession of handguns by private citizens. For the Supreme Court to adopt these positions arguably canonizes a later individualism in interpretation and, in the face of a constant drumbeat of gun-related death, disregards the overall Constitutional goals of preserving the common defense and common welfare.

In considering these matters, commissioners may wish to consider how significant the matter of gun violence in our society to be and what measures, from the most local to the most national, may best represent a consistent moral stand by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-07.

It is an irrefutable fact that gun violence of all kinds occurs more frequently, and has an unbridled and devastating impact on racial ethnic families and communities than any others—particularly the African American and Hispanic communities in our country. For the PC(USA) not to overwhelmingly approve and support this overture would reflect a dispassionate and perceptibly aggressively insensitive attitude toward “the least of these ...” constitute a default on our obligation to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the Gospel mandate. If the PC(USA), one of the “White Mainline Denominations,” remains, perceptibly, and by people of color, conspicuously silent on an issue that screams out in racial overtones, that silence would represent a totally illogical and deceptive position coming for a church that imposed a decade-long mandate (2000–2010) to increase racial ethnic membership by 20 percent while simultaneously shifting its focus from a mono-cultural to an arguably ambiguous “multicultural” emphasis.

Item 09-08

[There is no recommendation assigned to Item 09-08.]
Item 09-09

[The assembly approved Item 09-09 with amendment. See pp. 15, 37.]

On Food Sovereignty for All—From the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to call on individuals, congregations, mid councils, and ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to do the following:

1. Pray for people within the food system in the U.S. and overseas, from producers devoting their lives to feeding people but who are often undercompensated and lacking respect, to workers throughout the food chain, and to consumers lacking access to affordable fresh, healthy food.

2. Study food sovereignty, food justice, and other applications of biblical and Christian values to fairness and sustainability throughout the food system, using educational materials compiled on a single PC(USA) web page.

3. Support and participate in community conversations, forums, and assemblies where people directly affected by the lack of affordable and healthy food provide significant input and leadership about defining community needs and solutions.

4. Support and develop faith-based and other food sovereignty initiatives overseas and in our communities, with special emphasis on impoverished areas, always in concert with those directly affected. Faith-based initiatives in the U.S. may include sponsoring community gardens; hosting farmers markets, community kitchens, market gardens, food microenterprise development and cooperative buying clubs; and promoting purchase of locally and sustainably grown food.

5. Work with Presbyterians, PC(USA) partners, as well as interfaith and secular groups and coalitions on initiatives and campaigns whose purpose is to achieve food sovereignty. This may include efforts to reduce negative influences of large, multinational corporations on food and farm system practices and on policies that may be detrimental to producers, workers, and consumers.

6. Join with Presbyterians, PC(USA) partners, and interfaith and secular groups and coalitions working to end large-scale land grabs [and return unfairly obtained land to communities] and to implement genuine agrarian and aquatic reform programs and base national and international governance structures on the ‘Voluntary Guidelines for Land and Natural Resources Tenure’ from the Committee on World Food Security in order to provide secure access to land, forestry, and fisheries for communities.

7. Advocate for food, farm, and trade policies at all levels that protect family farmers and God’s creation, and support the building of just and sustainable local food economies.

Rationale

Humanity is confronted with the tragedy of hunger in a world that produces enough food for all to eat. The PC(USA) church partners and fraternal organizations around the world are calling for food sovereignty as a way of building prosperous, healthy, equitable, and sustainable food and farm economies everywhere. This includes supporting fair trade; the right to food and water, access to land; ecological agriculture and health-giving food; more localized decision-making; and equity for everyone throughout the food system.

The PC(USA) recognition of hunger as a problem of inequitable distribution of the abundance of food has been on the forefront of ministry and mission. Working together towards food sovereignty is vital in the face of widespread injustice, including hunger in the United States and in many other countries. The work of the PC(USA) historically and currently has been one of working toward the fulfillment of the concept of food sovereignty for all. The lack of political will, and systems designed to maximize profit rather than ensure the right of food to all has caused a disparity that this denomination has steadfastly addressed. Adopting the concept of food sovereignty for all is critical in furthering and fulfilling the Word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hear it in his word as well as in the words of the Old Testament prophets and poets, indeed those that follow:

The Word of the Lord: “Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith for ever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry” (Ps. 146: 5–7). Blessed be the word of the Lord.

“… Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me’” (Mt. 25: 37–40).
Food Sovereignty is a set of principles, policies, and practices that reflect the “right of all people, communities, and countries to define agricultural, food, and land policies that are ecologically, socially, economically, and culturally relevant. Food sovereignty holds that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and food-producing resources. This framework calls for actions and strategies on local and global levels to address the root causes of hunger” (http://www.emoregon.org/pdfs/IFFP/Food_Sovereignty_for_All_handbook.pdf, Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership, “Food Sovereignty for All: Overhauling the Food System with Faith-Based Initiatives”).

Groups such as La Via Campesina, an international movement, is one of the many organizations that addresses the root cause of hunger. It consists of millions of peasants, small- and medium-scale farmers, women landowners, and indigenous persons who are addressing the current food, poverty, and climate crisis.

In 2007, a declaration on food sovereignty from the Forum for Food Sovereignty held in Mali, set forth six attributes of the concept. Excerpts follow:

1. Focuses on Food for People: Food sovereignty stresses the right to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food for all individuals, peoples, and communities. … . It rejects the proposition that food is just another commodity for international agribusiness.

2. Values Food Providers: Food sovereignty values and supports the contributions, and respects the rights, of women and men, peasants and small scale family farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fishers, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and agricultural and fisheries workers, including migrant who cultivate, grow and harvest, and process food …

3. Localizes Food Systems… as it puts providers and consumers at the center of decision-making on food issues; protects food providers from the dumping of food and food aid in local markets, … and resists [government] structures, agreements, and practices that … promote … inequitable international trade and give power to remote and unaccountable corporations.

4. Makes Decisions Locally: Food Sovereignty seeks control over and access to territory, land, grazing, water, seeds, livestock and fish populations for local food providers. These resources ought to be used and shared in socially and environmentally sustainable ways which conserve diversity. …

5. Builds Knowledge and Skills: [It] builds on the skills and local knowledge of food providers and their local organizations that conserve, develop and manage localized food production and harvesting systems, [and that pass] on this wisdom to future generations. Food Sovereignty rejects technologies that undermine, threaten or contaminate these, e.g., genetic engineering.

6. Works with Nature: [It] seeks to heal the planet so that the planet may heal us; and rejects the methods that harm beneficial ecosystem functions, that depend on energy intensive monocultures and livestock factories, destructive fishing practices and other industrialized production methods. … (http://www.grassrootsonline.org/sites/default/files/The-6-Food-Sovereignty-Principles.pdf)

Principles of Food Sovereignty challenge the current model that favors trade of large amounts of food going over borders. The principles also challenge the idea that richer countries and financial organizations should favor themselves over less wealthy countries. The rationale is that if wealthy countries can grow massive amounts of a food, then it should grow it for the world. Meanwhile, low- and middle-income nations may export food (cash crops) to richer nations, leaving them little opportunity to raise their own nutritious food, as cash crops strip their land and may leave less time and money for self-care. “This logic favors a food industry reliant on industrial-scale farming, monocropping, and massive inputs of fuel, fertilizers, and pesticides. The beneficiaries are the corporate middlepeople who consolidate, arrange, package and ship the food around the world … and profound hidden costs are enacted on our planet as a whole: polluted water, air, and soil, deforestation; acid rain; species extinction; and climate change. The corporate food system wreaks countless ecological harms” (http://www.otherworldsarepossible.org/sites/default/files/documents/Harvesting%20Justice-Transforming%20Food%20Land%20Ag_0.pdf, pp. 8, 27).

There is a relationship with much of the corporate world and inequity in the social structure. Whereas there are certainly corporations which work to help uphold just practices, there are many which continue to be headed in the opposite direction. Some estimates suggest that half of the world’s largest economies are multinational corporations. A key difference between organizations is whether they are essentially profit-making or whether they work to provide a service while remaining economically viable (Wilkinson, Pickett. The Spirit Level, pp. 246–7). These authors provide research that suggests that further improvements in the quality of life no longer depend on further economic growth; it depends on “community and how we relate to each other” (Ibid., p. 247).

In the RELUFA Cameroon Food Sovereignty program, vulnerable communities in the semi-Saharan Far North Province are thriving through their participation in the RELUFA network’s Food Sovereignty program. Having been organized to run their own communal grain banks, farmers in thirty-four villages now ward off speculators at harvest time. Instead of selling their yields to merchants who hoard the produce to maximize profits later in the year, the crops are stored in the village granary. When families run out of their own reserves, they can take grains on in-kind credit and pay back this loan from the next sorghum harvest later in the year [Food Sovereignty video].
Meanwhile, in the United States, many farmworkers are still not afforded adequate rights. Organizations such as the United Farm Workers and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers have made great strides in improving labor conditions. Yet, still often workers “perform strenuous physical labor without the protections of sick leave, overtime pay, or health insurance. They are exempt from the National Labor Relations Act that protects workers’ rights to form unions and bargain collectively...” Farmworkers are twice as likely to live below the poverty line, and most earn an average of $10,000 to $12,000 per year” (Ibid, p. 75).

The concept of ‘land grabs’ is of grave concern. “The purchase and lease of vast tracts of land from poor, developing countries by wealthier nations and international private investors has led to debate about whether land investment is a tool for development or force of displacement”, reports the Oakland Institute, an independent policy organization working on social and environmental issues such as the land grab. (See www.oaklandinstitute.org.)

“Over the last four years, there has been a significant increase in land-based investment, both in terms of the number of investment projects and the total land area allocated. Industrialized nations and private foreign investors have driven demand for arable land in developing regions, particularly in Africa, but also in South America, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. Governments are interested in the lands for purposes of food security and biofuel production. Both governments and private investors are attracted by policy reforms that have improved the investment climate in developing countries, as well as arbitrage opportunities afforded by the extremely low cost of leasing land in these regions.

While only fractions of arable land in developing regions are being used for agriculture, demand for strategic swats next to irrigation and shipping sites is growing with greater investment. These areas and other lands are frequently in use even though occupants have no legal rights to the land or access to legal institutions. As demand for land assets increases and governments and multilateral institutions promote investment in national lands, displacement and affected livelihoods are becoming serious sources of international concern” (Oakland Institute).

Water rights are also a huge concern. Access to water and sanitation is a basic human right according to the United Nations General Assembly. Corporate Accountability International notes that human rights to water is a basic obligation of governments. Access is best afforded when the management and control of water is in the hands of the public. They note that “political interference by private water corporations threatens the ability of communities to guarantee the human right to water for all. Attempting to gain a foothold in the water market (estimated to be $400 billion-plus), global corporations use their vast resources to gain influence in international governing bodies such as the U.N. and funders like the World Bank. The water industry’s tactics include promoting policy models that grant more corporate control over water, institutionalizing corporate partnerships with policymakers, weakening regulations and investing in water rights and trading” (stopcorporateabuse.org).

Fair trade versus free trade is a part of the concept as well. A concern at this time is the Trans Pacific Partnership (TTP) free trade agreement, under negotiation among eleven countries. This agreement is largely being negotiated in secret. Many groups, including labor unions and churches, opposed this agreement. It liberalizes trade possibilities and leads to more of an unregulated market. This would allow corporations to operate with less accountability and rules.

Concurrence to Item 09-09 from the Presbytery of Heartland.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-09

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that Item 9-09 be approved.

The ACSWP advises that the principles of “Food Sovereignty for All” recommended to the General Assembly by the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta are consistent with the foundational positions of the PC(USA) and respond to escalating threats to food security nationally and globally. The Social Creed for the 21st Century, approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) succinctly captured the two foundational positions of the PC(USA) with regard to food insecurity. The first position is focused on the elimination of hunger wherever it occurs as a blatant attack on and disregard for the value and dignity of human life. The creed calls for “the abatement of hunger and poverty,” reflecting the long-standing affirmation of the church that “... sufficient food for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being is the right of everyone, and that economic and political activity should secure this right” (United States Food Policy Objectives and Guidelines, UPCUSA, 1976, pp. 501–506).

The second position is focused on a just and sustainable system of food production and distribution. Thus, the creed calls for “Access for all to clean air and water and healthy food, through wise care of land and technology.” This “wise care” has been spelled out in great detail in the policy, Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Human Development (208th General Assembly [1996], PC(USA), pp. 524, 526, 534–36). In its call for supporting sustainable systems of food production and distribution.
security in the context of an environmental crisis and a growing human population, this policy affirms support for small-scale landowning farmers, restoration of land to many who have been displaced, as well as the promotion of ecologically sound farming practices. A Presbyterian discussion of these issues can be found in the April 2014 issue of *Presbyterians Today*.

The national and global context of food security today still calls out for the church’s response. According to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, about 15 percent of the populations of developing countries suffered from chronic undernourishment in 2012. The global picture is mixed with some areas seeing a decrease in hunger (Asia, for example) while other areas saw an increase (Africa). Developed regions also saw the number of hungry rise, from 13 million in 2004–2006 to 16 million in 2010–2012, reversing a steady decrease in previous years from 20 million in 1990–1992. The recession that began in 2008, for example, caused an increase in poverty in the U.S., which caused an increase in food insecurity. In 2010, 14.5 percent of U.S. households were food insecure, the highest number ever recorded in the United States.

According to the World Watch Institute, solving the problem of chronic hunger does not require producing more food. “The world can already feed 9–11 billion people with the food grown today.” It requires instead addressing the poverty of those, often enough agricultural laborers as well as urban dwellers, who cannot access food. And it requires addressing a global system that wastes enormous amounts of food that is produced too often with unsustainable farming practices that contribute to the environmental crisis. The recent report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change foresees tragic effects on the world’s poor as climate change causes rising temperatures to disrupt food production and access to water, causing food prices to rise. Both grain yields in temperate zones and tropical crop yields are forecast to decline. The UN Human Development Report 2013 estimates increasing numbers of people living in extreme poverty and a significant increase in child mortality due to the effects of climate change. In the context of this growing threat to the right of all people to food, the principles of “Food Sovereignty for All” provide useful information and meaningful activities to consider for changing behaviors and doing advocacy.

Commissioners may note that the specific numbered provisions of the overture define food sovereignty in operational terms, as providing food adequacy, community empowerment, and justice for agricultural workers and small land-holders. This appears to reflect the principle that communities should define how the concept is applied, although the concept is given more definition in the rationale section. In terms of past policy, “food sovereignty” combines elements of the norms of “participation” (democratic accountability) and “sustainability,” that have been part of the social teaching of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since the energy policy developed jointly by the PCUS and UPCUSA in 1981, The Power to Speak Truth to Power, and Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice, 1990. Commissioners may also remember the concept of “appropriate technology,” which was defined by communities’ ability to maintain and manage technologies at scale suitable to their capacities.

A recent article, “The Quinoa Quarrel: Who owns the world’s greatest superfood?,” illustrates the challenges that will remain as problems of water and climate change devastate some localities and regions. The grain in question is an extremely hardy, complete protein, native to Bolivia, a poor country understandably concerned to control the genetic integrity and revenue from a key resource. Yet the author notes the tension between the interests of Bolivia and those of the world’s poor in areas where land is becoming saltier and drier. Market distribution, genetic property rights, and relief and development organizations may all play a part in defining quinoa’s role. The overture would suggest that the democratically elected government of Bolivia would have the key role, acting in the interests first of its own rural poor.

Endnotes
2. [http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/i3027e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/i3027e00.htm)

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**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-09—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-09.
Comment on Item 09-09—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.


Funds from the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering support partners engaged in food sovereignty initiatives in impoverished areas in the U.S.A. and overseas, http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/hunger/wai/. These funds also connect concerned Presbyterians with international partners that have initiated campaigns on issues like land grab, http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/joininghands/foodandland.

This overture affirms and strengthens the current work of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

$Item 09-10

[The assembly approved Item 09-10 with amendment and with comment. See pp. 15, 37.]

[Comment: Action via Agenda: Wednesday Consent Agenda. A church in Detroit Presbytery has offered to host the task force and provide housing for members of the task force to help reduce financial implications.]

On a Study of End-of-Life Issues—From the Synod of the Covenant.

In view of the legalization of physician-assisted suicide in five states and several nations, and increases in the technological choices facing patients and their families in end-of-life circumstances, the Synod of the Covenant respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to convene a 7–8 person team of Presbyterian ethicists[theologians, pastors,] and physicians, including one or more drafters, to produce a pastoral and educational booklet giving guidance on”
   a. physician-assisted suicide (PAS);
   b. palliative and terminal sedation, withholding/withdrawing nutrition and hydration and other end-of-life treatments;
   c. the role of medical professionals, hospital and hospice chaplains, hospital ethics committees, and relevant medical regulation;
   d. pastoral support of dying persons and their families;
   e. special circumstances of dying children and the dying pregnant woman;
   f. special circumstances of chronically and/or severely disabled persons in end-of-life planning and care;
   g. organ donation in relation to determinations of death and methods of prolonging body functions;
   h. talking with the faithful about end-of-life planning and advance directives;
   i. appropriate governmental and institutional policy recommendations to support the faithful exercise of Christian conscience on these matters.

2. Recommend that this balanced study team meet primarily by video-phone and once in person, and that it consult with the Presbyterian Mission Agency; be guided by prior General Assembly policy; examine any comparable denominational or ecumenical resources; test the booklet with experienced pastors and chaplains, hospital and hospice physicians and nurses; and report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

3. Recommend the booklet requested be printed for purchase and be posted on-line with updated templates of living wills, authorizations of durable powers of attorney for medical care, and references to relevant theological, ethical, and medical studies and resources for pastoral care.
4. Recommend that copies of this booklet and any related policy recommendations be sent to appropriate regulatory and certifying bodies (including those for thanatology and clinical pastoral education), and Presbyterian seminaries, colleges, and universities.


Rationale

The Brief Statement of Faith added to the Book of Confessions in 1991 echoes the Heidelberg Confession when it states, “In life and in death we belong to God” (10.1, Line 1). A Presbyterian study document with that title was produced in 1995, following guidance from prior General Assemblies policies such as The Nature and Value of Human Life (PCUS, 1981) and The Covenant of Life and the Caring Community & Covenant and Creation (UPCUSA, 1988). These documents stressed the relational, covenantal character of life before God that puts moral limits on the practice of medicine and provides a distinctive source of moral insight that conditions patient autonomy. Since these earlier reports, matters have become even more complex than they were, as scientific and technological developments have increased the capacity to prolong human life and laws have expanded the legal choices for those facing terminal illness.

In light of these new possibilities and the moral challenges they entail, Presbyterian witness to the covenantal character of human life in creation, sustenance, and redemption needs to be renewed and clarified. Presbyterian ethicists have written significant work since the 1990s, and some would be willing to contribute to a concise consensus statement for the church, identifying theological concerns and Christian values at stake. This effort, as proposed, would depend primarily on their volunteer commitment and possible funds for a writer/editor’s honorarium, a single meeting, and some printing, using existing staff for coordination. The plan for producing the report primarily in the form of a booklet is to enhance its usefulness to the church.

Concurrence to Item 09-10 from the Presbytery of Detroit.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-10

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-10—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

As stated in the proponents’ rationale, the emergence of new possibilities and new challenges begs for up-to-date address of today’s end of life issues. General Assembly documents that offered guidance in these matters in the past are still relevant and instructive, but they did not treat some of the complexities and choices that confront patients, families, care providers, and pastoral supporters today. “An Essay on the Problems Related to the Prolongation of Life by Technological Means” (1974), “The Nature and Value of Human Life” (1981), “The Covenant of Life and the Caring Community” (1988), and “In Life and in Death We Belong to God: Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide, and End-of-Life Issues”—A Study Guide (1995) have not lost their relevance, and this overture insists that they remain relevant for the anticipated team; but they need to have their reach extended. What is more, the very contributions that these assembly-approved resources have made testify to the importance of end-of-life issues for the ongoing theological-ethical reflection and health-care practice of Christians.

What is being proposed is an affirmation rather than a repudiation of the concerns addressed by those earlier resources. It constitutes a focused continuation of the exploration facilitated by “In Life and in Death We Belong to God.” The built-in cost containment in the proposal should answer questions about affordability. We understand the ethicists and medical personnel bringing the proposal believe they share an emerging consensus on the new “aid-in-dying” laws now in operation in several states. The booklet they propose as the vehicle for assisting those facing end-of-life decisions seems eminently practical. Thus this is a resolution not a larger policy study. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would note that if approved, the report envisioned would be presented to the General Assembly meeting in Oregon, the first state to legalize physician-assisted suicide in the United States.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-10

Comment on Item 09-10—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.
Item 09-11

[The assembly approved Item 09-11. See pp. 15, 38.]

On Affirming the Importance of Maternal and Child Nutrition Over 1,000 Days—From the Presbytery of National Capital.

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to:

1. Affirm the importance of maternal and child nutrition in the 1,000 days between the beginning of a woman’s pregnancy and her child’s second birthday, reaffirming “that enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God’s good creation (Book of Confessions, Confession of 1967, 9.46).”

2. Recognize the importance of the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children in the United States and the role of U.S. foreign assistance in supporting governments of developing countries in improving maternal and child nutrition.

3. Call on Presbyterians to pray for and minister to women and children in the United States and around the world who are in the 1,000-day window.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to work with Presbyterian Women in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc., to identify resources for Presbyterians to learn more about maternal and child nutrition.

5. Call on Presbyterians to learn more about the importance of nutrition for women and children in the critical 1,000-day window and preventing children from experiencing cognitive and physical delays.

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for policies that promote good nutrition in the 1,000 days window.

7. Direct the Stated Clerk to write to the president of the United Nations General Assembly urging that the post-2015 development agenda include a stand-alone goal addressing hunger and under-nutrition, and that a set of nutrition targets should be included that reflect the World Health Assembly targets released in 2012, which include a goal of reducing under-nutrition which causes stunting by 40 percent by 2025.1

8. Direct the Stated Clerk to write to the U.S. Congress and to the president of the United States asking them to work together to lay the groundwork for ending hunger in the United States by 2023, ending hunger around the world in 2030, and to affirm the importance of addressing maternal and child nutrition in the critical 1,000-day window in reaching those goals.

9. Affirm the relationship between the PC(USA), the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and Bread for the World, and to endorse the Women of Faith for the 1,000 Days Movement, a campaign of Bread for the World.

Rationale

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long been a leader in the anti-hunger movement and has strong policy and program support for such a movement. New research shows that by targeting efforts to end hunger by improving nutrition for women and children in the critical 1,000-day window between the beginning of a woman’s pregnancy and her child’s second birthday, these efforts can be more effective.

Reducing maternal and child malnutrition, especially in the 1,000-day window, is critical to increasing child survival, improving cognitive and physical development, strengthening the immune system to bolster resistance to disease, and breaking the cycle of poverty.

Under-nutrition is an underlying cause of nearly 45 percent of the 6.9 million deaths among children under five every year.1 Under-nutrition causes stunting, which leads to long-term poor health, impaired brain development, and decreased immunity. One in four children in the world is stunted, a number that can rise to one in three in developing countries.

Leading Nobel Laureate economists have recommended that addressing hunger and malnutrition among young children should be a top priority for policymakers. The economists identified nutrition as the smartest investment, with every $1 invested in nutrition generating as much as $138 in better health and increased productivity.

Bread for the World, a partner of the PC(USA) in working to end hunger, has affirmed a goal to end hunger in the United States by 2023 and around the world by 2030. While government action alone cannot end hunger, it is critical for the U.S. government to take a leadership role.

The PC(USA) joins denominations such as The Episcopal Church and organizations like the National Latino Evangelical Coalition to endorse the Women of Faith for the 1,000 Days Movement. Other partners include Presbyterian Women, the
Women’s Missionary Society of the AME Church, the National Council of Catholic Women, and the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, among others. (For a full list and more information visit [www.bread.org/go/1000days](http://www.bread.org/go/1000days).)

Endnotes

Concurrence to Item 09-11 from the Presbytery of Chicago.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-11

Comment on Item 09-11—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Recognizing the importance of this campaign and the impact it has on improving the lives of women and children around the world, Presbyterian Mission Agency has formed a “1000 Days Roundtable” that includes representatives from World Mission, Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries, Presbyterian Women, and Compassion, Peace, and Justice to encourage congregations to get involved in the campaign.

The 1000 Day Campaign reinforces and strengthens the poverty alleviation work that the PC(USA) is engaged in through long-term mission partnerships in Bangladesh, Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Peru, Haiti, Ethiopia, Malawi, Southern Sudan, and Zimbabwe, [http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pw/justice/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pw/justice/).

$Item 09-12

[The assembly approved Item 09-12. See pp. 15, 38.]

On Providing a Trauma Crisis Counseling Consultation to Train in Best Practices in Caring for Survivors of Homicide Victims—From the Presbytery of Nevada.

The Presbytery of Nevada overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the PC(USA) to commit the necessary financial and programmatic resources to provide for a trauma crisis counseling consultation within twelve months of the 221st General Assembly (2014). The attendees would be trained by the Presbyterian Mission Agency, mental health professionals, and community stakeholders in some of the best practices for caring for the bereaved survivors of homicide victims and traumatized community members.


Rationale

Previous General Assemblies have charged our PC(USA) ecclesiastical bodies to address this public health crisis (e.g. *Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call, Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 830 ff.).

Clergy are seen as first responders in times of tragedy and trauma; even though, many PC(USA) clergy have yet to receive adequate training in the crisis counseling skills necessary to respond effectively after a traumatic event in their community.

Far too many of the bereaved homicide victim families in our communities do not receive adequate emotional and spiritual care. Many of these bereaved families feel like they are walking this dark valley of traumatic grief without a shepherd.

The PC(USA) Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center has been a paragon model; having hosted eleven therapeutic camps for school shooting survivors ever since the Westside School Shooting in Jonesboro, Ark. (1998).

The PC(USA) has invaluable resources that can help equip PC(USA) clergy as crisis counselors and first responders. The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program has expertise in providing disaster assistance following traumatic events. The sharing of these vicarious lessons and best practices will enhance our PC(USA) pastoral response, when and if, yet another tragedy strikes one of our communities.

As our nation continues to reel from pervasive gun violence, and our elected officials are gridlocked in the zero sum debate about gun control, our communities still hold thousands of bereaved homicide family survivors who receive inadequate emotional and spiritual support from community stakeholders. Since the tragic Sandyhook Elementary school shooting, there have been forty-four additional school shootings. Our urban centers continue to confront the trauma of gang-related shootings and far too many of our homes have homicides related to domestic violence. One is too many.
The bereaved homicide victim family members are at a greater risk for developing PTSD and traumatic grief disorders. These mental health conditions have well-established co-morbid risks of substance abuse and suicide. The disparities in access to quality mental healthcare for racial ethnic minorities and the economically disadvantaged only compound this difficult healing journey. Many of these bereaved families do not have a congregational affiliation, and when they do, these clergy have not been fully equipped to serve as crisis counselors in this capacity. Many families face the stigma and shame of having a child who was a known gang member so they are reluctant to come forward for assistance because of the stigma. The bereaved family deserves care and support, regardless of the circumstances surrounding the homicide.

The PC(USA) PDA program, affiliated mental health professionals, and PC(USA) camp and conference are ecclesiastical partners who have critical resources that could further educate and equip our teaching elders and ruling elders to be more sensitive and responsive to the emotional and spiritual needs of crime victim families in our respective communities. No one should ever have to walk through the dark valley of traumatic grief without compassionate shepherds.

**Concurrence to Item 09-12 from the Presbytery of Lehigh.**

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-12**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-12—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the resolution with amendment as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Nevada overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the PC(USA) to [commit the necessary financial and programmatic resources to provide for a trauma crisis counseling consultation within twelve months of the 221st General Assembly (2014). The attendees would be trained by the Presbyterian Mission Agency, mental health professionals, and community stakeholders in some of the best practices for caring for the bereaved survivors of homicide victims and traumatized community members.] [direct Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to respond to invitations from mid councils and their congregations to provide training that will prepare them to respond to possible public violence events in their communities. The training will

“[1. enhance awareness, resilience, and skills to support healing of communities;

“[2. utilize training best practices to care for bereaved individuals and traumatized communities; and

“[3. equip individuals and institutions to engage in dialogue about gun violence.]”

The resolution, “Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call,” approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010) recognized the need to provide care for our brothers and sisters touched by gun violence as it encouraged: “the church at every level—from individual member to congregation, presbytery, synod, and national church—to become informed and active in preventing gun violence, to provide pastoral care for victims of gun violence, and to seek a spiritual response of grief and repentance, grace and courage to resist that violence and celebrate the Lord and Giver of Life.”

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance provides this training and support in the aftermath of public violence events. This overture encourages mid councils to take advantage of the skills, connections, and expertise of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance before such events occur.

**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-12**

*Comment on Item 09-12—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.*

The Presbyterian Mission Agency, through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), is already engaged in providing support to communities impacted by gun violence through its National Response Team and staff. The National Response Team and staff are skilled professionals, clergy, and clinicians with expertise in responding to and supporting churches and communities who are impacted by acts of public violence.

In addition to providing initial support immediately after an event, PDA also offers emotional and spiritual care, compassion fatigue, and resilience training for religious and community leaders that strengthens their capacity to equip the community to recover from the trauma of the violence.

PDA has also produced one full-length award-winning documentary on gun violence, *Trigger*, [http://triggerdoc.com/](http://triggerdoc.com/), and “Tapestry,” [https://vimeo.com/91726932](https://vimeo.com/91726932), a shorter (twenty-eight minutes) award-winning documentary on the processes of recovery and healing in communities after public violence, viewed through the lens of PDA National Response Team
members who have done such responses. Both of these documentaries also have study materials designed to equip congregations and communities to engage in dialogue about gun violence.

PDA welcomes the opportunity to enhance the resilience, skills, and awareness of its mid council partners and their congregations as the PC(USA) seeks to bring a healing presence and a prophetic word into the scourge of public violence afflicting our country. This could be accomplished as an invitational event through mid councils to Stony Point or regionally, if preferred.

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**Item 09-13**

[The assembly approved Item 09-13 with amendment. See pp. 35, 38.]

*A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014)—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

[1. Direct the Presbytery Mission Agency (PMA) to reestablish and fill the position of associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment, or an appropriate alternative.]

[2.] Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, in consultation with the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) and the other five PC(USA) agencies (Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.), to create a database comprised of businesses that qualify under the Supplier Diversity standards reviewed by GACOR, which all of the six agencies and other PC(USA) bodies (e.g., mid councils: presbyteries and synods) should use as a source for supplies and services.

[3. Direct ACREC to have discussions with legal counsel of the PC(USA), GACOR, and other relevant church entities about policy and/or strategies that address the General Assembly’s concern and directive to:]

“[a. Include persons with disabilities as part of the ‘diversity of the church’s membership’ and provide such persons with a supportive work environment.]

“[b. Collect data and monitor diversity efforts pertaining to Middle Eastern communities.]

**Rationale**

These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:


**Summary of Findings for 2012–2014**

In response to the 2010 and 2012 recommendations:

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*The 219th General Assembly (2010) initiated this effort at the denominational level by directing that the Session Annual Statistical Report include data on Middle Eastern people in Item 03-21: http://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3131&promoID=110.*
1. The ACREC did not do an analysis of the progress of the six agencies regarding cultural proficiency for 2010–2012, but focused primarily on assessing the drafts of the agencies’ Six-Year Cultural Proficiency Plans.

2. The cultural proficiency standard and assessment and review policy was approved at the 220th General Assembly (2012) and has since been incorporated in the General Assembly’s Agency Review Manual as Appendix C.

3. Although there were efforts by the former associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and agency representatives, the cultural proficiency assessment tool was not revised. This tool was to be utilized until the Six-Year Cultural Proficiency Plans were put in place. As the six agencies began drafting their Six-Year Cultural Proficiency Plans, which would become the means by which cultural proficiency would be evaluated, revising the previous assessment tool was no longer necessary.

4. The ACREC has been made aware that while GACOR was tasked by the 220th General Assembly (2012) with the responsibility of reviewing the affirmative action and supplier diversity benchmarks for the six agencies, GACOR has not, as of January 2014, been given the support and resources needed to carry out this task. The ACREC would urge that GACOR be given the necessary resources and that this work be carried out as soon as possible.

5. In the raw data on employment provided by the agencies ending on December 31, 2012, not all agencies provided data on employees who are disabled (based on self-identification). Nor did the data include employees who are identified as Middle Eastern. Currently, people of Middle Eastern descent, Christian or not, are greatly discriminated against in today's political climate and should be included as a part of church’s cultural proficiency and antiracism self-assessment. Collection of this data is a challenge that emphasizes the need to develop a strategy in how to capture this data and to overcome obstacles the PC(USA) diversity policy is intended to address.

6. In addition, the raw data needs to be disaggregated. Pursuant to the 218th General Assembly (2008) Women of Color Consultation Report (Item 09-13), the six agencies were directed to gather data in disaggregated form in terms of age, race, gender, and ethnicity, when providing comparative statistics. It is worth reiterating the importance of providing this information, particularly in upper management positions in each agency.

7. The agencies also provided data on supplier diversity. As of December 31, 2012, five of the six agencies attained the goal of at least 10 percent of their purchases with minority or woman-owned firms. The one agency that did not reach this goal did have 11.76 percent of its contracts (two in number) that were awarded to firms owned by women. None of the other agencies included data based upon the number of contracts. The categories during this cycle included the new categories of Middle Eastern and Persons with Disabilities. The latter category is based upon self-disclosed or self-reporting.

8. The ACREC members met with the purchasing manager of PMA to discuss available resources that might provide listings of minority and firms owned by women or diversity supplier databases. Suggested were the National Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc., and for local Kentucky resources, the Metropolitan Sewer District (Supplier Diversity Section) and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. These resources are being provided here as potential resources. The ACREC has no experience with these companies, and does not know if they meet the guidelines on supplier diversity.

9. In 2012 and 2013, ACREC was able to successfully participate in meetings with the review committees for the Board of Pensions and the Foundation, as these agencies began their six-year review of these agencies. Many thanks to the OGA associate for Assembly Operations for facilitating ACREC’s participation in these meetings. Two agencies, the PMA and OGA, are scheduled for their six-year review in the 2014–2015 cycle, in which ACREC also will participate, in accordance with the directive from the 219th General Assembly (2008).

10. Antiracism training and cultural proficiency training were made mandatory at the 220th General Assembly (2012) for the six agencies. The agencies have indicated that they have provided or are planning to provide these trainings to their employees. It is not known if all employees in all agencies have received this training. It is anticipated, however, that during the next review cycle, the agencies will report on their progress regarding the training.

11. In the middle of this review cycle, the associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment resigned. This Presbyterian Mission Agency staff person was assisting the agencies in developing their six-year plans and also provided training in cultural proficiency to various PC(USA) entities including ACREC. This position has not been filled, though two consultants have been hired. In light of the mandatory training in cultural proficiency and antiracism for the six agencies,

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* Recommendation 3.c. of “A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (Item 11-09), and can be found at: http://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3113&promoID=100.
12. Drafting and reviewing the Six-Year Cultural Proficiency Plans was the most significant activity that occurred during this review cycle. All of the agencies had presented at least a first draft before or shortly after the December 31, 2012, deadline. These early drafts were provided to ACREC, ACWC, and GACOR for comment. All agencies were asked to submit a supplement to their plans, specifically to organize the six-year plans in two-year review cycles. The ACREC members met with all but one of the agencies individually and discussed comments to the drafts. Three agencies have indicated that they will submit a revised draft by March 1, 2014. Once the latest drafts are received, they will be reviewed by ACREC, ACWC, and GACOR. It is anticipated that the six-year plans will be approved before the 221st General Assembly (2014), but after the deadline for reports. Once the plans are approved by ACREC, they will go into effect.8

13. The purpose of the six-year plans is intentional, systemic change. Formulating these long-term plans causes agencies to examine the current work environment and to think creatively as to how to develop and sustain healthy organizational cultures that support diverse workforces, at all levels. Each plan is tailored to the specific characteristics and function of each agency, while the mission and overall goals remain constant: to foster a diverse workforce that gives “full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and ... provide[s] for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment.”9

14. It is hoped that the end result is a plan with specific goals, easy to understand with measurable targets, which are easy to evaluate and flexible enough to change as the work environment changes. This plan, once it is synchronized with the six-year review of the agency, should result in two-year reviews via submissions of reports, and one face-to-face meeting in the year of the six-year review, unless more frequent meetings are needed.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 09-13

Comment on Item 09-13—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) appreciates the ways the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) is revising the process of the cultural proficiency reviews to reflect GACOR’s responsibilities regarding employment of personnel (G-3-0103) and specific tasks referred by the assembly to GACOR regarding AAEEEO and supplier diversity.

Recommendations 2 and 3 demonstrate the committees’ greater cooperation with one another to avoid duplication of tasks. There is in development a website that will provide access to some databases supporting supplier diversity. GACOR is concerned that the implementation of Recommendation 2 may be interpreted that the creation and maintenance of a new database is called for and wants to remind commissioners that we have limited staff and volunteer resources for such a large task. There are professionally maintained databases available in most local and regional areas. We hope consideration of existing resources will factor into the implementation of this recommendation. A single database sufficient for the widely varying levels outlined in this recommendation is beyond the capacities of the GACOR and agencies.

The GACOR reminds commissioners of Item 09-19, a recommendation from GACOR regarding the development of a common definition of supplier diversity to guide the future review and recommendation of new goals for each agency. The table with agencies represented (in Item 09-19) may be a place to refer Recommendation 2.

The inclusion of persons from the categories, cited in Recommendation 3, are already included in the AAEEEO forms GACOR uses to request employment data from the agencies. Agencies have concerns regarding these categories and the conversations are expected to be fruitful. We welcome being a part of those discussions. The GACOR appreciates being a partner with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns in serving the PC(USA).

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

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9 Book of Order, G-3.0103.
Comment on Item 09-13—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency is appreciative of the important work of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and enjoys a collaborative, productive relationship with regular consultation. While the Presbyterian Mission Agency agrees with the importance of cultural proficiency and antiracism work within the denomination, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency in particular, it disagrees with the Advocacy Committee on how to best fulfill this responsibility.

When the former incumbent of the associate for organizational diversity, education and recruitment position left the Presbyterian Mission Agency, work was redistributed within the Human Resources office. No mandates for the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency were changed, only the manner in which this work is done.

Currently the Presbyterian Mission Agency Human Resources staff includes a position that focuses on recruitment and organizational diversity (through the Diversity in Leadership Network). Education is achieved through a large selection of online career and personal development courses.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency believes this approach fulfills the General Assembly’s mandate for cultural proficiency training while also achieving good stewardship of financial resources. No other General Assembly agency has employed a full-time staff position focused on their cultural proficiency work. The work currently mandated by the General Assembly is fully reflected in the budget that has been proposed for General Assembly approval. Creating an additional position for this work will have a financial implication that requires reductions in other programmatic areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

$Item 09-14

[The assembly approved Item 09-14 with amendment. See pp. 15, 38.]

National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force Report

The National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to hold a national consultation on developing regional racial ethnic ministries in 2015 for twenty-five participants over a two-day period. This consultation will have a planning team of ten people and shall include developing a vision and structure so each ministry may create its own unique way of doing ministry.

   Rationale for Recommendation 1

   The work of the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force currently consists of only seven people who have a limited amount of time and resources to complete the task. In order for racial ethnic ministries to grow and flourish, a greater number and variety of people are needed so that a larger regional representation is involved in developing and implementing racial ethnic ministries. The outcome of this national consultation will be reported back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

2. Encourage the mid councils to collaborate with PMA translators and expand resources for other languages.

   Rationale for Recommendation 2

   The National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force rejoices at the hiring of the new staff persons. As the diversity of racial ethnic people in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) grows, there will be a need for more translation, interpretation, and documentation services.

3. Call for a churchwide conference on race, ethnicity, racism, and ethnocentricity in 2015. In addition, direct the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to appoint a planning team of ten people for this event in consultation with the following groups:

   a. Racial ethnic congregational leadership;
   b. Racial ethnic caucus leadership;
   c. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC);
   d. Presbytery and synod leadership;
e. General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR);
f. Representatives from the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA)[s][z]

[g. A report will be submitted to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) on these matters.]

[Financial Implication: Presbyterian Mission Agency—$82,210 (2015); $8,640 (2016)]

Rationale for Recommendation 3

Racial ethnic ministry, to a large extent, is a response to a history of discrimination and lament on current pains of structural racism and ethnocentricity within the church body. This churchwide conference will involve leadership to work in conjunction with larger and majority congregations to find visible solutions to visible and invisible racism and discriminations that are within different ethnic groups toward each other also. This conference will be the beginning step needed to recognize and heal wounds. The outcome of this conference and resulting recommendations will be reported to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Overall Rationale


The ministry and witness of racial ethnic people in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have been evident for more than 200 years. Racial ethnic people have brought to the denomination various ways in which Scripture is understood through our unique experiences of the Holy Spirit: wonderful music that glorifies God with different melodies and instruments; multiple styles of worship; and perspectives on introducing others to a relationship with Jesus Christ. At the same time, racial ethnic people have contributed to the life and mission of the church by participating at all council levels of the denomination through service on committees and task forces, and as General Assembly Moderators. As racial ethnic ministries continue to be led by the Holy Spirit to grow and flourish, the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force encourages the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to partner and truly engage with our brothers and sisters to create a diverse church where all gifts in ministry are recognized and celebrated.

The National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force was approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in response to a recommendation from the General Assembly Mid Council Commission Racial Ethnic Strategy Task Force of the General Assembly Committee on Mid Councils. The recommendation was presented by the Assembly Committee on Mid Councils Review and approved by the General Assembly. The responsibility that was charged to the task force is to

… exclusively review, assess and explore the call to, responsibility in, and vision for racial ethnic ministry within the PC (USA), reporting its findings for implementation to the 221st General Assembly (2014) (Minutes, 2012, PCUSA, Part I, p. 277 of the electronic journal, p. 172 of the print journal)

In addition the task force is charged to

... be charged specifically to address the issue and the lack of language access, sensitivity, and resourcing (particularly as relates to the Spanish and Korean languages) within the existing frame of council operations, as well as within the context of any councils. (Ibid.)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) has taken supportive and encouraging positions advocating inclusion and support of racial ethnic ministries. While this may be true, significant problems remain. Many of our racial ethnic congregations find themselves in presbyteries in which they are the only congregation of its kind and receive little or no assistance in the form of guidance, nurture, or resources. Some congregations and/or members of racial ethnic groups have not been fully welcomed to be present or to share their gifts in some presbyterian contexts and structures. The commitment to inclusion and racial ethnic ministry has waned in recent years and other priorities have taken the forefront in terms of resources, time, and energy. In past General Assemblies, racial ethnic ministries have been highlighted, proclaimed, and met with approval through statements and strategies but have received little support or funding. As the universal church in general and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) in particular grapples with complex societal, theological, and cultural changes, racial ethnic ministries have in many cases taken a back seat or been declared a cause from another era. Although these are significant barriers to unity in the body of Christ, we believe that through God’s Holy Spirit, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) can experience a new life and vision through the witness and vision of racial ethnic members of this denomination and those who seek to claim the Reformed tradition as their home.

The implementation of the recommendations of the report of the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force has the real possibility of further energizing and engaging the denomination in visioning a new day for racial ethnic ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). An understanding of this new vision includes networking, consultation, and collaboration with mid councils, caucus leadership, and members of congregations. This understanding will also give awareness of the rich diversity of gifts, skills, and practices of ministry that will enrich the body of the denomination.

The National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force began its work by assessing the mandate given by the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to examine the historical and social importance of racial ethnic ministries. This review included a view of the current and projected racial ethnic membership in the denomination by the Office of Research Services staff, as well as, conversations with staff from the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women’s area and the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR).

The task force also conducted a review of the historical connection of racial ethnic ministries to the mid councils with respect to synods and invited comments from the leadership of the following racial ethnic caucuses and/or entities: National Asian Presbyterian Council (NAPC); National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC); National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus (NMEPC); National Presbyterian Hispanic/Latino Caucus (CNPH); National Council of Korean Presbyterian Churches in the PC(USA) (NCKPC); Native American Consulting Committee (NACC); the Advisory Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC); and participants of the Mid Councils as Partners in Immigrant and Multicultural Communities workshop at the 2013 Big Tent Event in Louisville. In light of this information, we offer the following observations:

1. The racial ethnic population of the United States is growing at a fast rate, which will move the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to be in discussion and dialogue on how best to engage in ministry with a diversity of cultures, races, and experiences.

2. There are a growing number of new immigrant fellowships worshipping in various places and settings in our denomination. Some of these are very small groups that began as Bible study groups and may be loosely associated with either an individual congregation or mid council.

3. There is a need to maintain a regional expression of racial ethnic ministries in synods/presbyteries or in a subsequent proposed structure.

4. There is a low representation of Presbyterian racial ethnic seminarians in Presbyterian seminaries.

5. There is a need for mid councils (specifically presbyteries) to find creative call positions for racial ethnic graduates, especially women of color.

As we look toward the future of racial ethnic ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the task force believes that God is working in the midst of the established and immigrant racial ethnic faith communities together with the whole body of Christ to bring life, joy, and love for one another through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Social, Biblical and Theological Foundations**

If the church is to be attentive to the increasing and unavoidable “browning” of the United States, how will its ministries respond to this increasing demographic change? This demographic shift provides the church an opportunity to embrace new ways to proclaim the gospel, to nurture fellowship, to practice and live in worship, to live in the truth, to promote social justice, and to build up the kingdom of heaven in the world (Book of Order, F-1.0304). The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) has been blessed throughout its history by indigenous and long-standing racial ethnic communities as well as different immigrant communities that have come and continue to come to the United States for different reasons and in a variety of circumstances, many of which were and are violent and denigrating to human dignity. In each of these instances the church has been influenced, and continues to be influenced by their presence, experiences, and circumstances. Today, as in the past, the Presby-
terian Church (U.S.A.) and American Christianity are faced with social, linguistic, economic, and cultural challenges that require—at all levels of the church—a response that is relevant, welcoming, and faithful. The church, in its response through its witness and ministry, will inevitably find opportunities of transformation and regeneration for the glory of God, and the spiritual growth of the body of Christ.

One of the challenges faced by the church is becoming aware of and responding with solidarity to the plight of immigrant communities. To migrate inevitably carries the pain of separation, not only from the homeland, but from people and landscapes that are familiar and close to one’s own being. Challenged by our church’s past and present in the reality of immigration, the church is challenged to experience the reality of immigration not from an expectation of assimilation, but from the experience of the migrant. Prophetic Scripture does not shy away from the plight and realities of migrant communities in its abundant narratives of the migrant experiences of ancient Israel.

The prophet Jeremiah (29:4–11) lifts up the “strangers in a foreign land”, the people of Judah. In his “letter to the exiles”, Jeremiah encourages the immigrant community to prepare for a more permanent reality in exile (build houses, plant orchards, give children in marriage). The experience of immigration for many will become a more permanent situation that immigrants recognize will require an effort on their part to “root themselves” in the realities of the context they now live in. And as Jeremiah encouraged the exiles from Judah, immigrants in the past and today are challenged by the call to not simply put down roots, but to “seek the welfare of the city” where they are found, and “pray to the Lord on its behalf.” (Jer. 29:7, NRSV) The church is, then, the space where immigrant communities have sought and continue to seek the welfare of the cities and towns where they are found. But for many immigrants the church may also be one of those places and spaces where they are called to put down roots, and struggle with the reality of migration and settlement. The call to the church, then, is to be a body of people who welcome the immigrant, and provide for ways in which the newcomer, whether from around the corner or from across the world, may find means in which to become not an object of the ministry of the church, but a subject of the witness of the gospel in the body of Christ, and to the larger community. This becoming a subject of ministry—and not an object—presumes that the church will recognize and celebrate the individuality and particularity of each of its members, especially each other’s life story, and its implication in faith, witness, and fellowship.

The apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 12 that we all have been given multiple gifts from the same Spirit. Racial ethnic members of the body of Christ are no different. Racial ethnic constituencies have multiple gifts of ministry, and can minister within the whole church for the building up of the God’s beloved community and the transformation of the church.

Finally, the intent behind these recommendations is for this church to intentionally and honestly begin an ongoing effort to a path of reconciliation. All we do as children of God we do with the purpose of reaching reconciliation. This task force has a real commitment for this church to achieve reconciliation within its members. In doing so we must be honest with one another, we must acknowledge the historical context and wounds that have shaped and continue to shape the way we are, the way we do church, and the especially the way we interact and engage different people. An initial step on the path to reconciliation is one that recognizes the explicit and implicit forms of racism in the history of the church, and in its current structures and ministries. The next step is one that intentionally seeks the healing of racial, ethnic, native, and immigrant communities—those in the church and those outside it.

This task force recognizes that these recommendations are not the ultimate solutions for racial ethnic ministries in the PC(USA). What this task force recognizes is the need to begin a conversation with as many people as possible. We want to recognize the gifts we all bring to the body of Christ and recognize that we are all part of the same body. We hope these recommendations will steer the church on the path of reconciliation.

Bibliography


ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-14

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-14—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-14.
The ACREC thanks the task force members who actively participated on this committee and for this report that presents important observations about issues concerning racial ethnic ministries in the PC(USA). These observations include fast-growing racial ethnic populations in the U.S., new immigrant fellowships, racial ethnic presence in the reorganized regional synod bodies, low representation of candidates and staff at Presbyterian seminaries, and calls for women of color seminarian graduates. These are cutting edge issues that will likely shape the future church.

We support the task force’s recommendation for a two-day consultation involving a larger group of persons to develop relevant and effective strategies for racial ethnic ministries. With limited resources, the task force was able to obtain some comments and views from members of the racial ethnic caucuses and other relevant church groups. However, in order to be true to their charge to “review, assess, and explore the call to, responsibility in, and a vision for racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA),” the task force believes that more responses are needed from a greater variety of people from a “larger regional representation.” In order to minimize costs, this two-day consultation could be held just prior to or during the Big Tent in 2015.

We also support the recommendation for a church-wide conference on race, ethnicity, racism, and ethnocentricity. Racism is still a major social and institutional issue in the United States, including our churches. There was an attempt to have a discussion on race with PC(USA) leadership during an ad hoc meeting at the Big Tent in 2013, in reaction to the acquittal in the Trayvon Martin murder trial. An intentional, well-planned conference—where a larger and broader audience would be in attendance—will provide an opportunity for a healthy general discussion about race in the church, and could be the beginning of a road to healing that is still needed in our church.

GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 09-14

Comment on Item 09-14—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) welcomes the recommended actions in this report, particularly those that strengthen mid council collaboration on translations of materials and the formation of the planning team for the conference on race, ethnicity, racism, and ethnocentricity in 2015. The GACOR reminds commissioners that the responsibilities of all councils above session to demonstrate work on participation and representation (G-3.0103) and unity in diversity (F-1.0403), is accomplished most easily through the work of committees on representation. The complementary nature of the topics directed by the recommendation will provide helpful and coordinated vision for the PC(USA). The short timeline given for this work is our only concern. The GACOR suggests the recommendation make clear the responsibility to report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) or another designated assembly.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

Item 09-15

[The assembly approved Item 09-15 with amendment. See pp. 15, 38–39.]

A Resolution to Educate Against and Help Prevent Voter Suppression—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Acknowledge the changes in voting rights and the new wave of voter suppression disproportionately affecting racial ethnic communities that have resulted from the June 2013 decision by the Supreme Court.

2. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to update Lift Every Voice, Democracy, Voting Rights, and Electoral Reform, approved by the 218th General Assembly (2010), to include changes in the Voting Rights Act.

3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to prepare educational materials (web-based or print) for use in congregations and mid councils specifically on how voter suppression impacts our democracy theologically, ecclesiologically, and culturally.

4. Continuing the Presbyterian tradition of witness for democracy and the equality of electoral rights necessary for its exercise, direct the Stated Clerk to write to mid councils to inform them about the changes in the Voting Rights Act and send them an updated digital copy of the ACSWP document, “Lift Every Voice,” advocating for voter rights in a more just and democratic society through

   a. educating congregations and mid councils on the impacts of voter suppression and the [affects] [effects] of not having federal oversight on voting rights, as of June 2013; and
b. sponsoring conversations about the negative social impacts of voter suppression and why this matters to the church, providing ideas for congregations to help in local efforts to stop voter suppression.

5. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to lift up voters’ rights in election years 2014 and 2016 through its communications channels (such as Presbyterians Today, email newsletters, action alerts, etc.) and recognize the need to educate the grassroots on the effects of voter suppression on church and society.

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop advocacy strategies to work against voter suppression and for greater freedom in voting and access to voting, and to share news of these efforts across the church.

7. Direct the Office of the General Assembly, Mid Council Ministries, to host conversations on race and racisms in order to address current and historic wounds, including the issue of voter suppression as one needing attention and redress.


Rationale

In June 2013, the Supreme Court of the United States nullified a core provision of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965, which provided federal oversight to election laws in areas that were historically suppressing the vote in particular populations and blocking democratic election outcomes. Voter suppression laws were at the center of what became known as Jim Crow. The VRA made most disenfranchisement and voting qualifications illegal. Traditional voter suppression tactics included the institution of poll taxes and literacy tests, aimed at suppressing the votes of African Americans and working class white voters.

The Supreme Court annulled the use of the VRA map used by the Justice department for decades, and ruled that Congress needs to produce a new and updated map for where federal oversight is still required. The Wall Street Journal reported this story:

WASHINGTON—The Supreme Court nullified a core provision of the Voting Rights Act in an ideologically divided ruling that eroded a landmark of the civil-rights era and threw the issue into the lap of a gridlocked Congress.

In a 5-4 decision, Chief Justice John Roberts said Jim-Crow era discrimination no longer justified requiring a group of mostly Southern states to seek Washington’s approval before changing election practices. Joined by the court’s other conservatives, he said the court had to act to uphold states’ sovereignty, sparking a dissent from liberals who said the ruling would undermine progress made since the law was passed in 1965 to ensure fair treatment at the polls.

Tuesday’s ruling substantially eases the path for lawmakers in states that had been under federal supervision, which now can immediately implement changes in their election procedures without first obtaining clearance from the Justice Department. Nine states and portions of six others, primarily in the South and largely now under Republican control, are affected. Some, such as Texas, have clashed with the Justice Department over measures ranging from legislative redistricting to voter-identification laws.

The court, ruling in a challenge brought by Shelby County, Ala., left standing Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, which gives the federal government authority over states that historically suppressed minority votes. But that section was effectively nullified by the court, which said the formula used to identify such jurisdictions, contained in Section 4, is not constitutionally valid because it is based on decades-old voter-participation data.

That move gives Congress the option of embarking on what would likely be a fraught effort to craft a new formula to meet the court’s concerns. Such action seems unlikely.
The Jim Crow Laws of the pre-VRA era are still with us in many ways. The national turmoil following the verdict in the Trayvon Martin case clearly demonstrates that our nation is still divided over race, and has not reconciled over discrepancies of access to power and privilege. The ACREC believes that the Supreme Court decision puts in place a new set of Jim Crow Laws that are not difficult to see in our society today, and are demonstrated well by this excerpt from a University of Connecticut article from Nov 6, 2013:

The past year has seen a renewed debate on issues surrounding voting rights. The Supreme Court’s ruling on the Voting Rights Act and the subsequent voter ID laws that were passed in several states brought back into the spotlight an issue that America has struggled with throughout its history: universal suffrage.

Voter ID laws were widely condemned as discriminatory and unfair. Unfortunately, widespread and even more disenfranchising voting laws exist. Forty-eight states have laws regulating voting rights for convicted felons.

Every state except Maine and Vermont imposes some kind of voting restriction on criminals, from not being able to vote while in prison to being permanently stripped of voting rights. Not only is this a blatant stain on America’s hard-won universal suffrage, it’s pushing millions of people out of the political process.

5.85 million people in the United States are not eligible to vote due to felony disenfranchisement, according to a study done by the Sentencing Project. Of the 2.2 million people currently in prison, almost all of them have no voting rights. Not all regain it when they complete their sentences. And because this issue is tied to the prison system, it disproportionately affects minorities. According to the Sentencing Project, in 13 African Americans is legally barred from voting.

While these laws aren’t supposed to target any group, their history shows that they were enacted specifically to disenfranchise, and they still do today. 7.7 percent of the black population can’t vote, compared with just 2.5 percent of the total population.

Many of these laws go back to Reconstruction, when they were enacted along with a slew of other Jim Crow laws in reaction to the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. These laws have been controversially upheld while most others were overturned because of a provision in the 14th Amendment that says states will be punished for denying the right to vote for any reason other than “participation of rebellion or other crime.” Many states also have a vested interest in keeping these laws on the books.11

The ACREC believes that without changes to current “New Jim Crow Laws,” the state of our union will remain fatally flawed. We cannot purport to have an advanced democratic society when such huge percentages of certain populations are permanently disenfranchised, through laws that incarcerate them for minor offenses.

From People for the American Way:

Laws disproportionately affect African-Americans

Supporters give various reasons for their support of disenfranchisement of felons, but the historical motivation behind such laws is unambiguous: they sought to keep African Americans from the voting booth and were passed before the civil rights movement. Today, these laws still disproportionately affect African Americans and other racial minorities.

Nationwide, more than thirteen percent of adult African American males are denied the right to vote because of past felony convictions, and Black men make up over a third of the total disenfranchised population. In six of the states that deny the right to vote to ex-offenders one in four Black men is permanently disenfranchised. The laws disproportionately affect Latino men as well: sixteen percent of Latino men will enter prison in their lifetime, compared to less than five percent of white men.12

As approved by 218th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA), the recommendations of Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights and Electoral Reform13 are:

1. Toward Increasing Voter Participation
   a. Voter Franchise: The Affirmative Right to Vote
   b. Universal Voter Registration
   c. Other Obstacles to Voter
   d. Community Organizing so That Voters Count
2. Toward Ensuring Equality and Fairness
   a. Give the District of Columbia Full Voting Rights and Congressional Representation
   b. Re-enfranchise Felons Who Have Paid Their Debt to Society
   c. Enforce the Voting Rights Act

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d. Reject Expensive Voter ID Requirements

e. Protect People and Communities of Color from Targeted Purges of Voting Lists

f. Punish Deceptive Campaign Practices

g. Nonpartisan Legislative Districting

3. Toward Enforcing Accountability and Responsibility in Our Electoral Process

a. Proposals for Renewing Our Democracy

b. Reform Our Primary System

c. Elect President by Popular Vote (Electoral College Reform)

d. Allow Instant Runoff Voting

e. Consider Proportional Voting

Voter Suppression Primer

Definition

“Voter suppression is a strategy to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging or preventing people from exercising their right to vote by reducing the number of voters …”

“ The tactics of voter suppression can range from minor “dirty tricks” that make voting inconvenient, up to blatantly illegal activities that physically intimidate prospective voters to prevent them from casting ballots. Voter suppression could be particularly effective if a significant amount of voters are intimidated individually because the voter might not consider his or her single vote important.”

Laws or administrative practices can also make it more difficult for people to register to vote.14

Impediments

1. Photo ID requirements

2. Purging voter rolls

3. Felon disenfranchisement, often permanently

4. Disinformation about voting procedures

5. Inequality of resources available on Election Day

6. New and emerging suppression strategies15

A report by People for the American Way Foundation16

In addition to the suppression strategies noted above, other emerging strategies are appearing around the country that could spread if they are effective:

1. Restricting Early Voting

2. Ending Same-day Voter

3. Database matching

4. Literacy Tests

Other Resources:


Advice and Counsel on Item 09-15—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-15.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy agrees with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns that changes in the Voting Rights Act’s application, based on Supreme Court decisions, and state level statutes and regulations, are allowing the electoral franchise of the United States to be limited deliberately. These methods of “voter suppression” are in some cases new, and in other cases amplified by changes in campaign funding law. This proposal is thus timely and doable within the timeframe and financial constraints.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-15

Comment on Item 09-15—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Public Witness is closely monitoring federal and statewide voter suppression in some key states including North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina. These states were chosen based on constituent calls and contacts asking for our advice on responding to voter suppression in their states. We remain actively engaged with local advocates and civil rights organizations in Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, and other states that remain wedded to restrictive voting laws.

Many Presbyterians are involved in challenging voter suppression in their local communities and states. We are witnessing and participating in anti-voter suppression movements on state levels including Moral Monday organizing around voter suppression and legislative trends in North Carolina and Georgia.

This resolution will strengthen the PC(USA)’s existing voting rights policy “Lift Every Voice: Democracy, Voting Rights and Electoral Reform.” http://www.pcusa.org/resource/lift-every-voice-democracy-voting-rights-and-elect/

Item 09-16

[The assembly approved Item 09-16. See pp. 32, 39.]

Tax Justice: A Christian Response to a New Gilded Age—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

In fulfillment of the assignment of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to provide a biblically grounded witness for current discussions of tax reform, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the following statement of principles and recommendations on justice in taxation, and receive the supporting rationale and resources for study:

I. Principles and Covenant Framework

It is a basic mark of a healthy social covenant that all share in the society’s benefits and burdens. Just taxation is a foundational part of a moral society’s answer to poverty and its close relatives, inequality, economic insecurity, and social immobility. Just taxation is also a key tool for enabling communities to thrive, for advancing science and culture, and for sustaining democratic institutions. Each citizen has an affirmative duty to contribute to the common good by paying their fair share of taxes.


The following principles arise from the Reformed covenant theology described in this study’s rationale, and are a Presbyterian response to the clear and pressing needs of the people of God. In accord with our tradition of public responsibility, this contribution by a Christian church is also offered to the broader worldwide movement for tax justice. Accompanying this report is an appendix that summarizes the history of progressive taxation in the United States, showing the influential role of Christians and churches.

There is a growing consensus within our community that tax revenues are collected in a manner that harms those who have the least. Current tax policies put higher proportional burdens on middle class and poor Americans.
ther, the amount realized is insufficient to meet this country’s pressing social needs. As a result, deficits have increased while those with the most need are asked to pay a more burdensome portion of their income than the wealthy. This call to tax justice addresses a real crisis. It does so while urging local, state and federal jurisdictions to play their unique roles in the overall United States tax system, and supporting new measures internationally to prevent corporations and individuals from sheltering income and wealth from citizenship responsibilities. The background paper that accompanies this recommendation section provides basic data on the ways globalization has affected our U.S. tax base and led to a shifting of the tax burden away from transnational corporations and onto citizens and companies whose operations are primarily domestic.

The church’s moral claim recognizes the reality that even the greatest individual and corporate fortunes depend on the shared goods of physical and institutional infrastructure, governance, social peace, and intellectual capital built up over years of civilization. Morality, and particularly the morality that we as a society adopt through our political choices, is indeed at the heart of the problem of tax justice. We as a society are tolerating immoral tax laws when we allow tax minimization strategies, whether individual or corporate, to shift payment for these shared goods to those who have less ability to underwrite the costs and to share in the benefits. The impact of inequality in America today is undeniable, prompting many comparisons with the first Gilded Age a century ago, when the permanent graduated income tax was put in place. Progressive taxation alone cannot rectify the imbalance that puts 35.6 percent of total U.S. wealth in the hands of one percent of the population, almost as much as the 36.6 percent held by the lower 95 percent, even in the recession year of 2009. Yet fair taxation is a key part of providing adequate revenue for government and, indeed, for maintaining public investment, social mobility, and equitable public policies.

The recommendations in this report seek to make the U.S. tax system fairer, calling it to be:

• more progressive, taxing those with greater wealth at higher proportions of their income, wealth, and inheritance;
• more transparent, which includes both simplicity and accountability for all tax preferences and tax expenditures;
• more solidarity-focused, which means reducing the use of tax expenditures, shelters and havens, and supporting more adequate international standards to reduce tax competition within and among nations;
• more sustainable for current and future generations, which means avoiding unproductive financial and ecological indebtedness; and
• more adequate, effectively addressing broader objectives of economic and social health than efficiency alone, such as meaningful employment, improved family life, and restored public trust. The tax system must be characterized by both efficiency in tax collection and revenue sufficient for the common good.

We build upon the four criteria for evaluating tax systems affirmed by the 189th General Assembly (1977):

Equity (progressive for current and future generations)
Integrity (honoring communal obligations and discouraging corruption)
Simplicity (understandable despite its need to address a complex economy)
Efficiency (balancing cost-effective collection with economic growth)

In order to respond to new patterns that challenge the church’s values in an unavoidably global context, the 221st General Assembly (2014) approves an updated set of principles: Progressivity, Transparency, Solidarity, Sustainability, and Adequacy, defined as follows:

1. Progressivity: this is the basic framework of an equitable tax system. Guided by our equality in sharing in God’s grace at the communion table, which St. Paul extends to sharing God’s gifts with communities most in need, and by the responsibility “of those who have much” to contribute accordingly, we affirm biblical support for graduated tax systems whose rates increase as the level of income and wealth increase. Progressivity begins to redress the redistribution upward, a feature of current markets that channel economic gains disproportionately to top earners and investors. Progressivity also addresses today’s large disparities in wealth, including financial wealth that is more highly concentrated than income, and promotes economic growth, keeping money in the hands of lower- and moderate-income people who spend proportionately more of their income. Progressivity is the key indicator that equity is being sought for all participants in the economy.

2. Transparency: this principle combines values of integrity and clarity. Guided by our sense of accountability to God and our awareness of human envy and greed, transparency serves the common good by minimizing corruption and the cynicism that grossly uneven tax burdens engender. Beyond inviting honesty among individual taxpayers through comprehensible, well-administered, and adequately funded tax collection, transparency challenges the practices of secrecy jurisdictions that are frequently used as tax havens. By clearly identifying burdens and benefits and
upholding standards of dignity and respect, tax transparency strengthens the integrity of the community as a whole. Lack of transparency, exemplified in part by the thousands of pages of tax code, is countered by simplicity. A simpler tax code is also more efficient, saving tax payers millions of dollars in fees now spent on tax advisors seeking to exploit every nuance of the code, though over-simple approaches do not do justice to our complex economy.

3. Solidarity: this principle addresses taxation as a form of mutual support based in cooperation and the rule of law. Christians recognize an indebtedness of the individual to the community over time, for the nurture and education of children, for the risks borne by those who provide for mutual security, for the knowledge inheritance of developed societies, for the benefits to social life and commerce of enforceable contracts, justice systems, and infrastructure, and much more. This communal sense of gratitude prompts measures to restrain jurisdictional tax competition (a “race to the bottom”) that beggars neighbors and makes it impossible for governments to address even the most pressing social needs.

4. Sustainability: this principle responds to the environmental and fiscal challenges we face today and which future generations will face tomorrow. Stewardship means holding God’s gifts in trust, turning away from unwise growth and unnecessary consumption. It will require public planning to manage resources for the common good. A sustainable tax system provides for green incentives to reduce waste of renewable as well as non-renewable resources and to encourage investment and charitable giving for maximum community benefit. It may mean choosing to forgo tax income from natural resource exploitation in order to protect future generations from climate and health risks.

5. Adequacy: this principle combines efficiency in revenue collection with sufficiency defined by social purpose. Hebrew, Christian, and Muslim scriptures abound with images of human generosity and creativity reflecting God’s inexhaustible riches shared throughout creation. At the same time, the virtue of frugality translates clearly to cost efficiency. Thus an effective tax system ensures that revenue collected is adequate for a full measure of human and natural flourishing, while also minimizing collection cost relative to collection revenue.

_A Covenant Vision Frames the Recommendations:_

The five principles identified above work in concert with each other and fit within the covenantal vision of mutual responsibility held by Reformed Christians. This vision builds on the development of covenantal concepts through scripture to the “new covenant” we celebrate in communion, which is a sign of our redemption in Christ. For us, human life is best understood not in isolation, but in relationship with God and others. Our lives are bound by covenantal relationships in families, congregations, and political and economic communities, where burdens as well as blessings are to be shared by all. These relationships both make our lives possible and give rise to duties to God and others. Covenants bind future behavior and are often most just when they are most explicit about obligations and expected benefits. They are the basis for community-wide taxation as well as personal charity.

Taxation is part of the self-government of communities. The maxims “no taxation without representation,” and equally, “no representation without participating fairly in taxation,” apply to all citizens. By the degree to which corporations, individuals, and families of great wealth exercise inordinate political influence to lower their tax burdens, democratic values are jeopardized. A nation, state, or locality’s overall tax burden should be progressive, although each combination of income, sales, consumption, property, and other wealth taxes may unavoidably include some regressive measures justified on efficiency grounds, such as fees to discourage waste of natural resources. Social and environmental objectives may justify incentives and tax expenditures or deductions, but such preferences should generally be time limited and capped both for the taxpayer receiving benefits and in the aggregate (total spent by society to achieve given goals). The broadest possible tax base is always desirable to enhance participation of citizens, but measures to mitigate poverty also require rebates, negative, or minimal taxes for those at the lowest income or wealth levels.

**II. Recommendations**

In adopting specific recommendations for public policy witness, the General Assembly is guided by a particular “preliminary principle” characteristic of Presbyterianism: that “Truth is in order to goodness … that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise, it would be of no consequence either to discover truth, or to embrace it” (Synod of New York and Philadelphia, prefix to Form of Government, 1788). In this context, the goals of our tax policy recommendations are to help achieve consequences in accord with Reformed theology and principles. Therefore, in order to encourage greater tax justice in the United States and internationally, the 221st General Assembly (2014) approves the following public policy recommendations:

**A. Individual Taxation**

1. Work to eliminate the application of lower tax rates on unearned as opposed to earned income. In most cases, taxes assessed on unearned or investment income (dividends, capital gains/losses, carried interest, etc.) currently are lower than marginal tax rates assessed on earned income (wages, salaries, business income, etc.). This privileges unearned income (and higher-income tax payers and asset-holders) and reduces tax progressivity.
2. Increase progressivity overall, increasing upper income brackets’ tax rates and restricting deductions and exemptions, both to boost revenue and reduce income inequality. State income taxes tend to be less progressive, and several states have no income tax, putting a higher burden on lower income residents through sales and other regressive taxes. Across the board (flat) taxes are inconsistent with the principle of progressivity and can reinforce the concentration of wealth.

3. Improve the fairness of important parts of the country’s retirement system. The payroll tax that supports Social Security is capped at $117,000 in 2014. This cap privileges high-income earners and produces marked regressivity and should be removed. Lifting the cap would also extend Social Security’s stability without requiring other long-term fixes, such as raising the retirement age. Existing state exemptions from taxation of higher level pension income and benefits should be eliminated, though in general any changes to employee pensions should only affect new contractual obligations.

4. The earned income tax credit (EITC), which helps ensure working people a living wage, is a longstanding feature of the tax code, supported historically by both liberals and conservatives. The need for this kind of measure is very great today, and the EITC, or similar measures aimed at keeping working families out of poverty, should be expanded.

5. Work to repeal or prevent the imposition of sales taxes on necessities, such as food and clothing, while retaining (despite their inevitably regressive nature) sales and excise taxes on gambling, alcohol, tobacco, and other legal addictive substances and high-risk behaviors, both to discourage this activity and to pay for rehabilitation/recovery and other social costs.

B. Tax Expenditures Benefiting Individuals

1. Work to require tax expenditures or deductions to be subject to time limitation and periodic, independent review for both their social economic benefit and possible future retention, reduction, or removal. Recognizing that tax deductions generally benefit higher-income households in the first place, this would generally phase out tax expenditures as the taxpayer’s Adjusted Gross Income increases. Examples of measures to be addressed follow, with the recommendation of capping benefits less needed by high-income individuals and families:

   • The mortgage interest deduction as currently constructed privileges those who borrow the most; it should be limited to one residence and capped at a level that has a meaningful relationship to average home costs (i.e. that reflects reasonable housing needs rather than luxury market subsidies);

   • Charitable contributions are only deductible by the approximately 25 percent of taxpayers who itemize deductions. Although tax-exempt charitable organizations (including religious bodies) play a critical role in our country, the nonprogressive means by which most tax-exempt organizations are financed means that nonprofits have a great responsibility to provide social benefit, broadly conceived, and to prevent leaders and managers from receiving undue personal gain;

   • Rules governing tax exempt “social welfare organizations” (501(c)(4)s) should exclude or strictly limit the eligibility of donations for partisan political purposes, parties and candidates, and the individual and corporate donors to or through such organizations should be made public due to their influence on the political process.2

   • The exclusion of capital gains on home sales privileges high-value property owners who can make maximum use of exclusion.

   • The exclusion of certain foreign-earned income (up to $95,100 in 2012) and housing benefits privileges income earned out of the country and encourages the movement of United States citizens to foreign jurisdictions.

   • The capping of property taxes for senior citizens privileges many elders while burdening younger citizens of similar income. This tax expenditure does not appear to adhere to the principle of progressivity; means testing is one solution to this, as is raising the cap, depending on jurisdiction.

2. Work to cap deductions for state tax, and municipal bond interest exemptions, for very high net worth households.

C. Individual Tax Avoidance and Fraud

1. With respect to tax evasion and fraud, work to maximize wealth and income transparency. The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), and similar laws adopted by other countries, represents an important legislative step forward in requiring foreign financial institutions to report balances, financial activities, and transactions to a taxpayer’s home jurisdiction. Communions that recognize the fallen nature of humanity support transparent financial reporting. This transparency fosters equality and fairness, and helps address tax avoidance and fraud, including money laundering.
2. Work with international coalitions and communions to oppose “race to the bottom” policies enacted by states and countries that seek to attract business investment and wealthy depositors by assessing extremely low tax rates and creating secrecy jurisdictions. These policies hurt economic competition by disadvantaging companies that do not engage in tax avoidance strategies and reduce government revenues needed for domestic social and economic development.

3. Work cooperatively for full disclosure of beneficial owners of corporations and greater transparency in private banking strategies. Tax avoidance and fraud are abetted by the creation of corporations based in tax havens whose owners are not disclosed, depriving tax revenue for needed programs in “home” countries. Activities that have no productive value, sometimes involving overseas mergers and spin-offs, allow for significant tax avoidance.

4. Work to ensure adequacy of Internal Revenue Service funding and technical capacity—and of international aid to help develop effective tax administration in the poorest countries.

D. Corporate Taxation

1. Work to lower corporate tax nominal (statutory) rates while simultaneously (a) broadening the tax base by reducing corporate tax expenditures/deductions, i.e., oil depletion allowance, accelerated depreciation, etc., and (b) obtaining additional tax revenues from corporations that use global tax havens, schemes that are based on defects in transfer pricing rules, and other means to avoid or reduce United States taxes. This would increase effective corporate tax rates while lowering nominal rates. Alternative minimum taxes for corporations could also be instituted. Overall, while statutory tax rates are reduced, total corporate tax collections must rise.

2. While recognizing arguments by some that the corporate income tax inherently discourages investment, the committee believes that it should be retained in the United States. Although the corporate tax currently raises a relatively small percentage of federal revenues, this amount remains important in absolute terms and should be increased. Elimination of the corporate income tax would further enable the use of corporations and businesses to shelter income. Note that two-thirds of corporations’ dividend income goes to pension funds and other nonprofit (and untaxed) entities and is not taxed until it reaches the beneficiaries (thus calls for an end to the corporate income tax because of “double taxation” are largely inaccurate). In addition, eliminating the federal corporate tax would impair the ability of state governments to administer their own corporate tax rules, and elimination of the corporate tax would set an unfortunate precedent for developing countries, as explained further below.

3. Support standardization of corporate tax structures among developing nations that, often, depend on corporate taxation for a much higher proportion of tax revenue and are more vulnerable to corruption. Greater standardization also can facilitate enforcement and negotiation with private entities and achievement of social development goals.

4. Ensure adequacy of funding and enforcement capacity for the Securities Exchange Commission, Consumer Finance Protection Bureau, and other bodies with oversight over corporate and banking behavior and concentration.

5. Work to implement the progressive reduction in deductibility of expenses for corporate salaries, inclusive of bonuses, option packages, and other benefits, for highly compensated employees, and other measures to curb the dynamic of extreme inequality in corporate compensation.

6. Support the implementation of a financial transactions tax, similar to those used by some other countries, to raise revenue (as most other transactions are taxed), and reduce financial speculation and risk. (A form of this tax existed in the United States until 1964).

E. Tax Expenditures Benefiting Corporations

Work to limit and eliminate corporate tax expenditures that do not broadly serve a business or societal purpose. Four examples are noted:

1. All tax expenditures that provide targeted benefits to particular businesses or industries should be granted only for a specified period of time; they should all sunset. As in the case of individual tax deductions, corporate tax expenditures should be subject to periodic, independent review for both their social economic benefit and possible future retention, reduction, or removal.

2. Corporate siting tax expenditures are utilized by cities, counties, and states to entice corporations to locate in their jurisdiction. Such tax expenditures should be subject to a rigorous cost/benefit analysis by all jurisdictions that propose them to ensure that benefits would be widely shared. The law should provide for enforceable community benefit agreements (CBA’s) as well as “claw back” provisions for firms that subsequently fail to live up to their ends of the agreements. States themselves should seek to reduce competition among their own cities, suburbs, and rural areas. (Prior General Assemblies have favored “brownfield” development in already industrialized areas for ecological and equity reasons).
3. Tax holidays for taxes deferred on profits from assets domiciled in United States corporations’ international subsidiaries. Tax deferral may encourage offshore investments, as well as tax-driven mergers and acquisitions; hence full-profit repatriation (and payment of taxes owed) should be required within a limited time frame.

4. Exemption from taxation of online purchases. This privileges online enterprises over brick and mortar stores, weakening the tax base of communities and states.

F. International Corporate Tax Avoidance

1. With respect to laws, including “transfer pricing” laws (described more fully in the background section), which today facilitate the movement of income by businesses to tax havens, the church should support work that has been begun to cause nations to change laws so that tax avoidance through income-shifting to tax havens is no longer permitted. This is to affirm the direction of charitable and religious organizations and research institutes seeking tax justice, as well as intergovernmental bodies including the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development) and G-20 governments working for greater tax policy coordination. The toleration of today’s porous tax laws by countries around the world reflects a dangerous “race to the bottom” by which countries compete to offer tax favoritism to businesses; the result is to deprive governments, particularly of poor countries that depend especially heavily on revenues from international businesses, of funds needed for urgent social needs.

2. Greater clarity and transparency in lawmakers are needed so that today’s opportunities for arguably legal tax avoidance, for example, by the use of tax havens, are eliminated. International tax laws, including transfer pricing laws and highly technical provisions such as “check the box,” appear innocuous at first impression, especially by those without technical backgrounds in taxation, but they allow such room for tax avoidance that multinational firms often can “pick” the jurisdiction in which to pay taxes (and not to pay taxes) without regard to the country of residence of owners, employees, or customers or location of raw materials or manufacturing. Logically the firm picks the lowest tax jurisdiction possible. Any solution must deliver transparency and real force to transfer pricing rules. The method of “formulary apportionment,” while requiring careful technical work on the necessary implementing laws, may advance solutions in this area.

3. The church supports efforts, by religious and charitable organizations as well as by governmental foreign-aid bodies, to assist developing-country governments in raising revenues through their tax systems. Developing countries inevitably need to depend upon strong and nonporous corporate tax laws, since a disproportionate amount of economic activity in poorer countries tends to involve investment by foreign-owned multinational companies, such as mineral extraction companies, service providers such as cell-phone companies, and distributors of foreign-supplied food, beverages, clothing, and other consumer products. Developing-country governments should be encouraged to avoid participating in the “race to the bottom” with respect to corporate income taxation, as developing countries suffer disproportionate financial harm from the resulting loss of corporate tax revenues.

4. The movement—often on paper—of income generating assets (such as intellectual property rights) to subsidiaries in lower tax areas should continue to be addressed within the United States. Legislation and regulation of tax competition among the fifty states is still needed to work toward equalization of tax rates, to strengthen high standards for beneficial owner disclosure, and to help sustain adequate living standards.

G. Estate and Wealth Taxes in a Covenantal Framework

1. Work to implement progressivity in estate tax rates. Even though only a portion of the top 5 percent is significantly affected, that number covers a very wide range of high income and assets. Tax justice for this group also demands progressive rates, and it is a reasonable source for adequate revenues.

2. Support a progressive estate tax beginning with estates considerably lower than the current $5,000,000 for individuals and $10,000,000 for couples. Coupling a lower starting point with a progressive scale could more accurately reflect the degree of benefit received from our current economic arrangements.

3. Work to eliminate the step-up in basis for inherited assets, which effectively exempts large amounts of capital gain from taxation. The benefits from this now-antiquated provision of the tax code inure or accrue disproportionately to those with high incomes and wealth. Gain on sale of inherited assets should be taxed in the same manner as gain on sale of assets received as gifts (carryover basis). If the step-up is retained, it should be limited to gains below a reasonable maximum amount. (More description of current taxes on estates (federal and state) and inheritances (applied to beneficiaries) is provided in the background section to this report).

4. Middle and lower income citizens already pay a wealth tax on their primary asset, their home, when they pay property taxes on the value of their home. Given serious and likely continuing high levels of poverty and inequality in our country, we encourage taxing other forms of wealth through a federal wealth tax (such as a small progressive rate on high net worth, an occasional “capital levy,” or other measures to meet serious social or environmental need). Financial transaction and activity taxes may also be seen as taxes on wealth.
5. Related to the above, and recognizing the role of poverty as a major determinant of poor academic performance and limited social mobility, work towards equity in education funding among jurisdictions, to alleviate remaining disparities among school districts of widely differing property wealth and resulting tax bases.

H. “Green” Taxes and New Forms of Economic Development for Future Generations

Work to adopt taxes and tax expenditures that encourage responsible stewardship and protection of God’s creation. “Green” taxes, generally speaking, incorporate a product’s social and environmental costs (often called “externalities”) into the costs of consumption, paying for remediation or innovation in some cases and reducing consumption or use that carries undesirable consequences.

1. In an ecological perspective, both nonrenewable and renewable resource use has significant costs to be compensated for through tax policy. One new approach envisions depletion taxes to be measured at the wellhead, mine, forest, or other source that could assess the value of nonrenewable and renewable resources, to be passed on to eventual customers. This would put carbon use taxes in a larger marketplace that would also put a greater valuation on the consumption of water, a range of minerals, topsoil, and other natural resources. Resource extraction industries often carry significant ignored societal costs, which should be reflected in prices through fair taxation, trade, and tariff policies. This points to a context of economic policy beyond the scope of this report that addresses ways to redirect growth and re-value social goods so as to minimize “through-put” and waste while improving the quality of life—which for Christians and many others includes a spiritual dimension. Federal subsidies of various sorts that currently encourage the extraction and exploitation of nonrenewal resources (while also reducing their market price)—for example, for coal, oil, and timber—should be eliminated promptly.

2. It should be borne in mind that green taxes fall on everyone, regardless of ability to pay. Since people’s energy use is difficult to reduce in the short term, these taxes can lay a heavy burden on those with the fewest resources. This does not mean that they should be avoided; to the contrary, their use in an era of global climate change would appear essential. Nevertheless, ability to pay (or incidence) should be taken into account when designing green taxes as when designing all other tax levies, and lower-income taxpayers must receive rebates or refundable credits to partially offset their payment of green taxes. In the case of gasoline taxes, for example, currently inadequate even for transportation system needs, necessary increases need mitigating offsets for poorer consumers. The overall transition to a lower carbon future requires much more significant public investment in energy efficient transportation, building, agricultural, and industrial infrastructure and design. (See the 2008 General Assembly report, “The Power to Change”).

The costs of not taxing more wisely now are already being seen in changing weather patterns, rising seas, and “unnatural disasters.”

1. Recommendations for the Church:

1. The 221st General Assembly (2014) invites all members, congregations, and councils and directs the appropriate officers of the Presbyterian Mission Agency to encourage study and discussion of this report and to represent its positions in the consideration of tax and related legislation at all governmental levels, and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this report electronically and through a limited number of print copies to members, ecumenical partners, and governmental bodies, with guidance from the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

The assembly further approves recommendations that:

2. Elders, deacons, pastors, and Christian educators encourage reflection among members and the broader public on the covenantal value of taxes and stewardship, including concepts such as “who are my children;” “whose shoulders do I stand on, and who stands on mine;” and “what is my responsibility towards generation-to-generation accumulating inequality?” These questions connect to significant choices in both personal giving (including charitable deductions) and to the example that Christians should set regarding the value of their communities and their country in their estate planning.

3. Because this study focused on the largest factors affecting the tax structure of our society in its global setting, it has not reviewed the specific tax laws related to the free exercise of religion that have changed since the last study of those considerations in 1988, in a report adopted by the 200th General Assembly, “God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience.” Thus the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy is directed to examine developments in clergy compensation, use of government funding by church mission programs and schools, and the rules governing Section 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 organizations that may merit social witness on behalf of the church, to consult with the Advisory Committee on Litigation and ecumenical partners involved in church/state matters, and to report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) as to whether further targeted study should be authorized.

Conclusion: Taxation and the Renewal of Moral Purpose

Considered together, the necessarily detailed recommendations of this report encourage greater use of progressive taxes including income and wealth-transfer (i.e., federal and state estate and inheritance) taxes, and more limited
and selective use of regressive taxes such as sales, excise and similar taxes and user fees. The twenty-plus year pattern of reducing progressive income taxes while increasing payroll and sales taxes and user fees has eroded progressivity to a serious extent, as has the relative decline in corporate tax payments. While wealthy Americans still pay a significant share of personal income taxes, the combination of payroll and other taxes on salaries and wages (rather than capital gains, carried interest, investment income) places a greater and generally disproportionate burden for the support of the common wealth on those with lower incomes and fewer assets. The Christian community is called to work against this pattern.

As is documented in the background section, citizens of the United States are not highly taxed. Among the nations gathered in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the typical integrated tax system generates 26.1 percent of GDP. The United States’ tax system generates 17.9 percent of GDP. We believe it is clear that our current tax system is failing to raise adequate revenue to address the grievous level of poverty, with its often grinding degree of economic insecurity, and to remedy the undemocratic level of inequality in our society, nor are revenues sufficient to support thriving communities. It is our steadfast hope that this report may offer Presbyterians and fellow citizens a way to discuss the role of taxation in creating a more just, prosperous, and sustainable society for ourselves as well as our children’s children. As we understand God’s covenant today, it is our calling to strengthen the bonds of community and mutual support so that all may share in this gift of life that comes from a gracious and just God.

This calling to help renew the moral vision of our society is a calling to which we invite other churches and persons of goodwill to join in with us. Thus we share an ecumenical statement on “the Ends of Wealth and the Divine Economy” prepared for the Centennial of the National Council of Churches in 2010:

We will never create a fully just social order, yet we have a calling from God to seek whatever approximation of one that may be possible. All creation shares in an interdependent destiny, and all human communities must work to devise a sustainable future. The vision of the new and redeemed creation that ends the New Testament is of a city in harmony with nature, where—even after great suffering—“the leaves of the trees are for the healing of the nations” (Rev. 22:2).

… Unlimited growth and consumption by some are not adequate social goals. The exploitation of labor and of nature are not worthy measures of productivity … Money itself is not the only form of recognition and incentive … In theological terms, the communion of saints includes not only those who have gone before us in death, but those who come after us in God’s providence. As a stewardship rather than ownership society, the church itself looks always forward for the consummation of God’s promises.

Loss of faith in government’s capacity to change conditions … is a relative of the false god of fatalism. Government is not God, but scripture tells us that good government is of God, ordering life for justice, security, and common welfare. … In Luke 12, Jesus ends a parable with “to whom much has been given, much will be required” (Lk 12:48). He is speaking of faith, not wealth, but as we end this treatment of the ends of wealth, we point again to the divine generosity that sustains all of life. As Christians … we seek to orient ourselves so that we can point the way to a more divine economy sustained by fairer sharing of both burdens and joys.” (http://www.ncccusa.org/witnesses2010/christian-understanding-of-economy.pdf)

Rationale

TAX JUSTICE: A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO A NEW GILDED AGE


I. The Crisis and the Need for Reform

Having reviewed the nationwide debate over tax reform in recent years, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy wishes it could share the conclusion that the nation is moving toward a more just and effective tax system. Unfortunately, however, there are many signs that the opposite is the case, and that we continue our long drift in the direction of a tax system that is less equitable and less adequate to meet this country’s social needs.

The problems have been compounded by what is now a long-standing “race to the bottom” by both the federal and state governments. At the federal level, our laws have allowed a great deal of income from multinational companies to escape taxation, with the thought that loss of much of the country’s revenue base is justified by what is perceived as a need to create a low-tax environment for international business. At the state level, the race to the bottom has been fueled by a belief that tax rate reductions and/or the flattening of tax progressivity will attract more businesses to locate in particular states, creating more economic activity and jobs. The result has been fierce tax competition at both the international and U.S. state levels, with countries and states matching one another’s tax reductions, and a proliferation of tax avoidance and evasion. The ultimate result is that tax revenues are depressed around the world and around the United States, but no jurisdiction ends up with the competitive advantage it sought.
The U.S. economy—and the majority of American people—are facing many harmful trends. Defective tax laws, which enable tax avoidance by corporations and high-income individuals, directly add to the burden on those who pay their full taxes. At the same time, the growth in national income is heavily skewed towards the wealthy who hold investible resources. More than 20 percent of children live in poverty, but households in the top 1 percent of the income spectrum receive more than 22 percent of all income for which is publicly accounted. Over the past forty years, U.S. income inequality has increased markedly. Even though the economy has partially recovered and profits are at historic highs, the combined numbers of unemployed and discouraged workers remain at more than 10 percent—and even greater in communities of color. At the same time, taxation overall has become more regressive, pushing the cost of government onto the less well-to-do and future generations.

The result is that in our country—and in other countries that have suffered similar difficulties with respect to economic policies—resources that are needed to support human well-being are being withheld. Virtually everywhere on the globe people look to their governments for essential services like airline traffic control, basic research and development, border security, building codes, child safety, data security, diplomacy, education, electric power management, epidemic prevention, environmental protection, financial regulation, firefighters and police, food security, foreign aid, gas pipeline regulation, health care, historical preservation, inoculations, judicial services, law enforcement, marine protection, national defense, national parks, ports and harbors, postal services, prisons, professional certification, railroads, roads and bridges, sanitation, space exploration, social insurance, tax collection, underwriting, water, and zoos. Economic efficiency may argue for privatization in some instances, but we list these functions because governments generally perform them more efficiently and fairly and pay for them out of tax and fee revenues.

Greater justice in taxation will not solve all our economic ills, but effective and fair tax laws are vital for producing enough revenue for social and economic advance. It is a basic mark of a healthy social covenant that all share in the society’s benefits and burdens, and that each person’s tax burden reflects their ability to pay. Just taxation is fundamental to a moral society: to relieve poverty and its close relatives, inequality and social immobility, to provide for the common good and a thriving society. This report cannot capture the harsh realities contained in the words, “poverty,” “hunger,” and “unemployment,” whose consequences on millions of Americans may take generations to rectify. Yet the moral claim of these neighbors, suffering preventable hardship, should affect each of us at the deepest levels of faith and conscience.

We are also aware that we live in a global economy in which consideration of individual taxes in any particular country is impossible to separate from the taxation of multinational corporations. Global economic competition has tempted many countries to reduce taxes on multinational corporations in hopes of attracting corporate investment. The resulting “race to the bottom,” however, has largely nullified any competitive benefits to particular countries; instead, the reduction in tax revenues around the world severely constrains government efforts to foster education and social advancement. The effects have been especially severe in developing countries, which typically rely more heavily than wealthier countries on taxes paid by corporations, and which have especially pressing needs for government revenues in order to help improve social conditions. This global dynamic of “off-shoring” and “out-sourcing,” at least partly for tax reasons, is generally seen as legal under the system of international tax law that has developed over several decades. Tax avoidance is not the same as tax evasion. It does, however, mesh with the illegal concealment of assets by persons of great wealth and some businesses, and often the same tax “havens,” or very low tax jurisdictions, are used. Currently, organizations including the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development) and the IMF (International Monetary Fund) have called for fundamental changes in this system, and countries should support their work through national legislation.

This report argues for robust regulation of tax havens and secrecy jurisdictions, based on their key role in “the race to the bottom.” Apart from monies lost to countries of origin by corporations registering assets or assigning income to foreign subsidiaries, the scale of illegal money held by a virtual tax haven industry cannot be ignored. Concealed monies in excess of a staggering $21 trillion have been identified based on large troves of leaked documents and extensive analysis by experts in the tax justice movement. This total includes criminal tax evasion through the use of shell companies and funds “hidden” from public accounting for generations. Again, legal structures in countries around the world allow multinational groups to transfer to havens large sums, which under rational tax laws would be considered taxable income in countries where the firms operate but instead escape taxation. Famously, one address in the Cayman Islands has more than 6,000 corporate subsidiaries headquartered there for the sole apparent purpose of tax avoidance, while the entities controlling the funds are located in Toronto, New York, Miami, and elsewhere. U.S. chartered corporations—many incorporated in secrecy-permissive Delaware—are also allowed to defer payment of taxes from overseas operations, monies that are then kept invested abroad—encouraging the outsourcing of manufacturing as well—in hopes of tax holidays that reduce taxes on profits eventually brought home (repatriated). The open proliferation of both legal tax avoidance and illegal tax evasion paints a picture, for the world to see, of cynical disregard of governments for their obligations to raise revenues to support their people. This unseemly and tragic situation rightly causes disrespect for both corporations and governments, yet it will take much improvement in laws and enforcement to correct.

In recent years, investigative reporting by journalists, as well as reports by charitable and religious organizations, has exposed the extent to which tax laws around the world have been effectively nullified as major corporations and some wealthy individuals pay little or no tax. Several important international bodies, including the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and the G-20 group of governments, have expressed the view that national govern-
ments around the world need to eliminate holes in their tax codes in order to end the current unacceptable situation. Concrete legislative action is needed at home, and—in concert with other countries—abroad, and we believe churches should be in the forefront of supporting the badly needed reforms.

The church recognizes that private charity, while necessary and admirable, cannot alone remedy the hardships and injustice that continue to permeate society. Our tax system needs reform to restore moral fairness and fund the common work of our towns, cities, states, and federal government. The immediate crisis should be transformed into a kairos—a defining moment—for restoring fair taxes that raise sufficient tax revenue for a sustainable society.

The need for justice in taxation is based on the fact that poor and middle class people are paying too much of the burden, while the wealthier among us systematically underpay, as the overall mix of taxes has gotten less and less progressive due to distorted but legal incentive structures and outright evasion. The growing economic divide reduces human freedom and opportunity for fulfillment for a vast number of people, and leaves some urban and rural areas as “sacrifice zones,” such as has been the case in Detroit. We need to engage in positive international cooperation. Yet the race to the bottom invites every country or state to fund only a truly minimal government.

The committee affirms the value of well-ordered, regulated markets, both domestic and international. Nevertheless, it is also clear that in order to serve human needs, private institutions must operate within government fiscal systems that can moderate economic hardships and ensure that all have the opportunity to participate in the market and other institutions on which the world depends. We acknowledge that this insistence on the constructive role of governmental institutions is to some extent countercultural in the current political climate; nevertheless, we feel it is necessary to encourage greater balance in policy debates, and it is to this end that this report is devoted.

II. “World of Hurt, Word of Life” Mandate:

In 2008, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the National Council of Churches of Christ approved a new Social Creed for the 21st Century calling for new forms of social responsibility, recognizing the new context of uneven globalization and increasing climate change (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 924ff). With regard to taxation it contains this goal: “tax and budget policies that reduce disparities between rich and poor, strengthen democracy, and provide greater opportunity for everyone within the common good” (Ibid, p. 925).


Standing against this tide and echoing the social awakening of our predecessors in the last Gilded Age, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) opposes the market fundamentalism that has diminished Christian values in our economy and political culture—values of common sacrifice and shared prosperity, care and uplift for the most vulnerable, and responsibility for future generations. (Ibid, p. 1056)

The church had not been entirely disinterested. As a 2010 report on the recession had noted pressures on church budgets, questioning, “If the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a ‘middle class church,’ how do we adapt when the middle class declines?” Whether or not any church should reflect any social class, greater tax justice depends on values and virtues that the church and other religious bodies should exemplify, teach, and nurture.

Thus, after addressing the economic dangers to jobs, families, neighbors, and long-term sustainability, that 2012 report also called for the study of tax reform here presented:

Because taxation is considered a legitimate function of government in the Christian tradition and, today, lies at the heart of debates over the role of government and the responsibilities of citizens, and because tax policy reflects the nature of social trust and mutual obligation, pushing our focus beyond the idea of “contract” to the implicit “covenant” in our society, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy is directed to appoint a seven-volunteer study team to assess the values implicit in tax policy, focusing on the areas of personal income, wealth, giving, and consumption, and considering a spectrum of reform proposals. With input from a wide range of experts and policy leaders in the field, and with necessary grounding in existing church teaching on the subject and our church’s communion principles for economic reconstruction, articulated above, the study team will report its findings and recommendations to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1061)

Basic Kinds of Taxes and their Operation:

*Personal income taxes* are assessed by the federal government and many states on most kinds of income. Federal income taxes are progressive, though less so than in the thirty years following World War II. In 2012, personal income taxes contributed nearly half (47 percent) of federal revenue.

The tax rate assessed and paid on an additional dollar of income is called the marginal tax rate. In a progressive system, the marginal tax rate rises with rising income. Current marginal tax rates are shown in the box below.

For purposes of background, it may be useful to familiarize oneself with the basic terminology and structure of the U.S. income tax through the following simplified example. A couple has income of $150,000. To calculate their taxes, they would first subtract from their income all their deductions, either the standard deduction or itemized deductions such as mortgage
interest payments, charitable donations, and state and local taxes. Assume these deductions equal $20,000, leaving them with a taxable income of $130,000. On the first $17,850 of income they pay 10 percent or $1,785. (See the chart of marginal tax rates.) On the next $54,650 (the difference between $17,850 and $72,500) they pay 15 percent or $8,197.50. On the next $57,500 (the difference between $72,500 and their taxable income of $130,000) they pay 25 percent or $14,375. So their total tax bill would be $22,750.50 or 15.2 percent of their total income. This example omits tax credits such as the Child Tax Credit and other possible deductions or exclusions from income they may have been eligible to receive and that would have reduced their tax liability. (Note: itemized deductions on incomes of $150,000 are more likely to range between $35,000–$50,000, depending on the filer’s knowledge of the tax code).

Payroll taxes are assessed by the federal government on most earnings. The taxes, deducted from workers’ paychecks (“FICA”), pay for Social Security and Medicare. Employees and employers each pay 6.2 percent of all earnings up to a cap ($117,000 in 2014) that rises each year at the rate of average wage growth. Both employers and employees also pay 1.45 percent of earnings for Medicare. Unlike Social Security, there is no cap on earnings subject to the Medicare tax. Self-employed people pay both the employer and employee share of these taxes. In 2012, payroll taxes contributed one third (34 percent) of federal revenue. This share has been rising over time.

Payroll taxes are regressive. Although the tax rate is the same for all workers (so it might mistakenly be seen as a proportional tax), other features of the tax make it regressive. First, the tax is assessed only on wages and salaries. Higher income households receive less of their income through working than do others. For example, the top 20 percent receive less than half of their income from wages or salaries while 34 percent comes from interest, dividends, capital gains, and business and proprietary income. Second, the Social Security tax is not assessed on earnings above the cap. No taxes are assessed on fringe benefits, such as employer contributions for medical insurance and retirement savings.

At this time the Social Security program is receiving more money in taxes than it pays out in benefits. The surplus is invested in Treasury bonds. But these bonds, purchased with our payroll tax money, are funding 18 percent of federal spending (a percentage that changes with the health of the economy). So a sizable portion of the current operations of the federal government are funded by a regressive tax.

Capital gains taxes are assessed on the gains from the sale of stocks, bonds, businesses, mutual funds, property, and other investments. The tax rate on capital gains is lower than the rate on wages and salaries. Households with income above $400,000 (single people) or $450,000 (couples) pay a tax of 20 percent instead of 39.6 percent, the rate they pay on earnings. Those with incomes below this level but above $36,250 (single) or $72,500 (married) pay 15 percent, not 25 percent, 33 percent, or 38 percent.

Historically, low rates on capital gains have been supported by several rationales, including the argument that some gains reflect inflation rather than real economic gain, and also that high capital gains taxes tend to “lock” investors in to particular assets in economically undesirable ways. While these arguments should be acknowledged, it also must be recognized that the benefits of a low tax rate on capital gains accrue disproportionately to the wealthy. In 2013, an estimated 94 percent of the benefits from the low rate on capital gains will go to taxpayers with cash incomes over $200,000 and three-fourths of the benefits will accrue to millionaires. Because many wealthy people receive much of their income from investments, the low tax on capital gains is a primary reason that millionaires pay lower taxes, as a share of income, than their secretaries.

Estate taxes are the most progressive federal tax, simply because they focus solely on those with the greatest capacity to pay. After changes made in January 2013, a tax of 40 percent is now assessed on estates of $5.25 million or more (this figure...
is doubled if a couple owned the assets) and this amount will rise each year with inflation. In 2011, just 3,270 estates exceeded $5 million and owed estate tax. Over half of all estate taxes were paid by people who were, before death, in the top 1/10 of 1 percent of the income distribution. The estate tax helps narrow income inequality by reducing the size of massive inheritances and limits the corrosive power and influence that accompanies wealth. The tax also encourages donations to nonprofit organizations because contributions to charity made from estates are tax-free.

(While this technically affects all inheritors, in practice the effect is minimal or nil on middle and lower income taxpayers.)

Our tax system contains another anomaly with respect to taxation in connection with death that is highly regressive in effect. At the time of death, a decedent’s assets receive a new income tax basis, for determining gain or loss on later sale of the asset, equal to the asset’s fair market value. This means that those receiving assets as an inheritance essentially receive forgiveness of tax on whatever gain was built into the asset at the time of the decedent’s death. This results in a very large hole in the capital gains tax; it disproportionately benefits the wealthiest; and our report recommends its elimination (perhaps with a reasonable exemption to protect relatively modest amounts of assets transferred at death).16

We recognize that in recent years the idea of estate taxes and other taxes at death has been unpopular in some quarters but we believe a fair tax system calls for the reinvigoration of taxes on large inheritances. A forthright defense of estate taxes can be found in Wealth and Our Commonwealth: Why America Should Tax Accumulated Fortunes (2002) by William Gates Sr. and Chuck Collins. A more philosophical (and theoretically aware) account of the role of accumulated intellectual capital in the creation of wealth today comes in Unjust Deserts: Wealth and Inequality in the Knowledge Economy (2008) by Gar Alperovitz and Lew Daly, which makes the case for society’s rightful claim to gains resulting from technologies made possible by shared infrastructure, culture, and above all, advanced education. Alperovitz and Daly’s case goes beyond estate taxes to support progressive taxation generally; the epigraph to their book is 1 Corinthians 4:7.

Wealth Taxes, as such, do not exist in the United States, although property taxes do assess one kind of wealth. Given the enormous and likely continuing levels of inequality in our country, where the top .01 percent, a bit more than 16,000 families, averaged more than $30 million in income each for 2012, and where the top 1 percent received 22.5 percent of national income, the study team came to give serious consideration to wealth taxes.17 As this report was being drafted, the International Monetary Fund released a study that discussed wealth taxes in relation to economic growth and income concentration.18 A recent book by economist Thomas Piketty maintains that further income and wealth concentration is inevitable and will be impervious to usual reforms. He advocates a “global wealth tax.”19 While the primary goal of taxing wealth or anything else is to derive adequate revenue for a decent society, studies of the effects of systemic inequality show economic deterioration as well as spiritual and psychological dangers.20 This brief section builds on argument elsewhere that more resources are needed for proactive governmental investment to increase employment, reduce poverty, and improve social outcomes, but it does not quantify the amounts needed as is done in alternative budgets and tax plans. The increasing trend toward wealth concentration, however, makes it difficult not to address its consequences for tax policy.

To understand the realities that would be addressed by wealth taxes, two graphs illustrate current patterns of concentration:21
III. Covenant Theology and Taxation: To Whom Much Is Given

Covenant as an alternative vision of the race to the bottom—another vision of how humans work together.

As stated in World of Hurt, Word of Life, we are called by Christ to be a new covenant community, the very body of Christ. At table, we are knit together to become a “manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (see 1 Cor. 12:7). For believers, this experience of communion transforms our behavior. Though that experience helps us integrate all parts of our lives, we focus here on that obligation we experience to help relieve poverty and redress economic inequity.

On the one hand, the gift of communion profoundly aligns the believer with God’s creation. At table we find a grace-fed faith and hope that is eternal. Amazing! As a result, we feel blessed and deeply indebted to the God who names us, calls us a people, and invites us in our all-too-human condition to table.

On the other hand, it stirs the conscience to question how we can be guided by the profound equality forged by Christ at table. As we will demonstrate later in this document, a conscience troubled by the radical equality of Christ’s table pushes for equity in the community of Christ and the public body politic.

These two underpinnings of gift and task build on the communion theology developed in World of Hurt, Word of Life. We are convinced as people of the covenant that equity must define our life, both in our relationships with each other and our witness in the world. We who are fed at Christ’s table are filled with gratitude for the gifts and challenges that God puts before us. We invoke the Spirit and invite all to experience these gifts and challenges.

Covenant in the Bible

Christians in the Reformed Tradition have maintained that families, congregations, and political and economic communities are most just and function best when they are ordered as covenants. Covenants in the Bible contrast with contracts in which people make specified commitments to serve their mutual advantages within set limits. Covenants grow out of the awareness of indebtedness for undeserved gifts and involve exchange of promises to be faithful for the long haul. Covenants are formed when parties make vows that bind future behavior. For example, partners in a marriage covenant “tie the knot” when they promise to love one another for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health. The American Declaration of Independence is a classic political covenant because in the act of dissolving the “bands” that tied us to Britain, the signers pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor to engage in “acts and things that states may of right do.” These promises bind us together and are the basis of communal life. They give rise to obligations and expectations of mutual responsibility.

Covenant and Politics

Scripture portrays covenant partners as equal before God. This reinforces the equality safeguarded by the biblical land laws with their jubilee fail-safe mechanism to prevent landlessness (see Leviticus 25). Given the incredible diversity of gifts and conditions among humanity, it provides metaphysical or religiously based support for the concept of equality before the law. The importance of this equality for democratic self-governance makes us question the moral acceptability of extreme inequalities of wealth and power. By affirming God’s sovereignty equally over all others—who are all in God’s image—covenant provides a better basis than kinship or ethnicity for including strangers and immigrants into the community. Covenant gives an alternative vision for how humans can live and work together; covenant is incompatible with the above-mentioned race to the bottom.

Covenant puts the impetus for personal autonomy in creative tension with the fundamental need for a structured, orderly, and predictable communal life. In so doing, it paves a middle way between tight collectivism and atomistic individualism.

For us, it connects the communitarian core of our faith, based in communion, with universal standards of application. According to covenantal political theory, the balance between freedom and order is structured by a constitution. In the American political context, the Articles of Confederation and, later, the U.S. Constitution, as well as state constitutions, follow this
A covenantal perspective illumines the social dimensions of human life. Individuals are not self-made. They have been raised, taught, and given opportunities by the communities that nurtured them. They are indebted. While some modern economic theories reduce all motivations to rational self-interest, a covenantal viewpoint observes that, as social creatures, humans are motivated by multiple loves. These include: love of family, friends, work, one’s country, company, coworkers, customers, community, self, and God. Any of these can inspire hard work, saving, investment, entrepreneurship, and sacrificial giving. According to the Christian vision, our lives are bound to others in ways that enrich individual and common life. We are more than competitors for scarce goods.

A covenantal perspective does not denigrate hard work, but it notes that individuals can only create wealth in concert with others. They depend on the gifts of human culture, knowledge, and technology. They depend on trading partners and others with whom they can divide labor.

The fact is that individuals cannot create wealth apart from a well-defended, ordered, educated, developed, and increasingly just society. In developed societies, hardworking individuals benefit from roads and courts to enforce contracts. Indeed, we see dysfunctional societies around the globe where people toil to eke out a living with barely anything to show for it. The lesson we should take from this is that government governs best not when it governs least, but when it governs well. Chaos and devastation may be the outcome for those whose governments govern least.

Our own society presents abundant benefits and enormous opportunities. These benefits give rise to the obligations of citizenship, including a duty to participate in our democracy, defend our country from enemy threats, and care for those in need, and pay taxes. Society’s benefits are the moral basis for taxation; therefore, all taxation is not rightly considered “theft,” nor should all efforts to ameliorate economic inequality be shouted down as “class warfare.” Political rhetoric to that effect is neither balanced nor helpful.

Societal Sin

The prophets and Jesus confronted the social sin of rebellious worldly kingdoms that had become organized in defiance of God’s purposes. They help us to look beyond individual bad behavior to identify and confront corporate, systemic evil.

The recognition that societies can sin helps us appreciate that immoral behavior is not simply an expression of bad character, but can be influenced by the way a nation or other political unit allows “the game is played.” In this light, it is not enough to call sinful individuals to repent. We must also confront sinful systems and structures that condition us to do or accept evil.

Often multiple dynamics work together. For example, consider how companies seek to maximize profits, how states compete for business and capital, and how politicians seek short-term victories to win the next election. Together these forces tempt politicians to cut taxes to attract business and capital, without adequately taking into account the consequences of, effectively, nullifying portions of a country’s or state’s tax laws. The result can be a race to the bottom: chipping away at progressive taxation and lowering the quality of life for citizens. While there may be a short-term win for the politicians and companies that benefit, in the long term it may weaken economic potential by starving education, research, and infrastructure.

A Broken Covenant

Unfortunately, all of us are at times tempted to go astray, to be “free-riders.” We are tempted to value the larger community solely for what we get from it, to deny that it has showered us with gifts that make our lives possible. We can resent the demands of life together, even when these demands have been democratically decided. We are capable of ignoring what others need in order to flourish and endure.

This paper makes the case that our current situation, where extremely wealthy individuals benefit greatly from American society and do not proportionately contribute to its continuing welfare, constitutes a “broken covenant.” The ties that bind us are strained. We have lost the sense that “we are all in this together.” Tax injustice is a key marker of this. The community that made the creation of wealth possible is starved of the funds it needs to maintain infrastructure, engage in research and development, educate its young, care for the needy, and uphold the rule of law. God’s children are denied the benefits of communal life. Poverty is allowed to perpetuate for generations in what is increasingly a low-wage, low-opportunity society. God-given talents of the poor go undeveloped and are never fully employed in service to God and the community, diminishing us all. The working poor, whom some economists would characterize as “the makers,” are dismissed as “takers” because they cannot afford food, healthcare, or to educate their children without government help (i.e., wage subsidy).

The spiritual effects of economic insecurity, as experienced by, at this point, a large percentage of the American public, must also be recognized. It is hard for a citizenry to be committed to mutual support and care if so many individuals feel...
themselves to be poised at the edge of economic disaster for themselves and their families. We must provide reasonable security for all before we can realize our potential as a just and mutually caring society. An equitable and adequate tax system is needed in order to promote such a society.

We will be proposing principles to guide efforts toward tax justice, but principles alone are not enough. A social vision that honors our communal nature is essential if future generations are to thrive on a healthy planet. It is gratitude that should move us to moral responsibility. It is a privilege to step up to that moral vocation, a service of obligation to God, an affirmation of the dignity for all who share our societal life, and an extension of covenantal care for the total economy of our planet.

IV. Our History of Progressive Taxation

Individual and Corporate Income Taxation (and why we need to address them both)

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Social Gospel movement in the United States roused Christian consciences concerning the harsh conditions of industrial cities and immigrant populations. This period is often called the “Gilded Age,” referring to the extreme wealth gathered by those at the top, often through monopolistic means.

The Social Gospel and parallel movements in economics and political science introduced a vision of social systems that names our interdependence in a more complex society (social order). The Social Gospel proponents argued that the Gospel of Christ needed to take new forms in new societies. The Federal Council of Churches developed a Social Creed in 1908 that advanced worker rights and social protections, many of which anticipated the New Deal by twenty-four years or more.

A key part of the re-balancing and recovery of the economy came with the adoption of the permanent and progressive federal income tax in 1913, under Presbyterian Woodrow Wilson. There was growing recognition that reliance on regressive taxes and fees and tariffs was failing to generate sufficient revenue, leaving areas of extreme poverty and otherwise leading to undesired public indebtedness. The U.S. experience then came to demonstrate how greater tax justice requires a broad base of tax-paying citizens who make governments more accountable than governments that depend solely on resource windfalls and tariffs on trade.

As the 20th century continued, the United States became a leader in progressive, broad based taxation. We were actually the eleventh country to adopt a nationwide, progressive, peacetime income tax. With its adoption, mass participation expanded. Rates became more progressive. Taxation shifted from wealth to income and reporting from voluntary to automated.32 Churches like the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stressed honesty in taxation and Americans have remained reasonably honest, although with inequality and limited social mobility more people gamble and what David Callahan calls a “cheating culture” has expanded.33 Our society may still be far from the patterns of widespread corruption in some undemocratic developing countries, where as much as a third of export revenue is estimated to be skimmed off and hidden in tax havens. A 2012 Internal Revenue Service (IRS) report on unpaid taxes from 2006 showed voluntary compliance for individual income tax payers fell from 79 to 77 percent in 2001–6, with much of the underreporting among those whose income was not subject to payroll measurement.34 While this report focuses on the ways our tax system needs to be restructured for greater fairness and less poverty and inequality, the size of the “tax gap” of uncollected revenue—an informed estimate puts the 2013 total at $566 billion—strongly suggests that cutting the IRS budget does real damage to our society and should be reversed.35

The role of income taxation grew in the United States as World Wars I and II and the Great Depression created massive needs for revenue. Understanding this need through the lens of the Gospel led to Christian social witness. The leaders of the church promoted policies favoring progressivity and broad based funding of government. For a concise treatment of the broadening and deepening understanding of public responsibilities by the church, the Social Creed for the 21st Century, approved in 2008, provides a one-page treatment of salient issues and lifts up key values.36

In the 20th century, marginal rates peaked at 94 percent for individuals filing jointly in 1944 and 79 percent for corporations in 1968–1969. Second, progressivity peaked in the mid-1960s after fifty years of development with the highest tax bracket paying 91percent on incomes over $2 million.37 This progressive, broadly based tax system was arguably efficient and sometimes sufficient enough to include payment of prior years’ debt.

Income inequality in the United States decreased until the mid-1970s, driven by a rise in wages and household income, particularly in the lower and middle parts of the income ladder. This beneficial trend has been reversed, however, and since the late 1970s, income has become steadily more unequal. Productivity still increased, particularly with the digital data revolution, but the economic rewards have gone primarily to the wealthiest, driven by falling or stagnant wages for most and dramatically increased salaries and bonuses going to those at the very top. It is hard to argue that levels of executive compensation in multiples of hundreds above workers’ wages are related to productivity, yet among other factors the tax system was losing its corrective function.38

To show the changes in sense of public obligation, we contrast the following tax schedule during Dwight Eisenhower’s presidency with the current schedule. The 1954 schedule was after a tax cut.
### Income Tax Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>1954 Tax Rate</th>
<th>2013 Tax Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000,000 ($1M)</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,000,000 ($2M)</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000,000 ($5M)</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000,000 ($10M)</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000,000 (50M)</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The worsening of inequality driven by these trends in wages and incomes has been exacerbated by changes in taxes. While incomes received by people at the top have soared, the share of their income paid in taxes has dramatically declined.

The following graphic tracks this reality and shows the effective tax rate (the share of income paid in taxes) for each income group. Taxes paid, measured as a share of income, have been somewhat stable over this period for many income groups and trended downward for the lowest income households. But the top 1/100th of 1 percent of tax payers has seen a very dramatic reduction in taxes, from approximately 70 percent of income to below 40 percent in 2004, the last year for which this data series is available.

#### 10. Federal Individual Taxes by Reported Income Class – Reduced Progressivity

The chart shows a reduction in the progressivity of the federal personal income tax, largely driven by the massive decline in taxes paid by the highest-income tax payers. This erosion in the personal income tax is being compounded by other trends in taxation, i.e., increased reliance on payroll taxes, declines in corporate taxes, and new, sophisticated tax avoidance strategies. The reduction in taxes paid at the top and the reduction in income growth for those in the middle and the bottom of the distribution has resulted in a level of inequality tragically reminiscent of the first Gilded Age in the 1920s.

#### Overview of U.S. Taxes

The chart shows the sources of federal revenue between 1934 and 2012. While revenue has increased over this period, the chart shows the percentage of the total that was raised through various types of taxes. These various taxes fall very differently on different segments of the population. So the amount of revenues raised from the different taxes affects the overall fairness of the system.

#### Reading the chart

Each color (measured in vertical distance) indicates the percentage of all federal revenue contributed by the tax in a particular year, indicated on the horizontal axis. Consider 1970, a year shown in the middle of the bottom axis. Moving up from the 1970 hash-mark, the blue color indicating the individual income tax extends to 47 percent, a figure that can be roughly “eye-balled” off the left axis. The red color indicating corporate income taxes extends from (around) 47 percent to about 64 percent indicating a contribution of 17 percent (64 minus 47). Green (payroll taxes) extends upward from 64 percent to about 87 percent indicating a 23 percent contribution, etc.
The following changes are most significant:

- During the 1940s income taxes rose from less than 20 percent of revenues to just over 40 percent where they have continued until today.

- Corporate income taxes have declined significantly from 20 percent to nearly 40 percent during World War II to less than 10 percent today. This is partly reflected in the difference between the 35 percent official rate (actually with some variation40) and the effective corporate rate of 12.6 percent.41

- The decline in corporate income tax revenue has been largely offset by the increase in payroll tax revenue, up from the low teens in the 1950s to over one-third of all revenue today.

- Excise taxes on alcohol, tobacco, and motor fuel have also declined significantly, although many state governments have increased excise taxes over this period.

“Other” taxes in the chart include estate taxes and customs duties (tariffs).

**Tax Expenditures**

**Individual Tax Expenditures**

Before moving forward, it is necessary to define a tax expenditure42. A contribution to the church, for example, may legally be deducted from the donor’s income. This reduces the church member’s taxable income and lowers her tax payment. This “lost” revenue is a tax expenditure. The allowable deduction causes revenue not to be collected by government via the tax system. The U.S. tax system incorporates a huge variety of allowable deductions and “credits” that can reduce tax payments. These are all tax expenditures. Opinions, of course, vary widely on the wisdom of different tax expenditures, but it must be remembered that each one exacts a cost in government revenue—and each reduces the effective tax rates of those taxpayers who take advantage of them. “Tax efficiency” results from the expert use of deductions for mortgage interest, investment costs, pensions, health care, certain non-federal taxes, charitable gifts, and tax-exempt bonds and corporate structures like partnerships. With the introduction of tax credits, the set of options for tax minimization increased, as did the community of skilled advisors available to guide that strategy.

Tax expenditures under the individual and corporate income tax code have grown over the years to become nearly as large as the federal government’s discretionary spending.43 As of 2012, tax expenditures were worth more than $1.3 trillion (the budget was $3.6 trillion) and were projected to grow to more than $1.8 trillion by 2017 unless reforms are enacted.44 Indeed, on the corporate side, the yearly loss from corporate tax expenditures is now almost equal to the entire revenue collected from the federal corporate income tax.45

Tax expenditures exist at the federal, state, and local levels. At each level of government, they should be subjected to regular, careful, and transparent cost-benefit analysis. At the state and local levels many of these tax expenditures take the
form of subsidies for particular kinds of business enterprises, sometimes seriously eroding government access to revenues. Some of the most debated involve tax exemptions granted to sports teams or stadium owners by municipalities like Detroit and New York City, under threat of losing the franchises to other locations.46

As of 2013, the most important tax expenditures, with rough estimates of annual revenue lost, are the following:

1. The exclusion of employer contributions to health insurance and health care ($184 billion);47
2. Preferential tax rates on dividends and long-term capital gains, relative to ordinary income ($91 billion);48
3. The mortgage interest deduction for up to two residences ($72 to $88 billion);49
4. The deduction for non-business state and local taxes and property taxes ($79 billion);50
5. The earned income credit ($60 billion);51
6. The exclusion of Medicare benefits ($58 billion);52
7. The deduction for charitable contributions ($47 billion);53
8. The forgiveness of capital gains taxation on inherited assets ($38 billion);54
9. The exclusion of capital gains on home sales ($20–$30 billion);55
10. The child tax credit ($28–$57 billion);56
11. The exclusion from individual income taxes of interest earned on state and local bonds ($18 billion);57
12. The exclusion of foreign-earned income (up to $95,100 in 2012) ($8 billion);58
13. The exclusion of interest earned on life insurance savings ($2.5 billion).59

Apart from corporations, the largest beneficiaries of tax expenditures are upper income households. (See the chart following.) In 2011, the top 10 percent of households received 53 percent of tax expenditure benefits while the top 1 percent of households received 24 percent.60 Just 11 percent of all tax expenditure dollars accrue to the lowest 40 percent of taxpayers. The Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit are refundable tax expenditures, that is, they are paid to households even if they owe no personal income tax. Refundable tax credits (primarily the EITC and CTC) comprise 18 percent of all tax expenditures.61 But even though these two tax expenditures are particularly beneficial to lower-income people, the overall impact of tax expenditures is to benefit wealthier households.

**Key Corporate Tax Expenditures:**

Tax expenditures for corporations can be calculated in various ways, of which the Government Accountability Office listing of the seven largest federal corporate tax expenditures (below) is perhaps the most basic. The GAO’s summary notes the overlapping use of more than two thirds of corporate tax expenditures by individuals: “In 2011, the Department of the Treasury estimated 80 tax expenditures resulted in the government forgoing corporate tax revenue totaling more than $181 billion. Many of these tax expenditures are broadly available to both corporate and individual taxpayers. More than two-thirds or 56 of the 80 tax expenditures used by corporations in 2011 were also used by individual taxpayers, such as other types of businesses not organized as corporations.62 William Quigley provides an overview that includes an estimate of $80 billion for state and local subsidies to corporations, a CATO Institute calculation of $100 billion in direct federal subsidies (seen as market interference),63 deductions for the costs of settlements to avoid further prosecution for improper activities, and notes the de facto subsidies provided when low wage employees depend on food stamps and other public benefits.64
Table 1: Seven Largest Corporate Tax Expenditures, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tax Expenditure</th>
<th>Federal revenue loss estimates resulting from corporations (dollars in billions)</th>
<th>Share of total estimated corporate tax revenue losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated depreciation of machinery and equipment</td>
<td>$76.1</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferral of income from controlled foreign corporations</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deduction for US production activities</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit for increasing research activities</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion of interest on public purpose local bonds</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred taxes for financial firms on certain income overseas</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit for low-income housing investments</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$155.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>86%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GAO analysis of Office of Management and Budget budget data on tax expenditures, fiscal year 2013.

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Watchdog groups, such as Citizens for Tax Justice, provide information on a company-by-company basis, also organized by state. The high return on investment from lobbying by individual firms, former officials, and trade associations is summarized in a *Boston Globe* article, drawing on research for the Center for Responsive Politics.

**Burdened and Heavy Laden? How to Assess U.S. Tax Burden as an Integrated System with Moral Burdens**

It has been suggested that the United States citizen is over-burdened and “heavy laden” with taxes. It may feel that way at times, especially when wages are stagnant or falling, and if other prices and perhaps interest rates are rising. And for some in our society, it is a virtual matter of faith to oppose any new taxes, no matter what the social need. No set of tables or measured argument can change such views. The goal here is simply to lay out the integrated system, allowing readers to see their tax position both within the dynamics of U.S. taxation and, briefly, within a global context. Domestically, there are some taxes that have been more or less progressive, i.e., the individual income tax, while the payroll tax is regressive giving preference to high-income earners.

Any overall comparisons must (as in the next chart) condense a large amount of data that averages state property, sales, and estate taxes, which are quite variable. States also vary widely in the amount of safety net and quality of social services, funds spent on prisons and education, the role of lotteries and casinos, etc. In contrast, other developed nations generally tax at higher rates, spend more on public goods, and provide more generous social provisions (such as medical care), all of which tend toward greater economic equality. The recommendations of this report do not follow the practice in much of Europe to use VAT, or value-added taxes on purchases, the regressive impacts of which are then offset by rebates—VAT would entail a massive restructure of the U.S. system. This report does follow most of the nations of the world, however, in recommending higher energy taxes.

The following graphic delineates tax-generated revenue for the typical United State citizen. It identifies the jurisdiction and tax schedule that generated the revenue.

![Image of tax data](Image)
One way to test the overall United States tax burden is to look at our tax obligations in relationship to other nations. The following graphic compares our percentage of taxes to Gross Domestic Product with other countries in the OECD. This chart takes into account the higher proportion of payroll taxes in the United States in comparison with mainly European nations.

From Avoidance to Evasion: Tax Competition and Tax Havens

Tax avoidance (using legal means to avoid paying taxes) is not foreign to most of us. How many have stopped at a brick and mortar retail store, checked out the merchandise and then ordered online to dodge the sales tax? Similarly, it is reasonable to expect taxpayers to modify behavior to obtain tax expenditures or to time when their income will be taxed. The ethical challenges faced by the individual start not in the domain of illegality, but in the place of personal integrity. The long-term wealth of any household is preconditioned on the success of our civil society. Aggressive tax avoidance can be seen as antithetical to an individual’s beneficial interest if one’s dependence on a “good society” is admitted, even if we do not look at needs of others or the future needs of our own families.

For the Christian, however, there is an additional overlay, the call of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to give voice to the voiceless, heal the sick, and look out for the poor, hungry, and homeless, and the sick, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger in the land, to safeguard God’s gift of creation, and to promote and protect the common good.69 To do so requires concerted action not solely accomplishable by individual acts of compassion. There is an identifiable role for government in the building of a responsible society. As a result, members of the Christian community, who are firmly grounded in Gospel and at the same time fully participating in civic society and the political economy, approach the question of tax avoidance from a distinctive ethical and transnational perspective. In the Reformed tradition we have called it a covenantal perspective, but we recognize similar values when our brother, Pope Francis, speaks of the idolatry of money and the cry of the poor.

Most Presbyterians have some acquaintance with tax competition, which occurs among jurisdictions competing to attract businesses seeking the lowest tax rates. Starting with local tax abatements (or reductions—often to attract or keep businesses), moving through interstate competition, and then seeing nations struggle for comparative advantage, sometimes sacrificing wage levels and public investment to appease powerful economic interests. The key function of the tax haven industry and its 71 or so prime jurisdictions is to be the “anchor,” or lowest points, in the “race to the bottom” that is now an unavoidable aspect of economic globalization.70 Some of the more fortunate among us face personal choices of whether to use tax havens, but they are part of the moral environment for all of us. They are part of many of our business lives, as most major corporations are themselves both driven and drivers, making extensive use of havens to “park” income transferred from subsidiaries around the world, under various tax avoidance plans, often based on defective transfer pricing rules. And our in-
vestment portfolios inevitably benefit from such practices, unless we have particularly scrupulous screens. One could perhaps even say for church investors that benefits from tax havens are a subtle form of unrelated business income.

In pre-globalization forms, tax havens have been in existence for centuries. As early as the 1930s as nominal rates increased, United States Treasury officials began to notice a rise in noncompliance, including not only misstatement of income and expenses, but also the use of offshore havens to stash income and wealth, particularly in countries like Switzerland and Lichtenstein. A ruling by the Bank of England in 1957 permitting establishment of “Euromarkets” allowed assets to be held extra-country, i.e., dollar deposits outside the United States, pound sterling outside the United Kingdom, etc. This pushed the envelope creating a large, unregulated lending industry in Panama, the Caymans and the Channel Islands and other newer locations.

Reforming secrecy jurisdictions and the related practices of tax avoidance and tax evasion is difficult. Switzerland, among other jurisdictions, until recently has fought both international requests for transparency and internal whistleblowers. The United States has itself resisted demands for transparency from the international community. Miami’s banking industry, host to Latin American depositors, has resisted reporting of income attributed to non-United States citizens. Laws in Delaware and Nevada permit corporations to be established without listing their owners; if the IRS can’t find out who owns something, taxes cannot be assessed. Just like secrecy regimes in offshore locations, these states attract business by offering secrecy which, in itself, is not evidence of illegal behavior. The states do not obtain nor divulge information that is needed for the corporations to be taxed. The role of the private banking industry and specialized large law and accounting firms cannot be explored here, but clearly plays a vital intermediary role for individuals seeking to minimize their tax burdens, and some persons go so far as to change their residency for tax purposes.

The result of opaque financial structures is an inability to determine how much tax revenue is sliding away. The amount of money booked in tax havens, much of it the result of plainly illegal activity, is enormous. The estimate of over $21 trillion was noted earlier. Another estimate, generated by the Boston Consulting Group, totals “on paper roughly $8 trillion of private wealth out of a global total of $123 trillion sits offshore, but this excludes real property, yachts and other fixed assets.” One take-away from this work of detection and analysis is the recognition that most measures of inequality are probably understated; parts of the worldwide .001 percent hold assets that are literally off the charts.

The total result of this lack of transparency is unknown, but the amounts involved would likely provide for substantial government debt reduction if ever collected. What was once tolerated in the international community is becoming less acceptable as national and regional jurisdictions cope with deficits.

The following counter trends are working to increase compliance, restrain tax competition, and to limit the power of tax havens. It may also be the case that broader trends of “re-globalization,” along with demographic and environmental changes, will affect the investment patterns of nations and the regulation of corporations, moderating dynamics that have favored inequality among and within nations.

1. The United States is a leader in the movement for wealth and income reporting from “on demand” to “mandatory and concurrent.” This is being accomplished in substance by the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) adopted by the 111th Congress for implementation starting in March of 2010. The act is a unilateral demand by the United States that all holdings and activities of financial accounts held by its citizens be reported electronically to the IRS. The act was an attempt to claim up to $100 billion in payment non-compliance. While the “arrogance” of this act was at first the focus of international comment and criticism, in recent months additional nations have joined the movement by also requiring similar “big data” exchanges via bi-lateral treaties.

2. On the state level, there are some bright spots, as in the substantial tax reform achieved in Minnesota, based partly on public debate and analysis of the dynamics behind corporate relocation decisions. The desirability of talented workforces, good educational and cultural capacities, and well-maintained infrastructure: these all nurture and attract businesses that are not simply “extractive,” and pay better wages. Elsewhere, an influential banker chairing the Washington State Citizen Commission for Performance Measurement of Tax Preferences has developed a comprehensive economic policy program to reverse trends towards inequality.

3. The international community has begun conceptual work on automatic exchanges to facilitate multiparty exchange of financial account data. Reaching consensus and then adoption, however, may be far in the future. The price of freedom will be vigilance and persistent advocacy for the adoption of legislation for the exchanges.

4. A global tax justice movement has emerged. The church has taken its role in the movement. Through advocacy, policy development and, where possible, whistle blowing the movement has helped generate public interest in tax justice. The movement may be seen as a multinational counterforce to the easy temptations of immediate profits and self-service.

5. The church ecumenical has taken up its role in witness and advocacy. In 2013, the General Synod of United Church of Christ, for example, adopted a resolution, “The Tax System: A Matter of Faith, Fairness, and Flourishing Communities. It’s key criteria:
An equitable tax system is:
- progressive, requiring higher-income households and corporations to pay a greater share of income in taxes than lower income ones;
- fair and without loopholes, havens and other arrangements that can be used to shield income from taxation;
- neutral, that is, does not create incentives for particular behaviors except when those behaviors are explicitly intended as a goal of public policy;
- adequate to raise sufficient funds to meet social needs and promote the welfare of all; and
- redistributive, shifting income from rich to poor to reduce income inequality and enhance the common good.

In applying these principles, their General Synod called for all income to be taxed at basically the same rate, and any “tax expenditures” to be targeted to impact less wealthy citizens. They favored keeping the corporate income tax and adding a financial transaction tax to moderate speculation toward longer term investment.

Before leaving this historical review, we return to the simple statement: the faithful interact with this world’s ability to facilitate unethical behavior in a unique, often prophetic way. We cling to the principles of Christ while challenging ourselves and the principalities of this world to act in an ever more just manner. We do so for the most vulnerable of the children of God.

V. Principles of a Just Tax System

This report addresses the heart of the matter and its primary implications: to make the U.S. tax system fairer, it needs to be:
- more progressive, taxing those with greater wealth at higher proportions of their income, wealth, and inheritance;
- more transparent, which includes both simplicity and accountability for all preferences and tax expenditures;
- more solidarity-focused, which means reducing the use of tax expenditures, shelters, and havens, and supporting more adequate international tax standards;
- more sustainable, which may mean choosing to forgo taxation by not exploiting nonrenewable resources; and
- more effective, meaning it must produce adequate revenues to provide for the common good, and avoid unwise debt which shifts taxation to future generations.

This section provides a fuller rationale for the principles outlined at the beginning of the recommendations section. The first step was to affirm the work of previous Presbyterians working on the question of fair taxation, even as this report updated that key work from thirty-seven years ago. The value of solidarity is perhaps the most significant addition, though the study team re-thought all of the principles. This was the value seen most at stake in challenging the “race to the bottom,” in order to honor social solidarity within and among nations and ensure multinational corporations contribute to the societies that provide them their wealth.

Thirty-seven years ago, the 189th General Assembly (1977) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America outlined four criteria for evaluating tax systems:
- Equity–Revenue should be generated so that the task of providing for the common good/social services is not borne disproportionately by the poor. Equity should also be sought among generations—judicious use of debt to fund society’s current work must not cause future generations to assume a disproportionate amount of the cost.
- Integrity–The tax system should be free from corruption and characterized by moral wholeness such that taxpayers recognize their communal indebtedness.
- Simplicity–The tax system should be understandable to taxpayers so they can trust the equity and integrity of the system.
- Efficiency–The tax system should generate revenue for the highest output of goods and services, including intangible outputs to increase the public good, with the least amount of administrative cost and so that the return produced is in excess of the amount expended.

Over the years new patterns have emerged that challenge the church’s witness. It is time to refresh the church’s criteria. Thus we propose that these principles be enriched by a new set of principles for a new gilded age: Progressivity, Transparency, Solidarity, Sustainability, and Adequacy.

1. Progressivity:

Each time we approach communion with Christ, we are reminded of his desire to fairly set the table of this world. In our work, equity will be enacted through progressivity:

We seek equity among generations. The failure to adequately fund the work of society today leads logically to one of two outcomes: Today’s work is not completed, or borrowing to fund today’s work causes future taxpayers to assume the cost.
We do not argue that equity is best served by a rigid or legalistic application of this principle. There are times, as in the Great Recession, when economists argue that it is appropriate to borrow. We do assert that equity requires judicious use of debt to fund society’s current work.

a. We embrace progressivity as the overarching concept of an equitable tax system. At the communion table, we are asked to serve the vulnerable, those who are dependent, the poor. Logically, this means faithful work to build a graduated tax system whose rates increase as the level of income increases. Given that the core of tax injustice is that the poor are paying proportionately more (and receiving less and less), then increased progressivity is needed to redress the resulting personal suffering and widening inequity redistribution upward of labor markets dominated by large non-union firms, low wages, and export markets.

b. The demands of equity cause us to reject a flat tax or tax expenditures that are highly regressive. Low-income individuals and families struggling to meet basic living expenses cannot pay taxes at the same rate as the higher-income individual or family. The previously affirmed principle of equity compels the church to affirm progressive tax solutions, including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), an effective idea pioneered by Republican economists that helps those working at low wage levels and the communities in which they live.

The believer will note that the current method of generating revenue for social security insurance is regressive, not progressive. The first dollar of a person’s wages is taxed at a flat (not progressive) percentage, while dollars over 115,001 are not taxe at all. It is highly advantageous for the high-income taxpayer but not so for the low-income taxpayer. Hence we advocate phasing out the cap, a simple change that will also ensure the soundness of that system past 2040.

2. Transparency:

It is not necessary only that a tax system be fair; it must be fair visibly, so that taxpayers are assured that all are paying their proper shares of the national tax burden. Transparency addresses the integrity of the system and would increase simplicity—consistent with the scale of the economic actor being taxed and the complexity of our economy.

In the words of St. Paul, the law can be a ‘stumbling block’ to each of us: none of us has clean hands or an envy-free imagination. When we approach the communion table, we are overtaken by grace and realize we are called to wholeness, not perfection. Another word for moral wholeness is integrity, the principle we affirm from our predecessors in 1977. At the same time, we update this principle to the word transparency, as a comprehensive look at taxation must look at organizations as well as individuals.

The tax system we seek is created, administered, and enforced in a manner that invites honesty. Unlike the equitable system described above, the inequitable system is perceived as unfair by taxpayers. If our neighbors do not pay taxes, we feel foolish paying ours. If corporations dodge taxation and receive inequitable tax expenditures, cynicism mounts. Corruption abounds. The law becomes a stumbling block.

Likewise, to sustain integrity, those who administer tax rules are expected to treat the taxpayer with dignity and respect. And the taxpayer should be informed, both about the tax rates and participation by all citizens and corporations, so that the payment of taxes is understood as both a social norm and a good.

Simplicity is an antidote to complexity. Over the past century, the U.S. tax code has added layers of complexity. The time is now for the simplification of structure through the reduction or elimination of tax expenditures. The Assembly recognizes that there is a constituency for each deduction or credit. Nonetheless, reducing tax expenditures generates the additional revenue required and makes the enterprise more understandable. But the problem is not simply that it is hard to quantify expenditures; it is a matter of trust amid entrenched special pleadings.

3. Solidarity:

We recognize that we are dependent on the community we sustain with our taxes. This communal dimension to our gratitude and to our calling prompts a further updating of the four values from 1977: the addition of solidarity.

We see our communal indebtedness as we reflect on our early years and our last days in facilities built with our taxes. We see our indebtedness as our children are reared, educated, and their identity forged with the building blocks delivered through our taxes.

We see our indebtedness as our police and military risk their lives for freedom here and around the world.

We see our indebtedness to society—that is, to one another—as corporations draw on legal and contractual traditions, move goods via roads built with our tax dollars, and hire personnel educated in our schools.

It is this sense of gratitude to the greater good of a knowledge economy developed over time that guides the report in its address to transnational corporations and other entities that weaken the solidarity within and among nations through means.
we have described. The resulting inequities have become publicly notorious and portray a global fiscal system based on cynical exploitation of defective laws, and a kind of law-making that is largely invisible to the public. Conversely, a good tax system fosters an opportunity to strengthen the communities that sustain us. For this reason, above all, we recommend the principle of solidarity.

4. **Sustainability:**

   Economic and environmental sustainability must go together. The tax system is one of the key ways that productive capacity is targeted to both short-term and long-term need. Prices of products and wages of people carry much valuable information, but markets alone do not reflect moral values and they have a decided short-term bias. This report reflects an overall understanding that the current level of economic inequality in our society—and its recent growth—are both immoral and unsustainable—though inequality is more addressed by the criterion of solidarity. Economic growth has typically been the recipe for addressing inequality: “a rising tide lifts all boats.” But we now see that most of our economic gains are captured by a very small share of the already very rich. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, 95 percent of the growth in national income between 2009 and 2012 went to the top 1 percent.88 Growth is not only threatening the environment but it is failing to correct inequality or alleviate poverty.

   (To step out of the metaphor, however, a rising tide caused by global warming is raising sea levels, causing vast amounts of economic damage along shorelines, as well as a host of other drought/flood and extreme weather patterns. According to the study by Nicholas Stern commissioned by the British government, the costs of mitigating climate change impacts grow exponentially as they are deferred.89 Already insurance costs for coastal areas are increasing, reflecting risk with increasing accumulation, and pesticide contamination.

   Sustainability as a value in taxation introduces a way to tax growth in a way that addresses externalities, or social and environmental costs, in a new and more holistic way. Sustainability means preventing unintended consequences and taxing to cover costs more immediately. It also means being clearer about incentives to eliminate waste in virtually every form. Thus the understandable goal of controlling carbon by putting a price on it addresses the chief cause of global warming, but all nonrenewable resources require more deliberate use and recycling whenever possible. The trade-offs of development become more stark, and the hazards of population growth are also increased. Even renewable resources require some level of taxation to allow precisely for their renewal—like fisheries around the world, or even fertile soil, which is being depleted by over-use, erosion, and pesticide contamination.

   Climate change and humanity’s contribution to production of greenhouse gases have focused the attention of prior General Assemblies. Drawing upon creation narratives, biblical injunctions, and ethical analysis, our predecessors have spoken prophetically about our sin against creation and God’s longing for its restoration. The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved a comprehensive policy, *The Power to Change–U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming*. This assembly (the 218th General Assembly [2008]) which supported taxing carbon and discussed the pros and cons of “cap and trade” and other policies designed to transition toward a sustainable energy future ([http://www.pcusa.org/resource/power-change-us-energy-policy-global-warming/](http://www.pcusa.org/resource/power-change-us-energy-policy-global-warming/)).

   The overall argument for this principle reflects thinking on the re-direction of the economy pioneered by Herman Daly and John Cobb, but the challenge is mustering the political will, nationally and internationally, to test new models, such as that carbon taxes and increased gasoline taxes, that would advance transportation efficiency far more effectively than (still valuable) improvements in car engine efficiency.90

5. **Adequacy:**

   As described above, the efficient tax system
   
   • utilizes tax expenditures (in general) for targets that produce a social return in excess of the amount expended;
   
   • delivers its revenue to the end user with the least amount of administrative cost;
   
   • works to generate the highest output of goods and services, and intangible outputs to increase the public good.

   Yet efficiency is not an adequate measure in itself, for taxation is not simply a technical calculation that can be separated from social purpose. The debate over “revenue neutrality” can illustrate this reduction of the purpose of tax reform. Adequacy is defined by the objectives that the funding itself is to serve not simply by an arbitrary “neutral.” Efficiency, then, should guide the administration of a tax system, but effectiveness to the purposes of government should help assess tax expenditures and other subsidies, not only for their fairness, but for their aggregate results. Talking about the purposes of government leads us to the framework within which these principles interact.
Thus the report proposes moving from Equity, Integrity, Simplicity, and Efficiency to Progressivity, Transparency, Solidarity, Sustainability, and Effectiveness. These principles work in concert with each other, but also within an overall vision of mutual responsibility, a social covenant.

VI. Note on the Study Team:

As authorized by the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) appointed the following persons to a study team:

The Reverend Kenneth GY Grant, chair, currently a principal in a private firm administering assets for pension plans, endowments, foundations, and private and public funds; providing transfer agency and trading services for investment product; and managing investment trusts for the institutional market; Boston, Massachusetts.

The Reverend Gloria Albrecht, Ph.D., professor of Christian Ethics, Emerita, University of Detroit/Mercy; Detroit, Michigan.

Elder Ellen Pearre Cason, CPA, MBA, principal in a specialized accounting firm; New York, New York.

Elder Simon Park, Ph.D., retired mission co-worker with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and former professor of accounting.

The Reverend Raymond Roberts, Ph.D. pastor, The Presbyterian Church of Westfield, New Jersey.

Elder Brian Rusche, director of an interfaith social justice advocacy organization; Minneapolis, Minnesota.

By special arrangement, Dr. Edith Rasell, Ph.D., M.D. an economist and staff member of the United Church of Christ, Cleveland, Ohio, served as a member and advisor to the study team.

Consultant services were provided by James S. Henry, Esq., author, public interest lawyer, former chief economist of McKinsey & Company; Sag Harbor, New York.

The Reverend Michael Durst, Esq.; recently ordained in the United Church of Christ; tax attorney and columnist; Bloomberg BNA; consultant at one time to the Internal Revenue Service; served as an advisor to the study team.

Staff assistance: The Reverend Christian Iosso, Ph.D. coordinator, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Louisville, Kentucky.


The Study Team met four times, in Boston, New York, and Cleveland, in addition to the extended public forum meeting in Washington, D.C. An eighth person appointed to the study team was unable to serve.

APPENDIX TO TAX JUSTICE REPORT TO THE 221st GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)

A Short Historical Account of Progressive Taxation in the United States and its Ethical Bases

By James S. Henry, Esq.

This is an edited section of a longer work on tax policy by the author, a leader in the Tax Justice movement and former chief economist for McKinsey & Company.

First Efforts

Progressive taxation has very deep roots in U.S. history. This year, 2013, marked the 100th anniversary of the first permanent progressive U.S. federal income tax. But the first crude graduated tax on personal “faculties” actually dates back to 1706 in Massachusetts. A federal income tax was also once proposed to pay the costs of the War of 1812, but the war ended before it could be adopted. At the state level, Alabama, Connecticut, North Carolina, and Virginia all experimented with income taxation before 1850, and Pennsylvania pioneered a 3 percent corporate income tax in the 1880s. The first temporary progressive federal income tax, a graduated tax of 3 to 5 percent on incomes over $11,000 and $185,000 respectively, was proposed by Abraham Lincoln and adopted by Congress in July 1862 to help finance the Civil War. In 1864 the rates were boosted to 5 to 10 percent on incomes from $7,400 to more than $124,000, then simplified in 1867 to a flat 5 percent on incomes over $14,000, and finally slashed to 1870 to 2 percent of income over $33,000. In 1872, this first, generally successful experiment with federal income taxation was repealed by the Grant Administration.

The First Gilded Age and the Christian Social Gospel

Demands to restore a peace-time federal income tax remerged in the so-called “Gilded Age” of the 1880s and 1890s. This was a period of rapid U.S. industrialization and urbanization, which generated prolonged periods of deflation and depression, the “original accumulation” of large family fortunes, and wealth concentration. This was due in part to the sidelining of the income tax from 1872 to 1913, just as
elite incomes were soaring, especially in the North. The “labor problem” also emerged during this period, featuring pitched battles be-
tween, on the one hand, employers, Pinkertons, police, and federal troops, and striking workers and labor organizers on the other. For the industrialists of the new trusts, this was something of an “Atlas Shrugged” paradise, with minimal labor laws, minimum wages, health and safety regulations, housing laws, securities laws, banking laws, building codes, rights for women and minorities, anti-bribery laws, or limits on selling drugs and alcohol; instead there was child labor, eighteen-hour days, hazardous sweatshops and mines, and mind-numbing squalor and addiction, especially in densely-populated urban slums. This was a time when even the average physical heights of Americans diverged sharply by social class, a “gilded age” only for those of substantial means.95

That late 19th century American world of sweatshops and extreme inequality eventually generated antidotes: in the mines and the shop floor, a radical labor movement; on the farms, the Populist movement; and in the churches, the liberal professions, and the universities, the so-called “Progressive” movement. Each movement had its own particular causes and prescriptions for reform. Over time, however, reviving the progressive federal income tax became one of the causes that united them.

Proposals for a revival of the federal income tax first appeared during this period in the farmer-labor-based Populist and Socialist Party platforms of the 1880s. The Democratic Party, led from 1896 to 1908 by William Jennings Bryan, a devout Presbyterian from Nebraska, quickly coopted it. In 1894, the reformers won a modest 2 percent federal tax on incomes over $99,000 (in $2013). But in 1895 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that a federal tax on property income (unlike one on labor earnings) was unconstitutional.96 This unpopular decision helped to galvanize the demands for tax justice.

This Gilded Age campaign for the federal income tax is especially interesting to us because it was spearheaded by leading proponents and believers in the so-called “Christian Social Gospel” movement. As one historian has described it, this was “one of the most productive intellectual movements to originate from American Protestantism.”97 It was also one of the first attempts to translate religious convictions into a political agenda that would seek popular support.

Originating in the early 1880s, the Social Gospelers included such distinguished Protestant intellectuals as John T. Ely, the Johns Hopkins economist who founded the American Economics Association; theologian Walter Rauschenbusch;98 the Congregational minister Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, whose 1896 book “In His Steps—What Would Jesus Do?” sold thirty million copies, more than any other 19th century publication; John R. Commons, another noted economist; Josiah Strong, a Congregational minister who helped to organize the Federal Council of Churches in 1905-08; the leading Chicago Methodist pastor Harry F. Ward, who drafted the original 11-line Social Creed, and George D. Herron, Woodrow Wilson’s future Ambassador to Moscow.99 In 1908, thirty-three mainline Protestant churches, including the United Presbyterians, the Methodist Episcopalians (Methodists), Congregationalists, the United Lutherans, and the Northern Baptists, came together to adopt a “Social Creed” and found the Federal Council to help tackle such issues.100

Gospel Politics and the Income Tax

Theodore Roosevelt took a special interest in the Social Gospel leaders, inviting several of them to the White House in 1907.101 He became a forceful advocate for a graduated income tax, especially after he left the Presidency in 1909.102

But the key politician involved in the shaping of income tax after it became legal movement was Wilson himself. The son of a leading Southern Presbyterian minister, Wilson had studied with Professor Ely at Johns Hopkins University in the 1880s. He later became a history professor at Princeton, that University’s President, and Governor of New Jersey. In 1911-12, as a leading Progressive, Wilson realized a meteoric ascent to the U.S. Presidency, defeating President Taft, Roosevelt, and the Socialist Party’s Eugene V. Debs in that year’s hotly-contended four-way race.

Wilson achieved this success while maintaining and deepening his commitment to the “Social Gospel” version of Christianity. As he later recalled, “Christianity gave us in the fullness of time the perfect image of right living, the secret of social and of individual well-being. For the two are not separable.”103 Such convictions played a key part in his conclusion—to the consternation of his Wall Street friends—that “The most serious problem facing us today is the concentration of money power in the hands of a few.”

But Wilson was no socialist. Indeed, only a handful of Social Gospelers could be accused of being “Christian Socialists” who questioned the very foundations of capitalism. Rather, Wilson, Bryan, and most key Social Gospelers were simply trying, in Bryan’s words, to practice “applied Christianity.”104 They sought to smooth capitalism’s rough edges with basic reforms like the 8-hour day, the 6-day week, anti-monopoly laws, and taxes on income and wealth.

From a theological standpoint, they believed that Christianity was not just about individual salvation, the after-life, or fervent protestations of belief. As Rauschenbusch wrote, “The Lord’s Prayer is … not the property of those whose chief aim is to pass through an evil world in safety, leaving evil unshaken.”105 They saw Jesus as an activist, even to some extent an enemy of the state, whose spoken words were inspiring, but whose silent deeds were even more inspiring: healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting social outcasts, and expelling the money changers, even at the risk of defying conventional religious and political authorities. In their view, it was hard to make sense of such actions if faith alone, absent active involvement, were sufficient for “salvation.”

Of course the Social Gospel thinkers were not the only proponents of the federal income tax. Even some business interests supported it as a substitute for high federal tariffs, which were hurting trade. Nor were the tax rates enacted all that progressive, at first.106 Still, the Social Gospel contributed significantly to providing ethical and religious foundations for Progressive reforms in the pre-war period.107

The 1913 Federal Income Tax

The campaign for the first U.S. peacetime income tax, led by Progressives and supported by the Social Gospel movement, culminated in the 16th Amendment, which was adopted by Congress in 1909 and ratified in 1913 after Wilson’s election. At first the individual income tax was barely progressive—a modest 1 percent tax on net incomes over $4,000 ($90,000 in $2013). For the top .5 percent with incomes
above $20,000 ($450,000 in 2013), there was a 2 to 7 percent surtax, with the top rate applying to incomes over $11.6 million ($2013). Since 1909 there had also been a 1 percent on corporate net income above $100,000 ($2013). The first federal estate tax was added in 1916.

Compared to today’s “tax expenditure”-laden environment, this was a pristine income tax. At a time when the average U.S. household earned $16,000, only 358,000 out of 37 million households, or less than 1 percent, had to file federal tax returns in 1913-16, and U.S. Treasury’s Bureau of Internal Revenue could make do with just 4,000 employees.108

But costly wars and income taxation go hand in hand, at least until the 21st century. Under the impact of impending U.S. entry to World War I in April 1917, the Revenue Acts of 1916-17 halved the $90,000 exemption, doubled the minimum rate, and adopted a 4 to 67 percent on incomes over $100,000 ($2013)—the top 5 percent. For corporations there was also a new 12 percent “excess profits” tax regime.109 The 67 percent rate only applied to the top 400 households with incomes over $36 million.

Overall, however, by comparison with regressive excise taxes and distorting tariffs, this new system quickly proved not only fairer, but also could generate enormous sums of tax revenue even in wartime. In 1914 the federal income taxes generated just 10 percent of a much smaller federal revenue base; by 1918, its share of revenue was 69 percent. While the U.S. had only been the 11th country in the world to adopt a nationwide income tax, by then it had the world’s most progressive income tax system. World War I was responsible for accelerating this development, but Wilson and his fellow Progressives and Social Gospel leaders had given it a strong start.

The Expansion of Progressive Taxation in the U. S.

For our purposes, the key point of this story is that for decades the U.S. led the world in fair income and wealth taxation. Furthermore, this experiment with mass-based progressive income taxes was a resounding success. Not only were strong progressive rates adopted and maintained, but mass participation in the tax system soared.110 This was partly because minimum tax rates for people with lower incomes were also raised, and partly because tax authorities decided that millions of ordinary workers—unlike the recipients of property income—would be subject to a withholding tax on wages, rather than voluntary reporting. The resulting broad tax base complemented high progressive tax rates by making everyone pay a little.

Of course there were vehement opponents along the way—for example, Andrew Mellon, the Pittsburgh banking, steel, Alcoa, and Gulf Oil magnate who served as Treasury Secretary under three Republican Presidents from 1921 to 1932. One of the three richest people in the U.S., his series of revenue acts in the 1920s substantially weakened Wilson’s progressive income tax and estate tax. But the Great Depression led to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s victory over Herbert Hoover, and to Mellon’s prosecution for income tax evasion in 1934-35. Especially after 1936, FDR relied on stiff progressive tax rates as well as increased borrowing to finance New Deal spending programs and World War II.

The Great Depression and the war were followed by the Cold War, the Korean War, and a costly arms race. For two decades after World War II, the national security issue helped to justify high progressive tax rates to the public.

During the system’s first fifty years, both individual and corporate progressivity increased significantly. In 1917-20, as a result of the U.S. entering World War I, federal rates on individual incomes were boosted from a 2 percent to 15 percent range to a 4 percent to 73 percent range, with the top rate applying to incomes over $50 million.111 Similarly, during the Depression, federal rates extended from 4 percent on $10,000 to 63 percent on $50,000,000 or more, while during World War II (1941-45) they extended from 10 percent to 94 percent on $50 million or more. Rates peaked at 94 percent for individuals in 1944 and 79 percent for corporations in 1968-69.112 In contrast, as of 2013, the top rate of 39.6 percent for non-capital gains income kicks in at $440,876 (for married couples filing jointly), with no higher rate beyond that.113 Many states also enacted income taxes, as well as estate taxes, property taxes, and sales taxes.

Once in place, these high federal graduated rates tended to be applied to lower income levels, which made the system more progressive. By 1963, at the fifty-year mark, the system was at its peak level of progressivity, with incomes over $100,000 taxed at 75 percent, a 91 percent rate on incomes over $2 million, and a 75 percent-plus rate on corporate income taxes as well.

Of course these were not the actual “effective” tax rates that most people were paying. During the 1930s, for example, as nominal rates increased, U.S. Treasury officials began to notice a sharp rise in non-compliance, including not only misstatements of expenses and income, but also the use of offshore havens to stash income and wealth. A 1937 letter from Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau to FDR complains that at the time, wealthy Americans had started to use “offshore havens” like Panama and Newfoundland (!) to hide their riches.

Second, over time, the high rates also generated a lucrative tax planning industry, as wealthy taxpayers became adroit at exploiting “tax expenditures” like deductions for mortgage interest, investment costs, pensions, and charitable contributions, as well as the market for tax-exempt municipal bonds.114 As tax dodging became more sophisticated, the understaffed IRS of the period accumulated a multi-year audit backlog.

Still, even after taking into account the growth of avoidance mechanisms, the U.S. post-tax distribution of income during this high tax period was significantly less unequal than the pre-tax distribution. Inequalities of wealth and income declined dramatically during World War II, the 1950s and early 1960s, aided not only by the impact of the Great Depression and WWII on large fortunes, but also by steep marginal rates on high incomes.115 At the same time, the ratio of public debt to GDP, which had increased sharply during World War II, steadily declined. During this post-war period the U.S. acquired a dominant position in the world economy, and progressive income taxes allowed the Treasury to share in the very profitable expansion of U. S. businesses.

The Decline and Fall of Progressive Taxation in the U. S.

While “tax expenditures” and tax dodging appeared on the stage quite early, as of 1963 the U.S. federal income tax was still quite broad and progressive.116 The same basic progressive federal structure had prevailed throughout the late 1940s and 1950s. One can debate what the “effective” tax rates really were back then, after taking into account write-offs and deductions, especially for the corporate tax.
But compared with today’s rates, there is little question that the overall federal income tax regime in the early 1960s was much more progressive.  

The first modest retreat from progressive taxation began in January 1963, when President Kennedy proposed to cut the maximum individual federal tax rate to 65 percent and the minimum rate to 14 percent, with lower corporate rates as well. Kennedy intended this to be a “demand-side” stimulus for consumption and investment in a period of excess capacity, not as a “supply-side” incentive. But it marked the first time since the 1920s that aggressive rate reductions were proposed for the very top of the income distribution. Interestingly, Kennedy’s proposal was rejected by the Democratic-majority Congress. In early 1964 President Johnson got Congress to cut the top individual rate to 77 percent, and to reduce corporate rates slightly.

1970s Shocks

For the next decade reductions in progressivity were limited, but the conditions were building for an anti-tax movement. The U.S. economy started to experience more erratic growth, fueled by higher energy costs, increased global competition, and increased political instability around the globe. That period’s prolonged series of unexpected shocks included the 1970 recession, the 1971 decision to float the U.S. dollar, the Arab-Israeli war and the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Export Countries) oil price spikes of 1973, the 1974-75 recession, and the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which set off another sharp oil price spike. Meanwhile, more and more U.S. multinational corporations (MNCs) and banks started to move their operations, intellectual property, and other assets offshore for tax purposes, taking advantage of new tax code provisions that permitted foreign profits to be stockpiled abroad tax free, as well an expanded offshore haven network and accelerated globalization of trade and investment.

In 1976, the Supreme Court issued the first of several decisions that undercut Congressional attempts to limit the role of money in political campaigns. Over time, this permitted the country’s largest financial institutions, multinational corporations (MNCs), and the wealthy to purchase greater political influence relative to unions, the middle class, and the poor. Abroad, similar interests also began to acquire increased influence in other key OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) countries, notably the United Kingdom and Germany.

The Floodgates

Largely as a result of these developments, there was a sharp decline in U.S. income tax progressivity, especially after 1981. This was partly the direct result of the lower nominal tax rates noted above. But there was also a rise in “tax expenditures” that favored special interests, as well as a decline in the IRS’ real resources for tax enforcement. Since the 1990s it also become much easier for MNCs to engage in “legal” tax avoidance by offshoring their intellectual property and trading companies to low-tax havens, allowing them to retain billions in profits abroad tax free.

Finally, there was also a shift of the overall U.S. tax base from progressive federal corporate and individual income taxes to other much less progressive taxes. In particular, the key fact about payroll, sales, property, and non-federal income taxes is that they are not only less progressive than the federal income tax, but regressive. As one recent study of state and local taxation concluded, “Nearly every state and local tax system takes a much greater share of income from middle- and low-income families than from the wealthy.” Indeed, in many localities families with incomes less than $25,000—less than half the median income for a family of four—now pay far higher combined state and local tax rates than those with incomes over $150,000.

While anti-tax lobbyists may note that wealthy individuals now pay the bulk of income taxes, almost all Americans pay these much more regressive taxes, which are virtually unavoidable. Once all these other taxes are taken into account, there has been a clear trend to purchase greater political influence relative to unions, the middle class, and the poor. The anti-tax agenda seems determined to push this even farther, with some advocating the replacement of federal income taxes with VAT (value added) taxes.

Endnotes

1. This data comes from the Economic Policy Institute: http://inequality.org/wealth-inequality/ It does not reflect the gains made by the Forbes 400, for example, due especially to the stock market recovery: http://www.forbes.com/forbes-400/

2. This recommendation would generally support the recently proposed IRS rulemaking, “Guidance for Tax-Exempt Social Welfare Organizations on Candidate-Related Political Activities,” though additional regulation and legislation is likely to be needed to address the sheer scale of political contributions by a small percentage of extremely wealthy citizens and non-citizens (one reason for disclosure of contributor names). See: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-11-29/pdf/2013-28492.pdf .

3. The goal here is to reduce incentives for corporations to grant salaries, bonuses, and options packages that have little discernable relation to productivity and that often exceed by fifty or more times the average wage of all workers in large firms. An alternative practiced elsewhere would put graduated levies on those corporations with highly elevated CEO salaries, recognizing that the U.S. has been the leader in CEO salary levels, while having near the lowest minimum wage among developed countries. Consideration of the moral impacts of excessive severance and “golden parachute” arrangements is beyond the scope of this report, but a 2010 treatment of the theology of compensation can be found at: http://www.pcusa.org/resource/neither-poverty-nor-riches

4. The General Assembly report, Just Globalization: Justice, Ownership, and Accountability (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/resolution-just-globalization/) called for a “small tax on international capital transactions,” associating such a tax with the “Tobin Tax,” named for the late economist, James Tobin that was to be applied to currency transactions. This language would allow for harmonization with the financial transactions taxes en route to implementation in Europe and now often termed “Robin Hood” taxes: see http://www.robinhoodtax.org/.


7. For a cross-section of 140 countries at all income levels, it turns out that government spending as a share of national income has averaged 23 percent over the past decade. Significantly, for the thirty-four OECD countries at the top of the income distribution—including the U.S., the UK, France, and Germany—it has averaged 33 percent. This data sample is from the World Bank’s World Development Indicators data base (2013). It includes all 140 countries for which the required indicators are available, including all OECD—Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development—countries. The 33 percent overall average is for federal government spending. In the U.S., where state and local government spending is also quite important, the median ratio of government spending at all levels to GDP for 2001–2012 was 32.8 percent, while the ratio for federal government spending alone was 21 percent. U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2013) data, James S. Henry analysis.

8. In an earlier and much longer version of this report, economist and lawyer James S. Henry began his assessment of the needs for tax revenue and public investment with the realities of hunger and poor health affecting millions of U.S. citizens, and then documented twelve other consequences of the poverty and inequality tolerated, if not generated, by the concentration of wealth and power mirrored in our tax system.


16. In slightly more detail, there is currently a significant difference between gifts and inheritance that the report’s recommendations seek to eliminate. This relates to how the accumulated gain in value of assets is calculated. Gain upon sale is, generally, the difference between the basis (original cost with certain adjustments) and the sale price (where the sale price is higher). In the sale of a gift, the basis is that of the donor at the time originally bought/acquired. In the sale of an inheritance, the current basis is that on the date of death of the donor and the accumulated unrealized gains from the donor’s purchase to date of death (sometimes decades) are permanently tax-free for both the deceased and the inheritor. Conversely, under the “carryover basis” method, accumulated gains on inherited assets are not taxed until their eventual sale (as is true of gifts), and at that time all accumulated unrealized gains since the donor’s purchase are subject to tax (as is true of gifts). Because there is such dramatically different tax treatment of a gift received a week prior to death, versus an inheritance received a week later, this method would greatly simplify certain distortions of estate tax planning, in addition to related family dynamics.


22. Ibid., table 6.6.

23. The Hebrew word for covenant, brit, means “to bind.”

24. Note that “obligation” and “religion,” contain the word “ligament,” reflecting their covenantal origins.

25. The word “partner” is associated with covenantal language and expresses equality among the members of the covenantal community.

27. In families covenants are constituted informally as partners negotiate the duties of life together. In larger groups, however, the process of constituting life together is more formal. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church is an example of how larger group life can take structure and form. Federal theologians claim that Deuteronomy functioned as the constitution for ancient Israel.

28. Revolutionary War patriot (1797) Thomas Paine, in Agrarian Justice (1797), put it this way, “Separate an individual from society, and give him an island or a continent to possess, and he cannot acquire personal property. He cannot be rich. So inseparably are the means connected with the end, in all cases, that where the former do not exist the latter cannot be obtained. All accumulation, therefore, of personal property, beyond what a man’s own hands produce, is derived to him by living in society; and he owes on every principle of justice, of gratitude, and of civilization, a part of that accumulation back again to society from whence the whole came.”

29. For example, Jesus confronted systemic evil of his day when he touched those who were considered unclean (Mk. 5:21–34), told the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25–37), and turned over the tables in the temple (Mt. 21:12).


31. We want to emphasize that our intention is not to disparage business and market institutions, which serve many good and worthy purposes. We do not believe it helpful, as some rhetoric has done, to equate profit with greed. Companies need to stay profitable to stay in business in order to meet human needs.

32. The move to automation was made possible, in part, by the reliance on employer-generated wage data submitted to the Internal Revenue Service. Technology, including the current generation’s work in “big data”, reduced the cost of providing data and increased the efficiency of reporting. Recent innovations include the electronic reporting by financial institutions of cost basis for the calculation of realized capital gains and losses.

33. See http://www.cheatingculture.com/aboutdavidcallahanhtm/.


37. The equivalent 1963 tax brackets adjusted to 2012 dollars were $10,000, 20 percent; $100,000, 38 percent; $500,000, 75 percent; $1M, 89 percent; $2M, 91 percent; $5M, 91 percent; $10M, 91 percent; $50M, 91 percent. Tax Foundation (2013), data inflation adjusted by James S. Henry.

38. This paragraph generalizes a number of factors treated at greater length in World of Hurt, Word of Life (2012). Changes that shorten the length of the supply chain (or global distribution of production), some related to energy development within the U.S., may improve the bargaining position of some workers, but as long as high unemployment persists, inequality will be reinforced.

39. This chart is show the official or statutory rates, but does not reflect changes in currency valuation or the “effective” tax rates when deductions and exclusions are in place.


41. This figure is from the Government Accountability Office for 2010: http://www.dailyfinance.com/2013/07/02/americancorporations-effectivetax-rate/.

42. Harvard Law Professor Stan Surrey coined the term “tax expenditures” for these preferences back in the 1970s, capturing the essential idea that they are, in effect, government subsidies. The Joint Committee on Taxation uses this definition: “Tax expenditures are defined under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (the “Budget Act”) as “revenue losses attributable to provisions of the Federal tax laws which allow a special exclusion, exemption, or deduction from gross income or which provide a special credit, a preferential rate of tax, or a deferral of tax liability.” (Pub. L. No. 93-344), sec. 3(3). Quoted from ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL TAX EXPENDITURES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2012-2017, Joint Committee on Taxation, Feb 1, 2013, pub. JCS-1-13.

43. See also GAO (2013), at http://www.gao.gov/key_issues/tax_expenditures/issue_summary. [The study team received additional background provided to ACSWP: Exhibit 65: “Federal Tax Expenditures, vs. Discretionary and Mandatory Federal Spending.”]

For example, in FY 2011, the GAO estimated that US federal corporate tax expenditures cost the Treasury more than $181 billion, about the same as the total revenue collected by the federal corporate income tax that year. See http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/653120.pdf.

For the case of Cablevision’s tax exemption of Madison Square Garden by New York City, see http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20130417/midtown/state-pols-square-off-over-madison-square-gardens-property-tax-exemption; for Detroit’s recent tax break deal for a new stadium with the owners of the Red Wing hockey franchise, at a time when the city is closing public schools, see http://voiceofdetroit.net/2013/09/09/illitch-plans-881-million-red-wings-stadium-project-with-public-funds-despite-detroit-bankruptcy-filing/.


See Tax Policy Center (2008), supra.

Pew (2012), supra.


Tax Policy Center (2008), supra.

See U.S. Senate Budget Committee (2012), supra.

Supra.

Supra.


Supra. 37, p. 1.


This reference is from the World of Hurt, Word of Life approved by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the charter of the Tax Reform Study Team: “Yet we cannot serve two masters. If we are to confront this moral crisis we must recover the biblical values of justice, compassion and covenant community. We must seek nothing less than to place God—not the economy, wealth, or competition—at the center of our lives. In doing so, we will empower our church, our society, and our government to look out for the poor and the sick, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger in the land, to safeguard God’s gift of creation, and to promote and protect the common good. The depth and scale of the challenges force us to respond, not only to the obvious distress of many we know and love, but to the many more God commands us to love. This challenge is more than a call for a new ethical compass in our personal behavior. The work of economic reconstruction today requires something like a new national covenant, a new public framework derived from authentic religious values, to reorient the way wealth is produced and shared and to reclaim the role of government in securing the common good.” 220th General Assembly (2012), World of Hurt, Word of Life, p. 1.
For the 2011 “Financial Secrecy Index” list of the top 71 havens, most of which are not First World countries, see [http://www.financialsecrecyindex.com/](http://www.financialsecrecyindex.com/). A new index is about to be released in November 2013, with detailed evaluations of more than eighty jurisdictions.

For a study relating noncompliance to effective tax rates for corporations using statistical analysis: Michelle Hanlon, Lillian Mills, Joel Slemrod, “An Empirical Examination of Corporate Tax Noncompliance,” June 24, 2005, online: [http://www.bus.umn.edu/otpr/ WP2005-7.pdf](http://www.bus.umn.edu/otpr/ WP2005-7.pdf). This study largely confirms the anecdotal view that larger and more complex firms (generally multinational) have more options for noncompliance. The business school authors observe that companies with more intangible assets have more opportunity for tax planning. Accepting the concept of “tax aggressive” corporations, where the tax departments may be viewed as profit centers, they find “preliminary evidence that executive compensation is positively related to tax non-compliance,” p. 23.

*The Economist* in its February 16, 2013, special report on Offshore Finance noted that the cost of whistle blowing is both social ostracization and formidable legal fees for self-defense. In many instances it is against the law to blow the whistle with any volume. *The Economist*, Who’s the criminal?, 2/16/2013, p xx.

*The Economist*, writes, “States such as Delaware and Nevada offer cheap, easy incorporation, with anonymity guaranteed. Registration agents do not even have to ask for ID, as they do in most tax havens. And what is not collected cannot be passed to the police, which is why criminals and debtors love American shells.” *The Economist*, Onshore financial centres: Not a palm tree in sight, February 16, 2013, p. xxx.


Ibid.


The committee notes that FATCA is an example of tax compliance theory at work. Here the taxpayer is viewed as a potentially unreliable self-reporter of income. To counteract this propensity third parties are asked to report taxable income, etc. For example, employee income is documented by payroll reporting generated by the employer. Financial institutions are now required to report capital gains, not simply the value realized at the sale of a security. Each of these is an example of third party reporting aided by the emergence of big data and as a result a limitation on tax avoidance or fraudulent evasion.


Contrary to anarchist and libertarian positions that seek to reduce taxes in order to starve governmental functions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has articulated a policy witness that promotes an appropriate role for the civil society. Freedom requires a funded government and taxes are required to sustain that government. We argue that taxation meet the principles of progressivity, transparency, solidarity, sustainability and effectiveness as defined in this document.

The Global Alliance for Tax Justice includes such leading NGOs as Action Aid Intl, Africa Forum, Africa Community Development Foundation, Attac (multiple European countries), Asia Initiatives (US), Berne Declaration (Sw), BothEnds (Neth), Bread for All, Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (India), the Center for Global Development, Canadians for Tax Fairness, CCFD-Terresolidaire (France), Christian Aid (UK), Centro Boné de República Dominicana (DR), CNCD (Belgium), Debt and Development Coalition Ireland, Eurodad, Fairfood Intl, Finnwatch (Finland), FUNDE (El Salvador), Global Policy Forum (USA/Germany), Global Witness, Halifax Initiative (Canada), IBIS (Denmark), ICFI (Guatemala), the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa, Latindadd (Peru), Mike Ror (France), the National Council for Combatting Discrimination (Rumania/Italy), Oxfam GB, Oxfam Intl, Prakarsa (Indonesia), Red de Justicia Tributaria Latinoamericana, Sherpa (France), SOMO Centre (Netherlands), Tax Justice Network (Africa, Norway, UK, US), the War on Want (UK), and WEED (World Economy, Ecology and Development) (Germany).

Among the church groups involved are: Baptists for Tax Justice (UK), Caritas/AllianceSud, Catholiques Contre le fainéant et pour le développement (France), JPIC Ministry—Missionary Oblates, Jubilee USA, Jubilee South, Kairos, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Methodists for Tax Justice (UK), the Macah Challenge International, Norwegian Church Aid, Secours-Catholique, Religious Sisters of Charity (California), and the Uniting Church in Australia.


A tax expenditure is a tax credit or deduction that exempts some or all of the tax payer’s income or wealth, as defined at note 34.

The Study Group notes that political rhetoric suggesting that “many people” or the “poor” or another group of the society do not pay taxes is inaccurate. Every working individual pays the social security tax from dollar one of his or her employment compensation. This is a flat tax up to approximately $115,000 in 2014.
87. The study group celebrates that longevity of members of our community of faith. Eighty years old is the new seventy for many. This lengthening of the years of life is made possible by the public health efforts of government. Without taxes and the revenue they provide we would die at a surprisingly early age, as previously.


90. MIT Study: Carbon Tax a “Win-Win-Win” for America’s Future. John Reilly and Sebastian Rausch in a 2012 study, “Carbon Tax Revenue and the Budget Deficit: A Win-Win-Win Solution?” published by MIT “calculated the impact a carbon tax starting at $20 per ton would have using a national economic model that details energy taxes and household incomes. They found that the tax would raise $1.5 trillion in revenue, which could then be used to reduce personal or corporate income taxes, extend the payroll tax cut that expires this year, maintain spending on social programs—or some combination of these options—while reducing the deficit.” See also Valerie Karplus, “The Case for a Higher Gasoline Tax,” The New York Times, February 22, 2013, a summary of a much longer paper in the journal, Energy Economics.


93. All tax bracket figures are in comparable $2013.

94. For historical U.S. individual federal income tax rates and brackets, see http://taxfoundation.org/article/us-federal-individual-income-tax-rates-history-1913-2013-nominal-and-inflation-adjusted-brackets. This source provides inflation-adjusted brackets back to 1913. For earlier periods we have used the historical deflators available at http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/#. In the repeal of the income tax during the Grant Administration may be seen some of the same private interests that prevailed in the Teapot Dome and other scandals.


96. The tax in question was a 2 percent tax on bond income. See Pollack v. Farmers’ Loan and Trust Company. 157 U.S. 429 (1895).


98. See Walter Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis (1907), and Christianity and the Social Order. (1912).


101. Roosevelt invited several leading Methodist Episcopalians who were Social Gospel proponents to the White House in December 1907. http://liberalslikechrist.org/about/socialcreed.html.

102. See the famous progressive speech that Roosevelt made at Osawatomie, Kansas, on August 10, 1910, which included a rousing endorsement of a graduated income tax: http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/new-nationalism-speech/.


106. See Exhibit 8 Appendix Slides: “Family Tax Rates by $2013 Income Level, 1913–2013.” (Slides of data calculations referred to here and below were developed by James S. Henry and are available from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy—ACSWP.)

107. At least on issues not involving race, alcohol, or immigration; from today’s standpoint, some supporters of the social reform were quite politically incorrect when it came to their patronizing attitudes toward blacks and immigrants. Several also became strong advocates of Prohibition, seen as a moral, economic, and public health issue. On questions of racial equality and especially the “Jim Crow” laws that were sweeping the South at the time, the largely white supporters of economic reforms, including Bryan and Wilson, were only intermittently progressive. See Berg, Wilson, op. cit. Indeed, under Wilson’s presidency, Jim Crow laws were extended to Washington D.C. This is one of the few blemishes on Wilson’s otherwise forthright role with respect to progressive causes, from tax justice and labor laws to the League of Nations.

108. See Exhibit 8, Appendix Slides.” Family Tax Rates by $2013 Income Level, 1913-2013.” (as at note 106).


111. All tax bracket figures are in comparable $2013.


113. See Exhibit 8, Appendix Slides:”Family Tax Rates by $2013 Income Level, 1913–2013.”


116. See Exhibit 8, Appendix Slides: “Family Tax Rates by Real $2013 HH Income Level.” On the individual side, in real $2013 terms, tax rates ran from 20 percent on the first $10,000 to $100,000, 38 percent on $100,000 to $500,000, 78 percent on $500,000 to $1 million, 85 percent on $1 million to $5 million, and a full 91 percent on net incomes over $5 million. The nominal federal corporate tax rates were 30 percent on the first $25,000 of net income and 52 percent on income over $25,000, with a 22 percent surtax, for a combined maximum of 74 percent.

117. As of February 2013, the maximum nominal federal rate was 39.6 percent for individuals and 35 to 39 percent for corporations. The marginal nominal corporate tax rate is a temporary 39.1 percent for corporate profits in the narrow bracket $100,000 to $335,000, and 38 percent in the bracket $15 million to $18.3 million due to the phasing out of lower brackets. For corporate from $335,000 to $10,000,000 the rate is 34 percent; for $10,000,000 to $15,000,000 and over $18,333,000, 35 percent.

118. There are heated arguments about what the average effective federal income tax rates on for companies and small business, but the best recent estimate is about 18.5 percent, with far lower rates for MNCs on their non-U.S. profits and royalties. See CTJ(2011): “Corporate Tax Payers and Corporate Tax Dodgers, 2008-2010,” at http://www.ctj.org/corporatetaxdodgers/CorporateTaxDodgersReport.pdf. For US state corporate income taxes, the average effective state corporate income tax rate is about 3 percent. After allowing for interactions, the average combined rate is about 20.9 percent as of 2013. For a corporate view, with less accurate accounting, see Price Waterhouse Coopers, “Assessing Tax: 2013 Tax Rate Benchmarking Study,” available at http://www.pwc.com/en_US/us/industrial-products/publications/assets/pwc-industrial-products-tax-rate-benchmarking-report-2013.pdf; and Tax Foundation (2011, 2013), at http://taxfoundation.org/sites/taxfoundation.org/files/docs/sr195.pdf; http://taxfoundation.org/blog/another-study-confirms-us-has-one-highest-effective-corporate-tax-rates-world Both TF and PWC found much higher average effective rates, at 27 percent. The TF methodology, however, based their calculations on profits reported by companies to the IRS—though the point of tax avoidance is to reduce reported profits below actual profits.


120. See Buckley v. Valeo, 424 U.S. 1 (1976), which struck down federal campaign spending limits. This was one of the first in a series of decisions by the court that expanded the role of money in U.S. political campaigns, on the view that “money is speech.”

121. See Exhibit 9, Appendix Slides: “Federal Individual Income Taxes by Reported Income Class—Reduced Progressivity: 1960s to 2000s.” The chart on this data ends in 2004, but the reduced federal income tax progressivity trend continued until January 2013, when the top federal rate was boosted slightly, from 35 percent to 39.6 percent, a 13 percent jump. At the same time, however, a 2011 cap on employee payroll tax rates was removed, allowing them to increase by 2 percentage points, a 15 percent jump. So once take federal payroll tax rates into account, it is not clear that overall progressivity increased in 2013.


124. In 2009, about a third of state tax revenues derived from property taxes. 23 percent were from sales taxes, 21 percent from individual income taxes, just 3.6 percent were from state corporate taxes, 1 percent were from state estate taxes, and 19 percent came from various other generally regressive taxes. Tax Foundation (2012) data.

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**Item 09-17**

[The assembly approved Item 09-17 with amendment. See pp. 15, 39.]

The Self-Study Report of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to engage, communicate, and collaborate with all areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agency on matters of gender justice advocacy.
2. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to ask members of ACWC to communicate the work of ACWC to their home synods, presbyteries, congregations, and other PC(USA) constituencies in which they participate and to bring back to ACWC local gender justice concerns from these groups in order to increase the knowledge of ACWC around the church and to inform ACWC’s work with the broader concerns of the church.

3. Urge the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns to use the summary report from the survey conducted by the PC(USA) Research Services to inform its work priorities for the next four years.17

4. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns to continue to advocate for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to an intersectional perspective and approach to gender and racial justice issues, as described in the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved document, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God, including advocating for robust action lifting up and celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God and monitoring the fulfillment of all recommendations made by past and future Women of Color Consultations.18

5. Incorporate the review of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns’ Manual of Operations and meeting minutes as a part of ACWC’s regular Six-Year Self-Study Review process with the General Assembly, removing this responsibility from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

[6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to comply with the current (November 2013) Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual in maintaining the dual-member relationship with ACWC, in accordance with the instruction that the advocacy committees “shall” have a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, and in light of the particular nature of the advocacy committee’s mandate to “advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of women’s concerns” and to “monitor the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns.”19]

[7.] [6.] Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to uphold the instruction given by the 205th General Assembly (1993) to ensure programmatic advocacy: “Under the leadership of those working in the areas of racial ethnic ministries and women’s ministries, ... ensure advocacy and monitoring functions ... throughout the ministries and agencies of the General Assembly.”20

Rationale

A. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns’ Background & Purpose

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), acknowledging the reality of pervasive societal and institutional systems of racism and sexism, established two advocacy committees with the purpose of holding the denomination accountable to its commitment to gender and racial justice. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) was created by the General Assembly to:

assist the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give full expression of the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the Book of Order, F-1.0403. The committee shall monitor and evaluate policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church and the world and shall advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society as a whole.21

The committee was created to ensure the PC(USA) is faithful to its commitment to gender justice—both internally and in its witness to the wider world.22 Unfortunately, left in the wake of the creation of ACWC was a major downsizing of the church’s programmatic gender justice work. What was once a full Women’s Ministry Unit became a program area within the National Ministries Division.23 Four committees—The Women’s Ministry Unit Committee, the Women Employed by the Church Committee, the Justice for Women Committee, and the Committee of Women of Color—were all eliminated just...

22 This was in adherence to the Articles of Agreement of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at reunion: “The General Assembly Council in its development of a design for the work of the General Assembly shall also ensure the continuance of the advocacy and monitoring functions of the existing Councils on Church and Race (both denominations), Committee on Women’s Concerns (Presbyterian Church in the United States) and Council on Women and the Church (The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America) Until such time as the design for work of the General Assembly is completed and these functions are ensured, the existing structures and functions of these bodies shall be maintained” (Article 5.6)
prior to the creation of ACWC. So while the creation of the advocacy committee represents a commitment of the church to maintain some element of monitoring its practices with regards to gender justice, it also represented a major reduction in the priority given to gender justice issues within the PC(USA).

With this noted, the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns exists because as a church coming out of the Reformed tradition, the PC(USA) acknowledges that sin is real and that the system will necessarily need tuning and prompting, prodding and adjusting. In a world where people are still mistreated, silenced, and ignored because of their gender, the voice of advocacy for women is still necessary. The denomination was intentional about ensuring resourcing and support to encourage gender justice within the PC(USA), because that voice helps to continually re-create the church to be a better reflection of God’s realm on earth. Sometimes the voice of advocacy calls for looking internally and making some changes within. Other times it challenges the church to be to the world a bold voice and strong example of what is just.

While categorized as a committee of the General Assembly, ACWC’s staff person is lodged in the Executive Director’s Office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The current requirements for the makeup of the membership of the committee are found in the Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations:

C. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)

This advocacy committee shall consist of:

2 clergy women
1 woman church lay employee
1 Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team Vice Moderator for Justice and Peace
7 members at-large, chosen to balance the committee geographically, racially and ethnically, and with consideration to age and expertise.
1 Presbyterian Mission Agency Board [member] nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the advocacy committee.

At least four members of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns shall be racial ethnic women. At least two members of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns will be men, but no more than three members may be men.

The intentionally diverse composition of ACWC results in varied experiences, knowledge, and expertise around the table. In addition to the direct membership connections to Presbyterian Women and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, ACWC sends and receives liaison members to the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP). The ACWC also has one member who holds dual membership with ACWC and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), a position that allows this person voice and vote on both committees. Two members of ACWC also serve as members of the Women of Color Joint Working Group. Throughout the years, ACWC has invited liaisons from the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen (NAPC), Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT), the National Network of Presbyterian College Women (NNPCW), World Mission, and the communications department of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, with varying levels of presence by these representatives. During any meetings that occur in Louisville, ACWC is intentional about connecting with various staff people from the Presbyterian Mission Agency, including staff from Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, Compassion, Peace and Justice, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

B. Assigned Functions for ACWC

The ACWC has direct access to both the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, meaning it can bring policy statements, resolutions, study papers, and advice and counsel memoranda or other correspondence to either body. The ACWC also has a corresponding member with each group who has voice but no vote.

The particular functions assigned to the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns are as follows:

a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on women’s concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or on its own initiative.

b. Advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of women’s concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the Board may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.

c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women’s concerns.

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24 Ibid., Idem.
25 According to the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2012, “The Executive Director has the responsibility for the advocacy and advisory committees” (21).
generally jumps into action to get work completed in time to be submitted to the General Assembly. That something essential will come up between that time and the winter deadline, at which point one of the working groups should be brought to the attention of the General Assembly in the form of a resolution. Of course, there is always the chance the next assembly (usually beginning in the fall of non-GA years), ACWC starts to pull together any work that it determines is desired.

In the section directly following this, we will address in detail some of the ways in which ACWC fulfills the functions to which it has been assigned.

As a committee of the General Assembly, ACWC is a policy entity—meaning it doesn’t do any programmatic work. In the fall of 2008, the Presbyterian Mission Agency (then General Assembly Council) underwent a restructuring process that moved the staff for the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) entirely outside of the program area of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women and into the Executive Director’s Office. Along with this structural change came a new emphasis on keeping the policy work of ACWC entirely separate from the programmatic work done in Women’s Ministries. For example, ACWC (outside of its ability to bring resolutions and suggestions to General Assembly) no longer has a direct connection to the production of resources, educational presentations, training opportunities, or determining the direction and foci of gender justice work at the national level of the denomination. As this 2008 restructuring also meant the elimination of their former staff person’s job, ACWC received a new part-time staff person in the winter of 2009.

Unlike the previous staff person, this person was responsible for resourcing the work of the advocacy committee alone and would not have related programmatic responsibilities, as was previously the case.29 Given the new structure, for the purposes of this self-study, we will focus more intently on the work of ACWC after the 2008 restructuring, but will address some of the challenges of the current staffing model further on in the report.30

C. How ACWC Fulfills Its Assigned Functions

ACWC Meetings:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns generally meets face-to-face three times per year for 2–2.5 days. During General Assembly years, there is an additional meeting devoted to working on advice and counsel memoranda for the overtures that come in from the presbyteries and the reports coming out of various task forces and commissions of the General Assembly. The ACWC in some ways functions on the same two-year cycle as the General Assembly. New members are elected onto the committee at each assembly, with other members rotating off. Every late summer or fall after General Assembly, a good portion of ACWC’s first meeting is devoted to orientation of new members. From there, the group assesses that which may have been assigned to them by General Assembly and looks at the work related to gender justice that the assembly may have assigned to various program areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agencies. At this initial meeting, the group sets its goals and priorities for the next two-year cycle leading into General Assembly, focusing on gender justice issues that are particularly relevant in the church and the world at that time. The group then creates working groups as a means of completing the work of the committee. During this last cycle, ACWC functioned with two working groups: (1) Gender, Power and Privilege (focused on issues such as violence against women and reproductive health) and (2) God’s Household (focused on issues such as clergywomen support and theologies emerging from women’s experiences).

The ACWC perpetually keeps the GA-assigned deadlines for responding to referrals and submitting resolutions before them. Over the last six years, all General Assembly deadlines for work have been met by ACWC. As time creeps nearer to the next assembly (usually beginning in the fall of non-GA years), ACWC starts to pull together any work that it determines should be brought to the attention of the General Assembly in the form of a resolution. Of course, there is always the chance that something essential will come up between that time and the winter deadline, at which point one of the working groups generally jumps into action to get work completed in time to be submitted to the General Assembly.

Meeting agendas are created by ACWC’s three-person leadership team and staff and are focused around whatever work the General Assembly may have assigned to the committee, as well as any current issues in the church and society that ACWC may be monitoring. Each meeting begins and ends with worship, and the group is intentional about re-connecting with one another’s lives before launching into work. For the last two years, the committee spends some time near the beginning of each meeting answering the question: “How can ACWC be the best ACWC in the world?” This allows the group to assess the progress of their work, to evaluate their faithfulness to the task they’ve been assigned by the PC(USA), and to consider whether the vision they have for their work within this context is being realized.

29 The new staff person was hired on as part-time staff in 2009, and eventually the position was combined with that of the staff for the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (another policy entity), creating a full-time position that began in August of 2010 and continues today.

30 Agency summaries submitted to General Assembly recounting ACWC’s work going back to 2006 can be found in Appendices 1–4, if more detailed information is desired.
As an extended part of this conversation, ACWC also does a check-in at each meeting to see whether their commitment to holding an intersectional perspective and approach to gender justice issues is indeed being upheld. While the focus of the committee is gender, over the years ACWC has sought to be intentional about taking into account the realities of women who find themselves at the intersection of other social or cultural identities that affect the way they live and move in the world, whether that identity is shaped by race, ethnicity, class, physical ability, etc. Understanding these intersections is essential for understanding what it means to work for justice for all women. For this reason, ACWC has written this practice of checking-in on this commitment into each meeting of the committee.

Outside of the full-group check-in, the leadership team as well as each of the working groups give reports back to the full committee as to what work has been done between meetings. Also, members of the committee who have participated in any events or served as liaisons to meetings on behalf of ACWC between ACWC meetings are held accountable by being asked to give reports, which often lead into discussion about follow-up action or suggestions for collaboration with other groups.

There is effort put into providing an educational component to each meeting, whether that is a presentation by an expert within the committee, a workshop by an expert outside the committee, or a book discussion of something ACWC committed to read to inform their work. Within the last few years, however, ACWC has heard presentations from numerous experts, including: Dr. Gay Byron on Womanist theology and her book, *Symbolic Blackness and Ethnic Difference in Early Christian Literature*, Dr. Kate Ott on her work with the report, *Sex and the Seminary*, Nicolette Paterson of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and Reverend Noelle Damico with Elena Stein of Interfaith Action and Gerardo Reyes Cháves from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers on the gender justice issues that the Coalition of Immokalee Workers address, to name just a few of the guests ACWC has hosted. The group has also spent time studying books like Katharine Rhodes Henderson’s *God’s Troublemakers: How Women of Faith Are Changing the World* and Letty Russell’s *Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference*.

The group meets in various locations around the country, depending on what focus the group currently has and what resources ACWC seeks for its work. At times, the group meets in a particular location so as to be able to participate in relevant events, such as the Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference in Washington, D.C., the Commission on the Status of Women in New York City, or the National Council of Churches General Assembly held in New Orleans, La. Other times, meetings are in Louisville with a concerted effort to make connections and collaborate with staff people at the Presbyterian Center.

Between meetings, countless email communications fly through cyberspace, and untold hours are clocked on conference calls by the subcommittees/working groups of ACWC. As the world moves, ACWC members are constantly tracking those events or served as liaisons to meetings on behalf of ACWC which are held accountable by being asked to give reports, which often lead into discussion about follow-up action or suggestions for collaboration with other groups.

### D. Challenges as a Policy Committee

After the restructuring that occurred in the Presbyterian Mission Agency in 2008, maintaining visibility of ACWC’s work has been somewhat challenging. No longer connected to any program area, ACWC relies on its website, Facebook page, articles in the online journal, *Unbound*, and word of mouth to share the work that it is doing. The committee has made an effort over the last two years to seek out connection with their local congregations and worshipping communities to not only spread the word about ACWC’s work, but to gather information and input about what those around the church see as the most pressing gender justice issues. Even so, the results of the survey conducted by PC(USA) Research Services in conjunction with this self-study revealed that fewer than half (46 percent) of those surveyed reported being very or somewhat familiar with ACWC, while over a quarter (26 percent) reported that they are not familiar with ACWC.

Given ACWC’s assigned functions as a policy committee, it is unclear how heavily the responsibility of making ACWC’s work known lies with ACWC itself. The committee is called to “through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church,” yet the work to which it has been assigned is clearly policy-based, limiting the committee when it comes to producing materials, giving workshops, or taking other actions that might naturally spread the word about ACWC’s work. The committee believes it is important that a wider group of Presbyterians know about and feel some connection to ACWC’s work, but the path toward increasing recognition and connection has become more difficult with the removal of ACWC from the programmatic side of gender justice advocacy work within the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This is an ongoing conversation within the committee, and one of the actions to which the group would like to commit is to individually take ACWC home with them to educate and connect those in their personal Presbyterian circles, as well as to bring back to ACWC the hopes or concerns of those in their local presbyteries, congregations, etc. The ACWC takes seriously the charge to be a prophetic voice for the church, which requires not only solid knowledge of the church’s policy, but also understanding of the connection of those around the church to how that policy might be used as an advocacy tool beyond the church.

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31 Review of General Assembly Permanent Committee: Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, 3. Full survey results report is attached to this report as Appendix 6 for your information.
This conversation further connects to ACWC’s concerns about the lack of advocacy work happening in the program area of gender justice in Women’s Ministries. The staff who at one time was responsible for programmatic gender justice advocacy had the ability to better connect the wider church to critical issues and work that could be done to move toward gender justice and was in turn able to make the connection between ACWC’s work and the people in the pews. After the 2008 restructuring of the Presbyterian Mission Agency that separated the programmatic gender justice staffing from the policy staffing, ACWC has been informed that they are the only ones responsible for advocacy at this point. This is not how ACWC understands the intentions of the 205th General Assembly (1993), the same assembly that approved the creation of ACWC. That assembly stated regarding the Presbyterian Mission Agency (then General Assembly Council) that, “Under the leadership of those working in the areas of racial ethnic and women’s ministries, it will ensure advocacy and monitoring functions for these areas throughout the ministries and agencies of the General Assemblies.” 32 There is currently not a staff position dedicated to programmatic advocacy, though it seems to be a natural fit within the position of the associate for Gender and Racial Justice. Gender justice work inherently requires advocacy, as equality for women and men in the church and in the world is not yet a reality.

E. Relationship with the General Assembly (Assigned Functions A&C):

One of the assigned functions of ACWC is to prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on gender justice to the General Assembly. 33 This preparation and writing occurs over a two-year cycle and is directly influenced by current events in the church and in the world. It is work often done in collaboration—in particular, with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) or the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and/or other entities with particular expertise both inside and outside of the PC(USA).

Reports and resolutions vary from year to year—some focusing internally, and others looking beyond the boundaries of the PC(USA). The approach of the committee to any issue is always grounded in scripture, responsive to the witness of reformed theology, and emerging from “the voices of people long silenced.” 34 Nothing ACWC suggests to the General Assembly goes into effect unless the General Assembly commits to it by approving it. Here we’ll offer just a few examples of how ACWC has fulfilled this function:

In 2006, ACWC brought a resolution to the 217th General Assembly (2006) calling for a study on the Status of Women in the PCUSA. 35 Among other things, this resolution required ACWC to assess the status of women in elected and staff positions, in decision-making and leadership positions in the PCUSA at all levels through surveys and other data collection methods. After two years, ACWC came back to the 218th General Assembly (2008) and called for a task force to be created to continue this work in a more comprehensive fashion by creating a methodology to access the status of women at all levels in the church. 36 The task force designed the methodology for the research as asked and presented it to the 220th General Assembly (2012). 37 It passed in committee but failed on the floor. A representative of ACWC is now working with the director of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women to advance in the study by using the PC(USA)’s Research Services and seeking grants to fund it. As of the writing of this report, ACWC intends to submit the study to be considered again by the General Assembly, in case that should be necessary.

In 2008, ACWC recognized the growing awareness of and focus on the eradication of human trafficking. For this reason, they brought a resolution to the 218th General Assembly (2008). 38 This resolution passed, and since that time, a Human Trafficking Roundtable has been formed amongst PCUSA staff people working at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville. This year, ACWC has again raised the issue of human trafficking to the attention of the General Assembly, calling for the creation of comprehensive PCUSA policy surrounding this topic.

In 2010, in collaboration with the National Presbyterian Hispanic Caucus, ACWC brought a resolution addressing the situation of violence against women on the U.S./Mexico border. 39 Out of this resolution came a team that traveled to Juarez, Mexico, to learn more and to come home and educate Presbyterians by sharing their experiences and the resources created. 40

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35 Item 08-07 from the 217th General Assembly (2006), A Recommendation to Study the Status of Women in the PC(USA): http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28m4ugiq0evku2fcoxhgt2c%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=903.
36 Item 09-12 from the 218th General Assembly (2008), Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA): http://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=1543&promoid=9.
38 Item 11-13 from the 218th General Assembly (2008), A Resolution to Expand the Church’s Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking: http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28m4ugiq0evku2fcoxhgt2c%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=1093&promoid=7.
40 Several free, online video resources and study guides can be found here: http://www.pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource-ministries/hispanic/.
At the 220th General Assembly (2012), ACWC member, Belinda Rice, shared her experiences as a member of the team that traveled to Mexico, along with some of the online resources created by the group with attendees of the Women’s Orientation Breakfast. The word about issues of femicide in the border region continues to spread through the work of that team created as a result of ACWC’s resolution.

In 2012, ACWC was required by the General Assembly to respond to two referrals. One of those referrals was to “make recommendations that contribute to a proactive, health-giving ministry to and relationship with our clergywomen” following a review of resources currently available that was to have been done primarily via the Office of Committee on Ministry. Unfortunately, before such a review could occur, the Presbyterian Mission Agency (then the General Assembly Mission Council) restructured, and the Office of Committee on Ministry was dissolved. Since ACWC had been in regular communication with the coordinator of Women’s Leadership Development at the time, ACWC knew of the important work she was doing via a program called Deborah’s Daughters. Through visits around the church, this staff person was gathering information from women clergy about their experiences. Instead of pushing for the original review of resources to be completed, ACWC saw this as an opportunity to support an already functioning, successful ministry and suggested to the 220th General Assembly (2012) that ACWC make its recommendations about clergywomen after reviewing the information gathered in the Deborah’s Daughters visits. The assembly agreed, and ACWC will make recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) after receiving information from staff in Women’s Ministries.

In the meantime, ACWC has received information via the survey conducted by Research Services in conjunction with this self-study and would call to the attention of the assembly the responses regarding the situation of clergywomen in the PC(USA). A repeated response theme from the survey comments addresses the continuing lack of equity for women teaching elders. Equal pay and equal opportunities for leadership still call for close attention based on the needs expressed. Almost sixty years after the first ordination of women, the church at large is still woefully unaware of all the issues facing women clergy. In addition, there needs to be a wider understanding of what equity looks like and the reality of women’s experiences in the church—all women’s experiences. The ACWC is hopeful that the gathering of information by the program Deborah’s Daughters and the potential work to be done as a result of ACWC’s resolution to the 221st General Assembly (2014) to study the status of women in the church can begin to get at the reality of the situation for women teaching elders in the church. In order to take effective actions to create change, the data needs to be gathered.

Aside from self-initiated reports and resolutions and General Assembly assigned referrals, ACWC carefully reviews all of the overtures and reports coming to the General Assembly from presbyteries and other entities. In response to some of these, ACWC attaches an advice and counsel memorandum to the General Assembly, recommending approval or disapproval, often informing commissioners of particular relevant gender justice issues connected to the overtures or reports, or making specific recommendations of edits to the overture before approval. This function of ACWC is also included in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly.

One example of this is ACWC’s frequent recommendation to incorporate United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 into various overtures addressing situations of violence and war around the globe. The UNSCR 1325 urges the participation of women and the incorporation of gender perspectives into all peace and security efforts and highlights the essential role that women play in peacemaking efforts. This is a perspective often left out of overtures addressing situations of violence and war, but on occasion it has been added by the General Assembly as a result of ACWC’s advice and counsel.

Even while at the meeting of the General Assembly, ACWC is constantly monitoring any new business or commissioners’ resolutions that come in. At the 219th General Assembly (2010), a commissioners’ resolution calling for a renewed commitment to using expansive and inclusive language for God and the people of God was submitted. The ACWC drafted an advice and counsel memorandum for the resolution, advising approval but with a suggested addition, which ultimately became a part of the final, passed resolution.

F. Relationship with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (Assigned Functions A&B):

As a part of their prescribed composition, ACWC has one full, voting member who is also a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (Board), elected to ACWC by the Board. As the size of the Board has decreased, it has become in-

41 Item 11-12 from the 220th General Assembly (2012), A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah’s Daughters: http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28m4ugiqleveku26coxhzt2c%29%29/IOBView.aspx?n=ro&id=3931&promoid=232.
42 “Advice and counsel memoranda are resources prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns for the purpose of providing information about existing policy, current work on specific topics, recent developments, and other factors useful to commissioners as they consider issues before the assembly” (Standing Rules of the General Assembly, 1426).
45 Item 10-13 from the 219th General Assembly (2010), On Renewing the Commitment to the Use of Inclusive and Expansive Language for God and the People of God: http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28m4ugiqleveku26coxhzt2c%29%29/IOBView.aspx?n=ro&id=3591.
46 According to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations (November 2013), ACWC “shall have members as detailed below ...” including “One Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Member nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee and
creasingly more difficult to find members willing and able to serve in this capacity. Unfortunately, at the time of the writing of this report, ACWC has been informed that they will have a former member of the Board serving as their dual member for at least the next two years (2014–2016). This will clearly diminish the tie between the Board and ACWC and make it more difficult for ACWC to keep informed of the work of the Board in order to do its advocacy work in the context of the Board. This relationship was created as one of mutuality, to both maintain the Board’s connection to ACWC and ACWC’s to the Board. Further, ACWC has a particular need to have this strong connection, as part of its assigned functioning is to advise the Board and monitor the implementation of gender justice related policies and programs.\footnote{ Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations (November 2013), Appendix 1F, p. 35; 41.}

In fact, the Board itself (then called the General Assembly Mission Council) stressed the important role of the advocacy committees’ dual Board member when it commented on the Report of the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee:

> Even though there might be meetings in the future that do not include corresponding members, the [Presbyterian Mission Agency Board] would have the benefit of the perspective of the advisory and advocacy committees through these members of the [Presbyterian Mission Agency Board] who also serve on those committees\footnote{ Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations (November 2013), Appendix 1F, p. 41.}.

The dual Board/ACWC member has voice and vote on the Board to serve as a voice representing the perspective of ACWC in the deliberations of the Board. Ultimately, the Board has written this essential relationship into the requirements it has for itself in its manual, stating that the advisory and advocacy committees “shall” have members as detailed (including one Board member).\footnote{Report of the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee (Item 09-19 from the 219th General Assembly (2010)) can be read here: http://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3219&promoID=137, see GAMC Comment on Recommendation 4.} This is stronger language than that which is used for other Board-related committees. For these reasons, ACWC has submitted Recommendation 6 at the beginning of this report.

One of ACWC’s co-chairs also serves as a corresponding member to the Board. This member has voice but not vote in the committee and plenary deliberations of the Board. This has also been an important connecting relationship between ACWC and the Board, though this person is not welcome in closed meetings unless specifically invited and so cannot speak on behalf of the committee in such instances where no invitation is extended. Unfortunately, with the removal of a current voting Board member as one of ACWC’s members, ACWC will no longer have a voice at the Board table in any closed meetings to which the member is not invited.

Though they’ve not been approached by the Board, ACWC could potentially serve as a tremendous resource to the Board and would gladly connect with the Board to either give clear gender analysis on various issues, or to prepare something related to gender justice for the General Assembly. In fact, members of ACWC have participated in the creation of a tool that can be used for gender analysis. The tool was created as part of the work of the National Council of Churches Justice for Women Working Group, and can be accessed free of charge online.\footnote{You can view and print the gender analysis tool here: www.ncccusa.org/pdfs/gender4web.pdf.} This is just one example of a place where ACWC’s expertise could connect with and enrich the work of the Board. While according to the functions assigned to ACWC, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board may request that ACWC prepare policy statements, resolutions, etc. However, the Board has not made any requests of this nature to ACWC in at least the past six years.

Even so, there has been some effort from both the Board and ACWC to increase collaboration. The special review conducted in 2010 by the General Assembly appointed Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee noted strain in the relationship between the Board and the advocacy and advisory committees.\footnote{The report of the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee (Item 09-19 from the 219th General Assembly (2010)) can be read here: http://pc-biz.org/Explorer.aspx?id=3219&promoID=137.} One result of this review was to put in place a regular check-in between the committees and the Board, which is now reflected in the Manual of Operations of the Board. The nature of this check-in has been to inform the Executive Committee of the Board of the current work of ACWC and to answer any questions about that work. While this ensures a connection is made once every couple of years at the least, ACWC would love to see a more collegial and reciprocal relationship develop as partners in ministry with the Board.

Between General Assemblies, ACWC advocates to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of gender justice. An example of this work is ACWC’s collaboration with ACSWP in raising concerns to the Board about equity in the implementation of the new (2013) compensation model of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The committee had a conference call and expressed in a joint letter with ACSWP its concerns to the Personnel Subcommittee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, advocating for the consideration of some alternative approaches that might more effectively ensure just treatment for all and the avoidance of unintentional bias. Ultimately, the Board chose to make no changes to the compensation model as a result of the suggestions made by the committees.

G. Monitoring and Maintaining PC(USA) Policy (Assigned Functions D, E&F)

Whether General Assembly or the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board are meeting or not, at all times, ACWC monitors the implementation of PC(USA) policies and programs relative to gender justice. Much of this is done via conversation with
various staff people responsible for programs related to gender justice. The ACWC makes a point of checking in with relevant staff in Louisville on a regular basis to hear what work is being done.

Over the last six years (which mirror the past twenty years\(^5\)), there has been a drastic staffing reduction in the Women’s Ministries area, which is (as of the writing of this study) down to one full-time staff person and two deployed, part-time field staff because of staff vacancies and general reductions in this area. Within the past five years, staff positions and staff people have come and gone in Women’s Ministries. The coordinator for Women’s Leadership Development and staff person holding that position was eliminated, and the position was downgraded to associate level. That associate position was never filled and has since been eliminated. There have been two different people who have come and then left the position of associate for Gender and Racial Justice, neither holding that position for more than a year. The position of Young Women’s Leadership Development has been held by three people in the last five years and has now been reconfigured into the position of mission associate for Women’s Leadership Development and Young Women’s Ministries. This position has recently been filled. Women’s Ministries is now down to two full-time associate-level positions (only one of which is staffed at the writing of this report) and two part-time, deployed field staff for Racial Ethnic Young Women Together and the National Network of Presbyterian College Women.

The lack of staffing and the general trend that continues to slow programming for women is of great concern to ACWC. While ACWC monitors the work being done and makes recommendations to General Assembly for potential new work, ACWC also recognizes the reality is that with such limited staffing, there is only so much that can be done. Short of recommending that hiring happen more expeditiously and that positions no longer get reduced or eliminated, there is little ACWC can do to positively affect the programmatic side of gender justice work within the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

And yet, ACWC regularly brings to GA recommendations with the goal of ensuring implementation of gender justice programming, particularly that to which previous assemblies have committed. Leading into the 220th General Assembly (2012), and after being in conversation with the Women of Color Joint Working Group, ACWC was concerned that few people in the PC(USA) knew about the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—the decade we’re currently celebrating in which the PC(USA), as a result of a decision of the 218th General Assembly (2008), has committed to lifting up and celebrating the gifts of women of color. For this reason, ACWC brought it to the attention of the General Assembly via a resolution with recommendations to work to make this important decade more widely known, celebrated, and ultimately put into action. The General Assembly voted to approve these important recommendations. You can see that resolution here, or in Appendix 5 of this report.

Looking at the results of the self-study survey conducted by the PC(USA) Research Services Department, there continues to be a disconnect between the importance expressed by the respondents regarding participation and inclusion of women of color and their familiarity with the report, “Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and sharing New Harmonies.” As mentioned above, ACWC has continually worked to lift this 2008 report up to the church. The report was commended to the churches for study and action and declared 2009–2019 the Decade for Hearing and Singing New Songs to God. The ACWC’s resolution in 2012 led to the report being re-recommended to the churches by the General Assembly, and the decade was extended to 2022. Unfortunately, it remains true that not many in the church are aware of this Decade for Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.

There have been two Women of Color Consultations since the report was submitted to the General Assembly in 2008. A full report with recommendations from the consultation in 2013 is included in the reports to the 221st General Assembly (2014). However, until these reports are given the priority that was called for by previous General Assemblies and articulated in ACWC’s Self Study Survey Report, it will continue to remain another report gathering dust on the shelves of the denomination. Many Presbyterians have been quick to give lip service to participation and inclusion of all people, but very slow in acting on it. There must be a concerted effort on the part of everyone. In conjunction with this report, ACWC requests that you also read the Women of Color Consultation Report submitted to this General Assembly.

Another important gender justice issue and PC(USA) policy whose implementation ACWC saw falling by the wayside (which was also lifted up in a commissioners’ resolution at the 219th General Assembly (2010)) was that of using inclusive and expansive language for God and God’s people. Our language shapes the way we think about things, and the way we think about things shapes the way we speak. Limiting our language about God to masculine pronouns and images limits our understanding of God and aligns maleness with God while distinguishing femaleness as wholly other from God. While most would agree that God is not male, often the language used to refer to God falls into a masculine rut that fails to reflect the expansiveness of the God we serve. Words hold power, and defining God as male perpetuates the imbalance of power men have over women in the church and in the world. This issue continues to be a priority for ACWC.

A specific instance where ACWC chose to be in conversation with staff of the PC(USA) was following the 2010 Youth Triennium Gathering. A member of ACWC was in attendance at the gathering and noted the language used for God lacked

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5 For more history on this, please see Annette Chapman-Adiso, Years of Strong Effort: The Development of Women’s Organizations in the Presbyterian Churches 1967–1993 Louisville, KY: Women’s Ministries Program Area, National Ministries Division, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
the expansive nature reflective of our expansive God, relying heavily on male terms and pronouns for God throughout the gathering. In response, ACWC wrote a letter and had conversation with staff leading this effort to make suggestions for future planning efforts for that gathering in order to be more faithful to the PC(USA) policy on inclusive and expansive language. The staff was very open to having this conversation, and part of the issue was that some of the speakers were guests who were not necessarily Presbyterian. It is clear that the denomination as a whole could use more education on the importance and value of expansive language, and ideally we could come to a point where even outside speakers agree to honor the denomination’s commitment on language. Until this point, this issue has only been lifted up by ACWC or by programmatic staff in the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministry in the Presbyterian Mission Agency. It is important that intentionality surrounding language be taken up by all of the program areas in the Mission Agency, shaping the work, worship and print/web materials from areas like Theology, Worship and Education, World Mission, just to name a few.

A more recent example of policy monitoring as well as providing policy information to the Stated Clerk and Executive Director is ACWC’s collaboration with ACREC and ACSWP surrounding the contract made with the Hyatt Hotel in Louisville for the 2013 Big Tent. When it was brought to ACWC’s attention that there was a global boycott of Hyatt being called for because of the Hyatt Corporation’s known workers’ rights violations, ACWC worked with their partners to convince the PC(USA) to break the contract it had made with Hyatt for the Big Tent Conference, knowing that a large percentage of the hotel employees being mistreated were women. What motivated the committees to action was their sense that using the Hyatt would contradict PC(USA) policy on workers’ rights, which has historically stood for the fair and just treatment of all workers. After discussion, those responsible for planning the Big Tent did ultimately break the contract for meeting space with the Hyatt. The best news coming out of this is that an agreement has been reached between the workers and Hyatt. The PC(USA) was a part of the movement for justice in a case that will ideally result in fair treatment for the workers.

H. Prophetic Witness (Assigned Function G)

The ACWC is also assigned to “maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of gender justice.”

What unites the members of ACWC always is their commitment to their faith in Jesus Christ and the justice for which that calls, as well as a deep loyalty and love for this church and the commitments for which it stands. Jesus is recorded to have said something about prophets not being accepted in their hometowns. This is sometimes the case for ACWC, as the call for justice is not always one that is easy to hear. For this reason, the committee often faces challenges and roadblocks to the work it is called to do, some which have been named already, and others which will be named below.

The work of gender justice advocacy is incredibly challenging, but ACWC remains committed to this essential task of calling the church and the world to be a better reflection of the realm of God. May it one day be so.

I. Internal Committee Challenges and Goals

The process of self-evaluation and study through this report has allowed ACWC to discern the following challenges and to set goals for addressing these challenges:

1. Time-commitment of serving on the committee, particularly for young women and men.

As is clear from this report, serving on ACWC requires a time commitment that can be challenging, particularly for those in school, in new jobs, or with small children. The contribution of younger members to the work of the committee has proven invaluable, and serving on ACWC is also a leadership learning opportunity for younger Presbyterians.

GOAL: The ACWC is committed to continuing to seek out methods whereby younger members can fulfill their responsibilities to the committee without excessive strain on their lives. This includes using electronic means of connecting and sharing information (i.e. Skype, Go-To Meeting, email, conference calls), negotiating meeting times, duration and location, and being flexible with regards to how work is accomplished.

2. Getting the word out about ACWC’s work.

As referenced in this report, after the restructuring in the Presbyterian Mission Agency that separated gender justice advocacy policy work from gender justice advocacy programmatic work, sharing the work of ACWC has become a challenge. As a committee called to be a prophetic witness to and for the church, ACWC believes their connection to the denomination to be important.

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54 You can learn more about the struggle against workers’ rights violations at Hyatt here: http://www.hyattHurts.org/.


GOAL: The committee will continue to consider best practices for getting the word out to the church with regards to ACWC’s work, including being intentional about connecting with local presbyteries, committee members’ congregations, and other PC(USA) constituencies. (See recommendation 2. at the beginning of this report.)

3. Expanding our vision for gender justice advocacy work within the PC(USA).

As a challenge for the denomination as a whole, ACWC has also sometimes fallen into a pattern of focusing solely on the work of Women’s Ministries as the place where gender justice work needs to be done. While this is certainly an essential starting place in many ways, the commitment to gender justice should shape and influence the work of all areas of the PC(USA). The ACWC should serve as a model to the rest of the denomination in how to integrate the work of gender justice in various ways into all that the church does.

GOAL: The ACWC will engage, communicate and collaborate with all areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agency on matters of gender justice advocacy. (See recommendation one at the beginning of this report.)

J. External Challenges and Hopes

Some of the challenges ACWC recognized in the process of self-study and evaluation can be addressed at least in part by the committee itself. Others, like some named in the body of this report and the following examples, are equally or more disconcerting to ACWC, but are ultimately outside the purview of ACWC’s work and control. Even so, ACWC hopes that these challenges can also be addressed:

1. Too much time is spent by ACWC and staff accounting for the work and existence of ACWC.

The ACWC has appreciated this opportunity for self-study, review, and reflection and expects to be reviewed regularly by the General Assembly. However, within the past six years, ACWC has found itself undergoing multiple forms of review. After the normal General Assembly review in 2006, in 2008, ACWC underwent a two-year review as a part of the special review committee formed by the General Assembly as a result of a request by the General Assembly Council (now Presbyterian Mission Agency Board) to review the advisory and advocacy committees. This current two-year cycle (2012–2014) has once again required time spent on the normal General Assembly review. Throughout this entire eight-year period, there have been struggles with individual members of the Board questioning the committee, as well as with subcommittees of the Board challenging the committees’ work. Aside from the distraction and additional work this creates for ACWC on an informal basis, ACWC is also required to submit their minutes and their Manual of Operations to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board for regular review. The often difficult relationship ACWC has with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board has in part developed as a result of time spent throughout the years defending why ACWC was created and articulating repeatedly the role of the committee as prophetic witness called to monitor policy and program implementation. Underlying all of this seems to be some general confusion regarding the nature of the relationship of the committee to the Board. Review by a body for which ACWC has monitoring responsibilities is a set up for difficulty and ineffectiveness.

The General Assembly has a system of regular, comprehensive review in place for holding ACWC accountable to the work to which it is called, and the committee believes this system to be effective. Aside from the regular six-year review cycle, ACWC is required to submit an agency review of the work the committee has completed in each two-year cycle for review by the assembly. The challenge every six years of comprehensively studying oneself results in understanding best practices, setting new goals, and making adjustments to be as effective as possible in fulfilling the church’s calling for the committee. For this reason, ACWC is submitting Recommendation 5 at the beginning of this report. Since the General Assembly is the parent body to which ACWC is accountable, it makes sense to incorporate the review of ACWC’s meeting minutes and Manual of Operations into the regular review process. This would also be a step toward alleviating the constant review of ACWC, but would still hold ACWC accountable to the regular review process.

2. Collection of data at all levels of the church in a format disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity, and age.

There is a tremendous need for disaggregated information concerning women’s participation and experiences at all levels of the church. The 218th General Assembly (2008) directed all six of the PC(USA) agencies to:

- collect, organize, and report data for all research in the church (such as comparative statistics, Presbyterian Panel, data gathered by the Vocation’s office on inquirers, candidates and clergy, the Stated Clerk’s annual statistical report, etc.) in a disaggregated form by race, ethnicity, gender, and age, so that data on women of color and young adult women of color may be identified separately for analysis, where possible and as permissible by law.

Many requests for such data (from ACWC, the Women of Color Joint Working Group, ACREC, and possibly others have come through the past six years, but to no avail. There is often information available about how many men, how many


women, and how many racial ethnic people serve, but data is never disaggregated by age and often the various races and ethnicities are left clumped together into one large category. Breaking down the information more extensively is necessary to get accurate data on women of color and young women, for example.

Advocacy requires having accurate information. Accurate data would provide the ability to inform strategies and decision-making, moving the church beyond bold declarations about justice and equality into effective action that makes such declarations a reality.

3. **Vacancies in the Women’s Ministries Program area and time spent advocating for advocacy within the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women program area.**

As lifted up in the body of this report, over the past six years, the position of associate for Gender and Racial Justice (the programmatic side of gender justice advocacy work) has been vacant more time than it has been filled. The inconsistency of staffing in this position has created a void where programmatic gender justice advocacy is concerned. It is already problematic that there is only one staff person assigned to do advocacy work for two of the most marginalized groups in the church, women and people of color, but the fact of that position being so often vacant compounds the issue.

Further, ACWC has had disagreement with staff from that ministry area regarding the necessity of advocacy work being done from a programmatic angle. As ACWC understands it, the General Assembly required that advocacy work be done from the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW area, which is why ACWC is making Recommendation 7 at the beginning of this report.\(^{59}\) The only way to work toward justice is to advocate for it, and ACWC would like to see this approach embraced once again by programmatic staff working on gender and racial justice.

4. **Meaningful follow-through by the Presbyterian Mission Agency on items assigned by the General Assembly.**

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for ACWC to have to advocate for that which the General Assembly has assigned to be completed. In fact, after each General Assembly, ACWC makes a point of monitoring the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency as it has been assigned by the assembly.

Recommendation 4 at the beginning of this report represents one such place of frustration for ACWC. Much of the follow-through on the directives from the Women of Color Consultations has been ineffective or seemingly done just to say it was done. The fact of the lack of knowledge of the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God speaks to this.

5. **Part-time staffing for ACWC**

The time covered by this self-study has been a period of adjustment to the challenges of having a staff person who is less available to the committee, due to the restructuring that occurred in 2008. While the staff person prior to this restructuring had responsibilities other than ACWC, that person was only working on gender justice issues. The current staffing model requires that ACWC’s staff spend half of her time on gender justice and half on racial justice, with help from an administrative assistant who also has responsibilities for assisting other staff in Louisville. While the issues of gender and racial justice certainly intersect, they are also very much their own, vast areas of work. Expecting one staff person to have the expertise and ability to serve both advocacy committees simultaneously is hardly feasible.

The infeasibility of the staffing situation becomes most apparent as General Assembly approaches. Covering the work of both advocacy committees leading into the assembly, staffing combined meetings, and attempting to be present to support both committees at the assembly have been nearly impossible tasks. Recognizing that extra staffing is not an option, ACWC hopes to continue to struggle collaboratively to consider creative solutions to this situation.

K. **Conclusion**

As articulated in several places throughout this report, ACWC has gained much from the experience of self-review and study, and is grateful to have had this opportunity. The committee would like to express gratitude to Andrew Whitehead of the PC(USA) Research Services for his help in creating, distributing, and summarizing the results of the survey. Many thanks also to all those who made the time to respond to the survey.

The period of time covered by this review cycle has been one of adjustment for ACWC, particularly as its staffing model has shifted. The ACWC continues to be committed to growing and learning how to be the best ACWC in the world and looks forward to continued conversation on the work of ACWC with commissioners of the 221st General Assembly (2014) in Detroit.

\(^{59}\) Minutes of the 205th General Assembly (1993), Part I, p. 445
ADVOCACY COMMITTEE FOR WOMEN’S CONCERNS

I. Narrative Report to the 217th General Assembly (2006)

“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble” (Psalm 9:9)

“The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:12)

“...[B]e doers of the word, and not merely hearers...” (James 1:22)

1. Agency Description

The context of women’s advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in communal faith in “God [who] liberated the people of Israel from oppression ... [and] covenanted with Israel ... that they might do justice ...” (Book of Order, G-3.0101b) and motivated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the church explicitly articulated in the Articles of Agreement its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this commitment. Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to “... give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the Book of Order, G-4.0403 ... monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church...and advocate[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]” (Minutes, 1994, Part I, p. 262).

The ACWC’s assigned functions are delineated in the GAC Manual of Operations (Appendix I, EV, Section VIII.B.), and they include:

- Preparing policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on women’s concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative.
- Advising the General Assembly Council on matters of women’s concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
- Providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women’s concerns.
- Assisting the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women’s concerns and provide information to the church as requested.
- Providing the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women’s concerns.
- Monitoring the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns.
- Through advocacy maintaining a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women’s concerns.

The ACWC is a function of the Office of the Deputy Executive Director, General Assembly Council, although staffing is provided by the Women’s Ministries program area, National Ministries Division. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly and the ACWC chair has corresponding member status with GAC and with the General Assembly. The ACWC has ten members nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not represent any constituencies. Current members are Karen Breckenridge (co-chair), Sarah A. Colwill (co-chair beginning in August 2005), Adeline S. deCastro, Dean E. Foose, Jerri Rodewald, Aleida Jernigan, R. Ann (Ani) Lelea, F. William (Bill) Gray, Terry Alexander, and Nancy Neal (co-chair until August 2005). In addition, Lillian Oats (co-chair) is a full voting member of the committee, representing Presbyterian Women. Allison Seed is a full voting member elected to the advocacy committee by the General Assembly Council and also sits on the GAC Executive Committee.

Recognizing the complex ways in which gender inequality manifests itself differently because of class, race, ethnicity, education, age, status in employment, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, and culture, ACWC invites liaisons from other entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to sit with the committee at its regularly scheduled meetings. Those entities are the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), the National Network of Presbyterian College Women (NNPCW), the Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT), the Presbyterian Health, Education, & Welfare Association (PHEWA), the Congregational Ministries Division (CMD), the Presbyterian United Nations Office (PUNO), and the Worldwide Ministries Division (WMD). In turn, liaisons from the ACWC attend the meetings of the ACSWP, ACREC and the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI). In 1999, the ACWC began to work with the Board of Pensions (BOP) and, in 2002, with the Presbyterian Health, Education, & Welfare Association (PHEWA).

2. Accomplishments

3. **Meeting Summary—2004**

**January 22–24, 2004, in St. Petersburg, Fla.** The January meeting included guests Vernon Carroll (chair of General Assembly Council), Mary Elva Smith (associate director, Women’s Ministries and Collegiate Ministries, National Ministries Division), and guest speaker, Dianne Tennis (author of “Is God the Only Reliable Father?”). Considerable working time was spent preparing advice and counsel for issues before and referral items to the 216th General Assembly (2004). The site visit for the January meeting was to the Beth-El Farmworkers Mission, serving the rural populations of Hillsborough, Manatee, and Sarasota counties in Florida. Beth-El helps farm workers move toward self-sufficiency through education, worship, and outreach. It is a coordinated ministry of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At this meeting the committee approved (by consensus) the following mission statement:

“The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is called by [the] General Assembly to be a voice of justice and advocacy for women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and around the world; in order to give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership (Book of Order, G-4.0403). To this end, we advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of life and work in the Church and society. “Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?” Proverbs 8:1”

**July 22–24, 2004, in Seattle, Wash.** When the committee met in July 2004, guests included Kathy Lueckert, Deputy Executive Director, General Assembly Council (GAC); Flora Wilson Bridges, Seattle University professor and pastor of Madrona Presbyterian Church; and Elizabeth Stanhope, student, Fuller Theological Seminary (and intern working with Rev. Bridges). Work of this meeting centered on discussing the Mission Work Plan (2005–2006), the effects of downsizing national staff especially in Women’s Ministries (2004), a restructuring of ACWC to a non-hierarchical structure where leadership duties are shared among three co-chairs serving different functions (described below), and a guided discussion with the guests from Seattle Pacific University around issues for women clergy in the church.

The leadership will be a leadership team made up of three co-chairs with differing functions, as follows:

- **Co-chair for General Assembly Relations** and that person would be identified as the corresponding member to General Assembly and serve as Advice and Counsel chair;
- **Co-chair for General Assembly Council Relations** and that person would have corresponding member status; and,
- **Co-chair for Committee Relations** and that person would oversee the internal work group relations and ACWC’s relationships with other committees, particularly where we have liaisons.

The three co-chairs would share moderating duties during regular meetings. This model was chosen after several meetings consideration because it encourage participation of all ACWC members; allows work to be completed without a hierarchy of leadership; and, provides leadership development for members. Liaisons from the committee were designated for Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Board of Pensions (BOP), Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen (NAPC), National Network of Presbyterian College Women (NNPCW), and Presbyterian Health, Education, & Welfare Association (PHEWA). A final edit of the clergywomen report was completed and approved for printing (in 2005). The committee generated a list for new work of ACWC and the following were accepted and assigned working groups (recognizing the 216th General Assembly (2004) would generate additional work for the committee): human sexuality, violence (Juarez murders/border issues), status of women in PCUSA, including immigrant churches, and, ordination of Christian educators. The site visit in Seattle was to the Church of Mary Magdalene, a program for women who are struggling to be free from multiple difficulties including homelessness, poverty, and abuse. It is for women who have been robbed and raped emotionally, spiritually, and physically. The Church of Mary Magdalene was founded in 1991 by Presbyterian clergywoman, Jean Kim, who was called in a dream to “plant the cross” for homeless women of Seattle.

**October 14–16, 2004, in Princeton, N.J.:** The October meeting was situated at the seminary to continue responding to the concerns of clergywomen and female seminarians in the process of ordination. Guests to this meeting were Abigail Rian Evans and Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, professors at Princeton Theological Seminary and fifteen Princeton Seminary female students. The speakers, Professor Evans and Professor Sakenfeld, talked about the experiences of Princeton Theological Seminary in graduating women interested in pastoral leadership. In a later session, the Princeton students and ACWC members had an informal discussion about the students’ experiences with the use of inclusive and expansive language at the seminary. An informational exchange took place regarding pastors’ first calls and moving from seminary to a church. Current campus concerns include: sexual harassment, networking, and social justice issues. In addition to the working groups and assigned topics, a draft of the ACWC Manual of Operations was reviewed by the committee and accepted by consensus. The status of women working group presented five issues before women in leadership positions. They are: leadership (to or criticism of their speaking manner, appearance, etc.); and, mission priorities (sexual harassment, inclusive/expansive language, etc.). The working group on inclusive/expansive language distributed a draft of the Trinity report being written by a task group in collaboration with the Office of Theology and Worship to the entire committee for consideration and feedback at a future meeting.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) fulfilled the responsibility to prepare statements, reports, recommendations, and advice and counsel to the General Assembly on issues that impact the status and well being of women in the following ways:

- Prepared thirty-two advice and counsel memoranda on nineteen overtures, two commissioner resolutions, and one report, affecting women and their children coming before the 216th General Assembly (2004). Several were written in consultation with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. Additionally, ACWC resourced six committees. The ACWC also participated in the Women’s Orientation Breakfast and in the Women’s Ministries Luncheon.

- Held an open consultation at the 216th General Assembly (2004) to hear ongoing concerns of clergywomen in the church. This was in response to 2003 Referral: Item 04-01. Report, Clergywomen’s Experiences in Ministry: Realities and Challenges, Recommendation10. That the General Assembly Instruct the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to Provide a Forum at Future Gen-
elected the Reverend Sarah Colwill as a member of the Leadership Team replacing Nancy Neal beginning at the August 2005 meeting.

The next day, ACWC and ACREC met jointly and focused on immigration issues in the California context. The speaker was Nuri Robins. The committees spent January 21 (before their meeting) in a joint education session about cultural proficiency led by the Reverend Kikanza Poppen; Diana Stephen, associate, Network Support/Rural and Small Church Ministries, NMD; the Reverend Carolyn Visser; Vicky Wahl; Kathy Callies; Marion Cramer; Wendy Figland; the Reverend Peter Funch; Cal Hansen; Florence Hoff; Marian Judy; Dianne Larson; Paula Larson; Vi Leonard; Crystal Page; Julie Pearson; Carolyn Petik; the Reverend Tom Pickles; the Reverend Richard (Dick), Linda, and Ann Poppen; Diana Stephen, associate, Network Support/Rural and Small Church Ministries, NMD; the Reverend Carolyn Visser; Vicky Wahl; and Delores Walter. Diana Stephen highlighted in her presentation that “there is an economic crisis within rural communities and thought must be given to how policies affect these rural communities. There is a deep hurt—this (farming/ranching) is a vocation that is becoming industrialized. Large companies are exhausting the land, the animals, the water, etc. and accepting no responsibility for the damage they do. This is a global issue.” She went on to note that women serve as pastor for many small and rural churches. The salaries are very low, however, there are many opportunities. She and Kathryn Baker raised other issues in the area: domestic violence, prevalence of depression, and a high suicide rate. Health care is an issue as the closest (physical or mental) health care can be more than 100 miles away. This was the context for the field exploration and interviews with local pastors, elders, and community members. The ACWC extended the meeting by one day to include extensive field trips into the surrounding communities. This was an eye-opening meeting, renewing ACWC members to raise issues of the local effects of globalization on communities and women in particular.

Networking, Monitoring and Communication—In addition to the exposure to local advocates in areas where ACWC’s regular meetings are held, the very make-up of the ACWC allows for networking, monitoring, and evaluating procedures, policies, and programs among General Assembly entities and program areas. Through staff to the ACWC, networking around public policy issues is carried out through the Public Policy Advocate Team (PPAT) made up of GAC staff, representing several program areas; the Cross-Caucus meetings of the Racial Ethnic Ministries; and through involvement in issue oriented inter-staff meetings and conferences. The ACWC moved toward stronger partnership and more open communication with ACSWP and ACREC in planning joint meetings in January 2005.

In these ways a monitoring of broad concerns related to women of color, immigrant women, and working parents (child care) can be more efficiently affected. Likewise, such issues as domestic violence and other examples of violence against women, sexual misconduct policies, economic concerns as pay equity, women and health, and many other gender-related concerns can be lifted up and addressed in concert with other program entities of the church, making new partnerships possible.

The ACWC was invited to be a consulting partner to listen and be a resource for participants at the National Consultation of Racial Ethnic Women in the PC(USA) in October 15–17, 2004. The consulting partners, in partnership with the consultation organizers, developed a strategic plan (released in 2005) to address issues identified by the women of color. This event is recognized later in this report as the Women of Color Consultation. Appropriate issues will be considered by ACWC for future advocacy work. [See Other Actions section for information regarding the joint resolution from ACWC and ACREC.]

4. Meeting Summary—2005

January 22–24, San Francisco, Calif.: The ACWC, ACSWP, and ACREC all convened in San Francisco for their meetings. All three committees spent January 21 (before their meeting) in a joint education session about cultural proficiency led by the Reverend Kikanza Nuri Robins. The next day, ACWC and ACREC met jointly and focused on immigration issues in the California context. The speaker was Betty Canton-Self, executive director for the Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights (ICIR). Discussing issues of citizenship, farm workers, home services, and federal issues, the committees explored ways they can continue working in a coordinated way on their mutual concerns and identified important areas of potential collaboration. As a result, ACWC and ACREC acted on items to increase their future collaboration on issues of mutual concern, intentionally meeting together once a year, and have their leadership and liaisons meet by conference call twice a year. Helen Locklear, Deputy Executive Director, GAC, met with the ACWC to discuss the Mission Work Plan and its critical role in directing the committee’s work. Work groups discussed continuing issues from the 216th General Assembly (2004) and projected projects. The ACWC wrote a letter to the GAC personnel committee regarding the dismissal of two employees in late 2004 and elected the Reverend Sarah Colwill as a member of the Leadership Team replacing Nancy Neal beginning at the August 2005 meeting.

August 10–14, Sioux Falls, S.Dak.: The meeting was delayed until August to accommodate the harvest season and to make meeting in Sioux Falls with farmers possible. The ACWC went to Sioux Falls to discuss the We Are What We Eat report with the persons involved in its prompting and writing and to explore issues for rural churches and women in farming communities around globalization and food security. Guest speakers included: Kathryn Baker, Presbyterian Women (PW); Jeri Lynn Bakken; Bernetta and Dick Burghardt; Holly Butrum; Kathy Callies; Marion Cramer; Wendy Figland; the Reverend Peter Funch; Cal Hansen; Florence Hoff; Marian Judy; Dianne Larson; Paula Larson; Vi Leonard; Crystal Page; Julie Pearson; Carolyn Petik; the Reverend Tom Pickles; the Reverend Richard (Dick), Linda, and Ann Poppen; Diana Stephen, associate, Network Support/Rural and Small Church Ministries, NMD; the Reverend Carolyn Visser; Vicky Wahl; and Delores Walter. Diana Stephen highlighted in her presentation that “there is an economic crisis within rural communities and thought must be given to how policies affect these rural communities. There is a deep hurt—this (farming/ranching) is a vocation that is becoming industrialized. Large companies are exhausting the land, the animals, the water, etc. and accepting no responsibility for the damage they do. This is a global issue.” She went on to note that women serve as pastor for many small and rural churches. The salaries are very low, however, there are many opportunities. She and Kathryn Baker raised other issues in the area: domestic violence, prevalence of depression, and a high suicide rate. Health care is an issue as the closest (physical or mental) health care can be more than 100 miles away. This was the context for the field exploration and interviews with local pastors, elders, and community members. The ACWC extended the meeting by one day to include extensive field trips into the surrounding communities. This was an eye-opening meeting, renewing ACWC members to raise issues of the local effects of globalization on communities and women in particular.
October 6–8, Tempe, Ariz.: The ACWC located their October meeting at Cook College and Theological School, a Presbyterian racial ethnic school, in Tempe, Arizona, to re-familiarize themselves with concerns regarding Presbyterian racial ethnic schools. The committee stayed in the conference center and met on-campus for all their meetings. The ACWC spoke with Larry R. Norris, president; Vivian Winter Chaser, director of Public Relations; Minta McIntosh, volunteer in mission and coordinator for the Conference Center; and Maramlyen Tokeak, student body president. Our hosts shared cultural stories, songs, and hospitality in addition to explaining history, describing the student body, and financial/survival concerns of racial ethnic schools, in general, and Cook College, in particular. Racial ethnic schools was a topic of concern raised at the 216th General Assembly (2004).

The ACWC fulfilled the responsibility to prepare statements, reports, recommendations, and advice and counsel to the General Assembly on issues that impact the status and well-being of women in the following ways:

- Prepared advice and counsel memoranda regarding draft reports, policies and staffing concerns, and/or delivered letters of concerns with GAC entities.
- Delivered a letter to the Office of General Assembly recommending to all General Assembly entities, presbyteries, and synods that 10 percent of what people spend on meetings should be spent locally.
- Delivered an advice and counsel memorandum to the Governance Task Force, GAC, expressing concerns over the proposed changes in the structure of the General Assembly Council.
- Delivered two letters, raising the committee’s concerns with the Office of Theology and Worship regarding staffing/hiring and in response to a draft of the Trinity report and inclusive/expansive language.
- Delivered a letter enclosing the brochure, Well Chosen Words (2005), to all Presbyterian seminaries to promote the importance of using inclusive/expansive language in theological education.
- Monitored issues and concerns before the PC(USA) in reports from ACSWP, ACREC, Working Group on the Trinity, Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, Presbyterian Washington Office, Presbyterian United Nations Office, and other entities that address women’s concerns.
- Delivered a letter to the GAC personnel committee regarding employee dismissals in late 2004.
- Continued, in partnership with others, a review of the church’s policies on sexual misconduct by the clergy.
- Received a report from ACWC staff who attended the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) Forum in Bangkok, Thailand, through the Office of Women’s Advocacy.
- Moved to a non-hierarchical structure of having a leadership team of three co-chairs with differing functions.
- Produced, through collaboration with Women’s Ministries and the Women’s Advocacy Office, an updated version of Well Chosen Words (2005 revised document, PDS #72-839-05-003) and the Clergywomen’s Experiences in Ministry: Realities and Challenges 2003 (revised document 2005 available online at www.pcusa.org/womensadvocacy/clergywomen/clergywomen-report05.pdf).
- Submitted the ACWC Manual of Operations for approval and comment by the GAC.
- Collaborated with the Stated Clerk and Moderator in writing a letter to all presbyteries and synods in response to the referral item from 216th General Assembly (2004) in regard to problem pregnancies.
- Received and endorsed the report (2005) from the Women of Color Consultation(2004).
- Formed a working group with ACREC that will work on responding to the recommendations from the consultation and monitor the church’s response to the report. The full report is included in the ACREC report as Appendix A: Report and Recommendations from the Women of Color Consultation.
- Designated two members and two former members to serve on a self-study committee and began the process of preparing for ACWC to be reviewed at the 217th General Assembly (2006).
- Submitted ACWC’s annual narrative report to the General Assembly Council (March 2005).

Networking, Monitoring and Communication—The very make-up of the ACWC allows for networking with General Assembly entities and program areas. Through staff of ACWC and of the Women’s Advocacy Office, networking around public policy issues is carried out through the Public Policy Advocate Team (PPAT) made up of General Assembly Council staff, representing several program areas; the Immigration Table made up of GAC staff; the Sexual Misconduct table; and the Cross-Caucus meetings of the Racial Ethnic Ministries. Staff also collaborates strongly with Presbyterian Women, especially the Justice and Peace committee of the Churchwide Coordinating Committee (CCT) and the Racial Ethnic Dialogue group.

The ACWC issue reports, approved by past General Assemblies, are made available through the Office of Women’s Advocacy in the Women’s Ministries program area. These reports serve as a means of communicating with the larger church and are available through the Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS). Report information is also available on the web at www.pcusa.org/womensadvocacy/acwc/reports. Recent reports include:
5. **Mission Work Plan**

The 2005 work of ACWC reflects the following Goals and Objectives of the Mission Work plan 2005–2006:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal/Objective</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evangelism &amp; Witness</strong></td>
<td>1. Create a PC(USA) awareness campaign to make the PC(USA) more visible &amp; attractive to &lt;br&gt; —young adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>—racial ethnic persons</td>
<td>• Received the report and strategic plans from the National Consultation of Racial Ethnic Women in the PC(USA). &lt;br&gt; • Attended the Women of Color Consultation and participated as a partner. &lt;br&gt; • Endorsed the Women of Color Consultation report and formed of a joint task force with ACREC to support next steps and act on the recommendations. &lt;br&gt; • The joint working group, formed with ACREC, prepared the joint resolution included in this report to the 217th General Assembly (2006). &lt;br&gt; • Extended an invitation to REYWT for a liaison position to ACWC, which was accepted in January 2006. &lt;br&gt; • Had representation at the PW Racial Ethnic Dialogue. &lt;br&gt; • Met with farm-worker ministry in California to explore related issues. &lt;br&gt; • Met at Cook College and Theological School, to study issues regarding racial ethnic schools in the PC(USA).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Justice &amp; Compassion</strong></td>
<td>1. Respond to poverty, disasters and the impact of economic globalization through —compassionate ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Advocate for social, environmental, and economic justice in accordance with General Assembly policy and direction and assist other governing bodies in advocacy efforts.</td>
<td>• Provided resources for addressing problem pregnancies. &lt;br&gt; • Provided resources for handling sexual misconduct &lt;br&gt; • Collaborated with ACSWP and ACREC to develop a “Resolution on the Disenfranchisement of People of Color in the U.S. Electoral Process” (2004.Item 10-02). &lt;br&gt; • Collaborated with ACSWP and ACREC on issues regarding immigration, globalization, private for-profit prisons, food security and rural issues, and emerging issues related. &lt;br&gt; • Met in South Dakota to give further study to the issues in the <em>We Are What We Eat</em> report and developed letter to recommend local purchasing recommendation for all PC(USA) meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership &amp; Vocation</strong></td>
<td>1. Provide and promote resources for leadership development of —ministers of Word and Sacrament</td>
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Advocated for presbyteries and seminaries to support clergywomen in ministries in PC(USA).

Advocated for use of inclusive/expansive language in all PC(USA) resources.

Encouraged all COMs to train PNCs on gender, racial ethnic, and disabilities concerns.

Participated in celebration events for women’s ordination and collaborated with NAPC (National Association for Presbyterian Clergywomen).

Explored ordination of Christians educators issues.

Corresponded with the Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators (APCE).

Reviewed resources available to support women clergy of all ethnicities in the Call Process.

Engaged in process of improving communication with Office of Vocations, especially COM and CPM staff.

Surveyed the current situation of women staff in PC(USA) and collaborated to address pay equity issues.

Provided inclusive/expansive language resources on the web.

Provided Clergywomen’s Experiences in Ministry: Realities and Challenges report and Executive Summary on the web.


Developed liaison relationships with seminaries.

Provided inclusive/expansive language resources information to seminary students.

The ACWC received the report from the Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) and formed a joint working group with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) to review the recommendations of the consultation. The ACWC and ACREC have submitted a joint resolution to the 217th General Assembly (2006) to create a joint task force to respond to the recommendations of the report and monitor its implementation throughout the church. The full report is included in ACREC’s report under Appendix A: Report and Recommendations from the Women of Color Consultation.

—Report submitted by the Reverend Karen Breckenridge, the Reverend Sarah Colwill, and Lillian Oats, co-chairs, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

II. Ongoing Response to Referrals

1. 2004 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Request the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, Following Review of Resources Currently Available to Meet the Needs of Clergywomen in the Call Process and in Pastorates, to Make Recommendations That Contribute to a Pro-active, Health-giving Ministry to and Relationship with Our Clergywomen—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (Minutes, 2004, Part I., pp. 77, 389–90).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) continues to review available resources and is researching recommendations that will be reported to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

III. Recommendations

A Recommendation to Study the Status of Women in the PC(USA)

ACWC recommends that the 217th General Assembly (2006):

1. Request ACWC to assess the status of women, in elected and staff positions, in decision-making and leadership positions in the PC(USA) at all levels through surveys and other data collection and evaluation;
2. Report progress and initial findings to the 218th General Assembly (2008) to measure the extent to which gender justice has been achieved in the church, measuring presence and acceptance of women, to get the facts on the current status of women in leadership positions in an effort to support and further the inclusion of women in leadership positions in the PC(USA), at all levels. The primary areas of this first ever such survey for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will focus on:
   a. The extent of women in leadership positions at all levels of the PC(USA) in elected and staff positions, in decision-making and leadership positions.
   b. Attitudes about women in leadership – including how women in leadership positions are perceived and accepted, by both members and staff.
   c. Describing how women in leadership positions are treated, including compensation, in comparison with male colleagues, by both members and staff.

3. Prepare a final report to the 219th General Assembly (2010) to include recommendations for action, qualitative and quantitative data describing women in the various decision-making and leadership positions, and identifying patterns of women’s participation in the church and factors influencing positively and/or negatively upon their participation.

4. Direct the GAC to provide sufficient funding and staff support to ensure the research and analysis for a complete measurement of the status of women in the PC(USA).

5. Equip all GAC staff and members to be responsive to the needs of all women as part of their continuing commitment to valuing the gifts that all people bring to the PC(USA). GAC staff and members should continue to be encouraged to reflect on and incorporate the values articulated in the Report on Creating a Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004).

Rationale

This year marks three significant anniversaries for women in ordained leadership within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Therefore, the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) believes this requested study to be particularly timely. There has not been a comprehensive study of the status of women within the denomination. ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to live out its commitment to justice for women by “monitoring and evaluating policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church, . . . and advocating for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society.”

This survey will be a way for the Committee to carry out its mandate, provided on its creation by the 205th General Assembly (1993), to ensure advocacy and monitoring of justice for women throughout the church. Describing the qualitative and quantitative realities of women leaders in all levels of the church, the report will set the context of ACWC’s work for years to come.

It is especially important to know the extent to which the church is responding to the following two sections of the Book of Order:

G-40403 which states that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes . . . shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church.

G-9.0104 a, which states that governing bodies of the church shall be responsible for implementing the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and participation as stated in G-4.0403. All governing bodies shall work to become more open and inclusive and shall pursue affirmative action hiring procedures aiming at correcting patterns of discrimination on the basis of the categories listed in G-4.0403.

This study will reaffirm past General Assemblies’ commitments to the inclusion of women in decision-making and leadership in all levels of the church and their equitable treatment. It will also show how far we have come and how far we have left to go in fully realizing and reflecting that “. . . In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community.”

The reports will show areas for celebration. It is also expected to identify specific areas needing more attention, including identifying specific barriers that need to be addressed to bring about the full acceptance and equitable treatment of women in the PC(USA)’s leadership. The final report will contain recommendations for action.

The value of “including the rich diversity of God’s people in the leadership” of the PC(USA) at all levels was the subject of (2005) “Open Letter to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding “Creating A Climate for Change Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” The signers included the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council. This survey will further the acceptance and support of women in the decision-making and leadership positions of the PC(USA).

Funds Requested—see attached Financial Implications form to the report.

IV. Other Action Items

ACWC received the report from the Women of Color Consultation (WoCC) and formed a joint working group with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) to review the recommendations of the consultation. ACWC and ACREC have submitted

60 ACWC 208th (1996) General Assembly Report

61 A Brief Statement of Faith, lines 29–32
a joint resolution to the 217th General Assembly (2006) to create a joint Task Force to respond to the recommendations of the report and monitor its implementation throughout the church. The full report is included in ACREC’s report under Appendix A: Report and Recommendations from the Women of Color Consultation.

—Report submitted by the Reverend Karen Breckenridge, the Reverend Sarah Colwill, and Lillian Oats, co-chairs, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

Appendix 2

2008 Agency Summary—Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)

“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble” (Psalms 9:9)

“The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:12)

…[Be] doers of the word, and not merely hearers…” (James 1:22)

1. Introduction

The context of women’s advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in communal faith in “God [who] liberated the people of Israel from oppression … [and] covenanted with Israel … that they might do justice …” (Book of Order, G-3.0101b) and motivated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the Presbyterian church explicitly articulated in the “Articles of Agreement” its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this promise. Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the Book of Order, G-4.0403 . . . monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church … and advocate[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]. (Minutes, 1994, Part I, p. 262)

2. Assigned Responsibilities

The ACWC’s assigned functions are delineated in the GAC Manual of Operations (Appendix I, EV, Section VIII.B.), and they include:

- Preparing policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on women’s concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative;
- Advising the General Assembly Council on matters of women’s concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly;
- Providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women’s concerns;
- Assisting the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women’s concerns and provide information to the church as requested;
- Providing the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women’s concerns;
- Monitoring the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns; and,
- Through advocacy maintaining a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women’s concerns.

The ACWC is a function of the Office of the Executive Director, General Assembly Council, and connects to it through the executive administrator, though its direct staffing is provided by the associate of women’s advocacy in the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW ministry area. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly. The ACWC has organized itself with a leadership team of three co-chairs: two serve as corresponding members to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council respectively. A member of ACWC is a voting member of the Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee (MRTI). There are twelve members of the committee, ten members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not represent any constituencies. Members who left the committee in June 2006 were: Allison Seed (General Assembly Council), Dean Foose, Lillian Oats (Presbyterian Women), Ani Lelea, and Aleida Jernigan. Members who joined the committee in June 2006 were Mary Carter, Maria Cardenas Baez, Aisha Brooks-Lytle, Louise Davidson (Presbyterian Women), and Manley Olson (General Assembly Council). Two members resigned during this reporting period—Aisha Brooks-Lytle, in late 2006, citing life circumstances that did not allow her to fully participate (in her letter she cited a lack of understanding what the time requirements of the committee were before her election from the floor); and Mary Carter, in early 2007, due to a diagnosis that prevented her from completing her term. In November 2007, two members were appointed by the Reverend Joan Gray, Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006), as recommended by the General Assembly Nominating Committee—the Reverend Dr. Gay Byron and Belinda Rice. Their first meeting with ACWC was January 2008.

3. Accomplishments

a. 2006–2007: ACWC Met Three Times

(1) August 3–6, 2006, in Boise, Idaho

- Visits were made throughout southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon, addressing healthcare, mental health and social services, domestic violence services, and banking as it affects family farms;
Member orientation, Website updates, and generative conversations about the work of the committee;

Emerging issues were discussed and prioritized for work during the two years between General Assemblies and three workgroups were formed: Health and Human Sexuality, Rural/Urban Issues, and Status of Women/Language;

Jerri Rodewald was elected as co-moderator to fill the one year unexpired vacancy left when Lillian Oats was not re-elected; and,

Adeline DeCastro and Jerri Rodewald were elected to the Women of Color Consultation Task Force.

(2) October 26–28, 2006, in Washington, DC

Met with the Reverend Elenora Giddings Ivory and other members of the staff of the Washington Office, addressing criminal justice, domestic violence prevention and education, school crisis response programs, empowering victims of crime, and reproductive health issues;

Health and Human Sexuality workgroup distributed a letter to all Presbyterian members of Congress stating PC(USA)’s policy on women’s reproductive rights and health care;

Absentee policy was adopted by ACWC;

Agreed to work with ACSWP in developing the pay equity resolution; and,

Jerri Rodewald, Terry Alexander, Rebecca Harrison, and Jack Terry were appointed to a communication subcommittee.

(3) February 15–17, 2007, in Louisville Kentucky;

Elder Jerri Rodewald elected to serve a full term as co-chair, term to begin in August 2007;

Staff guests: Peggie Blenman, HR director, and the Reverend Dr. Marcia Myers, director, Office of Vocation;

Forum presented jointly to ACWC and ACREC focused on post-Katrina issues;

Communications subcommittee met with designer, Dana McMahan, to scope the new Website;

Health and Human Sexuality workgroup held three-part educational session with guest speaker, the Reverend Dee Dale (MCC);

Status/Language workgroup met with Research Services; and

ACSWP coordinator, the Reverend Dr. Christian Iosso, updated ACWC on work currently being done by them.

b. 2007–2008: ACWC Met Three Times


Met with the Reverend Joan Gray, Moderator, 217th General Assembly (2006); the Reverend Curtis Kearns, executive administrator (GAC), Board of Pensions executives and appropriate staff; and a Presbyterian Historical Society representative who provided an educational session;

Consulted with the General Assembly Nominating Committee: the Reverend Cindy Edwards, GANC member and contact for ACWC; and Valerie Small, staff;

Attorney Julia Thorne, manager of Immigration Services (PC(USA)) provided information and continuing education regarding immigration issues in preparation for the October meeting;

Health and Human Sexuality working group hosted a education program on gender with guest speaker, Chris Paige;

Consulted with Joel Hanisek, UN representative, and Jonathan Crooms, young adult intern, Presbyterian United Nations Office, about international gender justice issues; and,

Met with the Reverend Dr. Joseph Small, director, Theology, Worship, and Education ministry to receive an update on several items coming to that office out of the 217th General Assembly (2006).

(2) October 18–22, 2007, in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico;

Met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) for large sections of the educational and cultural portions of the meeting—focus of these sessions to examine what pushes immigration to the US, the a/effects on communities in Mexico and the Presbyterian Church of Mexico;

Visited San Pablo Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Chichen Itza;

Participated in a listening tour of Dzan, Yucatan, Mexico, a primarily Mayan community where we interacted with villagers and were hosted by municipal leaders and the nonprofit organization, IndeMaya;
● Approved the new logo for ACWC;
● Jointly reviewed the revised Form of Government, drafted letter for FOG Task Force, and appointed joint working group with ACREC to schedule a follow-up conversation; and,
● Approved the ongoing work of the working groups to develop final proposals for action at the 218th General Assembly (2008).

(3) January 24–26, 2008 in Louisville, Kentucky
● Leadership Team: representatives from ACWC and ACREC leadership met with Karen Schmidt, deputy executive director for Communications and Funds Development, and Dianna Ott, coordinator, Creative Services;
● Met jointly with ACREC and Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) in two sessions;
  —Discussion with the Reverend Dr. Cliff Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, regarding denominational issues and celebrated his service;
  —Joint committee work also saw discussion about the assembly with guests Vernon Broyles, Office of the General Assembly, and Nancy Hamilton, GAC executive associate; and,
  —Extensive review of actions being taken by the three committees to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
● Working Groups perfected recommendations for ACWC report to General Assembly regarding:
  —Immigration Detention; Trafficking of women; Beginning process for extensive research project on the status of women in the PC(USA); and, persons to recommend as committee resource people to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
● Reviewed and adopted narrative report and the pay equity resolution to be jointly submitted with ACSWP to the 218th General Assembly (2008);
● Selection of the Advice and Counsel team and resource persons;
● Welcomed newly appointed ACWC members, the Reverend Dr. Gay Byron and Belinda Rice, to fill vacancies in the class of 2010;
● Elected Elder Adeline DeCastro as co-chair to a two-year term to begin August 2008;
● Recognized outgoing elected members with thanks, to Karen Breckenridge, Nancy Neal, and Manley Olsen (GAC); and,
● Participated in Presbyterian Center worship celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King.

4. Highlights

a. Status of Women/Language

The work group focusing on the Status of Women and Language had many ongoing projects this year. We have monitored the work being done by different entities as instructed by the 217th General Assembly (2006), including the creation of an E-hymnal and the report concerning ordination of Christian educators. We communicated with PC(USA) seminaries and leaders to encourage the use of inclusive and expansive language. We commissioned the Presbyterian Panel, in November 2007 (see www.pcusa.org/research/panel), to gather information regarding the attitudes and assumptions toward women’s leadership in the church. We also reviewed this data and concluded that an extensive study on women in the church would be beneficial to our work of advocating for justice within the church. The study will benefit the whole church as it will set a baseline for comparisons, reveal where women are and are not in the structures and measure the quality of their participation at all levels of the church. A portion of this work may be accomplished in approving the joint resolution from ACSWP and ACWC for a study of pay equity within the PC(USA). This comes in response to the referred action of the 200th General Assembly (1999).

b. Rural/Urban Affairs

The Rural and Urban Affairs work group is charged with monitoring Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policies and work regarding immigration/detention, homelessness, hurricane/disaster relief, trafficking in persons, globalization, and gender-based violence. The work group followed up on work assigned to it by ACWC, partners, and the 217th General Assembly (2006). A study of church policies and current realities regarding trafficking in women/adults led to the conclusion that the General Assembly must encourage congregations and presbyteries to engage in stronger outreach to and advocacy for trafficked persons. In partnership with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, the effects of globalization were examined while in the Yucatan of Mexico. A review of denominational policies on for-profit prisons and just immigration, as well as practices of for-profit detention centers and conversations and observations in Mexico resulted in the conviction that PC(USA) policy statements did not address serious concerns about immigrant detention practices in the United States. Two actions came out of this work: one expanding the concern and work against human trafficking and one seeking action regarding immigration detention in the United States.

c. Health and Human Sexuality

The Health and Human Sexuality Work Group has focused on emerging issues relating to women’s health; access to medical care, pharmaceuticals and counseling (including availability, affordability, and accuracy); and gender and sexuality information, education, and
equity. We have prepared for proposed overtures to General Assembly through an education program for ACWC members with the help of experienced educators and pastors. Recognizing the sexualization of women in culture and in the conversations of the church about reproductive health, the work continues.

d. **Women of Color Consultation Task Force and Joint Working Group**

The 217th General Assembly (2006) recommended the creation of a task force on the Women of Color Consultation. Made up of seven persons, this task force was launched in October 2006, completing its work and reporting to the 218th General Assembly (2008) in a separate report. Constituted jointly by ACWC and ACREC, in consultation with Presbyterian Women and the National Cross Caucus, the task force studied the recommendations, which came from the Women of Color Consultation in 2004. In addition to analyzing and determining what progress had been made, the task force designed and recommended a mechanism for monitoring future progress by the denomination. The task force modeled cultural proficiency and antiracism models in its work together. The joint working group for ACWC and ACREC continues to review this work and looks forward to implementing and monitoring their suggested actions.

e. **Communications Subcommittee**

A subcommittee on communications was also established by ACWC shortly after the 217th General Assembly (2006) in response to the review. The ACWC Website has been separated from the women’s advocacy Website for clarity and easier access and has been redesigned. A new logo was commissioned and an informational brochure will be ready for the 218th General Assembly (2008).

5. **Actions of the Committee for Consideration of the 218th General Assembly (2008)**

   - Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the United States
   - Resolution to Expand the Church’s Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking
   - Resolution to Explore the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the PC(USA)

6. **Other Actions**

   - God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Pay Equity and Just Compensation, jointly submitted with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

7. **Appreciation**

   The Reverend Molly Casteel became associate for Women’s Advocacy and staff for ACWC in September 2005. With her arrival, and the continuing administrative support of Leigh Harper, senior administrative assistant, ACWC has functioned well with a large portfolio of work. The co-chairs and committee express their sincere and deepest appreciation.

   —Report Submitted by the Reverend Sarah Colwill, F. William (Bill) Gray, and Jerri Rodewald, co-chairs, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

### Appendix 3

**Agency Summary—Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) 2010**

“The Holy One is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble” (Psalms 9:9)

“The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:12)

“…[Be] doers of the word, and not merely hearers…” (James 1:22)

1. **Introduction**

   The context of women’s advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in communal faith in “God [who] liberated the people of Israel from oppression … [and] covenanted with Israel … that they might do justice …”(*Book of Order, G-3.0101b*) and motivated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the Presbyterian church explicitly articulated in the “Articles of Agreement” its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this promise. Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the *Book of Order, G-4.0403* … monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church … and advocate[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]. (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 262)

2. **Assigned Responsibilities**

   The ACWC’s assigned functions are delineated in the GAMC *Manual of Operations* (Appendix 1, Section VII.C.4.), and they include:

   a. Prepar[ing] policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advise and counsel memoranda on women’s concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Mission Council, or on its own initiative.

   b. Advis[ing] the General Assembly Mission Council on matters of women’s concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
c. Providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions
   before the General Assembly that impact issues of women’s concerns.

  d. Assisting the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly
   policy on women’s concerns and provide information to the church as requested.

  e. Providing the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council
   with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women’s concerns.

  f. Monitoring the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns.

  g. Through advocacy maintain[ing] a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women’s
   concerns.

The ACWC is housed in the Office of the Executive Director, General Assembly Mission Council. The committee has direct access to
the General Assembly. ACWC has organized itself with a leadership team of three co-chairs: two serve as corresponding members to the
General Assembly and the General Assembly Council respectively. A member of ACWC is a voting member of the Committee on Mission
Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI). There are twelve members of the committee; ten members are nominated by the General
Assembly Nominating Committee and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not
represent any constituencies. Members who left the committee in June 2008 were Karen Breckenridge, Nancy Neal, Manley Olsen
(GAMC), Louise Davidson (PW). Members who joined the committee in June 2008 were Darcy Lynn Metcalfe, N’Yisrela Watts Afriyie,
Chris Wolfe (PW), and Jan Martin (GAMC). Sarah Colwill resigned at the close of General Assembly 2008 due to family obligations. Eliz-
abeth Hinson-Hasty was elected to complete her two year term.

3. Accomplishments

   a. 2009–10: ACWC Met Four Times

      (1) March 13–16, 2009, in New York, New York

      • The committee met at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) United Nations Office just following the United Nations Commission on
        the Status of Women meeting. Joel Hanisek, U.N. Representative for the PC(USA) hosted the group.

      • Dr. Serene Jones, President of Union Theological Seminary, spoke to ACWC about women as political agents within religious
        contexts.

      • Catherine Bordeau, intern with Ecumenical Women at the United Nations, spoke to the group about faith at the U.N. and gender
        in the church.

      • Sister Marie Bernard Alima Mbalula, Secretary, Democratic Republic of the Congo, addressed the committee on the use of rape
        as a weapon of war in the DRC.

      • Committee member, Dr. Gay L. Byron, Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity
        School, spoke with ACWC about Womanist Theology and her latest academic work.

      • Linda Valentine, GAMC Executive Director and Michael Kruse, GAMC Vice-chair, had a conversation with the group in re-
        sponse to the most recent GAMC restructuring.

      • The committee had the opportunity to travel to Newark for a port tour and visitation of the Elizabeth, New Jersey Immigrant De-
        tention Center.

      (2) July 16–18, 2009, in Louisville, Kentucky

      • The committee discussed the GAMC Employee Handbook changes at length.

      • The committee spent extensive amounts of time responding to inquiries from the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee.

      • The Health, Sexuality, and Faith work group of ACWC met with Martha Bettis Gee, GAMC Associate for Child Advocacy, to
discuss pornography and its connections with human trafficking.

      • The Thea-ologies work group of ACWC met with Dr. Johanna van Wijk-Bos and Dr. Lee Hinson-Hasty to discuss women’s the-
        logies being taught in Presbyterian seminaries.

      • Marissa Castellanos, Project Manager, Kentucky Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking, spoke to the entire commit-
        tee about human trafficking.

      • Pat Hendrix, GAMC Sexual Misconduct Ombudsperson, informed ACWC about the sexual misconduct policy in the PC(USA).

      • Valerie Small, Office of the General Assembly Manager of General Assembly Nominations and Moderatorial Staff Services,
        explained the nomination process for members of ACWC.

      • Curtis Kearns, GAMC Executive Administrator, addressed the new ACWC staff position description with the committee.

      • The committee had a conversation with two representatives from the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee, Doug Megill
        and Sylvia Washer.
October 29–31, 2009, in Pasadena, California

- The committee had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Kate Ott of the Religious Institute, who spoke to them about the study she directed, entitled, *Sex and the Seminary*, looking at what seminaries are doing to cultivate sexually healthy religious professionals.
- The group continued discussion with Curtis Kearns, GAMC Executive Administrator, about their new staff person.
- Marsha Fowler and Ann Hayman educated ACWC about the PC(USA) report on HIV/AIDS.
- Ron Kernaghan, Chair, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), informed ACWC of what ACSWP is taking to General Assembly this year.
- Rev. Carol Tomkins led the group in a discussion on the new Form of Government.

January 21–23, 2010, in Louisville, Kentucky

- The ACWC member, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, spoke to the group about the Advisory and Advocacy Review Committee’s final report.
- The work groups finalized what they will take to the General Assembly.
- The ACWC met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and ACSWP.
- Julia Thorne, Attorney in the Office of Immigration Issues, OGA, spoke to the group about immigration and detention and her work with the PC(USA).
- The ACWC elected a new leadership team that will take over after the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Minneapolis.
- The ACWC, along with ACREC, had the opportunity to meet with Michael Kruse, GAMC Vice-chair, and Sue Ezell, GAMC Justice Mission Committee Chair, over dinner and discussed the relationship between the advocacy committees and the GAMC.
- Laurie Griffith, Manager of Judicial Process, OGA, addressed the group on sexual misconduct, particularly in the context of clergy and internet pornography.
- Cynthia Holder Rich from ACREC had a discussion with the group about the Belhar Confession.
- Curtis Kearns, GAMC Executive Administrator, gave the group some GAMC updates.

4. Highlights

a. **Women of Color Joint Working Group**

The 217th General Assembly (2006) recommended the creation of a Task Force on the Women of Color Consultation. Made up of seven persons, this task force was launched in October 2006, completing its work and reporting to the 218th General Assembly (2008) in a separate report. Constituted jointly by ACWC and ACREC, in consultation with Presbyterian Women and the National Cross Caucus, the task force studied the recommendations, which came from the Women of Color Consultation in 2004. In addition to analyzing and determining what progress had been made, the task force designed and recommended a mechanism for monitoring future progress by the denomination. The Women of Color Joint Working Group created by the 218th General Assembly (2008) as a permanent monitoring committee. The Women of Color Joint Working Group, a combined committee of ACREC and ACWC, continues to work to monitor all General Assembly referrals assigned to them pertaining to concerns of women of color in the PC(USA). ACWC will bring some of their recommendations to the 219th General Assembly (2010).

b. **Status of Women Task Force**

The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved ACWC’s recommendation to study the status of women at all levels of the church, calling for the creation of the Status of Women Task Force. While restructuring slowed the initiation of this group and its work, the Status of Women Task Force has been created and met once in January 2010. The task force will continue its assigned function and report back to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

c. **Hispanic-Latino National Presbyterian Caucus**

The Hispanic-Latino National Presbyterian Caucus contacted ACWC in September 2009 asking for assistance in advocating on behalf of the women of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. In conjunction with the caucus, ACWC wrote a letter to the Stated Clerk and Moderator of the General Assembly requesting they send a letter to the president of Mexico and the governor of Chihuahua asking them to tend to the violence being done against women and their families. Beyond this, ACWC will bring a recommendation to the 219th General Assembly (2010) to form a study group on the situation in Juarez and provide bilingual study materials to churches on the border.

d. **Youth, Technology, and Pornography**

The Health, Sexuality, and Faith work group of ACWC spent much of its time working in conjunction with Martha Bettis Gee, Associate for Child Advocacy, GAMC, on issues of pornography and youth. They are currently examining the need for updates to the 1983 report on pornography which contains no relevant discussion of the impact of technology on the pornography industry. Included in the
group’s discussion have been the issues of clergy abuse of pornography and pornography as a vehicle for the trafficking of children. The
work group intends to keep this issue at the fore of its work.

e. **Sex and the Seminary**

During the October 2009 meeting of ACWC in Pasadena, California, the group had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Kate Ott of the Religious
Institute and director of the study, *Sex and the Seminary*. Dr. Ott presented the group with some of her work regarding the importance of
religious professionals having been educated in sex and sexuality. The Thea-ologies work group of ACWC is continuing to work with Dr. Ott
and consider ways in which the PC(USA) might improve the sex/sexuality education of those preparing to lead the denomination.

**Rachel Sabbath Initiative**

During their October 2009 meeting, ACWC also learned from Dr. Kate Ott about the Rachel Sabbath Initiative. Through this initia-
tive, the Religious Institute is calling denominations and congregations to raise awareness and support the U.N.’s goals of reducing mater-
nal mortality rates and improving access to reproductive health care around the globe. As more than half a million women in the world die
each year and more than one million children are left motherless because of the lack of proper health care for pregnant women, ACWC
hopes to connect the PC(USA) with this project in the near future, see [http://www.religiousinstitute.org/initiative/rachel-sabbath-
initiative-saving-womens-lives-0](http://www.religiousinstitute.org/initiative/rachel-sabbath-initiative-saving-womens-lives-0) for more information.

**A Time of Transition**

The great majority of the past two years has been focused on internal matters for ACWC—restructure and review. In November,
2008, three positions in the Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW Area were eliminated as a result of restructuring in that ministry
area. The positions eliminated were: Office of Women’s Advocacy, Office of the National Network of Presbyterian College Women, and
the Office of Racial Ethnic and Young Women Together. The women were terminated from their positions and escorted out the same day.
This greatly impacted the work of ACWC, particularly since the October 2008 meeting had been cancelled due to budget restrictions. There
was no opportunity for consultation regarding the status of projects, nor, after working with staff for three years, any closure allowed.

The ACWC requested time on the agenda of the General Assembly Council at its March meeting to discuss the manner in which staff
was dismissed, and the restructuring. Earlier in March, however, Executive Director Linda Valentine and Michael Kruse, Vice-chair of the
General Assembly Mission Council, came to the ACWC meeting for that purpose. One conclusion resulted in ACWC participating in a
discussion about the rewrite of the GAMC Personnel Policies. This is being done with ACREC and ACSWP, and is continuing. Although
GAMC approved the personnel policies at their September 2009 meeting, assurance has been given to the three committees that changes
can be made following further consultation. The primary issue for ACWC is that of same-day separations.

After the restructuring, ACWC was no longer connected in any way with Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW. There is no
longer an Office of Women’s Advocacy (OWA) within REWM/PW. The senior administrative assistant for OWA and ACWC was pro-
moted to another position within REWM/PW, eliminating any staff support for ACWC. A temporary, part-time staff was hired February
15, 2009. Her one-year contract has been extended through General Assembly of this year.

**Actions of the Committee for Consideration by the 219th General Assembly (2010)**

- Resolution to Study Violence Against Women and Children on the Mexico-U.S. Border
- Resolution to Reaffirm Support for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Resolution to Ensure Staffing for Women’s Advocacy in the PC(USA)
- Resolution to Explore the Intersection of Gender and Race
- Resolution to Adapt the Session Annual Statistical Report (SASR)
- Response to Referral Item 09 -12 with Recommendation to Extend the Work of the Status of Women Task Force

**Final Response to 2004 Referral: Item 05-03. Recommendation 4. That the General Assembly Request the Advocacy Committee for
Women’s Concerns, Following Review of Resource Currently Available to Meet the Needs of Clergywomen in the Call Process and in Past-
torates, to Make Recommendations That Contribute to a Pro-active, Health-giving, Ministry to and Relationship with Our Clergywomen—**


**Recommendation 3. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s
Concerns (ACWC) to Create a Permanent Joint Working Group on Women of Color in the Church, to Be Made Up of Two Members of ACREC
and Two Members of ACWC, Appointed by the Leadership of Each Committee—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).**

**Appendix 4**

**Agency Summary—Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) 2012**

“The Holy One is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble” (Psalms 9:9)

“The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:12)

...[Be] doers of the word, and not merely hearers...” (James 1:22)

1. **Introduction**

The context of women’s advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in
communal faith in God who liberated the people of Israel from oppression and covenanted with Israel that they might do justice, and moti-
vated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) explicitly articulated in the Articles of Agreement its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this promise. The new Book of Order continues to uphold this commitment: “In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person” (Book of Order, F-1.0403). Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to:

give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the Book of Order, G-4.0403 ... monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church...and advocate[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]. (Minutes, 1994, Part I, p. 262)

2. Assigned Responsibilities

The ACWC’s assigned functions are delineated in the GAMC Manual of Operations (Appendix I, VII.C., p. 23).

They include:

a. Prepare[ing] policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and Advice and counsel memoranda on women’s concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Mission Council, or on its own initiative.

b. Advis[ing] the General Assembly Mission Council on matters of women’s concerns including statements concerning pressing issues the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.

c. Provid[ing] advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women’s concerns.

d. Assist[ing] the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women’s concerns and provide information to the church as requested.

e. Provid[ing] the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women’s concerns.

f. Monitor[ing] the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns.

g. Through advocacy maintain[ing] a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women’s concerns.

The ACWC is housed in the Office of the Executive Director, General Assembly Mission Council. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly and General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC). The ACWC has organized itself with a leadership team of three co-chairs: two as corresponding members to the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council respectively. One member of ACWC is a voting member of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI). There are twelve voting members of the committee; ten members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not represent any constituencies. One member is the current moderator for Justice and Peace of Presbyterian Women and one member is a member of the General Assembly Mission Council, chosen and sent by that body. The committee also has a number of liaison members: Carmen Rosario from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Erica Harley from the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen (NAPC), KT Ockels from World Mission of the General Assembly Mission Council, and Margryette Boyd from Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT), who joined the committee as liaison in 2011. During this term, the committee had representation from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) through Marsha Fowler, Gloria Albrecht, and Eric Mount, who each attended one or more meetings in that role. Members who rotated off the committee in July 2010 are Gay Byron, Adeline de Castro, and Maria Cardenes-Baez. Members who were elected to the committee in July 2010 were Barbara Adams Smelter, Samuel Chung, and Joann Haefong Lee. Samuel Chung’s position was declared vacant after two unexcused absences and has not yet been filled. Voting members who continued on from the previous term were Terry Alexander (MRTI), Jerri Rodewald, Jan Martin (GAMC), N’Yisrela Watts-Afriyie, Bill Gray, Darcy Metcalfe, and Chris Wolf (PW).


The ACWC met five times:

a. September 9–11, 2010, in Louisville, Kentucky

• The committee spent a significant amount of time on introductions as this was the first meeting for those elected at the 219th General Assembly (2010).

• The committee reviewed their work at General Assembly and looked ahead to what items they would need to monitor in the coming years.

• Nancy Young, coordinator for Racial Ethnic & Women’s Leadership Development Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges, met with the group to share her vision for her work and to hear about the work of ACWC.

• Vince Patton, who was soon to be Executive Administrator, joined the group for lunch and conversation.

• Unzu Lee, Presbyterian Women associate, reported to the group about the National Council of Churches’ project “Language Matters,” (later to be called “Words Matter”).
Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) shared some of the work of the GAMC with the committee.

The committee spent significant time determining how to divide their work into smaller working groups, and then spent time in those groups to determine work for the next two years. The committee organized themselves into three working groups: Health and Sexuality, Women and the Church, and Violence Against Women.


The committee’s focus in this meeting was ecumenical and interfaith relations, which influenced their decision to meet in New Orleans, where the National Council of Churches (NCC) was holding their general assembly.

The committee heard from Meagan Manas and Ann Tiemeyer of the NCC on the many ecumenical projects of the NCC related to gender justice. In particular, they heard about the beginnings of the project, “Words Matter,” as well as the Fistula Stories Project. They also learned about the NCC’s Justice for Women Working Group, a group of ecumenical women who focus on partnering to work on various gender justice issues. One member of ACWC, as well as ACWC’s staff person, participate in the work of this group. This keeps ACWC connected to the work of other denominations, which often serve as good resources in a time when resources are limited.

The committee participated in a group-building session as part of bringing on the new members and strengthening the work relationships of those who had been on ACWC for a time.

The committee heard Cecilia Casal’s report of the ecumenical trip she participated in to Columbia, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

The committee working groups decided which issues they would focus on for this two-year cycle.

The committee was able to attend a portion of the NCC’s general assembly.


The committee met in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference, which was focused on gender justice issues. Following their meeting, the committee attended the conference.

The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson met with the committee to share some of the work of the Office of Public Witness.

Committee member, Darcy Metcalfe, reported on her experience at the United Methodist Church’s Sexual Misconduct Conference and expressed her interest in looking further into the Safe Child policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Committee member, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, reported on her time in Hungary.

Committee member, Belinda Rice, reported on her work with the General Assembly committee assigned to study the situation of violence on the Mexico-U.S. border.

Committee member, Jerri Rodewald, reported on her time in New York at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

Glenn Northern of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Nicolette Paterson of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice met with the committee to discuss reproductive justice in the current context of the United States.

Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council, met with the committee to hear more about their work.

d. September 15–17, 2011, in Louisville, Kentucky

The committee worked on updating the ACWC manual of operations.

SanDawna Ashley, associate for Gender and Racial Justice, met with the committee and shared some of her work with them.

Tom Hay, director of operations, Office of the General Assembly, came to have a conversation with the group about the lack of childcare provided at General Assembly.

The committee spent time discussing the importance of the ACCRA confession and the Bible study written by Dr. Margaret Aymer and published by Presbyterian Women.

Committee member, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, gave an update of the work of the Status of Women Task Force.

Lisa Robbins and Ruth Gardner from the General Assembly Mission Council’s Human Resources department shared with the group the gender equity audit they are preparing for the next General Assembly.

Valerie Small, manager of General Assembly Nominations, met with the group to discuss best ways to include and encourage the participation of younger women on the advocacy committee.

Vince Patton, Executive Administrator of the General Assembly Mission Council, discussed the staffing for the committee.

The Health and Sexuality working group met with Claire Lewis and Michael Harper to discuss the church’s new online adolescent development curriculum.
e. January 17–19, 2012, in Louisville, Kentucky

• The committee met to finalize its work going into the 220th General Assembly (2012).
• Valerie Small, manager of General Assembly Nominations, and Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks of the General Assembly Nominating Committee met with ACWC to discuss nominations to ACWC going to General Assembly.
• Patrick Heery, managing editor for Unbound, met with the committee to discuss his work with this interactive, online journal of social witness.
• The committee met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to discuss their work for General Assembly.
• Three members of ACWC had attended the Women of Color Consultation in October of 2011, and Joann Lee led a discussion on her experiences at that event and on the consultation report going to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

4. Highlights

a. Status of Women Task Force

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns continued to stay connected to and support the work of the Status of Women Task Force, and is looking forward to the potential acceptance of the task force’s recommendations. The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved ACWC’s recommendation to study the status of women at all levels of the church, calling for the creation of the Status of Women Task Force. While restructuring slowed the initiation of this group and its work, the Status of Women Task Force has been created and met once in January 2010. The task force will continue its assigned function and report back to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

b. Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Services

The Health and Sexuality working group of ACWC monitored the development of legislative limitations on the availability of and access to reproductive health services for men and women in the United States and internationally. They studied “truth in advertising” issues related to self-described “abortion counseling clinics,” and questioned the availability of adequate scientific sexuality education. Further, they examined the inactivity by the PC(USA) in advocating for existing church policies and reviewed new PC(USA) materials and policy regarding sexual misconduct.

c. Ecumenical Focus

The committee has found that connections made through various ecumenical channels have provided resources and information for the committee that would otherwise have not been possible. Connections to the National Council of Churches’ Justice for Women’s Working Group and intentional participation in conferences like Ecumenical Advocacy Days and in groups like Ecumenical Women at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women have deeply benefitted and informed the work of ACWC. The committee values ecumenical partnerships, particularly in a time when resources are limited in all denominations.

d. Young Women

The committee continues to be committed to working toward intentional inclusion of younger women in the work of the committee, and has spent considerable time considering the ways in which it could be more welcoming to younger women. Some of the younger members currently on ACWC have been instrumental in considering ways in which serving on the committee could be made more accessible to young women.

e. Intersectionality

The committee has worked to become more aware of and intentional about the places where women’s issues intersect with those of race, class, disability, etc., recognizing that most women find themselves at the intersection of more than one social identity marker that may influence the way they are treated and experience the world.

f. Partnering with Programmatic Staff of the GAMC

The committee is still working to adjust to the still relatively new separation of gender justice policy and program work. They have been intentional about staying connected with the staff of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/ Presbyterian Women, and look forward to continuing to build their relationships with these women in order to make the work of gender justice in the church as effective as possible.

g. Staffing Shifts

As of shortly following the 219th General Assembly (2010), ACWC has begun sharing their staff person with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC). This provides a definite challenge to both committees in having adequate access to the resources staff provides and in finding meeting times that don’t overlap or occur too close together. The committee is concerned about how staff will manage at the General Assembly, when demands of both committees will be extremely high.

5. Actions of the Committee for Consideration of the 220th General Assembly (2012)

a. Resolutions in Response to Assigned Referrals

• A Resolution to Continue the Work of Deborah’s Daughters (Response to 2004 Referral: Item 05-03)
6. **ACWC’s 2012 Resolutions**

- A Resolution to Encourage Participation in the Words Matter Project
- A Resolution on Justice for Survivors of Sexual Assault
- A Resolution to Ensure Implementation of Updated and Detailed Safe Child Policy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

**Appendix 5**

[Taken from the *Minutes*, 2012, Part I, pp. 871–72, electronic version.]

**Item 10-20**

*A Resolution to Recommit to Celebrating the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) do the following:

1. Call on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to recommit to honoring and celebrating women of color, extending the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God to 2022.

2. Direct the Moderator, Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to communicate by the end of 2012 with congregations, presbyteries and synods, seminaries, campus ministries and conference centers asking them to recognize the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God and incorporate it in worship, conferences, training events and other activities.

3. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to provide annual funding in the amount of $7000 for the Joint Working Group (up to eight members) to meet independently of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns once each year, to be incorporated into the per capita budget every year.

4. Direct the General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to include the Joint Working Group in the planning of future Women of Color Consultations.

5. Direct General Assembly Mission Council (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) to lift up the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God in its web-based and print publications periodically throughout the decade.

**Rationale**

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2008 Referral: Item 09-13. Report, Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: Shunning Old Discords and Sharing New Harmonies, Recommendation 3. Direct the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) to Create a Permanent Joint Working Group on Women of Color in the Church, to Be Made Up of Two Members of ACREC and Two Members of ACWC, Appointed by the Leadership of Each Committee—From the Women of Color Consultation Task Force (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77).

The Joint Working Group was formed as a permanent committee as a result of the recommendations that came from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, which were approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008), (*Minutes*, 2008, Part I, pp. 54, 55, 964–77). They had their first meeting in July of 2009 in conjunction with a joint meeting of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC). They met again in January 2010, doing the work of monitoring the church’s response to issues and concerns raised in the initial Women of Color Consultation. They brought to the attention of both advocacy committees a number of issues directly affecting women of color. The Joint Working Group has not met since, due to the inability of the group to currently function under the parameters originally established for them. The ACWC is recommending new provisions for the Joint Working Group in order that this permanent monitoring committee established by the 218th General Assembly (2008) can continue to carry out its mandated work.

As reported to the 219th General Assembly (2010), the Women of Color Joint Working Group along with ACWC and ACREC have been discouraged by the lack of or inadequate responses to their referral monitoring inquiries. By the 219th General Assembly (2010), two years of the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God had gone by largely unrecognized. While the referrals from the 218th General Assembly (2008) called for the Decade to be communicated widely, requests from the Joint Working Group and the advocacy committees asking for such promotion and education resulted in no action. This decade (2009–2019) was intended to call the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to hear and sing new songs—those of women of color—in order to more faithfully represent and reflect all people of God, celebrating in particular the lives and gifts of women of color. (See *Hearing and Singing New Songs To God: http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acrec/pdf/woctaskforcereport.pdf*) Clearly, the Joint Working Group has found this lack of response discouraging and disheartening. While some effort has recently come from the General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to acknowledge the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God, these efforts to publicize the Decade have come almost three years after it was supposed to have begun. The Joint Working Group suspects this sudden action is in direct
correlation with the need to report to the 220th General Assembly (2012) on what has been done, and would draw the assembly’s attention to the late date at which this minimal action has been taken.

In passing the recommendations from the Women of Color Consultation Task Force, the 219th General Assembly (2010) reaffirmed the commitment of the PC(USA) to be a community of “full participation and representation” of every member of the body of Christ (Book of Order, F.1.0403), while also acknowledging that this commitment still requires a tremendous amount of intentionality and work—especially when it comes to the genuine and equitable inclusion of women of color in the life and decision making of the church. Sadly, in 2012, three years after the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God was to have begun, very few people in the denomination know what it is.

Restructuring within the GAMC (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency) has also had a direct effect on the Joint Working Group. When the Joint Working Group was formed, the advocacy committee staffing situation was of a different model from what exists now. This has direct bearing on the Joint Working Group’s ability to come together to meet. When the Joint Working Group was formed, each advocacy committee had their own staff person to resource them with expertise in their particular area of advocacy and to assist them in completing their work. This allowed the two committees to meet once a year at the same time in the same place, where they would use a portion of their time to come together to share their work with one another and often work together on intersecting issues. Due to restructuring of the GAMC (soon to be Presbyterian Mission Agency), since 2010, the two advocacy committees have shared one staff person. Since one person cannot resource and assist two groups at one time, the advocacy committees can no longer meet simultaneously. The Joint Working Group (who also share the same staff person as the advocacy committees) is thus unable fulfill the directive from the 218th General Assembly (2008) to meet when the advocacy committees meet together.

When they were able to meet directly following those simultaneous advocacy committee meetings, the Joint Working Group (four of whose members are on the advocacy committees) was able to save tremendously on travel cost. Four of their (up to) eight members were able to have their travel covered by the advocacy committees, with whom those four were already meeting anyway. Neither advocacy committee incurred any extra cost, as this was one of their regularly scheduled meetings. The only travel cost the Joint Working Group had to pay was for their two to four at-large members. Given the structure of the current staffing situation, this scenario is no longer possible, meaning that in order for the Joint Working Group to continue to meet once a year as mandated by the 218th General Assembly (2008), their budget must be increased. They have to this point only been allotted only $3060 a year, which cannot cover travel and meeting expenses for six to eight people.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) has the opportunity to recommit to our call to be a church that more faithfully and fairly reflects the diversity of the body of Christ. Given that the 218th General Assembly (2008) saw fit to create the permanent Joint Working Group, the church has a responsibility to continue to support this group. The booklet describing the history, context and mandate of the Joint Working Group, called Hearing and Singing New Songs to God (http://www.pcUSA.org/media/uploads/acrec/pdf/wocctaskforcereport.pdf), is available online, so making this resource and the context of the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God known would cost little to nothing. To begin the Decade again would serve to show our willingness to admit that we haven’t yet done what we committed to do, but that from this point we will indeed lift new songs to God and in our actions reflect our commitment to celebrating the lives and gifts of women of color in this denomination.

Appendix 6
Research Services Summary Report of Survey Conducted
Review of General Assembly Permanent Committee: Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns

Introduction

During the latter half of 2013 Research Services contributed to a review of one of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly permanent committees by surveying representatives of various denominational constituencies about the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC). In carrying out this evaluation, Research Services collaborated with the PC(USA) staff members who work with the ACWC.

The following are highlights from the survey results:

• Among all respondents:
  ◦ Nearly half (46%) report being very familiar (15%) or somewhat familiar (31%) with the ACWC. Over one quarter (26%) report being not familiar with the ACWC.
  ◦ Eight in ten respondents (82%) believe it is very important that the General Assembly and its agencies and committees work toward gender justice in the PC(USA), with another 11% of respondents finding such work somewhat important.
  ◦ When asked if the PC(USA) should keep the ACWC, almost two-thirds of respondents (63%) answer yes, their work is very important. Another 14% respond yes, their work is somewhat important. Almost one-fifth of respondents (17%) answer that they don’t know.

• Among respondents who are at all familiar with the ACWC:
  ◦ When asked if the work of the ACWC supports the mission of the PC(USA), three-quarters (75%) answer yes, very much. Another 20% answer yes, somewhat.
Almost three-fourths (74%) of respondents believe that the ACWC has been very faithful (53%) or somewhat faithful (21%) to its stated purpose over the last seven years. Over one-fifth (21%) of respondents, however, report they don’t know how faithful the ACWC has been to its purpose statement during this time.

Over eight in ten respondents (82%) believe it is very important for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC. Another 10% of respondents believe it is somewhat important for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC.

The remainder of the report will explore various aspects of the survey and how various sub-groups responded. Readers can refer to Appendix A for the percentages of responses for each category of every question.

Constituencies Surveyed

Research Services surveyed nine different constituencies. These were:

- 237 members of the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen
- 67 participants in the Commission on the Status of Women
- 136 members of the Justice and Peace Network
- 141 members of Presbyterian Women
- 99 members of the Feminist Agenda Network
- 38 committee members from the 2012 General Assembly
- 181 Discipleship in the Global Community newsletter subscribers
- 90 Presbyterian Mission Agency staff

These constituencies were grouped together to create three sub-groups. The 2012 General Assembly committee members and the selected PMA staff formed a general Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) group (identified hereafter as General PC(USA)). The National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen, Commission on the Status of Women, Justice and Peace Network, Presbyterian Women, and Feminist Agenda Network formed a sub-group of groups doing work similar to the ACWC (identified hereafter as Similar Work). The Discipleship in the Global Community newsletter subscribers formed a general justice-related group (General Justice).

Response Rates

The total response rate among all groups of respondents was 47%. In the end, 427 surveys were completed out of 902 individuals invited to participate (there were 87 invitations returned due to incorrect email address). Table 1 displays the response rates for each of the three sub-groups identified above.

Table 1: Response Rates for General PC(USA), Similar Work, and General Justice Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General PC(USA)</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar Work</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Justice</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

When asked if they are a teaching elder (minister) in the PC(USA), half of respondents (50%) say that they are, with nearly four in ten (38%) being active and the rest (12%) being retired. The survey also asks respondents to indicate their role or affiliation with the PC(USA), with results as follows. Thirty-six percent of respondents are members of a PC(USA) congregation. Eleven percent are staff of one of the six General Assembly agencies, and 11% are clerks or ruling elders on the session of a congregation. Almost a fifth of respondents (19%) report being an other ruling elder (not currently serving on session). Seventeen percent of respondents are either leaders or members of a congregational Presbyterian Women circle. Seventeen percent of respondents report being members of the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen. (Percentages here add up to more than 100% because respondents could select more than one role or affiliation with the PC(USA).)

A majority of respondents are women (88%). Over three-quarters of respondents (78%) identify as white, while 20% identify as racial/ethnic.

Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns

Familiarity

Almost half (46%) of respondents report being very familiar (15%) or somewhat familiar (31%) with the ACWC. A sizable number of respondents (26%) report that they are not familiar with the ACWC. Almost half of General PC(USA) respondents (48%) and Similar Work respondents (46%) are very familiar or somewhat familiar with the ACWC, while fewer General Justice respondents (38%) report being so.
Respondents who are at least “slightly familiar” with the ACWC were asked how they would rate their familiarity with the work the ACWC has done in the past seven years on each of nine topics. (See Figure 1.) Of these topics, respondents report being most familiar with the work of the ACWC on gender-inclusive language when talking about people (57% very familiar) and expansive language for God (54% very familiar). Almost half of the total sample is very familiar with the ACWC’s work on the participation and inclusion of women of color (49%) and violence against women (48%).

Nearly half of respondents (45%) are not familiar with the ACWC’s work over the past seven years on feminicide in Juarez. Almost four in ten (39%) are not familiar with the ACWC’s work on the (?) Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.

Among the sub-groups of respondents, over half of General PC(USA) respondents are very familiar with the ACWC’s work over the past seven years on gender-inclusive language when talking about people (64%), expansive language for God (62%), and participation and inclusion of women of color (55%). Over half of Similar Work respondents were very familiar with the ACWC’s work on gender-inclusive language when talking about people (55%), expansive language for God (51%), and violence against women (51%). Over half of General Justice respondents were very familiar with the ACWC’s work on gender-inclusive language when talking about people (63%) and expansive language for God (58%). For all three sub-groups, the two topics with which respondents were least familiar were feminicide in Juarez and the Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God.

Faithfulness, Effectiveness, and Support

Among respondents who are at least “slightly familiar” with the ACWC, over half (53%) believe that over the past seven years, ACWC has been very faithful to its stated purpose:

*The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is called by the General Assembly to be a voice of justice and advocacy for women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and around the world, in order to give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership. To this end, we advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of life and work in the church and society. 'Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?' Proverbs 8:1.*

Another 21% report that the ACWC has been somewhat faithful to this purpose. A significant minority of respondents (21%), however, don’t know how faithful the ACWC has been to this purpose. Each of the sub-groups’ responses generally mirror the findings from all respondents.

Respondents who are at least “slightly familiar” with the ACWC were also asked how effective this committee has been over the past seven years in five specific areas. (See Figure 2.) Majorities of these respondents believe the ACWC has been “very effective” or “somewhat effective” in each of these areas.
Figure 2: Effectiveness of ACWC Over the Past Seven Years in Five Specific Areas

When respondents who are at least “slightly familiar” with the ACWC were asked if the work of the ACWC supports the mission of the PC(USA), three-quarters (75%) overall answer yes, very much. Another 20% respond yes, somewhat; only 1% does not believe the work of the ACWC supports the mission of the PC(USA). Figure 4 displays the level of agreement among the sub-groups regarding whether or not the work of the ACWC supports the mission of the PC(USA).

Figure 4: Does the Work of the ACWC Support the Mission of the PC(USA)?

ACWC’s Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses

Respondents who are at least “slightly familiar” with ACWC were asked how strong or weak the ACWC is in seven specific areas. A majority of respondents report that the ACWC is very strong or somewhat strong in each of the areas: expertise in women’s concerns (77%), responsiveness to women’s concerns (75%), expanding the vision for gender justice within the PC(USA) (74%), research and analysis of women’s concerns (66%), monitoring General Assembly policies and procedures (66%), representativeness of the PC(USA) as a whole (63%), and as a voice for transforming society (59%).

A significant minority of respondents report that they don’t know if the ACWC is strong or weak in each of the seven areas, with the largest percentages responding don’t know for the following: monitoring General Assembly policies and procedures (27%), representativeness of the PC(USA) as a whole (24%), and research and analysis of women’s concerns (22%).

Figure 5 displays the findings for areas of greatest strength among each of the sub-groups sampled. While some differences among the groups exist, over half of all respondents in each sub-group believe the ACWC is very strong or somewhat strong in all of the areas listed.
Respondents who are at all familiar with the ACWC were asked how important it is for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC. Over eight in ten respondents (82%) believe it is very important, and another 10% believe it is somewhat important. Only 2% of respondents believe it is somewhat important for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC, while only 1% respond not important and 4% are of no opinion or not sure.

Among the three sub-groups, around three-quarters or more of each believe it is very important that the PC(USA) has the ACWC (Similar Work, 85%; General PC(USA), 74%; General Justice, 74%). (See Figure 6.) No respondents in the Similar Work or General Justice sub-groups believe that it is not important for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC, compared to 6% of respondents in the General PC(USA) sub-group.
When asked if the PC(USA) should keep the ACWC, six in ten respondents (63%) say yes, their work is very important. Another 14% respond with yes, their work is somewhat important; 4% say yes, their work is slightly important. Only 1% of respondents believe that no, their work is not important, while another 1% respond no, the PC(USA) has achieved gender equality. One in six (17%) respond don't know.

Across sub-groups we find that over half of respondents in the General PC(USA) group (53%) and General Justice group (55%) believe that the PC(USA) should keep the ACWC because their work is very important, with over two-thirds of the Similar Work group (68%) answering the same. One-fifth (20%) of those in the General Justice sub-group, 18% of those in the General PC(USA) sub-group, and 17% of those in the Similar Work sub-group respond that they don't know if the PC(USA) should keep the ACWC.

Comparing the responses of men and women to the question of whether the PC(USA) should keep the ACWC, two-thirds of women (66%) and fewer than half of men (45%) answer yes, their work is very important.

Most Important Issues for ACWC to Address

Society-wide and/or Global Issues

Respondents who are at least “slightly familiar” with the ACWC were given a list of 14 society-wide and/or global issues, and asked to choose the three that are the most important for the ACWC to examine and make recommendations to the General Assembly about. (See Table 2.) Over half of respondents identify human trafficking (66%) and domestic violence (51%) as one of the top three society-wide and/or global issues the ACWC should examine, while three in ten select equal pay for women and men (33%) and reproductive health (31%).

Table 2: Most Important Society-wide and/or Global Issues for ACWC to Examine and Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human trafficking</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay for women and men</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive health</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminicide</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial inequality</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectification of women's bodies</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution/sex work</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among each of the sample sub-groups, human trafficking (General PC(USA), 70%; Similar Work, 67%; General Justice, 55%), domestic violence (51%; 53%; 42%), and equal pay for women and men (30%; 34%; 29%) are consistently the top three society-wide and/or global issues cited as most important for the ACWC to examine and address.

Denominational Issues

Respondents who are at all familiar with the ACWC were also given a list of seven denominational issues, and asked to choose the two they believe are the most important issues for the ACWC to examine and make recommendations to the General Assembly about. (See Table 3.)
Over half of respondents (52%) identify pay equity for women teaching elders (ministers) and other PC(USA) women staff as one of the two most important issues the ACWC should examine and address within the denomination. Four in ten respondents chose representation of women in PC(USA) leadership (41%) and participation and inclusion of women of color (40%) as one of the two most important denominational issues for the ACWC to address.

Table 3: Most Important Denominational Issues for ACWC to Examine and Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay equity for women teaching elders (ministers) and other PC(USA) women staff</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation of women in PC(USA) leadership</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansive language for God</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual misconduct</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Mission Agency programs</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive language for people</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansive language for God</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual misconduct</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Mission Agency programs</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive language for people</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the General PC(USA) and General Justice sub-groups, the two denominational issues selected most often as ones that the ACWC should examine and address are participation and inclusion of women of color (General PC(USA), 47%; General Justice, 53%) and pay equity for women teaching elders (ministers) and other PC(USA) women staff (45%; 47%). For the Similar Work sub-group, pay equity for women teaching elders (ministers) and other PC(USA) women staff (54%) and representation of women in PC(USA) leadership (46%) are the two most important issues.

Attitudes toward Gender Issues

In consultation with the ACWC, the survey included a battery of questions that focused on attitudes toward a number of different gender issues. The results from this section will provide an ideological context within which the previous set of results can be understood.

Working toward Achieving Gender Justice in the Denomination, American Society, and Throughout the World

Among all respondents, eight in ten (82%) believe that it is very important for the General Assembly and its agencies and committees to work toward gender justice in the PC(USA). Similarly, 82% of the General Justice sub-group and 86% of the Similar Work sub-group also think that working toward gender justice in the PC(USA) is very important. However, just over two-thirds (67%) of the General PC(USA) sub-group believe that working toward gender justice in the PC(USA) is very important.

Analyzing this question by the gender of the respondents reveals that six in ten men (62%) believe it is very important that the General Assembly and its agencies and committees work toward gender justice in the PC(USA), compared to over eight in ten women (85%).

When asked whether the PC(USA)’s councils should do more to support women teaching elders (ministers) even at the expense of supporting other constituencies, over half of all respondents (56%) answered either yes, much more (19%) or yes, somewhat more (37%). One in ten respondents (11%) believe the PC(USA)’s councils should do nothing more, while 14% of respondents don’t know.

When asked whether the PC(USA) should direct more or fewer resources toward achieving gender justice throughout American society, 22% of all respondents answer direct many more resources, 40% respond direct somewhat more resources, and 18% choose direct the same amount of resources. Very few respondents want to direct somewhat fewer resources (2%) or direct much fewer resources (3%). Fifteen percent respond that they don’t know whether the PC(USA) should direct more or fewer resources toward this end.

When widening the lens even further by asking whether the PC(USA) should direct more or fewer resources toward achieving gender justice throughout the world, 32% of all respondents answer direct many more resources. Thirty-four percent respond direct somewhat
more resources, and 16% choose direct the same amount of resources. Again, few respondents answer either direct somewhat fewer resources (3%) or direct much fewer resources (2%). Fourteen percent of respondents don’t know whether the PC(USA) should direct more or fewer resources to this cause. (See Figure 8 for how each sample sub-group responds to this question.)

Figure 8: Sub-groups’ Opinions About Whether the PC(USA) Should Direct More or Fewer Resources Toward Achieving Gender Justice Throughout the World

\[\text{Direct many more resources} \quad \text{Direct somewhat more resources} \quad \text{Direct the same amount of resources} \quad \text{Direct somewhat fewer resources} \quad \text{Direct much fewer resources} \quad \text{Don’t know}\]

**Gender Inequality in the PC(USA)**

When asked about how widespread gender inequality is in the PC(USA), 24% of all respondents believe it is very widespread. Four out of ten respondents (41%) believe it is somewhat widespread. One in ten (10%) are neutral, while fewer believe it is either somewhat rare (7%) or very rare (1%). Almost one-fifth of the sample (17%) responded that they don’t know how rare or widespread gender inequality is in the PC(USA).

Regarding responses among the sub-groups, those individuals in the Similar Work sub-group more often believe that gender inequality in the PC(USA) is very widespread (26%), compared to 20% of the General Justice sub-group and 19% of the General PC(USA) sub-group.

When looking at this same question in terms of the gender of the respondents, a much larger percentage of men believe gender inequality in the PC(USA) is very rare or somewhat rare (17%) compared to women (7%). Many more women view gender inequality in the PC(USA) as very widespread or somewhat widespread (67%) compared to men (53%).

Respondents were asked whether women or men have more opportunities for career advancement as teaching elders (ministers) in the PC(USA). Over half (58%) believe that men have many more opportunities for such career advancement. Over one-fifth of the total sample (23%) believe men have more, but only slightly more, opportunities. Thirteen percent of the sample choose don’t know/not sure when asked about gender inequality in career advancement for teaching elders (ministers) in the PC(USA). Among the sub-groups, the Similar Work sub-group has the most respondents (63%) who perceive men as having many more opportunities for career advancement as teaching elders (ministers), compared to the General PC(USA) group (46%) and General Justice group (45%).(See Figure 9.)

Figure 9: Perceived Gender Inequality in Opportunities for Career Advancement as Teaching Elders (Ministers), by Sub-group

\[\text{Men have many more opportunities} \quad \text{Men have more, but only slightly more, opportunities} \quad \text{Women and men have equal opportunities} \quad \text{Women have more, but only slightly more, opportunities} \quad \text{Women have many more opportunities}\]

**Gender Inclusive Language and Expansive Language for God**

As discussed earlier in this report, respondents who are at least slightly familiar with the ACWC were asked how they would rate their familiarity with the work the ACWC has done on nine specific topics over the past seven years. More respondents report being very famil-
iar with the ACWC’s work on gender inclusive language and expansive language for God, compared to any of the other specific topics listed (see Figure 1). When all respondents were later asked how important it is to them, personally, that worship services use gender-inclusive language when talking about people, Among all respondents, almost two-thirds (63%) believe it is very important. Another 18% believe it is somewhat important. Over one-tenth (13%), however, believe it is not important.

Among the sub-groups, respondents in the Similar Work sub-group are most likely to believe gender-inclusive language is very important (67%), compared to the General Justice (57%) and General PC(USA) (50%) sub-groups.

When asked how God is best understood, almost half of respondents (49%) believe God is best understood in gender-neutral terms (beyond gender). Four in ten (41%) believe God is best understood in both masculine and feminine terms. Just 8% believe God is best understood in masculine terms, with no one responding that God is best understood in feminine terms.

In looking at the sub-groups’ responses to the question of how God is best understood, while a majority of each sub-group believes God is best understood in either gender-neutral or both masculine and feminine terms, the General PC(USA) sub-group has the largest percentage of respondents (19%) who believe God is best understood in masculine terms (compared to the General Justice (7%) and Similar Work (6%) sub-groups). (See Figure 10.)

Figure 10: How God Is Best Understood, by Sub-Group

Conclusion

Overall, respondents demonstrated both a high regard for the work of the ACWC but somewhat limited knowledge and familiarity with the ACWC. A clear majority of the respondents believe:

• The work of the ACWC supports the mission of the PC(USA)
• The ACWC has been faithful to its purpose statement over the last seven years
• It is very important for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC
• It is very important that the General Assembly and its agencies and committees work toward gender justice in the PC(USA)
• The PC(USA) should keep the ACWC because the work of the committee is important


PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-17

Comment on Item 09-17—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board is in compliance with the appendix to its Manual of Operations, cited by the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns. The language in the appendix reads: “This Advocacy Committee shall consist of … one Presbyterian Mission Agency Board nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board Nominating and Governance Subcommittee and elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to serve a four-year non-renewable term. This voting member fulfills the responsibility of liaison between the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Advocacy Committee.” The Manual of Operations also includes this provision: “When no current member of the Presbyterian Mission
Agency Board has the gifts or abilities required to serve on particular boards or entities that require Board representation, the Board Nominating Committee may select nominees from past Board members.”

At its February 2012 meeting, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board elected a voting member to serve a four-year, nonrenewable term (expiring in 2016) on the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns. This member completes his service on the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board at the conclusion of the 221st General Assembly (2014), having served since 2008. However, his term on the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is not complete until 2016, creating the concern raised by the advocacy committee.

This concern was raised by staff in February and options have been relayed to the advocacy committee, including asking the duly-elected board member to resign from the advocacy committee before the end of his term (so that a current board member might be elected), and considering a shortening of the length of the term of service on the advocacy committee (if the member must be a board member for all four years on the advocacy committee, then this shortens the list of eligible members by one third, and finding members with sufficient time to serve on all the required additional committees has become quite a challenge.) The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board advises the General Assembly to disapprove Recommendation 6 since the Manual of Operations is being followed, and alternate solutions are being discussed.

### Item 09-18

[The assembly approved Item 09-18. See pp. 15, 39.]

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) set the membership of the GACOR committee as fourteen members-at-large, distributed as equal as possible from the regions described by Standing Rule I.1.d. No two members shall reside in the same presbytery.

**Rationale**

To be faithful stewards at a time of reduced resources and anticipating mid council restructuring, the GACOR proposes a reduction from sixteen members. Recognizing that our work is expanding, we further recommend that membership should be no fewer than fourteen members. Standing Rule (I.1.d.) describes the four regions used to determine the location of General Assembly meetings to distribute them nationally. These regions will provide the nominating committee guidance to maintain geographic distribution of GACOR membership.

**ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-18**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-18—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 09-18.

The ACREC disagrees with this recommendation to reduce the General Assembly Committee on Representation’s (GACOR’s) committee members. The GACOR should remain, at the minimum, at its present levels, at least for the next two years. The GACOR was recently given additional responsibilities, including developing affirmative action and supplier diversity goals for six agencies. In order to timely complete the work that has been assigned, more not fewer committee members are needed.

Further, any reduction in the GACOR committee size also decreases the potential for diversity, particularly the racial ethnic representation. Simply consider the number of “identified,” if not “officially recognized,” racial ethnic groups that are part of the PC(USA) and the “inclusiveness” and “participation in decision making” guaranteed by the Articles of Agreement, and it becomes clear that diminishing the size of GACOR is not feasible.

### Item 09-19

[The assembly approved Item 09-19 with amendment. See pp. 15, 39.]

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the GACOR to convene a table with leaders, designated by the six agencies for the purpose of developing a standard definition of supplier diversity for the PC(USA), and any related terms or criteria necessary; and also to

---

a. revise any appropriate manuals and guidelines; and
b. report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

2. Direct the six agencies of the PC(USA) (PMA, Office of the General Assembly [OGA], Presbyterian Publishing Corporation [PPC], Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. [PILP], Foundations [FDN], and Board of Pensions [BOP]) to
   
   [a. provide annual status reports on supplier diversity (all strata) to GACOR.]
   
   [b. provide annual status reports on representation of women, persons of color, and persons with disability in its employment (all strata) to GACOR.]

Rationale

Rationale for Recommendations 1 and 2a


The 220th General Assembly (2012) gave a primary role to the GACOR regarding the review and recommendation of new goals for supplier diversity and AAEO for each of the six agencies of the PC(USA), in consultation with the agencies and advocacy committees (Item 11-17 Rec. 2–2g, from the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 45, 1103-05 of the CD; pp. 33, 250-251, 1091-93 of the print copy). Resuming this practice in 2013, GACOR receives annual data reports in these areas and interprets them in their biennial reports to the assembly.

It has become clear in the first year of implementation that there is confusion on what qualities or conditions constitute diverse suppliers. It will be difficult to determine if the goals are appropriate when there is no consensus on what the terms mean. There is a need to develop a standard definition and criteria for supplier diversity. The GACOR is the logical convener of a table where representatives from the agencies themselves determine a standard, as they have the expertise to do so in consultation. The purchasing manager in the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) is an essential partner in these discussions.

Reporting back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) will declare the agreed standard to the whole church and will be used by GACOR to evaluate work in these areas as well as determining when revision of goals for supplier diversity are needed. This will also assist the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) in its cultural proficiency reviews of the agencies in a six-year cycle.

The GACOR reports biennially to the assembly, but the six-year cycle of reviews of supplier diversity and its benchmarks will take place more regularly. Therefore, an annual reporting of this data will better equip the committee in its designated work. Recommendation 2a. and 2.b. simply makes clear the expectation of annual reporting.

Rationale for Recommendation 2b


Like the response to the previous referral, GACOR reports biennially to the assembly, but the six-year cycle of reviews of affirmative action/equal employment opportunity goals and benchmarks take place more regularly. An annual reporting of this data will better equip the committee in its assigned work.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-19

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-19—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 09-19.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) recently was designated as the church entity to recommend revisions to affirmative action and EEO goals and policies, including supplier diversity. See Item-11-17, Privilege, Power and
Policy: The Church as an Employer (2012). Supplier diversity is the modern name for minority vendor policy. Minority Vendor Policy was established in 1984 and was defined as “the purchase of goods and services ... from businesses owned by racial ethnic people.” A goal of 10 percent was set for all purchases made by church agencies from companies owned by women and people of color. As such, it is important to understand the parameters and practical definition of “supplier diversity.” In practice, however, are agencies purchasing goods and services from a minority-owned firm? What percentage of ownership is required? Would a nonminority owned firm with more than 50 percent of its workforce comprised of racial ethnics qualify? What policies are in place to allow for other companies to be considered. It is important that this is clearly understood. The GACOR should develop this standard definition of “supplier diversity” in consultation with the six agencies.

Item 09-20

[The assembly approved Item 09-20. See pp. 15, 39.]


Given the global crisis for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons and their families in eighty-one countries where homosexuality is illegal and the impact of persecution that threatens their lives, health, and safety, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does the following:

1. Encourages each Presbyterian to hold in prayer our LGBT sisters and brothers in the countries where they are vulnerable around the world.

2. Encourages the Presbyterian Mission Agency to create educational resources about the critical global LGBT situation and forward those resources to synods and presbyteries for study and action.

3. Encourages Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations to consider preparations to provide sanctuary, safety, and support for LGBT refugees and asylum seekers.

[Financial Implications: $9,726 (2015) PMA]

Rationale

God’s global family includes Presbyterians in more than 100 countries with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission partnerships in more than fifty countries. In eighty-one countries where homosexuality is illegal, God’s global family includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people who face persecution for simply being who they are, for whom they love, and with whom they create a family. Harsh sentences including life in prison can be imposed in a growing number of countries such as Uganda and Nigeria.

In addition to the criminalization of homosexuality, the death penalty can be imposed in ten countries. Persecution in the form of anti-propaganda laws such as in Russia engenders violence against LGBT persons and hinders HIV-AIDS and human rights work. Evangelism and pastoral care that could be offered to LGBT persons and their families in these countries by local congregations and our mission co-workers is significantly compromised because of criminalization and persecution.

Scripture, the Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) inspire and require solidarity and ministry with the LGBT people and their families around the world whose well-being and very lives are threatened by the laws of their own countries and the resulting experiences of oppression and persecution.

A Brief Statement of Faith proclaims to the world the way the Holy Spirit inspires us “to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace” (Book of Confessions, 10.4, Lines 70–71).

Psalm 9:9: “The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.”

Matthew 25:34–40:

“Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me;’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

63 Climate for Change Task Force, Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as an Employer, Item 11-17 of the 220th General Assembly (2012), <http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28gbht3ojcqzu22aaij11kxyyt%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3951&promoid=239>
Doing Justice:
Justice is the order God sets in human life for fair and honest dealing and for giving rights to those who have no power to claim rights for themselves. The biblical vision of doing justice calls for:

a. dealing honestly in personal and public business
b. exercising power for the common good,
c. supporting people who seek the dignity, freedom, and respect that they have been denied,
d. working for fair laws and just administration of the law,
e. welcoming the stranger in the land,
f. seeking to overcome the disparity between rich and poor,
g. bearing witness against political oppression and exploitation,
h. redressing wrongs against individuals, groups, and peoples in the church, in this nation, and in the whole world

*Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Lines 65–71: “In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage … to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.”

The encouragement of social activism in the world is a sign of the community of God. The *Book of Order* states this in F-1.0304:

The great ends of the church are:

- the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
- the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
- the promotion of social righteousness; and
- the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

### ACSWP Advice and Counsel on Item 09-20

**Advice and Counsel on Item 09-20—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).**

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-20.

This commissioners’ resolution is consistent with existing PC(USA) policy. The PC(USA) historically supported the basic human rights of all people, including prima facie discrimination against sexual minorities. The UN Human Rights Committee has urged states to pass antidiscrimination legislation that expressly includes sexual orientation, and to prohibit in their constitutions all discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Furthermore, the U.S. has recently begun to recognize violence against sexual minorities as grounds for asylum. Immigration Equality helped more than two hundred LGBT asylum petitions, a 250 percent increase from 2009.

### ACWC Advice and Counsel on Item 09-20

**Advice and Counsel on Item 09-20—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.**

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-20.

The commissioners’ resolution clearly states the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s long-standing belief in the basic human rights of all of God’s children. LGBTQ persons share the same humanity as heterosexual persons and are equal partners in the body of Christ. Patriarchal definitions of men and women are socially constructed and limit the full humanity of all. Therefore, encouraging Presbyterians, as they are able, and providing resources to equip them to become advocates for
LGBTQ persons, even to the point of offering sanctuary to those forced to flee, will enhance the church’s ministry to brothers and sisters who suffer in so many places across the world.

**Item 09-21**

*[The assembly answered Item 09-21 by the action taken on Item 09-07. See pp. 32, 39.]*

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Advocating Regulation of Ammunition.*

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) advocates legislation to regulate ammunition and urges federal and state governments to enact such legislation.

**Rationale**

In one year, on average more than 100,000 people in America are shot in murders, assaults, suicides and suicide attempts, accidents, or by police intervention (statistics from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence).

Nearly 3,000 children in the United States are killed by guns each year (Children’s Defense Fund, “Protect Children, Not Guns, 2012” [Washington, D.C.]).

In one given year, 17 people in Finland, 35 people in Australia, 39 people in England and Wales, 60 people in Spain, 194 people in Germany, 200 people in Canada, and 9,484 people in the United States were murdered with guns (statistics from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence)

The gun murder rate in America is twenty times higher than any other developed country.

In December 2012, twenty first graders and six of their teachers in an elementary school in Connecticut were killed by a crazed gunman with an assault rifle.

After the tragic shooting in Aurora, Colorado, Mayor Bloomberg of NYC lamented that showing sympathy to the victims is fine but what is needed is action to address the crisis.

Finally, President Obama has called for an action agenda to prevent further gun violence.

At this time, legal and illegal gun owners can easily buy ammunition for those guns online, at a superstore, or at a gun show.

The Justice and Peace Committee of the Presbyterian Women of Detroit in past polls of our membership found that gun violence was one of their top concerns.

In studying the issue, the Justice & Peace Committee believes that regulating ammunition would help prevent further gun violence ... not really banning bullets but making it a lot harder to get the ammunition to shoot those guns.

Ammunition would only be sold by licensed sellers and the buyer would have to show proof that he or she has had a background check.

This proposal does not take away the rights of what the National Rifle Association and gun owners say is their constitutional right to bear arms. (Second amendment: “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.”)

Other countries with strong gun regulation laws don’t have the mind-blowing statistics of people killed and wounded by guns as we do in America. We MUST assure peace and tranquility to the people of the United States of America.

This proposal has been approved by the Coordinating Team of the PWPD, the Social Justice and Peacemaking Committee of the Presbytery of Detroit, and the Presbytery of Detroit.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-21**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 09-21—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 09-21 be approved with amendment as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]
“The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) advocates [that federal and state govern-
ments]

“[1. enact] legislation to regulate ammunition[. guided by Gun Violence, Gospel Values, as approved by the 219th
General Assembly (2010)]. [and urges federal and state governments to enact such legislation]

“[2. invest in the development, promotion, and use of ‘smart gun’ and ‘smart ammunition’ technologies that will
help to prevent unintended and accidental shootings and aid law enforcement in reducing gun violence.]”

This commissioners’ resolution recommends the regulation of ammunition of firearms. As noted in the Rationale of this
item, the number of gun deaths in the United States far outstrip gun deaths in countries with stronger regulation, where guns
and ammunition are harder to access.

Regulation of ammunition is consistent with current General Assembly policy related to gun violence. Specifically the
218th General Assembly (2008) called for a ban on high-capacity magazines and “for new technologies, such as micro-
stamping, in which identifying information from a gun is transferred onto bullet cartridges, which allow law enforcement to
more easily trace guns and solve crimes” (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 859).

Such tracking of firearm ammunition would be a significant step forward in gun violence prevention. According to
of Justice report found last year that at least three companies … had developed owner-recognition abilities. The manufactur-
ers argue that these new technologies could prevent suicides, accidental shootings, and death of police officers whose guns
were wrested away in a struggle.”

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-21

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-21—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-21.

In light of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns’ strong support for ending gun violence (see Items 09-01
and Item 09-07), ACREC also strongly supports Item 09-21. It stands to reason that the call to enact laws to restrict easy ac-
tss to guns would be accompanied by legislation to regulate ammunition as well.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-21

Comment on Item 09-21—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This commissioners’ resolution calls for the regulation of ammunition of firearms. It is consistent with current General
Assembly policy related to reducing gun violence, the most recent of which is Gun Violence, Gospel Values approved by the
219th General Assembly (2010). The 218th General Assembly (2008) called for items related to ammunition regulation. Spe-
cifically, the 218th General Assembly (2008) called for a ban on high-capacity magazines and “for new technologies, such as
micro-stamping, in which identifying information from a gun is transferred onto bullet cartridges, which allow law enforce-
ment to more easily trace guns and solve crimes” (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 859). This resolution would serve to reiterate this
position and make PC(USA) witness on gun violence reduction more explicit.

Item 09-22

[The assembly approved Item 09-22 with amendment. See pp. 15, 39–40.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Encouraging Parental Leave Policy.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) encourages presbyteries and denominational agencies to adopt parental
leave policies with minimum terms of six weeks at 100 percent of prorated annual salary [that does not require the
employee to exhaust other types of paid leave] and full housing allowance. Parental leave is negotiated when a
teaching elder/employee of an agency or partner is to give birth or is to adopt a child.

Rationale

Currently many presbyteries do not have policies in place to assist teaching elders in negotiating parental leave. The bur-
den often falls on the teaching elder to advocate for his or her own needs without support of their presbytery.
In the case of birth or adoption, it is important that both fathers and mothers have the opportunity to establish strong bonds with their child.

Additionally, the church should model what it means to treat staff with compassion and care for their physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-22

Overture on Item 09-22—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-22 with amendment: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The 221st General Assembly (2014) encourages presbyteries and denominational agencies to adopt parental leave policies with minimum terms of six weeks at 100 percent of prorated annual salary [that does not require the employee to exhaust other types of paid leave] and full housing allowance. Parental leave is negotiated when a teaching elder/employee of an agency or partner is to give birth or is to adopt a child.”

The United States is one of four countries in the world that does not mandate paid maternity leave (others are Lesotho, Swaziland, and Papua New Guinea). Our economic peers far exceed us: Switzerland mandates 98 days of maternity leave at 80 percent pay, Canada mandates 119 days of maternity leave at 55 percent pay, and France mandates 112 days of paid maternity and paternity leave at 100 percent pay (Source: International Labour Organization: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/04/maternity-leave-paid-parental-leave-_n_2617284.html.)

The 216th General Assembly (2004) of the PC(USA) urged “synods, presbyteries, congregations, and individual Presbyterians to advocate for local, state, and federal legislation that might strengthen family life...[including] more paid leave for the care of dependent persons and child-related activities” (Transforming Families p. 16), calling for better parental leave broadly within the U.S. This commissioner’s resolution would bring church policies closer in line with what the PC(USA) has called for as a just vision for the nation as a whole.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 09-22

Advice and Counsel on Item 09-22—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 09-22 and that the policy include family leave for caregiving responsibilities.

While parental leave is emphasized in this overture, other family leave could be included, to open up an opportunity for participation by those with responsibilities to care for people with disabilities, elder care, etc.

According to a 2012 study by the National Center for Children in Poverty, the U.S. is one of only four countries that have no guarantee of paid time off for new parents. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows for job protection; however, there are limits to who this law applies to and it does not mandate that leave be paid. Some states have mandates to address the shortcomings of FMLA, but this issue remains a concern in many states as well as in our church. For many families, if their parental/family leave is not paid, then it is not an option.

Family leave policies benefit children, parents, and employers in several ways. Research indicates that children whose mother returns to work within the first twelve weeks after birth are less likely to be breastfed, less likely to be up-to-date on immunizations and pediatric check-ups, and are more likely to present with externalizing behavior problems. In addition, mothers who are able to spend significant time with their child after birth experience fewer depressive symptoms than those who have to return to work earlier. Fathers who are able to have longer leaves remain more involved in child rearing activities even once they’ve returned to work (research taken from Paid Leave in the States: A Critical Support for Low-wage Workers and Their Families. by Sarah Fass. March 2009. http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_864.html).

When a child’s parents experience these benefits, the child experiences additional benefits in the quality of interaction with her or his family. Employers also experience benefits when they adopt generous parental leave policies by increasing job morale, loyalty, and productivity.

Our church is called to be an example to the world and this resolution provides presbyteries and other denominational agencies an opportunity to be an example to other employers that we value the quality of life for children and their families.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 09-22

Comment on Item 09-22—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

At the Presbyterian Mission Agency, we believe a balanced life, with time for work, leisure, and spiritual nature, makes us healthier and more productive. Because the Presbyterian Mission Agency has more than fifty employees, it must comply
with the Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”), which allows eligible employees, to seek up to twelve weeks of leave, including parental leave for the birth of a child or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care. Employees who are entitled to FMLA leave following the birth of a child or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care may also receive parental leave benefits. The Presbyterian Mission Agency has a parental leave policy, by which time off runs concurrently with leave under the FMLA policy. Employees who have exhausted all of their available paid time off are entitled to parental time off at 60 percent of their regular pay and with full benefits. The personnel policies of the Presbyterian Mission Agency offer generous leave policies and permit parental leave for both mothers and fathers, and it is not limited to teaching elders, as called for by the commissioners’ resolution.

Item 09-23

[The assembly approved Item 09-23 with amendment to refer. See pp. 15, 40.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Requesting the Release from Prison of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera.

[The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to petition, on behalf of the General Assembly, President Barack Obama for the release of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera.]

[Whereas the 221st General Assembly (2014) has received Item 09-23, commissioners’ resolution, on requesting the release from prison of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera.]

[Whereas the committee believes it may not have sufficient information for the 221st General Assembly (2014) to add its voice to efforts to secure release of Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera from prison;]

[Therefore, the committee asks the 221st General Assembly (2014) to refer Item 09-23 to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the Stated Clerk for further study and discernment and, if appropriate, take timely action.]

Rationale

Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera has been in prison for thirty-three years as a result of a series of political events with which he was determined to be associated. World leaders, such as the Bishop Desmond Tutu and the ecumenical organizations within Puerto Rico, have endorsed the efforts in favor of the release of Mr. Lopez Rivera. In addition, the Puerto Rico governor, the resident commissioner in Washington, the legislature and leaders of the three political parties have petitioned for the release of Mr. Lopez Rivera.

The concept of justice has as a goal the transformation of the convicted individual so he or she may return to the free community and reincorporate back into society. Mr. Lopez Rivera has demonstrated during his years in prison to be a person free of resentment for his imprisonment. He has dedicated his knowledge, time, and resources while in prison to provide positive role modeling to others while volunteering to establish a reading and writing program for prisoners. He has been also dedicated to painting and to writing poetry. In addition, his actions in prison give testimony of his hope to be free with honor, dignity, safe and sound.

Furthermore, Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera’s sentencing was an exaggerated showing of power and injustice for his actions, and for he is today, the Puerto Rican political prisoner who has served the longest prison sentence.

Therefore, we the commissioners of the Presbiterio de San Juan, Presbiterio del Suroeste, and Presbiterio de Noroeste present this commissioners’ resolution asking the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to join the multiple ecumenical and Puerto Rican voices petitioning President Barack Obama to release Mr. Oscar Lopez Rivera from prison.
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free ...” (Lk. 4:18).

**Item 09-A**

[The assembly approved Item 09-A with comment. See p. 40.]

Minutes, General Assembly Committee on Representation.

[Comment: We recommend the minutes of GACOR be approved with the following exceptions: pages are not sequentially numbered, a slash was not inserted from the final sentence to the bottom of partially filled pages, acronyms should be explained, close with prayer (Minutes of February 8 – 11, 2012), charts & graphs should be in color or have data in legend.]

**Item 09-Info**

**A. Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns Agency Summary**

The committee is composed of twelve regular members representing African Americans, Native Americans, Latina/o Americans, Asian Americans, Middle Eastern Americans, and European Americans.

The 2012–14 membership of the committee is as follows: Carmen Rosario (chairperson; National Hispanic/Latino/a Presbyterian Caucus representative; member of Women of Color Joint Working Group, corresponding member to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the General Assembly); Lilia Ramirez (vice chair; Hispanic/Latino at-large; liaison to the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC); member of Women of Color Joint Working Group); Debbie Batisse-Kleiman (secretary; Native American, at-large); Noushin Framke (chair of Resource and Referral Subcommittee; Middle Eastern American, at-large; dual-member of Mission Responsibility Through Investment [MRTI]); Mark S. Jones Sr. (chair of Study and Comment Subcommittee; National Black Presbyterian Caucus representative); Clay Antioquia (dual member from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, Native American); David Esterline (European American member at-large); Buddy Monahan (Native American Consulting Committee representative); Patricia Petty Morse (chair of Climate for Change Subcommittee, African American, at-large); Samson Tso (National Asian Presbyterian Caucus representative; liaison to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy [ACSWP]); Raafat Zaki (National Middle East Presbyterian Caucus representative; Vacancy (Asian American, at large); *Aida Faris (served as the National Middle East Presbyterian Caucus representative and as vice chair of ACREC from August 2012–December 2013); Kevin Johnson (liaison from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy [ACSWP], African American); Barbara Adams Smelter (liaison from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, African-American).

The committee was staffed by Courtney Hoekstra, associate for Advocacy Committee Support, Presbyterian Mission Agency, and Sherri Pettway, administrative assistant, Presbyterian Mission Agency.

As of August 2013, the committee had one vacancy in the Asian American at-large position.

1. **Assigned Functions**

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) works to fulfill its General Assembly mandate to provide advocacy and monitoring on issues affecting people of color in both church and society. The committee evaluates social trends in church and society and provides advice and counsel to the General Assembly (GA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB). The committee addresses issues, including civil rights, racial justice, environmental justice, economic justice, public education, law enforcement, health care, employment, and housing as they directly impact communities of color and thereby the entire body of Christ. The committee also monitors the implementation of programs and policies approved by the church that impact the participation and quality of life for people of color within the church. The committee works in close cooperation with other agencies and entities within the church, including the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), to fulfill its responsibilities. The ACREC’s assigned functions, as stated in the Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations include:

a. Prepare policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on racial ethnic concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, or on its own initiative.

b. Advise the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of racial ethnic concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly.
c. Provide advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of racial ethnic concern.

d. Assist the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on racial ethnic concerns and provide information to the church as requested.

e. Provide the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on racial ethnic concerns.

f. Monitor the implementation of racial justice policies and programs relative to racial ethnic concerns.

g. Through advocacy maintain a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of racial ethnic concern.

The committee has direct access to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, and its chair has corresponding member status with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and with the General Assembly.

2. Officers for 2012–2014

While the original 2012–2014 Executive Committee of ACREC consisted of Carmen Rosario, chair; Aida Faris, vice chair; Debbie Battise-Kleinman, secretary; David Esterline, chair of Resource and Referral Subcommittee; Mark S. Jones Sr., chair of Study and Comment Subcommittee, committee membership changes and time-commitment challenges resulted in the slate as listed here as of November 2013: Carmen Rosario, chair; Lilia Ramirez, vice chair; Debbie Battise-Kleinman, secretary; Mark S. Jones Sr., chair of Study and Comment Subcommittee; Noushin Framke, chair of Resource and Referral Subcommittee.

3. Accomplishments

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns used its regularly scheduled meetings to explore a wide range of topics of special interest to the committee and its work. The ACREC is committed to and has participated in antiracism and cultural proficiency training at each of its meetings. The committee also hears and responds to reports at each meeting from all of the caucus/council/coordinating committee representatives and liaisons to and from other groups. At each meeting in Louisville, ACREC connects with the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the director of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, the associate for Gender and Racial Justice, and the Racial Ethnic Leadership Development manager, when possible.

Following the 220th General Assembly (2012) the committee met as follows:

a. August 22–25, Louisville, Ky.: ACREC’s first meeting after General Assembly consisted of new-member orientation, which included learning about ACREC’s history and functioning, meeting some staff people in the Louisville office, and generally getting a feel for the work of the committee. At this meeting, ACREC participated in antiracism training, installed its new executive committee, reviewed actions taken by the General Assembly, met with several staff people, and set some priorities for the current cycle of work.

In 2013, the committee continued its work with the following schedule of meetings and content summaries:

b. January 17–19, Louisville, Ky.: ACREC met via Skype with Sung Yeon Choi-Morrow of Interfaith Worker Justice to discuss concerns about the global boycott called on Hyatt Hotels and the PC(USA) plan to use Hyatt as one of the Big Tent hotels. The committee discussed follow-up on several General Assembly actions. The ACREC met with and received updates from several staff people, including Rhashell Hunter, director of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, Vince Patton, Racial Ethnic Leadership Development manager, and Teresa Waggener, coordinator of Immigration Issues. The committee led the Presbyterian Center staff in worship in the chapel.

c. July 29–31, Louisville, Ky.: The ACREC spent time in discussion on several important racial justice current events, including the George Zimmerman trial results and changes made to the Voting Rights Act. Several members of the committee had participated in conversations or committees that resulted as actions of the General Assembly, so the group heard reports and discussed follow-up actions regarding the review of ordination exams, the study to be done on incarceration, and the work of the National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force, to name a few. The ACREC met and consulted with several staff people, including Christine Hong, associate for Theology: Interfaith Office of Theology and Worship, and Charles Wiley, coordinator, Theology and Worship.

d. November 6–8, Dallas, Tex.: The ACREC elected Vice Chair Lilia Ramirez to take the place of Aida Faris. The committee discussed the panel on race at the Big Tent. In September of 2013, a consultation was held between caucus representatives, advisory and advocacy committee representatives, and the Stated Clerk, Executive Director, and Moderator of the
General Assembly regarding the role of the caucuses in the church. The ACREC discussed possible follow-up for the continuation of this conversation. The ACREC subcommittees worked extensively on drafts for resolutions to be brought to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

In 2014, the committee had its final full-committee meeting prior to General Assembly:

e. January 16–17, Louisville, Ky.: The committee met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to discuss business going to General Assembly. The ACREC worked to complete all of its reports and resolutions in order to submit the reports in time for review by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. Some members of the Climate for Change Subcommittee also had meetings with various representatives of the six PC(USA) agencies to hear more about the agencies’ six-year cultural proficiency plans in preparation for the completion of ACREC’s biannual Climate for Change Report.

4. Items of Business for the 221st General Assembly (2014)

The following items were sent to the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).


3. A Resolution to Develop a Churchwide Antiracism Policy.


5. A Resolution to Educate Against and Help Prevent Voter Suppression.

B. Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) Agency Summary 2012–2014

“The [Holy One] is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.” (Ps. 9:9)

“The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.” (Acts 11:12)

… [Be] doers of the word, and not merely hearers. …” (Jas. 1:22)

1. Introduction

The context of women’s advocacy is a human situation where women experience injustice because they are women. Grounded in communal faith in God who liberated the people of Israel from oppression and covenanted with Israel that they might do justice, and motivated by painful recognition of sexism within and without, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) explicitly articulated in the Articles of Agreement its commitment to work against gender-based discrimination. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) is a contemporary fulfillment of this promise. The new Book of Order continues to uphold this commitment: “In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person” (Book of Order, F-1.0403). Created by the mandate of the 205th General Assembly (1993) at the recommendation of the Report of the Task Force on Shape and Form, ACWC is charged with the responsibility of assisting the church to
give full expression to the rich diversity of its membership as specified in the Book of Order, G-4.0403 ... monitor[ing] and evaluat[ing] policies, procedures, programs, and resources regarding the way in which they impact the status and position of women in the church...and advocate[ing] for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of the life and work of the church in society [as a whole]. (Minutes, 1994, Part I, p. 262)

2. Assigned Responsibilities


They include:

a. Prepar[ing] policy statements, resolutions, recommendations, reports, and advice and counsel memoranda on women’s concerns to the General Assembly at the request of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Council, or on its own initiative;

b. Advis[ing] the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on matters of women’s concerns including statements concerning pressing issues that the council may wish to consider between meetings of the General Assembly;

c. Provid[ing] advice and counsel to the General Assembly and its committees on overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, reports, and actions before the General Assembly that impact issues of women’s concerns;
d. Assist[ing] the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in maintaining an up-to-date and accurate compilation of General Assembly policy on women’s concerns and provide information to the church as requested;

e. Provid[ing] the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board with information as they fulfill their responsibilities to communicate and interpret General Assembly policies on women’s concerns;

f. Monitor[ing] the implementation of women’s policies and programs relative to women’s concerns; and,

g. Through advocacy maintaining a strong prophetic witness to the church and for the church on existing and emerging issues of women’s concerns.

The ACWC is housed in the Office of the Executive Director, Presbyterian Mission Agency. The committee has direct access to the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB). The ACWC has organized itself with a leadership team of three co-chairs: two serve as corresponding members to the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board respectively. One member of ACWC is a voting member of the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI). There are twelve voting members of the committee; ten members are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and elected by the General Assembly. They are chosen based on their individual qualifications and do not represent any constituencies. One member is the current moderator for Justice and Peace of Presbyterian Women and one member is a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, chosen and sent by that body. The committee also has liaison members: Lilia Ramirez from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC), Cheryl Thorne from the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen (NAPC), and Marsha Fowler and Eric Mount from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. (Eric was generally the member to attend meetings.) Members who were elected to the committee in July 2012 were Kerri Allen (filling a two-year partial term from a vacancy), Louise Davidson, Mary McClintock Fulkerson, Jack Hodges (from the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board), Sheila Louder (Presbyterian Women moderator for Justice and Peace), Jacob Parsons-Wells and Susie Wiggins. Voting members who continued on from the previous term were Barbara Adams-Smelter, Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty (dual member of MRTI), Joann Haejong Lee, Darcy Metcalfe, and Belinda Rice. Belinda Rice resigned from ACWC in January of 2014.

3. Gatherings and Foci

At each of ACWC’s meetings, the committee reviews and evaluates its work. The ACWC has also committed to checking in on having an intersectional approach to gender justice, taking into account the various intersections of women’s identities, including but not limited to considering race, physical and mental ability, class, etc. Each meeting includes reports from all liaison and dual members on the work of the groups to whom they are connected. Whenever possible, when meeting in Louisville ACWC connects with the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, the director of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, the associate for Gender and Racial Justice, and the Racial Ethnic Leadership Development manager.

a. 2012–2014: ACWC Had Five Regular Meetings


• The committee spent a significant amount of time on introductions and orientation, as this was the first meeting for those elected at the 220th General Assembly (2012).

• The ACWC met with several staff people at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville to learn about their work and the connections of the work being done by the Presbyterian Mission Agency with ACWC’s work.

• The committee reviewed their work at General Assembly and looked ahead to what items they would need to monitor in the coming years.

• The ACWC determined a focus for their work in the next two-year cycle, including forming two working groups to accomplish their work.

(2) February 7–9, 2013, in Louisville, Ky.

• The ACWC coordinated and held an open conversation on gender justice advocacy and the work of ACWC at Harvey Browne Memorial Presbyterian Church in order to connect the work of ACWC and the concerns of people in the pew.

• The committee met with the associate for Young Women’s Leadership Development to hear about her work.

• The ACWC discussed the proposed new compensation plan of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, as well as the Dependent Care Reimbursement policy.

• The committee discussed the call for global boycott on Hyatt hotels and the need to address the fact that Hyatt had been booked as one of the hotels for the Big Tent in Louisville.

(3) April 3–4, 2013, in Washington, D.C.

• The committee met in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference. Following their meeting, some members of the committee attended the conference.
The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson met with the committee to share some of the work of the Office of Public Witness.

The ACWC reviewed and approved a joint letter with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board regarding concerns about the proposed new compensation plan of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The committee discussed the relationship it had formed via a letter sent to women newly ordained in a new denomination in Mexico and how to maintain this relationship.


The ACWC heard from member Mary McClintock Fulkerson on the false notion of the “traditional family.”

ACWC member Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty addressed the group on “Women and an Economy of Sharing.”

ACREC member and liaison to ACWC, Lilia Ramirez, shared with the group about her time with the women in Mexico in the newly formed reformed denomination.

The committee began discussion of resolutions to General Assembly.


The committee met to finalize its work going into the 221st General Assembly (2014).

The committee met jointly with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to discuss their work for General Assembly.

The ACWC reviewed and revised its self-study report.

b. Highlights

(1) Self-Study Review Process

The ACWC is under its normal six-year review by the 221st General Assembly (2014) and put a great deal of work into the report throughout this work cycle. The committee would like to draw your attention to that report, also submitted to this assembly, for more in-depth information on ACWC’s work and goals for the future.

(2) Becoming the Best ACWC in the World

Undergoing a larger review has led to ACWC’s commitment to check in at the beginning of each of its meetings with the question, “How can ACWC be the best ACWC in the world?” This question allows the committee to evaluate the work it has been doing and to consider how to be more effective in its work in the future.

(3) Young Women’s Participation

The committee continues to be committed to working toward intentional inclusion of younger women in the work of the committee, and has spent considerable time considering the ways in which it could be more welcoming to younger women. Some of the younger members currently on ACWC have been instrumental in considering ways in which serving on the committee could be made more accessible to young women. The committee has adjusted its meeting schedules and relied more on technology for making connections and getting work accomplished.

(4) Intersectionality

The committee continues to work to become more aware of and intentional about the places where women’s issues intersect with those of race, class, disability, etc., recognizing that most women find themselves at the intersection of more than one social identity marker that may influence the way they are treated and experience the world.

(5) Partnering with Programmatic Staff of the Presbyterian Mission Agency

The separation of gender justice policy and program work within the Presbyterian Mission Agency continues to be a challenge for ACWC’s work. They have been intentional about staying connected with the staff of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, and look forward to continuing to build their relationships with these women in order to make the work of gender justice in the church as effective as possible.

c. Actions of the Committee for Consideration of the 221st General Assembly (2014)—ACWC’s 2014 Resolutions

“A Resolution to Begin the Study of the Status of Women at All Levels in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”;
“A Resolution to Address Child/Youth Protection Policies and Resources in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.”);

“A Resolution to Support Hotel and Hospitality Workers through the Adoption of Just Policies and Principles in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.”);

“A Resolution on Developing a Comprehensive Social Witness Policy on Human Trafficking as a Human Rights Issue”;

“The Self-Study Report of the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.”

C. General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) Agency Summary

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone” (1 Cor. 12:4–6, NRSV).

“… Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action” (1 Jn. 3:18, NRSV).

Introduction

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) is a permanent standing committee of the general assembly, mandated by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order (G-3.0103), The Manual of the General Assembly (including the Standing Rules of the General Assembly and the Organization for Mission) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Since it was constituted in 1983, GACOR has a long history of leadership, training, and service to the denomination.

The GACOR helps the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) become the church that God calls us to be, a church that includes diverse persons from the abundance God provides, an inclusiveness that represents the fullness God has created. We serve as a conscience within the denomination, keeping its attention on the quality of its community and always pointing toward a greater openness to voices not always heard, to leaders routinely overlooked, and to seek decision making processes that enable full participation.

Assigned Responsibilities

The GACOR, in its constitutional mandate, promotes, reviews, advises, advocates, and consults with the General Assembly and its entities, committees, councils, and divisions in order to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness and diversity are implemented. How we function as the body of Christ is important both internally (structures, procedures, ways of interacting) and externally (social witness, mission, ministry). The church seeks to live into the abundance of the gifts given to it for its mission by helping it express that diversity and more fully accomplish our common ministries. To do this most faithfully, the church needs to have the widest possible participation. This rich diversity of membership and participation particularly includes race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography and theological convictions. At the national level, the church (as the body of Christ) is equipped with the widest possible diversity, by election and employment, for its life and it is called to select broadly from those leaders for its bodies.

Accomplishments

From January 2012 to December 2013, we have accomplished much and wish to highlight the following:

1. Advised the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012) on the slates for special committees and commissions.

2. Consulted with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) on the six-year cultural proficiency plans of the six General Assembly agencies.

3. Adapted to staffing transitions resulting from a restructure in the Office of General Assembly (March 2013).

4. Met with representatives of the six PC(USA) agencies regarding Recommendation 2, of Item 11-17, business referred by the 220th General Assembly (2012).

5. Engaged the six agencies in conversation regarding their employment practices.

6. Advocated for diversity in leadership by

   a. participating in caucus discussions with the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) leadership, and

   b. continuing communications with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC).
7. Attended to communications improvements with mid councils and interested parties by launching a blog (“In Spirit in Truth”), creating a new logo, revising brochures, and updating our website, and doing so in many places in Korean, Spanish, and English.

8. Designated members as liaisons with partners and caucuses to improve mutual communication with underserved communities.

9. Offered advice and counsel at Committee on the General Assembly (COGA) and PMA Board meetings.

10. Consulted with the Climate for Change Task Force on their final report resulting in referrals to GACOR.


12. Created a working group to integrate referrals from the General Assembly regarding employment.

13. Attended Big Tent.

14. Hosted the 2013 Synod COR Training Event with the theme, “There’s Power in the Patchwork: Unity in Diversity,” in Chicago with representation from eleven synods and very positive responses to plenary sessions (e.g. Contextual Bible Study of Acts 6; Martin Luther King Jr.: Confronting Viral Narratives of Race; Non-Healings in the Hebrew Bible; and, An Interactive Exercise in Church Building), workshops (Vision, Obstacles, and Directions: The Work of COR Beyond the Numbers; Scenario Planning: Developing Agility in the COR Movement; Bonhoeffer and the Harlem Renaissance; Polarity Management; and, Practicing God’s Radical Hospitality), and an interpretation of the event in a painting by the Rev. Shawna Bowman.


16. Improved response rate of synods reporting data to the GACOR reaching a completion of the 2012 report by ten of sixteen synods (75 percent).

17. Worked with OGA staff and the IT department of Presbyterian Mission Agency to develop and launch a new, user-friendly Synod COR web portal for 2012 and going forward. The 2013 report (of 2012 data) had a high response rate to completion (within three weeks of being available, 50 percent of synods had reported).

18. Compared demographics from the last four General Assemblies (2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012) with results showing three areas needing attention:
   a. Younger Commissioners: While the youth of the church is present through the active participation of YAAD’s, data shows that at the 220th General Assembly (2012) had no commissioners whose age was less than 25.
   b. Racial Diversity of Commissioners: A significant disparity of racial ethnic participation remains (although limitations in the racial and ethnic sensitivity classification system do not translate into accurate proportions of participation).
   c. An increasing gap: When the information from previous years (2006, 2008, 2010) is compared to 2012 data there was little to minimal increase in racial ethnic commissioners, while there was an increase of 179 (33 percent) in white commissioners.

Membership

Class of 2014: Ms. Deborah Fair (Synod of the Covenant), Ms. Cindy Lou Ray (Synod of Lakes and Prairies), the Reverend Martha Ross-Mockaitis (Synod of Lincoln Trails); the Reverend Heather Walchar (Synod of Mid-America), Mr. Patrick Nelson (Synod Northeast), the Reverend Amy Mendez (Synod Rocky Mountains), and Ms. Dora V. Martinez (Synod of the Southwest).

Class of 2016: the Reverend Dr. Tom Kirkpatrick (Synod of Alaska-Northwest), the Reverend Myung (Martin) Han (Synod of the Living Waters), Dr. Tressie Muldrow (Synod of Mid-Atlantic), the Reverend Rubén Ortiz-Rodriguez (Synod of Puerto Rico), the Reverend Héctor M. Rivera-Vélez (Synod of the Sun), Mr. Issa Sayar (Synod of the South Atlantic), Ms. Josephine (Jo) C. Mueller (Synod of Southern California and Hawaii), Ms. Wanda Tanner-McNeill (Synod of the Trinity).

Resignation/Vacancy since January 2013 (in the Class of 2014): Mr. Kenneth Bartlett-Preston (Synod of the Pacific)

Words of Thanks

On behalf of the 221st General Assembly (2014), the General Assembly Committee on Representation expresses its thanks and appreciation to Teaching Elders Amy Mendez and Heather Walchar and Ruling Elders Deborah Fair, Dora V. Martinez, Patrick Nelson, and Cindy Ray for their dedicated service to the church through membership on the GACOR. Due to illness, Dora V. Martinez was unable to complete the last six months of her term, and the committee thanks her for her
considerable contributions to our work. The GACOR wishes to thank Ruling Elder Kenneth Bartlett-Preston, who found it necessary to resign his position in early 2013. Kenneth’s contribution was important and valued and he is missed.

The GACOR is grateful for the staff assistance of the Reverend Molly Casteel, Assistant Stated Clerk and coordinator for Representation, Inclusiveness and Ruling Elder Training, and Diane Minter, senior administrative assistant for Mid Council Ministries. The committee is grateful for other staff who have supported them in this period: Flora Daniel, Tasia Spencer, Joyce Evans (who retired in 2013), and Molly Williams.
Survey Questions and Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of survey invitations sent</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of surveys completed</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q1. How would you rate your overall familiarity with the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents:</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very familiar</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat familiar</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly familiar</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very familiar</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat familiar</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly familiar</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. How would you rate your familiarity with the work the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) has done on the following topics over the past seven years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents:</th>
<th>Very Familiar</th>
<th>Somewhat Familiar</th>
<th>Slightly Familiar</th>
<th>Not Familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Equity for and support for female teaching elders (ministers)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Feminicide in Juarez (see note below)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Gender-inclusive language when talking about people</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Expansive language for God (see note below)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Reproductive health</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Sexual misconduct</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Violence against women</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:

- Feminicide is defined as the killing of women, girls, or infants by males because they hate females, have a sense of superiority over females, for sexual pleasure, or by an assumption of ownership over females.
- Expansive language refers to descriptions of God that seek to broaden our expressions of God. Rather than using only a small number of terms to refer to God (e.g., Father, Creator, Lord, Almighty), a move toward more expansive language might also use terms such as Redeemer, Creator, Mother, Breath of Life, I Am, and Giver and Renewer of Life.

1 91 invitations were returned due to bad email addresses. These were subtracted from the number of invitations sent. The breakdown per sample is: General PC(USA) = 1; Similar Work = 86; General Justice Work = 4; Total = 91.
### General PC(USA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Familiar</th>
<th>Somewhat Familiar</th>
<th>Slightly Familiar</th>
<th>Not Familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Equity for and support for female teaching elders (ministers)</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Femicide in Juarez (see note below)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Gender-inclusive language when talking about people</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Expansive language for God (see note below)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Reproductive health</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Sexual misconduct</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Violence against women</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Similar Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Familiar</th>
<th>Somewhat Familiar</th>
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<th>Not Familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Equity for and support for female teaching elders (ministers)</td>
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<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Femicide in Juarez (see note below)</td>
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<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Expansive language for God (see note below)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Reproductive health</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
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<td>31%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Violence against women</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### General Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Familiar</th>
<th>Somewhat Familiar</th>
<th>Slightly Familiar</th>
<th>Not Familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Equity for and support for female teaching elders (ministers)</td>
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<td>45%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Decade of Hearing and Singing New Songs to God</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Femicide in Juarez (see note below)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Gender-inclusive language when talking about people</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Expansive language for God (see note below)</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
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<td>18%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
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<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Violence against women</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3. **How effective has the ACWC been over the past seven years in . . .**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Slightly Effective</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Calling the attention of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Preparing policy statements for the General Assembly on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Advising the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Providing feedback to the General Assembly and its committees on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Monitoring the PC(USA)’s carrying out of policies and programs relative to women’s concerns?</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Slightly Effective</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Calling the attention of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Preparing policy statements for the General Assembly on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Advising the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Providing feedback to the General Assembly and its committees on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Monitoring the PC(USA)’s carrying out of policies and programs relative to women’s concerns?</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Slightly Effective</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Calling the attention of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Preparing policy statements for the General Assembly on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Advising the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Providing feedback to the General Assembly and its committees on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Monitoring the PC(USA)'s carrying out of policies and programs relative to women's concerns?</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Justice</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Slightly Effective</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Calling the attention of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Preparing policy statements for the General Assembly on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Advising the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Providing feedback to the General Assembly and its committees on issues of concern to women?</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Monitoring the PC(USA)'s carrying out of policies and programs relative to women's concerns?</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4. Does the work of the ACWC support the mission of the PC(USA)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, very much</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, somewhat</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a little</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Sample</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, very much</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, somewhat</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a little</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46 (n=53)</td>
<td>164 (n=221)</td>
<td>30 (n=44)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5. How strong or weak is the ACWC in each of the following areas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Very Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Weak</th>
<th>Very Weak</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Expertise in women's concerns</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Representativeness of the PC(USA) as a whole</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Expanding the vision for gender justice within the PC(USA)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Responsiveness to women's concerns</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Research and analysis of women's concerns</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. As a voice for transforming society</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Monitoring General Assembly policies and procedures</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
### General PC(USA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Very Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Weak</th>
<th>Very Weak</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Expertise in women's concerns</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Representativeness of the PC(USA) as a whole</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Expanding the vision for gender justice within the PC(USA)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Responsiveness to women's concerns</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Research and analysis of women's concerns</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. As a voice for transforming society</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Monitoring General Assembly policies and procedures</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Similar Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<th>Somewhat Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Weak</th>
<th>Very Weak</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Expertise in women's concerns</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Representativeness of the PC(USA) as a whole</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Expanding the vision for gender justice within the PC(USA)</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Responsiveness to women's concerns</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Research and analysis of women's concerns</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. As a voice for transforming society</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Monitoring General Assembly policies and procedures</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### General Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Very Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Strong</th>
<th>Somewhat Weak</th>
<th>Very Weak</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Expertise in women's concerns</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Representativeness of the PC(USA) as a whole</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Expanding the vision for gender justice within the PC(USA)</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Responsiveness to women's concerns</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Research and analysis of women's concerns</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. As a voice for transforming society</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Monitoring General Assembly policies and procedures</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns purpose statement states: "The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns is called by the General Assembly to be a voice of justice and advocacy for women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and around the world, in order to give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership. To this end, we advocate for full inclusiveness and equity in all areas of life and work in the church and society. 'Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?' Proverbs 8:1."

### Q6. In the past seven years, how faithful has ACWC been to this purpose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very faithful</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat faithful</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly faithful</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not faithful</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Sample</td>
<td>General PC(USA)</td>
<td>Similar Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very faithful</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat faithful</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly faithful</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not faithful</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7. **How important is it for the PC(USA) to have the ACWC?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion/Not sure</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Sample</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion/Not sure</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q8. Which three of the following society-wide and/or global issues are the most important issues for the ACWC to examine and make recommendations to the General Assembly about? (Check no more than three issues.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay for women and men</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminicide (Note: Feminicide is defined as the killing of women, girls, or infants by males because they hate females, have a sense of superiority over females, for sexual pleasure, or by an assumption of ownership over females.)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human trafficking</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectification of women's bodies</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution/sex work</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial inequality</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive health</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay for women and men</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminicide</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human trafficking</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectification of women's bodies</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution/sex work</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial inequality</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive health</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q9. Which two of the following denominational issues are the most important issues for the ACWC to examine and make recommendations to the General Assembly about? *(Check no more than two.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Mission Agency programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansive language for God (Note: Expansive language refers to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descriptions of God that seek to broaden our expressions of God.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rather than using only a small number of terms to refer to God</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., Father, Creator, Lord, Almighty), a move toward more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expansive language might also use terms such as Redeemer,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creator, Mother, Breath of Life, I Am, and Giver and Renewer of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive language for people</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay equity for women teaching elders (ministers) and other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC(USA) women staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation of women in PC(USA) leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual misconduct</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Mission Agency programs</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansive language for God</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive language for people</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and inclusion of women of color</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay equity for women teaching elders (ministers) and other PC(USA) women staff</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation of women in PC(USA) leadership</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual misconduct</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10. In your opinion, how important is it that the General Assembly and its agencies and committees work toward gender justice in the PC(USA)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td></td>
<td>327</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>398</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q11. Should the PC(USA)'s councils do more to support women teaching elders (ministers) even at the expense of supporting other constituencies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Yes, much more  | 78       | 19%
| Yes, somewhat more | 147     | 37%
| Yes, slightly more | 75       | 19%
| No, nothing more | 45       | 11%
| Don't know      | 56       | 14%
| Total           | 401      | 100%

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, much more</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, somewhat more</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, slightly more</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, nothing more</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12. Should the PC(USA) direct more or fewer resources toward achieving gender justice throughout the world?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct many more resources</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct somewhat more resources</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct the same amount of resources</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct somewhat fewer resources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct much fewer resources</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Don't know | 56 | 14%
| Total | 400 | 100%

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct many more resources</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct somewhat more resources</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct the same amount of resources</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct somewhat fewer resources</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct much fewer resources</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q13. How rare or widespread is gender inequality in the PC(USA)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very rare</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat rare</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat widespread</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very widespread</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>403</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Sample</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very rare</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat rare</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat widespread</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very widespread</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14. Which group has more opportunities for career advancement as teaching elders (ministers) in the PC(USA)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women have many more opportunities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women have more, but only slightly more, opportunities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and men have equal opportunities</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have more, but only slightly more, opportunities</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have many more opportunities</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know/Not sure</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>401</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By Sample</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women have many more opportunities</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women have more, but only slightly more, opportunities</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and men have equal opportunities</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have more, but only slightly more, opportunities</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have many more opportunities</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know/Not sure</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q15. **Should the PC(USA) direct more or fewer resources toward achieving gender justice throughout American society?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct many more resources</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct somewhat more resources</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct the same amount of resources</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct somewhat fewer resources</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct much fewer resources</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>399</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct many more resources</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>72</strong></td>
<td><strong>271</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q16. **Should the PC(USA) keep the ACWC?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, their work is very important</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, their work is somewhat important</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, their work is slightly important</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, their work is not important</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, the PC(USA) has achieved gender equality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>401</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, their work is very important</th>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>72</strong></td>
<td><strong>273</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q17. How important is it to you, personally, that worship services use gender-inclusive language when talking about people (e.g., "humankind" rather than "mankind")?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q18. How is God best understood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In masculine terms</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In feminine terms</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In both masculine and feminine terms</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In gender-neutral terms (beyond gender)</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In masculine terms</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In feminine terms</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In both masculine and feminine terms</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In gender-neutral terms (beyond gender)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q19. Are you a teaching elder (minister) in the PC(USA)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes—active</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes—retired</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General PC(USA)</th>
<th>Similar Work</th>
<th>General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes—active</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes—retired</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q19. Which of the following describe your role or affiliation with the PC(USA)? (Please check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Description</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Staff of one of the six General Assembly agencies                               |                 | 44       | 11%
| Exempt staff of one of the six General Assembly agencies                         |                 | 30       | 8%
| Synod or presbytery staff (please specify role):                                |                 | 17       | 4%
| Pastor                                                                          |                 | 127      | 32%
| Other congregational staff (please specify role):                               |                 | 22       | 6%
| Clerk or ruling elder on the session of a congregation                          |                 | 43       | 11%
| Other ruling elder (not on session)                                             |                 | 74       | 19%
| Deacon                                                                          |                 | 35       | 9%
| Member of a PC(USA) congregation                                                |                 | 142      | 36%
| Member of the Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team                   |                 | 20       | 5%
| Presbyterian Women synod or presbytery moderator or co-moderator                |                 | 23       | 6%
| Presbyterian Women synod justice and peace moderator                            |                 | 4        | 1%
| Leader of a congregational Presbyterian Women group                             |                 | 41       | 10%
| Leader or member of a congregational Presbyterian Women circle                  |                 | 67       | 17%
| Member of National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen                      |                 | 68       | 17%
| Other (please specify role):                                                    |                 | 109      | 27%
| None                                                                             |                 | 5        | 1%  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Description</th>
<th>By Sample General PC(USA)</th>
<th>By Sample Similar Work</th>
<th>By Sample General Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff of one of the six General Assembly agencies</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt staff of one of the six General Assembly agencies</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synod or presbytery staff (please specify role):</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other congregational staff (please specify role):</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk or ruling elder on the session of a congregation</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ruling elder (not on session)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of a PC(USA) congregation</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of the Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women synod or presbytery moderator or co-moderator</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Women synod justice and peace moderator</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader of a congregational Presbyterian Women group</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader or member of a congregational Presbyterian Women circle</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify role):</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Synod or presbytery staff (please specify role):**

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
associate gp
Donegal Presbytery Vacancy Coordinator
Former support staff in Social Justice and Peacemaking
GA Committee
Member of Synod Mission Council
Member of Peacemaking Committee - long time PEACEMAKER for Presbyterian Women in Maumee Valley Presbytery when Tim Jones was here.
Pastor to the Presbytery
Presbytery Associate, working with 20 churches/pastors and all CLPs
Presbytery Moderator
Presbytery Stated Clerk
Stated Clerk
Stated Clerk
Stated clerk of presbytery
synod executive
Synod, volunteer on Hanmi Presbytery AC for 14 years; Presbytery staff for 2 years

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Other congregational staff (please specify role):

active Parish Associate to local congregation
Administrative Assistant in the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW area
Associate Pastor
Choir Director and Congregational Music Leader
Church Administrator and Pastoral Care Giver.
CRE
Director of Youth and Children's Ministries
Former Christian Educator and Administrator
H. R. Parish Associate
Interim-type minister
office administrator
Office secretary
Organist
Parish Associate
Parish Associate
parish associate
Parish Associate (not paid)
Parish Associate (retired pastor)
Parish Associate Pastor
specialized ministry and parish associate
Substitute Pastor often for Sunday Worship, Active Chaplain in a large Children's Hospital.
temporary pastoral leadership

Other (please specify role):

active in worship in a congregation.
active member-at-large in presbytery; active in local congregation
Adjunct Professor of Philosophy and Religion
Agency of the PC(USA)
at large member of presbytery
At large teaching elder
Board Certified Staff Chaplain for Women and Children
Candidate for Ministry
Candidate for ministry
Candidate for Ordination
Candidate for ordination currently seeking call
Candidate for Teaching Elder
Candidate for teaching elder, LPTS graduate
certified christian educator
Certified Christian Educator employed over a period of 40 years at every level of the denominations work.
Certified Christian Educator PCUSA
class of peace advocates within the Presbytery of Carlisle
Chair, Presbytery Work Group
Chaplain

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Chaplain at a Children's Hospital in a large city
Christian educator
Co-chair of Presbytery church development and evangelism committee
Commissioned Ruling Elder / Lay Pastor
Commissioner to the 220th GA
Committee chair and member of presbytery council; commissioner on Synod PJC; in validated ministry
Ecumenical agency
Exempt staff of Presbyterian Women
former committee vice mod at GA
Former Member of NEC of UPW, PW. moderator in presbytery and synod, member of Program Agency, and other committees
former memer of GAC, ACWC, JFW and Ecumenical Decade Committee
Former national staff
former PW CCT member and PW synod and presbytery moderator
Former staff at the center; candidate for ministry
Full Time Chaplain at PCUSA affiliated retirement community
Have been Deacon, Moderator of PW Presbytery, and member/ Secretary of PW Synod Coordinating Team. Inactive Lay Minister.
Hispanic woman leader in my area
Honorably retired Teaching Elder serving as volunteer leader in a congregation and presbytery
I have led local, presbytery and synod PW in the past.
I have served as clerk & ruling elder on session/congregation, served on Presbytery boards, both congregational & PW, served at the Synod level with PW (treasurer, 3 yrs, Search Comm. 3 yrs, Synod Council at this time for the church.
I live in Glasgow, Scotland, and work for the Church of Scotland, with permission of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area of which I am a member.
Inquirer
INTERIM pastor
Intern for Presbyterian Ministry at the U.N.
Jarvie staff
Leader of a validated ministry
member of a GA standing committee
Member of Churchwide PW team to Dakota Presbytery 2010/ member of PCUSA Fair Trade Delegation to Nicaragua 2013, soon representing my Pby PW on a visit to partner Presbyteries in Guatemala, I present programs on these throughout my Pby and synod, have served as PWP moderator and moderator of the Pby, currently chair Pby Adm. Bd.d.
Member of Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Member of Korean-American Presbyterian Clergywomen
Member of local church's Committee on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation; Deacon nominee
member of PW regional group
member of two racial ethnic caucuses; member of presbytery committee
Minister Member in specialized ministry
mission co-worker
Mission Co-Worker PCUSA
moderator of a presbytery committee
Multi denominational campus minister

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Newsletter Editor of PWP Newsletter and member PWPCT
ordained minister in another denomination
P W Presbytery Moderator-Elect
parish associate served in a non-recognized ministry
PArish Associate, Trustee for the PCUSA Foundation
past PW CCT member
Peacemaking/Social Concerns Committee of Faith Presbyterian Church, Presbytery Peace & Justice Network
PHEWA (PDC); PEC
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board member.
Presbyterian Women Gathering- taught at numerous events
Presbytery Committee on Ministry
Presbytery mission
Presbytery PW leadership and Presbytery Leadership team
professor
Professor at a Presbyterian Seminary
PW coordinating team. GLPBY & Mid America Synod
PW TREASURER ON OUR SYNOD
PWP regional communicator; spiritual nurture at congregational and presbytery levels
Pwpnyc peace and justice coordinator
Retired GA program staff (congregational development)
retired Presbyterian Minister
Retired PW/CCT member
retired teaching elder, not involved in a congregation of PCUSA at present
school of theology teacher
secretary both Synod and Presbytery PW CT
Seminarian/Ordination inquirer
seminary staff -Dean of Students
serving as mission co worker
Social worker with the Jarvie Commonweal Service.
Specialized clergy - chaplain
Specialized ministry- chaplain
Spiritual director seeing individual directs
Staff of Presbyterian Women
Student
synod trustee
teaching elder in non-congregational setting
teaching elder in specialized ministry
Teaching Elder, MOS
tentmaker
Treasurer, PW in the Presbytery
Usher
Validated minister/chaplain
validated ministry
Validated ministry-Board Certified chaplain serving as the Manager/Chaplain of Spiritual Care at a hospital
Validated Presbytery ministry as Writer in Residence; active in PW Facebook group and subgroups

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♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Q20. Which of the following describe you? (Please check all that apply.)

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<th>All Respondents</th>
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<th>Similar Work</th>
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<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td>9%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>275</td>
<td>59</td>
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</table>

Other (please specify):
- European American
- European American
- None of your business. Your question is Racist!
- I am Spanish, Native American, Anglo, Scots, English, Irish -- but why should this matter?
- How come "White" isn't Caucasian/White?
- Some American Indian & White
- Latino/Black
- human
- Human with roots from western Europe. Why do you persist in using color as a descriptor?
- Armenian
- Korean American
- African from Africa
- These terms are no longer helpful
- human
- Caribbean
- Tan mermaid

Q21. Are you . . . ?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Response</th>
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Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
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Q23. Please use this space for any additional comments about the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns.

All Text Responses

ACWC has been a beacon for the church over the years it has been in place. More attention should be given to it by all the agencies of PCUSA.

I am very involved with Peace and Justice in PW and my Presbytery but truthfully I can't remember hearing of this group. Please send me more information.

When you ask me to limit it to three, that doesn't mean the other topics aren't important, they are! Both ACWC and ACREC were weakened by administrative changes several years ago. Program work on justice for women has been weakened even more. Distance from women ministers' organization and PW has weakened policy and program. Despite these problems, the volunteers have worked to hear God's voice and witness to it in the church.

ACWC is so important, but even more important is that the church listen to their findings and suggestions and respond. They have an important voice, but are paralyzed as far as creating very much change in the denomination. Backing them with funding for education, perhaps, or hiring more responsive staff in PMA....I'm not sure what it would take, but it's such a disappointment to me, as a young person, to watch the larger church ignore them.

Not sure how much input the ACWC has in relationship to staff policies. In the last few down-sizings, women in their 50s held the bulk of lost jobs. That's complex to decipher because each case is different personnel-wise. However, it is an ugly pattern that should be addressed somehow.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if people really were equal...not dependent on gender, race or ethnicity?

As an Executive Director of an ecumenical women's organization, I'd like to learn more about ACWC as I know practically nothing about this ministry in our denomination.

The work may be (and is) important, but it is not necessarily as important as other work of the denomination. When resources are shrinking, we need to be making decisions, not in the absolute, but comparatively. These are ethical choices. All things matter, but what matters more? The survey might have been stronger if it has asked for such. If I had to choose, for example, between the ACWC and expanding resources for youth ministry or congregational transformation, I would choose the latter. I would be more concerned about providing pastoral leadership for congregations in general, rather than concerned about the gender of that leader. The only exception might be with some of the racial-ethnic congregations. The Sister to Sister program has been a great benefit in that regard. But that sprang from PW grassroots.

I filled this out because I keep receiving it and felt a bit guilty for not doing it. I really don't know enough about the ACWC to be answering any questions.
In a culture where it seems that we are reverting to "old ways of doings" - it is vital that PC-USA continue to be proactive & continue to educate not just our members, but society as a whole. Please make every effort to continue to fund and equip the ACWC. Only now are we beginning to see substantive changes in American culture with regard to human trafficking and the global connection of the U.S. to this vast network of abuse for women of all cultures. Continue to support the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Their work is vital both nationally and globally. There is much, much to do and only now are we beginning to discern that more are actually listening. Keep it going!!

It is important to continue working for the voices of women in the world, especially in countries where they are mistreated.

I am a former member of the ACWC. The work of the ACWC is hindered by lack of sufficient staff AND the fact that it is a policy-making body only. They are not allowed to do any programmatic work. There is no advocacy within the Women's Ministries. Women's Ministries does not use the word "advocacy"; rather they use the term "gender justice". Gender justice is vastly different from advocacy. Consequently, there is very little, if any, programmatic advocacy going on related to women's issues. The work of the ACWC is also ignored or diminished by the Mission Agency in assigning follow-up work from the General Assembly pertaining to women's issues. Often ACWC had to struggle to get issues into the system for GA consideration. The less-than-effective work that takes place is not because ACWC has not done its job. They do a fine job within the limitations they are given. Very frustrating!

Anything the denomination and the ACWC can do to support and affirm the work of clergywomen is great!

The ACWC is woefully understaffed and underfunded and this provides severe challenges for the committee to be able to carry out their work effectively. I am also concerned that some leadership in the PCUSA does not recognize or value the importance of this work in the church and the world.

I consider myself very connected and involved in the denomination, and it concerns me how unfamiliar I am with the ACWC. I don't know how that can be corrected, but I think it's worth some conversation.

We need ACWC because there is no longer a Women's Ministry office in the PMA. There is a Young Women's Leadership (temporary) person - but all the work for women that was being done is no longer happening. This is a travesty for the PCUSA.

I'm sorry that I do not know more about what ACWC is doing. Will have to make a point of looking into it. Theoretically I believe it is an important committee to be the eyes, ears and conscience for our church.

Until I received this survey I was not aware that this committee continued to exist. I was on Women's Concerns Team for Synod of Northeast for many years. GREAT experience and did good work. The issue of inclusive language is more serious now than it was in the 1970's. The denomination is operating out of sense of fear and scarcity. Shame on us! Our faith gives us courage to do what is right. Where are the leaders??

Of course we still need ACWC's work. Their work is not finished until women's work, ideas and opinions are viewed on par with men's. That will take many years.

Honestly, I have as many complaints as I do kudos. I feel the ACWC is extremely important, but as a young woman who is heavily active in many areas of PC(USA), I think the ACWC and committees like it need to be given the room to truly work for what God has called all of us to do. The institutional systems of PC(USA) seem to keep committees of the GA and Mid-Councils stuck with trying to continually reinvent the wheel. There are some great things that have been done in years past, but greater things could have been done- and I hope they do get done in the future. Thanks for asking :)

I would support such a committee that worked for gender equality in the PCUSA. But the broad range of "Women's Concerns" takes ACWC far afield and leads them to support Concerns that are the view of some, but not in a way representative of the diversity of men and women in the PCUSA.

I think their work is very important as it lifts up issues of equality for women both within and outside of the PCUSA. This education needs to continue as the church seems "behind the times" in regard to this issue. I appreciate their work even though I may not know all they encompass and/or accomplish.

One more example of broadening our horizons would be to include "Chaplain" as a teaching elder option. In Monmouth Presbytery approximately 10% or our teaching elders are chaplains: hospice, hospital and law enforcement. Thank you!
ACWC is one of the last supports for women's concerns in the PC(USA). Women's issues and support for them financially and voiced by the denomination/GA continue to be eliminated and sidelined. Please keep ACWC funded and active.

I am not very familiar with the actual of the work of this committee. However, I strongly believe that there are important issues for women worldwide which need addressing by the PCUSA, by the Churchwide PW, and our government. I support you in any efforts in this direction.

There are so many voices that seek to be heard. I am grateful that ACWC remains persistent but not necessarily strident.

I hope the ACWC will continue to exist and do its work.

PCUSA is an example of gender equality to the point women may have an edge. A good way to check this is to review the last 2 years of positions that were filled at the Center in Louisville.

Until there is equity for women in positions of responsibility and justice is available for vulnerable women in our world, we need the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns. I spent seven years of my life (part-time) working for women's concerns at the Presbytery and Synod level and have travelled to Central America and Africa and have seen first-hand how women are disrespected, harassed and misused. Blessings on the Advocacy Committee!

I am shamefully ignorant of a lot of the work of the ACWC but want to become more involved in our church and especially in activities that benefit women.

My concern is how much digging on the web site it takes to find the ACWC information. How do you find it when you don't already know about the committee or function?

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns does what it can within the system as we have it, but it is sometimes only "somewhat effective" because their advocacy is not always heeded or taken fully into consideration. I believe their voice is important, but the church is not paying enough attention and making structural changes necessary to fully live into a world where gender-justice exists.

Advocacy Committee should continue to promote racial equity and justice within PCUSA.

Even though it is mostly ignored by the wider church, ACWC needs to be a voice for justice for women. Maybe we will be heard someday.

I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this much needed survey...Look forward to many changes as a result.

ACWC is one of the few vestiges of hope that we have since reunion with the Southern strain of our denomination. Sexism and racism ran rampant in the south and continues today. I was a member of the national committee to reorganize finances between us. It took three years. I traveled the denomination in the south. It is quite unfortunate that our whole church is now suffering from these "isms." Some questions here in this questionnaire are misleading and impossible to answer like "should the PC (USA) councils do more to support women teaching elders even at the expense of supporting other constituencies?" Women are a majority, we do not get opportunities as do men. One white woman has been moderator of our Presbytery over the past several years, no women of color and none sent to GA as delegates. An disproportionate number of men are sent into leadership positions in the denomination while equally qualified, and often more qualified ethnic women, are passed over. Men are disproportionately represented in all areas of opportunity in the church; that imbalance must be corrected to enable a proper and complete response to God's mission in the world. Correcting this historical imbalance should not be seen as favoring women or disadvantaging other historically favored constituencies. We were once making progress in the UPUSA, I am sorry to see us losing ground and fall back so far. I look into a hopeful future and know that change will come where all God’s children are present and included.

At 77 years of age, and a retired Clergywoman, I am frightened by a younger generation of PC(USA) women, elders & clergy, who take for granted all we fought for. As a result they seem to no longer feel it's important to use expansive language for God, or to demand equal pay for women who work in and for the church. Little girls and young mothers are still sitting in the pews thinking they aren't as important as boys and men. Please, the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns must continue.

This work is critical, especially as some Presbyterian churches are leaving the PC(USA) and reversing gains in women's status. The PC(USA) must take a strong stand for equity for women within church and society.

Once I left a position on a National Committee, I did not track the work of ACWC actively. Do they need to be more visible? I'm not sure. Perhaps their work is best done (more effectively?) when done incognito? Not sure.

ACWC is the only committee that addresses the concerns and needs of women in the church. There are so many issues that demand attention, but not much staff. Therefore, this committee is crucial to the work of the church.
I have been a member of NAPC for two years now and have just begun to see the great need for this advocacy committee work in our churches and in our world. Thank you.

It is pretty much invisible. I'm on the Presbytery PW Coordinating Team, and I have heard nothing of them. I am a member of NAPC, and I have heard nothing of them. I'm nominal Head of Staff for my presbytery, and I have heard nothing of them. Where have they been hiding???

I am greatly concerned that at the last downsizing May of 2012 there was a highly disproportionate amount of women in their "50's" downsized. It makes me think that the experience of women in their 50's is not highly valued.

I generally find the advocacy of the ACWC to be much more liberal than my beliefs, and I think it tends to be more liberal than the beliefs of most PCUSA members.

In the past few reorganization and/or reduction-in-force situations within the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of General Assembly, it feels like a disproportionate number of women over the age of 50 were adversely affected. I would hope to see ACWC raise this as an issue to be looked at in future similar situations.

I was first introduced to the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns last year while preparing to be a delegate to the United Nations 57 Commission on the Status of Women. For some time I had been questioning if God was leading me in a different direction professionally but as I learned about all the work done by through the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns and heard the horrific stories of injustice and abuse during CSW57 my prayers were answered. Scripture tells us "if you do it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you do it unto me". So as Christians, we can not ignore our responsibility to everyone in this global society who has any form of power and control used against them. Silence hides the violence and unless the silence is broken domestic violence/family violence/intimate partner violence will ultimately be "the silent killer of the family unit and thus society". The bottom line is, I can't emphasize enough what a vital role the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns plays within PC(USA). While they have experienced disruption due to the staffing changes and reorganizations of the Mission Agency, they remain faithful to the mandate given to them. I wish they were more assertive of their role in calling the church to new and emerging issues as well as partnering with other committees for intersectional work.

Advocacy for opportunities, equality and justice for women--locally, nationally and internationally--is extremely important work!

Choosing only three issues is very difficult when attention and work is needed in each of the arenas named and others that were not included. A greater investment needs to be made across the church and around the world in these concerns. Considering the limited number of staff and the size of the committee they do amazing work.

Commitments to the staff and to all who serve on the committee.

This is a hard working committee that has helped keep women's issues before our denomination. Let's let them continue to speak up for women!

Keep up the good work! Also know that similar concerns and issues exist in the Church of Scotland (as indeed in many other denominations) but without the important work of an in-house organization similar to ACWC. Basically female ministers have to act and talk like traditional men in order to advance in the Church of Scotland. ACWC is the voice for the PCUSA racial ethnic women. This would be the committee that stands for ALL women. Thanks for the prophetic ministry of ACWC!

Since retirement I do not have a good knowledge of ACWC. I do support them.

The work of this committee is very important to me. It is very important that it be staffed by competent dedicated women who are committed to the values of gender justice, inclusive language and expansive gender neutral terms for God.

Women's concerns seem to be having a lower priority at the PC(USA) national level. That is why we need a strong ACWC.

This committee is essential to the work of maintaining women clergy in much better positions and to receive equal pay and equal treatment. The work has not been accomplished and the committee is not nearly as effective as it could and should be. I pray this committee becomes more committed to its work and does not stop until it is accomplished.
1. The work of ACWC has suffered in the last decade due to constant reduction in staff support and budget. It is a farce to ask about the adequacy of this work in the context of little actual interest on the part of the national executive staff. Waiting 5 years for a weakly adequate response to the pay equity mandate of GA is an example. 2. Your multiple choice categories are inadequate and display a weak understanding of women's issues as they interconnect and impact women differently depending on race/ethnicity and economic class. For example, access to reproductive health services is connected to pay equity is connected to domestic violence, etc. Choosing between these is like choosing between food and clean air. 3. Finally, the goal is not to add women to a traditionally masculine institution or patriarchal theology. The goal is to uncover the fundamental heresies that support the subjugation of anyone. 4. ACWC, weakened as it is, is essential to the hope that the PCUSA may someday reject its worship of corporate America and become the exhibition of the Reign of God which is its only purpose for existence.

We must base our advocacy in biblical concerns, like God's concern for the widow and orphan, especially the poor. We seem to be more concerned about being politically correct rather than biblically correct. It is more important to use language about God that is inclusive of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Prince of Peace than being concerned about gender. Evangelism and justice must be merged in this area of social concern. We must condemn the sin of abusive violence and offer avenues of healing.

One of my biggest concerns is that as our denomination's membership continues to age, there is still a stigma with some congregations that throw up a brick wall at the idea of having a female pastor. Education truly needs to be directed towards search committees that have this antiquated point of view. However, gender inequality issues in the global landscape has varied cultural implications attached to it. Threatening to challenge these cultural establishments could be as destructive as it could be constructive.

I feel that we need to add not just the Pastors, Teaching Elders, and Ruling Elders but also for the Administrative Assistants, Receptionist, and other general staffing who are women. We tend to exclude these people out of mix but they are part of the backbone in which helps hold the Church together and are or should be considered just as important.

ACWC has always been an excellent resource for Presbyterian Women/ Horizons. The staff, committee and statements/resources from ACWC provide faith-based, justice-oriented guidance on women's issues. Staff resources for ACWC have been consistently reduced in number and expertise over the last decade. No active, effective advocacy for women exists in the PC(US)A aside from the little work which volunteers can accomplish. Only lukewarm support for existing PC(USA) reproductive health policies. Timid response to need for sexual/gender education programs for youth. Church management is too shy of criticism in educating about/advocating for existing church policies.

ACWC is very important. Where I puzzled over whether to say more resources ought to be devoted, it's largely because they are already doing good work. The number of women ministers in our presbytery has certainly increased but they tend to be in the smaller churches, sometimes not full time. Personally, I have no objection at all to being called a woman, HuMAN, feMale, person, etc. If Jesus called God "Father", I am not inclined to argue.

ACWC needs to be a voice for justice in the church because injustice at home is a weak foundation for justice work in the world. We need to practice justice in the institution as well as preach it from the pulpit.

Very important! And underappreciated because ACWC is on the leading edge, and the PCUSA is very patriarchal and sexist.

This work is important but no more important than what is happening in the world. In too many countries and cultures women and girls are to be used and abjured. That has to stop, now. Education of girls and women must happen for them to be able to stand up for themselves

I suspect that ACWC is a much needed committee in the PCUSA led by incredibly gifted people. I am embarrassed to say that I simply don't know about it, or don't make direct connections between things that I receive and the ACWC. I seek in my call, and to a great extent I believe the parish I serve, is sensitive to gender issues, we use neutral language, or expanded language for God - we would be allies!!! And yet on most of the questions I checked "I don't know."

This is critical work in the PCUSA and one of the most prophetic, Spirit-filled places where God's wisdom, justice, challenge, and love can be spread in the church. I am very thankful for the work of ACWC.

In this survey regarding expansive language for God, the name Creator is used in both the current and new categories. After taking the survey I would have answered the first question, how familiar am I with the ACWC as very familiar, my computer is too slow to page back to the beginning. Sorry.

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— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
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My involvement with the work of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns has been limited; but any Committee for Women's Concerns should be ongoing. We need a multicultural approach rather than the 1960s interest groups approach. You need to advertise. I am an elder commissioner to Presbytery and have never heard of acwc. Your work is vital to PCUSA in its ministry. I am also a certified ruling elder. You could advocate for women being given commissions in churches.

I could not just pick three of the items in the question I did not answer. We are in a time when the Advocacy Committee is most needed and needs full support. There needs to be more conversations to young women about what it is to be a Presbyterian Women and then break it down to sexual orientation and race. More resources to be provided to women of color. More conversations to involve men on women issues.

It's more important for me to be known as a woman with a disability than a woman who is white! If I had not gone to CSW I would not have known it even existed. I believe that few women in congregations know about it. It seems, at least to me, if you aren't interested enough to keep up on the PC(USA) are you own you are clueless.

I believe that existence of ACWC is extremely important to the life of the church. However, ACWC has lost its ability to be viewed as a respected voice within the church. Rather than being seen as effective voice and resource for the church leadership, they are often seen as nuisance protesters. As a result, when ACWC raises issues, more energy is spent in how to quiet the complaints (and ultimately make them go away) rather than taking them seriously. ACWC in its most effective and healthy form, needs to be seen by the entire church as an effective voice of advocacy and a respected resource. Advocacy cannot just be about expressing anger in the face of problems. Effective advocates need to know how to build strong relationships so their voice can be respected and heard. It is sad that ACWC has lost that vision. It is also sad that when thinking about gender equality, we tend to focus on teaching elders. There are horrific gender inequality situations at other levels of the church. ACWC need to be an advocate for ALL women of the church. Not just select few groups.

It is hard to give you a full assessment about the value and effectiveness of the ACWC with set questions with set answers. There's no way to qualify my responses to accurately reflect my thoughts on each topic.

Do not believe the church should advocate against scripture for unconditional abortion or link it to women's health NOR advocate for the acceptance of homosexual practices as appropriate to a Christian lifestyle and witness to the world. Believe the ACWC should advocate for Christian principles that honor and uplift women in concert with and not contrary to the living Word of God.

I am not personally familiar with the work of the committee-- I do have clergy women colleagues who feel very strongly this issue. I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to the call of God by serving as a pastor of a new church development. I am aware that my gender has limited some from participating but change in attitude comes from positive experiences. When women are given opportunities to preach, lead, and serve in every area and they clearly exhibit gifts given by God hearts begin to change.

I was disappointed in the representation of ACWC proposals at the 2012 GA, both in committee business at on the Assembly floor.

I'm concerned that I'm not familiar with this group. I have heard more about them in the last couple of years. Thank you for allowing me to be part if the survey. Please let me know what and when I can be of service.

There is a need to communicate the ACWC to congregations. Let PW at both the congregational and presbytery level that you have speakers to come and speak about issues.

I would like to know more about what ADCW does.

GO GO ACWC

I have been an ordained minister for 12 years, a ruling elder for 4 years previous to my ordination and have never ever heard of the ACWC or anything they do. As much as I do feel the PCUSA had made improvements in gender issues, there is still much lacking in many areas. Where I see the greatest need is in the area helping clergy couples be fully recognized and yet not penalize smaller churches who call clergy couples by making each have to pay full medical as well as many other issues that affect clergy couples.

I consider ACWC to be extremely important in the work of the church.
With the great reduction of the programmatic work of the denomination in the area of women and women's concerns, the advisory and advocacy work becomes even more crucial. It is extremely important that this entity continue to advocate and educate about unbiblical concerns that are particular to women as the new/er generation doesn't always know about or appreciate the issues. The ACWC work is very important. The ACWC keeps congregations aware of issues that affect women in the US and the globe. The work of ACWC is an excellent partnership between Presbyterian Women and ACSWP. The three ministries working together is awesome and is a great witness that the denomination cares about women issues. Patriarchy is a wily beast. Gender and racial equality will come when power is shared. We are changing a 5,000 year old system of thinking and doing. Its hard work. Women need all the allies we can get. Thank you. While I think Women's Concerns, both in the denomination and the wider social justice issues, are important to advocate for, I am not familiar with the specific work this committee does in order to properly evaluate its effectiveness and the use of it's funds toward that goal. In recent years, downsized or dismissed national staff have been predominantly older and female. ACWC needs to monitor closely what is happening here in terms of fair supervision, rewritten job descriptions, and younger people being hired, at lower pay, to perform the same work.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding
— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category
n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question
♦ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response
Item 10-01

[The assembly disapproved Item 10-01. See p. 29.]

On Amending W-4.9000 Concerning the Church’s Role in Legal Marriage and Services of Christian Covenant—From the Presbytery of Lehigh.

The Presbytery of Lehigh respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall W-4.9000 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]


“W-4.9001 Christian Marriage Blessing of a Christian Covenant

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. Christian marriage includes the legal civil aspects, but it is only one type of Christian covenantal relationship through which two persons enhance each other’s walk as disciples of Christ.

“Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (CRE) are not agents of the state but of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders shall not preside over a legal civil marriage. The role of those representing Christ and his church is to bless covenant partnerships as they are called to bless, and to refrain from blessing as they are called to refrain. As representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) they may participate in the establishment of a legal civil marriage insofar as conscience dictates providing that the state’s representative presides over the civil requirements and is present to sign the official documents.

“In a service of Christian marriage a Covenant, lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, vows are exchanged, and publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

“W-4.9002 Preparing for Marriage a Service of Christian Covenant

“a. In preparation for the marriage service of Christian Covenant, the teaching elder† shall provide for a discussion with the couple concerning

“(1) the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,

“(2) the legal requirements of the state,

“(3) the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage covenant,

“(4) the nature and form of the Christian marriage covenant service,

“(5) the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,

“(6) the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,

“(7) the legal requirements of the state.

“This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.

“If the Marriage Partnership Is Unwise

“b. If the teaching elder is convinced after discussion with the couple that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage partnership is unwise, the teaching elder or commissioned ruling elders (CRE) shall assure the couple of the church’s continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony blessing. In making this decision the teaching elder or CRE may seek the counsel of the session.
“This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.

“W-4.9003 Time and Place of the Service

A service of Christian marriage Covenant should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the teaching elder† or CRE and the supervision of the session. (W-1.4004-.4006)

The marriage A service of Christian Covenant ordinarily takes place subsequent to civil proceedings, but may be held concurrently if the State’s representative presides over the civil requirements and is present to sign the official documents.

The service of Christian Covenant ordinarily takes place in a special service which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life. Others may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the pastor. If the civil ceremony is held concurrently, the state’s representative shall be understood to preside during the civil portion, while the blessing shall be under the direction of the teaching elder or CRE. Celebration of the Lord’s Supper at the marriage blessing service requires the approval of the session, and care shall be taken that the invitation to the Table is extended to all baptized present. The marriage service of Christian covenant may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day upon authorization by the session. It should be placed in the order as a response to the proclamation of the Word. It may then be followed by the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. (W-2.4010; W-3.3503)

“W-4.9004 Form and Order of Service

“The service of Christian covenant begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and the woman covenant partners shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage mutual commitment and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the teaching elder† or CRE shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage there has been confirmation of Christian covenant. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.

“W-4.9005 Music and Appointments

“Music suitable for the marriage service of Christian Covenant directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. (W-2.1004) The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipers’ consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life. (W-1.3034; W-1.4004-.4005; W-5.5005)

“W-4.9006 Recognizing Civil Marriage

“A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of the vows by the husband and wife, and the public declaration by the teaching elder† reflect the fact that the woman and man are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.

Rationale

Both church and state have important, but different, roles in matters related to marriage, and unequal influence when it comes to questions of legality. In the legal sphere the state sets the agenda, establishes the laws, defines terms, and determines the responsibilities of its agents. In the legal sphere, the church currently reacts to these matters, and serves as an agent on behalf of the state.

As the relationship between church and state currently exists, the state has framed issues of marriage, and the church has been forced to respond. Teaching elders in a particular jurisdiction may find their freedom of conscience threatened by current law, or challenged in anticipation of changes to the law. Like-minded sessions may find themselves facing discontent and fervor over an issue largely settled in the congregation they serve because of the settled, or unsettled, condition in the state where they live. Whole denominations may be torn asunder because of questions asked solely in the legal and legislative branches of government.

This situation is untenable. While the state’s authority is to be respected in its sphere, “the state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace”1, the church’s role in marriage has waxed and waned over the centuries, frequently under the influence of the state. Without diminishing the role of the state in its determinations, the church must consider its role as an agent of the state.
Jesus said “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mt. 22:21). With the Theological Declaration of Barmen, we profess

We reject the false doctrine, as though the church, over and beyond its special commission, should and could appropriate the characteristics, the tasks, and the dignity of the State, thus itself becoming an organ of the State (Book of Confessions, The Theological Declaration of Barmen, 8.24).

This action would prohibit teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders from presiding at the legal civil marriage of a couple, that is, solemnizing on behalf of the state, but permit them to bless covenant partnerships as they are called to bless, and to refrain from blessing as they are called to refrain. Such representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may participate in the legal civil marriage as conscience dictates, insofar as the state’s representative presides over the civil requirements and is present to sign the official documents. Christian Confirmation of the Covenant may also take place separate from completion of the legal civil requirements.

Endnote


Scripture tells us that, in the as yet unredeemed world in which the church also exists, the State has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace. [It fulfills this task] by means of the threat and exercise of force, according to the measure of human judgment and human ability. The church acknowledges the benefit of this divine appointment in gratitude and reverence before him. It calls to mind the Kingdom of God, God’s commandment and righteousness, and thereby the responsibility both of rulers and of the ruled. It trusts and obeys the power of the Word by which God upholds all things.

Concurrence to Item 10-01 from the Presbytery of Upper Ohio Valley.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 10-01

Advice on Item 10-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-01.

The ACC perceives that some issues raised by this overture and the rationale provided for it are already addressed in our Constitution:

1. Pursuant to F-3.0101, the PC(USA) already recognizes that “God alone is Lord of the conscience” and that “Therefore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable.”

2. Section G-2.0105 currently provides for all persons in ordered ministry that “freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained” within certain bounds.

3. Section W-4.9002b already grants discretion to a teaching elder to determine whether she or he will or will not officiate at a civil marriage or service of Christian marriage.

4. Determination of who may be authorized to officiate at a civil marriage is the responsibility of the state government.

5. There is no need to amend the Constitution to empower a teaching elder, commissioned ruling elder, or session to participate in or approve a service of recognition of a civil marriage. Section W-4.9006 already provides for a service of recognizing a civil marriage.

If the General Assembly decides to approve this overture, the following should be considered:

1. The word “covenant” is used in other ways and contexts throughout the Constitution. The assembly may consider how the definition of covenant included here may affect interpretations of “covenant” in other sections of the Book of Order. For example, “covenant life” (G-1.0101), “covenant relationship” (G-1.0102), “covenant community of disciples of Christ” (F-1.0303), “covenant of membership” (G-1.0301), “covenant together” (G-1.0201), etc.

2. Laws regarding civil marriage may vary from state to state. This language in the Book of Order will not prohibit a state from considering a “service of Christian covenant” to be a valid civil marriage with the result that the presiding teaching elder may unintentionally violate this requirement.

3. The overture proposes that teaching elders and CRE’s “shall not preside over a legal civil marriage,” but only preside over services blessing such a legal civil marriage. The assembly needs to be aware that approval would remove the church’s participation in marriages as understood in the first two sentences of W-4.9001, which remain unchanged in the overture.

4. The proposed amendment would substitute “service of Christian covenant” for “marriage.” The term “marriage,” however, is also used in the proposed language resulting in inconsistency and possible confusion.
5. It will be the teaching elder’s responsibility to determine the implications of this requirement for his/her pastoral role.

6. The overture would remove the freedom whether or not to preside at legal civil marriages.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-01**

Advice and Counsel on Item 10-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-01. This overture creates a category called Christian Covenant. The duality of Christian Marriage and Christian Covenant results in an inequality in a situation where the commitments and expectations of the union of persons are equal.

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**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 10-01**

Comment on Item 10-01—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Item 10-01 from the Presbytery of Lehigh seeks to amend W-4.9000 in the Book of Order on the understanding of marriage. There are many aspects to this amendment, but one concerns the relationship of civil and church roles in services of Christian marriage.

The earliest Reformed patterns for marriage in the American colonies included separate civil and Christian recognition. The couple would be legally married by a civil authority, and then would receive Christian solemnization subsequently. This separation of the civil and religious aspects of marriage is practiced by many Reformed churches, and in many countries around the world.

In American history, this pattern changed before the American Revolution largely as the result of Anglican influence where the king was head of the church and the state. In this understanding, the minister was understood as a representative of the church and an agent of the state who therefore could perform the legal and religious functions simultaneously. This later pattern has endured and is reflected in W-4.9000 on marriage.

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**Item 10-02**

[The assembly approved Item 10-02 with amendment. See pp. 29, 30.]

On Amending W-4.9000, Marriage—From the Presbytery of the Cascades.

The Presbytery of the Cascades respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Amend W-4.9000 by striking the current text and replacing it with the following:

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

“In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

“If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract. A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the teaching elder, who [shall] [may] agree to the couple’s request only if, in the judgment of the teaching elder, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.

“The marriage service shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the teaching elder and the supervision of the session (W-1.4004–4006). In a service of marriage, the couple marry each other by exchanging mutual promises. The teaching elder witnesses the couple’s promises and pronounces God’s blessing upon their union. The community of faith pledges to support the couple in upholding
their promises; prayers may be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness.

“A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the statements made shall reflect the fact that the couple is already married to one another according to the laws of the civil jurisdiction.

“[Nothing herein shall compel a teaching elder to perform nor compel a session to authorize the use of church property for a marriage service that the teaching elder or the session believes is contrary to the teaching elder’s or the session’s discernment of the Holy Spirit and their understanding of the Word of God.]”

Rationale

The PC(USA) has a long history of working for social justice and equal rights for all people.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches throughout the denomination are seeking to be inclusive, welcoming communities of Christian faith and are committed to honoring diversity and promoting peace, health, and justice in personal relationship, church, community, and the world.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches throughout the denomination also have a long history of struggling with issues of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) equality; working within the structure and standards of the PC(USA) and also taking actions of ecclesiastical defiance when their conscience leads them to believe the teachings of Jesus require such actions.

As requested by the 220th General Assembly (2012), many churches have been studying the issue of marriage equality both in the pulpit and through adult education classes.

The Presbytery of the Cascades stands with those in the PC(USA) who believe that the teachings of Jesus call for radical inclusion of all people and that the actions of Jesus, passed down in Scripture, showed unconditional love and equality for all people. We believe that God created each of us with many differences, including sexual preferences, and that those differences are to be celebrated as part of the creative plan of God.

Support of marriage equality is consistent with our faith tradition. The covenant of marriage requires love and commitment; qualities that are in no way gender specific.

Failing to allow for marriage equality continues to have negative consequences for the Body of Christ, the Church, in that it gives some of our members fewer rights than others, treating them as second-class members. This is inconsistent with the teachings of Jesus. Valuing the worth, health, and happiness of our children and youth, requires that they are allowed to grow wholesal and holy in a church that embraces them and their visions of their future loving relationships. To deny marriage to the GLBT community will continue the discrimination they already experience and increase the level of stress and mental health issues that make this community more susceptible to substance abuse, depression, and suicide.

Marriage equality, on the other hand, will reduce the numbers of young people who find banning gay marriage to be hypocritical, unfair, and not the act of a caring Christian congregation.

The Book of Order of the PC(USA) should be amended to allow marriage between “two people” rather than limiting marriage to “between one man and one woman” and to allow PC(USA) church officials to perform marriage ceremonies between same-sex couples.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbyteries of Baltimore and Boston.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Heartland with Additional Rationale.

Rationale

This overture lifts up love and commitment as the primary values of a marriage rooted in faith. As such, it excludes no couple from receiving the guidance and blessing of the church in their marriage.

This corrects the erroneous statement in the Directory for Worship that civil law only recognizes marriage between a man and a woman.

This makes explicit the right and duty of teaching elders* to exercise pastoral discretion both in agreeing to officiate at a marriage ceremony for a particular couple, thus acting as an agent of the state, and in declining to do so.
This more concise language comports with the intent of the new Form of Government. It relieves teaching elders, sessions, and communities of faith from detailed stipulations about their actions, and emphasizes their broader responsibilities when asked to play a role in the celebration of a couple’s marriage covenant.

*As in other places in the Directory for Worship, the use of “teaching elders” in this paragraph should be understood to include ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service.

**Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of East Iowa (with Additional Rationale)**

**Rationale**

*Marriage is no longer a civil contract*

Christians in the Reformed Tradition view marriage not as a sacrament bestowed by the church but as a blessing that two people seek on a contract they are entering under auspices of the state. The church has defined marriage, first, as “… a gift God has given to all humankind. …” (W-4.9001) and at the same time has said, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001). In at least fourteen states and the District of Columbia, this civil definition is no longer true.

As the number of states allowing same-gender marriage increases, more and more Presbyterian ministers are being asked joyfully to perform a worship service of marriage for same-gender congregants much like they provide for their heterosexual congregants.

*Christian marriage is a covenant*

The wording of the proposed amendment places primary responsibility on teaching elders to utilize their pastoral discretion in counseling the two people to be married specifically about the covenant of marriage “and commitment to living their lives together according to its values.” While teaching elders may still act as agents of the state in signing the marriage contract, the emphasis of the proposed wording of Item 10-02 places higher value on the church’s belief that marriage is a gift from God to all of humankind and that the marriage ceremony itself is a response to God’s Word in an act of worship.

*Use inclusive language*

General Assemblies in 2010 and 2012 each had the opportunity to issue an authoritative interpretation that would provide immediate direction to teaching elders and sessions regarding the Directory for Worship. Both times, the General Assembly allowed parliamentary maneuvering to prevent them from even allowing these overtures to come to a vote on the plenary floor.

Replacing the wording in our Directory for Worship with wording that utilizes a more inclusive language, focuses on the covenant of marriage rather than the civil contract, and is in keeping with the intention of the new Form of Government to provide a framework by which we shall operate rather than detailed stipulations to the current language, thus providing clear direction for all teaching elders and sessions and allowing them to adopt this passage to fit their own sense of calling as it relates to marriage in this time and in this place.

**Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of San Francisco (with Additional Rationale).**

**Rationale**

Marriage is primarily about love, mutual support, and lasting faithfulness. Many states are increasingly recognizing that marriage is beyond gender. It refers to the commitment of two people to live beside each other with a love expressed as tenderness and justice. It refers to the deep promise to live together through the thick and thin of their journey together through the years. It refers to the mystery in which the love of God meets, is joined to and made manifest in the love of two people whose hearts are a home place to each other. The notion of marriage is demeaned by any lesser definition.

This overture removes the incorrect statement that civil law recognizes marriage only between a man and a woman. That statement is no longer true in thirteen states, the District of Columbia, and many federal agencies including the IRS. Recognizing this, some states, including California after the right for all couples to marry was restored by the courts, are already ahead of the church in moving the legal definition of marriage beyond gender. Let us remember that the most prevalent form of marriage described in the Scriptures is polygyny (patriarchal polygamy with multiples wives who were considered property of their husbands). There have been many definitions of marriage over the years. Since we live in a culture that recognizes the covenants between two people, this overture expressly encourages monogamous covenantal fidelity.

The present authoritative interpretation places Presbyterian ministers in the inevitable position of choosing to follow the current authoritative interpretation of Section W-4.9000 in the PC(USA) Constitution or to follow those other portions of our Form of Government that calls on them to offer the same pastoral care to all of their parishioners. Where the worship service
of marriage for same-gender loving couples is recognized under the law of some states, it is neither fair nor pastoral to exclude members of a congregation by declining to perform their marriage on the grounds of gender alone. In practical terms, what this authoritative interpretation means is that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders will be able to exercise their pastoral responsibilities without running the risk of prosecution by the church. Such prosecutions have placed a formidable financial and spiritual burden on councils of the church.

No teaching elder or session would be required to perform services of marriage that would violate their conscience. Changing the Directory for Worship in this way would move the church away from fear and reprisal, and closer to its own teaching on the hospitality of God and the welcome which that implies. This change also confirms that the decision making for hosting and performing such ceremonies is done at the local level with the pastor and session who know the couple best. Ultimately, this would also allow gay and lesbian teaching elders the right to be married in their own congregations. It should be hoped that those pastors who cannot perform such ceremonies for those who request them would find other teaching elders nearby or in their presbytery who may be willing to do so to preserve the pastoral connections of the couple within the church.

This overture is consistent with the overall intention of the new Form of Government that maintains the shared responsibility of the teaching elder, the session, and the community of faith, while reducing the detailed stipulations for action within that framework.

*As in other places in the Directory for Worship, the use of “teaching elders” in this paragraph should be understood to include ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service.

**Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (with Additional Rationale)**

**Elements of a Rationale**

*Explain why amending the current description is important to families and to the church. This particular approach:*

1. Places primary emphasis on love, mutual support, and lasting faithfulness as the values of marriage.
2. Removes erroneous statement that civil law recognizes marriage only between a man and a woman.
3. Emphasizes both relationship and distinction between civil law and Reformed theology.
4. Emphasizes the teaching elder’s primary responsibility to the values of Christian marriage as a covenant in responding to requests for marriage service.
5. Upholds pastoral discretion in deciding whether or not to perform a marriage, whether it is a marriage between two people of the same gender or of different genders in jurisdictions that allow same-gender marriage.
6. Maintains the framework of responsibility for teaching elder, session, and the community of faith, while reducing detailed stipulations for action within that framework, thereby following through on the overall intention of the new Form of Government.

**Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Hudson River (with Additional Rationale)**

For decades the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been struggling with how to be truly welcoming and truly just, as Jesus has called us to be. We have struggled with how to assure a full and unbiased search process so that minorities are included. We have asked ourselves who can be ordained and who can be married in our church.

For much of our nation’s and our church’s history, the marriage question focused on interracial couples.

In 1878, the Supreme Court of Virginia invalidated the marriage of a white woman and a black man on the grounds that interracial marriage was contrary to God’s plan. “[C]onnections and alliances so unnatural that God and nature seem to forbid them,” the court asserted, “should be prohibited by positive law, and be subject to no evasion.”

“God and nature.”

These were the grounds on which white supremacists successfully upheld so called miscegenation laws for another one hundred years, during which time interracial marriage was prohibited in thirty states.

One of the few people to openly condemn miscegenation laws was the philosopher Hannah Arendt, who in 1959 boldly stated that the right to marry whom one chooses is the most fundamental of all human rights:

The right to marry whoever one wishes is an elementary human right compared to which “the right to attend an integrated school, the right to sit where one pleases on a bus, the right to go into any hotel or recreation area or place of amusement, regardless of one’s skin or color or race” are minor indeed. Even political rights, like the right to vote, and nearly all other rights enumerated in the Constitution, are secondary to the inalienable human
The right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence; and to this category the right to home and marriage unquestionably belongs.

It would be another seven years before the Supreme Court of the United States took up the question of whether the laws prohibiting interracial marriage were unconstitutional.

The PC(USA) wasn’t content to stand by while the justices deliberated.

The 835 delegates to the UPCUSA 177th General Assembly (1965) of the then 3.3 million-member church concluded that there are “no … theological grounds for condemning or prohibiting” marriage between consenting adults merely because of racial origin (*Minutes*, UPCUSA, 1965, Part I, p. 409).

Today, when one out of every fifteen marriages is interracial, most Presbyterians embrace Jesus for his inclusivity.

Jesus, we’re the first to say, was not a racist.

And yet we don’t often consider that prohibiting the right of our fellow Christians to marry someone of the same gender is wholly analogous to prohibiting the marriages of people of different races.

Indeed, in 2003, when Massachusetts Chief Justice Margaret Marshall wrote for the majority in *Goodridge v. Dept. of Public Health*, the first ruling by a state’s highest court that same-gender couples have the right to marry, she made the analogy herself:

> Recognizing the right of an individual to marry a person of the same sex will not diminish the validity or dignity of opposite-sex marriage, any more than recognizing the right of an individual to marry a person of a different race devalues the marriage of a person who marries someone of her own race. … That same-sex couples are willing to embrace marriage’s solemn obligations of exclusivity, mutual support, and commitment to one another is a testament to the enduring place of marriage in our laws and in the human spirit ([http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/440/440mass309.html](http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/440/440mass309.html), p. 337).

To deny the privilege of being married in the church and declaring before God the promises of fidelity and caring, limits the pastoral capacity of our clergy and our church.

It is now time to allow, not force, but allow, our clergy and churches to perform weddings in jurisdictions where it is legal for same-gender couples as a sign of our pastoral care.

Let us remember that it is Jesus who gave us the example of welcoming all to fellowship and ministry with him. It was our Lord who stood against the tyrannical bias of his day when he welcomed Mary to sit at his feet as a disciple, and when he ate with Zacchaeus and declared that salvation was his, and when he healed the Roman centurion’s servant even though he was Israel’s enemy.

In the spirit of Jesus, it is time to say to those in the LGBT community that you are welcome, that you are fully members of the PC(USA).

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Genesee Valley (with Additional Rationale)

At issue is the Presbyterian understanding of the nature of Christian marriage and a pastor’s and session’s responsibility and ability to extend appropriate pastoral care. As more and more states (fourteen at this writing) authorize marriage between same-gender partners, pastors, and sessions trying to be responsible in providing pastoral care to church members by officiating at marriages in the church building find themselves increasingly constrained by the provisions of W-4.9000 of the Directory for Worship as interpreted by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) and subsequent decisions of the General Assembly’s Permanent Judicial Commission.

In light of the increased flexibility offered by the new Form of Government for conducting the mission of the church, it is time for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to amend the Directory for Worship to provide comparable flexibility in extending pastoral care to church members in same-gender partnerships.

The report of the Special Committee on Civil Union and Christian Marriage, which the 219th General Assembly (2010) approved and commended to the church, offers important background to the biblical, theological, historical, cultural, and pastoral issues involved here (*Minutes*, 2010, Part I, pp. 909ff).

The following brief observations support the amendment requested above:

* The Bible and the Reformed tradition reflect many patterns and forms of legal, religiously approved marital relationships.¹ The nostalgically remembered pattern of marriage of 1940s America cannot be taken as normative from a biblical or theological point of view.

* The understanding of marriage has changed through the years and was often geared more to property rights or political advantage than to a mutual, loving relationship.²
* Marriage is a contract regulated and licensed by the state. This was recognized in the ancient church and in Protestant churches since the Reformation.

* There are legitimate differences of interpretation of the passages regarding homosexual relationship in the Bible. The present regulation forces Presbyterian elders to act based on one interpretation, with which many disagree as a matter of conscience.

* Jesus in his public ministry broke down the barriers that separated people. He identified with those who were outcasts and marginalized by society. The gays and lesbians are considered outsiders by many today. The church needs to witness to the inclusive love of Jesus for all people.

* To prohibit clergy and congregations from fulfilling a legitimate request for pastoral care binds the conscience of clergy and prevents them from fulfilling their pastoral responsibilities.

* In 2010, the presbyteries approved Amendment A, allowing persons in same-sex relationships to be ordained. These church members should be allowed to be married if the state issues them a marriage license and their teaching elder determines that their marriage is advisable.

* The statement restricting marriage to “one man and one woman” addresses polygamy in 17th century England. The statement that marriage is “between a man and a woman” reflects conventions of the mid-20th century and is descriptive, not prescriptive. This overture is necessary to clarify those ambiguities and antiquated statements contained in W-4.9000.

* This amendment is also necessary to align our Directory for Worship with the principles of justice and equitable Foundations of Presbytery Polity (F-1.0403) that states “… In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. …”

In light of the above we believe positive action on this overture is warranted.

Endnotes

2. Ibid., pp. 3 and 27.
3. Book of Order, Directory for Worship, W-4.9000 “Marriage is a civil contract. …”
5. Ibid., pp. 11, 13 (item 3), and 20–21

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of New York City (with Additional Rationale)

Since July 2011, the State of New York has allowed two people of the same gender to marry. It is now simply untrue that “marriage is a civil contract between one man and one woman,” as the Book of Order now states. Although some New York pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have declined to perform such marriages in keeping with their conscience, many others are caught in an untenable position: their conscience tells them to exercise their pastoral responsibility and perform the marriage but the church tells them to fear prosecution. Such prosecutions have already placed tremendous financial burden on presbyteries, diminishing the church’s ability to effectively evangelize and perform necessary mission work.

We Are Called to Make Disciples

According to the Book of Order, we declare,

The good news of the Gospel is that the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people. … proclaiming the Lord’s favor upon all creation. … In Christ, the Church participates in God’s mission … by proclaiming to all people the good news of God’s love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God’s mission. [F-1.01]

… No person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith. The Gospel leads members to extend the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and causes a scandal to the Gospel. [G-1.0302]
According to this, Presbyterians call all people to discipleship in Christ, live to glorify God, extend the fellowship of Christ to all people, and recognize that none of us earn or deserve God’s grace.

The Marriage Ceremony Is Worship

In our order for worship, we listen to the Word, proclaim the Word, and respond to the Word. Responding to the Word is a demonstration of the love of God for God’s people.

“The response to the proclamation of the Word is expressed in an affirmation of faith and commitment. … Response to the Word also involves acts of commitment and recognition. … acts of commitment which may appropriately be included as response to the Word are (a) Christian marriage, …” [W-3.3500, W-3.3502, W-3.3503] According to this, Presbyterians view Christian marriage as an act of worship.

Our Polity

One part of our current Presbyterian polity specifically excludes a group of people when it comes to worship: those people in loving, committed, Christian relationships who are also of the same gender and wish to marry. However elsewhere in our polity, we hold up the words of Jesus Christ:

“… There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29). … The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. … [F-1.0403]

Conclusion

We are all discerning God’s Word for us. And as surely as we are all unique creations of the loving God, we will each of us disagree from time to time. But if we profess to call all people to Christ, to call all people to proclaim God’s love for us in worship, to guarantee full participation in worship to all persons, we must give teaching elders and sessions the discretion to choose to recognize the covenant of Christian marriage for two people of the same gender who seek to enter into marriage with love and faithfulness, just as we allow teaching elders and sessions the discretion to choose otherwise. To do anything else unfairly denies this group of our membership the opportunity to fully worship our God.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Transylvania (with Additional Rationale)

1. Section W-4.9001 of the 2013–2015 Book of Order, titled “Christian Marriage,” states in part: “… Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man.” This is no longer true in California, Connecticut, Washington, D.C., Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington and in cities, counties, and states with partial recognition of “marriage between two people” (Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Wisconsin, and six tribes in Oklahoma). Therefore this language must be changed or interpreted to reflect what is true.

2. Civil law with respect to marriage differs from country to country, and the aspects of marriage differ from culture to culture and change over time within a culture. The Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have documented dramatic changes in the practice of marriage in the past fifty years. We must be the church in the midst of the present reality. Christian same-sex couples who marry do not cause these changes in our culture, nor would their marriages in the church cause harm or disrespect to heterosexual marriages. To the extent that Christian heterosexual marriage can model for all heterosexuals the rule of love rooted in faith, so Christian same-sex marriage can model for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered) community the same rule of love rooted in faith.

3. The Holy Spirit guides the Church in particular places and at particular times. We approach the issue of same-sex marriage with humility and with awareness that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been oblivious in some cases and divided in others on a number of significant social issues, including slavery, suffrage, segregation, and the ordination of women and LGBT members. In these examples, at least some part of the church discerned the Spirit’s guidance in a way we would no longer understand to have been God’s will for God’s world. Sincere, passionate Presbyterians today discern God’s will with respect to same-sex marriage in different ways. We, in this time and place, cannot foresee how God will work with these different understandings. But, in humility and love, amending or reinterpreting the language in our Book of Order permits both understandings to move forward in the life of the church.

4. The Bible includes many patterns and forms of marriage and marital relationships, and cultural aspects of marriage reflect its different time and place. But in their time and place, they presented no barrier between God and humankind. God works with and through men and women in whatever time and place they live. And God will continue to do so, no matter what the PC(USA) decides with respect to same-sex marriage. Our job is to work with God or get out of God’s way.
5. The Book of Order protects a minister’s obligation and right to exercise pastoral discretion in deciding whether to officiate at the marriage service of any particular couple. The Book of Order also allows councils to make decisions concerning who they will and will not ordain to office. This authoritative interpretation (AI) and/or amendment will allow local councils (church sessions) to make their own decisions about the unique circumstances of each marriage, based on the laws of their state and their discernment of the Holy Spirit’s guidance. This AI and/or amendment will allow ministers to use their discretion in states that have changed their civil law concerning marriage. No minister or church is ever required to participate in a particular marriage. And no minister or church can participate in a same-sex marriage that violates the civil law of the state where it would take place.

6. The social witness policies of the PC(USA) have consistently advocated an end to discrimination based on sexual orientation. States recognizing marriage equality have ended such discrimination in civil marriage. To fail to apply those same standards to our own institution is unconscionable. The PC(USA) currently approves and participates in heterosexual marriage while prohibiting same-sex marriage. Marriages of either type should be founded on the rule of love and supported and strengthened by the institutional church.

7. This AI and/or amendment, allowing discretion by teaching elders and councils in states where civil laws regarding marriage have changed, will bring us into line with our mission partners in countries that allow marriage equality: Argentina, parts of Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, portions of Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom (England and Wales), and Uruguay. This change might be received critically by some mission partners; that happened after the 2010 change in ordination standards. However, mission fields that broke partnership with the PC(USA) over ordination have found new ways to work together in mission outside the previous structures. Our mission worldwide has more integrity where we recognize differences among cultures and choose to work together despite those differences, always under the rule of love. In truth, there is broad diversity of thought and conviction within the church and between the PC(USA) and any of its mission partners on any given issue. We can move and act as the body of Christ only when we identify our commonalities and work together despite our differences. We can, with God’s help, become a light to the world.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Albany (with additional Rationale)

As witnesses to God’s grace, it is time for the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to affirm clearly our common understanding of the value and meaning of marriage, rather than focusing on our disagreement about who may marry. Grounded in the Reformed understanding of marriage as covenant, the proposed substitute text for W-4.9000 lifts up the values of love, mutual support, and lasting faithfulness both for the married couple and for the faith community, thus answering the call in the recent study document issued by the Office of Theology and Worship: “a proper Christian understanding of marriage will claim again the role of the church as a fundamental approving and supporting community in which a marriage of two persons may not only make an appropriate beginning but in which also that marriage may be supported. Without making marriage a sacrament or supplanting the state, the church may offer, as it does in infant baptism, a community in which covenants are made and publicly acknowledged, are nurtured and brought to fulfillment” (“Christian Marriage in the Presbyterian Church [U.S.A.],” p. 26).

The recent adoption of the new Form of Government points the way toward clarification of our understanding of marriage by focusing on principles of theology and polity. In that spirit, this overture proposes a substitution for rather than a revision of the present text of W-4.9000, where detailed specification of procedures blurs the focus on principles. The substitute text seeks to uphold the intention of the new Form of Government to create a broad constitutional framework within which the councils of the church may adapt practices, procedures, and structures to the needs of particular mission.

Given the role of civil law in defining marriage, as it has been recognized from the beginning of the Reformed tradition, the current differences among civil jurisdictions regarding the gender of persons qualified to marry necessarily create different contexts for the mission of the church. Within the United States, as of August 2013, thirteen states (Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, California, Washington, Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island, Delaware, Minnesota, and Vermont), Washington D.C., and two Native American tribal jurisdictions (Coquille, Suquamish) legally permit marriage between two people of the same gender as well as two people of different gender. The statement in the current text of W-4.9001, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man,” is factually inaccurate.

Within their particular contexts for mission, teaching and ruling elders are responsible for determining appropriate pastoral care for a couple requesting a service of Christian marriage. “The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care . . . .” (Book of Order, W-6.4000; see also W-6.3002 and W-6.3011), and a service of Christian marriage is a form of worship. In the interest of pastoral care, the proposed substitute text for W-4.9000 does not specify the gender of the couple requesting a service of Christian marriage, but emphasizes the authority of both the teaching elder and the session either to comply with or to deny such a request. Corresponding emphasis is placed on the fact that the teaching elder is not obliged to act as an agent of the state or other civil jurisdiction. The proposed text thus permits but does not mandate the participation of teaching elders and sessions in marriages of same-gender couples.

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Such permission is justified by principles of theology as well as polity. “The biblical vision of doing justice” summarized in the Book of Order includes “supporting people who seek the dignity, freedom, and respect that they have been denied” (W-7.4002c), and surely this category includes people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. Whether support for these people should include the right to marry depends in part on whether biblical references to marriage between persons of different gender are to be taken as definitions of marriage or rather as examples. The latter interpretation is supported by the early use of marriage as an example of the type of relation promised between God and the people of God (Hosea 2:14–23), some of whom, of course, are male and some female. The Confession of 1967 recognizes this principle of exemplification: “The relationship between man and woman exemplifies in a basic way God’s ordering of the interpersonal life for which he created mankind” (Book of Confessions 9.47). Extending the gift of marriage to same-gender couples offers a means of “ordering of the interpersonal life” as an act of pastoral care. Having made a commitment of lasting faithfulness to each other before God and the community of faith, the couple who have entered into Christian marriage have a solemn responsibility to uphold that commitment. The faith community, in turn, have responsibility for continuing spiritual support and pastoral care for the couple. In its mission to society as a whole, the church thus helps to create a culture of faithful, loving, lasting relationships. Real meaning is given to the opening statement in the current text of W-4.9000, and preserved in the proposed substitute text: “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the wellbeing of the entire human family.”

Current Text of W-4.9000 [Text in brackets appears as marginal notes or footnotes in printed edition]:


W-4.9001 Christian Marriage

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

[W-4.9002 Preparing for Marriage]

a. In preparation for the marriage service, the teaching elder shall provide for a discussion with the man and the woman concerning

(1) the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
(2) the legal requirements of the state,
(3) the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
(4) the nature and form of the marriage service,
(5) the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,
(6) the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
(7) the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.

This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.

If the Marriage Is Unwise

b. If the teaching elder is convinced after discussion with the couple that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the teaching elder shall assure the couple of the church’s continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. In making this decision the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session.

W-4.9003 Time and Place of the Service

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the teaching elder and the supervision of the session. (W-1.4004–4006) The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special service which follows upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life. Others may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the pastor. Celebration of the Lord’s Supper at the marriage service requires the approval of the session, and care shall be taken that the invitation to the Table is extended to all baptized present. The marriage service may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day upon authorization by the session. It should be placed in the order as a response to the proclamation of the Word. It may then be followed by the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. (W-2.4010; W-3.3503)

W-4.9004 Form and Order of Service

The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and the woman shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the teaching elder shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.

W-4.9005 Music and Appointments

Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. (W-2.1004) The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipers’ consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life. (W-1.3034; W-1.4004–4005; W-5.5005)

W-4.9006 Recognizing Civil Marriage

A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of the vows by the hus-
band and wife, and the public declaration by the teaching elder† reflect the fact that the woman and man are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse (with Additional Rationale)

At issue is the Presbyterian understanding of the nature of Christian marriage and the responsibility and ability of a pastor and session to extend appropriate pastoral care. As more and more states (fourteen at this writing) authorize marriage between same-gender partners, pastors and sessions trying to be responsible in providing pastoral care to church members by officiating at marriages in the church building find themselves increasingly constrained by the provisions of W-4.9000 of the Directory for Worship as interpreted by the 1991 General Assembly and subsequent decisions of the General Assembly’s Permanent Judicial Commission.

In light of the increased flexibility offered by the new Form of Government for conducting the mission of the church, it is time for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to amend the Directory for Worship to provide comparable flexibility in extending pastoral care to church members in same-gender partnerships.

The report of the Special Committee on Civil Union and Christian Marriage, which the 219th General Assembly (2010) approved and commended to the church in 2010, offers important background to the biblical, theological, historical, cultural, and pastoral issues involved here.

The following brief observations support the amendment to the Directory for Worship requested above:

* The Bible and the Reformed tradition reflect many patterns and forms of legal, religiously approved marital relationships.¹

* The understanding of marriage has changed through the years and was often geared more to property rights or political advantage than to a mutual, loving relationship.²

* Marriage is a contract regulated and licensed by the state.³ This was recognized in the ancient church and in Protestant churches since the Reformation.⁴

* There are legitimate differences of interpretation of the passages regarding homosexual relationship in the Bible.⁵ The present regulation forces Presbyterian elders to act based on one interpretation, with which many disagree as a matter of conscience.

* Jesus in his public ministry broke down the barriers that separated people. He identified with those who were outcasts and marginalized by society. Gay and lesbian individuals are considered outsiders by many today. The church needs to witness to the inclusive love of Jesus for all people.⁶

* To prohibit clergy and congregations from fulfilling a legitimate request for pastoral services binds the conscience of clergy and prevents them from fulfilling their pastoral responsibilities.

* In 2010, the presbyteries approved Amendment A allowing persons in same-sex relationships to be ordained. These church members should be allowed to be married if the state issues them a marriage license and their teaching elder determines that their marriage is advisable.

* The statement restricting marriage to “one man and one woman”⁷ addresses polygamy in 17th century England.

In light of the above we believe positive action on this overture is warranted.

Endnotes


2. Ibid., pp. 3 and 27


5. Ibid., pp. 11, 13 (item 3), and 20–21.


Currently in our churches and communities, same-gender couples are living together in loving, committed, monogamous relationships. They are raising children, caring for aging parents, and making positive contributions to their communities. These couples include new and longtime members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Their relationships are equivalent to a marriage in every way but formal recognition by the church and by most states in which they live, though an increasing number of states are recognizing their relationships as marriages and many others recognize civil unions.

By reforming the definition of marriage in the Directory for Worship we would recognize committed, lifelong relationships that are already being lived out by our members. We would honor and support the love and commitment they practice in their lives every day. We would bear witness to the love of God as it is expressed between these couples and as we offer that love to them on behalf of the church.

In addition, as the legal recognition of same-gender relationships goes through transitions throughout the country, PC(USA) clergy and sessions are faced with complex decisions regarding ecclesiastical authority and property use. It is important to remember that while a teaching elder may act as an agent of the state in performing legal marriages, a teaching elder may also act as an agent of the church in performing a Christian marriage that is not recognized by the state. An example would be the marriage of an 80 and 85 year old who do not want to legally be married because of the loss of a pension but who do want to be married in the eyes of the church. In this case the teaching elder would not invoke the power given by the state in pronouncing the marriage.

Same-gender couples who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can come to their minister and request that minister to prepare them for marriage and solemnize said marriages as an agent of the state, only to be denied that important time of pastoral care and ministry because of the current interpretation of the provisions replaced by this amendment. These marriages create certain privileges and responsibilities for the married couple and their families within the community and the church that cannot be ignored. Among other things, civil marriage bestows a new status on this couple and designates them as a unique social unit; it delineates their family structure and makes the other their next of kin; it establishes parental and societal rights and responsibilities for them; and establishes their rights of inheritance along with creating larger familial relationships.

All of these issues affect this new family and their lives in the church. Broadening the language to reflect a broader, but distinctly reformed and covenant-centered understanding of marriage removes the polity barriers faced by some ministers, sessions, church members, and other Christians while continuing to honor the laws of each state and the individual consciences of every ruling and teaching elder and congregation.

Overtures directly addressing marriage equality in the United States and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have come before the last two General Assemblies. The 219th Assembly (2010) completely failed to substantively address the marriage-related overtures that were before it. The 220th General Assembly (2012) failed to substantively address overtures related to authoritative interpretation of the marriage provisions at issue in this overture and, by a narrow margin, failed to approve changes to W-4.9000. Then and now, though in substantially different fashion, the proposed changes to W-4.9000 are intended to recognize: (1) the contemporary reality of civil marriage under the law, (2) the ecclesial reality of marriage equality in the polity of our mainline sisters and brothers in Christ and, most importantly, (3) the theological reality that our longstanding tradition of reforming our understanding of the marital covenant faithfully leads us to now recognizing and solemnizing that covenant regardless of the gender of the parties involved.

In the ecclesial trial of one of the last major cases on marriage equality in the Presbyterian courts, the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of the Redwoods (1) gave thanks “for the courageous and heartrending testimonies of the married couples who shared with us their great hurt through the policies of our church … [and] for the joy in marriage they shared with us”; (2) asked “for forgiveness for the harm that has been, and continues to be, done to them in the name of Jesus Christ” and (3) implored the General Assembly “to listen to these testimonies, which are now part of this record, to take them to heart, and to do what needs to be done to move us as a church forward on this journey of reconciliation.” See Decision of the PJC of the Presbytery of the Redwoods, dated August 24, 2010. Similarly, in the GAPJC decision, Southard v. Presbytery of Boston, February 4, 2010, five members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission expressly recognized that the current language of the Constitution with regard to marriage is at odds with numerous other provisions mandating “the acceptance of our gay, lesbian, and bisexual brothers and sisters into the full fellowship of the church,” and “urged the General Assembly to amend the constitution to allow for the marriage of same-sex couples in the PC(USA) and otherwise welcome gay, lesbian, and bisexual people into the full fellowship of the church.”

As of the time this overture is proposed (October 8, 2013), both the legal and ecclesial landscapes have dramatically changed since those 2010 opinions. Marriage equality is nationally recognized with the invalidation of the Defense of Marriage Act by the United States Supreme Court in 2013 and (as of September 2013) thirteen state governments (those of Massachusetts, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Maryland, Washington, Delaware, Rhode Island and Minnesota), along with the District of Columbia, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Suquamish tribe, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, the lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel, and the Confederated Tribes of the Coquille Reservation issue same-sex marriage licenses. Further, court rulings mandating marriage
equality are on appeal in New Mexico and New Jersey. Rulings and legislative action are pending in a number of other states, including Illinois. If Illinois adopts marriage equality this year, a proposal supported by a majority of Illinoisans, more than 40 percent of the United States’ citizenry will live in jurisdictions recognizing marriage equality.

For the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and for the good of loving, monogamous, same-gender couples in our church and for the community and for the greater ministry of our clergy, sessions, and churches, we propose these changes to the Directory for Worship.

**Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Redwoods (with Additional Rationale)**

Throughout our communities, church, and nation, same-gender couples are living life and nurturing their families together in loving, committed, monogamous relationships. They are raising children, caring for aging parents, and making positive contributions to their communities. These couples include new and long-time members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In a growing number of states, the marriages of these same-gender couples have legal recognition, and are correctly honored as having equal character, quality, and dignity as any other marriage. Sadly, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has until now failed to honor in our Constitution (and in related judicial decisions) the full dignity and humanity of these couples, these families, and these marriages.

This overture seeks to amend W 4.9000 of the Constitution so that it more fully and faithfully reflects the expansive love of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and honors all families, without discrimination. By changing the marriage provisions of the Directory for Worship, we would recognize committed, lifelong relationships that are already being lived out by our members. We would honor and support the love and commitment they practice in their lives every day. We would bear witness to the love of God as it is expressed between these couples and their families and as we offer that love to them on behalf of the church.

In addition, as the legal recognition of the marriages of same-gender couples goes through transitions throughout the country, PC(USA) clergy and sessions are faced with complex decisions regarding ecclesiastical authority and property use. Teaching elders/ministers of Word and Sacrament currently can face ecclesiastical charges if they perform marriage ceremonies or civil unions that may be legal in their state. Same-gender couples who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can come to their minister and request that minister to perform their marriage as an agent of the state, only to be denied that important time of pastoral care and ministry because of church law. These marriages create certain privileges and responsibilities for the married couple and their families within the community and the church that cannot be ignored. Among other things, civil marriage bestows a new status on this couple and designates them as a unique social unit; it delineates their family structure and makes the other their next of kin; it establishes parental and societal rights and responsibilities for them; and establishes their rights of inheritance along with creating larger familial relationships. All of these issues affect this new family and their lives in the church.

Broadening the language to offer marriage to any two people removes the religious barriers faced by ministers, sessions, church members, and other Christians while continuing to honor the laws of each state. Changing the language in this way emphasizes that the Directory for Worship defines marriage within the bounds of our denomination and does not determine what is legal or illegal in civil law. This overture recognizes that the civil, legal definition of marriage is in transition within and among the states. This overture honors the dignity of all same gender couples and their families throughout the PC(USA).

In 2010 and then again in 2012, the 219th and 220th General Assemblies failed to act on the substantive marriage-related overtures that were before it, each time suggesting that presbyteries continue in conversation. The inaction of these General Assemblies has left these families officially outside the pastoral care of the church in marriage. Faithful pastors and sessions do courageously celebrate, and officiate, and participate in the marriages of same-gender couples, but they do so in the PC(USA) under the threat of ecclesiastical prosecution. Now, in 2014, it is even more clear that this constitutional amendment is necessary to recognize the full dignity of same-gender couples and their families. At the time of the drafting of this overture marriage was legal for same-gender couples in thirteen states and the District of Columbia. More than 30 percent of the population of the United States now lives in states that recognize the marriage of same-gender couples. This is a reality from which the PC(USA) can no longer hide. This reality requires a faithful response that recognizes the full dignity and humanity of all families.

A growing number of members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission have called for a constitutional amendment like the one proposed here—as they have had to consider the prosecution of faithful pastors for celebrating the marriages of same-gender couples. In recent decisions, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission has used its power of authoritative interpretation to interpret the current language of the Constitution as barring any participation by a teaching elder/minister in the marriage of a same-gender couple. Dissenting from those decisions, in the 2010 decision in Southard v. Presbytery of Boston, February 4, 2010, five members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission expressly recognized that the current language of the Constitution with regard to marriage is at odds with numerous other provisions mandating “the acceptance of our gay, lesbian, and bisexual brothers and sisters into the full fellowship of the
church,” and “urged the General Assembly to amend the Constitution to allow for the marriage of same-sex couples in the PC(USA) and otherwise welcome gay, lesbian, and bisexual people into the full fellowship of the church.”

Two years later, six members of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission called on the church to amend its Constitution to more faithfully reflect the Gospel, as follows:

We cannot perpetuate the idea that LGBT couples are children of a lesser God. They are ethically and spiritually the equals of heterosexual couples in the eyes of our Lord. None of us can honestly declare to a committed couple that somehow homosexuals reflect a more perfect image of the God we worship than they who view their gender differently. Our denomination has failed to do justice to the LGBT community while emphasizing the traditions of heterosexual marriage which are embodied in W-4.9001.

As Christians we claim the high goal of loving and including all, then seek to exclude the LGBT community. This second-class (or worse) treatment proclaims the hypocrisy of our present interpretations. Since the Directory for Worship is part of our Constitution and the majority has found that it may give rise to disciplinary cases, then it should be immediately amended to clearly state that we fully welcome the LGBT community into their rightful place in our church, including allowing them to marry.

The language of this amendment places primary emphasis on love, mutual support, and enduring faithfulness, and it affirms pastoral discretion in deciding whether or not to celebrate any particular marriage. For the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and for the good of loving, same-gender couples in our church, and for the community and for the greater ministry of our clergy, sessions, and churches, we propose these changes to the Directory for Worship.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of Southern New England (with Additional Rationale)

The church is now in a state of disunity regarding same-gender marriage. Such disunity is costly to the church’s treasure, time, and more importantly, its witness to Jesus’s call to loving covenant.

During such a time, we must be humbly conscious of the work of the Holy Spirit through Christian conscience. Teaching and ruling elders and their congregations have come prayerfully to recognize that some faithful same-gender couples are asking to be held to the same standards of mutual love and commitment as heterosexual couples. To deny the availability of Christian marriage for otherwise qualified same-gender couples is to reject their equal inheritance through Christ. That rejection denies our traditional belief that marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind.

Additionally, teaching elders who act in good conscience and officiate at the weddings of same-gender couples they deem ready for Christian marriage find they may be charged with the offense of violating their ordination vows for an act that the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) has said was not clearly prohibited when those vows were taken. In the current situation, compliant teaching elders, sessions, and congregations may find themselves to be denying the common humanity that is at the very focus of church life and worship.

Historic descriptions of marriage (including W-4.9000), as descriptions, are no longer accurate or complete. Their use as prescriptions has preempted the historic relational, pastoral roles of teaching elders and sessions, their discretion and conscience. The proposed amendment will reprioritize those roles and honor Christian conscience.

The GAPJC has acknowledged that existing interpretations have exacerbated disunity and has requested guidance. The proposed overture to amend the Directory of Worship would provide that guidance.

Throughout Scripture marriage is used as a metaphor for Christian unity, for God’s love and covenant with us, for the union of Christ and the church. May the church act to make this metaphor ever more evident.

Concurrence to Item 10-02 from the Presbytery of National Capital (with Additional Rationale)

As witnesses to God’s grace, it is time for the members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to affirm clearly our common understanding of the value and meaning of marriage, rather than focusing on our disagreement about who may marry. Grounded in the Reformed understanding of marriage as covenant, the proposed substitute text for W-4.9000 lifts up the values of love, mutual support, and lasting faithfulness both for the married couple and for the faith community, thus answering the call in the recent study document issued by the Office of Theology and Worship: “a proper Christian understanding of marriage will claim again the role of the church as a fundamental approving and supporting community in which a marriage of two persons may not only make an appropriate beginning but in which also that marriage may be supported. Without making marriage a sacrament or supplanting the state, the church may offer, as it does in infant baptism, a community in which covenants are made and publicly acknowledged, are nurtured and brought to fulfillment” (“Christian Marriage in the Presbyterian Church [U.S.A.].,” p. 26).

The recent adoption of the new Form of Government points the way toward clarification of our understanding of marriage by focusing on principles of theology and polity. In that spirit, this overture proposes a substitution for rather than a revision of the present text of W-4.9000, where detailed specification of procedures blurs the focus on principles. The substitute text seeks to uphold the intention of the new Form of Government to create a broad constitutional framework within which the councils of the church may adapt practices, procedures, and structures to the needs of particular mission.
Given the role of civil law in defining marriage, as it has been recognized from the beginning of the Reformed tradition, the current differences among civil jurisdictions regarding the gender of persons qualified to marry necessarily create different contexts for the mission of the church. Within the United States, as of August 2013, thirteen states (Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, California, Washington, Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island, Delaware, Minnesota, and Vermont), Washington D.C., several counties in New Mexico, and five Native American tribes legally permit marriage between two people of the same gender as well as two people of different gender. The statement in the current text of W-4.9001, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man,” is factually inaccurate.

Within their particular contexts for mission, teaching and ruling elders are responsible for determining appropriate pastoral care for a couple requesting a service of Christian marriage. “The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care . . .” (Book of Order, W-6.4000; see also W-6.3002 and W-6.3011), and a service of Christian marriage is a form of worship. In the interest of pastoral care, the proposed substitute text for W-4.9000 does not specify the gender of the couple requesting a service of Christian marriage, but emphasizes the authority of both the teaching elder and the session either to comply with or to deny such a request. Corresponding emphasis is placed on the fact that the teaching elder is not obliged to act as an agent of the state or other civil jurisdiction. The proposed text thus permits but does not mandate the participation of teaching elders and sessions in marriages of same-gender couples.

Such permission is justified by principles of theology as well as polity. “The biblical vision of doing justice” summarized in the Book of Order includes “supporting people who seek the dignity, freedom, and respect that they have been denied” (W-7.4002c), and surely this category includes people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. Whether support for these people should include the right to marry depends in part on whether biblical references to marriage between persons of different gender are to be taken as definitions of marriage or rather as examples. The latter interpretation is supported by the early use of marriage as an example of the type of relation promised between God and the people of God (Hos. 2:14–23), some of whom, of course, are male and some female. The Confession of 1967 recognizes this principle of exemplification: “The relationship between man and woman exemplifies in a basic way God’s ordering of the interpersonal life for which he created mankind” (Book of Confessions, 9.47). Extending the gift of marriage to same-gender couples offers a means of “ordering of the interpersonal life” as an act of pastoral care. Having made a commitment of lasting faithfulness to each other before God and the community of faith, the couple who have entered into Christian marriage have a solemn responsibility to uphold that commitment. The faith community, in turn, have responsibility for continuing spiritual support and pastoral care for the couple. In its mission to society as a whole, the church thus helps to create a culture of faithful, loving, lasting relationships. Real meaning is given to the opening statement in the current text of W-4.9001, and preserved in the proposed substitute text: “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.”

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 10-02

Advice on Item 10-02—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-02.

This overture proposes to strike W-4.9000 in its entirety and replace it with new section W-4.9000. This includes revising the definition of marriage to “two people” and allowing teaching elders to perform marriage ceremonies between same-gender couples.

Similar overtures have been considered by previous General Assemblies. The 220th General Assembly (2012) voted to answer those overtures by a call for “a season of serious study and discernment” concerning its [the PC(USA)] meaning of Christian marriage using material prepared by the Office of Theology and Worship.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution’s advice on this overture is the same as its advice to the General Assembly Committee on Civil Unions and Marriage in 2012 (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 1164ff) and is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overture. The overture does not propose to change the basic premise that “marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind,” rather the overture seeks to amend the definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people.” Amending the definition of marriage to two people would alter the foundation on which previous AlIs of this section have rested. A possible consequence of the proposed language is perceived tension between Scripture, the Confessions, and the Book of Order. The assembly will need to articulate the reasons for changing the current definition of Christian marriage.

If the assembly approves this overture, a constitutional issue that should be considered is the use of the word “shall” in the third paragraph (“who shall agree to the couple’s request only if . . .’’). This could be interpreted to limit the teaching elder’s ability to deny performing a service of Christian marriage for any reason other than that given in the overture.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 10-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 10-02.
A. Introduction

The Christian Church has influenced societies over the centuries and throughout the world through its understanding of the love of God and neighbor. In the particular area of marriage, the Church has grown in its understanding of mutuality and mutual respect between marriage partners and the nature of the families that are created by such unions. Thus the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy—which has worked on matters of marriage, family, and human sexuality since the 1970 General Assembly Report on Sexuality and the Human Community—does not take the process of change lightly. Rather we pray that commissioners and the larger church can see God’s hands both holding us and leading us on the path of grace.

In this Advice and Counsel (A&C) memorandum, part of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy’s assigned role for the General Assembly on matters of social ethics and Christian conscience, we ask commissioners to look at several theological and polity considerations that we believe justify sending a constitutional change to the presbyteries. In another Advice and Counsel memorandum on Item 10-03, we address the matter of an authoritative interpretation (AI) that would not propose a re-definition of marriage but allow marriages to be performed in jurisdictions where it is legal without subjecting ministers, couples, and congregations to judicial charges within the Presbyterian system.

We draw here on the wisdom of the many concurring overtures sent in for this Item 10-02, as well as concerns in Items 10-01 and 10-05, which we recommend to answer by action on this item. We also cite sections from the 2012 Advice and Counsel memoranda of both our own committee, ACSWP, and the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC). In 2012, ACSWP and ACC both did not take positions on the variety of overtures on marriage presented and we recommended study by the church, for which the Office of Theology and Worship and many of our seminaries are to be commended for assisting.

B. Theological and Ethical Framework

A basic way to look at the question of whether to change the definition of marriage is to ask whether the addition or extension of a benefit to a new category of persons takes anything away from the existing category or set of persons. Increasingly, around us in our culture and the developed world, heterosexual married couples are not threatened by the extension of the blessing and structure of marriage to GLBT people. Honoring deep yet equalizing traditions of gender complementarity remains possible for many Christians and other neighbors, while other forms of complementarity and partnership are also celebrated. Christian theologians and pastors have, in fact, often been in the lead in thinking through new forms of inclusion even as our churches have struggled to define the issues at stake. While the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and much of the church has focused on the moral bottom-line of fairness in what is now termed, “marriage equality,” this is not to deny the rich and beautiful traditions of marriage that we believe the church is still called to uphold. As Reformed Christians, we believe the biblical core of our faith supports the extension of the benefits of marriage as this overture proposes, while also affirming that no minister or session would be required to perform or permit inclusive marriages against their own conscientious convictions.

C. Polity Framework Considerations

In 2012, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution produced a single comprehensive A&C to address a variety of marriage and civil union overtures, without taking a position either for or against (See pc-biz.org for any of the items in Committee 13 of the 2012 General Assembly). We find excerpts from that memorandum continue to be helpful:

In offering this advice, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution is aware that the constitutional issues raised in the following sections are but one voice in the process of discerning the will of God for the church …

The intent of this advice is to offer to the assembly the collective judgment of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution regarding the constitutionality of the proposed overtures. It is not intended to be advice on the theological, ethical, and legal merits of the overtures …

These sentences require interpretation: Does the second sentence (civil contract) describe a subset of the first (gift to all humankind), or is it a description of how the gift is conferred? Does the second sentence (civil contract) control and subsume the third (Christian marriage)? Is the language of “woman and a man” descriptive or proscriptive?

These are questions that apply directly to the polity issues presented by the overtures, and which create difficulties for the church as it seeks to understand what constitutes a faithful witness to the world. If God’s gift of marriage is only conferred through a civil contract, then the church’s practice (and therefore its witness) regarding marriage would be limited by the definitions set by civil authority. When state and church definitions were consistent, the question of how marriage was defined was not essential. With some states now providing for marriage between same-gender couples, the language of “… civil contract …” becomes problematic for the church; whose definition of marriage is proscriptive in the church?

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for same-gender couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-gender unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community. The passage of civil laws providing for the marriage of same-gender couples creates a conundrum for church polity …

…the social witness of the church for equality under the law has been interpreted as being fulfilled in its affirmation for “civil unions”—but recent changes in some state laws have challenged this distinction along with the church’s liturgical practices and theological understandings of Christian marriage.
Both the Preface to the Directory for Worship and W-1.4001 make clear the connection between the church’s faith and its practice, so that forms of worship are informed biblically, theologically, and ecumenically, and the practice of worship respects both the tradition of the church and the pastoral needs of the community. In this light, changes to the language, forms, or definition of marriage should be informed by theological fidelity, ecumenical consultation, and pastoral sensitivity.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes that questions about W-4.9000 and its relationship to same-gender couples have been addressed to the General Assembly since 1991. Increasing societal acceptance of same-gender couples, laws enacted by some states allowing marriage by same-gender couples, and our own denomination’s struggles over ordination standards have all contributed to the increase of items before the General Assembly seeking change, definition, or interpretation of this section of the Directory for Worship. The church’s concerns for the pastoral care of its members also contribute to the frequency and urgency of these questions. The appointment of the Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2008) and the request for the change in the Board of Pensions policy regarding benefits for same-gender couples are an indicator of the urgency of these matters…

There has been a major change in context since the assembly first began considering changes in practices of marriage. The United States now has a variety of marriage laws. Most define marriage as between a man and a woman, some allow for marriage between two persons regardless of gender, and others allow for civil union between two people regardless of gender…”

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would note three things about the polity concerns identified by the 2012 ACC statement: that the church’s freedom to define marriage remains essential even if the decision is made to maintain a complementary understanding of civil and religious roles; that the affirmation of marriage as a gift of God to all is primary; and that marriage is not simply a dimension of pastoral care as it has Christian covenantal and communal dimensions. We understand the re-written section of the constitution proposed in this Item 10-02 that these three basic factors would remain unchanged. Our concern for this basic framework is the primary reason for our demurral on Item 10-01, which would separate too strongly the religious and civil aspects of marriage.

D. Theological and Ethical Considerations

1. The ACC excerpts quoted above note the factor of “urgency,” certainly seen again at this assembly, but which can actually be extended before the 1991 date they cite to 1978, if the full dimensions of that year’s report on ordination standards are included. Although these thirty plus years are short in terms of theological tradition and the life of God, many faithful members of our church have been waiting much of their lives to be fully included in our worship life as a people of God. It is primarily because ACSWP shares the sense of urgency with the proponents of Item 10-02 and its concurrences (and other Items before this Committee) that we recommend that Item 10-07 not be adopted. Certainly the number of states and countries allowing marriage equality is increasing rapidly based upon human rights and equal treatment provisions of civil constitutions. This is a reason to begin the constitutional process as well as to provide an Authoritative Interpretation.

2. The justice argument that civil unions provided adequate or even equal basis for rights and respect for same-gender relationships has been proven false, in our view. Although it remains the position of some that same-gender relationships should not imitate or conform to heterosexual norms, the downsides of a “separate but equal” approach are hard to compensate for in the public and legal spheres. Item 10-05, while representing a creative possibility in some respects, would seem to us to fall prey to the weaknesses of a “two-track” approach. Theologically, ACSWP would also note the hopes of a more holistic approach to marriage and sexuality matters as far back as 1970, as well as in 1991.

3. The theological focus of the church and use of its resources would be improved if a constitutional change were approved. This is part of the logic of Item 10-06, applied to A1’s, and it is relevant in the longer constitutional and theological context as well. The suffering of individuals and couples rejected by parts of the church and alienated from the love of Christ and Christian faith—these are the deepest costs to the Body. At the same time, the struggle for equal regard for same-gender persons within the Christian community has also had and has importance, as even costly litigation may illuminate the best values of the church. Now, however, our church and others may be able to turn more fully to an evangelism wedded to a fuller sense of justice and actually do more justice to a range of other urgent concerns. Certainly a church that affirms marriage equality—as proponents note—would seem likely to have more success in outreach and mission with younger adults in the United States.

E. Social Witness Policy Considerations, Especially for Families

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy has been concerned about strengthening families for many years, working with ethicists who look at the economic and cultural factors such as low pay and systemic inequality that have put enormous pressures on parents and those considering parenthood. The assembly’s past policies on families, however, also give shed light on the current choices before the assembly regarding marriage.

The 216th General Assembly (2004) approved the policy Transforming Families. In its historical analysis, the policy points out that Scripture contains several forms of marriage and family, none of which is a “precise equivalent of contemporary marriage and family life” (C.1). It notes that the development of monogamous marriage took place over time in Hebrew (and other) societies. And it points out that “the Reformed tradition embraced marriage as a good for all in society, Christian or not” (C.1). As the Book of Order states, “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family” (W-4.9001).
Transforming Families (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/transforming-families/) also states that while the marital-biological family is a basic form of family, it is neither “exhaustive nor exclusive” as a family form, and “it does not fully exemplify God’s ordering of interpersonal life.” Moreover, the policy recognizes that the forms and purposes of family have evolved as God’s ordering of equal gender relationships has become clearer. In these ways, the church has acknowledged that forms of marriage and family are shaped by of historical and cultural developments. Today we would find some of the previous forms and some of the interpersonal relationships that they embodied falling short of our understanding of God’s will for humankind and human well-being.

Having said this, this policy did not address specifically the question of same-gender marriage and family. It assumed without comment the previous policies of the church that called for the same protections and civil rights for same-gender families that are equal to those of married heterosexual families. Equality under the law is one principle. But the church also recognizes the importance of these protections and rights to the capacity of such families to do what good families do: nurturing children, deepening love, providing material support, caring for the young and the sick and the aged, and creating a context for growth in faith. The church has understood that same-gender couples, and homosexual persons, have the same need and desire for the pastoral care of the church. Thus, it offers the blessing of the church on same-gender unions and committed itself to the wellbeing of children in same-gender unions as it has to all children (Transforming Families, p. 31).

Finally, Transforming Families ends with a vision of a church and society “which welcomes and nurtures all persons regardless of their family circumstances” and a church that rejects “attitudes or practices that value some more highly than others - based on gender, age, class, ability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or any outward condition” (Recommendations, #2).

Still, these policies did not include same-gender couples in the church’s understanding of marriage. The intent of Item 10-02 (and others) is to embody in the church itself an equal recognition that same-gender faithful and committed relationships are included in the gift of marriage God intends for humankind. These items set before the 221th General Assembly (2014) the question of whether the church’s commitment to equality of civil rights for same-gender persons is possible if the church itself does not receive such relationships into its body on an equal basis with opposite-gender relationships.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 10-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 10-02.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the rationale given in this overture.

The ACWC believes that in withholding the right to marry from same-gender loving people, the church is upholding a patriarchal standard for humanity. Committed to standing against patriarchy and its effects within the world and the church, ACWC advocates giving access to all that Christian marriage provides to same-gender couples in committed and loving relationships who are in the PC(USA).

The proposed amendment is a clear and compelling statement reflecting the gift of God that marriage provides to human beings. It encourages healthy families, congregations, and communities.

Item 10-03

[The assembly approved Item 10-03 with amendment. See pp. 29, 30.]

On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Affirm Pastoral Discretion in Performing Marriage Ceremonies—From the Presbytery of Heartland.

The Presbytery of Heartland overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to issue the following authoritative interpretation of the Book of Order, W-4.9000:

“Worship is a central element of the pastoral care of the people of God (W-6.3001, W-6.3010) in which a teaching elder’s discernment of the leading of the Holy Spirit is indispensable. The necessity of ensuring the exercise of freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture (G-2.0105) in the planning and leadership of worship has deep roots in our Reformed tradition and theology. Because a service of marriage is one form of such worship, when a couple requests the involvement of the church in solemnizing their marriage as permitted by the laws [of the civil jurisdiction in which the marriage is to take place] [of the place where the couple seek to be married], teaching elders* have the pastoral responsibility to assess the capabilities, intentions, and readiness of the couple to be married (W-4.9002), and the freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture (G-2.0105) to participate in any such marriage they believe the Holy Spirit calls them to perform.
Exercising such discretion and freedom of conscience under the prayerful guidance of Scripture, teaching elders may conduct a marriage service for any such couple in the place where the community gathers for worship, [if] [so long as it is] approved by the session; or in such other place as may be suitable for a service of Christian worship. In no case shall any teaching elder’s conscience be bound to conduct any marriage service for any couple except by his or her understanding of the Word, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The authoritative interpretation of this section by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) (Minutes, 1991, Part I, p. 395, paragraphs 21.124–128), and the subsequent authoritative interpretations of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission relying upon it, are withdrawn and replaced with this authoritative interpretation.”

*As in other places in the Directory for Worship, the use of “teaching elders” in this paragraph should be understood to include ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service.

Rationale

The civil legal framework of marriage has changed since the constitutional provisions and other rulings that govern marriage in the PC(USA) were put into place.

The constitution protects a minister’s obligation and right to exercise pastoral discretion in matters such as whether or not to officiate at the marriage service of any particular couple.

Clarifying the constitution in this way will contribute to the peace and unity of the church.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbyteries of Baltimore, Boston, Northern New England, Transylvania, and the Twin Cities Area.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of San Francisco (with Additional Rationale)

Rationale

A Christian understanding of marriage, as a covenant in which people pledge to share their lives and encourage one another’s growth and deepening discipleship, is one of the most distinctive offerings of the church to a culture in which people and relationships often seem disposable. It is a blessing not only for the couple but also for the gathered faith community, where other couples find their own marriages strengthened by witnessing the promises made by the new couple. Marriage services are also a significant evangelism opportunity for congregations, as they invite the new couple, their families, and their friends, to consider a distinctive view of covenantal life, and to witness the church’s welcome.

Under current Presbyterian polity as enunciated by authoritative interpretations, teaching elders may bless same-gender relationships, and they may also receive authority directly from the state to perform civil same-gender marriage ceremonies. However, many teaching elders hesitate to perform such marriages for fear of facing ecclesiastical charges. And since same-gender marriages are currently not recognized by the church, teaching elders must take care not to misrepresent such ceremonies as conferring church recognition of a same-gender marriage.

Uncertainty regarding the PC(USA)’s present position on celebration of same-gender marriages may hinder congregations’ outreach and evangelism, particularly in states that now permit same-gender marriage. In the fourteen states where same-gender marriage is legal, thousands of teaching elders and sessions may be reticent to offer the welcome and pastoral care their biblically informed consciences lead them to do. Indeed, pastors and congregations may even be dissuaded from celebrating the covenantal commitments of their own parishioners, if those church members or officers are lesbian, gay, or transgender.

We in the San Francisco Bay area live in an area where nearly a sixth of our neighbors identify as GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender), while only a comparatively few worship in any worshiping community on any weekend. Our congregations, sessions, and teaching elders want to exhibit the “love and justice of Jesus Christ” to our community (W-4.4003i). Our teaching elders want to spend their “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h) caring for their parishioners, not wasting resources on ecclesial litigation. Of course, pastors and sessions whose own consciences cannot allow them to support these unions have complete pastoral discretion not to do so.

It is time for the church to resolve the pastoral crisis confronting clergy in states where marriage equality is the law of the land. As our own General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) recently ruled,

In light of the number of cases coming before this Commission and the convoluted grounds upon which cases are brought and decided, it would be beneficial for the church to provide a definitive position regarding participation of officers in same-gender ceremonies whether civil or religious. 

(Newark v. McNeill, Disciplinary Case 221-02)
While the PC(USA) has not yet elected to recognize same-gender marriages, it is essential that the denomination state clearly and unambiguously the right of a teaching elder to conduct civil same-gender marriages and to bless those relationships in PC(USA) worship services, so that those teaching elders may confidently and compassionately minister to their congregations.

**Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Maumee Valley (with Additional Rationale)**

When a couple seeks to be married in the church, rather than in a civil setting, they want the support of the people of God for their pledge of lifelong commitment. Will we continue to withhold this support, or will we welcome them fully and give a blessing to the gift of love that God has placed in their hearts? Will we encourage them to fully participate in the life of the church and to raise children in the body of Christ? There is no stated “biblical definition” of marriage. Indeed, much of what the Bible describes as marriage or intimate relationships—bigamy, polygamy, concubinage, socioeconomic bridal negotiations, levirate marriage—is no longer part of Christian matrimony. Where do we go from here, then?

There is debate over what the *Book of Order* intends to say in W-4.9000. Is it descriptive of one particular marriage scenario, or is it prescriptive of the only marriage scenario? The Directory for Worship repeatedly stresses the importance of worship in the exercise of pastoral care: “The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care as well as for the ministry of nurture in the faith” (W-6.4000). The Preface to the Directory for Worship explicitly states that “this directory ... uses language about worship which is simply descriptive” (Preface, b). There are numerous descriptions of usual practice in the directory that are not followed to the letter by pastors and congregations. This is within the Reformed tradition of “ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda,” blessing neither preservation for preservation’s sake nor change for change’s sake. The church is not the agent of its own reformation; God is the agent of reformation, and the church is the object of God’s reforming work. This is what Pastor John Robinson had in mind in 1620, when in his final sermon to the Pilgrims departing for the New World, he reminded them that God does not reveal God’s whole truth to any one person at any one point in history: “… I am verily persuaded the Lord hath more truth [and light] yet to break forth from His Holy Word” ([http://www.newtestamentpattern.net/christian-articles/sundry-thoughts/the-words-of-john-robinson_mayflower](http://www.newtestamentpattern.net/christian-articles/sundry-thoughts/the-words-of-john-robinson_mayflower)).

We must continually be open to hearing the new things God is saying to us through the Word. It was this ever-renewed, ever-revealing light that led us away from the scriptural interpretations once used to keep slavery in place, to justify anti-Semitism, to limit the role of women in society and in our denomination, to justify the despoilment of the environment, to authorize physical punishment of children at home and school, and to rationalize homophobia, for example. In fact, the *Book of Order* is designed to be very fluid, constantly open to amendment, change, and reform. Procedures for modifications are understood as a means to faithfulness as God leads us in discernment. For example, it was this openness to new paths revealed to us by God that led to the 2011 *Book of Order* amendment (10-A) that removed the issue of sexual orientation from the ordination process for deacons, elders, and ministers.

The authoritative interpretation being sought will confirm the long-standing role of teaching elders and ruling elders in exercising non-judgmental inquiry, as they seek to understand and live out the Scriptures and their ordination vows. The political maneuvers of recent years have impinged on the fulfillment of those vows taken by our congregational officers and most especially by our clergy. Current interpretations of the *Book of Order*, W-4.9000, give the impression that those authorized by their ordination in the PC(USA) to solemnize marriages are not permitted to perform that service for same-gender couples, especially by our clergy. Current interpretations of the polity maneuveres of recent years have impinged on the fulfillment of those vows taken by our congregational officers and most exercising non-judgmental inquiry, as they seek to understand and live out the Scriptures and their ordination vows. The polity’s sake nor change for change’s sake. The church is not the agent of its own reformation; God is the agent of reformation, and the church is the object of God’s reforming work. This is what Pastor John Robinson had in mind in 1620, when in his final sermon to the Pilgrims departing for the New World, he reminded them that God does not reveal God’s whole truth to any one person at any one point in history: “… I am verily persuaded the Lord hath more truth [and light] yet to break forth from His Holy Word” ([http://www.newtestamentpattern.net/christian-articles/sundry-thoughts/the-words-of-john-robinson_mayflower](http://www.newtestamentpattern.net/christian-articles/sundry-thoughts/the-words-of-john-robinson_mayflower)).

We must continually be open to hearing the new things God is saying to us through the Word. It was this ever-renewed, ever-revealing light that led us away from the scriptural interpretations once used to keep slavery in place, to justify anti-Semitism, to limit the role of women in society and in our denomination, to justify the despoilment of the environment, to authorize physical punishment of children at home and school, and to rationalize homophobia, for example. In fact, the *Book of Order* is designed to be very fluid, constantly open to amendment, change, and reform. Procedures for modifications are understood as a means to faithfulness as God leads us in discernment. For example, it was this openness to new paths revealed to us by God that led to the 2011 *Book of Order* amendment (10-A) that removed the issue of sexual orientation from the ordination process for deacons, elders, and ministers.

The authoritative interpretation being sought will confirm the long-standing role of teaching elders and ruling elders in exercising non-judgmental inquiry, as they seek to understand and live out the Scriptures and their ordination vows. The political maneuvers of recent years have impinged on the fulfillment of those vows taken by our congregational officers and most especially by our clergy. Current interpretations of the *Book of Order*, W-4.9000, give the impression that those authorized by their ordination in the PC(USA) to solemnize marriages are not permitted to perform that service for same-gender couples, as they routinely do for heterosexual couples. As legal marriage for same-gender couples becomes a reality in a growing number of venues*, this supposed prohibition requires more and more teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders either to discriminate against some couples, contrary to their conscience, or to risk involving themselves and their congregations in judicial process. Pastors are facing the impossible dilemma of choosing between, on the one hand, their ordination promises to “pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h), to “love your neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world” (W-4.4003f), and to “try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ” (W4.4003i(3)), all up against, on the other hand, the promise to “be governed by our church’s polity” (W-4.4003e). The current interpretation painfully interferes with pastors’ ability to exercise their discretion in providing pastoral care. Resolution of this conflictual situation need not remain impossible for a denomination that has traditionally drawn strength from its capacity for mutual forbearance. A pastor in the PC(USA) is not under any compulsion to perform a marriage that s/he deems inappropriate. It is also the long-standing practice of Reformed faith to allow freedom of conscience in all nonessential matters, and homosexuality was not considered an essential in the past. Same-gender marriage was scarcely on the radar as recently as a generation ago.

What happened in the relatively recent Presbyterian past has been at times a convoluted journey through our polity. The requested authoritative interpretation (AI) does not seek to amend W-4.9000; rather, it clarifies that conducting a service of worship that does not follow W-4.9000 to the letter is not an offense that should subject a minister to the threat of discipline. The requested authoritative interpretation removes a prior AI, issued by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) at a time when there was no possibility in this country of conducting a legal marriage service, civil or religious, for a same-gender couple. The requested AI also removes the subsequent AIs by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) that rely upon that 1991 AI.
The GAPJC has itself acknowledged that the current language of the Book of Order is silent as to same-gender marriage and that it was a split decision of the GAPJC that created an offense where none previously existed:

We understand the Decision to be an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, to mean that officers of the PC(USA) who are authorized to perform marriages shall not hereafter perform a same sex union ceremony in which or with respect to which such officer states, implies or represents to be a marriage or the equivalent thereof. While the Commission did not find Spahr guilty as charged herein, in part because her conduct occurred under prior authoritative interpretations, we understand that future noncompliance with the authoritative interpretation of the Decision will be considered to be a disciplined offense. ([emphasis added] Disciplinary Case 218-12, Concurring Opinion [Spahr 1, http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc21812withconcurrences.pdf]).

The GAPJC reaffirmed that the supposed offense was its own creation, when it determined that Jean Southard did not commit an offense in performing a marriage for two women; if the supposed offense were inherent in the Book of Order, Rev. Southard would have been guilty:

“This Commission concluded in Spahr that prior authoritative interpretations lacked mandatory language. Southard conducted this ceremony two months prior to Spahr. Sensitive to the authoritative interpretation in Spahr, this Commission agrees with the SPJC that Spahr cannot be applied retroactively to the facts of this case. Therefore, Southard did not violate the Book of Order or her ordination vows by erring in her constitutional interpretation. She did not commit an offense because the applicable authoritative interpretation (Spahr) had not yet been promulgated.” ([emphasis added] Disciplinary Case 220-02 [Southard, http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc 22002.pdf])

If the GAPJC has the authority to create an offense by authoritative interpretation, the General Assembly—a much larger and more representative body—has the same authority as the GAPJC to correct that action (G-6.02). The Book of Order does not address same-gender marriage. The Directory for Worship was written before same-gender marriage seemed like a possibility. To pass an AI that allows sessions and pastors discretion to do, or not to do, same-gender marriages merely addresses a situation that is not explicitly covered in the Book of Order. If the current section on marriage were intentional in its exclusion, it would explicitly say, “Marriage is to be (or ‘shall be’) between a man and a woman.” Section W-4.9001 does not say that, and previous attempts to make it say that have failed. Notwithstanding, no PC(USA) minister can ever be required to participate in a marriage service against his or her conscience. In cases such as this one, a determination of offense requires clear demonstration of a violation against Scripture or the Constitution, in which the terms of a mandate are unambiguous and expressly stated. In this case and in the other recent cases related to it, it is strikingly significant to note the absence of arguments upon perceived biblical warrants or directly applicable mandates in our Constitution and the presence of simple descriptive, not prescriptive, bases. The authoritative interpretation of these sections (W-4.9000–4.9006) by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) is no longer factually correct and does not adequately prioritize the discretion granted to teaching elders and sessions in both providing pastoral care and overseeing services of worship.

In this case and the other recent decisions, the principal concern is that the GAPJC has forged a standard upon an extremely fragile provision, employing a strained interpretation that does not provide the necessary legal foundation for resolution of our dilemma and does not foster pastoral guidance in the life of the church. It does not take into account the changes in the understanding of marriage, especially by persons of faith in Jesus Christ. Will we welcome all couples to participate fully in the life of the church? Will we encourage all families to raise children as members of the body of Christ? By relying so heavily on W-4.9001, the GAPJC has ruled upon convention rather than church law. The definitive clarity that the church deserves and expects in this continuing and vexatious dispute awaits deeper foundational judgment as well as more precise legislation.

*COUNTRIES: Argentina, Australia (by end of 2013), Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Mexico (Mexico City, Quintana Roo), Nether-lands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom (England, Wales), Uruguay.


U.S. RELIGIOUS GROUPS: Episcopal Church, United Church of Christ, Unitarian Universalist Association, Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, Judaism (Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform).

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Genesee Valley (with Additional Rationale)

On July 24, 2011, the State of New York extended the right to marry to couples of the same gender, joining Massachus-sets, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, and the District of Columbia. Since that date, California, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Washington, and New Jersey have also extended the right to marry to same-gender couples. Many Presbyterian teaching elders, including several in our presbytery, are receiving requests from their lesbian and gay congregants to celebrate their marriages in the Christian community. They assume they would be afforded the same pastoral care provided to other members.

The Directory for Worship acknowledges that marriage is a “civil contract” and therefore regulated by the state (203rd General Assembly [1991] in Baltimore). It was written before the possibility of civil marriage between persons of the same sex was contemplated. Likewise, the 1991 General Assembly’s authoritative interpretation that distinguished between a “same-sex ceremony” and a marriage, the 2000 Benton decision of the GAPJC, and the 2008 Spahr decision were all ad-dressing ceremonies that were not legal civil marriages. In this interim, when the definition of civil marriage is changing, the Book of Order requires interpretation to be applied to a variety of circumstances. One of the most pressing is the pastoral cri-
sis that results when same-sex couples ask the teaching and ruling elders of their congregation to permit and participate in their marriage services under Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) auspices, and those elders must hesitate for fear of challenge in church courts.

Worship is the central context of pastoral care for Christians:

“The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care as well as for the ministry of nurture in the faith” (Book of Order, W-6.4000; see also W-6.3002 and W-6.3010).

Lesbian and gay Presbyterians seeking the care of their church do not wish to provoke controversy, endanger their pastors, or embroil their congregations in judicial proceedings. Like heterosexual couples, they simply want the support of their faith community as they undertake the commitments and responsibilities of marriage. When the possibility of prosecution looms over pastors who are endeavoring to fulfill their promise to “… pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h), anguish extends to the couple, the pastor, the congregation, and eventually the whole church.

Therefore, we propose an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 to clarify the ambiguities it contains. Much of the section is written in permissive or advisory language. The Preface to the Book of Order states that “SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE signify practice that is mandated” while “SHOULD signifies practice that is strongly recommended” and “MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required.” The Preface to the Directory for Worship (section b) states: “In addition to the [above] terms defined in the Preface to the Book of Order, this [Worship] directory also uses language about worship which is simply descriptive.” For example there is a logical conflict between the description of “Christian marriage” as an expression of “Christian commitment” and the allowance that one of the partners might not even be “a professing Christian” (W-4.9002a(1)). The descriptions of Christian marriage, if prohibitive of ceremonies in which every detail does not conform to the descriptions, would forbid teaching elders from officiating at interfaith marriages because they might, among other things, “Diminish the Christian understanding of marriage.” If W-4.9000 was intended to set normative, mandatory, exclusive standards for what the PC(USA) considers marriage, then those who conduct marriages would also be at risk for allowing music that fails to “[direct] attention to God and express the faith of the church” (W-4.9005) or for allowing “flowers, decorations, and other appointments” (Ibid) that do not “reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life” (Ibid). There is nothing in the text of W-4.9000 that makes the “man and woman” description mandatory and the other details not mandatory. If officiating at the marriage of a same-gender couple is an offense, then any ceremony not conforming to every detail of W-4.9000, even a heterosexual marriage, is likewise an offense.

The comments of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2001: “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 254). There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals.

The enactment of laws that make it possible for same-sex couples to enter into a civil contract raises the question then of whether the key to performing marriage ceremonies to be held in a church and conducted by teaching elders or commissioned ruling elders is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional distinctions held by the PC(USA) are no longer as clear.

Pastors and sessions need the General Assembly’s assurance of their freedom and discretion to provide the pastoral care that their members require. This freedom is based on the same principle as W-4.9002b, which provides that pastors are free, as their judgment dictates, not to officiate at marriages that their members and others are contracting.

In the absence of mandatory language in the Book of Order that would prohibit a service of Christian marriage for any couple that is legally permitted to marry, the assembly should give such assurance of freedom and discretion in the form of this proposed authoritative interpretation. It will prevent deep grief for church members who might otherwise be denied the pastoral care of the church and it will protect pastors and sessions from judicial challenge for exercising their pastoral responsibilities.

**Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Long Island (with Additional Rationale)**

The Session of the Setauket Presbyterian Church takes seriously its vows to “pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h), to “love [our] neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world” (W-4.4003f), to “try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ (W-4.4003i3), and to “be governed by our church’s polity” (W-4.4003e). We also take seriously our pastoral and leadership role as elected by a congregation that is socio-politically and theologically diverse.

The Setauket Presbyterian Church is the fifth oldest congregation in the denomination (1660), with a history of putting faith and principles into action dating at least from organized resistance to British occupation during the American Revolution. We are a More Light church and a member church of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians. From our history and our public stance, it is logical that same-sex couples would come to us, as indeed they have, trusting that we
will welcome them and their families, and that we would provide the same pastoral care and congregational support in the name of Christ that a church is called to offer to all people.

The civil laws of the State of New York allow same-sex marriage, but the present interpretations of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) do not. This created personal conflict for each of us, and, as we grappled with it together, distress and sadness in the session as a whole. We saw that the language in W-4.9001 describing civil marriage was no longer adequate or accurate, at least when applied to a growing number of states (including our own) and other nations worldwide. As we studied, prayed, and reflected over two months and three session meetings, the following issues rose to the surface:

Suppose, we reasoned, one of the same-sex couples in our church family adopted a baby, presented her for baptism, and also asked to get married now that that was possible. We realized that we could baptize the baby, but not marry the couple. We could even approve their reception on our property, but not their wedding. That seemed illogical and unfair to us, no matter how kindly we broke the news to them. We saw that no matter which way we turned, we would be breaking one or another of our ordination vows.

We learned that in the Reformed tradition, teaching elders have always had pastoral responsibility to assess the appropriateness of any marriage, and that sessions had similar responsibility in assessing the impact on “proclamation of the Gospel” and “demonstration of the Kingdom of God to the world” in their approval of the use of church buildings. We understood those parallel responsibilities to be part of the checks and balances built into our polity. We grieved that the current interpretation of the descriptive language in our Directory for Worship interferes with this trust and these responsibilities.

We observed that, as a church, we bless heterosexual marriages contracted under civil law because for century’s marriage partners have testified that their bond is a means of grace. We felt that when same-gender partners testify that their committed relationships have the same benefit, it was right to give them the same blessing. We acknowledged that as the world changes, same-gender couples are actually doing something profoundly conservative by asking to be held, through public covenant, to the same standards of faithfulness and mutual love that the church expects of heterosexual couples.

We were concerned for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We remembered that our Lord Jesus spent very little time in the Temple, and most of his time among the people. On many occasions we see him following the spirit of the law, when he found it in conflict with the letter. The spirit of marriage is alive and well in two people who express a heartfelt desire to unite their spirits and their lives with each other and with God. It would be against that very spirit to deny them that right.

Out of our established commitment to peace and justice, we reflected that as Jesus taught us to fight for the oppressed, in our time there is perhaps no better example of what Jesus meant than the one before us now. It seemed to us unimaginable to think that Jesus would deny two people who seek to live their lives in union, with him and with each other, the ability to do so. Recognizing our duty as Christians to fight for justice for all of God’s people, we realized that in this case, if we do not make a change in the church, we are not only refusing to fight for the oppressed, we are in fact the oppressors.

Moreover, we were deeply concerned for the faith of our children. We were startled to read the statistics published by the conservative evangelical Barna Foundation: that 85 percent of unchurched young people under age 29 believe the church is hypocritical; 87 percent believe that it is judgmental, and 91 percent believe it is anti-homosexual. Digging further, we discovered that conservatives and liberals alike are alarmed at the growing rate at which young people are falling away from the churches. Although there are undoubtedly many contributing factors to this, we could not dismiss the Barna statistics as irrelevant.

Our denomination as a whole has for decades maintained a consistent civil rights stance on behalf of LGBTQ people in matters of civil law, no matter how we are still working out the details of polity. This is something of which the young people in our congregation are proud. We wanted to contribute to an environment of pastoral concern rather than ecclesiastical litigiousness as our denomination works through the huge transitions now shaping society.

For all these reasons, we wanted to be part of the solution, and through due denominational process, to return our polity to its historical position: an expectation of prayerful discernment on the part of teaching elders and sessions, where marriage in the church intersects with marriage in the still-evolving law of the land.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of New York City (with Additional Rationale)

Recent changes in civil law permitting couples of the same gender to marry have created a pastoral crisis in a significant number of jurisdictions where many Presbyterians reside. Within the United States, as of August 2013, thirteen states (Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, California, Washington, Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island, Delaware, Minnesota and Vermont), Washington, D.C., and two Native American tribal jurisdictions (Coquille, Suquamish) le-
gally permit marriage between two people of the same gender as well as two people of different gender. Within these jurisdictions, faithful members of PC(USA) congregations are approaching teaching elders expecting the same pastoral care to be extended to couples of the same gender that is regularly extended to couples of different gender. They are requesting a service of Christian marriage, an occasion for the worship of God, and therefore based on the foundation for the ministry of pastoral care (Book of Order, W-6.4000; see also W-6.3002 and W-6.3011).

A pastoral crisis arises from the fact that the PC(USA) Constitution no longer offers clear guidance concerning qualifications for marriage. The statement in the Directory for Worship, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001), is factually inaccurate. Until the Directory of Worship is revised to recognize changes in civil law and to clarify the implications of those changes for marriage in the PC(USA), the General Assembly needs to affirm what has not changed: namely, the responsibility of the individual teaching elder to determine the couple’s fitness to marry based on their “commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding” (W-4.9002b). The proposed authoritative interpretation provides such affirmation.

While the process of constitutional change takes its course, the proposed authoritative interpretation invites all members of the PC(USA) to experience God’s grace through gracious regard for each other. Under the proposed authoritative interpretation, not only may pastoral care be extended to same-gender couples, but teaching elders and sessions who agree to extend such care may face less threat of judicial action. By contrast, existing authoritative interpretations, which would be withdrawn by the present proposal, not only arise from judicial action but open the prospect of further litigation as the courts of the church struggle for clarity in an unclear constitutional context. The proper means to achieve such clarity is the constitutional process involving the church as a whole. We will be better prepared to engage in that process if we use the means now available to practice gracious interactions with each other.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of The Western Reserve (with Additional Rationale)

Same-gender couples seek to be married in the church for the same reasons as heterosexual couples—and they will continue to marry. The question is whether the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will welcome them, or drive them away; celebrate and witness their mutual commitments, or leave them without the support of the faith community for the solemn covenant they are entering.

Current interpretations of the Book of Order, W-4.9000, give the impression that those authorized by their ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to solemnize marriages are not permitted to perform that service for same-gender couples, as they routinely do for heterosexual couples. As legal marriage for same-gender couples becomes a reality in a growing number of countries, U. S. states, and other civil jurisdictions, this supposed prohibition requires more and more teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders either to discriminate against some couples, contrary to their conscience, or to risk involving themselves and their congregations in judicial process. Pastors are facing the impossible dilemma of choosing between their ordination promises to “pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h), “love your neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world” (W-4.4003f), and “try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ” (W-4.4033i), or the promise to “be governed by our church’s polity” (W-4.4003e). The current interpretation unacceptably interferes with pastors’ ability to exercise their discretion in providing pastoral care.

The Directory for Worship repeatedly stresses the importance of worship in the exercise of pastoral care: “The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care as well as for the ministry of nurture in the faith” (W-6.4000). See also, for example, W-6.3010, W-6.3002.

The Preface to the Directory for Worship explicitly states that “this directory also uses language about worship which is simply descriptive.” There are numerous descriptions of usual practice in the directory that are not followed to the letter by pastors and congregations.

The requested authoritative interpretation (AI) does not seek to amend W-4.9000; it simply clarifies that conducting a service of worship that does not follow W-4.9000 to the letter is not an offense that should subject a minister to the threat of discipline. The requested authoritative interpretation removes a prior AI, issued by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) at a time when there was no possibility of conducting a legal marriage service for a same-gender couple, and subsequent AIs by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) that rely upon it.

The GAPJC has itself acknowledged that the current language of the Book of Order is silent as to same-gender marriage, and that it was a split decision of the GAPJC that created an offense where none previously existed:

We understand the Decision to be an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, to mean that officers of the PCUSA who are authorized to perform marriages shall not hereafter perform a same sex union ceremony in which or with respect to which such officer states, implies or represents to be a marriage or the equivalent thereof. While the Commission did not find Spahr guilty as charged herein, in part because her conduct occurred under prior authoritative interpretations, we understand that future noncompliance with the authoritative interpretation of the Decision will be considered to be a disciplinable offense. [emphasis added] Disciplinary Case 218-12 Concurring Opinion (Spahr 1, [http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc21812withconcurrences.pdf])
The GAPJC reaffirmed that the supposed offense was its own creation, when it determined that Jean Southard did not commit an offense in performing a marriage for two women; if the supposed offense were inherent in the Book of Order, Rev. Southard would have been guilty:

This Commission concluded in Spahr that prior authoritative interpretations lacked mandatory language. Southard conducted this ceremony two months prior to Spahr. Sensitive to the authoritative interpretation in Spahr, this Commission agrees with the SPJC that Spahr cannot be applied retroactively to the facts of this case. Therefore, Southard did not violate the Book of Order or her ordination vows by erring in her constitutional interpretation. She did not commit an offense because the applicable authoritative interpretation (Spahr) had not yet been promulgated. [emphasis added] Disciplinary Case 220-02 (Southard, http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc22002.pdf)

If the GAPJC has the authority to create an offense by authoritative interpretation, the General Assembly—a much larger and more representative body—has the authority to correct that action (G-6.02).

Ministers whose study of Scripture, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has led them to affirm same-gender marriage, are following their understanding of Jesus Christ, who placed himself on the margins with people others considered unclean, unworthy, and immoral, and lifted up love and compassion. They note that the Bible reflects many patterns and forms of legal, religiously approved marital relationships. They appeal to Presbyterian principles of biblical interpretation, including reading in context, the use of knowledge and experience, the centrality of Jesus Christ, interpretation of Scripture by Scripture, the rule of love, and the rule of faith (Presbyterian Understanding and Use of Holy Scripture, http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/resolutions/scripture-use.pdf). They believe that turning away same-gender couples harms gay and lesbian persons and their families, creates injustice, hinders evangelism, and violates their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

These ministers are seeking the freedom of conscience to act on their convictions that is safeguarded in our Historic Principles of Church Order, and the mutual forbearance required for maintaining the unity of the body (F-3.01).

The same principles protect those whose study of Scripture leads them to a different conclusion. No minister can ever be required to participate in a marriage service against his or her conscience.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed, same-gender relationships. Therefore, while holding persons in ordered ministry to high standards of covenant fidelity in the exercise of their sexuality, as in all aspects of life, we acknowledge that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does not have one interpretation of Scripture in this matter. We commit ourselves to continue respectful dialogue with those who hold differing convictions, to welcome one another for God’s glory, and not to vilify those whose convictions we believe to be in error. We call on all Presbyterians to join us in this commitment. (action of the 220th General Assembly 2012, http://www.pc-biz.org/MeeitngPapers/(S(zuvchv5dex1dkpgphysjezk0))/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=4063)

The requested authoritative interpretation follows the reasoning of the members of the GAPJC who dissented in the Spahr 2 decision (Disciplinary Case 220-08, February 2012, http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc22008.pdf)

We respectfully dissent from this Decision [that declared that Janie Spahr had violated the Book of Order by conducting services that were and are legal marriages].

The majority judges this case primarily in relation to the decisions in Spahr (2008) and Southard (2011) in a conviction that, behind its judicial interpretation, there is in the Constitution an explicit basis against officiating in a same-sex marriage. In fact, this conviction rests upon an assumption rather than explicit constitutional rule. It is grounded principally upon one section, even one sentence, in the Directory of Worship, that is claimed to have clear and obvious legal status. The Commission assumes here and in earlier cases that W-4.9001 presents a legal basis for denying the permissibility and validity of same-sex marriage because it presents a “definition” of marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman. This assumption is flawed. This provision in the Directory of Worship cannot serve effectively as a judicial criterion.

There are several reasons why W-4.9001 is incapable of bearing the legal significance and weight that the Commission has placed upon it. First, this paragraph emerged decades ago, in a very different time and context. In its language and descriptions, it reflects conventions of a time when same-sex unions presented little, if any, cultural concern or attention... Secondly, W-4.9001 is an introductory narrative for a distinctive, introductory section on marriage, outlining its biblical and theological characteristics as background to provisions of pastoral practice and nurture...To claim that this paragraph is primarily and intentionally in nature forces an artificial warp upon its evident narrative purpose. As a fourfold theological outline of Christian marriage in narrative form, in no way is it clear or obvious that it proposes regulatory imperative or legal intention. Certainly, it does not have the kind of language or format that the church has come to expect in definitive juridical statements, the kind of “shall” language that is common to our order in providing regulatory lines for boundaries of action or proscribed behavior.

This is all to say that, in cases such as this one, a determination of offense requires clear demonstration of a violation against Scripture or the Constitution, in which the terms of a mandate are unambiguous and expressly stated. In this case and in the other recent cases, it is strikingly significant to note the absence of arguments upon perceived biblical warrants or directly applicable mandates in our Constitution and the presence of mere definitional bases.

In this case and the other recent decisions, our principal concern is that this Commission has forged a standard upon an extremely fragile provision, employing a strained interpretation that does not provide the necessary legal foundation for resolution of our dilemma or foster pastoral guidance in the life of the church. By relying so heavily on W-4.9001, the Commission has ruled upon convention rather than law. The definitive clarity that the church deserves and expects in this continuing and vexatious dispute awaits deeper foundational judgment as well as more precise legislation.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from Presbytery of Albany (with additional Rationale)
Recent changes in civil law permitting couples of the same gender to marry have created a pastoral crisis in a significant number of jurisdictions where many Presbyterians reside. Within the United States, as of August 2013, thirteen states (Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, California, Washington, Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island, Delaware, Minnesota, and Vermont), Washington D.C., and two Native American tribal jurisdictions (Coquille, Suquamish) legally permit marriage between two people of the same gender as well as two people of different gender. Within these jurisdictions, faithful members of PC(USA) congregations are approaching teaching elders expecting the same pastoral care to be extended to couples of the same gender that is regularly extended to couples of different gender. They are requesting a service of Christian marriage, an occasion for the worship of God, and therefore based on the foundation for the ministry of pastoral care (Book of Order, W-6.4000; see also W-6.3002 and W-6.3011).

A pastoral crisis arises from the fact that the PC(USA) Constitution no longer offers clear guidance concerning qualifications for marriage. The statement in the Directory for Worship, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001), is factually inaccurate. Until the Directory of Worship is revised to recognize changes in civil law and to clarify the implications of those changes for marriage in the PC(USA), the General Assembly needs to affirm what has not changed: namely, the responsibility of the individual teaching elder to determine the couple’s fitness to marry based on their “commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding” (W-4.9002b). The proposed authoritative interpretation provides such affirmation.

While the process of constitutional change takes its course, the proposed authoritative interpretation invites all members of the PC(USA) to experience God’s grace through gracious regard for each other. Under the proposed authoritative interpretation, not only may pastoral care be extended to same-gender couples, but teaching elders and sessions who agree to extend such care may face less threat of judicial action. By contrast, existing authoritative interpretations, which would be withdrawn by the present proposal, not only arise from judicial action but open the prospect of further litigation as the courts of the church struggle for clarity in an unclear constitutional context. The proper means to achieve such clarity is the constitutional process involving the church as a whole. We will be better prepared to engage in that process if we use the means now available to practice gracious interactions with each other.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse (with Additional Rationale)

As the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. wrestles with its understanding of the nature of Christian marriage, pastors and sessions strive to be faithful in providing appropriate pastoral care to church members who seek to be married. As of October 28, 2013, fourteen states have legalized civil marriage for same-gender couples among their 100 million citizens. Teaching elders in those states must risk disciplinary action if they seek to give to same-gender members of their churches the same pastoral care that they offer to other members, officiating at their marriages. For leaders in many Presbyterian churches in these states, this constitutes a crisis of conscience. Until the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) determines how to resolve the conflicting definitions of marriage in the Directory for Worship and civil law, teaching elders in those states that authorize same-gender marriage need to be protected from judicial action for carrying out their responsibility to provide pastoral care to church members.

Here in the State of New York, same-gender couples have been able to be married since June 2011. Since then, hundreds of same-gender couples have approached their pastors, requesting to be married in the church where they are members. Some pastors have consented and conducted same-gender wedding ceremonies, either in the church or in another location; a few of these pastors have been charged and convicted, at considerable expense to themselves and their presbyteries. Some pastors have declined out of scruples of conscience. Others have declined out of respect for the denomination’s policy or because they were intimidated by the prospect of disciplinary action. These pastors generally tried to make other arrangements, either having a minister of another denomination conduct the wedding or conducting a service of blessing after the couple had a civil marriage. When their pastor declined to conduct their wedding, most same-gender couples felt a sense of rejection from their own faith community, and many then joined a different church where they could be married or left church altogether.

One pastor in the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse was approached by a same-gender couple who had been together for seventeen years, requesting to be married. The pastor consulted with the session, which disapproved of having a marriage that would expose the pastor and the church to disciplinary action. The pastor then regrettfully arranged for a minister colleague to conduct the couple’s marriage, but the pastor conducted a service of blessing for the couple afterward.

In the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, one third of our churches are united or federated churches, usually with a church of a denomination that allows same-gender marriage. In at least one case, a same-gender couple sought to be married by the Presbyterian pastor of their united church. The pastor arranged for a minister of another denomination to conduct the wedding in the couple’s church building, an awkward arrangement at best! A similar situation arose when a Presbyterian pastor serving a church of one of our Formula of Agreement partners had to invite another minister to officiate at the marriage of one of their same-gender member couples. Another couple, both active leaders of the church, requested that they be married in the church sanctuary by their pastor (a Presbyterian serving under the Formula of Agreement). The couple had been together for nearly forty years and to refuse to extend pastoral care in this situation was unthinkable.
The above overture would give relief to teaching elders and sessions in our presbytery, so that they could discharge their responsibility to provide pastoral care to their church members, including to the same-gender couples in their congregations who seek to be married in their church, without risking disciplinary action or having to resort to tortuous and generally unsatisfactory alternatives.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Chicago (with Additional Rationale)

Same-gender couples seek to be married in the church for the same reasons as heterosexual couples—and they will continue to marry. The question is whether the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will welcome them, or drive them away; celebrate and witness their mutual commitments, or leave them without the support of the faith community for the solemn covenant they are entering.

Current interpretations of the Book of Order, W-4.9000, give the impression that those authorized by their ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to solemnize marriages are not permitted to perform that service for same-gender couples, as they routinely do for heterosexual couples. As legal marriage for same-gender couples becomes a reality in a growing number of countries, U. S. states, and other civil jurisdictions—18 nations, 13 U. S. states, the District of Columbia, and several counties and Native American tribes, as of September 2013—this supposed prohibition requires more and more teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders either to discriminate against some couples, contrary to their conscience, or to risk involving themselves and their congregations in judicial process. Pastors are facing the impossible dilemma of choosing between their ordination promises to “pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” (W-4.4003h), “love your neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world” (W-4.4003f), and “try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ (W-4.4003i3), or the promise to “be governed by our church’s polity” (W-4.4003e). The current interpretation unacceptably interferes with pastors’ ability to exercise their discretion in providing pastoral care.

The Directory for Worship repeatedly stresses the importance of worship in the exercise of pastoral care: “The worship of God in the Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care as well as for the ministry of nurture in the faith” (W-6.4000). See also, for example, W-6.3010, W-6.3002.

The Preface to the Directory for Worship explicitly states that “this directory also uses language about worship which is simply descriptive.” There are numerous descriptions of usual practice in the Directory for Worship that are not followed to the letter by pastors and congregations.

The requested authoritative interpretation (AI) does not seek to amend W-4.9000; it simply clarifies that conducting a service of worship that does not follow W-4.9000 to the letter is not an offense that should subject a minister to the threat of discipline. The requested authoritative interpretation removes a prior AI, issued by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) at a time when there was no possibility of conducting a legal marriage service for a same-gender couple, and subsequent AIs by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) that rely upon it.

The GAPJC has itself acknowledged that the current language of the Book of Order is silent as to same-gender marriage, and that it was a split decision of the GAPJC that created an offense where none previously existed:

We understand the Decision to be an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9001, to mean that officers of the PC(USA) who are authorized to perform marriages shall not hereafter perform a same sex union ceremony in which or with respect to which such officer states, implies or represents to be a marriage or the equivalent thereof. While the Commission did not find Southard guilty as charged herein, in part because her conduct occurred under prior authoritative interpretations, we understand that future noncompliance with the authoritative interpretation of the Decision will be considered to be a disciplinable offense [emphasis added] Disciplinary Case 218-12 Concurring Opinion (Spahr 1, [http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc21812withconcurrences.pdf]).

The GAPJC reaffirmed that the supposed offense was its own creation, when it determined that Jean Southard did not commit an offense in performing a marriage for two women; if the supposed offense were inherent in the Book of Order, Rev. Southard would have been guilty:

This Commission concluded in Spahr that prior authoritative interpretations lacked mandatory language. Southard conducted this ceremony two months prior to Spahr. Sensitive to the authoritative interpretation in Spahr, this Commission agrees with the SPJC that Spahr cannot be applied retroactively to the facts of this case. Therefore, Southard did not violate the Book of Order or her ordination vows by erring in her constitutional interpretation. She did not commit an offense because the applicable authoritative interpretation (Spahr) had not yet been promulgated. [emphasis added] Disciplinary Case 220-02 (Southard, [http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/pjc22002.pdf]).

If the GAPJC has the authority to create an offense by authoritative interpretation, the General Assembly—a much larger and more representative body—has the authority to correct that action (G-6.02).

Ministers whose study of Scripture, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has led them to affirm same-gender marriage, are following their understanding of Jesus Christ, who placed himself on the margins with people others considered unclean, unworthy, and immoral, and lifted up love and compassion. They note that the Bible reflects many patterns and forms of legal, religiously approved marital relationships. They appeal to Presbyterian principles of biblical interpretation, including reading in context, the use of knowledge and experience, the centrality of Jesus Christ, interpretation of Scripture by Scrip-
tured, the rule of love, and the rule of faith (Presbyterian Understanding and Use of Holy Scripture, http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/resolutions/scripture-use.pdf). They believe that turning away same-gender couples harms gay and lesbian persons and their families, creates injustice, hinders evangelism, and violates their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

These ministers are seeking the freedom of conscience to act on their convictions that is safeguarded in our Historic Principles of Church Order, and the mutual forbearance required for maintaining the unity of the body (F-3.01). The same principles protect those whose study of Scripture leads them to a different conclusion. No minister can ever be required to participate in a marriage service against his or her conscience.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed, same-gender relationships. Therefore, while holding persons in ordered ministry to high standards of covenant fidelity in the exercise of their sexuality, as in all aspects of life, we acknowledge that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does not have one interpretation of Scripture in this matter. We commit ourselves to continue respectful dialogue with those who hold differing convictions, to welcome one another for God’s glory, and not to vilify those whose convictions we believe to be in error. We call on all Presbyterians to join us in this commitment. (action of the 220th General Assembly (2012), http://www.pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers/Slzucvhe5dscxlqkphhizek00i/10BView.aspx?m=ro&id=4063)


We respectfully dissent from this Decision [that declared that Janie Spahr had violated the Book of Order by conducting services that were and are legal marriages].

The majority judges this case primarily in relation to the decisions in Spahr (2008) and Southard (2011) in a conviction that, behind its judicial interpretation, there is in the Constitution an explicit basis against officiating in a same-sex marriage. In fact, this conviction rests upon an assumption rather than explicit constitutional rule. It is grounded principally on one section, even one sentence, in the Directory of Worship, that is claimed to have clear and obvious legal status. The Commission assumes here and in earlier cases that W-4.9001 presents a legal basis for denying the permissibility and validity of same-sex marriage because it presents a “definition” of marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman. This assumption is flawed. This provision in the Directory of Worship cannot serve effectively as a judicial criterion.

There are several reasons why W-4.9001 is incapable of bearing the legal significance and weight that the Commission has placed upon it. First, this paragraph emerged decades ago, in a very different time and context. In its language and descriptions, it reflects conventions of a time when same-sex unions presented little, if any, cultural concern or attention. ... Secondly, W-4.9001 is an introductory narrative for a distinctive, introductory section on marriage, outlining its biblical and theological characteristics as background to provisions of pastoral practice and nurture. ... To claim that this paragraph is primarily and intentionally legal in nature forces an artificial warp upon its evident narrative purpose. As a fourfold theological outline of Christian marriage in narrative form, in no way is it clear or obvious that it proposes regulatory imperative or legal intention. Certainly, it does not have the kind of language or format that the church has come to expect in definitive juridical statements, the kind of “shall” language that is common to our order in providing regulatory lines for boundaries of action or proscribed behavior.

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In this case and the other recent decisions, my principal concern is that this Commission has forged a standard upon an extremely fragile provision, employing a strained interpretation that does not provide the necessary legal foundation for resolution of our dilemma or foster pastoral guidance in the life of the church. By relying so heavily on W-4.9001, the Commission has ruled upon convention rather than law. The definitive clarity that the church deserves and expects in this continuing and vexatious dispute awaits deeper foundational judgment as well as more precise legislation.

As of the time this overture is proposed (October 8, 2013), both the legal and ecclesial landscapes have continued to evolve, constantly increasing the number of clergy and congregations placed in the untenable conflict between current interpretations of this provision and their sense of pastoral call and obligation. Marriage equality is nationally recognized with the invalidation of the Defense of Marriage Act by the United States Supreme Court in 2013 and (as of September 2013) thirteen state governments (those of Massachusetts, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Maryland, Washington, Delaware, Rhode Island, and Minnesota), along with the District of Columbia, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Suquamish tribe, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, the lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel, and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation issue same-sex marriage licenses. Further, court rulings mandating marriage equality are on appeal in New Mexico and New Jersey. Rulings and legislative action are pending in a number of other states, including Illinois. If Illinois adopts marriage equality this year, a proposal supported by a majority of Illinoisans, more than 40 percent of the United States’ citizenry will live in jurisdictions recognizing marriage equality.

In addition, a teaching elder is primarily a servant of God and not primarily an agent of the state. When performing legal marriages, a teaching elder is both an agent of the state and a servant of the church. However, some teaching elders, being led by God and their consciences, and with the permission of their sessions, may feel called to choose to exercise their call as servants of the church in performing marriages that are not legal according to the state. Historically this has happened when teaching elders have refused to participate in state-led discrimination. Teaching elders have performed marriages for elderly couples who wanted the blessing of God and their church community without losing their pensions, on which they were dependent. Likewise, teaching elders have performed marriages for church members who do not have “legal” status according to the state for a variety of reasons but who seek God’s blessing and the support of their church community in their life part-
nerships. Decades ago, teaching elders who were exercising their freedom of conscience were performing marriages for inter-
racial couples before the state considered them legal. Teaching elders are answerable to God and not to the state as long as
they do not misrepresent the state.

Further, to continue to interpret these provisions as a definitive statement and assertion that “Christian marriage” can ex-
ist only between a man and a woman puts the PC(USA) in a position of great arrogance with regard to our sister denomina-
tions, particularly among our fellow mainline churches. Christian marriages between same-gendered couples are celebrated in
Episcopal, UCC, American Baptist, and Lutheran churches (among others) every week in this country. To retain an interpre-
tation that purports to say otherwise constitutes a denial of the faithfulness of our sisters and brothers in the faith that is simply
not Presbyterian, and a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of our status of full communion with our brothers and sisters
in the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Church of Christ by denying the “Christian” character of the marriages
they are celebrating.

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**Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of the Redwoods (with Additional Rationale)**

This overture asks this General Assembly to exercise its constitutional authority to issue an authoritative interpretation of the
Constitution that affirms the constitutional pastoral discretion of teaching elders to solemnize and celebrate marriages (and
to extend pastoral care in marriage) without discrimination against same-gender couples and their families.

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) grants equal authority to issue “authoritative interpretations” of the
Constitution to both (1) this General Assembly sitting as a legislative body, and (2) the Permanent Judicial Commission of
the General Assembly (the GAPJC). The GAPJC can authoritatively interpret the Constitution in the context of a case that comes before it. This biennial General Assembly similarly has the equal constitutional authority to authoritatively interpret the Constitution through its overture process. This authority includes the authority to withdraw previous authoritative interpre-
tations issued by either previous General Assemblies or prior GAPJC decisions.

In a series of judicial decisions in disciplinary cases, the GAPJC has created restrictions on the pastoral discretion of pas-
tors to participate in the marriages of same-gender couples, as those marriages are now legally recognized and celebrated in
thirteen states. See *Spahr v. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, Case no. 220-08 (February 20, 2012). As explained at length in
the dissents in those judicial decisions, those restrictions are not found anywhere in the plain language of the Constitution,
but rather have been created and articulated through the power of “authoritative interpretation.” Moreover, those judicially
created restrictions have caused great harm to same-gender couples and their families, and to pastors and congregations who seek to faithfully extend pastoral care in marriage to all families without discrimination.

This overture proposes an authoritative interpretation that affirms the constitutional pastoral discretion of teaching elders
to solemnize and celebrate marriages (and to extend pastoral care in marriage) without discrimination against same-gender
couples and their families. By recognizing this constitutional discretion and responsibility, the authoritative interpretation clarifies that the provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage—by their terms—do not prohibit a teaching el-
der/minister of Word and Sacrament from officiating at a marriage service of a same-gender couple. The overture seeks to provide clarity in response to disciplinary proceedings that have been brought against faithful teaching elders/ ministers of Word and Sacrament who have celebrated the marriages of same-gender couples, consistent with their constitutional responsi-
bilities of pastoral care, inclusion, and nondiscrimination, and consistent with their understanding of the Gospel. Those dis-
ciplinary proceedings have invoked W-4.9001 as a disciplinary offense, even though that section contains no mandatory or prohibitive language. The cost to the church is the prosecution—with no basis in the plain language of the Constitution—of pastors who are faithfully living into their responsibilities under the constitution and Gospel.

As a growing number of members of the GAPJC have indicated in dissenting opinions, the provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage are descriptive, and not prohibitive. “W-4.9001 is an introductory narrative for the whole section on marriage, outlining its biblical and theological characteristics as background to provisions of pastoral practice and nurture. Its content serves to establish a progression of four theological claims (gift, civil contract, covenant, commitment) as a foundation for the church’s general understanding of marriage” (see *Southard v. Presbytery of Boston* (February 7, 2011); *Spahr v. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, Case no. 220-08 (February 20, 2012)). They have further explained that “the language in [the marriage provisions] is not obviously legislative, in the sense of providing regulatory lines that define or pro-
scribe behavior.”

Section W-4.9001 contains four descriptive statements describing marriage as a gift, a civil contract, a covenant, and a
lifelong commitment. None of these descriptive statements contains or constitutes a prohibition or mandatory standard. Sec-
tion W-4.9001 is neither a mandatory nor a prohibitive directive. Moreover, this section of the Directory for Worship does not mention or address the marriage of same-gender couples. Neither does it prohibit a minister of Word and Sacrament from celebrating a legally sanctioned marriage in a service of Christian worship.

Section W-4.9001 contains none of the language that the *Book of Order* instructs must be present to set forth a mandate
or a prohibition. Because this principle is so fundamental, it is captured on the first pages of the *Book of Order*: “In this Book
of Order (1) SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE signify practice that is mandated; (2) SHOULD signifies practice that is strongly recommended; (3) IS APPROPRIATE signifies practice that is commended as suitable; (4) MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required” (Preface to the Book of Order [emphasis and caps in original]). Indeed, the GAPJC not long ago affirmed that the phrase “should not” in our polity “is not prohibitive” (Session of Second Presbyterian Church v. Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery, Remedial Case 217-5, at p. 4.)

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does assign to teaching elders/ministers of Word and Sacrament the responsibility for pastoral care, and repeatedly advocates and mandates inclusion and the full participation of all people in the life and care of the church. Prohibiting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) women and men from celebrating their marriages in services of Christian worship cuts them off from the pastoral care of the community that is required by our faith and our Constitution. This overture asks the General Assembly to clarify that the plain language of the provisions of the Directory for Worship related to marriage (W-4.9001 and following) do not prohibit this pastoral care—and specifically, that they do not prohibit a teaching elder (also referred to as a minister of Word and Sacrament) from officiating at a marriage service of a same-gender couple, as the couple and their families seek to celebrate marriage as a gift from God honored in Christian community.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Salem (with Additional Rationale)

The 220th General Assembly (2012) acknowledges that faithful Presbyterians earnestly seeking to follow Jesus Christ hold different views about what the Scriptures teach concerning the morality of committed, same-gender relationships.” Many PC(USA) pastors arrive at a faithful interpretation of Scripture that leads them to understand committed same-gender relationships not as sinful, but as loving, faithful, human relationships. Therefore, in states where marriage is legal for such couples, these pastors would want to honor those relationships before God and in the faith community without fear of prosecution.

The threat of prosecution effectively binds the conscience of these welcoming pastors. This authoritative interpretation does not change in the fact that no minister can be forced to participate; it allows for freedom of conscience (G-2.0105) whatever one’s interpretation.

Denying same gender couples, in states with marriage equality, the right to celebrate their commitment in the context of their faith community communicates that they are not entitled to the same rights and privileges as other members of the congregation.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Santa Fe (with Additional Rationale)

This overture comes from the Presbytery of Santa Fe at an important time in the history of our state, as well as of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and of the nation. Beginning at the end of August 2013, eight counties in New Mexico began to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, citing the equal protection clause of the state constitution. Within the first three months more than 1,700 same-sex couples in New Mexico were issued marriage licenses. On December 19, 2013, the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled unanimously that: “We hold that the State of New Mexico is constitutionally required to allow same-gender couples to marry and must extend to them the rights, protections, and responsibilities that derive from civil marriage under New Mexico law” (From the NMSC opinion written by Justice Edward Chavez). With this ruling, New Mexico became the seventeenth U.S. state with full civil marriage for same-sex couples.

There are, as of January 6, 2014, seventeen U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and six Native American tribal jurisdictions with same-sex marriage, as well as seventeen other countries. The rapid expansion of the number of states in which same-sex marriage is now legal has been accompanied by dramatic shifts in public opinion in support of same-sex marriage, as well as the U.S. Supreme Court’s overturning of key portions of the Defense of Marriage Act, and the extension of federally recognized marital rights to legally married same-sex couples across the country. The circumstances regarding the issue of civil marriage have, thus, changed radically from the status quo that existed when the PC(USA) Constitution was written, and when previous authoritative interpretations were issued.

As elsewhere across the U.S., the change in the civil law in our state (or, in its interpretation) has immediately confronted our pastors and churches with a dilemma. The issue of marriage is a pastoral issue for the church, rooted in our biblical and theological understandings. Across the country there are many members and friends of the church who have felt that they could not turn to their own pastors and faith communities in order to be married. They have felt constrained to turn to civil authorities and ministers of other denominations, often despite the desire of their pastor and church session to be able to minister to and with them in a public witness and blessing of their marital covenant. In other cases (Spahr, Southard, etc.) ministers who have acted in conscience to preside at the marriages of same-sex couples have faced judicial inquiries and disciplinary actions.

Section W-4.9001 of the Book of Order describes marriage as “a gift [of] God … to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family,” and as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” The latter description, however, is no longer exclusively true. As already noted, in many jurisdictions the civil contract of marriage has now been extended to include...
same-sex couples as well. Christian marriage is further described as a covenantal relationship “through which a man and a
woman [hereafter referred to as ‘the couple’] are called to live … together before God their lives of discipleship.” The mar-
riage service is described as being one in which “a lifelong commitment” is made by the couple, “publically witnessed and
acknowledged by the community of faith.”

Ministers in our church (teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders) function as officers of the state as they conduct
marriage services and oversee the signing and filing of the legal documentation. The Christian marriage covenant is a com-
mmitment made before God by the couple, in the context of the community of faith. Ministers are responsible, among other
duties, to “direct” the service of worship in which the marriage is celebrated (W-4.9003). They are also responsible to “pro-
vide for a discussion” with the couple concerning various aspects of marriage in relationship to both the legal requirements of
the state and the privileges and responsibilities involved in the covenant of Christian marriage. Ministers have the discretion
to decide for themselves whether or not to conduct a marriage service (W-4.9002). Such decisions are made on the basis of
the minister’s discernment of the couples’ commitment, responsibility, maturity, and Christian understanding, and prayerfully
informed and guided by the minister’s freedom of conscience in the interpretation of Scripture (W-4.9002, and G-2.0105).

In the matter of same-sex marriage, as in all matters of faith and practice, Presbyterians seek the Spirit’s guidance in un-
derstanding the witness of Scripture to the issues of our day. We also turn to the confessions of the church seeking guidance
in their historical witness. Yet, as the confessions themselves acknowledge, these documents were the products of their day
and time and do not necessarily speak directly to the matters now before us. (See Book of Confessions, The Confession of
1967, 9.02–03, and 9.43.) The confessions speak descriptively, but not necessarily prescriptively.

We recognize that for many the understanding of marriage has now changed to include the marriage of same-sex cou-
ples. This is a position held in good conscience by many in the church, as well as in civil society, but not by many others.
Opinion is divided. We acknowledge that our current understandings of Scripture and tradition differ widely, as they have on
other issues in past times. We also acknowledge that both opinions are rooted in sincere faith by those who hold them, and
both are expressed in the living out of the gospel in our congregations and communities. We affirm that on either side of this
issue our understandings are provisional, but, hopefully, also grounded in our earnest, prayerful, and mindful seeking of
God’s will and guidance. It is not our desire to impose our views on one another, but, recognizing the great diversity of opin-
ion that exists within the church at this time, to respect the freedom and honor the sincerely held views of all, even as we pray
for a clearer discernment of God’s will in these matters.

Where charity and love abide, there God is found. From the beginning the church has struggled as it has encountered
new peoples, times, and circumstances, with the issue of what is required of Christian disciples versus what is permitted in
the freedom of the Gospel. (As in Acts, Galatians, etc.) This has always caused tensions within the covenant communities of
disciples we are called to be, and the wisdom of the church has been to seek to balance commitment to the truth of God with
mutual forbearance in love for those with whom we may disagree.

Concurrence to Item 10-03 from the Presbytery of Southern New England (with Additional Rationale)

The church is now in a state of disunity regarding same-gender marriage. Such disunity is costly to the church’s treasure,
time, and more importantly, its witness to Jesus’s call to loving covenant.

During such a time, we must be humbly conscious of the work of the Holy Spirit through Christian conscience. Teaching
and ruling elders and their congregations have come prayerfully to recognize that some faithful same-gender couples are ask-
ing to be held to the same standards of mutual love and commitment as heterosexual couples. To deny the availability of
Christian marriage for otherwise qualified same-gender couples is to reject their equal inheritance through Christ. That rejec-
tion denies our traditional belief that marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind.

Additionally, teaching elders who act in good conscience and officiate at the weddings of same-gender couples they
deem ready for Christian marriage find they may be charged with the offense of violating their ordination vows for an act that
the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) has said was not clearly prohibited when those vows were
taken. In the current situation, compliant teaching elders, sessions, and congregations may find themselves to be denying the
common humanity that is at the very focus of church life and worship.

The GAPJC has acknowledged that existing interpretations have exacerbated disunity and has requested guidance.

The proposed authoritative interpretation ensures that while the church is in this period of discernment and disagreement
over same-gender marriage, teaching elders officiating over same-gender marriages where such marriages are permitted by
law can act in good conscience, and that faithful and honest dialogue can happen in a context of pastoral care rather than
chilling prosecution and judicial action.

Throughout Scripture marriage is used as a metaphor for Christian unity, for God’s love and covenant with us, for the
union of Christ and the church. May the church act to make this metaphor ever more evident.
In long-standing Christian tradition, civil authority has played a primary role in the regulation of marriage. Christians in the Reformed Tradition view marriage not as a sacrament mediated by the church but as a blessing that two people seek on a contract they are entering under auspices of the state. This blessing is a moment of great joy in the church and in the lives of those on whom it is conferred, but Christian marriage does not change the status of those two people. Marriages that are not blessed by the church are nevertheless recognized in Presbyterian churches.

Because of the integral connection between civil and Christian marriage, the church must contend with the fact that states have passed legislation or are operating under judicial rulings that make legal marriage equality an option for two people of the same gender. Since March 2010, the District of Columbia, and since January 2013, the State of Maryland, have been allowing two people of the same gender to marry. Thirteen states, the District of Columbia, several counties in New Mexico, and five Native American tribes allow same-gender marriage. This complicates pastoral care options. The issue comes to a head in the decision about whether teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders will officiate at marriage ceremonies of two people who have legally obtained a marriage license and whether the session will permit the use of church property for such ceremonies. Although some pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have declined to perform such marriages in keeping with their conscience, many others are caught in an untenable position: their conscience tells them to exercise their pastoral responsibility and perform the marriage but the church tells them to fear prosecution. Such prosecutions have already placed tremendous financial burden on presbyteries, diminishing the church’s ability to effectively evangelize and perform necessary mission work.

The issue is critical because worship is the central context of pastoral care for Christians. In our order for worship, we listen to the Word, proclaim the Word, and respond to the Word. Responding to the Word is a demonstration of the love of God for God’s people.

“The response to the proclamation of the Word is expressed in an affirmation of faith and commitment. … Response to the Word also involves acts of commitment and recognition. … acts of commitment which may appropriately be included as response to the Word are (a) Christian marriage ….” (W-3.3501, W-3.3502, W-3.3503).

The church has defined marriage, first, as “... a gift God has given to all humankind …” (W-4.9001) and at the same time said, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” (W-4.9001). In thirteen states, the District of Columbia, several counties in New Mexico, and five Native American tribes, this civil definition is no longer true. The 219th General Assembly (2012) Advisory Committee on the Constitution stated,

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008,

The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as an act of witness, justice, and compassion to the wider community … (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1169)

Teaching elders and sessions need the General Assembly’s assurance of their pastoral discretion to provide the care that their members require. This is based on the same principle as W-4.9002b, which provides that pastors are free, as their judgment dictates, not to officiate at marriages their members and others are contracting. In the absence of mandatory language in the Book of Order that would prohibit a service of Christian marriage for any two people who are legally permitted to marry, the assembly should give such assurance in the form of the proposed authoritative interpretation. The authoritative interpretation will prevent deep grief to church members who might otherwise be denied the pastoral care of the church; it will protect pastors and sessions from judicial challenge for exercising their pastoral responsibilities; in the spirit of mutual forbearance widely urged in recent years by General Assemblies and their task forces, it will promote the peace, unity, and purity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 10-03

Advice on Item 10-03—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) disapprove Item 10-03

This overture proposes an authoritative interpretation which would allow the exercise of pastoral discretion and freedom of conscience in conducting a marriage service for any couple as permitted by the “laws of the place where the couple seeks to be married.” It suggests an interpretation contrary to the clear statement of W-4.9000.

Section W-4.9001 and related citations (W-4.9002a, W-4.9004, W-4.9006) limit marriage to couples who are “a woman and a man.” Because these statements are clear and unambiguous, they can not be interpreted in a manner that is inconsistent with their plain and ordinary meaning.
The Book of Order is not based upon state and civil law, but the church’s understanding of Scripture and Reformed theology. As noted in *Southard v Presbytery of Boston* (GAPJC 2012, 220-02), “While the PCUSA is free to amend its definition of marriage, a change in state law does not amend the Book of Order.”

Freedom of conscience is a foundational principle of the PC(USA) (G-2.0105) but must be exercised within certain bounds. The exercise of freedom of conscience in and of itself is not necessarily a violation of polity or an obstruction of constitutional governance. Such freedom of conscience, however, is not freedom of action. All persons in ordered ministry have a duty to fulfill constitutionally mandated responsibilities.

If it is the will of the assembly to change the definition of marriage, such a change is better accomplished by amendment of W-4.9000 rather than by authoritative interpretation.

### ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-03

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises approval of Item 10-03.

**A. Introduction**

In our Advice and Counsel (A&C) memorandum on Item 10-02, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy provides a five-part affirmation of the constitutional change in the description of marriage proposed in that item. This A&C provides a complementary affirmation of the authoritative interpretation proposed by this overture. The authoritative interpretation (AI) proposed would not change the constitutional definition of marriage and hence would not “short circuit” consideration of the constitutional change Item 10-02 recommends.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) is the body elected by the General Assembly to provide analysis and recommendations for action of matters Christian conscience affecting the church’s engagement with the world. The ACSWP and its predecessors in both denominations have addressed matters of marriage, family, and human sexuality on a regular basis starting in 1970. As the committee’s mandate directs, it considers the biblical, theological, and empirical dimensions of social challenges in light of previous General Assembly policy (See Item 11-Info for more on ACSWP). At the same time, because the matters before Assembly Committee 10 are also polity matters, we also quote below from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The ACSWP approaches the matter of the authoritative interpretation as a justice concern as well as a theological and pastoral matter. As in the case of a constitutional change that would support marriage equality, the committee does not believe that the extension of the benefits of marriage to additional categories of people causes a loss to those already enjoying legal marriage, and in fact believes that the biblical core reflecting God’s incarnational love points toward greater inclusion.

**B. Polity Considerations**

In 2012, both ACSWP and the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) did not endorse specific overtures. The ACSWP at that time advised further study while noting that civil or “holy” unions, permitted by the General Assembly, were not providing full equality and legal standing for same-gender couples. Further, the distinction between marriage, which was to create a new status for the couple, and the blessing of a civil union that existed prior to that blessing, was fast eroding. In fact, as many pastors know, many Presbyterians and Americans generally believe that marriage is a sacrament, despite Calvin’s teaching that it is an ordinance designed primarily for companionship within the framework of covenant fidelity. The need for equal inclusion has only increased since that time in our view.

The advice of the ACC in 2012 was contained in a comprehensive memorandum that covered both constitutional changes and authoritative interpretation. By not taking a position, but evaluating the various options, the ACC made it clear that it preferred the constitutional change route but acknowledged that AI’s had been used and in fact, by distinguishing sharply between blessing of civil unions and marriages, had added elements to the interpretation of the Directory of Worship section W-4.900 that were not there previously. Authoritative interpretations, in fact, complement the constitutional process and, in the case of instant Item 10-03, are designed to reduce conflict and costly judicial process while forcing no pastor to violate his or her conscience.

The ACSWP quotes here from the 2012 ACC memorandum:

The church has defined marriage, first, as “a civil contract between a woman and a man.” In 1991, the General Assembly adopted an authoritative interpretation which said, “since a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-gender union ceremony that the minister determines to be the same as a marriage ceremony.”

At the same time, the social witness policies of the church have urged an end to discrimination against same-sex couples. Thus, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008:
The social witness policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have consistently advocated for the end to discrimination in the civil arena on the basis of sexual orientation. This commitment to equality under the law has prompted our support of civil unions for homosexual couples that would afford them protections and rights by the state equal to those afforded heterosexual couples under marriage. The church has permitted the blessing of same-sex unions as an act of pastoral care to its members and as acts of prophetic and compassionate witness against civil definitions it deemed too narrow. (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 253)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted in 2008, “Changing civil understandings of marriage raise new questions of how pastors are to lead the church in exercising pastoral care to its members and compassionate witness and outreach to its neighbors” (Minutes, 2008, Part I, p. 254). There is no question that the church is called to provide pastoral care to all individuals.

The enactment of laws allowing the marriage of same-gender couples sets in relief whether the defining variable for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s definition of marriage is the civil contract or the gender of the parties. The traditional assumption that marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman can no longer be taken for granted.

[... section not quoted]

Each of the overtures seeking authoritative interpretation has some inconsistency with previous authoritative interpretations. All are premised on a rationale based on the Preface of the Directory for Worship that “…this directory also uses language about worship that is simply descriptive.” Item 13-10 posits that since there is no mandatory language (“shall,” “is to be,” “are to be”) in sentences describing a couple as a man and a woman, it is not mandated that the couple be a man and a woman. Previous authoritative interpretations (e.g. Spahr) appear to be based on the language of the Preface that the language “between a man and a woman” “… set standards and presents norms for the conduct of worship in the life of congregations and … councils.”

If the General Assembly desires to make clear that teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders who are authorized to conduct services of Christian marriage may conduct such services for same-gender couples who have obtained a civil marriage license; and that sessions may permit the use of church property for such services, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this would be most effectively accomplished by an amendment to W-4.9000.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution continues to advise that unless and until W-4.9000 itself is amended, any attempt to amend the definition of marriage by an authoritative interpretation of this section will be problematic and constitutionally insufficient. “Where there are tensions and ambiguities between provisions, it is the task of the councils and judicial commissions to resolve them in such a way as to give effect to all provisions” (Book of Order, F-3.03).

It is the view of ACSWP that any AI would be appropriately “insufficient,” though not necessarily problematic, and that the concurrences to Item 10-03, particularly those from the Presbyteries of Chicago and Western Reserve, provide constructive ways forward.

C. Theological and Ethical Considerations:

The overtures under consideration here support the church’s commitment to civil equality and nondiscrimination. They emphasize the new importance of expressing and extending that equality into the church’s worship and pastoral care in those states that have legislated marital equality. In doing so, they recognize the complementarity that has long existed in the Reformed Tradition between the role of the state in legalizing marriage and the role of the clergy who pronounce a couple married and sign their state license. None of these items would compel pastors to officiate at same-gender marriages in violation of their conscience. None of these items would apply to states that have not legalized same-gender marriage, and none presumes to restrict a theology of marriage for the church, although the General Assembly has in the past focused on such theology through the recommended forms of marriage services.

The ACSWP points to its’ A&C on Item 10-02 for a fuller presentation of past church policies, particularly that on Changing Families (2004), which addressed factors affecting family life. We would only note that additional recommendations to support families were adopted by the General Assembly in the 2012 report, World of Hurt, Word of Life, which called for economic reconstruction based on communion values.

In light of the range of theological views in the church and the continuing movement toward marriage equality in the culture, ACSWP encourages commissioners to adopt an Authoritative Interpretation that may permit the household of faith to grow, particularly among younger adults. The alternatives, including protracted litigation, are less desirable. Perhaps it would even be fair to transpose the statement quoted from Gamaliel in Acts 5:39 about the early church’s growth: “But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!” Certainly not every current in the culture is “of God,” but in this area of life even the empirical data seem to suggest that the church extend the benefits of marriage.

**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-03— From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 10-03.

This overture asks the General Assembly to approve an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 describing the rights and responsibilities of pastors in states in which civil unions or marriages of same-sex couples are permitted by law. The overture cites *Book of Order* statements noting that a marriage ceremony is a type of worship service that a pastor has freedom of con-
The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is committed to eliminating the patriarchy that persists today within the church and society. God’s justice, as we have come to understand it through the teachings of Jesus Christ, recognizes the equality of all God’s children, each of whom is made in God’s image. Patriarchal views define those not conforming to certain gender roles as somehow less than human and therefore not worthy of the pastoral care that Christian marriage provides to heterosexual committed and loving couples.

Providing this authoritative interpretation will effectively grant pastors and sessions the freedom of conscience to care for couples of like gender who desire the affirmation of the church and commitments required of Christian marriage, treating them as the equals they are in God’s eyes.

### Item 10-04

[The assembly answered Item 10-04 by the action taken on Item 10-03. See pp. 29, 31.]

**On Issuing an Authoritative Interpretation of W-4.9000 to Affirm Pastoral Discretion in Performing Marriage Ceremonies—From the Presbytery of East Iowa.**

The Presbytery of East Iowa respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to issue the following authoritative interpretation of the Book of Order, W-4.9000:

“Section W-4.9000 of the Book of Order describes marriage as a lifelong union between a man and a woman. Historically, teaching elders* have been entrusted to decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether to officiate at the marriage of a particular couple (W-4.9002b). In the course of premarital preparation, teaching elders have assessed each couple’s capabilities, intentions, and readiness to be married. Teaching elders have exercised discretion and judgment in various ways (for example, in the cases of divorced persons seeking remarriage; interfaith and interracial couples; and, in more recent years, in the blessing of same-gender relationships). Teaching elders have the pastoral responsibility to assess the capabilities, intentions, and readiness to be married of any couple as permitted by the laws of the place where the couple is seeking to be married. Exercising their discretion, teaching elders may conduct a marriage service for any such couple in the place where the community gathers for worship, if approved by the session; or such other place as may be suitable for a service of Christian worship. In no case shall any teaching elder’s conscience be bound to conduct any marriage service for any couple except by his or her understanding of the Word, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The authoritative interpretation of this section by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) (Minutes, 1991, Part I, p. 395, paragraphs 21.124–128), and the subsequent authoritative interpretations of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission relying upon it, are withdrawn and replaced with this authoritative interpretation.

*As in other places in the Directory for Worship, the use of “teaching elders” in this paragraph should be understood to include ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service.

**Rationale**

*Marriage is no longer a civil contract*

Christians in the Reformed Tradition view marriage not as a sacrament bestowed by the church but as a blessing that two people seek on a contract they are entering under auspices of the state. The church has defined marriage, first, as “… a gift God has given to all humankind …” (W-4.9001) and at the same time said, “Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man” [W-4.9001]. In at least fourteen states and the District of Columbia, this civil definition is no longer true.

*Our current polity assumes interpretation*

In the case of the Reverend Laurie McNeill, tried for the offense of being married to her female spouse (Newark v. McNeill, Disciplinary Case 221-02), the Presbytery of Newark Permanent Judicial Commission (PPJC), acquitted McNeill of the charges against her and declared:

If, as the Prosecution contended, W-4.9001 set mandatory standards which any PCUSA ordained officer or member must follow in order for his or her marriage to be a marriage in the eyes of the PCUSA, then any “marriage” which is contrary to any of the provisions of W-4.9001 (and its companion provisions W-4.9002–4.9005), even as between heterosexuals, would be an offense. In particular, the third and fourth sentences would have to be read to require not only that the marriage is between a man and a woman but that it is also between two Christians and that it be acknowledged by the “community of faith.” If the “woman and man” language is mandatory, then the “for Christians” and “publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith” provisions also must be mandatory. There is nothing in the text which makes one mandatory and one not mandatory.

*Immediate relief is needed for Iowa pastors*

Since April 2009, Iowa has been allowing two people of the same gender to marry. This complicates pastoral care options for Iowa pastors. Although some Iowa pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have declined to perform such marriages in keeping with their conscience, many others are caught in an untenable position: their conscience tells them to exercise pastoral responsibility and perform the marriage but the church tells them to fear prosecution. Such prosecutions have
already placed tremendous financial burden on presbyteries, diminishing the church’s ability to effectively evangelize and perform necessary mission work.

Teaching elders and sessions need the General Assembly’s assurance of their pastoral discretion to provide the care that their members require. In the absence of mandatory language in the Book of Order that would prohibit a service of Christian marriage for any two people who are legally permitted to marry, the assembly should give such assurance in the form of the proposed authoritative interpretation.

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**Concurrence to Item 10-04 from the Presbyteries of Baltimore, Geneva, and Newton.**

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**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 10-04**

*Advice on Item 10-04—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.*

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to answer Item 10-04 with its response to Item 10-03.

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-04**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 10-04.

Please see the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns Advice and Counsel on Item 10-03:

This overture asks the General Assembly to approve an authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 describing the rights and responsibilities of pastors in states in which civil unions or marriages of same-sex couples are permitted by law. The overture cites Book of Order statements noting that a marriage ceremony is a type of worship service that a pastor has freedom of conscience to conduct. Pastors, after examination of the couple, guided by scripture and with agreement of session (if the ceremony were to be held in the church), have the discretion and freedom to conduct any service of marriage.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is committed to eliminating the patriarchy that persists today within the church and society. God’s justice, as we have come to understand it through the teachings of Jesus Christ, recognizes the equality of all God’s children, each of whom is made in God’s image. Patriarchal views define those not conforming to certain gender roles as somehow less than human and therefore not worthy of the pastoral care that Christian marriage provides to heterosexual committed and loving couples.

Providing this authoritative interpretation will effectively grant pastors and sessions the freedom of conscience to care for couples of like gender who desire the affirmation of the church and commitments required of Christian marriage, treating them as the equals they are in God’s eyes.

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**Item 10-05**

[The assembly answered Item 10-05 by the action taken on Item 10-02. See pp. 29, 31.]

*On Amending W-4.9001, Christian Marriage—From the Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi.*

The Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall W-4.9001 be amended by adding the following new paragraph at the end of that section: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“W-4.9001 Christian Marriage

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

“For the purpose of God’s mission, presbyteries and sessions may define marriage as a civil contract between two persons within the boundary of the state law.”

*Rationale*

1. Scripture, the Word written, is the most solid foundation for bearing testimony to Jesus Christ, the living Word. The church has maintained important traditions of the church and thus must maintain them based on the Word of God (F-1.01, F-1.0203, F-2.04, F-2.05, F-3.0107, W-1.1004).
2. Reformed churches must share the love of Jesus Christ to all people with their contemporary cultures and languages while they are continually reformed (F-1.0301, F-1.0302c, F-1.0401, F-1.0403, F-2.01, F-2.02, G-1.0302, W-1.2005, W-1.2006).

3. Though the theological interpretation of Scripture may be diverse, it should not contribute to the division and confusion of the church (G-2.0105).

4. Church leaders must govern the churches of God with freedom of conscience (F-3.0101, G-2.0105).

5. Congregations engage in the mission of God in their particular contexts. Thus session and presbyteries determine standards of ordination for their elders (F-3.0102, F-3.0202, G-1.0101, G-2.0104b).

6. Though the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) honors civil contracts, every state has different opinions on them.

7. Though the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should be open for individuals to lead Christian lives with freedom of conscience, it should also preserve its faith, heritage, and theology. Though the church should seek to embrace everyone, this must be done for the benefit of all of the communities of the people of God (F-1.0302a, F-3.0101, F-3.0102).

8. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is currently losing a lot of members. Though all the congregations in other mainline denominations are losing their members, we cannot deny the fact that the drastic decrease of members in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has resulted from theological debates about marriage within our denomination.

9. In order to amend the confessional documents that are the most fundamental criteria of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theology, proposed amendments should receive the approval in writing of at least two-thirds of presbyteries. Therefore, we must deeply reconsider to determine the definition of marriage that influences the confession of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the approval of half of the presbyteries (G-6.03d).

10. We suggest that sessions and presbyteries, councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), should determine the definition of marriage so that congregations can recognize diversity among us, and each congregation and presbytery can maintain its own faith and traditions and bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their own particular contexts (F-1.0302, F-1.0304, F-1.0403, F-1.0404, F-3.0101, F-3.0104, F-3.0105, F-3.0107).

Concurrence to Item 10-05 from the Atlantic Korean Presbytery.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 10-05

Advice on Item 10-05—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-05.

Item 10-05 proposes to amend W-4.9001 by adding a new paragraph at the end of that section: “For the purpose of God’s mission, presbyteries and sessions may define marriage as a civil contract between two persons within the boundary of the state law.”

The addition of this paragraph would allow presbyteries and sessions to define marriage in a manner that is inconsistent with sections of the Book of Order.

- W-4.9001 Christian Marriage: “… Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. …” (the paragraph preceding the proposed addition).

- W-4.9002a Preparing for Marriage: “In preparation for the marriage service, the teaching elder shall provide for a discussion with the man and the woman concerning … ”

- W-4.9004 Form and Order of Service: “… The man and the woman shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. …”

- W-4.9006 Recognizing Civil Marriage: “… The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of the vows by the husband and wife, and the public declaration by the teaching elder reflect the fact that the woman and man are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.”

The Book of Order is based upon the church’s understanding of Scripture and Reformed theology. Presbyteries and sessions are currently not authorized to take action in conflict with the Constitution. There is an inherent conflict with allowing lower councils to take actions or make decisions that are contrary to the Constitution. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if it is the will of the assembly to change the definition of marriage, the assembly should amend the language in W-4.9000 and related citations.
If the intent of the overture is to permit councils to have the ability to allow or refuse to allow same-gender marriages, it is not explicitly stated in the overture.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 10-05—from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-05.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the approval of Item 10-03, a more comprehensive solution to the issue raised in this overture.

Item 10-06

[The assembly answered Item 10-06 by the action taken on Item 10-03. See pp. 29, 31.]

On Rescinding the 1991 Authoritative Interpretation Concerning Teaching Elders Performing Marriages for Same-Gender Couples and Sessions Permitting Such Ceremonies in their Facilities—from the Presbytery of New Castle.

The Presbytery of New Castle overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to revoke and repeal its 1991 Authoritative Interpretation (Minutes, 1991, Part I, p. 395, paragraphs 21.124–128, Re.91-23)* concerning teaching elders/ministers of the Word and Sacrament performing marriage ceremonies involving same-gender couples and prohibiting sessions from permitting the use of church facilities for this purpose.

Rationale

There now are twelve states and the District of Columbia where same-gender marriage is legal. Two of these states are among the nation’s largest: California and New York. Delaware and Maryland, which comprise New Castle Presbytery, are two of these as well, both of which legalized same-gender marriage in 2013. It seems clear that more states will join this group in the coming years. But some will not.

The United States Supreme Court, in United States v. Windsor, ruled that the Defense of Marriage Act of 1996, which allowed states where same-gender marriage was illegal to discriminate against such persons, was unconstitutional.

The legalization of same-gender marriage in an increasing number of jurisdictions puts Presbyterian pastors and sessions in a bind. Clearly, many local Presbyterian congregations have gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered members. Pastors probably feel it most because of their natural instinct to minister to their flock. They may be distraught when a same-gender couple, who are church members, come to them and ask the pastor to officiate at their legal wedding. Session elders feel it because loyal and legitimate church members only wish to be married in their own church, but cannot under the 1991 authoritative interpretation (AI).

Repeal of this AI will not affect churches and Presbyterians in jurisdictions where same-gender marriage remains illegal. This overture does not affect the definition of marriage found in the Directory for Worship.

On the other hand, retention of this authoritative interpretation invites defiance by our teaching elders. Any such defiance invites complaints under the Rules of Discipline. At one level, adjudicating such complaints is a waste of time and resources for the presbytery. Worse, it risks a plethora of presbytery-level permanent judicial commission decisions that will waste the time and money of synods and the General Assembly.


Concurrence to Item 10-06 from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities.

ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 10-06

Advice on Item 10-06—from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-06.

In 1991, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution was asked to provide an opinion on the use of church facilities, and whether a minister is in violation of the Book of Order with regard to same-sex unions. The ACC advised that there was no mention in the Book of Order of same-sex unions (ceremonies). The committee further advised that if a session considered a
ceremony the equivalent of marriage, it “would not be sanctioned” under the Book of Order because of the definition of marriage at W-4.9001. The ACC further advised that

- the session was responsible for the use of the church buildings and facilities, so it should not allow the use of the facilities if the session determined the ceremony was the same as a marriage ceremony; and

- Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a man and a woman, and it is not proper for a minister to perform a same sex union that the minister determines the same as marriage. (*Minutes*, 2001, Part I, p. 395)

In 1994, in response to a request regarding pastoral authority in performing marriages, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution issued the following advice:

... the General Assembly has also been reluctant to limit the pastoral ministry of individual ministers or sessions as they seek to nurture their members in accordance with the church’s directives . . .

... in the end each and every request for pastoral blessing needs to be considered within its own context. (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 186, paragraph 21.012)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long tradition of trusting pastors and sessions with careful and prayerful discernment about what constitutes faithful worship and compassionate pastoral care appropriate to the circumstances of their members and communities. For the peace, unity and purity of the church, it is vital that this tradition be reaffirmed. (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 441)

In 2000, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution was asked to provide advice on a proposed authoritative interpretation affirming the rights of pastors and sessions to determine what appropriate pastoral care and worship activities shall take place in and around the life of a congregation.

The ACC’s advice quoted the 1991 authoritative interpretation: “Pastors and sessions are free to determine what appropriate pastoral care and worship activities shall take place in and around the life a congregation. Even so, they are bound by the Constitution and obliged to follow it” (*Minutes*, 2000, Part I, p. 442).

The deletion of the 1991 Authoritative Interpretation would remove the guidance it provides regarding the permissibility of teaching elders performing same sex union ceremonies and sessions giving approval to the same.

The deletion of the 1991 authoritative interpretation would not change the definition of marriage in W-4.9000.

### ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-06

*Advice and Counsel on Item 10-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 10-06.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns is committed to eliminating the patriarchy that persists today within the church and society. God’s justice, as we have come to understand it through the teachings of Jesus Christ, recognizes the equality of all God’s children, each of whom is made in God’s image. Patriarchal views define those not conforming to certain gender roles as somehow less than human and therefore not worthy of the pastoral care that Christian marriage provides to heterosexual committed and loving couples.

Rescinding this authoritative interpretation will effectively grant pastors and sessions the freedom of conscience to care for couples of like gender who desire the affirmation of the church and commitments required of Christian marriage, treating them as the equals they are in God’s eyes.

### Item 10-07

*The assembly disapproved Item 10-07. See pp. 29, 31.*

*On Creating a Task Force to Identify Common Ground and Reconcilable Differences with Respect to Same-Gender Marriage—from Eastern Korean Presbytery.*

The Eastern Korean Presbytery respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Create a task force, consisting of no less than twelve elders with diverse theological, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to formulate tangible recommendations to the 223rd General Assembly (2018), with responsibilities to

   a. identify common ground and reconcilable differences in biblical understanding and confessional interpretation with respect to same-gender marriage;
b. study the nature, scope, and controversies of the same-gender marriage laws legalized in certain states;

c. assess the impact of such laws and related sociopolitical changes on the ministry and mission of the church;

d. provide the local presbyteries and congregations with theological guidelines for their ministry, as to understand and apply the concepts and functions of family and parenting based on biblical norms and ethics; and

e. bring forth practical and futuristic recommendations that would not only strengthen and promote unity within the church, but also solidify ministries and missions with ecumenical partners locally and globally.

2. Direct all councils to take no actions on the same-gender marriage issue until such recommendations are received, discussed, and disposed by the General Assembly.

Rationale

The 220th General Assembly (2012), having received conflicting reports from the study of civil union and Christian marriage*, directed the whole church to “enter into a season of serious study and discernment concerning [the] meaning of Christian marriage,” in “a desire to promote the peace, unity, and purity of the church,” and it is now time to gather our wisdom and search together for a concrete, practical and unifying resolution.

In a short period of time a dramatic shift in our biblical interpretation and polity application concerning human sexuality has caused confusion, division, and resentment, resulting in weakening, rather than strengthening of the ministry and mission of the church. Many presbyteries and local congregations are experiencing membership loss, poor morale, and increasing financial burdens as a result.

Several overtures have already been advanced in an effort to change the definition of marriage, while social debates, as well as complex legal maneuvers, continue, and theologians, philosophers, and lawmakers are yet to offer boundaries for acceptance of and approval for the new cultural development.

We recognize that divisive actions are often chosen through the means of offensive drive in the midst of confrontation, rather than prayerful search for a common ground, which we repent as our confession warns us against “the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny” (Book of Order, F-2.05).

The burgeoning of sociopolitical debate on and hastened implementation of same-gender marriage inevitably invites criticism of incongruity with biblical and theological understandings, which causes further confusion and disunity for all engaged in the pastoral and public ministries, and ultimately threatens the already fragile goals of peace, unity, and purity of the body of Christ.

While it is important for effective ministry to adapt to changing needs in our society and culture, it is imperative for the church to discern and prophetically declare the role and function of each Christian and congregation in applying Christ’s teachings to each changing need. In the course, it is not surprising that apostolic teachings are found often incompatible with the prevailing cultural norms. Thus, in attempting contextualization to the rapidly changing sociocultural milieu, we need to recalibrate our understanding, as we endeavor to be transformed through spiritual renewal, rather than conforming to prevailing culture.

As we strive toward the goal of oneness in Christ, the church ought to invigorate her efforts to uncover common theological understandings of human sexuality, marriage, family, and parenting.

Although recent denominational studies often emphasize apparent differences in biblical understandings of marriage in different times and cultural settings, it is fundamentally critical for us to grasp a clear sense of marriage and family, as they reflect God’s character, perfect harmony and unity, the Triune God, and the revelation of the great mystery of Christ’s love for the church. Marriage and family are the central human relationships that God has gifted each person to achieve the embodiment of Christ in our daily walk.

Society in general and people in younger generations in particular expect the church to provide a practical guideline with persuasive rationale that they can apply in their search for God’s purpose in the confusing world and directing themselves towards godly lifestyles.

Throughout church history, Christians have struggled to discover new answers in the midst of apparent disparity between “the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God” (Book of Order, F-2.05), which in our times has been epitomized in the understanding of human sexuality, marriage and family.

It is of critical importance for presbyteries, sessions, and elders to develop strategies to adequately nurture, support, and embrace God’s people in heterogeneous cultural backgrounds and theological orientations (Book of Order, F-1.04, G-3.0301). Clear understanding and discernment are particularly important for presbyteries whose boundaries include states and localities that have different societal and legal demands for same-gender marriage.
In short, it is not time to decide the church’s direction by vote, but to engage in serious and prayerful study aiming to develop a definitive guideline that would not only unify the church, but also promote effective ministry to the changing, confusing world.

Endnote

*The majority and minority reports of Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage (2012).

Concurrence to Item 10-07 from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 10-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 10-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 10-07.

This overture proposes a four-year study of same-gender marriage by a task force with twelve theologically diverse elders. The task force would report to the 223rd General Assembly (2018).

While the intent is seeking unity on this topic, the ACWC does not believe theological diversity is all that is needed to resolve this issue within the church. Specific skills for evaluating gender concerns, theological issues, social and psychological costs, legal implications, and the nature of church membership are required.

As the rationale for this overture notes, cultural norms, civil society’s laws, and even church practice have been changing rapidly with regards to the rights of same-gender couples. At this rate, the completion of an exhaustive and expensive four-year study may find the results and recommendations are no longer an issue for church and society. In addition, such a study only prolongs the inequities and pastoral struggle created by our current policies.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns therefore advises the overture be disapproved.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 10-07

Comment on Item 10-07—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

10-NB

[The assembly approved Item 10-NB with amendment. See pp. 29, 31, 33, 55.]

The 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to [establish a way to bring reconciliation to the church that would involve] [engage in the process of working together with churches in the task of reconciliation, starting with] visiting each presbytery and serving as a resource for each presbytery’s discussion of these actions in congregations and the presbytery at large and present voices of reconciliation for the unity of the church.
**Item 11-01**

[The assembly answered Item 11-01 by the action taken on Item 11-11. See p. 65.]

*On Peace Discernment—From the Presbytery of Baltimore.*

The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:


2. Thank the many Presbyterians who accepted the invitation of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to participate in church-wide discernment on peace and violence in the light of the witness of Jesus Christ using the process and materials in the interim report.

3. Recognize God’s call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war.

4. Affirm our responsibility as people of faith to earnestly seek effective, loving, nonviolent responses to conflict in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our world.

5. Dedicate ourselves to respond to acts and threats of violence with ministries of healing, peacemaking, prayer, and reconciliation.

**Rationale**

The Peace Discernment Steering Team was formed at the direction of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to design and implement a broadly participatory process to “seek clarity as to God’s call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war” and to “identify, explore, and nurture new approaches to active peacemaking and nonviolence” ([Minutes](#), 2010, Part I, p. 68). The interim report, “Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness,” was developed by the team ([Minutes](#), 2012, Part I, pp. 1333ff). The 220th General Assembly (2012) encouraged congregational, presbytery, college, and seminary groups to engage in the process described in the report.

Participants in these study groups have found the process compelling and transformative. Presbyterians are eager to continue to discern God’s will for a peaceful world and to seek new nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution.

In its call for a comprehensive commitment to nonviolence in all aspects of personal and community life, this overture builds on and expands the rich tradition of support for peacemaking in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**Concurrence to Item 11-01 from the Presbyteries of Huntingdon, Mission, and Scioto Valley.**

**Concurrence to Item 11-01 from the Presbytery of Hudson River (with Additional Rationale)**

The Peace Discernment Steering Team was formed at the direction of the 219th General Assembly (2010) to design and implement a broadly participatory process to “seek clarity as to God’s call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war” and to “identify, explore, and nurture new approaches to active peacemaking and nonviolence …” ([Minutes](#), 2010, Part I, p. 967). The interim report, “Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness,” was developed by the team. The 220th General Assembly (2012) encouraged congregational, presbytery, college, and seminary groups to engage in the process described in the report.

Participants in these study groups have found the process compelling and transformative. Presbyterians are eager to continue to discern God’s will for a peaceful world and to seek new, nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution.

In its call for a comprehensive commitment to nonviolence in all aspects of personal and community life, this overture builds on and expands the rich tradition of support for peacemaking in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In four Hudson River Presbytery congregations, their combined high school youth group participated in Lenten studies of peace discernment, resulting in a remarkable document written entirely by the young adults. We have found it instructive for our congregations, and commend it to the broader church:
Causes of Violence

When people turn to violence, it is usually out of ignorance, fear, instinct, or anger. We believe we need to find a way to address these causes of violence before they become acts of violence. Acting in the moment is not enough; we must solve the root problem or risk it happening again. We must also address what happens after the moment of violence—if we don’t make a change for the better, we are allowing violence to continue. Violence is based on hate and fear, and hate and fear are based on ignorance. With better education, we feel we can both help to stop the hatred and fear, and redirect it into more constructive expressions. The fact that violence is glorified in our society is an obstacle to peace, but this can also be changed through education. People often see violence as their only means of expression, but they must learn that there are more effective ways to get their voices heard. Violence leads to violence; intelligence leads to intelligence, and love leads to love. We must spread what we wish to see more of in the world.

Responses to Violence

We recognize that self defense is not the same as aggression, but also know that even in protection, violence is not the best solution. We also recognize that sometimes violence is a necessary response, but should not be our first or only response. We sometimes need to be reminded that violence or inaction are not our only two choices, and to consider other options before acting, both as individuals, as a church, and as a nation. Nonviolent actions have proven to be more effective in achieving change than fighting back. Turning to violence can be too easy, and though non-violence is hard, its reward is greater. Violence is based on hatred and fear, but nonviolence is based on love.

On Power

We acknowledge the difference between power from within—power of will, of conviction, of love—and power from without—power over others, and being in control. Inner strength of conviction and morals can be a powerful source of inspiration to bring about change. Love is Jesus’ power and is one of the most powerful forces in the world. Power over others is different than power over yourself. Using power to frighten or intimidate and restrict or bind others is not just. Power from within tends to be a positive force, but power over others tends to be a negative force.

Can We Justify Violence?

We need to be able to see how quickly we become the evil we are trying to fight. Killing our enemies just makes us the new enemies; we become as bad as the people we are fighting. We know that the means do not justify the ends and using violence can never lead to true peace, even with the best of intentions.

Questions Exploring Violence in Our Society

We question how to live peaceful lives if others do not. Where is the line between being peaceful and being passive? In what ways can we defend and protect ourselves without resorting to violence? How can we find the strength to live in a way that contradicts society? We look for these answers in Jesus, but they are not easy answers.

Peace is a long but necessary journey, and one that we must be willing to take together.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 11-01 be approved as amended: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Baltimore overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:


“2. Thank the many Presbyterians who accepted the invitation of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to participate in church-wide discernment on peace and violence in the light of the witness of Jesus Christ using the process and materials in the interim report.

“3. [Recognize God’s call to the church] [Recommend that presbyteries engage in the next stage of the discernment process to consider what it would mean for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war, in contrast to the church’s current “just peacemaking” overall approach].

“4. Affirm our responsibility as people of faith to [earnestly] seek effective, loving, nonviolent responses to conflict in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our world.

“5. Dedicate ourselves to respond to acts and threats of violence with ministries of healing, peacemaking, prayer, and reconciliation [and to reflect together on the place of military, police, and other kinds of force in the policies of our nation].”
The Advisory Committee believes that most Christians could support these recommendations, though they would likely differ about what it would mean to say that God calls “the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response.” The commitment behind this overture is admired, but in its original language it preempts the second stage of the discernment process that is designed to go to the presbyteries, if the commissioners approve the recommendations of “Risking Peace in a Violent World,” Item 11-11. In other words, unamended, this overture would commit the General Assembly to a position in favor of nonviolence that has not been considered in the presbyteries and which, to judge from Presbyterian Panel survey data, is not necessarily the “fundamental” response of most Presbyterians today.

The rationale to the overture comes close to defining nonviolence as the only legitimate stance for Christians. “In its call for a comprehensive commitment to nonviolence in all aspects of personal and community life, this overture builds on and expands the rich tradition of support for peacemaking in the Presbyterian Church (USA)” [italics added].

The word, “fundamental,” indeed may be accurate to the overall witness of the New Testament and the example of Jesus Christ, a matter that the third affirmation proposed in Item 11-11 seeks to test. Also the word, “fundamental,” need not be understood as making nonviolence “mandatory in all circumstances,” although “comprehensive” would suggest that.

While the PC(USA) does have a rich tradition of peacemaking, it has accepted that some violence, under certain circumstances, may be, tragically, justifiable as a last resort to protect the innocent, advance justice, maintain order, and uphold the rule of law. The fine additional rationale provided by the young adults in four congregations of Hudson River Presbytery seems to agree with the proposed amendments: “We also recognize that sometimes violence is a necessary response, but should not be our first or only response.”

In recommending support of this overture, as amended, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy agrees with its proponents that nonviolence a key question for Christians, particularly as our species—and all species—face challenges of climate change that no weapons or warfare are likely to solve.

$Item 11-02

[The assembly approved Item 11-02 with amendment. See pp. 65–66.]

On Turning Attention to the Plight of the Church That Is Suffering Due to Sectarian Violence and Persecution in Egypt and Other Parts of the World—From the Presbytery of Pittsburgh.

The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct our attention to the plight of the church of Jesus Christ that is suffering due to [maltreatment,] sectarian violence, and persecution in Egypt, [Iraq, Syria, Iran, Palestine, Israel, N. Korea, Pakistan, India, Central African Republic, Sri Lanka,] and other parts of the world. In [so] directing [such] attention to this plight, we call upon the PC(USA) to be a catalyst that calls all Christians [in the United States and] across the globe to unite in support and prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering.

This support should be reflected in direct interaction with the persecuted [and beleaguered] church[es] through means not limited to but inclusive of:

[•] [1.] [Refuge and] [Showing] hospitality [to Christian brothers and sisters who have come to the United States as refugees];

[•] [2.] Mediation with civil authorities and local governmental representatives [for adequate services to all refugees in the United States];

[3. Sharing information and coordinating concern with other churches through ecumenical bodies, in consultation with partners in the Middle East and other areas of sectarian tension;]

[4. Directing the Office for Public Witness and the Presbyterian Office at the United Nations to inform and equip Presbyterians to advocate for just peace throughout the Middle East.]

[• Mobilizing the global Christian community to defend, encourage, and protect;]

[•] [5.] [Leadership development and consultation] [Directing Presbyterian World Mission and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to consult with mission partners in the Middle East, and seek increased financial support through church-wide appeals to support mission partners’ efforts to provide relief for Christian refugees in/from the region;]

[6. Calling on the government of the United States to examine its role in the Middle East, to seek to ensure that future involvements in the region be consistent with the promotion of justice and freedom for all, including religious
liberty, and "to ensure that military intervention of any kind is undertaken as a “last resort” and reflects a high consensus among democratic nations that it may serve a “just peace.”"

[Financial aid;]

[•] [7.] [Pervasive] [P]rayer [without ceasing for our sisters and brothers in Christ who suffer for the sake of the Gospel]

[Financial Implication: Presbyterian Mission Agency—$18,500 (2015)]

Rationale

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has an illustrious history of being agents for the Kingdom of God that furthers a positive impact upon the world and society. Our global situation at the dawn of the 21st century is pockmarked with growing sectarian violence that is sweeping innocent Christians into the fatal grip of merciless evil.

Jesus calls us to be peacemakers (Mt. 5:9), which positions us to intervene where there is no peace. Jesus informs us that we will be persecuted, but we are not to ignore a sibling in need.

As Jesus prayed in the Upper Room his “high priestly prayer” as recorded in John 17, he petitions God that his disciples would all be one as he is one with the Father. The global Christian Church cannot sit idly by watching our siblings in Christ being ruthlessly driven from their homes and in many cases executed for their faith.

As the early church was being established, we note in the Book of Acts the trials and tribulation the first disciples endured, yet they intervened with the authorities reflecting the love of Jesus Christ and bearing witness to the truth of the gospel message. The church must be engaged to provide support and encouragement to those who are suffering. If the church of Jesus Christ does not stand up for their sisters and brothers in the faith, who will? Jesus warns in Matthew 25 that if we overlook the needs of those who are imprisoned, hungry, naked, and hurting then we have overlooked him!

According to a recent article in the Washington Times (12/23/12), nearly one third of the total world’s population identify themselves as “Christian.” There are 2.2 billion Christians. Of those, nearly 50 percent represent access to crucial resources that can affect a positive impact for support of the persecuted church; we are compelled to respond to the cry, “Hosanna.”

Concurrence to Item 11-02 from the Presbytery of Beaver-Butler.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

In concurrence with the intent of the overture, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 11-02 be approved with the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Pittsburgh overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to direct our attention to the plight of the church of Jesus Christ that is suffering due to [maltreatment and/or] sectarian violence [and persecution] in Egypt[, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Palestine, Israel, N. Korea, Pakistan, India, Central African Republic,] and other parts of the world. In [so] directing [such] attention to this plight, we call upon the PC(USA) to be a catalyst that calls all Christians [in the United States and] across the globe to unite in support and prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering.

“This support should be reflected in direct interaction with the [persecuted] [beleaguered] church[es] through means not limited to but inclusive of:

“[•] [1.] [Refuge and] [Showing] hospitality [to Christian brothers and sisters who have come to the United States as refugees];

“[•] [2.] Mediation with civil authorities and local governmental representatives [for adequate services to all refugees in the United States];

“[3. Sharing information and coordinating concern with other churches through ecumenical bodies, in consultation with partners in the Middle East and other areas of sectarian tension;]

“[4. Directing the Office for Public Witness and the Presbyterian Office at the United Nations to inform and equip Presbyterians to advocate for just peace throughout the Middle East;]

“[•] Mobilizing the global Christian community to defend, encourage, and protect;]
The revolutions that changed leadership in Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere in the region, the General Assembly stated:

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and other religious communities. Among its affirmations:

[5. Leadership development and consultation] [Directing Presbyterian World Mission and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to consult with mission partners in the Middle East, and seek increased financial support through church-wide appeals to support mission partners’ efforts to provide relief for Christian refugees in/from the region];

“6. Calling on the government of the United States to examine its role in the Middle East, to seek to ensure that future involvement in the region be consistent with the promotion of justice and freedom for all, including religious liberty, and ‘to ensure that military intervention of any kind is undertaken as a “last resort” and reflects a high consensus among democratic nations that it may serve a “just peace.”’”

[6. Calling on the government of the United States to examine its role in the Middle East, to seek to ensure that future involvement in the region be consistent with the promotion of justice and freedom for all, including religious liberty, and ‘to ensure that military intervention of any kind is undertaken as a “last resort” and reflects a high consensus among democratic nations that it may serve a “just peace.”’]  

“[7. Urging the United States State Department to include in its annual reports on the status of human rights in other countries an assessment of the impact of U.S. and allied foreign and military policies on religious minorities and their exercise of religious freedom.]

[7. Urging the United States State Department to include in its annual reports on the status of human rights in other countries an assessment of the impact of U.S. and allied foreign and military policies on religious minorities and their exercise of religious freedom.]

“[Financial aid;]

“[8. Pervasive] [p][P]rayer [without ceasing for our sisters and brothers in Christ who suffer for the sake of the Gospel].”

The proponents of this overture are rightly concerned with the situation of Christians in minority religious situations in the Middle East and elsewhere. They present several biblical bases for international action in Christian solidarity. This is a continuing concern of the General Assembly as various countries with state-endorsed religion, some allied with the United States and receiving substantial foreign and military aid, restrict the practice of Christianity and other faiths. In 2010, before the revolutions that changed leadership in Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere in the region, the General Assembly stated:

For tolerance of religious pluralism, freedom of worship, and protection of Christian communities and in line with principles [of humanitarian and human rights law]… the 219th General Assembly (2010)…recognizes the efforts made by the Egyptian government and civil society to ease the growing climate of tension between the country’s Christians and Muslims, and urges that the root causes of fear, anger, and the growing incidence of violent outbreaks be addressed, in order to restore mutual trust and to enable all citizens to enjoy their full and equal rights.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the resolution, “For Human Rights and Civic Freedom: Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World,” from which the quoted words in Recommendation 6 above are taken. That resolution takes very seriously the situation of Christian churches in the Middle East and the impacts of several wars on Christian and other religious communities. Among its affirmations:

In mission and ecumenical partnerships with indigenous Christians, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to continue its educational, medical, religious, and justice work in ways that support the fulfillment of human aspirations and the freedom of all citizens to worship without discrimination, including ancient Christian communities and other religious minorities. In this service, the church will continue to differentiate its mission, even in humanitarian relief, from the work of the United States military and other governmental agencies. (…)

Presbyterians are encouraged to consider travel in predominantly or partly Arab and Muslim countries, taking into account justice and security concerns, and connecting when possible with Christians in those nations. (See: http://www.pcusa.org/resource/human-rights-and-civic-freedom-movements/).)

That 2012 resolution also cited the 1974 resolution, “Christian Social Witness in Repressive Societies and United States Responsibility,” which begins: “Urges the congregations and individual members of the Presbyterian Church to offer specific and continuing prayer for all people under any repressive regime including Christians who are suffering because of their witness to Jesus Christ.” The amendments proposed recognize that not all mistreatment is “official,” and that the vulnerability of Christian communities in certain areas should be an enduring concern of Christians everywhere.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-02.

As with any other part of the church, ACREC agrees with this overture that when our brothers and sisters cry out for solidarity, we as the body of Christ need to respond. No matter that the sectarian violence in Egypt today is complicated and has connections to domination and colonization by Western powers, the church cannot stand by and ignore the “Hosanna” calls, which take us to the early Christians who had the same call, “Hosanna! We beseech you, save us!” The Christians of Egypt are some of the oldest communities of our tradition and before it is too late, as with the Christians of Iraq who had to flee after 2,000 years of living in their homeland when the U.S. military invasion/occupation began in 2003, we must heed this call for help from Egypt.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-02

Comment on Item 11-02—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The suffering of the church in Egypt and other parts of the world is not only “due to sectarian violence and persecution.” There are many factors involved, including geopolitical and economic factors. The General Assembly should consider all the factors that result in and contribute to sectarian violence. For example, our mission partners in the Middle East have clearly
pointed out that U.S. government policies (and Western attempts to dominate in general) affect them adversely by fueling sectarian tension. Therefore, the role of the U.S. government (often seeking national or special interests rather than principles the U.S. purports to support) should be addressed by the overture.

The overture names only the church in Egypt, and fails to mention the suffering of other Christian populations in the region. For example, following the 2003 American-led invasion of Iraq, more than half of the country’s Christian population became refugees. Likewise, the plight of Syrian Christians, Palestinian Christians, and others in the Middle East should not be neglected. Additionally, while the overture mentions “Other Parts of the World,” it does not consider countries outside of the Middle East, such as North Korea, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Sudan, where Christians suffer from maltreatment no less than in the Middle East.

Use of the word “persecution” mischaracterizes the nature of the maltreatment of Christians in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, and in many cases would be an unhelpful exaggeration. At the same time, the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly maintain ecumenical and interfaith relationships and humanitarian programs that can enable efforts such as those requested by the presbyteries submitting this overture.

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**Item 11-03**

[The assembly approved Item 11-03 with amendment. See pp. 65, 66.]

*On Removing Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism—From the Presbytery of Long Island.*

The Presbytery of Long Island overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Petition the [p]resident of the United States and the U.S. Department of State to remove Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism as soon as possible.

2. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to communicate this petition to the president and the U.S. Department of State.

3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for this result in cooperation with the appropriate denominational and ecumenical organizations in Washington.

*Rationale*

On March 1, 1982, Cuba was added to the U.S. Department of State’s list of state sponsors of terrorism because of Cuba’s alleged ties to international terrorism and its support for terrorist groups in Latin America. State sponsors of terrorism provide logistical and financial or political support to groups that carry out terrorist attacks on civilians, and there is no evidence that Cuba has provided such support in recent decades or is currently providing it.

To the contrary, Cuba has made international commitments to combat terrorism, has ratified all twelve international counterterrorism conventions, and has offered to sign a bilateral agreement with the United States on counterterrorism. In an immediate response to the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., by Islamist militants belonging to Al Qaeda, Cuba expressed solidarity with the U.S. condemning the attacks and offering Cuban airports for the emergency diversion of airplanes from U.S. airports.

Cuba is a sponsor of the peace talks between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People’s Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo or FARC) guerrillas and the Columbian government and is playing a constructive mediating in these talks in an effort to bring an end to one of the regions’ longest-standing conflicts and has been lauded by the Columbian government for its assistance. Cuba collaborates with the U.S. in counter-drug traffic efforts, interdicting narcotic shipments in the Caribbean and has been publicly thanked by the United States government for this cooperation.

Under these circumstances, keeping Cuba on the list of state sponsors of terrorism weakens the credibility of the entire list. In the past, other countries such as Iraq and Libya have been removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. Removing Cuba from the list would send a positive signal to all Latin American governments and would enhance the image of the U.S. in this hemisphere and around the world.

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**Concurrence to Item 11-03 from the Presbyteries of Santa Fe and Southeastern Illinois.**

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 11-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved.
The State Department currently lists four countries as “State Sponsors of Terrorism”: Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Syria. The significance of this designation has to do with the application of three laws:

section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act, section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act, and section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act. Taken together, the four main categories of sanctions resulting from designation under these authorities include restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions. Designation under the above-referenced authorities also implicates other sanctions laws that penalize persons and countries engaging in certain trade with state sponsors. (http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/c14151.htm)

As the overture notes, countries such as Libya and Iraq have been removed from the list. Other countries not on that list may come immediately to mind as being of far greater danger to their neighbors and to their own populations. More importantly, the designation appears to be untrue by the State Department’s own reporting. The Council on Foreign Relations reviews human rights and intelligence reports to which there is public access and summarizes: “intelligence experts have been hard pressed to find evidence that Cuba currently provides weapons or military training to terrorist groups. In 1998, a comprehensive review by the U.S. intelligence community concluded that Cuba does not pose a threat to U.S. national security, which implies that Cuba no longer sponsors terrorism” (2010: http://www.cfr.org/cuba/state-sponsors-cuba/p9359). In their view, Cuba remains on the list because it may have relations with countries that may oppose the United States in some measure (Iran, Venezuela), it may shelter or hold foreign nationals of interest to the United States (not necessarily terrorists), and it may still be an important political concern for parts of the Cuban exile community.

In the past, the General Assembly has asked Congress to rescind the Cuban Democracy Act (1992) and the Helms-Burton Act (1997), both measures which reinforce the embargo (see Item 11-05). The assembly has also called on the Cuban government to respect the full range of human rights. Lifting the designation of “state sponsor of terror” does not suggest or imply approval for all of the laws and practices of the government of Cuba, but it would be consistent with past General Assembly policy and accurate to the current state of affairs. It would likely be taken as an incentive for positive actions on Cuba’s part, and would also normalize the behavior of other nations that carry on trade with Cuba while taking measures to avoid contacts with the U.S. that would trigger the three laws cited above. Especially with the high US surveillance related to the Guantanamo Bay prison, if Cuba were actually involved in supporting terrorism it is likely that the public would have heard about it in some way.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-03.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-03

Comment on Item 11-03—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency has been engaged in mission with church partners in Cuba since 1890 https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/cuba/. In 1967, the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba (IPRC) was established as an autonomous denomination. Nine presbyteries have established partnerships with the IRPC. Travel restrictions and sanctions make these partnerships more difficult.

In February 2014, the Office of Public Witness, together with Church World Service and the Latin America Working Group, hosted a delegation of ecumenical leaders from Cuba in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the visit was to advocate for normalized U.S. relations with Cuba. Removing Cuba from the List of State Sponsors of Terrorism and lifting all restrictions for both U.S. and Cuba travel were among the issues discussed in the joint deliberations with the State Department and Congressional Offices http://www.pcusa.org/news/2014/3/18/cuban-church-leaders-press-normalization-us/.

Item 11-04

[The assembly answered Item 11-04 by the action taken on Item 11-10, Recommendations A, B, C, & D. See pp. 65, 66.]

On the Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones)—From the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to:

1. Call on all countries to halt the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as weapons of war for all military, paramilitary, and surveillance activities whether by state-sponsored armed forces or by private groups or paramilitary units or contractors.
2. Call on the United States to stop the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles on its borders aimed at restricting the movement of peoples.

3. Recognizing that the UN Charter gives the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that in fulfilling this responsibility the council can establish a UN peacekeeping operation, the General Assembly calls on the United Nations Security Council to authorize the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in peacekeeping operations only when such usage is restricted to decreasing military conflict and protecting civilians.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate to those in positions of national leadership in the United States for the cessation of the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as weapons of war in military, paramilitary, and surveillance activities both in foreign countries and within the United States.

5. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate with the member states of the United Nations for the cessation of the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as weapons of war in military, paramilitary, and surveillance activities.

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate within the UN community that the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in peacekeeping operations be restricted to decreasing militarization and protecting civilians.

7. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to assist presbyteries directly impacted by the presence of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle bases through the creation of electronic theological resources expressing the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) towards Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and strategies for nonviolent protests of drone bases.

8. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to facilitate collaborative efforts between presbyteries directly impacted by the presence of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle bases with other organizations both outside and within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in order to determine the best way to respond to this increasingly utilized first-strike weapon of choice.

9. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to monitor developments in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle technology and use and to inform the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of such developments and any related needs for new policy.

Rationale

Since 2002, the United States has used Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, commonly called drones, in approximately 425 strikes, killing more than 3,500 people (“The Shadow of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles” in Unbound, May 25, 2013). Many of the victims have been women, children, and innocent noncombatants. While there is the temptation to find, in this remote methodology of waging war, a measure of security through distance, the reality is that this method of attack neither meets the standards of the traditional teaching on military activity as established by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) nor effectively takes into account the realities of communities who live under the constant threat of strikes. Additionally, the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as weapons of war has been shown to be tantamount to unauthorized targeted assassinations of both foreign nationals and, in a few cases, United States citizens challenging both the sovereignty of other nations and the due process of the system of justice valued by those in the U.S.

In Pakistan alone, the use of strikes has led to an increase in anti-United States sentiment (Dawn News Service, 1-22-13). In that region, a destabilized country only leads to the threat of increased terroristic responses to United States military might. In the brokenness of the world and the callousness with which we approach the deaths of civilians in other countries, children who have had to bury their parents have the potential of continuing the cycles of violence that first descended out of the sky, obliterating any semblance of normalcy in their own lives. Additionally, tragically, those who work as pilots for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles have begun reporting an increase in the experience of PTSD stemming from their actions against foreign domestics (New York Times, 02/25/13).

In addition, reports have indicated the use of unmanned aircrafts along the border between Mexico and the United States (National Public Radio, 06/11/13). This represents a threat to the privacy of U.S. citizens in that border area while serving as a prelude to the certain use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles by municipal police forces (Public Broadcasting Service, 04/18/13). This furthers the founded fears of U.S. citizens who worry that the efforts to maintain a peaceful existence are being undertaken at the cost of constitutional civil liberties. This also suggests a moral and ethical cost of which we would do well to take note.

The Charter of the United Nations gives the UN Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The council may adopt a range of measures as it seeks to fulfill this responsibility. Those measures may include the establishment of a UN peacekeeping operation.

Peacekeeping has unique strengths, including legitimacy, burden sharing, and an ability to deploy and sustain troops and police from around the globe, integrating them with civilian peacekeepers to advance multidimensional mandates.

UN Peacekeepers provide security and the political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult, early transition from conflict to peace.
UN Peacekeeping is guided by three basic principles:

• Consent of the parties;
• Impartiality;

The nature of the mandates assigned to UN peacekeeping operations by the Security Council has expanded significantly in response to changing patterns of conflict. “Today’s multidimensional peacekeeping operations are called upon not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law.” (Ibid)

Given the geographic, political and meteorological realities faced by current and future peacekeeping operations, the use of unmanned aerial vehicles allows peacekeeping missions access to regions otherwise too vast and costly for the peacekeeping mission to protect. By using unmanned aerial vehicles, with partnership of the host government, peacekeeping operations are able to promote peace in far larger regions with fewer armed soldiers.

As members of the prophetic tradition of the followers of Jesus, we are called to stand for peace even when that stance is judged as less than expedient in creating safety and security for the country. In our efforts to walk in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth we must remember that it was his work of redemption on the cross that welcomed people from all over the world into the family of God. With that familial relationship comes the responsibility to treat each other as we would desire to be treated and to love each neighbor to the same degree that we seek to love ourselves. The use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles by the United States threatens to introduce an ease in battle and separation from the sights of war that ensures war in this fashion will simply become second nature to the country that uses them. As a church we must stand against those who seek to use violence in the vain attempt to enjoy a peaceful existence and call for an end to the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

Concurrence to Item 11-04 from the Presbyteries of Albany, Chicago, and New York City.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

In concurrence with the concerns of the proponent presbyteries, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be answered by the approval of Item 11-10, Resolution on Drones, War, and Surveillance, with the addition to that resolution of the following recommendations:

1. Add the following recommendations to Item 11-10, Recommendation A.:

“[9. Recognizing that the UN Charter gives the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that in fulfilling this responsibility the council can establish a UN peacekeeping operation, the General Assembly calls on the United Nations Security Council to authorize the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in peacekeeping operations only when such usage is restricted to decreasing military conflict and protecting civilians.

“[10. Direct the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to advocate with the member states of the United Nations for comprehensive conventions to govern the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as weapons of war in military, paramilitary, and surveillance activities, with priority on the protection of all noncombatants and enforceable limitations on the justification, scope and duration of such activities, and the prevention of weaponized UAV proliferation.]

2. Add a new Recommendation E to Item 11-10 to read as follows:

“[E. Direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program to assist presbyteries and individual Presbyterians through the creation of downloadable electronic and limited-run print theological resources building on this Resolution on Drones, War, and Surveillance, to facilitate collaborative efforts with other organizations both outside and within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in order to determine the best ways to respond to this increasingly utilized weapon of choice, and with the Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, to monitor developments in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle technology and use and to inform the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of such developments and any related needs for new policy.]”

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would affirm the serious concerns raised in this overture, which are shared by many in our society and around the world. For this reason it is bringing a Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance to this General Assembly (Item 11-10). The ACSWP resolution responds to many of the concerns raised by this item, but does not reject all military and surveillance uses of drones by nation states. The recommendations related to the United Nations, in fact, would seem to fit better within the larger resolution, given that the UN normally draws on the military forces
of member nations. Instead of calling for the (highly unlikely) prohibition of the use of drones by nation-states, the approach recommended urges that their use be restricted by internationally agreed upon rules of war and subject to greater legal oversight and public transparency.

Along with the weaponized drones that cause the greatest concern about creating more enemies and extending the battlefield, is the use of drones in surveillance. This is also highly unlikely to be ended, but also in need of much greater accountability. It is also impossible to approach the issue of surveillance by drone in isolation from surveillance in other forms. Many of the U.S. military bases around the world, in fact, include “listening stations” of various kinds. Data collection from drones, piloted aircraft, electronic “vacuuming,” text and phone messages is all part of a picture justified by a concern for counter-terrorism. Though drones raise specific moral questions about the character of the warrior and respect for due process and human rights—seen in the U.S. military’s not counting the deaths of civilians killed by various methods in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and elsewhere—the resolution addresses common elements of secrecy, lack of accountability and oversight, and the need to improve both domestic and international law on surveillance and secret warfare.

Thanks in part to The Thoughtful Christian, published by Presbyterian Publishing Company, some of the theological and ethical resource called for in the overture has already been produced. If commissioners believe that the Resolution on Drones, War, and Surveillance puts drone use in a framework that can engage with U.S. and UN policymakers, then some of the elements from this overture can improve that resolution. The theological questions of moral distance and dehumanization as well as of military violence generally would be part of any resources for study and action developed from the resolution, so the recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy is not to reinvent the wheel on resources but to build on what has already been written for this assembly.

The deployment and semi-covert use of weaponized drones has clearly outpaced moral reflection and oversight, and the Resolution on Drones, War, and Surveillance recommends eliminating and preventing some uses entirely, while recognizing that the problems with this technology overlap with those of other weapons and surveillance systems. Precision targeting with drones does not prevent killing innocent people, even if it kills fewer than stealth bomber strikes. The General Assembly has rejected other weapon systems in the past that fail to discriminate between combatants and noncombatants, making them inherently immoral. In the case of nuclear weapons, the General Assembly approved a thorough report developed over several years, Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age (1988) (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/christian-obedience-nuclear) that continues to provide bases for analyzing weapons of mass destruction. The challenge of drones is a different challenge, but still very much within the moral purview of a Christian vision of just peace.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-04

Comment on Item 11-04—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-04

Comment on Item 11-04—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The General Assembly has addressed issues of war and peace on numerous occasions through the years. This includes speaking to specific weapons, for example land mines and nuclear weapons, and the questions about the morality of their use.

Drones represent a new technology not fully addressed in any current PC(USA) policy related to weapons of war. The approval of this overture or the report from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would establish policy to guide the work of programs of the Presbyterian Mission Agency called to address these matters.

Item 11-05

[The assembly approved Item 11-05. See pp. 65, 66.]

On Lifting All Travel Restrictions for U.S. Citizens Traveling to Cuba—From the Presbytery of St. Augustine.

The Presbytery of St. Augustine overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to:

1. Petition the president of the United States, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control to remove all of the restrictions on travel by U.S. citizens to Cuba, which it is legally possible for them to do, and to openly and vigorously advocate to Congress the repeal of all laws restricting the constitutional right of U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba.
2. Petition the majority and minority leaders of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives to work to repeal all of the laws restricting travel to that nation.

3. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to communicate this petition to the president, the U.S. Department of State, the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the U.S. Treasury Department, and to the congressional leaders cited above.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for this change in policy in cooperation with other appropriate denominational and ecumenical organizations in Washington.

Rationale

We laud our government for lifting a number of the restrictions instituted by the previous administration on travel to Cuba. This has made it possible for thousands more U.S. citizens to visit that country.

The Cuban government reported that in 2012 approximately 475,000 U.S. citizens visited relatives in Cuba and that another 98,000 U.S. citizens also visited Cuba that year under educational and religious licenses.

However, millions of U. S. citizens are unable to visit Cuba because of restrictions still in place that limit travel to that nation.

Speaking to the Organization of American States in 2013, U. S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, stated that “our people are actually our best ambassadors.”

In Cuba the average monthly wage is less than the equivalent of $22 (U.S.) per month, and most Cubans depend on remittances from outside the country for basic necessities. Although the Cuban government provides a monthly food allotment for each person, it only provides food for less than half a month. Thousands of retirees depend on food aid from churches in order to survive. Many of them have incomes of only the equivalent of $8 (U.S.) per month.

In 2012 the Cuban government announced that it would be laying off 500,000 government workers in the next few years. It also announced that it would allow approximately 200 types of private businesses. Thousands of Cubans have begun private enterprises.

Increased travel by U. S. citizens will help supports thousands of these Cuban entrepreneurs and will enable them to purchase food and clothing and provide for their other basic needs.

Concurrence to Item 11-05 from the Presbyteries of Central Florida, Giddings-Lovejoy, Santa Fe, South Louisiana, and Southeastern Illinois.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-05—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved.

Travel to Cuba is currently possible under general or specific licenses from the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the U.S. Treasury. Travel restrictions are part of the more general blockade that dates back to the period after the Revolution (1959) and subsequent deterioration of U.S.-Cuba relations, including the missile crisis and the failed invasion sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency at the Bay of Pigs. As the Treasury website states: “The Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 CFR Part 515…, were issued by the U.S. Government on July 8, 1963, under the Trading With the Enemy Act in response to certain hostile actions by the Cuban Government” (http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba.pdf). Put simply, tourism and commerce are not permitted but general licenses can allow educational and religious activities by groups and specific licenses can be granted for individual and one-time purposes. The rules for these licenses were changed to allow more “people-to-people” tourism in 2011 (http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/10/travel/at-long-last-legal-trips-to-cuba.html?pagewanted=all& r=0).

Many observers propose that increased travel to Cuba is paradoxically doing what the long years of the blockade have not achieved: opening up the society. Past General Assemblies have called for normalization of relations and an end to the blockade overall (PCUS: 1972, 1977; UPC: 1977, 1982 [particularly noting travel restrictions]; PCUSA: 1990, 1992). Given changes in U.S. policy regarding the region overall, as well as changes in Cuba, this is an appropriate updating of the church’s long-standing concern.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-05

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-05—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-05.
Item 11-06

[The assembly referred Item 11-06 with comment. See pp. 65, 66.]

[Comment: Refer Item 11-06 back to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and the Cuba Partners Network to rework this important concept (and future funding sources) in light of the PC(USA)’s and this assembly’s commitment to deepening our relationship by careful analysis of the ongoing complex situation in Cuba.]

On Authorizing a Consultative Process to Provide Guidance for the Church’s Response to the Dramatic Changes Taking Place in Cuba—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe.

The Presbytery of Santa Fe, meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, February 8, 2014, in order to obtain a careful analysis of the ongoing complex situation in Cuba to guide the response of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the councils and congregations of the church, overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014), meeting in Detroit Michigan, June 14–21, 2014, to direct the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), in consultation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, to design and implement a consultative process that would involve:

1. An extended meeting of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in Cuba, including representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Cuba Partners Network, to view the Cuban situation directly and to consult with experts in the Cuban government, the University of Havana, the Cuban Council of Churches, and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba, with the agenda developed in consultation with the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba. The program should include not only hearings but also visits to locations and projects where the effects of the ongoing changes in Cuba and efforts to implement them by both governmental and religious agencies can be observed. The use of the consultation model and a regular meeting of the committee itself will save the cost of a task force and enhance the mutual conversation of our churches as called for in the 1986 Mutual Mission Agreement.

2. A follow-up consultation in the U.S., preferably in Washington, D.C., at which members of the ACSWP who had participated in the Cuba consultation and representatives of the Cuba Partners Network and appropriate Presbyterian Mission Agency staff, would consult with U.S. governmental agencies and committees and religious and other nongovernmental organizations concerned with Cuba policy to explore response to the evolving changes in Cuba by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), both through mission engagement and public policy advocacy.

3. Preparation and submission of a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) with recommendations for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission engagement and public policy advocacy.

4. Preparation and submission to the Presbyterian Mission Agency of interim reports and recommendations for action consistent with existing policy on matters deemed urgent.

Rationale

The year 2014 marks the 45th anniversary of the basic policy toward Cuba adopted by the 181st General Assembly (1969) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) stating that “consistent with the right of self-determination … the United States Government should immediately take steps to re-establish normal relations with the Government of Cuba. This should include the lifting of the trade embargo against Cuba. … The three United States military bases in Latin America should eventually be dismantled, subject to negotiation with Panama and Cuba” (Minutes, UPCUSA, 1969, Part I, pp.742, 744). Subsequent General Assemblies have reaffirmed and amplified this policy as U.S. policy toward Cuba has changed under succeeding administrations, though the fundamental realities first addressed in 1969 remain largely unchanged.

The 198th General Assembly (1986) approved a Mutual Mission Agreement between the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), authorizing a Partnership in Mission that included; “exchange of seminary professors and students”; “participation of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba in the Mission to the USA Program”; “joint ministry in peacemaking programs”; “exchange programs between youth, women, and other groups”; and “relating middle governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba” (Minutes, 1986, Part I, pp. 589–90), subsequently amended also to authorize partnerships between congregations of the two denominations. This agreement opened the way to a mission partnership of unprecedented breadth and depth between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba currently involving some fifteen presbyteries and synods, ninety congregations, the Outreach Foundation, the Presbyterian Cuba Connection, and Living Waters for the World working together in the Presbyterian Cuba Partners Mission Network. At its annual meeting in 2013, the Cuba Partners Network, the World Mission Division of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba affirmed the intention to work cooperatively as a “community of mission practice.”

The continued involvement of thousands of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the life of their sisters and brothers in Cuba and their experience of the impact of the continued U.S. embargo on them and all the people of Cuba
give the PC(USA) an unusually profound insight into the human impact of U.S. policy toward Cuba and an almost “personal stake” in continuing to seek just and peaceful relations between our two nations. Recent changes in Cuba bring new urgency to that quest and new hope for its successful outcome.

The government of Cuba has embarked on an apparently irreversible course of fundamental change that affects the daily life of Cubans, has opened up new opportunities for individual initiative, is enabling the churches to move into social space in new ways, is leading to greater and more positive involvement in the Latin American/Caribbean region, is brokering negotiations for peaceful solutions to long intractable conflicts, is permitting Cuba dissidents to travel abroad freely, and has led to the freeing of political prisoners. These individual changes are clearly part of a complex process of reform that continues to unfold, sometimes with weekly announcements.

These continuing developments present an opportunity for the United States government to abandon the policy of isolation rooted in the dynamics of the Cold War, a policy consistently opposed by the General Assembly through the last forty-five years. Continuation of that policy not only seeks to isolate Cuba but also isolates us from Cuba and the opportunity to encourage and assist that sister nation in its efforts toward reform. Restoration of normal diplomatic and commercial relationships would clearly be in the best interests of our nation as Cuba interfaces more and more with the world.

These developments also present new opportunities for mission engagement with our daughter/sister Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba as that church explores new possibilities for witness and service as the continuing dynamics of change unfold in Cuba. The process of change in Cuba is complex and ongoing. The process of consultation called for in this overture will provide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with carefully explored guidelines for effective future mission engagement and public policy advocacy.

Concurrence to Item 11-06 from the Presbytery of Mission.

Concurrence to Item 11-06 from the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois (with Additional Rationale)

The year 2014 marks the 45th anniversary of the basic policy toward Cuba adopted by the 181st General Assembly (1969) stating that “consistent with the right of self-determination … the U.S. Government should immediately take steps to re-establish normal relations with the Government of Cuba. This should include the lifting of the trade embargo against Cuba” (Minutes, UPCUSA, 1969, Part I, p. 742). Subsequent General Assemblies have reaffirmed and amplified this policy as U.S. policy toward Cuba has changed under succeeding administrations, though the fundamental realities first addressed in 1969 remain largely unchanged.

The 198th General Assembly (1986) approved a Mutual Mission Agreement between the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), authorizing a Partnership in Mission that included; “exchange of seminary professors and students … participation of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba in the Mission to the U.S.A. Program … joint ministry in peacemaking programs … relating middle governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba … [and] exchange programs between youth, women, and other groups” (Minutes, 1986, Part I, pp.589–90), subsequently amended also to authorize partnerships between congregations of the two denominations. This agreement opened the way to a mission partnership of unprecedented breadth and depth between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba currently involving some fifteen presbyteries and synods, ninety congregations, the Outreach Foundation, the Presbyterian Cuba Connection, and Living Waters for the World working together in the Presbyterian Cuba Partners Mission Network. At its annual meeting in 2013, the Cuba Partners Network, the World Mission Division of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba affirmed the intention to work cooperatively as a “community of mission practice.”

The continued involvement of thousands of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with the life of their sisters and brothers in Cuba and their experience of the impact of the continued U.S. embargo on them and all the people of Cuba give the PC(USA) an unusually profound insight into the human impact of U.S policy toward Cuba and an almost “personal stake” in continuing to seek just and peaceful relations between our two nations. Recent changes in Cuba bring new urgency to that quest and new hope for its successful outcome.

The government of Cuba has embarked on an apparently irreversible course of fundamental change that affects the daily life of Cubans, has opened up new opportunities for individual initiative, is enabling the churches to move into social space in new ways, is leading to greater and more positive involvement in the Latin American/Caribbean region, is brokering negotiations for peaceful solutions to long intractable conflicts, is permitting Cuba dissidents to travel abroad freely, and has led to the freeing of political prisoners. These individual changes are clearly part of a complex process of reform that continues to unfold, sometimes with weekly announcements.

These continuing developments present an opportunity for the United States government to abandon the policy of isolation rooted in the dynamics of the Cold War, a policy consistently opposed by the General Assembly through the last forty-five years. Continuation of that policy not only seeks to isolate Cuba but also isolates us from Cuba and the opportunity to
encourage and assist that sister nation in its efforts toward reform. Restoration of normal diplomatic and commercial relationships would clearly be in the best interests of our nation as Cuba interfaces more and more with the world.

These developments also present new opportunities for mission engagement with our daughter/sister Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba as that church explores new possibilities for witness and service as the continuing dynamics of change unfold in Cuba. The process of change in Cuba is complex and ongoing. The process of consultation called for in this overture will provide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with carefully explored guidelines for effective future mission engagement and public policy advocacy.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-06—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee advises that this overture be approved with amendment to Recommendations 1.–3. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“1. An extended meeting of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy in Cuba, including representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Cuba Partners Network, to view the Cuban situation directly and to consult with [the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba on matters of mission and witness and through their auspices include relevant] experts in the Cuban government, the University of Havana, the Cuban Council of Churches [and other religious leaders] [- and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba, with the agenda developed in consultation with the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba]. The program should include not only hearings, [worship, and theological reflection,] but also visits to locations and projects where the effects of the ongoing changes in Cuba [as they relate to the religious life of the church] and efforts to implement them by both governmental and religious agencies can be observed. The use of the consultation model and a regular meeting of the committee itself will save the cost of a task force and enhance the mutual conversation of our churches as called for in the 1986 Mutual Mission Agreement.

“2. A follow-up consultation in the U.S., preferably in Washington, D.C., at which members of the ACSWP who had participated in the Cuba consultation and representatives of the Cuba Partners Network and appropriate Presbyterian Mission Agency staff, would consult with U.S. governmental agencies and committees and religious and other nongovernmental organizations concerned with Cuba policy to explore response to the evolving changes in Cuba [as they relate to the religious life of the church] by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), both through mission engagement and [public policy advocacy] [social witness].

“3. Preparation and submission of a report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) with recommendations for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission[ witness, advocacy, and theological-ethical understanding] [engagement and public policy advocacy].”

The survival and strength of the Presbyterian Church in Cuba is a gift of God, working through the dedicated lives of ministers and members who have experienced “lean years,” and yet kept their hands to the Gospel plow. The faithfulness of PC(USA) congregations and partners, throughout the many years of blockade and Cold War and Central American wars, is to be honored as well. But this overture calls for more than honoring and maintaining connection, important as those tasks are. It calls for two consultations designed to draw upon the learnings of many years and current analysis to assess best ways for our two churches to move forward in a very dynamic environment.

The amendments proposed are meant to emphasize the Reformed Christian understanding of mission that connects our theology with the broad range of human life over which God is sovereign, while recognizing the current legal structures governing travel to Cuba (also noted in the Presbyterian Mission Agency comment). Religious life and Christian discipleship in the Reformed tradition clearly include more than liturgical practice. Both our churches share this incarnational understanding and a commitment to partnership; hence the amendments clarify the key role of the Presbyterian Church of Cuba in any contacts with Cuban official, academic, and civil society representatives. The amendments also make explicit the theological and ethical dimension implicit in the overture and previous Cuba social witness policies, some of which are noted in the overture.

Commissioners may be aware that the life of the Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Cuba has been of great concern to Presbyterians in the United States since the revolution and its aftermath severed relations with what was once part of the Synod of New Jersey. The wonderful growth of the mission partnerships among Presbyterians, noted in this overture, testify to the depth of relationship. The experiences of the Spirit of Christ across ideological lines enrich the lives of Christians in both cultures and help us understand the unique place of the church in each society.

While the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has repeatedly expressed concern for full human rights and improvements in relations between governments that so affect our Christian witness and mission, the last in-depth analysis of Cuban developments prepared for the General Assembly was in 1990. The growth of mission partnerships was in fact a recommendation in that policy statement. Both predecessor denominations had cooperated in a major study in 1978–1979 (published in Church
& Society, July–October, 1979), and both had monitored tensions in the Caribbean and Central American region in the 1980s. A 1997 statement summarizes statements in the recent period: “Presbyterian General Assemblies have repeatedly called upon the United States to pursue a policy of reconciliation and negotiation with the Cuban government” (Minutes, Part 1, 1997, p. 589).

Clearly there remain legal issues for any consultations among Christians from the two nations, despite increased commerce and travel across the strait below Florida. (See National Geographic for a recent mainstream account of changes occurring: http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2012/11/new-cuba/gorney-text). The method proposed is low cost and an appropriate and customary part of expenses determined by General Assemblies. As stated, the purpose of the consultations is to go beyond news accounts and government statements and to help advance Presbyterian mission and witness in a time of widely acknowledged change. Given the depth of Presbyterian relationships and history, it seems appropriate we join in careful and prayerful thought about what God is doing in Cuba and how that can guide both our churches in the future.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-06

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-06—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-06.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-06

Comment on Item 11-06—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-06

Comment on Item 11-06—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This overture displays a familiarity with the remarkably strong relationship that has remained between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbyterian Church in Cuba over the years. It recognizes the significant changes underway within Cuba and in that country’s relations with other nations in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Europe. The overture proposes a cost-effective way to build upon the work of the Cuba Mission Network and the mission partnerships that have made our Presbyterian witness and connection so distinctive and durable. The dual consultation model is designed to include a diversity of voices framed by the mission of the church. The consultation in Cuba, to be developed with our mission partners, would be arranged by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and World Mission in full accordance with the requirements of U.S. law and the hopes of that church. As in other social witness and mission reports prepared for the General Assembly in the past, the goal is to gather faithful persons with significant experience and expertise whose prayer and reflection may help guide both our churches for years to come.

Item 11-07

[The assembly approved Item 11–07 with amendment. See pp. 65, 67.]

On Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide—From the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

In order to mark the centennial of the Armenian Genocide in 2015, to remember the suffering of the Armenian people, and to give thanks for their continuing witness, the Presbytery of Los Ranchos respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take the following measures to testify to this tragedy and to help ensure that no other peoples experience such suffering:

1. Urge congregations and individuals to

   a. recognize the Armenian Genocide, which claimed 1.5 million lives of Armenians from 1915 to 1923 and displaced more than one million more;
b. express deep sympathy to the Armenian people and designate April 24th of every year hereafter as a day of remembrance of the 1.5 million Armenians who fell victim to the first genocide of the twentieth century;

c. honor the provisions of American and international law and the role of American and international justice institutions in preventing the recurrence of similar mass killings, atrocities, and population removals and bringing the perpetrators of any such crimes to justice; and

Furthermore, believing that the international recognition of this genocide is a necessary condition for the prevention of similar crimes that may occur in the future, the General Assembly:

2. Supports the designation of “genocide” for the deaths of 1.5 million Armenians and the expulsion of one million more from the Ottoman Empire during the period from 1915–1923, recognizing the systemic elimination of a population group as a crime against humanity in keeping with the 1947 Geneva Convention on Genocide.

3. Directs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to

   a. call upon [the] [President Obama] and the Congress of the United States of America to recognize and condemn the deaths and expulsion of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire during the period from 1915–1923, as a genocide, and to communicate this resolution for that purpose;

   b. communicate this resolution to ecumenical partners and organizations nationally and internationally;

   c. ensure suitable time within the 222nd General Assembly (2016) to observe the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and to honor those organizations, countries, and individuals who assisted Armenian refugees, including the work of the Jinishian Memorial Program.

4. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency to

   a. encourage appropriate observance of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, [designating Sunday, April 26, 2015, as the 100 year anniversary commemoration day in Presbyterian churches] including the preparation of educational and liturgical resources, drawing on the witness of prior assemblies and other historical records, and participation in travel, conferences, and other memorials [to be made available on the web at least two months prior to 4/26/2015];

   b. encourage the United States to endorse the highest human rights standards for all agencies and actions of the United States government, including protection of minority and/or subjugated populations from genocide and ethnic cleansing;

   c. work cooperatively with other churches and communions in both advocacy and encouraging appropriate artistic, musical, and other cultural forms of remembrance.

Rationale

The year 2015 marks the 100th anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide. Between 1915 and 1923, some 1.5 million Armenians perished and more than a million were deported from their homeland, Western Armenia, in present-day Turkey.
Many others died of starvation and epidemics during forced marches or in concentration camps. Through execution and deportation, plundering of property, sexual abuse, and torture, the Armenian presence was systematically expunged from Asia Minor. The Armenian Genocide has been condemned by the international community as a crime against humanity. Concise accounts of these events can be found at the following Web sites:

http://www.armenian-genocide.org/
http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/armenian-genocide
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obi9I96AT_A
http://www.history.com/topics/armenian-genocide

We give thanks to God for the continuing witness of Armenian Christians. Since 301 CE, this first Christian nation has borne witness to the sovereign justice of God and the saving love of Jesus Christ. Today their tenacious faith is evidenced by three million in the Armenian nation and six million in diaspora around the world.

Historical Witness of the General Assembly

The General Assemblies of 1918–1923 included actions regarding the suffering of the Armenian people in the immediate wake of what were termed “atrocities” in the period before 1947 when the term, “genocide,” came into use. Many American Presbyterians, including President Wilson, viewed the Allied victory in World War I as an endorsement of self-determination for subject peoples of the defeated empires. The assemblies of the time supported the League of Nations and were also concerned for Syrian and Assyrian Christians under Ottoman rule, as evidenced in these excerpts:

- Minutes, General Assembly of the 130th General Assembly (1918) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA):

  The Standing Committee on Foreign Missions, through its chairman, Rev. Joseph A. Vance, D. D., presented a resolution on the state of the Armenians and Syrians which was adopted as follows:

  The Committee on Foreign Missions, having had referred to it a telegram from the National Armenian Relief Committee in New York City, on the subject of the increasing destitution among nearly 3,000,000 of Armenians, Syrians, and other Christian races of Western Asia, recommends the adoption by the General Assembly of the following Resolution:

  Resolved, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., hereby expresses its deep sympathy with the suffering Armenians, Syrians, Persians, and other races of Western Asia, and commends their cause to the continued generosity of our people as represented by the Armenian and Syrian Relief Committee, so long as these distressing war conditions may continue. (Minutes, PCUSA, 1918, Part I, pp. 219–20)
Minutes, General Assembly of the 131st General Assembly (1919), PCUSA:

Resolved, That one Sunday during this year should be appointed by the Moderator and Stated Clerk, whereon a strong plea should be made by all Presbyterian pastors from their pulpits in behalf of those suffering Christians in Turkey and Persia; and collections should be taken and sent to the American Relief Committee for Armenians and Syrians in New York. (Minutes, 1919, Part I, p. 254)

We commend to the Church at large the appeal for help for the people in these lands, and urge our people to make liberal response to the Syrian-Armenian Relief Fund, that the hungry may be fed, the naked clothed, and the homeless housed. (Ibid. p. 260, Item 7(h), paragraph 2)

Minutes, General Assembly of the 132nd General Assembly (1920), PCUSA:

6. Papers were received bearing upon the situation in Armenia. This answer is recommended:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church records its most emphatic protest against the massacres and all other acts of inhumanity to which the Armenians, the Hungarians, the people of Transylvania and other peoples of the war stricken areas have been subjected. We also express our hope that at a very early date all such harsh and cruel treatment shall be at an end.

In line with this expression we present the following resolution, viz:

Resolved, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. (a) express sincere sympathy with the Republic of Armenia and its national aims; (b) that we protest vehemently against the repeated atrocities committed upon such a faithful people; and (c) that we endorse the Near East Relief for its great service to stricken Armenia. (Minutes, PCUSA, 1920, Part I, p. 179)

Along with other sections and forceful language, the 132nd General Assembly (1920) of the PCUSA endorsed an action of the Federal Council of Churches which cited “cable dispatches from Lord Bryce and other British leaders interested in the Christian peoples of the Near East declare that ‘Unless America joins to help bear the burdens, we see no hope of delivering the subject races of Turkey. … America alone is in a position to do, with comparative ease, what ought to be done in that country for its pacification, for the protection of people there, and for the setting up of a safe and righteous government… She [the U.S.] should not shrink from declaring her willingness to take such an advisory or mandatory responsibility if the allied nations and the peoples of the East” determine this would be constructive” (Minutes, PCUSA, 1920, Part I, pp. 205–6).

Third section: “That we urge America to take this more intimate part in Eastern affairs so that the peaceful work of missions may continue to render its helping hand and that those now in exile from Armenia and Persia may return to their homes and the pursuit of their ordinary vocations unmolested” (Ibid. p. 206)

Fourth section: “That copies of these resolutions signed by the Moderator be sent to the President and to our representatives in Washington and that they be printed and put into the hands of all ministers…” (Ibid. p. 206)

Current Witnesses

• The Tenth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Busan, South Korea, adopted a memorial resolution on the Armenian Genocide:

“…the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 8 November 2013, requests the general secretary to:

A. Organize in 2015, around the commemorative 100th anniversary date 24 April 2015, an international conference in Geneva on the recognition of and reparation for the Armenian Genocide with the participation, among others, of WCC member churches, international organizations, jurists, historians and human rights defenders.;

B. Organize an ecumenical prayer service commemorating the victims of the Armenian Genocide at the Cathedral of Geneva in conjunction with the international conference; and

C. Invite member churches of the WCC to pray for the memory of the Armenian martyrs around the dates of the international conference and also for recognition of the Armenian Genocide.” (http://asbarez.com/115900/world-council-of-churches-to-observe-genocide-centennial/)

• In 2013, the Governing Board of the Conference of European Churches also recognized “the other 600,000 Christians of Aramean, Chaldean, Assyrian, and Greek descent, including Catholics and Protestants, who were also massacred along with their Armenian brothers and sisters.” (http://press.ceceurope.org/fileadmin/filer/cec/CEC_Documents/Gov_Bd_November_2013_Docs/7_GB2013_Doc_14_7_CEC_Public_Issues_Statement_Armenian_Genocide_FINAL.pdf.)
The Advisory Committee advises that this overture be approved with the following amendments as follows:

1. Amend Recommendation 1.c. as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]
   
   “c. honor the provisions of American and international law and the role of American and international justice institutions[, such as the International Criminal Court,] in preventing the recurrence of similar mass killings, atrocities, and population removals and bringing the perpetrators of any such crimes to justice; and

   “Furthermore, believing that the international recognition of this genocide is [a necessary condition for] [an important contribution to] the prevention of similar crimes that may occur in the future, the General Assembly:”

2. Amend the Recommendation 4. by adding a new section “d.” to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

   “c. work cooperatively with other churches and communions in both advocacy and encouraging appropriate artistic, musical, and other cultural forms of remembrance[.]

   “[d. consider appropriate ways to include reference to the suffering of Assyrian, Chaldean, Syriac, Greek, Kurdish, and other peoples under Ottoman rule, and to later genocides and mass population removals, for which the Armenian experience may be considered a prototype.]”

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has repeatedly affirmed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent affirmations of international human rights law, including instrumentalities such as the International Criminal Court still in need of U.S. support.

The overture’s own rationale provides further policy base in General Assembly statements on the need to stop massive tragedies from being visited on minority peoples and to provide for self-determination within a just international framework. Their overture also mentions other peoples affected by imperial policies of the early 20th century in that part of the world. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy believes it would be consistent with the concerns of the proponents to include in any resources prepared appropriate mention of other instances of such inhumanity, including perhaps more recent cases such as Cambodia, Rwanda, and parts of the former Yugoslavia.

Commissioners may question whether naming the Armenian suffering a genocide contributes to eventual restoration of relations with the nation or majority population of Turkey. In our view, to call such a great tragedy a genocide is to cry out for understanding all of the forces that tempt all stronger ethnic and religious groups to oppress, demonize, and victimize neighbors. This awareness that history must be faced with realism and humility, and the experience that people recover dignity by having their suffering acknowledged, both argue for the use of term genocide for an event that is increasingly well-documented.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would note a recent (April 2014) statement of historical condolence by the contemporary Turkish government that deserves commendation and that may point to a more complete acknowledgment of Armenian suffering. We would join in the hope that these communities and others still affected by actions of the Ottoman Empire can reach greater conciliation and truthful mutual understanding in the years ahead.

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ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-07

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-07—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-07 with amendment to Recommendation 4.a. as follows: [Text to be inserted is shown with an underline and with brackets.]

   “a. encourage appropriate observance of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, [designating Sun-day April 19th, 2015, as the 100-year anniversary commemoration day in Presbyterian churches,] including the preparation of educational and liturgical resources [and bulletin inserts,] drawing on the witness of prior assemblies and other historical records, and participation in travel, conferences, and other memorials[. to be made available on the web at least one month prior to 4/19/2015].”

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns strongly supports this item because it is an important component in the healing process for the descendants of the Armenian Genocide. After 100 years, Turkey still denies that genocide took place and holds the position that Armenians were massacred as collateral damage in World War I. Historians overwhelmingly agree that Armenians were ethnically cleansed by the collapsing Ottoman Empire at the end of WWI because of their religion—they are Christian—and had the unfortunate circumstance of their homelands being located in the heart of the Ottoman Empire, which could not be shed like some far-off parts of the empire were when the Ottoman Empire was carved up at the end of the war (e.g. like Mesopotamia, North Africa, etc.).
Turkey became the modern nation state in 1922. The Armenians who had lived in their ancestral homelands for more than 3,000 years did not fit into the Turkish plan of “Turkey for the Turks” and a campaign of ethnic cleansing is now well documented, notably by Turkish historian, Taner Akam, author of the groundbreaking book, A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility (2006). In his pioneering and landmark assessment of Turkish culpability, Akam uses “key Ottoman, European and American sources, to reveal that the mass killing of Armenians was no byproduct of WWI, as long claimed in Turkey, but a deliberate, centralized program of state-sponsored extermination” (Publishers Weekly, http://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-8050-7932-6).

The official Armenian commemoration on April 24th will be on a Friday. The ACREC advises that Presbyterian churches commemorate the loss of life in the Armenian Genocide on the Sunday April 19th, equipping congregations with the information before Armenia’s commemoration day, Friday, April 24th.

For further information—the weekend after April 24th will be the 100-year anniversary of the tragedies of the Gallipoli Campaign in which more than 120,000 soldiers died on both sides of WWI in the battle to take Constantinople. The Allied powers (Entente) who lost at Gallipoli included large numbers of soldiers from the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC). Those countries, along with other Commonwealth countries, will be commemorating the tragic loss of life on the 25th and 26th of April with many events in Turkey, while Turkey itself hosts the 100-year commemorations of their victory at Gallipoli.

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**Item 11-08**

[The assembly approved Item 11-08. See pp. 15, 67.]

*Western Sahara: Occupied, Non-Self-Governing Territory, and Test Case for International Law*

In response to a referral by the 220th General Assembly (2012) of legal and other factors affecting the status and future of the territory of Western Sahara, the Presbyterian Mission Agency recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Urge the U. S. Department of State and the U. S. ambassador to the United Nations to continue to call upon the community of nations to support self-determination for the people of the region known as Western Sahara in accord with prior UN resolutions and determinations of international courts, including provision for a supervised referendum in which the human rights of all Sahrawi and others residents are protected and a fair, internationally recognized settlement is achieved, and the proposal of the United States for human rights observers in this effectively occupied, non-self-governing territory.

2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in support of these efforts on behalf of Western Sahara, and to give attention as feasible to justice issues in other non-self-governing trust territories, territorial possessions, and occupied territories.

3. Direct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to monitor the activities of international corporations in Western Sahara in which the Foundation or Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may be an investor, including the Potash Corporation (currently in church portfolios), initiating correspondence on the impacts of that firm’s mineral extraction, and recommending appropriate further corporate social responsibility measures consistent with the concerns noted above.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, to monitor matters of human rights and religious liberty in Western Sahara and other countries across the Northern Africa region where ethnic and religious tensions and undemocratic governance may threaten international peace and security, and make recommendations on public policy and economic witness as appropriate.

**Rationale**

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2012 Referral: Item 14-NB. Recommendation. The 220th General Assembly (2012) directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), Presbyterian Ministry to the UN, and Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to study and consider actions to bring justice to the disputed territory of Western Sahara, considered by many international jurists to be illegally occupied by Morocco, including the issue of corporate engagement and the renewal of diplomatic efforts to support self-determination, and report to the 221st General Assembly (2014). (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 61, 64, 1347 of the CD; p. 280 of the print copy)

Introduction: This response begins by describing the concern of the minister commissioner who initiated this action on behalf of Western Sahara, a territory on the Northwestern coast of Africa, South of Morocco and North of Mauritania. The response continues with a short review of the history of this disputed region, a review of its relevance to other matters of self-
determination, particularly the occupation of Palestine, and concludes with recommendations for further study and action. The debate over Palestine has received far more attention from the 2012 and previous assemblies. As a supporter of nonviolent economic pressure on Israel to end that occupation, the commissioner maintained that the church should take a morally consistent position on an analogous situation: that of Western Sahara. The 220th General Assembly (2012) affirmed that the matter was worthy of further study and directed Presbyterian Mission Agency staff to prepare a report to guide action by the next General Assembly. Because the case raises important moral and legal questions, it requires careful exposition. Commissioners pressed for time may wish to read only the first and last two sections.

Posing the question: The commissioner drew the Peacemaking and International Affairs Committee’s attention to the work of Stephen Zunes, one of the most steadfast advocates of self-determination for Western Sahara. Zunes, a political scientist at the University of San Francisco, is an expert on nonviolent social change, including faith-inspired strategies of resistance. Zunes has listened to the voices of Western Sahara people, voices that are hard for us to hear directly. His position is concisely stated:

Morocco, like Israel, is in violation of a series of United Nations Security Council resolutions and a landmark decision of the International Court of Justice regarding their occupation. Morocco, like Israel, has illegally moved tens of thousands of settlers into the occupied territory. Morocco, like Israel, engages in gross and systematic human rights abuses in the occupied territories. Morocco, like Israel, has illegally built a separation wall through the occupied territories. Morocco, like Israel, relies on the United States and other Western support to maintain the occupation by rendering the UN powerless to enforce international law. Morocco, like Israel, is able to maintain the occupation in part through the support of multinational corporations.

This set of claims requires examination, but Zunes takes this comparison to suggest that nonviolent economic pressure should be put on Morocco in the same manner that Israel—or Israel’s settlements—are the focus of a boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaign. Further, he contends that the campaign for Palestine would be strengthened if such a similar campaign were directed at the government of Morocco and the companies supporting its rule in Western Sahara. Other analogous situations could be considered for this strategy (China over Tibet, India over Kashmir, and Indonesia over East Timor in the past). At the case of Western Sahara is arguably clearest due to a history of unfulfilled United Nations resolutions. At root both the Western Sahara and Palestinian struggles are seen to be about the enforcement of international law.

In addition to the academic work of Stephen Zunes and Jacob Mundy, a careful review of the legal debate over Western Sahara was published by the New York Bar Association’s Committee on the United Nations in June, 2012. Other summary background resource for this study can be found in The Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967, published by the United Nations in September, 2012. Key legal opinion on Western Sahara’s status and use of its resources is that of UN Undersecretary for Legal Affairs Hans Corell in 2002.

There are three primary, if partial, counter-arguments to the position of Zunes and others. The first is to claim that Morocco has a right or sufficient justification to annex Western Sahara, (either through recognized historical links or through a regional security argument). Second, Western Sahara is listed by the United Nations as a “Non-Self-Governing Territory,” one “whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government,” according to the UN Charter’s definition. Thus, even if the actions of Morocco are effectively occupation, its legal status is different. And third, on a practical level, the domination of a relatively small group of people by others who share a somewhat similar history, religion, and ethnicity, is not of the same strategic and geopolitical significance as the occupation of Palestine, which keeps approximately twelve million people stateless and without full human rights on the basis of different ethnicity and religion.

Because the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) takes public positions based upon social witness policies that are, in turn, based on biblical and confessional understandings as well as analysis of data and “facts on the ground” (such as this report), it is essential to note the church’s long support for human rights and self-determination (including liberation from colonialism). To cite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948):

that every individual and organ of society ... shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

To make the applicability of the declaration fully universal, Article 2 states:

... no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty [italics added].


Brief Recent History: Western Sahara is about the size of Great Britain but with a population estimated at 550,000. The territory was colonized by Spain and called Spanish Sahara. That period lasted from the late 1800s through 1976. Thus it lasted as a colony longer than many countries decolonized in the 1960s. Like other former colonies, its boundaries reflect outside interests as its inhabitants were primarily nomadic Arab tribes, generally known as Sahrawis. Members of these tribes comprise the nationalist Polisario Front that began a struggle for independence from Spain in 1973. Polisario Front stands for “Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro.”
The people of Western Sahara, like those of Morocco, are almost exclusively Sunni Muslim. There are no church partners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Western Sahara.

The Franco dictatorship in Spain was encouraged toward decolonization both by UN policies and a popular rebellion. Madrid indicated that it would hold a referendum on the future of the territory in 1975. At the same time, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled in October of 1975 in favor of the right of self-determination for the Sahrawi people, against claims by both Morocco and Mauritania. Morocco’s claims were based on traditions among some tribes to pledge support to the Sultan of Morocco. For Mauritania, there were close ethnic ties among some Mauritanian and Sahrawi groups. A special United Nations mission had visited the territory in 1975, reporting that a strong majority of the population supported independence with the Polisario rather than incorporation into either Morocco or Mauritania. (A recent commentator, Mohammed Daadaoui, responding to Zunes’ pro-independence position cited above, reiterates the Moroccan traditional claims.)

No referendum was held in 1975, however. To strengthen its claims to the territory and effectively prevent Spain from holding the referendum, the Moroccan government organized a march reported at more than 300,000 people, crossing the border from a southern Moroccan city and going several miles into Spanish Sahara. In Jacob Mundy’s analysis, “Madrid was put in a no-win situation because the UN Security Council refused to stand up to Morocco. … Following the Nov. 14, 1975, Madrid Accords between Morocco, Spain, and Mauritania, they began a tripartite administration [through] the final withdrawal of Spain at the end of February 1976. That Morocco’s military control of Western Sahara began while the territory was still under Spanish jurisdiction is relevant to its status.

The War Period

The day after power passed from the Spanish to Moroccan and Mauritanian authorities, the Polisario ceremonially established the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. Conflict began between Polisario forces and the Moroccan and Mauritanian militaries. Mauritania withdrew from Western Sahara in 1979, following a series of losses to Polisario forces and internal political strife, but the conflict between Morocco and the Polisario continued. (Mauritania has less than 4 million people, including an estimated 140,000 slaves; Morocco has about 35 million people). In the 1980s, the Moroccan military constructed an extended sand wall (“the Berm”) to secure the most populous and productive parts of the territory, including its entire coastline. Initially, it protected only key cities, but by 1987 the Berm enclosed two thirds of Western Sahara, excluding primarily desert wasteland in the east of the territory.

Completed with landmines, fences, and electronic surveillance, the Berm was effective at discouraging extended Polisario raids in Moroccan-controlled territory prior to a ceasefire in 1989. Morocco controls the area within the Berm; the Polisario controls the Free Zone east of it and observes the ceasefire. Thus the Berm is largely unpatrolled, though there are Moroccan military forts and bases at key locations behind it.

Ceasefire

Sporadic violence between Polisario and Moroccan forces had continued until 1991, when the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution recalling terms agreed to by both parties two years prior. The United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was established by Security Council resolution 690 (1991) of 29 April 1991, in accordance with “the settlement proposals,” as accepted on 30 August 1988 by Morocco and the (Fronte POLISARIO). MINURSO monitored the ceasefire, to which both sides acceded, and took steps, such as identifying and registering voters, in preparation for a referendum on the sovereignty of Western Sahara.

Due to the Moroccan government’s rejection of MINURSO’s proposed voter rolls, again there was no referendum. The Houston Agreement, reached by Moroccan and Polisario representatives after the expected 1992 referendum failed to materialize, anticipated a referendum in 1998, which, similarly, did not come to fruition. The UN Security Council passed a resolution in 2003 endorsing the “Baker Plan,” a plan developed by UN special envoy James Baker. The Baker Plan called for five years of local rule (under Moroccan sovereignty), followed by a referendum on independence. This plan was disregarded by the Moroccan government.

As a kind of counter-proposal and as a response to a stalled process, in 2007 Morocco offered a plan for limited autonomy well short of independence. This plan provides for greater local rule, accompanied by a referendum that would give Western Saharan voters (including Moroccan residents, but possibly excluding those living outside Moroccan control) the option between full Moroccan rule or limited autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty. Rejected as a false choice by the Polisario and many Sahrawi, neither this referendum nor the establishment of empowered local government has taken place. Moroccan media generally refer to Western Sahara as the “Southern Provinces.”

Situation on the Ground

Western Sahara has been under Moroccan rule for thirty-eight years. During that time, conditions and demographics have changed dramatically, but the sentiments of most Sahrawi have not. While a minority (mainly Sahrawi born and living

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in Morocco proper) vocally oppose the Polisario and agree with Moroccan claims to the territory, the vast majority of Sahrawis resent Moroccan rule and the political oppression that enforces it. Those living within the Moroccan controlled area are split on preference for complete independence or for strong autonomy with ties to Morocco (usually hoping for something stronger than what is offered by the 2007 autonomy plan). Universally, even among Sahrawi who support Moroccan rule, there is a desire that the police and security forces be Sahrawi instead of Moroccan, as they presently are.3

Moroccan rule is enforced by systematic political repression that violates human rights, albeit on a limited basis. Effectively, there is only limited freedom of speech. While people may privately speak out against Moroccan rule, public statements, public protests, and even possession of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic flag are typically met with arrest and often with beatings. A 2007 cable from the US Embassy in Morocco’s capitol, Rabat, (revealed by WikiLeaks) reports that in Layoune (the most populous city), “in general, young Sahrawis are afraid to be out at night due to fear of the police. Sahrawis are still being arrested and beaten for political offenses.”4 Protests in 2005 were met with a broad crackdown,5 and a 2010 raid, which left several dead, was condemned by the UN Security Council.6 Groups advocating for human rights or Sahrawi self-determination have been prevented from registering as NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) and denied access to the legal system.7 A strong police presence in Layoune (disproportionate to the city’s small crime rate) stands ready to respond to unrest and harasses, arrests, and encourages known human rights protesters and advocates of independence to emigrate (deportations have also occurred).8

For the Polisario-linked population living in refugee camps in Algeria, it is important to recognize that Algeria exerts some control over the Sahrawis and is not a democracy. Algeria, in fact, fought a very brutal war with Algerian Islamists, costing approximately 200,000 lives, and still has internal and external security concerns. As this is written, the fourteen-year rule of its president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, continues despite his having had a stroke in April of 2013. Rule by the National Liberation Front of Algeria is expected to continue, despite relative economic stagnation, whether or not Bouteflika remains president. So far the Arab Awakening has not led to much change in Algeria or in the response of the Polisario. If Algeria treats the Sahrawis and Polisario as a proxy to weaken its Moroccan neighbor, it is not clear that this is a very active effort.

Economics and Demographics

Western Sahara has an undeveloped economy with unproven but potentially rich mineral resources. A leaked U.S. State Department cable doubts that Western Sahara could be economically viable as an independent country, discounting the world’s fourth largest phosphate deposits and some probable reserves of gold, uranium, oil, and other minerals, in addition to still-rich fisheries.9 For now, the Moroccan government is providing subsidies, which included an $800 million investment program from 2004 to 2008. Layoune has a government subsidized desalinization plant that provides water at a significant loss. Other basic goods, such as gasoline and cooking oil, are subsidized. Moroccan businesses enjoy a tax-exemption. The Moroccan government has invested in fishing, Western Sahara's largest industry (two-thirds of total employment), building fishing villages, and training people to fish.10 Residents of Western Sahara benefit from this government support, though with control of their own resources, Sahrawis could conceivably have a much higher per capita income.

Moroccan subsidies exist alongside discrimination and restriction of political freedoms. While fishing has come to be the most significant employer, it still employs few Sahrawis. The Sahrawi have historically lived inland, and have little tradition of fishing. According to an embassy cable, “well-informed government supporters as well as critics agreed with reports Embassy has long heard that a large part of the fishing concessions are controlled by GOM [Government of Morocco] security officials, specifically including Army Chief Benanni and Gendarmerie chief Benslimane. Kalihenna and Sahrawi businessman close to him have reportedly also been rewarded with lucrative fishing licenses.”11 Corruption, however, is certainly not unheard of in Morocco itself.

Morocco appears likely to achieve victory on demographic and financial grounds, despite lack of progress towards a formal resolution to the conflict, as tax breaks and subsidies provide incentive for Moroccans to settle in Western Saharan cities. Rabat holds greater financial resources, and has shown itself willing to use those resources as a velvet glove to win tacit acceptance of its rule, while wielding its iron fist swiftly to crush hints of resistance. The Polisario, in contrast, has neither significant military nor significant financial capabilities, and continues to exist primarily because the Algerian government provides necessities to the refugee camps it controls (which contain approximately 100,000 people).

8 Ibid.
9 http://wikileaks.org/cable/2006/03/06RABAT389.html Professor Zunes critiques this cable for its pro-Moroccan tilt; the cable acknowledges the overall pro-Moroccan US position. See: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-zunes/wikileaks-cables-on-weste_b_793862.html.
10 http://wikileaks.org/cable/2005/05/05RABAT1052.html.
The United States government sees Morocco as a strategic ally, and, while maintaining that the Moroccan government must participate in serious negotiations with the intention of holding a referendum, supports Morocco with significant foreign aid. Such expenditures cost $182.9 million in 2012, and were mostly economic. United States’ monetary support for Morocco’s military was higher during the cold war (about $40 million per year), but has decreased in the last two decades (only $4 million in 2000, though that amount may have since increased slightly). Officially neutral, the United States government effectively accepts the status quo, while quietly encouraging movement towards an agreement and referendum. France, Morocco’s former colonial power, has a closer relationship and greater influence.

Western Sahara exports octopus and sardines, as well as other fish, and one significant farm exports 5,000 tons of tomatoes annually to Europe and Canada. These products are labeled “Produit du Maroc” (Product of Morocco) before being shipped. Some road salt and phosphate rock is exported to European countries, Venezuela, and New Zealand (the road salt is mined by Crystal Mountain, a U.S. company). Kosmos Energy, a U.S. company, is active in offshore oil exploration, and PCS Fertilizer and Mosaic Co. may have purchased Western Saharan mined phosphate rock. Saharan sand is shipped to repair Canary Island and other beaches. Excepting fishing, the economic impact of international trade is small, and U.S. companies hold a small portion of that trade.

The arguments against forcing Morocco to allow a referendum or even to put human rights monitors in Western Sahara (proposed by the United States in April, 2013, responding to sporadic protests) center around the alleged dangers of instability, such as a situation of weak government with Islamic insurgents or tribal divisions. While the Polisario is sometimes criticized for Socialist-sounding language, it is not an Islamist movement. Yet the claim is that terrorist groups could set up in the open territory. Jenn Abelson, reporting for the Boston Globe in June, 2013, reported:

“An independent state is not viable in Sahara. You have to be very clear for security reasons. Today what is happening in Mali is happening in the Sahara. It is threatening the security of the Sahara and everywhere,” said Youssef Armani, minister delegate of foreign affairs and cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco, in a meeting with journalists in May. “There is no room for a failed state in the region.”

In contrast to that claim (from a palace-appointed official), the Sahrawis practice a form of Muslim jurisprudence that rejects Salafi-style extremism and is more liberal than Moroccan Islam when it comes to women’s rights to equal inheritance and divorce rights and women’s public leadership roles. According to Zunes and Mundy, intra-Polisario disputes have mainly been solved peaceably. Algeria (as noted above) is very unlikely to ally itself with Islamic extremism.

Legal Questions and United Nations Status

Western Sahara is formally listed by the United Nations as a “Non-Self-Governing Territory.” This is a term distinct from “colonization” or “occupation.” It identifies an area as possessing neither independence nor formal incorporation in another country. United States territories such as Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands are included, but some colonial possessions, such as Singapore, were included in this list before being granted independence. Palestine is not on the list of Non Self-Governing Territories, but is considered occupied; hence there is some difference in UN categorization. Spain is annually listed as an “administering power” of Western Sahara by the UN General Assembly’s 4th committee, so in a sense Morocco is controlling a once Spanish-administered non-self-governing territory. Except for a 1975 resolution calling for Morocco to withdraw its initial “Green March” into W. Sahara, security council resolutions focus on the referendum and do not explicitly call for Morocco to exit.

At the same time, in 1979, the UN General Assembly (Resolution 34/37) deplored what it called Morocco’s occupation of Western Sahara. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “… it makes no difference whether an occupation has received Security Council approval, what its aim is, or indeed whether it is called an ‘invasion,’ ‘liberation,’ ‘administration’ or ‘occupation.’”

According to Harvard University’s International Humanitarian Law Research Initiative, “The UN has formally agreed that Western Sahara is an occupied territory; therefore all parties would be obligated to follow the mandates of the Geneva Convention IV.” Occupation is strongly implied in the 2002 UN Legal Counsel opinion because it clearly says Morocco did not lawfully come into possession of Western Sahara practice, from leaked diplomatic cables and outside observer reports, Western Sahara seems to be occupied and many NGO’s use the term.
Questions of international law with regards to Western Sahara revolve around two key principles, the right to self-determination and the right to territorial integrity. The referendum was designed to address the former principle, after the UN determined that the Sahrawis were indeed a people. The latter principle is negated by the Berm, a wall of separation dividing the territory; international law states that territory seized in war is not legitimately possessed by the conqueror and should not be colonized. That the population continues to self-identify as Sahrawis, despite the de facto annexation and economic subsidies, suggests that a referendum still could go against Morocco if one were held.

If it is the case that self-determination must be allowed (as is the position of the New York City Bar’s Committee on the United Nations, which uses the word “occupation” to describe the situation), then the continued suppression of that right through the possession of the territory without movement towards a referendum is illegal and pressure must be put on the government of Morocco to allow for a referendum. Excepting many members of the Arab League and a few other nations, most nations have not recognized Morocco’s annexation and eighty-four have recognized Western Sahara as a nation, as has the African Union (many of whose members can recall the de-colonization process quite clearly).

“Divesting of All Occupations?” The Analogy Between Western Sahara and Palestine

To return to the commissioner’s original proposal, it seems clear that both Sahrawis and Palestinians are denied self-determination and that their land and resources are controlled undemocratically by neighboring powers who have brought in waves of settlers. Along with demographic pressure, there is cultural pressure to relinquish identity and history. Clearly the situation of Palestine is much more in the world’s eye and a particular cause of resentment to Muslims, as noted in much testimony on terrorism and anti-U.S. attitudes. Yet the determination of whether to apply similar BDS pressures cannot be made simply on the basis of the scale of public awareness or the number of people involved. Especially to respond to Zunes’ initial comparisons, there must also be some contrasts made between the situations of the Sahrawis and the Palestinians.

In general, Morocco’s occupation or annexation seems much less violent than that of Israel’s subjugation of the Palestinians, and it is accompanied by economic subsidies, rather than the economic stranglehold Israel maintains throughout the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and especially Gaza. Furthermore, Israel is engaged in an ongoing campaign of dispossession that denies citizenship to Palestinians and deports those without residency permits, while Morocco seeks to incorporate Sahrawis as citizens and does not create internal borders via checkpoints, fences, and special sections of its Berm. Nor does Morocco discriminate against Sahrawis on the basis of their religion, while Israel clearly treats even its acknowledged 20 percent Arab population as second-class citizens, none of whose religious sites (Muslim or Christian) are afforded protection by law from encroachment or isolation. Israel also maintains constant surveillance and frequent incursions into the Palestinian territories that would, by analogy, be the territory on the Eastern side of the Berm.

True, as with Palestinians, many Western Saharans live as refugees (more than 25,000 in Mauritania; between 100,000 and 125,000 in Algeria), but it is not clear that a negotiated agreement in Western Sahara would necessarily restrict their right of return, even if that agreement meant limited autonomy. Nor does the Polisario make land claims on Morocco, whose borders are not undeclared, as are Israel’s. Thus it could be argued that the situation of Western Sahara could be more amendable to nonviolent agreement, possibly within an agreed upon trial period for any new arrangement, though this idea is somewhat similar to the failed 2003 peace plan. Conversely, due to relative similarities in ethnic and religious heritage, the Sahrawi people are likely more in danger of long-term absorption into the Moroccan population.

Divestment of securities in companies active in Western Sahara, for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), would mean employing criteria and processes of dialogue that would evaluate a range of strategies for accomplishing the objective of self-determination. Those criteria include practical factors, such as significant allies and media scrutiny, that speak to the effectiveness of economic pressure, and matters of principle that speak to the integrity of the church as investor (or purchaser, if boycott is envisioned). The initial step in any corporate responsibility work by the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), however, is to begin with research and dialogue with any companies in which the PC(USA) holds investments. This could include seeking information on the employment status of native Sahrawis and the strategic value of products to the Moroccan government, police, and military. Other steps may include shareholder proposals to change corporate policies where improvement rather than cessation is sought. (These processes were done in the “selective, phased” divestment process with key companies that cooperated with South African apartheid, and the same approach has been taken with key companies supporting Israel’s settlements in Palestine.)

Conclusion:

The issues raised by the case of Western Sahara are serious and prompt responsible action by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to support the human rights consensus of United Nations’ and other legal authorities. The situation of the native Sahrawi people is worthy of attention and the resolutions of the United Nations should be implemented, namely referendum and measures to improve human rights. The de facto annexation of the territory bears similarities to Israel’s occupation and effective colonization of Palestine, and other longer processes of nations incorporating other territories into their borders. While the situa-

tion of the Sahrawis is not identical to that of the Palestinians, this assessment would support further international justice advocacy for the Sahrawi people, both with governments and with Islamic, interfaith, and ecumenical bodies.

Item 11-09

[The assembly approved Item 11-09 with amendment. See pp. 65, 67.]

A Resolution on Behalf of Dominicans of Haitian Descent and any Others Impacted by the Decision 168/13 of the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) requests that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to
   a. engage in advocacy for international and local support in favor of Dominicans of Haitian descent and any others impacted by the decision 168/13 of the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic,
   b. speak out against statelessness and deportation for Dominicans of Haitian descent and any others impacted by this law,
   c. advocate in favor of equal treatment and access to basic human rights, privileges, and public services for all Dominicans regardless of the nationality of their ancestors.

2. Direct the Stated Clerk to write a pastoral letter to congregations in the U.S.A., partner churches in the Dominican Republic, related political offices in Washington, D.C., and the embassy of the U.S.A. in the Dominican Republic about:
   a. the discrimination against Dominicans of Haitian descent and any others impacted by this law,
   b. its consequences toward Dominicans living in the U.S.A.,
   c. its impact in our local congregations that have Dominican members [who’s] [whose] legal status in the U.S.A. may be jeopardized by this decision,
   d. recognition of the injustice and atrocity committed against them,
   e. the official position of our denomination against all discrimination toward Dominicans of Haitian descent and any others impacted by this law.

3. Encourage the church at all levels—synods, presbyteries, local churches, national committees, and Presbyterian Mission Agency—to
   a. support different initiatives on behalf of Dominicans of Haitian descent and any others impacted by this law,
   b. educate, equip, and empower Presbyterians in relation to this topic,
   c. pray for our brothers and sisters who may be impacted as a result of the interpretation of this article in the Dominican Constitution and court ruling.

Rationale:

“When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt” (Lev. 19:33–34, NRSV).

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mk. 12:31, NRSV).

The 2010 Constitution of the Dominican Republic defines the criteria for Dominican nationality as follows: “Any person born within the national territory with the exception of children born of foreign members of the Diplomatic mission and consulates, foreigners who are in transit or reside illegally in the Dominican territory.”

On September 23, 2013, the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic handed down decision 168/13, whereby it gave a new interpretation as regards the acquisition of nationality by individuals born in the country to foreign parents who are in transit or undocumented.

In point 5.1.d., the decision states, “that not all people who have been born in the Dominican Republic are born Dominicans.” The decision reads further, “a person who is not born Dominican … the child of a foreigner mother who at the time of birth is in an irregular situation and , consequently, cannot justify her entrance and permanency in the Dominican Republic” (5.1.j).18

Based on this interpretation, individuals who previously had been recognized as having Dominican nationality were de-nationalized. This controversial citizenship ruling would affect individuals who formally registered as Dominicans as far back as 1929. They would retroactively no longer qualify for citizenship (5.1.e). So, the potential number of stateless people grows each day, impacting at least three generations of Dominicans.

Many Dominicans who are second or third generation of Haitian descent or any others impacted by this law, who are fully assimilated, who have little or no ties to Haiti or other country of origin of their ancestors, barely speak Creole or any other language different than Spanish, will be in risk of deportation and to remain stateless in the country where they were born. This uncertain future will keep many in a legal limbo.

This court ruling impacts our local PC(USA) congregations, which have Dominican members who may be impacted by this law jeopardizing their legal status in the U.S. In the case of Dominicans who are not U.S. citizens and live here, any future legal process to adjust their status will be in risk since they will be stateless.

Basic human rights and privileges would be denied, like access to public services (health, education, work, shelter, etc), equal participation, citizen and nationality rights.

It is necessary for our denomination to state its position against all discrimination towards Dominicans of Haitian descent and any others impacted by this law, understanding the impact on Dominicans living in the U.S.A and in our local churches since thousands of people could be affected.

Further readings:
http://tribunalconstitucional.gob.do/node/1764

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**Item 11-10**

*Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance*

As with the introduction of past military technologies, the development of moral and legal guidance for the use of drones (remotely piloted aircraft) and cyber/digital surveillance has trailed their deployment. To help remedy this, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

[The assembly approved Item 11-10, Recommendation A., with amendment. See pp. 65, 67–68.]

A. Affirm the following statement and approve Recommendations A.1.–A.8. as follows:

Drones used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and United States Armed Forces for national security can easily penetrate enemy lines and linger to conduct surveillance, which enables them to isolate and identify targets more accurately, choose blast trajectories, and use lower-yield weapons. Because they can attack with less collateral damage than other weapons and without jeopardizing the lives of U.S. military personnel, military officers and civilian leaders are tempted to use them frequently, sometimes in ways that violate national sovereignty and human and constitutional rights. Because they arouse resentment among local populations, even when used sparingly, military drones may undermine strategic objectives (such as winning support of a population facing an insurgency). Because drone programs have been secret, they cripple the capacity of citizens to interpret the “blow-back” they arouse and to

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exercise democratic oversight over foreign policy. And because they are already receiving substantial research and development funding in the U.S. and elsewhere, they are increasingly “the new face of war.”

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Encourages the church to engage in and lead the public in a robust discussion of the moral use of drones in national security. This discussion should be informed by biblical principles, as well as “Just War” and “Just Peacemaking” criteria.

2. Opposes in principle the targeted killing or assassination of suspects without warrant or due process outside of the context of declared military engagement or observed terror activity, and grieves the collateral deaths of civilians that are inevitable, if less than with some other weapons, and the deaths of our enemies themselves if these weapons facilitate.

3. Urges the United States Congress to pass legislation governing military drones. These laws should articulate procedures that put checks on executive power and establish civilian oversight. The goal is to ensure that in any justification of targeting human beings that the Constitutional rights of U.S. citizens are protected, international law upheld, noncombatants safeguarded, U.S. strategic goals served, and the larger goal of peace and justice advanced. To these ends, the Central Intelligence Agency should not run any part of the weaponized drone program and should focus on intelligence collection as its primary mandate.

4. Urges the U.S. to make public and submit its rules for military drones to institutions of the international legal community for analysis and evaluation so that, together with other nations, we may develop international conventions governing their use and prevent a ‘drone race.’ Under the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), the United States and other nations should be held responsible for drone uses that violate the rules of war or human rights such as acts of terrorism; assassination (killing without due process); destruction of natural resources, habitat, and infrastructure; and other crimes.

5. In the absence of conventions outlawing drone use in combat or counterterrorism, urges that targeted killings of suspected terrorists be given more effective judicial and congressional review through the use of warrants, advocates for the accused (such as a privacy advocate and/or opposing counsel in Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act/surveillance court proceedings), and regular after-the-fact public reporting by any and all secret courts, so that elected bodies may evaluate the costs and benefits of counterterrorism measures and find alternatives, and so that no one person, even a president acting in military capacity, could order the killing or indefinite detention of a suspected enemy exempt from judicial review.

6. Urges, in cases where the proposed targeted killing of suspects amounts to the declaration of war, that congressional approval (beyond surveillance court approval) be sought, as for other wars, and that any such declaration or approval include tax revenues sufficient to cover all costs expected from these military operations.

7. Supports the prohibition of fully autonomous or “robot” drones that designate targets and “decide” to shoot combatants based on computer calculations and automated reactions and urges review of targeting decisions such as those based on tracking call phone SIM cards that may lead to unintended deaths.

8. Instructs the appropriate offices of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly, in ecumenical and interfaith cooperation whenever possible, to advocate for such legal protections of human rights and regulation of military drones (UAVs), and to produce resources to interpret and assist discussion and exploration of the use of remotely piloted aircraft and related technologies.

[The assembly approved Item 11-10, Recommendation B., with amendment. See pp. 65, 68.]

B. Affirm the following statement and approve Recommendations B.1.–B.3. as follows:

Since drones are able to linger over targets for large spans of time without detection, their domestic use by governmental agencies, commercial enterprises, and civilians presents significant privacy and civil liberties concerns.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Encourages the church to engage in and lead the public in a robust discussion of the moral dimensions of domestic drone use, including Federal Aviation Administration regulations.

2. Recommends that the United States Congress[, other Federal, state, and/or local agencies, as appropriate,] pass legislation [and/or regulations] governing the use of domestic drones so that Constitutional rights are upheld.

3. Urges the adoption of policies that would prevent domestic drones from being weaponized.
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Encourages the church to engage in and lead the public in a robust discussion of the morality of digital and electronic surveillance and of cyber warfare justifications.

2. Recommends the United States Congress pass legislation to increase accountability of surveillance agencies and commercial contractors engaged in surveillance. In particular, we call for greater transparency of the purposes and budgets of all “secret” agencies, including the expanded Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), even those whose regular operations may be justifiably concealed from most U.S. citizens for security reasons. We encourage the development of new forms of congressional oversight to monitor the government’s collection and use of phone, internet, and text message “meta-data.” We commend laws to protect whistleblowers, prevent collection of personal data without a warrant, and ensure diversity in judges reviewing warrants for individual surveillance, data-mining, and indiscriminate or bulk data collection, including that of non-U.S. nationals and foreign leaders.

3. Understanding that routine leniency toward people who violate their security clearances would undermine operational security, we encourage the consideration of pardon and/or the mitigation of punitive sentencing for whistleblowers along with rigorous analysis of any damages alleged to national security. To the extent that potential suspects fall under civilian rather than military jurisdiction, Department of Justice procedures should allow for the public interest to be represented appropriately in court. In cases where military tribunals do not allow for the full exercise of Constitutionally protected rights, as at Guantanamo and arguably in several whistleblower cases, the Department of Justice should be able to make appeals within the civil justice system.

[The assembly approved Item 11-10, Recommendation D., with amendment. See pp. 65, 68.]

D. Affirm the following statement and approve Recommendations C.1.–C.3. as follows:

The church’s emphasis on spiritual freedom of conscience and the work of the Holy Spirit in community lead us to maintain that congregational life is protected from governmental and commercial intrusion. In order to uphold both privacy rights and the separation of church and state, we regard all spaces of worship as surveillance-free zones. Aware of the potential for abuse by both government agencies and criminal enterprises, surveillance of individuals should only intrude into congregational life under extraordinary circumstances and in each case should require a warrant or court order. [Recognizing the role of technology in facilitating overreaching surveillance, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) encourages the church to examine its own technological choices and, where feasible, use hardware and software, such as Free and Open Source software, that allows us to avoid participation in this surveillance except under extraordinary circumstances with a warrant or court order.]

Rationale

[Note: In order to test the ideas behind this resolution, an earlier version of this rationale was widely distributed as a resource for Adult Education by special arrangement with The Thoughtful Christian, a product of the Westminster/John Knox Press. The Advisory Committee expresses its appreciation to the Press for this arrangement, and welcomes comment on it.]
Drones or unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) are remotely piloted aircraft used for surveillance and/or destruction of military targets. Drones are controversial because they have become a key element of contemporary warfare, allowing the killing of opponents without risk to the drone operator and generally without due process or public notice. Compared with the fifty targeted killings during the Administration of George W. Bush, by February 2013 the Obama Administration had used drones more than 350 times, killing an estimated 3,500 people, mainly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. This brief study will examine the moral risks of using a method of warfare more similar to execution, the political risks of “blowback” from populations living under weaponized drones, and the dangers of a drone race among countries using new aerial platforms for boundary maintenance and the expansion of control. Unless new rules can be developed and enforced internationally, drones will increasingly be the new face of military intervention and occupation as well as intelligence gathering.

There are also an increasing number of peaceful uses for these unmanned aircraft, some of which can be quite small and tailored to particular functions. Surveillance, however, is a primary drone function and one that frequently overlaps with the increase in cyber and digital surveillance by a variety of means. Documents revealed by whistle-blowers have revealed the enormous and intrusive scope of previously undisclosed surveillance of U.S. citizens, effectively treating all citizens as suspects and providing little public accountability for personal and mass data collected. Wide-ranging surveillance by the National Security Administration and other of the sixteen U.S. intelligence agencies has also violated the privacy of world leaders and possibly involved industrial espionage, a practice we deplore in cyber warfare efforts of other nations.

On May 23, 2013, President Obama addressed some of the moral and legal questions about the military use of drones, announcing that some new rules had been put in place, while still keeping the actual rules under secret classification. While suggesting that the use of lethal drones would be reduced and shifted from the CIA to the military, the president defended their continued use in the new period of more focused warfare, particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan so long as our troops are there. After describing the range of drone uses, this study will look at the main ethical and legal questions and then return to the question of what kind of war their use implies. Drone warfare and its processes of target selection are likely to illustrate the tensions between governmental secrecy and public accountability for some time to come.

The surveillance work of drones raises broader and unavoidable considerations about electronic surveillance generally, which are treated in a section following the assessment of drones below.

A. Peaceful and Military Purposes

Aerial surveillance by spy plane became well-known with the shooting down of a U-2 reconnaissance plane in 1960 by the Soviets. Subsequently, the United States came to rely more on satellites, and with the advent of global positioning devices (GPS) on handheld smartphones with location applications, what had formerly been restricted to government surveillance has become widely accessible. Similarly, a wide sweep of engineering advances in cameras, telecommunications, nanotechnology, and computerization allow for real-time video of virtually any location on earth.

The primary peaceful uses for drones or UAVs—unmanned aerial vehicles—are in the following areas:

1. Policing and border surveillance, including the use of smaller drones to relay information from individual residences and inaccessible accident scenes.
2. Newsgathering, in some cases where manned helicopters would previously have been used.
3. Weather forecasting and atmospheric measurement, such as by the “Global Hawk” used by NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Drones may also help in rescuing flood victims as well as tracking extreme weather.
4. Agricultural uses such as crop dusting and irrigation control.
5. Traffic control and crowd assessment.
6. Protection of archeological sites and endangered species, including measurement of climate change impacts.
7. Search and rescue operations across vast expanses of water or land.

The commercial and governmental use of UAVs in the United States is governed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Previous height restrictions (to 400 feet), no-fly zones around airports, and requirements that drones be kept in eye-range are all under review with many more permitted uses emerging. Along with official uses, the dangers of surveillance by neighbors and other forms of intrusion raise questions about privacy and civil liberties, extending the definitions of what might constitute reasonable search, permissible observation, and potential publication of images. While drones are used to patrol the U.S.-Mexico border and even to penetrate further into Mexico, several U.S. jurisdictions such as Seattle have sought permits to use drones for policing purposes. One city, Charlottesville, Virginia, became the first to oppose the domes-
tic use of drones. Their February 4, 2013, resolution reads, in part: “The rapid implementation of drone technology throughout the United States poses a serious threat to the privacy and constitutional rights of the American people.”5

The military uses of the some 11,000 drones possessed by the United States have been mainly related to surveillance and the replacement of ground or submarine-based missile platforms. Since 2002, the United States has been the primary user of drones in warfare, equipping the airplane-sized Predator and Reaper drones with sophisticated missiles designed to hit targets of varied size. There are also smaller drones, such as the 400-pound Shadow, or the backpack-sized Switchblade, that carry little or no weaponry.6 Lesser numbers of drones have been produced by Russia, China, Israel, and Iran, and as many as seventy countries have some form of drone or aerial robot.

The basic operation of large and small drones is by pilots on the ground, often based in the United States, who are able to observe targets for long periods of time due to advances in flight duration. This capacity for prolonged observation has reportedly added to the accuracy of drone targeting and a reduction in civilian deaths (often termed “collateral damage”). The work of drone pilots has been compared to video-game play, but the strain of long observation, the detailed knowledge of their human targets and the required examination of sometimes gristy impact scenes has led to forms of PTSD among drone operators.7 This kind of stress can be intensified rather than relieved by the daily transitions from the warzone on screen to normal family life on a safe U.S. military base.

Under the rules of war, drone pilots (and the people they may be with) are legitimate military targets. While the lives of drone pilots in the U.S. may be physically safe, the life of spotters and intelligence personnel on the ground in remote areas of Pakistan, Yemen, or Somalia is less so. U.S. military and covert personnel as well as local opponents of Al Qaeda, Taliban, or other groups send in data to guide the selection of targets, often with remarkable precision. Other targeting comes through identification of cell phone frequencies and intercepted communications. Sometimes the status of targeted persons is disputed, with allegations that U.S. forces are given the names of family or tribal opponents who may not be members of terrorist, Islamist, or other opposing groups. In some cases “signature” strikes are unleashed at suspected opponents who fit a suspect profile by appearing to position a roadside bomb, for example. In at least one case the U.S. has acknowledged targeting a wedding party; local groups allege more civilian deaths than the U.S. military.8

At least in some cases, authorization for the killing of suspects comes from the president of the United States himself. While the use of drones had been an official secret up to May 23, 2013, it was made known that potential targets were presented to President Obama by top security officials. Although the killing or capture of Osama bin Laden was directed to be done by a special forces team, similar reviews of suspected targets are carried out on a regular basis to eliminate the leaders of Al Qaeda. The revelation of this “hands-on” role by the president has been affirmed by some and criticized by others as a diminishment of his office.9 Others maintain that presidential oversight reflects the moral seriousness with which the Executive Branch of government takes the use of drones.

B. New and Still Evolving Technologies and Applications

A major center for new drone development in the United States is Dayton, Ohio, partly due to the presence of the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and the Air Force Institute of Technology.10 Some military drones are piloted from that base and many start-up companies are also located there, some receiving grants from DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. One DARPA initiative is to support the development of drones that mimic birds and even insects and hence would be difficult to detect.11 Researchers are concerned to build in mechanisms that will prevent drone crashes or the “hacking” or jamming of drone controls. These concerns are magnified when robot drones are contemplated that process their own photographic and other data, identify targets by use of preprogrammed pattern recognition, and “decide” to fire without human input. Beyond the Dayton area concentration of drone entrepreneurs, established military contractors such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing are also working on drones.

Robotic defenses that identify threats, target, and “decide” to fire are already part of the AEGIS system that defends American Naval ships. It is claimed that in November of 2012 the Department of Defense issued a ten-year moratorium on robotic drones, to analyze the ethics of “smart drones,” as there is concern about the moral implications of self-directed robot drones that remove human decision from the killing process.12 Israel has developed a hovering drone called Harpy that can be programed to attack any radar signal that its programming does not recognize, while other work on robotics is picking up steam.13

II. Key Ethical Issues

The military use of drones brings into play traditional “Just War” criteria as well as newer considerations related to the technology and the nature and even name of our current hostilities. Just War criteria include just cause (usually self-defense), last resort, legitimate authority, right intent (redressing a wrong), and likelihood of success, seen as a victory that is also a just peace, or at least an outcome better than would have obtained without war. There are also rules for the just conduct of war, proportionality of response to threat, protection of civilians, and avoidance of atrocities.14

The newer considerations have to do with the role of soldiers and targets on an uncertain battlefield with an indefinite timeline. At least in the current theatres of drone warfare, the soldiers controlling drones do not put themselves at risk while...
those being targeted may have no knowledge of their degree of risk. The first group is comprised of professional soldiers, but may include contractors and personnel from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The second group may see themselves as local patriots defending their homeland or devout Muslims protecting Islam from contamination. When killed, members of the second group are often seen as martyrs, which underlines the religious dimension to warfare in the greater Middle East.

A. Just Cause

Speaking to a new approach to drone warfare on May 23, 2013, President Obama referred to the post-9/11 Authorization for Use of Military Force as the basis for ongoing military operations against Al Qaeda, including the use of drones. That legislation, adopted 9/18/01, authorized force against any groups or nations responsible for the terrorist attack on the United States and since has been extended to cover military operations in Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, and elsewhere, even against groups that did not exist in 2001. Yet one of the implications of the president’s speech was that the scale of the war on terror was to be reduced, suggesting that the threat level from overseas terrorists had declined and hence the argument for warfare based on self-defense is weakened. One main alternative to a war model for pursuing purported terrorists is a policing model that would treat them as criminals to be brought to justice, but this would also call into question the need for summary execution by drone-fired missile or other means.

B. Last Resort

This criterion would support the use of drones in cases where neither the U.S. military nor that of the host country could capture and detain suspects posing an imminent danger to the United States or its allies. A “white paper” leaked in February 2013 used the concept of “imminent” threat to assert the potential danger from active terror suspects at any time or place, widening the battlefield, extending the potential duration of military action, and justifying the drone killing of U.S. citizens, such as Anwar al-Alwaki in Yemen in September 2011. Also called a “drone memo,” this sixteen-page document figured in the confirmation hearings for John Brennan, new CIA director, with the senators largely agreeing that necessity required some use of drones, with the notable exception of Senator Rand Paul, who filibustered to receive assurance that no U.S. citizen would ever again be targeted. (Mr. Paul’s filibuster revealed bipartisan discomfort with drones, but he did not receive an unequivocal assurance about potential U.S. targets.) In terms of overseas strategy, an alternative here might be to consider negotiation and other political/cultural/communal ways to end a thirteen-year war, but this would require redefining the goals of the conflict and perhaps the nature of the enemy. Perhaps ironically, some military and CIA officials want to keep troops in Afghanistan partly to protect drone bases there.

C. Legitimate Authority

Allies in NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, had more than nominal commitments of troops in Afghanistan for varying periods, and a smaller number sent troops to Iraq. This article cannot examine the origins of either primary war, nor the role of the U.S. in Somalia and Yemen, but in no case was war formally declared against another state, nor was war authorized by the United Nations Security Council. Al Qaeda and related groups continue as targeted non-state actors, more in the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa than in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where the Taliban are the primary U.S. opponents, waiting for the bulk of U.S. troops to leave in 2014. The G.W. Bush Administration described the overall U.S. effort as a “War on Terror,” its opponents “an axis of evil.” The question with the use of drones in this context, however, is whether they make it easier and less public to spread hostilities across national boundaries. Even if it is allowed that under U.S. law, the president as commander-in-chief can initiate irregular warfare without a declaration of war, and can keep a CIA-run drone war unacknowledged for six years, this does not answer whether the U.S. and its allies were initiating wars of choice without satisfying criteria of international legitimacy.

D. Intent and Likelihood of Success

The stated purpose of current drone use, as of May 2013, is to “dismantle terrorist networks,” when there is no possibility of capturing, detaining, and trying alleged terrorists. It has been necessary to disavow vengeance and any intent to fight Islam, although many U.S. citizens and public figures consider Islamic fundamentalists to be our enemies. Again, without tracing the shifting rationales and strategies behind our military engagements in the larger Middle East, the question is whether drone warfare carries a likelihood of success. Here it has the decimation of Al Qaeda’s older leadership to claim as victory, yet revenge-seeking militants, including suicide bombers, appear frequently in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other countries (not to mention Iraq). One scholar has argued that drone warfare has not only produced a hatred of the United States and its drone pilots, sitting far away in dishonorable safety, but that the clear (if denied) approval of drone use by Pakistani and Afghan governments has led to their de-legitimation. Further, Taliban and other groups have gone after the compromised pillars of traditional society, tribal elders and religious leaders, leaving profound disorder and reigniting historic tensions. A counter-argument here would be that weakened societies and failed states need outside support and drones are the most efficient way to provide it.

E. Conduct of War Regarding Drone Strikes

In terms of the conduct of war, President Obama has maintained that drone strikes are more proportionate and spare many more civilian lives than conventional missiles or occupations. They also put fewer U.S. troops in harm’s way than in-
surgency campaigns. These contenations seem accurate, even if the long-range stated objectives of stable, prosperous, and democratic societies seem quite distant. As one Yemeni witness told a congressional panel, “Now, however, when they think of America, they think of the fear they feel at the drones over their heads. What the violent militants had failed to achieve, one drone strike accomplished in an instant.”

The newer considerations of inadvertent destabilization and target-creep on a shifting battlefield have already been suggested: drone warfare, in legal scholar David Cole’s word, may be too “easy.” Cole points to the clear drop off in numbers of captured Taliban and Al Qaeda as deaths by drone have risen, wondering if the desire to protect U.S. personnel from the risks involved in capture missions has changed the equation for drone use: “In short, drones radically reduce the disincentives to killing. And that may well make a nation prone to use military force before it is truly a last resort. That certainly seems to be what has happened here.”

F. Protection of Civilians

Just War Theory mandates that combatants and noncombatants be distinguished in order to protect noncombatants’ lives. The ability of drones to linger undetected over their targets for long hours gives them the ability of identify and isolate targets, choose a blast trajectory, and use lower yield munitions, lowers the possibility of collateral damage as compared with alternative means of target acquisition (for example, sending in special operations forces, or calling in an airstrike). Granting that drone kills may be generally “cleaner” than conventional missiles, there have been some reports that the automatic targeting of cell phone signals (SIM cards) without other confirmation has led to deaths of civilians near those carrying the phones.

G. Moral Harm to Soldiers

Because Drones linger over targets for a long time, drone operators get to know their targets. Because drone operators are familiar with their targets, they also do their own damage assessment. They see the results of their actions: civilian deaths, the grief of loved ones, the slow deaths and suffering of their targets. This contributes to a form of PTSD that psychologists call “moral harm,” a sense, now well-documented among drone operators, that they have done something immoral and violated something sacred. The asymmetrical dimension of drone warfare, the fact that they do this from the safety of well-protected communities within the U.S. and leave the military base to, say, pick up their kids after school, heightens this sense of moral discontinuity.

III. Legal Questions

The use of remotely piloted aircraft to target suspects raises basic questions of due process under both U.S. and international law. Beyond the Fifth Amendment’s basic concerns for a fair trial, perhaps the most applicable U.S. law is contained in Executive Order 11905, Section 5 (g), signed by President Ford in 1976 after Senator Frank Church’s Select Committee on Intelligence had examined a range of CIA assassination efforts (targets included Patrice Lumumba of Congo, Fidel Castro of Cuba, Ngo Dinh Diem of S. Vietnam). That section reads “no employee of the U.S. Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, political assassination.” In 1981, President Reagan issued Executive Order 12333, which in Section 2.11 reads, “No person employed by or acting on behalf of the U.S. Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination.” This removes the modifier, “political,” from assassination. Does drone warfare, largely carried out by the CIA as part of its shift to covert military action since 9/11, constitute summary execution or assassination?

International law is closer to the U.S. Bill of Rights. The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (rati fied by the U.S.) reads: “Every human being has the inherent right to life. … No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his (her) life.” To justify targeted killings by drones, one needs to maintain that they fall within the laws of war.

IV. Possible Christian Responses

Because the impact of drones is related to both military policy and cultural awareness, Christian responses need to include application of ethical principles and analysis of growing trends in popular culture. The former considerations of justice toward combatant and civilian targets are crucial, but the latter trends may support what becomes a normalized acceptance of constant surveillance and possible militarized response to civilian demonstrations for social change. As Mike Bridle of Dronestagram states, “It’s important to distinguish between military and civilian drones, between many types of drones, while understanding the way technologies flow between violent and nominally peaceful uses and the results of this flow, such as heightened fear, surveillance culture, and lowered empathy.”

There has been some address by churches to the challenge of drone warfare and the use of autonomous robot warplanes. In Britain, an ecumenical group that included pacifist Catholics convened a conference in July of 2012. In the United States, an ecumenical letter coordinated by the Friends (Quakers) was addressed to President Obama in 2013, questioning the use of drones. The Society of Christian Ethics held a roundtable at its 2012 annual meeting that included a formal discussion of drone warfare among scholars Michael Walzer, Stephen Carter, and Andrew Bacevich, with Carter and Walzer defending their use within limits and Bacevich—a former Army Colonel—generally opposing. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly has addressed drones in a limited way, also in 2012:
The practices of undeclared war, including cyber attack, targeted killing by drone aircraft and other means, covert infiltration and “false flag” operations (that set up others for blame), expand government power, and threaten civil liberties as well as the national sovereignty of other nations.  

So far, few denominational bodies have addressed the moral challenges raised by drone warfare at any length, although this is likely to change as “Just Peacemaking” criteria are increasingly applied to analyze the overall effectiveness of this strategy. Inevitably, there is the logical question of what the dominant nations will allow to be done under United Nations auspices to regulate the use of drones by convention and eventual treaty. This seems far away, and the subsidized growth of the drone industry will make such regulation both more difficult and more needed as drones become part of the international arms trade. At the same time, drone use is expanding on the borders and increasingly inside the United States, meshing with questions of domestic civil liberties raised by other forms of surveillance.

One summary question is whether the new kind of war described by President Obama is still actually defined by George W. Bush and the one-sided projection of force worldwide, justified as protection of “the homeland.” Does the more “comprehensive” counterterrorism strategy still define the United States’ role in the world in primarily military terms, controlled by the commander-in-chief’s definition of what constitutes an emergency? Has President Obama, in fact, made somewhat principled improvements to a tactic, while letting that tactic still dictate too much of our nation’s strategy or approach to the world? If this is seen to be the case, then the U.S. will continue to suffer from vision-deficit disorder and what we call “terrorism” will only be the shadow of what others call “empire,” all of which will be potential battlefield. If, however, the use of drones is seen as an effective form of policing terrorism, and terrorism is seen as the inevitable response of some of the dispossessed, then their use may be accepted conditionally as part of national security operations alongside policies to reduce the causes of terrorism and increase collective security.

V. Cyber Surveillance and Other Electronic Data Collection

In July of 2010, The Washington Post ran a series of stories on the scope of secret government agencies, including those created since the tragic events of 9/11/2001. At that time, they identified 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 companies working in the areas of counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence, in approximately 10,000 locations across the United States, and estimated that 854,000 people held top-secret security clearances. In June of 2013, The Guardian newspaper began to publish documents collected by one of those people holding a top-security clearance, a private contractor named Edward Snowden. Aware of the fate of Corporal Bradley (now Chelsea) Manning (more below) and other whistleblowers, Mr. Snowden chose overseas asylum (currently in Russia) before the publication of his unauthorized disclosures began. The chief reporter who handled the enormous cache of secret electronic files, Glenn Greenwald, Esq., prudently remains based in Brazil. The debate continues to rage over Snowden’s actions and those of the National Security Agency, whose files were released, raising hard questions about the freedom and privacy of all citizens, and perhaps their security as well.

A recent Washington Post commentary quotes cyber security expert Peter Singer who put the disclosed documents into three categories:

(a) leaks revealing espionage against U.S. adversaries and rivals;
(b) legally questionable activities targeting U.S. citizens thru backdoors, fudging of policy/law, etc.
(c) un-strategic actions targeting American allies that has led to huge blowback on U.S. standing and U.S. business

Both Singer and foreign affairs blogger, Max Fisher, then suggest that how one feels about Snowden reflects on which of his leak areas is of greatest concern. For the intelligence agencies, the disclosures regarding U.S. spying seem treasonable, regardless of whether individuals are harmed directly. Terrorists and other enemies now know better how to evade our various surveillance vehicles. For citizens worried about civil liberties, the domestic spying makes everyone a suspect and violates our privacy. It also makes private companies complicit in allowing the government at the very least to data-mine our meta-data, and raises questions about access to content of our phone calls in at least 30 percent of cases (presumably including all overseas phone calls). For our allies and people with a sense of humor, listening in on the German chancellor and violating the privacy of our allies and their companies is embarrassing and trust-damaging. The mention of “backdoors” refers to exploiting defects or built-in access points in encrypted software, dedicated and/or proprietary computer programs, and cable and cellular networks. Snowden has been threatened, denigrated, and accused (so far without proof) of collusion with other nations, but was apparently able to collect unknown quantities of documents on his own with relatively simple equipment from within a spy agency itself.

The recommendations for surveillance proposed in the resolution for the General Assembly address mainly the first two categories of concern, the responsible defense and security of the United States and others (which ideally involves nonmilitary means in most cases), and the protection of the rights of citizens (without denying these protections to foreign nationals). Much has been written on the topics and the advisory committee has a selection of studies and reports beyond those cited in the endnotes. We proceed here to provide some background on civil liberties that introduces themes identified by past General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and then comment on the most recent (as of this writing) address by President Obama on surveillance, that of January 17, 2014.
A. Recent Background on the Post 9/11 Growth of Surveillance, Including the Roles of Whistleblowers and the Press

According to Human Rights law professor, William Quigley:

On May 27, 2011, President Obama, over widespread bipartisan objections, approved a Congressional four-year extension of controversial parts of the Patriot Act that were set to expire. …These provisions allow the government, with permission from a special secret court, to seize records without the owner’s knowledge, conduct secret surveillance of suspicious people who have no known ties to terrorist groups and to obtain secret roving wiretaps on people.35

A particular Patriot Act provision, on “material support,” refers to assistance given to terrorist organizations that may be taken to include communications, “expert advice and assistance,” with such organizations, broadly defined. Under expansive definitions, some reporting on organizations may be restricted and “Friend of Court” briefs by third parties prevented. The Obama Administration’s Justice Department was challenged on this, but upheld 5-4 by the Supreme Court in Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project.36 One purpose for surveillance on U.S. citizens in the United States is to uncover all contacts with potentially terrorist groups, including funding as well as physical threats. Watch lists are part this and there are a host of tracking devices and electronic sources of information that the government may access beyond actual phone calls. We lead with reference to 9/11 and the Patriot Act because that fear of terrorism continues to be the justification for much of the growth of surveillance organizations.

While all nations have some kind of intelligence service, the United States preserves its democratic character by constitutional checks and balances, including the Bill of Rights and public accountability, for example, the free press. The reach of national security can thus be seen in the obstacles, good and bad, placed in front of the disclosure of government “secrets.” Most Presbyterians would acknowledge some role for government secrecy, and though it tends to augment governmental power, such secrecy cannot become a basis for reflexive distrust. Matters of legality and morality are and should always be matters of open debate, with faith groups bringing their traditions and intuitions to the discussion.

Before the extensive (and continuing) disclosure of NSA files, WikiLeaks, a self-styled cyber-accountability group, was well-known for its release of thousands of classified documents from U.S. embassies—including confirmation of official corruption in Tunisia, Libya, and other countries that aided the “Arab Spring.” Thousands of field reports from Afghanistan described lack of progress in that war and noted many civilian deaths not reported elsewhere, arguably making for a more truthful public debate.37 Defenders of government secrecy pointed to the diplomatic damage done by disclosing confidential reports and the danger to the trust and security among those who cooperate with U.S. officials, while critics pointed out that few specific negative effects were ever presented, even for later documents not “scrubbed” with the assistance of The New York Times and Guardian (Britain) newspapers.38 The treatment of Corporal Bradley (now Chelsea) Manning, convicted of being the source of the documents, included prolonged forced nudity and solitary confinement in a remote prison, raising questions about due process and whistleblower treatment.39

The Washington Post 2010 investigative report on intelligence claimed that the culture of secrecy was self-perpetuating and hard to monitor. Another test case for the treatment of whistleblowers occurred in a case carried over from the Bush to the Obama Administration, that of senior National Security Agency (and former military officer) Thomas Drake. Prosecuted under the Espionage Act, Drake was accused of being a primary source for reporter Siobhan Gorman of the Baltimore Sun. Gorman “wrote a prize-winning series of articles for the Sun about financial waste, bureaucratic dysfunction, and dubious legal practices in NSA counterterrorism programs.”40 Jane Mayer provided a lengthy analysis of the case,41 which William Quigley summarized:

They charged a National Security Agency adviser with ten felonies under the Espionage Act for telling the press that government eavesdroppers were wasting hundreds of millions of dollars on misguided and failed projects. After their case collapsed, the government, which was chastised by the federal judge as engaging in unconscionable conduct, allowed him to plead to a misdemeanor and walk.42

Other reasonably well-known censorship cases include the memoir by former CIA agents; Ali Soufan’s The Black Banners,43 and Glenn Carle’s The Interrogator.44

Any particular case can be debated, of course; concerned citizens have to assess broader patterns. In the Drake case and those two books, long-time U.S. agents involved in the “war on terror” claim that they crossed moral lines that became hard for them to justify in terms of the values and purposes of their country. To make sense of testimonies like theirs, Mark Danner speaks of the United States after 9/11 entering a “state of exception,” when traditional moral restraints were and remain suspended.45 Our recommendations suggest the need to distinguish clearly between whistleblowing and espionage, as these cases illustrate.

In assessing the policies and practices of the United States, the once covert use of drone aircraft in Pakistan provides an example of the limits of secrecy. Admiral Denis Blair, former director of National Intelligence for the Obama Administration, publicly argued that this program should be run by the military rather than the CIA, as “Covert action that goes on for years doesn’t generally stay covert.”46 The use of drones in Pakistan as well as Afghanistan raised two sets of questions for U.S. citizens, one related to the morality of targeting individuals outside an established battlefield setting,47 and one related to foreign relations (both of which are treated earlier in this background paper).48 Our recommendation for ending CIA involvement is guided by Blair’s assessment and that of many other military and foreign policy analysts. It should be noted that the
trend toward using covert operatives for reconnaissance, counterterrorism, and training indigenous groups has paralleled the growth of the drone program. As of 2012, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) budget had quadrupled from 2001 and its ranks had doubled to an estimated 66,000 uniformed and civilian personnel, reportedly operating in as many as 120 countries.49

The range of government data collection that concerned the 217th General Assembly (2006) related to the disclosure of large-scale warrantless wiretapping that appeared to violate provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978.50 That act established a secret intelligence court and the use of “national security letters.” Other information disclosed the use of electronic “data mining” among all the international e-mail and phone transmissions harvested by the government’s listening posts. Subsequent legislation has updated FISA with some restrictions on the roles of internet service providers subject to government access and other forms of warrantless information gathering now deemed not to violate the Fourth Amendment against unreasonable search and seizure.51 We address this further below, but it is important to note that the struggle for accountability is ongoing.

Technological advances in data-gathering can appear benign or worrisome, depending partly on how aware citizens are of the limits to their privacy.52 Some recent concern has focused on the amount of personal information disclosed for commercial purposes by such companies as Facebook and Google, whose value is partly constituted by once-private data provided by users that is linked to advertising. Most users of those services willingly trade privacy for connection and convenience. Another source of data are Global Positioning System (GPS) applications in mobile phones; such devices can also be put on vehicles without a warrant for ease in tracking suspects. Potentially more worrisome are patterns lifted up by William Quigley two years ago, drawing on studies by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Center for Constitutional Rights:

- Wiretaps for oral, electronic or wire communications, approved by federal and state courts, are at an all-time high. Wiretaps in year 2010 were up 34 percent from 2009, according to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

- The Electronic Frontier Foundation documented thousands of violations of the law by FBI intelligence operations from 2001 to 2008 and estimate that there are over 4,000 such violations each year. President Obama issued an executive order to strengthen the Intelligence Oversight Board, an agency that is supposed to make sure the FBI, the CIA, and other spy agencies are following the law.

- Western companies sell email surveillance software to repressive regimes in China, Libya and Syria to use against protestors and human rights activists. Surveillance cameras monitor residents in high-crime areas, street corners, and other governmental buildings. Police department computers ask for and receive daily lists from utility companies with addresses and names of every home address in their area. Computers in police cars scan every license plate of every car they drive by.

- There are at least 72 fusion centers across the U.S., which collect local domestic police information and merge it into multijurisdictional intelligence centers, according to recent report by the ACLU. These centers share information from federal, state and local law enforcement and some private companies to secretly spy on Americans.53

Space does not permit a longer discussion of the role of major internet and financial companies in relation to government National Security Letters, which enjoin cooperation in providing data and trump consumer privacy considerations. Like the government, the companies face skilled hackers and have their own data security concerns. An interesting illustration of interlocking considerations (and media concentration) concerns Amazon, which as a contractor provides Cloud computing services to the CIA, clearly collects vast amounts of consumer data itself, and whose chairman, Jeff Bezos, owns the Washington Post, which is expected to report objectively on government data collection.54

B. Constitutional Protections and the Church’s Concerns for Human Rights and “Free Exercise” of Religious Freedom

In the 2006 “Resolution on Human Rights in Time of Terrorism and Torture,” the General Assembly called for

the humane treatment with due process for all combatants held by U.S. forces anywhere in the world, and support[ed] the provisions of the Bill of Rights and the principles of judicial review and congressional oversight over Executive Branch operations, now including counterterrorism, Homeland Security, and domestic surveillance programs, both classified and publicly acknowledged. (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 867)

That resolution also called for “the protection of the right of privacy for U.S. citizens against intrusion by government or private entities” (Ibid.).

Traditionally, the focus of Presbyterian and other religious engagement with civil liberties is the First Amendment’s first phrase, the “Establishment clause,” which guides the separation of church and state. Yet the founders wisely saw the freedoms of worship, speech and press, assembly, and “to petition for redress of grievances,” connected with each other, and combined them all in the First Amendment. Particular Christian concerns for freedom, justice, and peace are addressed in various later amendments (now totaling twenty-seven), but the First Amendment itself ensures the capacity of individuals and groups to address any of those and other topics. A notable example of the Presbyterian church’s use of its voice on behalf of civil liberties in general was the eloquent 1953 Letter to Presbyterians of the General Assembly Council that challenged McCarthyism and its distortion of national security fears.55

The General Assembly’s most extensive treatment of religious and civil liberties, God Alone Is Lord of the Conscience (1988), is named for the key Presbyterian belief in God’s direct address to the individual conscience. That thorough statement considered civil disobedience, aid to religious schools, prayer in public schools, Sabbath observance, tax exemption, and oth-
er questions, including government intervention in religious affairs. This last matter has direct bearing on the possibility of government surveillance of worship activities.

In 1984 and possibly before, the U.S. government sent covert agents into several congregations of the Presbyterian and American Lutheran churches in order to investigate the “Sanctuary Movement,” which protected persons fleeing from government-sponsored violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and other countries. In January 1986, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the American Lutheran Church, and four of their congregations, filed suit alleging that the undercover operation (later acknowledged) violated the free exercise of religion. Freedom of the pulpit and of parishioners to speak truth was clearly connected to freedom of speech.

That lawsuit, described in the booklet, “Why Churches Fight Government Infiltration,” bears some analogy to efforts by Muslim congregations in the U.S. to address more recent government surveillance and use of informers, intended to track down terrorism. Though the issues are different, the First Amendment principle of noninterference and the need for warrants for entry, search, and seizure stipulated by the Fourth Amendment, have clear bearing. Government surveillance and pressure under an expanded understanding of the “material aid” statute has severely limited Muslim charities that give funds overseas for any purpose, and thus jeopardizes any religious giving across borders that the government may wish to discourage. The Associated Press uncovered a specific program of the New York City Police Department, done in cooperation with the CIA, that involved “mosque crawlers” who investigated worship services based on the ethnic profile and reputation of the mosques.

In the current context, all PC(USA) funds sent overseas must comply with the Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Asset Control, which means assuring that each grant or disbursement to recipient or intermediary does not go to someone on a published list of proscribed persons and entities (that listing is available on line: www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/t10sdn.pdf). Other watch-lists and security reviews have made it more difficult for nationals from many countries to receive visas, reducing numbers of international students, tourists, mission partners, “International Peacemakers” of the Peacemaking Program, and participants in church gatherings such as the Uniting General Assembly of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (June 2010, Grand Rapids, Michigan).

To recognize the context of fear of Muslim and other terrorism is not to enter into a full analysis of its scope and of the status of allegations and arrests made over the years since 9/11. Nor does this report to address specifically the use of torture, which the assembly strongly condemned in 2006 when it also called for the closing of extraterritorial prisons (such as Guantanamo). Yet the “mission creep” of police power, in a country already characterized by the highest level of incarceration in the world, raises concern for overreaction and the weakening of legal safeguards. Before 9/11, church concern about torture (the Eighth Amendment’s “cruel and unusual punishment”) had to do with the U.S. criminal justice system, including the effects of prolonged solitary confinement on the mental health of inmates.

C. The Current State of Surveillance and Question of the Surveillance State

On January 17, 2014, President Obama addressed the nation on the matter of NSA bulk phone data collection and other programs, such as PRISM, which pull in vast amounts of cyber data and digitized information. He was prompted by the continuing leaks from Edward Snowden and by the report of an advisory committee that he had appointed. The appointment of that advisory task force, the Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies, was itself prompted partly by congressional displeasure at limits on their own oversight. Those limits were displayed when Snowden’s proof of widespread domestic surveillance forced the director of national intelligence, James Clapper, to retract sworn testimony of March 2013. In that testimony, Clapper denied that citizen data was collected. Because their own oversight is secret, legislators who knew Clapper spoke falsely could not challenge him.

The Review Group, chaired by Richard Clarke (author of Against All Enemies, a book on the security failures of the George W. Bush Administration), recommended that the government leave all the bulk phone data with the telecommunications companies. The NSA could request to access it when needed, but in that way would not continue to amass that citizen data. While accepting a few of the Review Group’s forty-six recommendations, the president continues the policy of NSA collection as he and his national security team weigh alternatives.

A more critical report on the phone data collection operation (first authorized secretly in 2006) was released on January 23, 2014, by the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, a “watchdog” body authorized by Congress. This report did not address as wide a range of surveillance activities as the President’s Review Group, but the privacy board analyzed the legal justifications given by the FISA court for the specific program authorized to collect all U.S. citizen phone records, and the actual results of that program. The FISA court and NSA claimed support from section 215 of the Patriot Act, but that section only authorizes the FBI (not NSA) to collect business records relevant to specific terror investigations. Despite its enormously overstepping limits on citizen privacy, the privacy board found “no instance in which the program directly contributed to the discovery of a previously unknown terrorist plot or the disruption of a terrorist attack.” Thus the privacy board recommended that the program be ended.

On the basic question of whether the government can conduct warrantless or secret surveillance on its citizens, two court cases also addressed the situation: on December 16, 2013, Justice Richard Leon ruled that the NSA data vacuuming violates
the Fourth Amendment’s protection against unreasonable search and seizure, and on December 27, 2013, Justice William H. Pauley III ruled that the data collection was permissible, based on a reading of the 9/11 Commission Report and subsequent disclosures. It is hoped that the president’s expected March 28, 2014, deadline for a decision on bulk data collection and storage will take these contrasting decisions and reports into account. To summarize the president’s current position from his January 17 statement:

… in terms of our bulk collection of signals intelligence, U.S. intelligence agencies will only use such data to meet specific security requirements: counterintelligence; counterterrorism; counter proliferation; cybersecurity; force protection for our troops and our allies; and combating transnational crime, including sanctions evasion. In this directive, I have taken the unprecedented step of extending certain protections that we have for the American people to people overseas. I’ve directed the DNI, in consultation with the attorney general, to develop these safeguards, which will limit the duration that we can hold personal information while also restricting the use of this information. The bottom line is that people around the world, regardless of their nationality, should know that the United States is not spying on ordinary people who don’t threaten our national security and that we take their privacy concerns into account in our policies and procedures. This applies to foreign leaders as well.

The recommendations made by the General Assembly address a range of the president’s, and the nation’s, concerns:

1. The fairness of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, whose establishment in the 1970s was noted above. This FISA court approves virtually all NSA, CIA, and other requests for data gathering. Its members are appointed by Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Roberts, and it turned out all but one on the bench in 2013 were Republican appointees. The president has recommended that Congress amend the FISA law so that in some circumstances the court hears testimony from other parties than the NSA in order to represent potential targets or the public interest. The president has declassified decisions of the court that give the public more knowledge, but thirty-five of forty decisions uphold meta-data collection and—while sometimes pressing the NSA for more focused surveillance requests—the court consistently grants those requests.

2. The status of whistleblowers. The president has issued a presidential directive to prevent retaliation against government employees, but this does not address the case of Snowden, who was a contractor.

3. The matter of secrecy and public trust. Are the provision of review by a secret court and a congressional panel sworn to secrecy enough protection for civil liberties? The president may sound admirably self-critical in terms of what the NSA has done as part of his administration, but Congress and the U.S. public need to be stronger parties in the conversation and decision-making.

On the final recommendation, the General Assembly’s concern is not only ethical but religious. What is the quality of prayer and spiritual life when the “eye in the sky” is not a metaphor for God’s providential care, but a constant, secret monitoring drone? Is worship a form of data that can be collected? And what if the church or any of its members or ministers were to criticize the government—a consistent practice in Reformed history? The short answer to these questions is that faith is about trust, and surveillance erodes trust. Faith is also about our freedom to love God and, in a subtle way, surveillance may erode our inner freedom. Thus, the resolution’s final recommendation, Statement D, maintains that there should be a zone from which both government and market are excluded; in fact, a sanctuary where we nurture faith and communicate with prayer, beyond all electronic devices.

Endnotes


6 Ibid., online at http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2013/03/unmanned-flight/horgan-text.

7 An example is this narrative: http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/pain-continues-after-war-for-american-drone-pilot-a-872726.html.


9 The debate over the president taking responsibility for target selection on “Terror Tuesdays” at the White House, as disclosed in The New York Times (June, 2012), is summarized in “Obama’s ‘kill list’: The president as executioner-in-chief,” The Economist (June 15, 2012), 18.

10 Op. Cit., Horgan. This paragraph draws from that article at several points.


14 https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/poli116/justwar.htm This is a listing followed by a range of discussion posted independently of drone considerations.
15 http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/107/sres23
22 Ibid.
27 An example of cultural analysis: http://www.theverge.com/2013/2/18/3993100/romancing-the-drone-how-flying-robots-are-invas ing-pop-culture.
28 Ibid.
30 http://fcnl.org/issues/afghanistan/faithbased_organizations_Question_letナル use of drones/.
36 http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/11/opinion/03cole.html. See also Professor Cole’s http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2011/may/19/after-september-11-what-we-still-dont-know/?pagination=false, which includes reference to the “material support” interpretation that “makes it a crime even to file an amicus brief on a designated group’s behalf,” 29.
40 http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/05/23/110523fa_fact_mayer#ixzz1bzFqIOW.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
Item 11-11

[The assembly approved Item 11-11 with amendment. See pp. 65, 68–69.]

_Risking Peace in a Violent World: Affirmations for Presbyterian Consideration_

Convinced, despite years of war, that peacemaking is still the “believers’ calling,” and inviting Presbyterians across the church to help determine the shape of that calling for a new day, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

1. Approve the process below for engaging presbyteries in the second stage of the discernment process initiated by the 219th General Assembly (2010) for final report to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

2. Approve the five affirmations for presbytery discussion of new directions in our Presbyterian peacemaking witness.

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50 http://www.indiana.edu/~globalm/pdf/isa08_datamining.pdf. This summary paper by Prof. Jeffrey Hart of Indiana University describes the technologies and companies as well as government programs involved in this still growing area: “The Controversies over Data Mining and Warrantless Searches in the Wake of September 11.”
51 http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/intel/R40138.pdf. This summary paper by Prof. Jeffre y Hart of Indiana University describes the technologies and companies as well as government programs involved in this still growing area: “The Controversies over Data Mining and Warrantless Searches in the Wake of September 11.”
52 Jonathan Turley of Georgetown Law Center is among those concerned: http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/is-the-united-states-still-the-land-of-the-free/2012/01/04/gIQAvcD1wP_story.html.
53 Quigley, op. cit. Quigley also notes the influence on civilian policing of military approaches. Protest police … uniformed like soldiers with SWAT shields, shin guards, heavy vests, military helmets, visors and vastly increased firepower … are accompanied by helicopters, special tanks, and even sound-blasting vehicles first used in Iraq. Wireless fingerprint scanners first used by troops in Iraq are now being utilized by local police departments to check motorists. Facial recognition software introduced in war zones is now being used in Arizona and other jurisdictions.
56 See Minutes, PC(USA), 1988, Part I, pp. 549–99. This study was printed and is available from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) or online at http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/god-alone-is-lord.pdf It updates several prior assembly policy statements including Relations of Church and State (1963), and draws on three long articles in the May/June 1986 _Church & Society_ magazine, “Reformed Faith and Religious Liberty.”
57 Numerous articles have been written on this; an early one describing a legal challenge to the treatment of Muslims and a particular mosque: http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/31/us/threats-responses-civil-liberties-suit-challenges-constitutionality-powers.html.
67 A somewhat typical critique of the president’s position comes from the former chief of the Center on Constitutional Rights, Michael Ratner: http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/21461-obamas-nsa-speech-makes-orwellian-surveillance-patriotic.
68 http://www.propublica.org/article/four-questionable-claims-obama-has-made-on-nsa-surveillance.
69 See this article in _Unbound_ for additional references: http://justiceunbound.org/carousel/first-they-came-for-the-whistleblowers/.

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3. Receive the five-part explanatory rationale and summary of focus group findings to be sent out with the affirmations.

In addition to that discernment process, the 221st General Assembly (2014):

4. Commends those congregations and individuals who have affirmed the “Commitment to Peacemaking” and faithfully maintained steady support over the years for the Peacemaking Offering to sustain and adequately staff the Presbyterian Mission Agency peacemaking programs and to fund creative congregational and presbytery initiatives.

5. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency to continue to help interpret the discernment process outlined in Recommendations 1.–3. Above.

6. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency to work with the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy as it develops resources and assists networks to support international peacemaking on current and emerging challenges such as South Sudan and areas in need of reconciliation and reconstruction such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Colombia, while addressing domestic peacemaking in such areas as gun violence, violence in families, and concern for returning veterans.

7. Affirms the value of peacemaking as part of the “compassionate prophetic discipleship” of “Presbyterians joyfully engaging in God’s mission for the transformation of the world,” within the vision of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Process of Discernment for Presbyteries: As the next stage in a six-year process of discernment, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Stated Clerk to send to each presbytery, electronically and in print, the following five affirmations and supporting rationale with the request that they discuss and take an advisory vote on each affirmation and send the results of those votes, along with a summary of the floor discussion, back to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy [by July 1, 2015.] to help guide the preparation of a report on peacemaking directions for the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

The affirmations for churchwide discussion and advisory vote:

1. We affirm that peacemaking is essential to our faith in God’s reconciling work in Jesus Christ, whose love and justice challenge hatred and conflict, and whose call gives our church a mission to present alternatives to violence[,] [and] fear, [unjustified force] and misused power.

2. We confess our complicity in the world’s violence even as we pray for the Spirit’s courage to “unmask idolatries,” to speak truth about war and oppression, and to stand with those who suffer[; and to respond to acts and threats of violence with ministries of justice, healing, and reconciliation].

3. We reclaim [the power and authority of] Jesus [Christ,] [as] Prince of Peace, [Christ the] [and] Reconciler[,] who proclaims God’s reign, who inspires the prophetic church, forgiving, healing, and undoing violence, and who overcomes evil through the cross and resurrection.

4. We seek to understand the nonviolent revolutions and armed struggles of our time [through the Gospel of Peace] by drawing on the traditions of [Christian pacifism,] just war, just peacemaking and active nonviolence, and by cultivating moral imagination through prayer, study, and engagement with friends and enemies. [Even as we actively engage in a peace discernment process, we affirm our responsibility of continuing the long tradition of support by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for our sisters and brothers who serve in the U.S. military, veterans, and their families.]

5. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves [to work first for nonviolent change in our personal and communal lives,] [earnestly to seek and promote loving, nonviolent responses to conflict in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our world, and] to risk calling our nation back from the practices of empire to the highest ideals of our heritage, and to practice boldly the things that make for peace.

Rationale

I. INTRODUCTION

In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
A. Title and Purpose

The commitment of the church to peace and reconciliation has a central role in Christian vocation. For Presbyterians it is a matter of creedal standing, briefly yet powerfully set forth in the Brief Statement of Faith (1991) cited above, and outlined at greater length in The Confession of 1967. Wording from both confessions is echoed in the title of this report. We acknowledge not only a “fearful” but a violent world, even as we hear God’s call in our time to take new risks to challenge our country’s over-reliance on military might and under-investment in “the things that make for peace.” Thus the title invokes The Confession of 1967’s prophetic phrase: “This search [for peace] requires that the nations pursue fresh and responsible international understanding” (Book of Confessions, 9.45).

B. Introduction: The Request for Presbytery Votes, and the Organization of this Background Report

In 2010, on the 30th anniversary of Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling and the formation of the Peacemaking Program, the 219th General Assembly (2010) authorized the creation of a six-year discernment process to take a new and fresh look at peacemaking in the church’s life. The assembly’s action combined overtures seeking to review and strengthen the church’s policy thinking and program after almost a decade of war, and to examine particularly the nonviolent understanding of Jesus’ call to discipleship. A steering committee was appointed to devise opportunities for the broad membership of the church to explore not simply the effectiveness of the church’s peacemaking work and its threefold offering, but the basic nature and scope of the Gospel’s mandate for peacemaking.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) authorized study materials to be distributed (after testing in committee) and approved a two-stage process of face-to-face discussions in both congregations and councils, and then of presenting a set of concise affirmations to the presbyteries. This is the steering team’s report made through the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy and in consultation with the Peacemaking Program. After some background on Presbyterian peace witness and the peace discernment process, we provide a summary of the responses from the discernment groups that helped shape what became five affirmations. The affirmations clearly build on each other, but presbyteries can decide whether to consider the five as a set or vote on them individually to assess the degree to which they may, or may not, represent that presbytery’s views.

This background report then provides rationales for each of the five affirmations to be sent to the presbyteries. The five proposed affirmations honor the range of viewpoints within the church while testing new directions; they are not statements of policy but propositions for serious debate. We respectfully ask presbyteries—which we know well—to make time on their busy docket to consider the affirmations. We know it will take some leadership and we pray for gracious listening as well as wise moderating. What might those admittedly general affirmations mean in your presbytery, and for your children, and for our discipleship?

Our Presbyterian process values differences of opinion as efforts to speak the truth in love under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Voting is part of the work of the body to build consensus over time, and Presbyterians do not usually see unanimity or total agreement as necessary for decision. We both take corporate stands, believing that the church as a body should not be silent, and at the same time we affirm that “God alone is Lord of the conscience,” making space for dissent. It is for those reasons we would like to see the vote tallies, but it is up to each presbytery to determine how to report, and some may wish to approve their own affirmations or amend the ones presented here.

Recommendations 4.-7. (before the affirmations) clarify continued support for the Peacemaking Program and offering while the discernment process is underway, seeking to keep faith with the decisions of previous assemblies and to address current threats to peace and security.

C. Background on Presbyterian Peace Witness and Peacemaking

For focus, we have put a short survey of Christian and Presbyterian approaches to peacemaking prior to 1980 in a brief appendix (A), along with summaries of Just War, Just Peacemaking, and active nonviolence principles.

A key understanding from the later 20th century is that peacemaking has come to be seen as central to Christian witness and as a large enough concept to unite both those tending toward nonviolence or pacifism and those operating within the Just War or justifiable war tradition. Most Presbyterians, in fact, are not absolutists and hold values from both main Christian approaches to war and physical violence. Peacemaking emphasizes common ground. As former chief of chaplains, Kermit Johnson, wrote in an essay on “Just War and Nuclear Deterrence,” Just War “Like pacifism, [it] is rooted in the commandment: ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ It is a presumption against violence, ‘the presumption in favor of peace and against war.’”¹¹ He then went on to consider whether there could be cases of “tragic necessity” when nuclear war could be considered a “lesser evil” and meet the just war criteria.

This is the kind of prayerful thinking that is not always easy, but that thousands of thoughtful Presbyterians have engaged in through the Peacemaking Program and now most recently in the Peace Discernment process. Our church has been gifted with theological ethicists of the first order helping shape public responses to war within and well beyond the church itself. Other Presbyterians in the military and military contractors—and probably all Christians at one time or another—have also
Presbyterian church thinking about peace not only considers the impacts of major wars in which Presbyterians have fought, but notes the tolerance that has grown since the 1940s for conscientious objection to all war (pacifism) and to specific wars perceived to violate just war and other criteria. This acceptance may have at first recalled the votes in 1936 and 1938 when majorities of the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. voted to remove just war language from the Westminster Confession, which was then the church’s only confessional standard. Those votes did not reach the supermajorities needed for constitutional change. Then World War II received strong support from the churches, but the Cold War, the nuclear threat, the Civil Rights movement, and Vietnam led to a new wave of individual conscientious objectors and more understanding of Eisenhower’s “military-industrial complex.” It was in that context that the church adopted The Confession of 1967 with its inclusion of strong social ethics concerns for economic and racial justice, family life, and peace:

God’s reconciliation in Jesus Christ is the ground of the peace, justice, and freedom among nations which all powers of government are called to serve and defend. The church, in its own life, is called to practice the forgiveness of enemies and to commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace. This search requires that the nations pursue fresh and responsible relations across every line of conflict, even at risk to national security, to reduce areas of strife and to broaden international understanding. Reconciliation among nations becomes particularly urgent as countries develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, diverting their [hu]manpower and resources from constructive uses and risking the annihilation of [hu]mankind. Although nations may serve God’s purposes in history, the church which identifies the sovereignty of any one nation or any one way of life with the cause of God denies the Lordship of Christ and betrays its calling. (Book of Confessions, Section 9.45)

That bold declaration grounded the idea of a shared church calling that was developed in *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling*. This document offered a broad biblical, theological, and ethical basis for Christian peacemaking but also identified some more specific directions for that mission: efforts to reverse the worldwide arms race; “conversion of the economy from military to civilian production;” and continuing attention to how justice relates to peace. Because we are asking presbyteries to affirm the work of peacemaking in the first affirmation, we note key developments in Presbyterian peace witness after 1980 in that first of the five rationales.

D. *The Peace Discernment Process*

The present Peace Discernment Process, initiated by the 219th General Assembly (2010) and affirmed by the 220th General Assembly (2012), differs from previous studies in that it seeks broader participation from across the denomination and focuses more on the example and teaching of Jesus and the early church. The full texts of the discernment materials and response forms used are available on-line at: https://www.pcusa.org/resource/peace-discernment-interim-report-encountering-gosp/.

These discernment resources, some of which are reflected in this report, were designed to introduce “ministries of peacemaking and justice-seeking that honor the Gospel, the history of the church, and the movement of the Holy Spirit …” and to inform eventual recommendations of new policy and action *(Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 69).* The resources were presented to and partly tested by the Peacemaking and International Affairs Committee of the 220th General Assembly (2012), which recommended that the discernment process proceed: http://pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28tusr3jzthk2ncc5l11qekaul%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=4015&promoid=254.

Presbyterians in more than forty-five congregations and eighteen presbyteries came together in small “focus groups” to pray, to reflect, to engage in individual and congregational discernment, to “seek clarity as to God’s call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war; and identify, explore, and nurture new approaches to active peacemaking and nonviolence” *(Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 68).*

Most participants found that the Peace Discernment Process encouraged meaningful sharing that was powerful and engaging. They appreciated the opportunity to hear varied perspectives and opinions in a framework where almost everyone had at least one loved one with experience in war. Some were surprised at the level of trust that developed in their small groups, allowing individuals (including veterans) to risk being vulnerable and speak about difficult personal experiences they had had with violence. One participant called it “a very holy process.”

E. *Nonviolence, Just War, and Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling*

Presbyterians generally agree that peacemaking is the calling of all believers, but they differ about whether violent means of peacemaking are faithful to Jesus’ life and witness. Some focus on Jesus’ call to love our enemies and his sacrifice on the cross, and they conclude that violence can never be a faithful Christian response to violence, injustice, or evil in the world. They gravitate toward nonviolence. Others point to Jesus’ defense of the poor and oppressed, the weak and vulnerable, and believe that violence or coercion can be justified in restraining evil forces and defending the innocent. Their perspective assumes a public responsibility to maintain order and a policing if not a military function. They gravitate toward the just war tradition. For many participants, the Peace Discernment Process was their first introduction to both the methods of nonviolent action and the criteria of just war.
F. Lamenting Our Culture of Violence and War

It is clear, after more than ten years of war, that a majority of Presbyterians are deeply concerned about the enormous human and economic costs of war—the hundreds of thousands killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the millions displaced, the thousands of U.S. soldiers killed or injured, the trillions of dollars spent, and the damage done to our economy. Understandably, there was a focus on those wars where our country has been most directly involved, but many were aware of other wars and long conflicts initiated and suffered by others. A majority of Presbyterians are also deeply worried about the violence pervasive in U.S. culture—the high incidence of gun violence compared to other countries; school shootings; violence against women; violence in media, sports, and entertainment; and the underlying structural violence of economic injustice and social oppression (racism, sexism, other exclusions).

Many appreciate the important connection between justice and peace. They understand that direct, physical violence is often caused by injustice, and that a genuine peace can only be brought about by working toward justice and equity for all. Many lifted up God’s vision of shalom, affirming that peace is a rich mosaic of human flourishing within the global community in the broader context of God’s good creation.

G. A Desire to Learn Peacemaking Skills

At the same time, many expressed a sense of being overwhelmed by the enormity of the issues, particularly at the national and international level. Weary of the stream of grim news of bombings and terrorism, there were questions about what our years of war had achieved. Some questioned the effectiveness of both social policy statements and the primarily educational approach of the Peacemaking Program, facing a political system dominated by money. They are looking for direction and guidance about how individuals and congregations can take effective action to further justice and peace. In this vein, there seems to be broad interest in learning concrete peacemaking skills that they can use in their daily lives—skills in nonviolent communication, negotiation, mediation, community organizing, social movement building, and nonviolent direct action.

H. Challenging U.S. Militarism

While many Presbyterians are not ready to renounce violence as a means of restraining evil or protecting the innocent, most of the discernment participants would nevertheless support:

- Just Peacemaking initiatives to promote justice and prevent war.
- Downsizing the military-industrial-surveillance complex.
- Economic conversion from a war economy to a peace economy.
- Shifting resources from the military to international diplomacy and development.
- Ending policies of preemptive attack, targeted assassination, and torture, which lead to violent “blowback” and which seemed immoral to many discernment group participants.
- Moving the U.S. away from the role of global policeman, finding other ways to support international structures of security cooperation.

Given the high level of motivation in the discernment groups, a representative survey of Presbyterian opinion was commissioned from Presbyterian Research Services. While the questions presented by the Presbyterian Panel survey instrument were necessarily shorter, there is considerable similarity in overall outlook to the written narrative summaries from the discernment groups (http://www.presbyterianmission.org/media/uploads/research/pdfs/nov_2012_panel_summary_violence_and_war.pdf).

With that summary of discernment discussion findings, we turn to the five affirmations that are being proposed as support for an ongoing and enriched peacemaking agenda for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The affirmations are offered for discussion, not as policy stands to be either approved or rejected in their present form.

II. FIVE AFFIRMATIONS FOR 21ST CENTURY CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKING

A. Affirmation #1: We affirm that peacemaking is essential to our faith in God’s reconciling work in Jesus Christ, whose love and justice challenge hatred and conflict, and whose call gives our church a mission to present alternatives to violence and fear, unjustified force and misused power.

The 192nd General Assembly (1980) of the UPCUSA adopted Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling, the denomination’s most comprehensive policy on matters of international violence and war. It declared that:

- The church is faithful to Christ when it is engaged in peacemaking.
- The church is obedient to Christ when it nurtures and equips God’s people as peacemakers.
The church bears witness to Christ when it nourishes the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in our world. (http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/peacemaking.pdf, pp. 5–6)

Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling broadened the concern for individual conscience to affirm that peacemaking was the calling of all believers, particularly in the face of nuclear and other Cold War dangers. Invoking Isaiah’s vision, it emphasized our global interdependence and international connection. With New Testament themes, it presented a holistic understanding of peace and encouraged a wide range of church engagement. It affirmed that “peacemaking is an indispensable ingredient of the church’s mission. It is not peripheral or secondary but essential to the church’s faithfulness to Christ in our time” (Ibid., p. 18). Since that time, peacemaking has become broadly accepted, integral to our prayers and hymns, and evident in our preaching, teaching, and public witness.

Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling led to the creation of the influential Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and established a special offering to provide funding for it. The Peacemaking Offering, traditionally received on World Communion Sunday, has raised at least $2 million each year, providing support for the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and part of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, as well as peacemaking ministries in local congregations, presbyteries, and synods. The innovation of having the offering go to three levels of the church speaks to the wisdom of developing institutional capacity not only in what is now the Presbyterian Mission Agency, but also bringing together resources for intentional creativity at the regional and community levels.

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Engaging Church, Society, and the World as Peacemakers

Presbyterians engage in peacemaking in a variety of ways. Through worship, prayer, and Bible study, they point to the reality of God’s peace-giving, nurture the spiritual life of their communities, and equip people to share the gospel message of peace throughout the world. Presbyterian peacemakers foster respectful communication using resources such as “Seeking to Be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement.” They fight for affordable housing, better schools, and funding for social services through faith-based community organizing campaigns. They work to reduce gun violence in the United States. They join with ecumenical and interfaith partners in struggles for human rights and economic justice in countries around the world. Presbyterian peacemakers risk nonviolent accompaniment, walking alongside church leaders threatened with political violence in Colombia. They seek to make peace with the earth by living more sustainably themselves, and challenging legislators to resist the pressures of special interest lobbies and instead support forward-looking policies that reflect wise stewardship of the planet. Countless additional examples of faithful peacemaking could be cited. We have much good peacemaking work to celebrate in our church!

Presbyterian Peacemaking Witness and Just Peace

Since 1980, careful studies and prophetic statements have addressed the nuclear danger, particular military interventions and their rationale, and the relation of religion, violence, and terrorism. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), since 1988, has held a virtual “nuclear pacifist” position, opposing first use and retaliation and calling repeatedly for disarmament. That policy statement, Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age, suggests that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a kind of “just peace” church, with its images drawn primarily from the Old Testament:

The church in the nuclear age must shift its energies from considerations of just war to the urgent and primary task of defining and serving a just peace. A nuclear stalemate or even the elimination of all nuclear arms is still far from God’s shalom. Shalom is the intended state of the entire human race. It involves the well-being of the whole person in all relationships, personal, social, and cosmic. Shalom means life in a community of compassionate order marked by social and economic justice. Peace without justice is no peace; that is why the Bible so often reflects God’s special concern for the poor and powerless.

The great biblical visions of global peace—words into plowshares, every family under its own vine and fig tree—are fundamental to thinking about just peace. Such a peace is ultimately God’s gift; we need to avoid the proud illusion that we can create it by human effort alone. But Christian obedience demands that we move toward that peace in all possible ways: by extending the rule of law, advocating universal human rights, strengthening the organs of international order, working for common security and economic justice, converting industry to peaceful production, increasing understanding of and reconciliation with those we identify as enemies, developing peacemaking skills, constructing concrete manifestations of just peace across barriers of conflict and injustice, and other means. (Minutes, 1988, Part I, p. 450)

In 1998, the assembly approved a resolution on just peacemaking, which embodies the tension involved in endorsing military intervention as a method to prevent such things as genocide and seeks to move the church’s thinking beyond the traditional categories of just war, crusade, and pacifism. Along with a realism that has been characteristic of much Reformed ethics (and some liberation theologies), that resolution affirms a preference for strong peacemaking initiatives, noting of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):
In keeping with these principles and policies, General Assemblies have also called for responsible withdrawals by the United States from Iraq (2004) and Afghanistan (2010); the 2004 General Assembly prophetically and controversially termed the Iraq war “unwise, illegal, and immoral.” The resolution on “Religion, Violence, and Terrorism” (also 2004) endorsed a “policing” approach to terrorism and responds to the charge sometimes made that religion engenders violence. And in 2008, the General Assembly “commended for study” a careful ethical assessment of the Iraq war entitled “To Repent, To Restore, To Rebuild, and To Reconcile,” which includes the concepts of public forgiveness and “honest patriotism” as developed by Donald Shriver.

One of the key questions wrestled with by Peace Discernment participants was whether the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) could consider becoming a “peace church” on the model of the Mennonites or Quakers, who have long held pacifism to be a key expression of Christian love and part of the nature of the church itself. A variant of this question was whether an individual congregation could declare itself a “peace church,” going beyond the Commitment to Peacemaking. Some recent theological discussion has proposed nonviolence for the majority of Christians as well, deliberately challenging the compromises seen to accompany public responsibility.

The wording of this first affirmation does not propose that nonviolence necessarily be an essential mark of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as it is for the traditional peace churches. Rather, it proposes that we have: “a mission to present alternatives to violence and fear, unjustified force and misused power.” The word “unjustified” signals the understanding of many Presbyterians that force may justified; they would draw a line not between violence and nonviolence, but between justified and unjustified use or restraint of legitimate force. Edward Long, a leader in Presbyterian peace thinking, notes how today’s pervasive acceptance of war’s inevitability so often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. How does the church resist being transformed by that world of nations that is in constant overt and covert military struggle? This is where our peacemaking approach must go beyond words and engage in transformative worship and action, creating needed alternatives for our society as well as ourselves.

An updated Reformed approach was explored by a large number of congregations in the mid-1980s using the study guide, “Presbyterians & Peacemaking: Are We Now Called to Resistance?,” written by Ronald Stone and Dana Wilbanks. That congregational process and a parallel conversation among scholars virtually unique among denominations generated some of the thinking about resisting violence that went into Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age. In the case of the Peace Discernment participants, some held to fully nonviolent positions while a larger number argued that responding to injustice sometimes requires actions on the spectrum of force that includes physical violence. The overall consensus was to choose nonviolent alternatives whenever possible without making nonviolence an absolute position.

The Peace Discernment steering team (as noted below) thought it important to consider nonviolence in relation to the example of Jesus and the witness of much of the earliest, pre-Constantine church. This is not to deny our traditional Presbyterian appreciation of how justice and love, like Old Testament and New, must always go together. Biblical scholars Donald Gowan and Ulrich Mauser address this relationship of love and justice:

In view of the fact that Jewish thought and practice alike reserved the incorporation of all nations into God’s world of peace for the world to come in which idolatry has ceased and one law of one God is universally acknowledged, there can hardly be any doubt that the Pauline mission… regarded the powers of the eschaton as driving forces which call forth historical realization. The prince of peace is in the Pauline mission not only the historically identifiable person Jesus of Nazareth, nor only the meta-historical redeemer, but also the continuous presence of God’s ultimate peace in the stream of time.

Given this rich history of peacemaking and the vital ongoing work of making peace, it seems only fitting that we reaffirm the centrality of peacemaking, and renew our dedication to this central calling as followers of Jesus Christ. At the same time, as an integral part of honest and authentic peacemaking, we must confess our complicity in the violence of our world.
Confessing Our Complicity in Violence

Making peace means engaging the critical issues of our times. Yet, as those who are deeply immersed in peacemaking know so well, faithful peacemaking must be spiritually rooted and sustained by the Holy Spirit. The heart and mind of the peacemaker must be liberated from conformity to culture and renewed in the mind of Christ (Rom. 12). This transformation is itself peacemaking work. John Calvin reminds us that the human heart is “a factory of idols.” Therefore, healing the violence in our lives—not only the violence we do and the violence that is done to us, but our sinful capacity to countenance violence and to accept it as normal—must be integrated into a holistic theology of peacemaking. The peacemaker must even confess the kind of complicity that comes from failing to avert violence even after great effort, a feeling shared by many who opposed the second Iraq war. Such awareness that we are all responsible for some measure of violence is an important admission of imperfection.

In this section we move from an overview that looks at violence in our culture and its structures to a closer look at the factors at work in the Iraq and Afghan wars in particular. This gives violence an admittedly broad definition. A strict definition, for example, is suggested by Mark Douglas: “a forceful action that intends to cause unwanted injury to another.” The adjective, “structural,” modifies this definition to the operation of institutions and social structures that causes injury or deprivation to others.

The commitment to peace that stands at the heart of Christian obedience requires that Christians take an honest look at the extent to which they are complicit in the violence that characterizes the society of which they are a part. This complicity is present despite good intentions to avoid it and worthy efforts to live by the ideal of peace. Identifying and confessing this complicity is difficult and painful work—one that is often side-stepped or ignored. This complicity has not necessarily come about through deliberate malice, but inheres in the very course of living in an imperfect and fallen world, a world in which the human condition is marked by sin. No matter how much we as Americans can be proud of our ideals, if we fail to acknowledge our shortcomings we only increase the probability we will perpetuate them.

As the church engages in its discernment process, it must look honestly at our society and its history. It is hard to admit that violence has characterized much of our history and continues to dominate much of our current behavior. The land in which we live was frequently taken from native peoples by force. The independence we value so proudly was achieved by a violent revolutionary war. Our national wealth was advanced with the brutality of the slave system that was abolished only with a civil war. We have profited from violence used to subdue workers and to control access to natural resources.

We are addicted to violence for purposes of entertainment. Bullying is common in our schools, and violence in video games. The most popular sports often inflict injury, concussions, and trauma. More than 30,000 people are killed each year by guns, many of them suicides. In the U.S., one in every four women experience domestic violence during their lifetime. We have stationed armed forces throughout the world on a quasi-permanent basis and defend ourselves with weapons that are used in the places where others live—often striking the innocent in the effort to destroy the guilty. A large segment of our economy involves the production and sales of armaments. And for many in politics, to apologize is blasphemy or betrayal.

Much of the hurt that is experienced in our society is produced by what is termed “structural violence,” what the second affirmation calls, oppression. Our social and economic systems seem to condemn a growing number of people to lives of poverty or fear—even when public investment and other measures could boost unemployment and raise wages. Concentration of ownership and regressive taxes have enabled 1 percent of Americans to reap almost a quarter of our nation’s income every year and to control over 40 percent of our nation’s wealth. Workers overseas are paid much less and often endure far worse conditions to keep our prices low and top salaries high. An economy dependent on the burning of carbon fuels threatens not only our future, but that of others. The purchasing of influence by corporate power undercuts our democratic system. Physical assaults may not be involved or necessary in these processes, but they are nevertheless forms of violence.

It is not this report’s purpose to make a complete inventory of the extent to which we are complicit in violence. This is a task of ongoing prophetic scholarship, educational thoroughness, and moral inquiry to which the discernment being commenced by this report must address itself. The task must be ongoing; subtle forms of coercion will always emerge, carried by “sanctioned ignorance,” “false polarization,” and the confusion of “virtual” reality with actuality. Most of all, as we know through our prayers of confession, this kind of disciplined self-searching requires the capacity of the church and its members to transcend our own confining self-interest. Yet it is an essential aspect of being redeemed, of being transformed by grace. Society tends to honor the team player, the person who with excitement and verve cheers on whatever is being done. When we affirm the need for confessing our complicity we may prompt denial and hostility. To counter that normal human tendency is a vocation to heroic and prophetic humility without which the culture around us will never be healed.

It is not easy to unmask the powers. We all wear masks to some extent and therefore need others to help us take them off. Those who embrace idolatries usually believe they are defending the truth. They—and we—need to dialogue with those who differ from us—listening to them and hearing even the unspoken challenges to our views and unconscious ideologies.
Discernment means prophetic criticism even of our so-called prophetic criticism. Yet confession and apology and repentance can unlock the enormous powers of truth and love.

With regard to that unconscious complicity, theologian Walter Wink believes we have embraced “the Myth of Redemptive Violence,” the widespread belief that violence saves, that war brings peace, that might makes right. “The belief that violence ‘saves’ is so successful because it doesn’t seem to be mythic in the least,” Wink writes. “Violence simply appears to be the nature of things. It’s what works. It seems inevitable, the last and, often, the first resort in conflicts. If a god is what you turn to when all else fails, violence certainly functions as a god. What people overlook, then, is the religious character of violence. …”

From this perspective, violence is an idol, a false god. Violence does not save us from evil, sin, and death. It only adds to evil, sin, and death. As the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., put it: “The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. … Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive our hate: only love can do that.”

To the extent that we have put our faith in violence instead of God, we must repent of our idolatry, for we cannot serve two masters. As Christians we confess that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, no other. Our security does not rest in violence, but in God. On a deep level, anthropologist Rene Girard argues that the saving power of Jesus’ life comes from his unmasking the way that spirals of violence create and condemn victims who are in fact innocent. Our discipleship, instead, commits us to an upward spiral that weakens the powers of domination.

2. Structural Violence

The descending spiral of violence to which King referred often begins with “structural violence”—the social and economic structures that oppress and impoverish people, preventing them from meeting their basic human needs and realizing their full human potential. The structural violence of injustice and oppression can lead to the violence of revolt and rebellion that then leads to the retaliatory violence of government repression, which then only compounds the structural violence of injustice and oppression and leads to further revolt followed by yet more repression. This is not to say that all violent crime in poor areas is a form of revolt, but to say that those neighborhoods themselves are a form of crime against their inhabitants.

While direct physical violence is more visible and attracts more media attention (“If it bleeds, it leads”), structural violence is far more widespread and arguably does much more harm over time. We see it manifest in hunger and homelessness, poverty and disease. The processes of oppression noted above include patterns of inequality and exclusion called the “isms” of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and ethnocentrism. These patterns operate at interlocking levels—institutional (policies and practices), interpersonal (group and individual) and cultural (social norms and valuing). Most Americans know that the “isms” exist, but the common discourse in our country narrowly addresses discrimination that happens at the interpersonal level—when someone makes a blatantly derogatory comment or is accused of doing so. Most Americans are unfamiliar with how the isms operate on a more insidious social level and unaware of their exacting toll. Yet, those millions of “lives of quiet desperation” are reflections of coercive inequality. We dehumanize ourselves and degrade others by unconsciously supporting patterns that pin our opportunities for well-being on our neighbors’ marginalization. Structural violence militates against our Christian calling to be in authentic loving relationship with our neighbors, near and far.

3. Violence Against the Earth

We are also doing violence to the earth and its creatures. The globalized economy is built on the untrammeled extraction of finite resources, the exploitation of cheap labor, and a no-limits-to-growth ideology, resulting in dangerously compounding climate change. We are destroying ecosystems, depleting precious natural resources, melting glaciers, raising sea levels, and causing a massive extinction of species as our waste products like greenhouse gases alter the ecology of the entire planet. Severe weather fluctuations are already causing tragic increases in hunger. In the book Tropic of Chaos (2011), Christian Parenti warns that climate change is creating desperate refugees and the potential for serious violence in many regions.

4. The Global Context for the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars

To confess our complicity in general without grieving for the two significant wars of the last thirteen years would be fairly painless. Yet to confess without addressing the underlying dynamics is too sentimental. Here we look briefly at the context for the Afghan and Iraq wars, which is partly international structural violence, and then address the somewhat differing tragedies they involve. We return to the issues of U.S. superpower status in discussion of the fifth affirmation.

From a global perspective, we who live in the U.S. are among the richest 20 percent of the world’s population. (Consider that 40 percent of the world’s people attempt to live on less than $2 a day.) The world’s income distribution resembles the shape of a champagne glass, with the top 20 percent of the world’s people who live in the world’s wealthiest countries receiving 83 percent of the world’s income. The next 20 percent receive 10 percent of the world’s income. The remaining 60 percent of the world’s people share the 7 percent of world income that is left.
Global economic inequality is nothing new. As far back as 1948, George Kennan, head of the U.S. State Department planning staff, wrote the following in a secret policy planning study:

> We have about 50 percent of the world’s wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population. … In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. … To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentiality and day-dreaming; and our attention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our immediate national objectives. … We should cease to talk about vague and … unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.11

How do we “maintain this position of disparity”? What does it mean to “deal in straight power concepts”? Thomas L. Friedman, the foreign affairs columnist for the *New York Times*, explains it this way: “The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist—McDonald’s cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the builder of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies is called the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps.”14

Though there were multiple sources of our country’s original wealth, our privileged economic position is preserved through U.S. military power, as well as through military aid and weapons sales to governments around the world. Even though it is a violation of U.S. law, the weapons we sell to foreign governments are sometimes used by their militaries against their own people in order to maintain a stable environment for corporate investments. Militarization makes corporate-led globalization possible. Whether militarization itself is finally profitable is one of the questions that Afghanistan and Iraq raise.

5. The Iraq and Afghanistan Wars

Since the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, involving four hijacked civilian airplanes and approximately 3,000 civilian casualties, the United States has been engaged in two significant wars and a limited intervention in Libya. The war in Afghanistan has been a joint operation with NATO member armies as was the military intervention in Libya. The war in Iraq was initiated without United Nations authorization and involved a “coalition of the willing,” with Great Britain most notable among the U.S. allies. The General Assembly’s calling the Iraq War “unwise, immoral, and illegal,” was based on a clear rethinking of just war teaching: preemptive war was seen as antithetical to last resort; nonexistent weapons and regime change were not seen as just cause; unilateral action spurned the legitimate authority of the UN; and while military success was assured, democratization through military occupation was seen as a questionable way to achieve a just peace.

The Iraq and Afghanistan Wars have been extremely costly in both human and economic terms. The number of Afghans, Iraqis, and Pakistanis who have died in the fighting are estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands. Our repentence must include the long refusal of our occupation forces to count those deaths. Their survivors face many of the same issues that U.S. war veterans do, but without the medical and social support. War refugees and internally displaced persons number 7.8 million. More than 6,100 U.S. soldiers have been killed and more than 46,000 have been injured. Multiple deployments have put enormous stress on U.S. soldiers and their families, whose lives have been changed forever by the experience of war. Even after soldiers return home, war continues to take its toll through unemployment, domestic conflict, depression, alcohol and drug addiction, post-traumatic stress disorder, moral injury, and/or suicide.

The Iraq and Afghanistan Wars will cost the United States alone an estimated $3–$4 trillion when current and future veterans’ costs are added up; the costs of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and military activity by other countries involved is estimated to be another $3 trillion. Most Americans now question whether these military interventions have been worth the enormous cost in lives, national treasure, and reputation, particularly as it is not at all clear what they have achieved. This adds to an “increasing sense of the impotence of military might” (p. 11) and the belief that “the main problems of the world will not yield to military solutions,” (p. 15) as *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling* put it.

A case can be made that disproportionate militarization is bankrupting the U.S. economy and creating additional structural violence or oppression. While weapons manufacturers continue to post record profits during a deep recession, our nation’s cities and states are in a state of fiscal crisis, public services and welfare programs, especially for our more vulnerable citizens, are being slashed, and the federal debt due to war remains high.

The money we use each year to prosecute the war in Afghanistan could fund the Head Start program for the next fifteen years, but instead many children will grow up with an inferior education. With the money we spend in Afghanistan, we could provide health coverage to every American, thereby, according to a Harvard study, saving 45,000 American lives in one year. The budgets for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan could fill the budget gaps in all the states, preventing deep cuts in programs to the poor, the sick, and the uneducated. Furthermore, by some reckonings, the number one source of our nation’s debt, about which we hear so much these days, is military related—as Joshua Holland writes, “It’s a tragic irony that so much of the discussion surrounding the public debt centers on “entitlements” like Social Security (which hasn’t added a penny to the national debt) when we’re still paying for Korea and Vietnam and Grenada and Panama and the first Gulf War and Somalia and the Balkans and on and on.”15
Choices between the ability to kill militants and civilians on the other side of the globe and the ability to provide for the health and education of our children, choices to spend $700 billion over the last decade on new weapons (which by the secretary of defense’s own admission have been marginal in enhancing military capabilities) instead of spending that money on green energy or infrastructure—these are moral choices, and we are arguably making the wrong ones. The U.S. is in danger of what Paul Kennedy, author of The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, calls “imperial overstretch”—when a nation commits so many resources overseas to maintain its empire that the nation implodes from within.

In the 2010 General Assembly debate over the resolution to call for withdrawal from Afghanistan, six years after the church had called for an end to the Iraq war, it was claimed that the strategic goals for the 2001 invasion had been met with the dispersal or death of Al Qaeda leaders and downgraded military capacity of the Taliban. To stay longer was to accumulate enemies and support a corrupt government without adding much to regional or global security. Those judgments may be criticized, but they accepted a stronger initial justification for war than was the case in Iraq. Yet our moral accountability as a nation in both countries has to do not only with the invasion and occupation but the final cease fire and the future prospects for those nations. If Iraq is any indication, those prospects are not good. While our preeminent military role in the world does not make us accountable for all world problems, these two wars will be very hard to defend before the bar of history and history’s judge.

To approve this affirmation is to acknowledge the interlocking web of violence in our lives, our society, and the world, and to call the church to confession. War and oppression are closely intertwined. Engaging violence in ourselves and in the structures of our society and our world is essential to the integrity of our faith, yet daunting, complex, even overwhelming. With a spirit of repentance, then, we turn back to the heart of our faith.

C. Affirmation #3. We reclaim Jesus as Prince of Peace, Christ the Reconciler who proclaims God’s reign, who inspires the prophetic church, forgiving, healing, and undoing violence, and who overcomes evil through the cross and resurrection.

1. The Life and Teachings of Jesus

Since Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling was adopted in 1980, there has been another kind of explosion: in historical scholarship about Jesus of Nazareth. While this scholarship is enormously varied, and involves a wide range of early Christian texts, it offers the church much rich reflection on the interaction of Jesus, the peasant population, the Jerusalem authorities, and the Roman army. Many of the participants in the discernment process were familiar with works by Marcus Borg, N.T. Wright, Walter Wink, Elizabeth Schlusser Fiorenza, Elaine Pagels, John Crossan, John Meier, Richard Horsley, to name some of the best known. Jewish and Muslim scholars have added their volumes to this mix. It is safe to say that most of the discernment participants—like our steering team members—see a clear predilection for nonviolence in the example and teachings of Jesus. Scholarly opinion is more divided, but even those who emphasize Jesus’ engagement in confrontation and conflict rarely link him to violent revolution.

In this section we will look first at recent interpretations of Jesus, and then propose ways that new emphases and learnings may be considered in future Presbyterian peacemaking theology and formation.

Let us first heed Luke Timothy Johnson, however, who warns that our faith is not in the object of any scholar’s historical-critical reconstruction.16 Johnson insists that for the church the canonical collection of literary texts called the New Testament is united in witnessing to the meaning of the Jesus story, and that meaning is found in a pattern consistent with the cross and resurrection. For him: “Jesus’ existence as one of radical obedience toward God and self-disposing service toward others forms a pattern for all humanity that can be written in the heart by the Holy Spirit. It is this pattern that Paul designates as the nomos Christou (“the law of Christ,” or, better, “pattern of the Messiah”).”17 The first question, then, is whether peacemaking or nonviolence is part of that basic pattern.

Without attempting a survey, we choose very different scholarly positions from which to look at Jesus and violence, beginning with the work of Richard B. Hays in The Moral Vision of the New Testament (1996):18

Our exegetical investigation of Matthew 5: 38–48 has led to the conclusion that the passage teaches a norm of nonviolent love of enemies. … Do the other texts (than Matthew) in the canon reinforce the Sermon on the Mount’s teaching on nonviolence, or do they provide other options that might allow or require Christians to take up the sword? When the question is posed this way, the immediate result—as Barth observed—is to underscore how impressively univocal is the testimony of the New Testament writers on this point. The evangelists are unanimous in portraying Jesus as a Messiah who subverts all prior expectations by assuming the vocation of suffering rather than conquering Israel’s enemies. …

When Hays turns to Paul, he lifts up Romans 12, noting “though the governing authority bears the sword to execute God’s wrath (13:4), that is not the role of believers.” As Paul’s military metaphors make clear, “the weapons of our warfare are not merely human” (2 Cor. 10:4). Hays carries through a review of the New Testament and considers Revelation as a counsel to endurance. He considers texts that are cited to allow for violent or military action, seeing in the Temple cleansing a prophetic confrontation, and the references to soldiers “dramatize the power of the Word of God to reach even the unlikeliest people” (like tax collectors). His summary: “from Matthew to Revelation we find a consistent witness against violence and a calling to the community to follow the example of Jesus in accepting suffering rather than inflicting it.” The challenge for Hays that he faces directly is the disjunction between this interpretation of nonviolence in the New Testament and the witness of the Old Testament, which he sees providing the only possible scriptural bases for the Just War and Holy War traditions.
For contrast, we turn to a biblical scholar with a sociological starting point, who sees Jesus more focused on achieving justice than peace, per se, and leading a social movement that challenged the social order as much as it sought to reform Israel’s religious life. Nonetheless, Richard Horsley states:

Jesus, while not necessarily a pacifist, actively opposed violence, both oppressive and repressive, both political-economic and spiritual. He consistently criticized and resisted the oppressive established political-economic-religious order of his own society. Moreover, he aggressively intervened to mitigate or undo the effects of institutionalized violence, whether in particular acts of forgiveness and exorcism or in the general opening of the kingdom of God to the poor.19

Analytically, Horsley considers injustice to be a form of structural violence and sees, particularly clearly in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus’ nonviolent resistance to a host of malevolent powers. He considers his own work, including Jesus and the Spiral of Violence (1987) to provide a broader basis for nonviolence than selected quotations from Jesus and Paul, as he sees a first Century cultural context where religious and political allegiances are deeply entwined.20 Horsley’s Jesus is primarily a prophet out to renew a religious and social covenant; his interpretation, like many recent readings of Jesus, does not emphasize eschatological or apocalyptic themes, but does stress the importance of the crucifixion.

Walter Wink sees in Jesus “a third way” that resists evil through nonviolent means, an approach that outflanks and subverts aggression, sometimes by choosing to suffer. From this perspective, turning the other cheek, offering more clothing than a coat, and going the second mile are examples of the “weaker” party taking the moral initiative and humanizing the opponent, “forcing” him or her to recognize one’s own humanity without resorting to violence. This is a strategy with social and cultural implications, potentially breaking cycles of subjugation and humiliation, exposing injustice in power dynamics, and neutralizing and undermining the threat of violence.21

Wink’s interpretation is a way of accounting for a prophetic and nonviolent life that posed a clear alternative to the domination systems of his time. It does not deny the violent imagery in some of Jesus’ parables, though Margaret Aymer has shown how deeply those images go.22 It presents a Jesus of inner power who, when a Samaritan village refused to host him, refuses his disciples’ idea “to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them.” Jesus rebukes them, saying, ‘You do not know what spirit you are of, for the Son of Man has not come to destroy the lives of human beings but to save them’ (Lk. 9:51–62). Similarly, images of Jesus’ exorcizing evil can also be seen as his engaging with violent forces, but in peace scholar Andrea Bartoli’s words, they are not so much nonviolent as “de-violencing.” That kind of healing can involve spiritual convulsion, as it undoes or disarms the violent spirits from those possessed. This suggests that Jesus may not fit a specific “nonviolent” definition, but maintains that his willingness to face conflict was never a choice for violence.

Of Jesus’ death on the cross, Martin Luther King Jr. said: “Jesus eloquently affirmed from the cross a higher law. He knew that the old eye-for-an-eye philosophy would leave everyone blind. He did not seek to overcome evil with evil. He overcame evil with good.”23 “Those who want to save their life will lose it,” Jesus says, “and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it” (Mk. 8:35). Following Christ involves sacrifice. It leads to the cross. But it also holds out the promise of resurrection and new life.

2. The Example of the Early Church

Following on from the life and example of Jesus Christ is the important realization that for the first three centuries, most Christians embraced a nonviolent witness. Early Christians in Rome refused to engage in any violence because they trusted that their love for fellow citizens would point people to the new day dawning in Jesus Christ. The first Christians lived according to a nonviolent code, with frequent martyrdom.

Early Christian theologians, reading the Hebrew Scriptures through the lens of Christian faith, took with utter seriousness the prophecies of Micah and Isaiah, asserting that the Messiah had indeed come, and that the time had come to enact their prophecies of beating their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. They did not interpret the violence in their Scriptures (our Old Testament) as giving them license to kill. Indeed, there is no affirmation of killing or war in the writings of the early Church, nor is there the idea that Christians making war would make the world a better or safer place.

The early writings are replete with prohibitions against killing of any sort, some of which even denied the Eucharist to persons who engaged in such acts. The early Christians would not watch killings, either by viewing legal executions or by attending gladiatorial games. There is scholarly debate over why the early Christians avoided violence, and some Christian soldiers in that period have been identified, but the general witness is clear.

In the fourth century, the church’s relationship to the Roman Empire and to violence changed. The Roman emperor Constantine, converted to Christianity in 312 CE and began promoting the faith instead of persecuting it. By 380 CE, Christianity would become the state religion. During this period, Christians started to take up arms, sometimes with inducements of money or property. The change was such that while in 303 CE it was generally forbidden for Christians to serve in the military, by 416 CE only Christians were allowed to serve.

Christian reflection on the wars of the Roman Empire contributed to the creation of the just war doctrine, developed initially by Bishop Augustine of Hippo on ideas from Bishop Ambrose of Milan and Cicero. The just war theory established
of power in families, tribes, nations, and empires lays the foundation for what philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff calls, “world-formative Christianity.” For Reformed Christians, in fact, his early book, *Until Justice and Peace Embrace* (1983), has been seen as a counterpoint to John Howard Yoder’s, *The Politics of Jesus* (1972), a ground-breaking Mennonite case for the relevance of a pacifist Jesus and a pacifist church to the world. The difference in focus and scope of argument illustrates the difference in approaches. In Wolterstorff’s words:

> If the Bible were to be a comprehensive guide for our social activities, it was essential that the Calvinist take the Old Testament seriously. Appeals to the Old Testament in Calvinism have a function similar to appeals to nature in Thomist Catholicism (and in Lutheranism). It is fascinating to observe, in his *Letters and Papers from Prison*, that as Bonhoeffer moves toward world-formative Christianity and away from a formative version of Christianity based on inwardness and religious practices, he also begins to emphasize the importance of the Old Testament. He saw, as did the Calvinists, that the New Testament in isolation gives insufficient guidance for the new praxis.25

With the Old Testament comes the need to interpret the violence attributed to God and that attributed to human beings, and to do that in relation to newer views of Jesus. Those views, as we have seen, show him avoiding violence but not conflict, seeking reconciliation with justice, and resisting evil by yielding to God in such a way that Albert Curry Winn called him the original “reverse fighter.”26 The third affirmation proposes new thinking for the church, such as that done in Jerome F.D. Creach’s *Violence in Scripture* (2013), which wrestles with the bloodiest texts about conquest, holy war, vengeance, hell, and judgment, and does so in response to portrayals of Jesus like that of Richard Hays’ above.27 The challenge for those of us influenced by Christian Realism is not to use the Old Testament only to confirm Reinhold Niebuhr’s famous quip, “original sin is the only empirically verifiable doctrine of the Christian faith.” This is untrue to the Old Testament, which gives us visions of shalom, rules to restrain evil, and prophets of a new covenant, and unfair to Niebuhr, whose senses of paradox and irony always helped him move “beyond tragedy.”28

Much of the traditional Reformed reading of pacifism was that it was impossibly perfectionist and entailed renunciation of power (as in priestly vows) or withdrawal from the world (whether in monasteries or in sectarian communities like those of the Anabaptists). It may have worked for the early church, so that thinking went, but they were not powerless and on the margins by choice. Jesus’ teachings were sometimes considered impossible ideals, or to be a short-term ethic in anticipation of an imminent end of the world. This background section has suggested that better argued interpretations of Jesus’ mission can help renew our peacemaking witness.

At the same time, it is clear that faithful resistance—as much of our General Assembly just peacemaking statements recognize—has a force to it, and thus that nonviolence itself can be a form of coercion. Daniel Ott states this explicitly in his argument for “A Realistic, Public, Christian Pacifism,” arguing that “A realistic pacifism must be a pragmatic pacifism that acknowledges that even physical coercion may in a few instances be necessary as a result of our ‘responsibility to protect.’” Yet for Ott, even in policing, “nonviolent strategies are morally superior … through the ability of nonviolence to engage in conflict while honoring the moral primacy of human life.”29 This is to anticipate the next affirmation and its supporting background rationale.

Two final observations may help us in reclaiming or renewing our understanding of Jesus the Peacemaker. The first has to do with the context for both most of the Old Testament and for the early church. That context was empire. The Hebrew people were first enslaved by and then liberated from the Egyptian Empire. The nation of Israel was conquered first by the Assyrian Empire, and later by the Babylonian Empire. Eventually, the Judeans living in exile in Babylon were allowed to return to Jerusalem as a result of the expansion of the Persian Empire. And the entire New Testament takes place in the context of a Roman Empire supported by conquest and slavery. Both John the Baptist, for us the last of the great Hebrew prophets, and Jesus of Nazareth, the One to whom he pointed, called for repentance, proclaiming the Reign of God. They spoke of the Reign of God as an alternative social order based on a rival set of values to those of the Roman Empire. Here is the choice put before the early Christians, imagined in contemporary preaching style:
For all its monumental cultural achievements, the Roman Empire was a system of domination; the Reign of God on the other hand, is a domination-free order. The Roman Empire was based on economic exploitation; the Reign of God is based on economic justice. The Roman Empire was based on violent pride; the Reign of God on nonviolent love. The Roman Empire projected a matrix of iron-fisted control; the Reign of God sings the songs of freedom. The Roman Empire was built on layers of oppression; the Reign of God is founded on the hope of liberation. The Roman Empire’s brutality struck fear in its subjects; the Reign of God offers the balm of healing. The Roman Empire promised peace through victory; the Reign of God promises peace through justice.30

The point of these illustrations is that international relations are complex and that the churches, to offer credible witness, need to have capacity for analysis as well as passion for peacemaking. In this section we present first emerging nonviolent strategies that are clearly preferable to continued dictatorships protected by short-sighted alliances, commercial interests, and massive weapons sales. We note the contributions made by Just War and Just Peacemaking categories, and their limitations. (See Appendix A for brief listings of Just War, Just Peacemaking and nonviolence principles.) This section concludes with the claim that the church’s capacity to “nourish(es) the moral life of the nation” (to quote The Believers’ Calling) depends on its own capacity to nurture a moral imagination to envision new relationships and take risks for peace.

1. Nonviolent Direct Action and Nonviolent Ethos

Nonviolent direct action, best known from the work of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., has proven to be a powerful means of wielding power in a variety of conflicts. This is the source behind the earlier examples: the nonviolent
“people power” that freed the Philippines, the pro-democracy movements in Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia that ousted communist regimes in 1989, the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, supported by international economic pressure, that brought an end to white minority rule. With them are lesser known cases, such as the nonviolent student movement in Serbia that ousted a weakened Slobodan Milosevic in the year 2000, or the peace achieved in Mozambique with the explicit assistance of Roman Catholic mediators. Christians participated in these movements for social change, using methods of nonviolent action reminiscent of the civil rights movement that changed the United States.

Nonviolent direct action—the use of protest marches, strikes, boycotts, sit-ins, and more—is a means of wielding power, a technique for waging conflict, just as guerrilla warfare, conventional warfare, and terrorism are also means of waging conflict. Nonviolent direct action is distinct from some methods of conflict resolution in that it seeks to surface, escalate, or intensify, conflict. It does not require its practitioners to be committed to a philosophy or ethic of nonviolence, so long as they follow the methods and stay united. Indeed, people often choose nonviolent action for pragmatic reasons rather than religious, moral, or ethical ones.

Nonviolent people power movements have shown themselves capable of overthrowing dictators, thwarting coups d’état, defending against invasions and occupations, challenging unjust systems, promoting human rights, and resisting genocide. A recent study, “Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,” by Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, compared the effectiveness of violent and nonviolent resistance campaigns in conflicts between non-state and state actors between 1900 and 2006. The study found that “major nonviolent campaigns have achieved success 53 percent of the time, compared with 26 percent for violent resistance campaigns.” Jesus’ third way of nonviolent action may not work in all circumstances, but the historical record shows that its contemporary analogues are a powerful means of engaging in conflict and can be used successfully in struggles for justice, human rights, and self-determination.

The work of nonviolence theorist, Gene Sharp, From Dictatorship to Democracy, was widely used as a manual during Arab Awakening. Widely translated and reprinted, it contains practical guidance for assessing the weak points of repressive governments and building movements, along with a list of 198 nonviolent methods. Sharp’s strategy would suggest, for example, that though the Syrian protesters were right to try nonviolent means at first, they had not prepared enough of the population for the regime’s response and the influx of extremists pursuing a proxy war. Though Sharp (himself a minister’s son) stresses the pragmatic applicability of the strategies to struggles anywhere, as Christians we are particularly interested in relating them to our “world-transformative” ethos and motivating hope.

Nonviolence may be thought of as both an end and a means. It is an end in that it refers to the future world we long for—a world free from violence and war, free from hunger and poverty, free from injustice and oppression, and full of God’s love, justice, and healing. We may understand it as Jesus’ “kingdom of God”; Martin Luther King Jr.’s ‘beloved community,’ or Walter Wink’s ‘domination-free order.’ Leo Tolstoy’s reading of Jesus in the Gospels influenced Gandhi in finding the satyagraha or truthforce in his religious tradition. Henry David Thoreau’s civil disobedience would be an example of nonviolence as an ethic or applied philosophy of life. As an ethic it has often been disparaged as a form of withdrawal or an attempt to escape complicity in life’s power struggles. Certainly parts of the Mennonite tradition reflect that withdrawal, while Quakers often represent deep and tenacious engagement, even with powers they oppose. Yet the paradigmatic Mennonite story of Dirk Willems, escaping imprisonment for his faith, yet turning back to rescue a persecutor from drowning, and then burnt at stake, is not about withdrawal. It is about being willing to suffer out of love.

These alternative visions and actions can contribute to the church’s embodied witness by helping it be a “contrast model” to more violent, hierarchical, or competitive social relations. Nor is nonviolence or pacifism based solely on a personal ethic of imitating Jesus. A communal ecclesiology can involve clear beliefs about everyone sharing in the gifts of the Spirit and about God’s interaction within human nature and within dedicated, worshiping communities. Personal and collective forms of nonviolent action are described later in the report under the heading of “things that make for peace,” but they are ideally rooted in the life of the church.

Thus we wonder and ask the church to wonder with us: what would it look like if the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reoriented more of its common life around the Prince of Peace and reemphasized the nonviolent example of his life and witness in our preaching and teaching, our spiritual formation and worship, and our public witness in our violent world?

Many Presbyterians have rarely given serious attention and reflection to questions of violence and nonviolence, war and peace. They have not heard these subjects addressed in sermons, nor have they talked about them in Christian education classes. We heard from many participants that the Peace Discernment process was their first introduction to the ideas of Christian nonviolence. At the same time, many were also unfamiliar with the actual content of the Just War and Just Peacemaking approaches. As a denomination, we need to do a much better job of teaching peace to people in the pews.

2. Just War Principles and Just Peacemaking Initiatives

These background sections have mentioned the just war tradition at various points, starting with the quote from Chaplain Kermit Johnson, who applied its categories of ethical decision to nuclear war. He concluded that even various “tactical” nuclear war scenarios could not be justified. In light of Augustine’s insistence on right intention, Ron Stone argued that the
threat of “mutually assured destruction” could not be justified, even though the Roman Catholic bishops’ pastoral letter, “The Challenge of Peace,” accepted deterrence conditionally, saying it was not “adequate as a long term basis for peace.” That was in 1983. The General Assembly’s opposition to nuclear war in *Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age* (1988) is also based partly on just war criteria, as was its stand on the Iraq war (2004). The clear implication of the church’s stand against the Iraq “war of choice” is to rule out the purported doctrine of preemptive war practiced by the second Bush administration in absence of a real or imminent threat. Indeed, if the discernment discussions revealed any consensus on a specific policy, it was to oppose preemptive war.

The just war tradition is intended to serve as a constraint on the use of military force—to minimize the violence used in achieving a particular objective. All of the criteria must be satisfied if military action (jus ad bello) is to be considered morally justifiable: just cause, right intention, proper authority, last resort, reasonable hope of success. Once a nation has committed to military action, that conduct (jus in bello) must adhere to two additional criteria—proportionality and discrimination (avoiding noncombatants).

Though we have seen the utility of just war criteria as a means of assessment, their flexibility is often exploited by those seeking war or defending the necessity of certain war practices. Critics question the practical value of just war criteria if they do not give clear direction to decision makers about which course of action is more moral. Some in the Christian Realist camp challenge the “natural law” bases of just war (such as the right to self-defense) and doubt that war can ever be a fully rule-governed activity.

A case in point: World War II, the so-called “Good War,” is widely considered to have been a “just war.” However, it did not meet all of the criteria of a just war. U.S. involvement in the war was certainly prompted by just causes—responding to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and countering the aggression of Nazi Germany in Europe. But the conduct of the war devolved into “total war” with both sides bombing cities indiscriminately, killing hundreds of thousands of noncombatants, culminating in the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in pursuit of unconditional surrender and possibly to signal Russia. The 158th General Assembly (1946) responded: “Christians know that war is evil. The use of the atomic bomb means that war reaches a degree of destruction which multiplies this evil beyond human concept.” They went on to call for “… immediate cessation of the manufacture of atomic bombs.”

Despite the elasticity of just war criteria, as long as U.S. military actions are presented as morally justifiable based on those criteria (whether or not there is a declaration of war), it is important that Presbyterians be well-versed in this tradition so that they can participate intelligently in the public debate and not be deceived by national leaders bent on using military force. The 1988 *Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age* statement recognized that most acceptance of war is based not on just war thinking, but on often unthinking obedience to the state and political forces; hence various means of resistance were seen as consistent with Reformed teaching.

The most important baseline approach to the just war tradition that has evolved in post-World War II ethical thinking is to underline the presupposition or grounded preference for nonviolence to be used with just war criteria. This understanding is augmented in the just peacemaking preventive measures that build on the principle that war is a last resort. Resort to violence in war, as many in the military know as well as civilian victims, is inevitably tragic and frequently means suspending moral criteria in the name of survival. Christopher Hedges, a former war correspondent, has also illuminated the virtually addictive thrill of combat violence.

The ten Just Peacemaking practices were put together by an ecumenical team of ethicists coordinated by Professor Glen Stassen of Fuller Theological Seminary. Based on many lessons from peacemaking involvements and perceived limits of Just War thinking, these practices focus most on how conflicts can be avoided—not least by taking what are called independent initiatives to reduce tensions and thus avoid overt hostilities. (See Appendix C.) An interfaith application of the principles has been published as well. The just peacemaking practices do not presume a pacifist basis, and hence are not an alternative to just war principles, even though they seek to “abolish war.” They underline how much war often results from specific failures of leadership and diplomacy, and from predictable weaknesses of international institutions—including a United Nations hamstrung by Security Council members with individual nation veto power and low standards of member behavior. The international justice system to protect human rights is also kept weak, partly by a United States that refuses jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and stands outside of basic treaties.

Just peacemaking, like active nonviolence, thus illuminates how much the just war approach is tied to nation states and their sovereignty. Citizenship in nation states is a basis for grounding much human rights law, but human rights law also points beyond and within states, many of which mistreat their people. A searching critique of the just peacemaking construct by one of its ethicist participants points both to its antecedents, in the “Six Pillars of Peace” of the Federal Council of Churches, and the limitations of putting too much weight on alternatives to national policies: “Until just peacemaking incorporates more attention to power, national definitions of purpose, diplomacy, and biblical realism derived from the prophets, it will remain too idealistic.”

What just peacemaking does well is to introduce a whole new body of practical measures for conflict resolution and reconciliation forged in some very difficult circumstances, often with strong Christian inspiration. We look more at “the
things that make for peace” in the next section, but simply to look at just peacemaking practice 4: “Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness.” This partly reflects Donald W. Shriver’s *An Ethic for Enemies* (1995), which applied forgiveness in political and social situations. Among the groups explicitly focusing on forgiveness are Fr. Leonel Narvaez’s Schools of Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Colombia and elsewhere in Latin America, seeking to help heal the effects of “dirty wars,” and the work of Donna Hicks on ways to restore dignity to victims of violence and humiliation.42

What the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other U.S. Christian bodies have not done fully or effectively is to provide a moral analysis of certain major developments in war-making. These would include what is close to the abdication by Congress of its power to declare war; the movement of many combat functions to private contractors and voluntary enlistees which has the effect of making it more and more a profit making enterprise (often financed by borrowed money); and the development of incredibly sophisticated weaponry in robotics, nanotechnology, drones, and more. (The 2014 ACSWP resolution on drones and surveillance addresses some of this.)

3. The Church and the Military

As long as Presbyterians continue to serve in the U.S. military, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a responsibility to care for active duty soldiers, veterans, and their families. Our denomination does this by providing chaplains to the military through the Presbyterians Caring for Chaplains and Military Personnel (PCCMP). The mission of these ministers is “to provide military personnel with a visible reminder of the HOLY in the midst of combat and chaos.” Chaplains serve as noncombatants; they are prohibited from carrying firearms. They offer worship, prayer, and Bible study, and spend much of their time providing pastoral care and counseling to the soldiers in their units. Chaplains also may serve as a moral voice on the battlefield, where life and death decisions are being made on a daily basis. Chaplains are often the only ones in the chain of command who can hear and hold the terror of young soldiers facing death, and hear and hold the remorse in taking the life of another human being. Chaplains themselves carry a large burden in being present in war as enemies also made in the image of God are objectified and killing becomes routinized. Indeed, military training is designed to break down the innate reluctance to take the lives of our fellow human beings, to make killing normal, normative, and necessary. Furthermore, war doesn’t end when the deployment is over; its lingering effects continue long after veterans return home.

Our congregations also have a role to play in supporting military families while their loved ones are deployed overseas and after they return home. Multiple deployments put enormous stress on soldiers and on the spouses and children they leave behind. Even when soldiers return physically unscathed, parts of the soul can remain on the battlefield. This can mean depression, suicidal thoughts, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, sometimes augmented by serious doubts or lack of support for the wars. Veterans need the love and care of congregations who will welcome them home and listen to them with wisdom. The church has a special responsibility to help heal the moral and spiritual wounds of its sons and daughters who have been scarred by war. For instance, in the Greek Orthodox tradition there is a ritual cleansing from the spiritual defilement of violence. A new approach to the “moral injury” of war has been pioneered by Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, working with retired Army Chaplain Herman Keizer.44

The PC(USA) also has a responsibility to our youth and young adults to help them examine their own moral consciences and to work through the ethical arguments for serving in the military versus declaring oneself a conscientious objector to war. Young people are presented with these important decisions early in their lives. We fail them if we do not equip them to make these decisions faithfully and wisely. The 1969 General Assembly report on *War, Peace, & Conscience* is still relevant here, even though there is no current military conscription. The major report, *Ministry to Persons in the Armed Forces*, adopted by the General Assembly in 1975, contains much valuable analysis of both chaplaincy work and short term programs like the Emergency Ministry on Conscience and War of the late 1960s.35

4. Inviting in the Moral Imagination

In our peace discernment process, we were inspired by the writings and the grassroots peacemaking work of John Paul Lederach, a Mennonite veteran of “peace-building” who has mediated conflicts for the last thirty years. Others, like Andrea Bartoli in the Roman Catholic tradition, and the emerging “forgiveness” school, also introduce imagination in cultivated ways. Lederach identifies the moral imagination as the capacity to imagine and design processes within the real-life challenges of violence without being caught up in destructive patterns. Lederach maintains:

*If we are to survive as a global community, we must understand the imperative nature of giving birth and space to the moral imagination in human affairs.*

*We must face the fact that much of our current system for responding to deadly local and international conflict is incapable of overcoming cycles of violent patterns because our imagination has been corralled and shackled by the very parameters and sources that create and perpetuate violence.*48

The moral imagination is activated when “politics as usual” fails to deliver. The moral imagination requires the capacity to risk a new world. This risk is embedded in three related capacities: to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships in which all parties are knit together, to embrace the complexity of every conflict, and to act creatively, especially given the risks it takes to imagine peace. Peace-building requires that people be able to envision their interconnectedness and mutuality. Daniel Ott, in his adaptation of Christian Realism, emphasizes how much peacemakers have to see that real change is possible and not be stuck in fatalism or determinism. Without the inner strength of hope, Christians would not have led in the struggles to abolish slavery, honor women’s equality, pay workers fairly, protect the rights of children, or fight global warming today.
Moral imagination also involves the capacity to rise above polarities of “us and them” and divisions of “with us or against us,” and reach beyond accepted meanings. “Paradoxical curiosity” is the gift of respecting complexity, seeking something beyond what is visible, and discovering unexpected potentialities. To take a risk is to step into the unknown without any guarantee of success or safety. For many people caught in conflict, violence is known, and peace is a mystery. Because peace-building typically requires people to move toward a new, mysterious, and unexpected future, it is a difficult journey. And yet, Christ clearly calls us to join him in risking peace and transforming conflicts by boldly practicing the things that make for peace.

E. Affirmation #5: As disciples of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves to work first for nonviolent change in our personal and communal lives, to risk calling our nation back from the practices of empire to the highest ideals of our heritage, and to practice boldly the things that make for peace.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to seek first the kingdom of God. Peacemaking is part of our seeking that reign or commonwealth where God’s will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Until that day, prophetic discipleship involves risk, and in this section we realize our proposal may challenge many. We propose it, not so much that our country’s national security be at risk, but for our church to challenge the way our nation has extended its understanding of national security into the world.

It is clear, after more than twelve years of war, that a majority of Presbyterians are deeply concerned about the enormous human and economic costs of war—the hundreds of thousands killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the millions of people displaced by the violence, the thousands of U.S. soldiers killed or injured, the trillions of dollars spent and the damage done to our economy. This report has noted that a majority of Presbyterians are also deeply worried about the pervasive violence in U.S. culture—in gun violence, sports, entertainment, and our tolerance for hunger, poverty, abuse, and neglect. Just as we seek to be just and loving in our own lives and in our congregations, so as Reformed Christians we believe the church is called to invite the nations of the world into new understandings of how to respond to violence in our time. To many, the church is called by the scriptures to be a counter-cultural community, as it was in its first three centuries of growth, pointing toward the kingdom of God.

In this section we look at the sometimes controversial concept of empire, understanding that the U.S. is not the only empire, and that empires come in several kinds. Under that heading we address the purposes of power and propose that our peacemaking calling means helping our nation change its orientation to the world, from superpower to something less grandiose. We do not see the U.S. losing its military preeminence any time soon, but it would be good to be number one again in some other measures of national achievement. Attacks on “empire” are nothing new: Christians have been comparing their governments to Rome from the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment through to our day. And yet, the word still names with power the human and economic costs of war—the hundreds of thousands killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the millions of people displaced by the violence, the thousands of U.S. soldiers killed or injured, the trillions of dollars spent and the damage done to our economy. This report has noted that a majority of Presbyterians are also deeply worried about the pervasive violence in U.S. culture—in gun violence, sports, entertainment, and our tolerance for hunger, poverty, abuse, and neglect. Just as we seek to be just and loving in our own lives and in our congregations, so as Reformed Christians we believe the church is called to invite the nations of the world into new understandings of how to respond to violence in our time. To many, the church is called by the scriptures to be a counter-cultural community, as it was in its first three centuries of growth, pointing toward the kingdom of God.

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Thus this affirmation lifts up a vision of God’s Reign of justice and peace as an alternative standard to power relations predicated primarily on force. The United States is not unique in the inevitable competition among nations seeking their own interests. China, Russia, and other major powers maintain empires through trade, alliances, and force. Ethnically different sections of some countries may be controlled by majorities and even internally colonized. Our role remains dominant, however, despite the tragedies of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the interests for which we sustain our massive military presence around the world remain largely unquestioned. On one level, it is honest patriotism to challenge U.S. foreign and military policies that seek to dominate the rest of the world in order to maintain our “American Way of Life” at the expense of others, especially “the least of these.” But it is also a matter of Christian discipleship, and this requires us always to be clear who “we” are: Christians and citizens who do not confuse the cross with the flag.

To say we seek nonviolent change first is to acknowledge that for many Presbyterians as individuals and as citizens there may be a last resort to violence. Yet our first goal or presupposition is peace, with justice, and our dispositions and our disciplines can be much strengthened in this direction. Our confirmation and adult education classes can teach forgiveness, reconciliation, and conflict resolution as practical strategies, and our public witness can look more wisely and critically at the national interests we are called to fund or defend. To support this recommendation is not only to seek to be nonviolent in our own lives, but to seek to reorient our society away from the lure of empire and its structures of domination toward the promotion of a sustainable global community in which everyone’s basic human needs are met and security assured.

1. Colonialism, Empire, and Post-Colonial Empire

The church stood in opposition to the Roman Empire until the fourth century, when it arguably began a long symbiotic relationship. As subsequent European empires expanded, they did so often with the blessing of the Church. Explorers and conquistadors conquered lands and peoples with Christian missionaries at their side. This was true of the Spanish, the Portuguese, the French, and the British, as they all came to the New World in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. Elsewhere in the world, powerful nations exercised their power to control the land and resources of others in a variety of ways, often settling regions, dispossessing native inhabitants, imposing new languages, cultures, and religions. For some one-time colonies, even after independence, relationships of dependency remained with the former colonizers.
In the case of the United States, original hopes of being a New Israel took new forms on the frontier and manifest destiny led to wars of conquest, however rationalized. Pax Romana became Pax Americana. In the 20th century the U.S. has controlled countries by supporting military dictators, such as Marcos in the Philippines, the Somozas in Nicaragua, and the Shah in Iran. We extend our influence and leverage by providing governments with military and economic aid, and with military equipment comes training and enduring relationships with foreign militaries, whatever their human rights records. Where there has been resistance to U.S. hegemony, whether it be the Cuban Revolution, or the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua, the Iranian Revolution in some respects, the U.S. has reacted with military and economic force.

As Christians living in the U.S. today, difficult as it may be, it is incumbent upon us to recognize that we live in what is perceived to be the heart of empire. Even in our own faith community, the World Alliance (now Communion) of Reformed Churches, issued a declaration containing a sophisticated concept of empire that still delivers mail to our address. The Accra Assembly (2004) defined the term: “In using the term “empire” we mean the coming together of economic, cultural, political and military power that constitutes a system of domination led by powerful nations to protect and defend their own interests.”47 That declaration criticized the unregulated or “neoliberal” market system in ways that were prophetic in light of the credit crash of 2008, but its larger claim was that economic globalization was strengthening inequality among and within nations, to the benefit of those at the top of a hegemonic order. We may not think easily about “hegemony,” but that’s part of the point. As Americans, we don’t think twice about the U.S. maintaining approximately 750 overseas military bases in 130 countries. But imagine some other country wanting to operate a military base on U.S. soil!

Given the freedom and prosperity most Presbyterians experience inside the U.S., we don’t often challenge the status quo, except perhaps on domestic surveillance. If we raise our voices in opposition to U.S. empire, we may not speak very loudly. But like Jesus, John the Baptist, and the Hebrew prophets before them, the Church today has a prophetic calling. As the Body of Christ, the Church continues the work of Christ in the world. We have a responsibility to speak truth to power, to challenge the status quo, to be a voice of conscience to our nation and to the world.

2. Aspects of “Empire” in U.S. Policy Today

Three crucial developments in U.S. foreign and military policy have arisen since 1980: the Carter Doctrine, the Powell Doctrine, and the Bush Doctrine. The Carter Doctrine says that the U.S. government reserves the right to use military power to guarantee access to Middle East oil. The Powell Doctrine expressed the U.S. aspiration to “full spectrum dominance,” that is, the ability of the U.S. military to bring dominating military force to bear on any situation anywhere on the planet. The Bush Doctrine of “preventive war” claims that the U.S. government has the right to “defend” itself against putative or imagined threats by striking adversaries preemptively. All three of these foreign policy strategies rely on a military role and can be termed, “militarism,” though the Obama administration has criticized the Bush doctrine and not stated a doctrine for its own increasing reliance on drones and special operations forces.

For most of our history, the size of the U.S. military mirrored the immediate threat or task to which it was directed. After the end of the Cold War, the size and capability of our military seemed to take on a life of its own, independent of any specific threats. Americans had grown to see it as their right and responsibility to police the world, and powerful interests benefited. Then the tragedy of 9/11 occurred, prompting a virtual doubling of military and surveillance expenditure even independent of the two wars, which were funded by debt.

Today our nation’s ability to project armed force beyond our borders is second to none. We have the best trained and equipped armed forces in the world, and we spend more on our military than do the countries with the next ten highest military budgets combined. The United States is by far the largest arms dealer in the world. U.S. weapons sales tripled in 2011 to a record high of $66.3 billion, accounting for more than three-quarters of the global arms market. The U.S. military budget is larger than all other federal programs except Social Security. The U.S. retains a web of military bases around the world from which to project force, carry on surveillance, and protect oil and other resources. U.S. military intervention had become relatively normal since the end of the Cold War—in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, the Persian Gulf, and then Afghanistan and Iraq II opened new horizons, including Pakistan, Yemen, and various military assistance operations in the Western Hemisphere. Hardly a year or two has passed without a significant military action. Living in a state of war has become the rule rather than the exception.46

National security has become the overarching interest with which the United States approaches the world. Since “the war on terror” began, covert operations, surveillance, and drone missiles have taken on a central role. The growth in the U.S. intelligence community has been staggering. According to a July 2011 series in The Washington Post, some 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies then worked on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence, with an estimated 854,000 people holding top-secret security clearances. The threat of terror is not to be dismissed, but that label may conceal the way that globalization creates cross-border networks of grievance and covert operations kept secret to us (such as providing arms, training, surveillance data) de-stabilize traditional societies.49

Perhaps more importantly, the entire spectrum of our nation’s engagement with the world is becoming more militarized. U.S. military forces are increasingly being used to do things that have not usually been considered part of their job—things like nation building, which had been handled by the State Department and through international diplomacy. The extent to
which our nation’s priorities have been skewed toward the military is illustrated by the resources we invest in it compared to what we spend on diplomacy and development. The base funding of the Department of Defense is more than ten times that of the State Department and USAID. Rather than a once hoped for “peace dividend,” our military planning is still guided by the goal of “full spectrum dominance,” and remains predicated on maintaining overwhelming superiority.

There are voices for change within the military itself. One of the more comprehensive comes from Captain Wayne Porter, USN, and Colonel Mark Mykleby, USMC, whose proposal for a new “National Strategic Narrative” was endorsed and summarized by Anne-Marie Slaughter, a professor of international affairs and briefly director of Policy Planning in the State Department. Their proposal is for five shifts in approach:

1. from a dominant position of control to credible influence in a more open geopolitical system;
2. from containment to sustainability, based on domestic re-development and better modeling of the behavior we seek in other nations;
3. from deterrence and defense to civilian engagement and competition, which would re-emphasize trade and diplomacy, while still modernizing “a security complex that includes all domestic and foreign policy assets”;
4. from zero sum to positive sum global politics/economics,” preferring interdependence and universal values to isolation and exclusion of other nations;
5. from national security to national prosperity and security,” a shift that would involve a new National Prosperity and Security Act to replace the 1947 National Security Act.

In Slaughter’s summary, she sees the officers adjusting the balance between exceptionalism and universalism toward the latter value, still seeking to be “leader of the free world,” but in a healthier and actually less military way.

3. Economic Drivers or National Purposes

President Eisenhower’s prophetic warning about the unwarranted influence of the military-industrial complex from 1961 has become more relevant than ever. More accurately called the military-industrial-congressional complex, or “the iron triangle,” it is an interlocking system of mutually reinforcing interests with very little outside oversight. Supported by “political engineering” that distributes military contracts across many congressional districts, the complex creates and sustains its own bureaucratic momentum. The question is simply how much private interests are dictating national interests, and whether we have come to confuse such interests with national purposes? Nonviolence seeks to put a moral bottom line under foreign policy, while peacemaking works more broadly to see that our purposes remain larger than our interests.

The United States’ vast military and intelligence establishments go far beyond the intent or imagination of our nation’s Founders, whose views could loosely be called isolationist, opposed to ‘foreign entanglements’ in John Adams’s words. George Washington himself counseled against a significant standing army: “Overgrown military establishments are under any form of government inauspicious to liberty, and are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican liberty” (Farewell Address, September 17, 1796). And James Madison wrote: “Of all enemies to public liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few.”

By contrasting the practices of empire with “the highest ideals of our heritage,” we affirm that our country should have a significant role in the world and one of benefit to all. It is a key role of the church to help inspire our culture to see new possibilities, and it is not isolationist to be opposed to much military intervention. At times the use of power is justified and may serve those high ideals of democracy and world community; the danger is both the momentum of our enormous arsenal calling to be used, and the mindset that may confuse power and responsibility.

4. Challenges in Pulling the United States Back from “Empire” Practices

Professor Andrew Bacevich, a career military officer now a professor of political science and incisive commentator on American military policy, analyzes a phenomenon he terms “Washington rules.” These rules consist of the “American credo,” which is the assumption that the United States is “exceptional” or “indispensable”—that it alone has the duty and the calling to “lead, save, liberate, and ultimately transform the world.” Complementing the belief in American exceptionalism is a consensus across the spectrum of the American political elite regardless of political party. This consensus insists that international peace and order require the U.S. to project military power anywhere across the globe and that the U.S. follow a policy of global interventionism. The twin pillars of “Washington rules”—American exceptionalism and the global police role—have a stranglehold on American foreign and military policy, according to Bacevich. Voices that question this consensus, as the church has done on numerous occasions, are ruled out as outliers, too radical, or naïve and unrealistic. The result is a self-reinforcing system of decision-making that discounts the calls for moral restraint or efforts to see the other nation’s point of view.

Therefore, the church must be realistic about the nature of its influence. In light of the Iron Triangle noted above, three main factors influence military spending: (1) powerful multi-national corporations have a vested interest in perpetuating the machinery of war and seeing it as a necessity. Weapons must be used and new orders placed for profits to be maintained over time; (2) political careers must be continued and economic benefits from the military-industrial complex deliver the goods to
constituencies back home, even if other forms of public investment would create more jobs; and (3) the dramatic rise in the power of the Pentagon and the massive “defense” establishment over the past seventy years has created a huge and dominant sector of government with ever-increasing demands. These three extremely powerful factors in the decision-making process regarding war form a political “micro-climate” largely impervious to outside influence. In fact, the phrase “micro-climate” is deceptive, for it is an enormous part of our country’s life, too often underestimated by churches and other reforming groups.

It is true that the Reformed tradition has long affirmed that the state can indeed be an instrument of God’s purposes in history (Romans 13). But it is also true that the Word of God warns us that the state can also be an instrument of the Beast (Revelations 13). These texts pose the basic question of whether the United States functions more as an empire pursuing its own interests than as a faithful instrument of God’s will. In these historical circumstances, nonviolence represents a counterlogic, a sharper contrast, and a counterweight to the machinery of permanent war and seemingly perpetual cycles of violence. The Reformed tradition makes careful provision for responsible resistance to government overreach, based on its covenantal vision of national purposes, and this more constructive vision is the core of the alternatives to misused power that the church seeks to present. That covenantal vision, in fact, was expressed in Puritan John Winthrop’s first use of Jesus’s metaphor of a “city set on a hill” for the new settlement they were building. Nowadays we are clearer, perhaps, than Winthrop was, that human rights and respect for international law are essential building blocks in any such construction, but he was clear enough that for the community to last “we must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities for the supply of others’ necessities.”

5. The Things That Make for Peace

We Presbyterians are looking for direction and guidance about how we, as individuals and congregations, can take faithful and effective action to reduce violence and war, to further justice and peace. In this vein, there is broad interest in learning concrete peacemaking skills that we can use in our daily lives. Indeed, if we are to be effective peacemakers, able to actually reduce violence and injustice in our various contexts, we need to receive education and training in the “things that make for peace.” We need to study and practice nonviolent means of conflict resolution (such as nonviolent communication, negotiation, and mediation) and nonviolent methods for social change (such as faith-based community organizing and nonviolent direct action) to help bring about a more just and peaceful world. (See Appendix C for brief descriptions of these approaches.) We also need to become more familiar with just peacemaking initiatives, which can help prevent war, and just war principles, which are intended to limit war, so that we can be more effective advocates for justice and peace in the public square. Jesus’ own statement, “would that you knew this day the things that make for peace,” was addressed to the whole of Jerusalem, and was followed shortly by his “cleansing of the Temple” (Lk. 19:42–46).

6. Interfaith Understanding

Among the most important peacemaking approaches for Christians today are practices of interreligious understanding that build mutual respect and the ability to hear what is most important to the other, without vetoes or mischaracterization. Religions are often blamed for being the cause of conflict and violence in the world. Religious identity is impossible to separate from other dimensions of personal identity, yet those who blame religion isolate it as the primary causal factor. In reality, political, ethnic, and economic factors bear much more responsibility for creating the underlying conditions that lead to violent conflict. Nonetheless, religions have within them a storehouse of resources to promote peace and reconciliation and Presbyterians should be quite familiar with the Christian basics—starting with the Golden Rule—“Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Lk. 6:31)—found in some form in all of the world’s major religions. In many cases cited in Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution, edited by David Little, public dialogue between religious leaders from opposing groups can help create breakthroughs for reconciliation.

Little also sees religious peacemakers playing key roles in “enforcement, peacekeeping, institution-and-capacity building, and agreement-making.” The work is less in the first area, which can involve coercion to end violence (as in Bosnia and Kosovo), and the second, which can be diplomatic language for outside military monitoring or stabilization forces. But the third and fourth, sometimes considered part of “Track Two,” unofficial or citizen diplomacy, frequently involve religious peacemakers in developing organizations and even rituals for social harmony and then creating positive contexts for Track One, or formal peace negotiations. Such efforts built empathic understanding in South Sudan and Northern Ireland, for example, although the relationships built can remain fragile.

7. Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

Under the fourth affirmation we noted ways that public forgiveness and apology were included within the just peacemaking framework. Truth and reconciliation commissions are also ways of bringing perpetrators to acknowledge, if not actually confess, the truth of their actions before their victims or the survivors of their victims. Allan Boesak has pointed out the danger that a collective evil, like apartheid, can be reduced to the actions of individuals who are then blamed on the group’s behalf, but he has also pointed to the way that victims can regain their voices and dignity through publicly recognized and respected grief. Naturally, the work of truth and reconciliation commissions must follow the actual achievement of ceasefires and the presence of outside observers (like a Jimmy Carter) and religious leaders (like a Desmond Tutu) can be extremely helpful. The key thing, though, is that such commissions are moral inventions and they can lead to more healing
and more creativity. We need more arenas where longer term hostilities can be defused and young people inspired and new leaders born. Could we even address structural violence this way, and recognize more veterans of social conflict who carry moral injuries?

8. Accompaniment and Nonviolent Third-Party Intervention

Nonviolent direct action is usually engaged in by the “weaker” party in a conflict. In the past few decades, however, there has been growing experience with third parties, who are not part of a conflict, intervening nonviolently in the hopes of deterring violent attacks and human rights violations. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has played a part in this through its Colombia Accompaniment Program, which has brought more than ninety trained accompaniers to stand in solidarity with the Iglesia Presbyteriana de Colombia whose leaders had been killed and members intimidated. The World Council of Churches has cosponsored an accompaniment program in Palestine to protect Palestinian school children and others from settler and Israeli army violence. The goal in such efforts is “to see and be seen.” At a less-intense level, court watchers and election monitors do variants of this work.

9. Teaching Peace in the Church; Being Peace in the World

The more personal dimensions and disciplines of active nonviolence and peacemaking are already being practiced in many churches where strangers are welcomed, prisoners are visited, veterans brought in, and perhaps “international peacemakers” hosted and interfaith dialogues sponsored. Some mission trips also seek to cross once-hostile boundaries, or to help build new friendships. Suspicion of “the Russians” still exists, racism still poisons our cities, Islamophobia is manipulated to prevent empathic understanding: all are addressed in some congregations. Some also teach children nonviolence and ways to prevent bullying, and increasing numbers are speaking up about the constant menace of gun violence. We believe these life-giving practices are of God and offer life to the church and witness to the world.

Peacemaking is a faith commitment; it is a calling rather than a conclusion. It constitutes the lens by which reality is brought into focus; the value system by which the meaning and significance of threats are determined. With humility, we recognize that just as the nationalistic exceptionalism of empire distorts, so a concern for universal human rights may not be the full key to the healing of the nations. If the U.S. were to reduce its footprint, would benign forces take the place of our military? Would the churches push for constructive multilateral ways to fill power vacuums and help create order through collective security—or are we simply weary of war? We have spoken of citizen diplomacy; could we see ourselves assisting others with citizen-based defense? At the core of all these risks in seeking peace is the choice to resist violence, and it is not just a personal choice.

The word, “making,” in peacemaking, is poesis in Greek. The Gospel of Peace is Christ, who is our peace, who gives to us ministries of reconciliation, who makes us ambassadors of God’s commonwealth and reign. But perhaps God also calls us to be poets of peace, composers, crafters, creators, hearers and doers of peace. We end with three true stories.

Three Examples of Risking Peace

- The French village of Le Chambon risked peace in sheltering 5,000 Jews fleeing the Nazis during World War II. The driving force behind the rescue effort was Andre Trocme, the Huguenot (French Reformed) pastor of the village. Deeply committed to Christian nonviolence, on Sunday mornings he would preach the Sermon on the Mount, love of God and love of neighbor, reverence for life, and the necessity of resisting evil with good. The people of Le Chambon hid Jews in their homes and farmhouses and arranged for them to reach the safe haven of neutral Switzerland. In doing so, they risked their lives. Occasionally, the Gestapo raided the town. Leaders were arrested and imprisoned, and some were later killed. But despite the repression, the resistance in Le Chambon continued to the end of the war.

In the last months of German occupation, the Tartar Legion commanded by SS Colonel Metzger was poised to destroy the village and its inhabitants. But a second German officer, Major Schmehling, commandant of the German Army post in Le Puy, dissuaded Metzger from attacking. Years after the war, Schmehling told Trocme of the fateful conversation: “Colonel Metzger was a hard one, and he kept insisting that we move in on Le Chambon. But I kept telling him to wait … I told Metzger that this kind of resistance has nothing to do with violence, nothing to do with anything we could destroy with violence. With all my personal and military power I opposed sending his legion into Le Chambon.”

- More recently, on August 20, 2013, a school bookkeeper, Antoinette Tuff, risked peace when a gunman walked into her school. Twenty-year-old Michael Brandon Hill entered the Ronald E. McNair Discovery Learning Academy near Atlanta with an AK-47 and 500 rounds of ammunition intending to shoot and kill as many people as he could. Ms. Tuff was scared but remained calm. She had received training in how to respond to dangerous situations like this one. And she found courage and strength in her Christian faith. She recalled her pastor’s teachings about “anchoring and how you anchor yourself in the Lord.” She was able to talk Hill down and convince him to surrender to police, thereby averting another mass shooting. “It was all God,” she said. “I was just praying.”

- The U.S. risked peace in September 2013, when it opted not to launch air strikes against Syria in response to an August 21 chemical weapons attack against civilians, but instead negotiated an international agreement to disarm the Syrian
government of all of its chemical weapons. President Obama had threatened a military response as a consequence for violating international norms. Military intervention seemed imminent. Then U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry made an off-the-cuff remark that air strikes could be averted if Syria turned over all its chemical weapons to the international community within a week, but Syria “isn’t about to do it and it can’t be done.” This rhetorical suggestion was taken up as a serious proposal by Russia and received a positive response from Syria. Where once military intervention was being touted as the only option for responding to the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the U.S. stumbled into a diplomatic alternative that had not been seriously considered. Whether the countries involved in that proxy war have encouraged a serious peace process since is another question.

God is always doing a new thing. It is the nature of God to gather up all the occasions of the past, and with immense healing power, weave transforming possibilities into the emerging moment. The future is constantly arriving, a future whose radical and redemptive newness it owes to the creative work of the Poet of the World, the Lover of Souls, the Lord of the Church, who declares, “Behold I make all things new.” Let us welcome the new thing that God is doing, risk peace and transform conflict by boldly practicing the things that make for peace.

APPENDIX A
Brief Summary of Christian and Presbyterian Approaches Prior to 1980

There is no question but that the centrality of peace as a distinctive feature of Christian fidelity goes back to the Bible, to the idea of shalom in the Hebraic tradition and to the idea of being peacemakers in the teachings and pattern of Jesus’ own fidelity to God. But translating this concept into policies that further human well-being has challenged Christian thinking ever since the church ceased to be bands of dedicated believers existing as outsiders within Greco-Roman culture.

Two main traditions developed within the Christian movement that were dedicated to the goal of peace, but understood responsibility for achieving it in different ways. The first, claiming a strong grounding in the New Testament and the practices of the early church, is Christian pacifism; the other, the just war tradition, grows out of the realization that when Christians become holders of authority and exercise office in a political world they may be called upon to use violence for the protective love of neighbor and for the maintenance of justice and order. Both of these moral stances need to be seen as very different from the views that religion may use violent means to advance its own interests—the premises of an ethic of the crusade, or that nationalisms or ideologies may claim de facto religious sanction for dominating others—the major causes of war for more than two centuries, particularly in Europe and countries colonized by European empires.

During the Protestant Reformation some groups, from which the “peace churches” emerged, understood Christian discipleship to require the repudiation of violence in the manner of the earliest church. Other groups, from which most mainline Reformed bodies emerged, understood Christian discipleship to allow for the restrained, and hence legitimate, use of the sword to preserve justice and order. Presbyterian Confessions generally contain just war positions in relation to the role of the magistrate, or civil government. These two main Christian approaches to war and violence retained theological coherence as Christians sought to apply them through revolutions and wars of conquest, liberation, defense, and humanitarian intervention. American Presbyterians participated in and justified the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, and the Korean conflict, but have been less and less of one mind on smaller wars like Vietnam, the Nicaragua/Contra war, the two Iraq wars, and Afghanistan.

Back in 1936 and 1938, when pacifist sentiment was strong in American Social Christianity, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. sent the presbyteries proposals to remove just war language from the Westminster Confession, which was then the church’s only confessional standard. While a majority of the presbyteries voted to remove or amend the language, in neither case did the outcome reach the supermajority of presbyteries required to accomplish that result.

During WWII, which had the overwhelming support of most Americans following Pearl Harbor, two important developments took place. First, some individual Presbyterians felt called to be conscientious objectors and were generally supported in taking this position (or at least benignly tolerated) by the church. That support made it amply clear that a pacifist conviction was a legitimate form of Christian discipleship. (The influence of the votes in the 1930s may be seen here). The second development found the Presbyterian church in cooperation with many other denominations giving extensive thought to what would constitute a just and durable peace. Studies were undertaken both in the denominations and in ecumenical bodies which explored such concerns and were staffed with competent specialists. That work contributed to support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations and was likely to have helped the undertaking both in the denominations and in ecumenical bodies which explored such concerns and were staffed with competent specialists.

The development of the Cold War and its tendency to divide the world into two polarized positions eventually brought increasing questions about the wisdom and adequacy of military and particularly nuclear means for establishing peace and justice on a worldwide scale. Many Christian ethicists at the time argued that the draft laws should recognize the validity of conscientious objection on just war grounds as well as on fully pacifist grounds, and the General Assembly of 1967 emphatically reaffirmed the right of Presbyterians to be conscientious objectors. (See Conscience, Conscriptio, and the Church.) This action highlighted the legitimacy of conscientious differences about participation in war by individuals, and made individual integrity a foundational reference point for moral reflection. That action did not overcome the differences between pacifist and just war commitments in the church’s corporate stand, but it clearly undercut any presumption that just war thinking inevitably means subservience to the policies of the state or that pacifism is unacceptable because it is unpatriotic.

Thus the recent history of our church is marked by a persistent belief in the importance of peace but also by continuing good faith disagreements as to what kinds of policies and commitments most faithfully translate that central belief into prudent and responsible action. Some of these disagreements have challenged the Peacemaking Program, the primary agency through which Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling and other social witness policies were to be implemented. Some have been impressed with what the church has done in the last
quarter century, particularly the extent to which it has managed to be critical of the prevailing trends in the society of which it is an integral part. Others feel that the program has been insufficient in its vigor and lacking in prophetic intensity and are disturbed by the fact that at the same time the church has been engaged in this program the country has become more and more involved in the use of military ways of meeting the threat of terrorism and other international crises, and has landed on what amounts to a permanent war footing.

APPENDIX B
DEFINITIONS

A very succinct summary of just war principles: Those applying to the decision whether or not to go to war (jus ad bellum).

1. There must be just cause.
2. There must be right intention.
3. The action must be undertaken by the proper authority.
4. The action must be taken as a last resort.
5. There must be a reasonable hope of success (to defend, protect, or otherwise gain a just peace).

Those applying to the conduct of war (jus in bello).

1. The force or violence used must be proportional to the result intended.
2. Noncombatants are not to be directly attacked.


Ten Principles of Just Peacemaking

1. Support nonviolent direct action.
2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threats.
3. Use cooperative conflict resolution.
4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness.
5. Advance democracy, human rights, and religious liberty.
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development.
7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system.
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade.
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations.


Six Elements of Nonviolent Strategy (More from a faith perspective)

1. Nonviolence is for the strong rather than the weak. It is a difficult discipline that eschews cowardice. It is not nonresistance but a particular method of resistance.
2. Nonviolence does not seek to “defeat or humiliate” the opponent, but to win them over. It is not employed for the purpose of scoring points but as a means of creating “the beloved community.”
3. Nonviolence directs itself “against the forces of evil rather than against persons who happen to be doing evil.” One may despise a particular form of evil, but one may not despise the doer of the evil.
4. Without making suffering into something to be sought, nonviolence can bring home the truth that “unearned suffering is redemptive.” It can be creatively enacted in ways that transform evil into a potential for good.
5. The attitude of nonviolence must be within the heart of the individual as well as his outer actions. “The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent but he also refuses to hate him.”
6. Nonviolence “is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice.” The practitioner can believe that she is not going against the grain of what is ultimate, but seeks rather to exemplify what is ultimate: redemptive suffering love.

Nonviolent Communication

Too often the words we use, especially in conflictual situations, escalate tensions rather than reducing them. We use words as weapons to blame, judge, criticize, or dominate others. At the same time, we don’t listen well. What we hear is distorted by our own prejudices and misconceptions.

Nonviolent communication is a process developed by Marshall Rosenberg that helps people to exchange the information necessary to resolve conflicts and differences peacefully. When using nonviolent communication, people listen deeply to themselves and others and articulate their observations, feelings, needs, and requests, honestly and respectfully with empathy and compassion. Nonviolent communication can help bring healing and reconciliation to interpersonal relationships in a variety of settings. More information is available from the Center for Nonviolent Communication (http://www.cnvc.org).

Interreligious Understanding

Religions are often blamed for being the cause of conflict and violence in the world. Religious identity is impossible to separate from other dimensions of personal identity, yet those who blame religion isolate it as the primary causal factor. In reality, political, ethnic, and economic factors bear much more responsibility for creating the underlying conditions that lead to violent conflict. Nonetheless, religions have within them a storehouse of resources to prevent violence and promote peace and reconciliation. For example, the Golden Rule—“Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Lk. 6:31)—is found in some form in all of the world’s major religions. Increasing interreligious understanding through interfaith dialogue is critical to peacemaking in the 21st century. Some Presbyterian teaching elders and congregations have been involved in interfaith dialogue in their local communities, particularly between Christians and Jews. These conversations are important and to be encouraged. At the same time, efforts to promote interreligious understanding and reconciliation must expand to include Muslims and other faith traditions. Strengthening these bonds of mutual respect and understanding between the religious traditions has a stabilizing effect in society.

Training and educational resources are available from a number of organizations, including the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding (https://www.tanenbaum.org), the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs (http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu), the Religion and Peacemaking Program of the U.S. Institute of Peace (http://www.usip.org/religionpeace), the Program on Religion and Reconciliation at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (http://kroc.nd.edu/research/religion-conflict-peacebuilding/program-religion-reconciliation), the Council for a Parliament of the World’s Religions (http://www.parliamentofreligions.org), and Religions for Peace (http://www.religionsforpeace.org)

Conflict Resolution Skills

Methods of conflict resolution such as negotiation and mediation seek to settle disputes peacefully through mutual agreement. We encounter conflict regularly in our day-to-day lives—at home, at work, in school, and in our congregations. Knowing how to manage and resolve these conflicts well is essential to the well-being of ourselves and others. But few people ever receive training in conflict resolution.

Many community mediation centers offer training in conflict resolution skills. For church leaders who want to learn the skills needed to address conflict in church settings, the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center (http://www.lmpeacecenter.org) offers a Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders. Excellent educational resources are also available through the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School (http://www.pon.harvard.edu).

Faith-Based Community Organizing

Congregations have joined together in faith-based community organizations to work for social and economic justice in their communities. By building relationships with one another they discover their shared self-interest. By organizing their people and money, they build the power they need to influence key decision makers in government and business to act in the community’s interests. Working across lines of religion, race, and class, these interfaith community organizations have fought for affordable housing, better schools, funding for social services, and a host of other issues. These efforts that address causes of structural violence, and hence contribute to less violence in families and communities.

Training in faith-based community organizing is available through four national organizing networks: the Industrial Areas Foundation (http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org), the Gamaliel Foundation (www.gamaliel.org), the PICO National Network (http://www.piconetwork.org), and the Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART) (http://www.thedartcenter.org/).

Nonviolent Third-Party Intervention

Most nonviolent direct action has been used by one or more parties directly engaged in a conflict. However, in the past few decades there has been growing experience with third parties, who are not part of a conflict, intervening nonviolently in the hopes of deterring violent attacks and human rights violations. Organizations such as Peace Brigades International (http://www.peacebrigades.org), Witness for Peace (http://www.witnessforpeace.org/), Christian Peacemaker Teams (http://www.cpt.org/), Nonviolent Peaceforce (http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/), and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (http://www.eapni.org/), recruit, train, and deploy volunteers who provide an international nonviolent presence in areas of violent conflict.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has played a part in this through its Colombia Accompaniment Program (http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/colombia/accompaniment), which began in 2004 at the request of the Presbyterian Church of
Colombia (IPC). Colombia church leaders who had spoken out against human rights violations and who had supported families displaced by decades of war were facing threats of political violence. They asked the PC(USA) to send international companions to stand with them and provide a measure of safety for them as they carry out their prophetic ministry. In response to their request, the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship has worked with PC(USA) World Mission and the IPC to train over 130 volunteers, of whom 90 have been deployed as short-term mission workers to Colombia. Accompaniers practice a ministry of presence with the IPC and with the displaced communities and human rights leaders with whom they work. The primary goal is to be a nonviolent presence of Christian support and solidarity with our church partners in the IPC, to “see and be seen,” and to share the story with churches and communities in the U.S. through prayer, education, and advocacy efforts.

Endnotes

1 Johnson, Kermit D. “Just War and Nuclear Deterrence,” in Ronald H. Stone and Dana W. Wilbanks, eds., The Peacemaking Struggle: Militarism & Resistance (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), p. 197. Johnson went on to determine that even various “tactical” nuclear war options then being advocated would not fit the criteria of Just War.

2 Much recent mainline pacifist discussion has been prompted by the writings of John Howard Yoder, Stanley Hauerwas, and a number of Roman Catholic priests (whose vows forswear violence).


4Presbyterians may be proud of the serious theological and ethical discussion of war and peace issues by Presbyterian scholars represented in several collections of essays, in particular: Ronald H. Stone and Dana Wilbanks, eds., The Peacemaking Struggle: Militarism & Resistance (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985) and Ronald H. Stone and Robert L. Stivers, eds., Resistance and Theological Ethics (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004). With some writing more than once, thirty-six scholars participated in this work, representing most Presbyterian seminaries and a number of colleges and universities.


10Rene Girard’s work gives depth to the concept of unmasking and has been part of Presbyterian ethicists’ discussions of the persistence of violence. An example of his view: “Christ does not achieve this victory through violence. He obtains it through a renunciation of violence so complete that violence can rage to its heart’s content without realizing that by so doing, it reveals what it must conceal … because it will be recorded and represented with exactness in the Passion narratives.” Girard, Rene, I See Satan Fall Like Lightning (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2001), p. 140.

11Robert McAfee Brown notes Brazilian Bishop Dom Helder Camara’s version of this in, The Spiral of Violence (Dimension Books, 1971); Brown’s own Religion and Violence (Westminster, 1973) presents a pioneering assessment of structural violence.


17Ibid., p. 149. Historical, literary, and other criticism can illuminate ways that texts and traditions developed, but Johnson, a biblical scholar himself, questions especially the use of Gnostic texts without passion narratives, as he relates “narrativity” to materiality.

18While appreciating Hays’ respect for the scriptural canon, Luke Timothy Johnson takes issue with him on his methodology for making ethical applications. For reviews by Johnson and four others: http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/articles/mvntreviews.htm.

20 See Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Powers* (Mpls: Fortress, 2011) for a recent synthesis of his work. Horsley sees Jesus as a prophet in the covenantal tradition and movement leader, rather than an apocalyptic visionary, wisdom teacher, or self-proclaiming messiah. As a transforming public martyrdom, the crucifixion amplifies Jesus’ message and carries great power not only for occupied Israel but for all on the margins seeking hope.


22 Margaret Aymer presented a critique of violent biblical imagery to the Peace Discernment consultation for Presbyterian universities and colleges in January, 2013, at Montreat, N.C.


28 Readers of Niebuhr will recognize references here to *The Irony of American History* and *Beyond Tragedy* as illustrations of his application of biblical resources.


30 This paragraph is from the Reverends Mark Davidson and Roger Powers, both pastors on the Peace Discernment steering team, putting recent scholarship into admittedly simplified antitheses.

31 For the Treaty of Westphalia’s implications: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sovereignty/ But perhaps the most fundamental and controversial account of what the church lost in the rise of empire in the West is Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Parker’s *Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of this World for Crucifixion and Empire* (Boston: Beacon, 2008). Acceptance of violence is a big part of this fall into empire. For a positive if questioning review: http://www.psr.edu/saving-paradise-how-christianity-traded-love-world-crucifixion-and-empire-review-tat-siong-benny-liew.


34 Further information about the techniques for nonviolent direct action is available from The Albert Einstein Institution (http://www.aeinstein.org) and the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/). See also Roger Powers, ____, forthcoming, for further Christian analysis of Sharp’s methods. (Sharp himself, a minister’s son, does not emphasize particular religious motivation but encourages widest applicability.)

35 This story can be found at: http://deedsforgod.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=181.

36 See Johnson, Kermit and Ronald H. Stone essays, op. cit. at endnote 1.


42 Leonel Narvaez, *Political Culture of Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (Bogota: Fundacion Para La Reconciliation, 2009 (original Spanish) and 2010 (English). Includes essays by Narvaez and Hicks.

43 The PCCMP was formerly the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel: http://pccmp.org/who-we-are/history/. An influential essay by a current chaplain, Captain Mel Baars, discusses her ministry in Afghanistan as of September 11, 2012: http://www.faithandleadership.com/content/mel-baars-war-and-the-dimensions-love.

Item 11-12

[The assembly approved Item 11-12 with amendment. See pp. 15, 69,]

On Helping to Remedy the Tragic Conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—From the Presbytery of Boston.

The Presbytery of Boston respectfully overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take the following actions to help remedy continuing tragic conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo:

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to communicate to the president of the United States, the U.S. State Department, appropriate Congressional leaders and international bodies the need to ensure that the fundamental human rights of all peoples are fully respected by the strengthening of transparent, accountable, and effective institutions and the impartial application of the rule of law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); and, in particular, to call upon the government of the United States to work diligently and, where possible, in concert with other nations and religious and humanitarian organizations to

   a. end sexual- and gender-based violence and to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of military or paramilitary leaders who use or condone the use of rape as a strategy of war;

   b. halt the recruitment of child soldiers (i.e., any person under the age of [sixteen] [eighteen]) and bring to justice military or paramilitary leaders responsible for such recruitment;

   c. promote transparency in extractive industries to prevent the trade in minerals from being used to finance conflict or violations of human rights; and

   d. assist the government of the DRC to rebuild and strengthen the country’s educational system as a necessary condition for economic growth, political stability, and effective democratic participation within the nation.
2. Direct Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for public policy that is consistent with the objectives set out in Recommendation 1 (above), building on existing treaties and encouraging international cooperation, collective security, and accountable monitoring processes for the DRC and those of its neighbors facing similar threats.

3. Direct Mission Responsibility Through Investment to study the merits, costs, and logistics of making the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) “conflict-free” with regard to investments in extractive industries by its agencies and to report its findings to 222nd General Assembly (2016), and to initiate usual processes of corporate engagement with firms operating or trading with the DRC.

4. Encourage presbyteries, congregations, and individual members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to
   a. pray with the people of the Congo for justice, peace, and the impartial rule of law that respects all people in the DRC;
   b. participate in the Congo advocacy initiatives of the Presbyterian Mission Agency;
   c. join the Congo Mission Network as it accompanies partners in the DRC and involves U.S. Presbyterians in the PC(USA)’s ministry of advocacy; and
   d. consider supporting the “conflict-free” campaign to end the use of products that use conflict minerals.

[Financial Implications: $2,500 (2015), $2,500 (2016) PMA]

Rationale

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] has a long history of involvement in the Congo and a deep concern for the country’s people. The ministry of U.S. Presbyterians, notably the Reverend William Shepherd, Lucy Gantt Sheppard, and the Reverend Samuel Lapsley, helped to lay the foundation for strong and vibrant Presbyterian communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) today.

In the past year, the DRC and its neighbors have taken significant steps to promote peace and stability, particularly in the nation’s war-torn eastern regions. The surrender of the paramilitary M23 rebel movement has brought renewed hope to communities of the east, yet many armed groups remain active in the DRC. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)] is called to continue to accompany its Congolese partners and the peoples of the DRC as they strive for justice, peace, and security during this time of transition. Building on the action of the 220th General Assembly (2012), which aimed to reduce the incentives for indiscriminate and wholesale violence in the DRC and to implement educational and governance policies that can begin to rebuild the shattered lives of the people, this overture adds some specific steps that continue our support of our brothers and sister in the DRC. Now is the time for the PC(USA) to advocate for and encourage the critical but usually thankless work of reconstruction.

The struggle for control of the DRC’s mineral wealth remains an important source of conflict. As the Presbytery of Boston so eloquently stated in their rationale of 2012:

… For more than 120 years, foreign powers and a domestic elite have systematically exploited the Congo’s riches, while the vast majority of the Congolese people realize little if any benefit. Today, much of the trade in these valuable resources continues to be controlled by other countries and illegal militias. The profits that they derive from the sale of “conflict minerals” are used to finance a violent struggle for territory and power that has claimed as many as six million lives in the past twelve years and has inflicted disease, poverty, and gross violations of human rights on millions more. Women remain the primary victims of this protracted conflict, especially in the war-torn northeast region, and rape continues to be practiced with impunity as a strategy of war and subjugation. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved a Resolution on Just Globalization that expressed its concern for the impact of global commerce on the integrity of creation, trade justice, and human rights and called, among other things, for action by U.S. agencies to promote transparency in international financial transactions. The subsequent 218th General Assembly (2008) endorsed the “Publish What You Pay” campaign for transparency in extractive industries.

Although the Congo gained independence from Belgian colonial rule in 1960, its people have never had an opportunity to taste the fruits of freedom and self-rule. … the recent election held in November 2011 was found by electoral observers from the Congolese Catholic Bishops’ Conference, the Carter Center and the European Union to be so seriously flawed that the announced results lacked credibility. Consequently, Congo advocates around the world, including the Congo Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), have joined the Congolese Catholic Bishops and human rights groups in calling for a review of the recent election processes and their results. Both the 213th General Assembly (2001) and the 217th General Assembly (2006) called upon the U.S. government to commit resources to promote free and fair elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo."

(Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1306 of the electronic copy)

The corruption of the previous regimes and the destruction of infrastructure and the tax base by the war has left the government of DRC ill-equipped to take effective measures to restore its sovereignty or the rule of law in Eastern Congo. And by this time wholesale rape and the abduction of boys and girls by all these armed groups has come to seem the normal means of waging war.

Continued advocacy for the rights of women and children to not be raped and/or coerced into serving as sexual slaves and/or as soldiers is critically necessary to rebuild the social fabric of the DRC. Continued support for education is necessary to create an informed and active citizenry that is a condition for the creation of a government that is accountable and that respects the rights of all its peoples to the transparent and impartial rule of law.
Conflict Minerals

The term “conflict minerals” is used to describe minerals extracted (looted) from mines controlled by armed groups, the trade in which is used to finance continuing warfare and human rights abuses. The Eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are the current epicenter of these conflicts which are associated with horrific human rights abuses. Local artisanal miners and small companies have had their lands and mines expropriated, often being subjected to a scorched earth policy of total destruction of local villages, crops, and infrastructure. The worst instances of indiscriminate rape, killings, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people can be directly attributed to the armed gangs and militias that have been pillaging the Eastern Congo for the past twenty years. (See Wikipedia for a list of sixty-two citations plus bibliography on this topic.)

Because these minerals are a large source of the income used to arm the groups, refusal to purchase products that have been made with these minerals has become a priority. Until the violence against the peoples of the DRC ends, no progress can be made in the restoration of a functioning economy and civil society that meets the needs of the people. Therefore, in 2010 the U.S. Congress included Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Financial Accountability Act that was signed into law on July 21st. This section requires publicly listed companies and some publically traded bond funds to report on their use of conflict minerals in all their products.

On August 12, 2012, the SEC issued a final rule on the reporting requirements that covers tin, tantalum (coltan), tungsten, and gold. All of these products are widely used in consumer electronic devices as well as almost all industrial and consumer goods machinery that includes electrical components (think the electronics in your automobile). Several companies have already taken steps to comply with the law and others are in the process of doing so. However, as the law does not cover any foreign company that is not publically listed in the United States and therefore exempts most Asian companies, many U.S. companies are fighting the requirements of the law in court. As reported by ProBono Australia and accessed on 20140129 at: http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2014/01/corporate-battle-over-conflict-minerals#:

US Corporations are taking a stand against the complex and comprehensive requirements of the reporting, branding it time-consuming and costly, and a breach of free speech by forcing companies to publicly condemn themselves.

The appeal is the latest in a line of legal challenges by major industry groups including the US Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable and the National Association of Manufacturers, a coalition representing some of the world’s biggest corporate powers.


Because continued advocacy to eliminate the use of conflict minerals is critical to removing the incentive to wage war on defenseless villages and towns, it is important that the PC(USA) take a stand against the exploitation of the peoples of the DRC. The twin evils of forced labor and human trafficking are rampant in the Eastern DRC largely as a consequence of the greed fostered by these minerals.

As so aptly summarized by the in Item 14-02 of 2012: “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the global community have an opportunity to support initiatives such as those of the Congolese Presbyterian churches to foster a new generation of Congolese people with an active commitment to participatory democracy, peace, and accountable governance” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1306 of the electronic copy).

Concurrences to Item 11-12 from the Presbyteries of Chicago and Giddings-Lovejoy.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-12

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-12—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-12.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns supports this overture that recognizes the vulnerability of women and children as a result of the lawlessness in the eastern area of the DRC. Gangs and militia continue to fight over valuable “conflict” minerals. They abduct girls and boys to fight in these gangs and the reality is that girls are used as sex slaves as well as combatants. Rape of women and girls is a reality and is used as a weapon of war.

We commend the 220th General Assembly (2012) for its recommendation to include women in any peacemaking process in the DRC. However, the combatants are far from efforts to resolve the situation peacefully. The kind of international pressure both diplomatically and financially this overture suggests have the potential to create conditions that would be compelling enough to bring all parties to the table.

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By ending the violence, bringing justice and assistance to those whose basic human rights have been violated, and eliminating lawlessness, the DRC can begin to provide the kinds of services and education women and girls need to be productive members of their communities.

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**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-12**

*Comment on Item 11-12—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.*

Item 11-12 was drafted by the Advocacy Committee of the Congo Mission Network (a PC(USA) Community of Mission Practice) with input from PC(USA) partners in Congo: the Presbyterian Church of Congo, the Church of Christ in Congo, and the Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa. These partners have asked PC(USA) to advocate, on their behalf, for the U.S. government to address the need in DR Congo for heightened respect of human rights and more effective governance. Our partners have specifically voiced concern for the need to address the issues of gender-based violence, child soldiers, extractive industries, and need for improved education. By approving this overture PC(USA) would be giving voice to the concerns of our Congolese church partners and addressing the root causes of poverty that have caused this resource rich country to be at the very bottom of the Human Development Index.

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**$Item 11-13**


*A Resolution on Developing a Comprehensive Social Witness Policy on Human Trafficking as a Human Rights Issue—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)*

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Advisory Committee for Social Witness Policy and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns to appoint four members to a Reference and Study Task Group, with staff for the committee to be appointed by the PC(USA) Human Trafficking Roundtable.

2. Direct this Reference and Study Task Group, with the help of a consultant, to review the current PC(USA) policy regarding human trafficking and propose comprehensive human trafficking policy grounded in a human rights based approach for the denomination, by:
   a. Examining the ways in which poverty, lack of or under-employment, and discrimination make women, men, and children vulnerable to traffickers;
   b. Considering all types of modern day slavery (on a global and national level) including forced labor, sex trafficking, bonded labor, debt bondage, involuntary domestic servitude, forced child labor, child soldiers, child sex trafficking, and organ harvesting;\(^\text{20}\)
   c. Consulting with a variety of groups working on the issue of trafficking, including Freedom Network, U.S.A.; the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, and End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT), and General Assembly programs and ministries;
   d. Defining the human rights violations such slavery creates, and
   e. Reporting its findings to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to assist in the research process.


*Rationale*

Matthew 25:40—The ruler will answer them, “The truth is, every time you did this for the least of my sisters or brothers, you did it for me.”\(^\text{21}\)

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\(^{20}\) Definition of human trafficking can be found at the U.S. Department of State Website: <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2011/164220.htm> (23 January 2014).

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) submits this resolution in light of the continuing and large scale tragedy of trafficked and forced labor of adults and children, and in order to provide guidance for the church’s advocacy and ministries with those affected.

The ACWC brought a resolution to the 218th General Assembly (2008) entitled “A Resolution to Expand the Church’s Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking.” Though prior to this the General Assembly had made policy statements regarding human rights, slavery, and sex and child trafficking specifically (2001, 2003, 2006), ACWC sought to continue to raise awareness amongst Presbyterians and to inspire the church to action, focusing primarily on the plight of women who are trafficked.

Since 2006, though the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy has included human trafficking in its Human Rights Report, the General Assembly has not passed any official policy on human trafficking. The policy that exists currently does not begin to address the scope and breadth of human trafficking. While important education and advocacy work continues to be done by such groups as the PC(USA) Human Trafficking Roundtable, the policy grounding in which such groups root their work is currently sparse. The denomination-wide demand for this group’s work and resources is steady, but the solid policy commitment of the denomination to working against human trafficking is lacking.

The United Nations’ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000 and entered into force on 25 December 2003. As of October 2013 it has been ratified by 158 states.\(^\text{22}\)

The protocol states trafficking in persons:

“shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs ... The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth [above] shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth [above] have been used.”\(^\text{23}\)

The Act (What is done)
Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons

The Means (How it is done)
Threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim

The Purpose (Why it is done)
For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs.\(^\text{24}\)

A report released in 2013 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime offered a breakdown of victims of human trafficking activities worldwide:

- Trafficking victims have been rescued in 118 countries and represent 136 different nationalities, according to the UNODC.
- Sex trafficking accounts for 58 percent of all human trafficking cases that are investigated around the world. Labor trafficking accounts for 36 percent of the cases.
- Women account for 55 to 60 percent of the victims, and women and girls account for 75 percent of trafficking victims.
- Children account for 27 percent of victims during the 2007 to 2010 time period, up from 20 percent between 2003–2006. Two out of every three child trafficking victims were girls.

In total, there are an estimated 20.9 million people around the world who are victims of human trafficking.\(^\text{25}\)


Although the PC(USA) has social witness policy addressing forms of sexual exploitation and slavery, none addresses forced labor in agriculture, domestic service, and services offered by nail and beauty salons, the removal of organs or child slavery in combat. Clearly, the widely accepted definition above makes it clear that the PC(USA) needs more breadth and depth in our policy on human trafficking. The church is called to articulate and to have a clear policy on this issue. The demand from congregations and the ecumenical community for resources and support addressing the breadth of modern day slavery must be met with an expanded and clear statement of policy.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-13

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-13—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises approval of this resolution.

The Confession of 1967 refers to “one universal (human) family” (Book of Confessions, 9.44) and the growth of human trafficking, part of the underside of globalization, is an unhappy part of the picture. The resolution correctly notes previous partial treatments of trafficking, several involving forced participation in the international sex trade. Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian World Mission, and other bodies within our church have played an important role in drawing attention to this problem and supporting international action.

At the same time, as the Trafficking Roundtable has reported to the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns, the existing General Assembly statements that are to guide Presbyterian Mission Agency program work are limited in scope and overall analysis, including theological analysis of the particular importance of Christian involvement and the potential for more solidarity among churches.

After an ACSWP co-chair and staff member met with World Vision and United Nations staff as well as several “rescue” organizations in Bangkok, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy requested an expert in labor trafficking, the Reverend Noelle Damico, to contribute a brief study to the 2010 Human Rights Update: See http://pc-biz.org/PCBiz_WebApp_deploy/%28S%283225ntetotyrswnuwz3kyqk%29%29/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3207&promoid=134

To quote briefly from that overview:

The use of the legal term ‘human trafficking’ can mislead the public into thinking that the phenomenon is principally about the transport of persons for profit. It is much more than that. It involves all aspects of this exploitative process from recruitment to forcing a person through violence or threat of violence to labor against their will. Also the media often wrongly equates human trafficking with smuggling, where a person consents to be moved across an international border. The critical additional factor that distinguishes trafficking from migrant smuggling is the presence of force, coercion, and/or deception throughout or at some stage in the process—such deception, force, or coercion being used for the purpose of exploitation explains the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2002, p. 7.)

Commissioners may thus appreciate that some aspects of this work have already been done over recent years. Yet the development of a coherent framework would be intended to strengthen the church’s witness and capacity to engage a concern likely—unfortunately—to affect millions of involuntary migrants and people vulnerable to exploitation until stronger sets of human rights norms and labor protections are in place.

Item 11-14

[The assembly approved Item 11-14 with amendment. See pp. 65, 69–70.]

Resolution on Sexual Violence within the U.S. Military Services: A 2014 Human Rights Update

Seeking to support efforts to end the continuing problem of sexual assault within the U.S. military, the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) recommend that the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approve the following measures:

1. Support efforts of Presbyterian and other military chaplains to provide pastoral care and advocacy for members of the military who have experienced any form of abuse, including sexual harassment, assault, and rape [or worse].

2. Mandate legislative and military leaders involved in developing policies to eliminate sexual violence within the armed services, including
   a. Comprehensive mental health evaluation of inductees and periodic mental health assessment of service personnel for risk of sexual violence;
b. Authorization and funding of research on military sexual trauma, the contexts and conditions for its occurrence, and its clinical treatment;

c. Removal of court-martial discretion from the chain-of-command, giving it instead to military prosecutors (and removing the ability of a single officer to invalidate the judgment of a military court or block its enforcement);

d. Reform of the [Veterans Administration (VA)] [Department of Defense] system in relation to treatment of service men and women who have suffered military sexual trauma;

e. Establishing “best practices” for the treatment of military sexual trauma Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder;

f. Coordination of research and implementation with the militaries of allied nations and international treaty organizations; and

g. Develop, implement, and institutionalize policies within military training for education and open discussion of sexual violence, dangers associated with hyper-masculinity and challenges to maintaining healthy relationships in high stress contexts.

3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency [and Office of Public Witness, and encourage the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel, to urge legislative and military leaders involved in developing policies to eliminate sexual violence within the armed services by:]

[a. providing transfer of victims of sexual violence to a different chain of command upon request of the victim, with a comparable rank and potential for advancement.]

[b. creating a ‘firewall’ between the victim and alleged perpetrator in duty assignment and residence,]

[c. changing ‘status of forces’ agreements with host countries to ensure adequate protection from sexual assault for civilian populations near military bases, including mechanisms for proper prosecutions of alleged perpetrators and proper care of civilian victims.]

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and encourage Presbyterians generally, to support the implementation of policies to prevent sexual violence by U.S. and other military personnel engaged in joint jurisdictions such as United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping and North American Treaty Organization (NATO), both within these forces and among vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeking civilian populations.

Rationale

Sexual violence is one of the oldest, most pervasive, and most dehumanizing of sins. From the rape of Dinah in Genesis 34 to the one in four women today who will experience sexual violence in their lifetimes, sexual violence leaves a lamentable mark on our culture and faith narrative.

The PC(USA) condemns sexual violence in all its forms and, along with its predecessors, has a long history of advocacy for the rights of women and against sexual violence. This history is evidenced from the Westminster Larger Catechism’s prohibition of rape (Book of Confessions, 7.249) to the 1971 General Assembly of the UPCUSA’s affirmation that “men and women must act as equal partners and contribute to the ministry of the church” to the 219th General Assembly (2008) of the PC(USA)’s study on pay equity and gender.

The PC(USA) has approved several resolutions regarding sexual violence in a military context, where the chain of command creates particular vulnerability for those lower in rank. In 1975, the General Assembly of the UPCUSA declared that “sexism and rigid sex-stereotyping [in the military] … should be vigorously eliminated.” In 1986, the 198th General Assembly of the unified PC(USA) denounced sex tourism and prostitution around military bases and installations. Most recently, the 210th General Assembly (1998) approved a “Resolution on the Military and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Women” denouncing rape used as a weapon of war as a human rights violation, a form of torture, and a war crime.

This resolution focuses on a particular context of vulnerability but does not ignore other contexts, including prisons, hospitals, and migrant labor, where such dangers have been addressed.

Sexual violence is not a crime of passion but an abuse of power. The 1998 resolution calls rape “a form of torture … that seeks to degrade and destroy. … Its goal is domination and dehumanization.” Furthermore, sexual violence grows from a distorted understanding of masculinity common to the rhetoric of military training camps: “Military training and socialization often send confusing messages about gender relations. Slogans and other expressions of aggression often equate sexual prowess with dominance and military strength.” Our church in the past has boldly proclaimed, “that which degrades women and which equates maleness with violence and conquest is contrary to the development of a whole, mature person.”
Within the power hierarchy of the military chain-of-command, justice in situations of sexual violence is often obscured. It was in the context of war that King David sexually commandeered Bathsheba and ordered her husband Uriah killed to cover his crime (see 2 Sam. 11, 12).10 As God called the prophet Nathan then, so the Spirit calls the Church today to witness to this abuse of power, calling for an end to sexual violence in the military and a system of justice for its victims removed from the power structure in which the abuse took place.

Historical Overview:

Issues of sexual assault in the military came into public awareness with the U.S. Navy Tailhook scandal of 1991.11 Today, the Uniform Code of Military Justice (Articles 120–120c) explicitly identifies various forms of sexual assault as legally actionable and punishable crimes under military law.12 In spite of this, sexual assaults within the U.S. military continue to rise. In 2005, the Department of Defense established the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program intended to promote prevention, encourage increased reporting of sexual assault, and improve the military services’ response capabilities for victims. There are five priorities of the SAPR Office (SAPRO). They are:

1. Institutionalize prevention strategies in the military community;
2. Increase the climate of victim confidence associated with reporting;
3. Improve sexual assault response;
4. Improve system accountability; and
5. Improve stakeholder knowledge and understanding of SAPR.13

Yet, in 2012 there were 3,374 reports of sexual assault, a 6 percent increase over the prior year.14 However, the FY2012 SAPRO report released by the Department of Defense (DoD) in May estimated actual instances of sexual assault to number 26,000 cases in fiscal year 2012, a 37 percent increase from 2011, indicating that such cases are massively underreported. In a separate survey, 23 percent of female and 4 percent of male service members reported unwanted sexual contact (USC)—ranging from groping to rape—since enlistment. Even though women in the military experience a markedly higher incidence of sexual assault, because women comprise only approximately 14 percent of the military, the total number of males who have experienced unwanted sexual contact is estimated to be equal to or greater than the number of females who have experienced USC.15 Of the 575 cases that were eventually processed, only 96 resulted in court-martial proceedings, and substantially fewer in conviction.16

The 2014 National Defense Authorization Act, recently signed into law by President Obama, represents a significant attempt to address sexual assault in the military. (See appendix for full list of relevant provisions.) While these provisions are significant and helpful in addressing matters of internal military culture and legal process, they fall short of what is needed. They are (a) not comprehensive, focusing instead on regulatory, legal, and procedural issues; and (b) they do not remove the decision of whether or not to take reported cases to court martial completely out of the chain-of-command and give that decision to military prosecutors. (This matter of judicial independence would affect the accountability of each command jurisdiction and, in turn, would reinforce the accountability of military prosecutors to legal standards within their own chain of command.) The reasons for emphasizing the relative independence of the military’s judiciary have to do with the characteristics of organizations in which abuse occurs.

The World Health Organization’s Guidelines for Medico-Legal Care for Victims of Sexual Violence17 identifies four categories of factors associated with men committing rape. These are characteristics of the following: society, community, relationship, and individual perpetrator. The factors include:

Society: Norms granting men control over female behavior; acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict; notions of masculinity linked to dominance, honor, or aggression; norms supportive of sexual violence; norms supportive of male superiority and sexual entitlement; weak laws and policies related to sexual violence and gender equality; high levels of crime and other forms of violence.

Community: Poverty, low socioeconomic status, unemployment, associating with sexually aggressive or delinquent peers, lack of institutional support from police and judicial system, general tolerance of sexual assault within the community, weak community sanctions against perpetrators of sexual violence.

Relationship: Associates with sexually aggressive or delinquent peers, family environment is characterized by physical violence and few resources, strongly patriarchal relationship or family environment, emotionally unsupportive family environment, family honor considered more important than the health and safety of the victim.

Individual Perpetrator: Alcohol and drug use, coercive sexual fantasies, attitudes supportive of sexual violence, impulsive and antisocial tendencies, preference for impersonal sex, hostility towards women, history of sexual abuse as a child, witnessed family violence as a child.
While these factors arise from research in civilian, not military, contexts they nonetheless pertain to recruits and inductees from the civilian sector who would pursue military induction. There are two issues here: First, recruits should undergo a full mental health screening prior to induction that encompasses these factors to assess for level of risk for perpetrating sexual assault. Second, the new law does not contain a provision for (or funding of) research on sexual assault in the military, more specifically a mental health and sociological analysis of the conditions and personality factors that might be predictive of propensities for sexual assault in a military context, the evidence-based efficacy of treatment modalities for victims, and evaluation research for programs of prevention through intervention.

In addition, the new law ignores the discrimination that occurs within the Veterans Affairs hospital system against victims of sexual violence.

... veterans struggling with the devastating mental health effects of military sexual violence who turn to the Department of Veterans Affairs for help will instead find discrimination. Their claims for disability compensation will turn out differently depending on their gender and where they live. And the VA will expect survivors to submit documentation that often does not exist—like official reports of rape or the results of pregnancy or STD tests—while taking veterans who claim benefits for many other forms of trauma at their word.18

The Service Women’s Action Network, in conjunction with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), has made a series of recommendations that redress the issues within the Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital system. In eighteen specific recommendations, they call upon Congress to:

act swiftly to pass a body of important legislation that reforms VA regulations regarding disability claims based on PTSD for in-service personal assault, improves training and oversight of [VA Regional Offices] with poor records in granting MST [Military Sexual Trauma]-related claims, and improves VA transparency and record-keeping in its treatment of MST-based claims.19

Adequate remediation of the escalating sexual violence within the U.S. military against its own personnel requires a comprehensive and aggressive legislative approach that addresses (a) regulatory and legal parameters, (b) comprehensive mental health assessment of inductees, (c) ongoing risk evaluation of military personnel, (d) adequate clinical treatment of victims of military sexual trauma, (e) vigorous research on sexual assault within the military to establish predictive markers and preventive interventions, and (f) evaluation research of programs to identify best clinical practices in the treatment of military sexual trauma.

Again, this resolution should not be taken to imply that the U.S. military suffers from a unique problem or danger. While some militaries do not report significant levels of sexual violence, others are known even to practice rape as a form of military strategy to demoralize civilian populations. The U.S. military should not be afraid to learn from other militaries, as well as to share its own knowledge of how to “raise the bar” for protection of service members and civilians.

In summary, the core justification of military establishments is to provide protection and security, a mission that is compromised when violence and sexual abuse occur within the military itself. Without addressing larger questions of militarism and the need for other methods of conflict resolution, this statement by the Assembly addresses practical measures to reform a problem that affects millions of U.S. citizens and others exposed to the U.S. military.

Appendix

Recent legislative efforts to address sexual assault in the military from the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act, Section D: “Military Justice, Including Sexual Assault Prevention and Response”:

Sec. 531. Limitations on convening authority discretion regarding court-martial findings and sentence.

Sec. 532. Elimination of five-year statute of limitations on trial by court-martial for additional offenses involving sex-related crimes.

Sec. 533. Discharge or dismissal for certain sex-related offenses and trial of offenses by general courts-martial.

Sec. 534. Regulations regarding consideration of application for permanent change of station or unit transfer by victims of sexual assault.

Sec. 535. Consideration of need for, and authority to provide for, temporary administrative reassignment or removal of a member on active duty who is accused of committing a sexual assault or related offense.

Sec. 536. Victims’ Counsel for victims of sex-related offenses and related provisions.

Sec. 537. Inspector General investigation of allegations of retaliatory personnel actions taken in response to making protected communications regarding sexual assault.

Sec. 538. Secretary of Defense report on role of commanders in military justice process.

Sec. 539. Review and policy regarding Department of Defense investigative practices in response to allegations of sex-related offenses.

Sec. 540. Uniform training and education programs for sexual assault prevention and response program.

Sec. 541. Development of selection criteria for assignment as Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program Managers, Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, Sexual Assault Victim Advocates, and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners-Adult/Adolescent.
Sec. 542. Extension of crime victims’ rights to victims of offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Sec. 543. Defense counsel interview of complaining witnesses in presence of counsel for the complaining witness or a Sexual Assault Victim Advocate.

Sec. 544. Participation by complaining witnesses in clemency phase of courts-martial process.

Sec. 545. Eight-day incident reporting requirement in response to unrestricted report of sexual assault in which the victim is a member of the Armed Forces.

Sec. 546. Amendment to Manual for Courts-Martial to eliminate considerations relating to character and military service of accused in initial disposition of sex-related offenses.

Sec. 547. Inclusion of letter of reprimands, nonpunitive letter of reprimands and counseling statements.

Sec. 548. Enhanced protections for prospective members and new members of the Armed Forces during entry-level processing and training.

Sec. 549. Independent reviews and assessments of Uniform Code of Military Justice and judicial proceedings of sexual assault cases.


Sec. 550A. Discharge or dismissal, and confinement required for certain sex-related offenses committed by members of the Armed Forces.

Sec. 550B. Enhancement to requirements for availability of information on sexual assault prevention and response resources.

Sec. 550C. Military Hazing Prevention Oversight Panel.

Sec. 550D. Prevention of sexual assault at military service academies.

Sec. 550E. Ensuring awareness of policy to instruct victims of sexual assault seeking security clearance to answer no to question 21.

Sec. 550F. Report on policies and regulations regarding service members living with or at risk of contracting HIV.

Sec. 550G. Additional modification of annual Department of Defense reporting requirements regarding sexual assaults and prevention and response program.20

Endnotes


2 Minutes, UPCUSA, Part I, 1971, p. 299. In 1972, the PCUS issued a similar call to “end discrimination on the basis of sex” (Minutes, PCUS, 1972, Part I, p. 178).


5 Minutes, PC(USA), 1986, Part I, p. 645.


7 Minutes, PC(USA), 1998, Part I, p. 517.

8 Minutes, PC(USA), 1998, Part I, p. 517.


12 U.S. Code, Title 10, chapter 47, Articles of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Subchapter X, Article 120 through 120c.


14 Ibid, p. 57


PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-14

Comment on Item 11-14—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

The Office of Public Witness has engaged in advocacy that seeks to reduce violence against women and girls, provide increased support and services for victims of relationship violence, and various other measures that will primarily benefit civilian victims of crime. In particular, the Office of Public Witness has been active in advocating for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWAA). In the context of recent congressional debates, PC(USA) General Assembly did not have policy that adequately speaks to the role of the military chain of command in the prosecution of military sexual assault. Consequently, the Office of Public Witness remained silent on the bill. If approved, this resolution would speak to that gap in policy.

$Item 11-15

[The assembly approved Item 11-15 with amendment. See pp. 15, 70.]

On Encouraging Use of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation—From the Presbytery of New York City.

The Presbytery of New York City overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the PC(USA) to do the following:

1. Encourage programs and ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies to give preference to tourism companies and businesses, including but not limited to hotels, airlines, and travel agents, that have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism adopted by End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT), as the companies and businesses make arrangements for meetings and travel to meetings.

2. Encourage programs and ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies to make available opportunities for advocacy and education with tourism companies and businesses, including but not limited to hotels, airlines, and travel agents, that have not signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism when they are used for arrangement for meetings and travel to meetings.

3. Urge members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to give preference to tourism companies and businesses, including but not limited to hotels, airlines, and travel agents, that have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism when traveling and to engage in advocacy with tourism companies and businesses that have not.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to maintain current information on the status of companies that have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism and to continue to partner with and support ECPAT-USA.

[Financial Implications: $1,500 (2015) PMA]

Rationale

Affirming that each human being is created in God’s image and should be treated with dignity and respect, the General Assemblies of the PCUS, UPCUSA, and PC(USA) have approved reports and statements condemning human trafficking, slavery, and sexual exploitation. Most recently, the 218th General Assembly (2008) approved A Resolution to Expand the Church’s Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 1167ff) and On Preventing the Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally (Minutes, 2008, Part I, pp. 1164ff).

As followers of Jesus who welcomed children (Mt. 19:13–15), the General Assembly has repeatedly affirmed our commitment to children and their wellbeing. A Vision for Children and the Church, approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993), expressed this understanding (Minutes, 1993, Part I, pp. 644ff).


Children around the world and in the United States continue to be sexually exploited and trafficked.
Individuals travel overseas to exploit children sexually. Air travel provides a primary means of transportation for these “child sex tourists.” Sex tourists usually have said it is legal and culturally acceptable to sexually exploit children in other countries, and often state that the impoverished children benefit by the payment received.

In the United States, traffickers use hotel rooms as venues to abuse children, knowing that systems are not in place to protect the victims. Exploiters seek creative means to move child trafficking off the streets and behind the closed doors of local hotel rooms.

The organization End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT) was created in Thailand in 1991 to ensure the right of all children to live free of child prostitution, child pornography, and child trafficking for sexual purposes. There are currently more than eighty groups in the ECPAT network in more than seventy countries. This includes ECPAT-USA. The 217th General Assembly (2006) called the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to partner with ECPAT in the effort to end the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 994).

Developed by ECPAT, the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism sets a standard of responsible business practices that effectively deters child sexual exploitation. It is an industry-driven, multi-stakeholder initiative with the mission to provide awareness, tools, and support to the tourism industry in order to combat the sexual exploitation of children in contexts related to travel and tourism.

The code employs the following six criteria which members of the tourism industry must adhere to once they endorse the code:

1. To establish a policy and procedures against sexual exploitation of children.
2. To train employees in children’s rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation and how to report suspected cases.
3. To include a clause in contracts throughout the value chain stating a common repudiation and zero tolerance policy of sexual exploitation of children.
4. To provide information to travellers on children’s rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and how to report suspected cases.
5. To support, collaborate, and engage stakeholders in the prevention of sexual exploitation of children.
6. To report annually on their implementation of Code related activities.

Nearly 1,300 companies in the tourism industry have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism including Delta Airlines, Adventure Travel Trade Association, Association of Corporate Travel Executives, International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association, Nix Conference and Meeting Management, Sabre Holdings, Carlson Companies, Hilton Worldwide, Wyndham Worldwide, Inn at Saint Mary’s Hotel, Millennium Hotel St. Louis, Real Hospitality Group, E-Trip Africa, Global Exchange, Meaningful Trip, and International Tour Management Institute in the United States.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessors have long used its economic power to stand for equality and justice. Use of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism in arranging meetings and travel to meetings would allow the church to continue that tradition and seek the human rights of children in our country and around the world.


Concurrence to Item 11-15 from the Presbytery of Hudson River (with Additional Rationale)

This overture requests concrete action that reaffirms the PC(USA)’s long-standing commitment to the health and safety of children worldwide.

Presbyterian participants in recent sessions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women are well aware of the excellent work being done by ECPAT.

For signatories of the Code, compliance requires training of staff. For hotels, in particular, this means instruction in warning signs of demeanor, body language, and behavior, in order to distinguish, for example, between a parent traveling legitimately with a child, and an adult with nefarious intent. Staff is trained to alert a manager, who, in turn, will notify law enforcement when there is a suspicious situation. Hotel managers are encouraged to establish a good working relationship, in
advance, with local law enforcement, with the goal of protecting children. Similar protocols are followed with other travel organizations. In no case are staff expected to intervene directly.

While not the subject of this resolution, ECPAT is also working to bring attention to the opportunities made available to traffickers and pimps by social media, and to provide “kid-friendly” warning materials. In addition, while federal law provides that an individual under 18 who is arrested for prostitution be treated as a victim, state laws often require punishment as a juvenile offender. ECPAT is leading efforts to pass “safe harbor” laws to eliminate this discrepancy, and to provide assistance to the victims.

Good data is notoriously difficult to obtain. Perhaps 300,000 children are at risk within the U.S.A. UNICEF estimates that trafficking of persons is an industry that generates approximately $10 billion each year, with up to half the victims being children, sold into pornography, prostitution, slave labor, or early marriage.

Both as individuals and churchwide, patronizing companies that honor “The Code,” and encouraging others to join them, are concrete ways by which Presbyterians can combat this abuse of children.

ww.ecpatusa.org
www.unicef.org/protection/files/ipuglobaltrafficking.pdf

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-15

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-15—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises approval of Item 11-15.

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is an abomination. This overture reaffirms the PC(USA)’s long-standing commitment to the health and safety of children worldwide through policy and tangible action. The overture wisely does not make a distinction between international and national travel and tourism, and it calls on agencies of the church to prioritize this matter in their meeting and travel arrangements.


ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-15

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-15—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 11-15.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns fully supports the overture from the Presbytery of New York City, “On Encouraging Use of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation.” Advocating, educating, and working to end human trafficking has long been close to the heart of the PC(USA), as exemplified in the many reports, statements, and resources cited in the overture. We also have a long-held concern for the child and how we are called as the church to nurture and protect the child. This overture combines these two longstanding concerns of the PC(USA) and also reflects the ethos of ACWC’s resolution at this General Assembly on “A Resolution on Developing a Comprehensive Social Witness Policy on Human Trafficking as a Human Rights Issue,” (Item 11-18). Both as individuals and as the church, patronizing companies that honor “The Code,” and encouraging others to join them, are concrete ways by which Presbyterians can combat this abuse of children.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-15

Comment on Item 11-15—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This overture affirms the work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and Presbyterian Women being done through the Human Trafficking Roundtable, http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/human-trafficking/. The Human Trafficking
Roundtable is a collaborative programmatic effort that works to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children with ECPAT-USA (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) and ECPAT-International. This roundtable was created in response to previous General Assembly actions calling on the church to condemn the international trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children, http://apps.pcusa.org/ga217/business/overtures/ovt1905.htm http://www.pc-biz.org/MeetingPapers%28S%28zvdsfbe4i0l3qiatt4fkqpoec%29%29/OIBView.aspx?m=ro&id=1539&promoid=7.

This overture asks the agencies of the church and all Presbyterians to use companies that have signed the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, http://www.thecode.org/.

It also encourages the programs and ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to engage in education and provide opportunities for advocacy with tourism businesses that have not yet adopted the code of conduct. There are resources available to those who would like to engage in advocacy, including a card that individuals can leave with hotels, airlines, and others in the travel industry to encourage them to sign on to the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, https://www.pcusa.org/blogs/words-plowshares/2013/5/1/ecpat-code/. The PC(USA) is the first denomination to co-brand the Code of Conduct card.

Item 11-16

[The assembly approved Item 11-16 with amendment. See pp. 15, 70–71.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Peace and Humanitarian Aid for Syria.

Concerning the humanitarian crisis, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. Calls upon PC(USA) congregations and their members to give even more generously for Syrian humanitarian relief through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance account #DR000081—Middle East/Syria.

2. Calls upon the Syrian government and all opposition forces and armed militants to open the country fully to relief efforts of the United Nations and collaborating international agencies.

3. Calls upon all relief organizations to observe strict political neutrality, avoiding any action that serves the political or military interest of any group, faction, or nation.

Concerning all parties involved in or interfering in the conflict, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

4. Calls upon the government of Syria, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, as well as all other groups to end their savage confrontation, beginning with an immediate ceasefire.

While praising the evident compliance of the Syrian government in surrendering its stock of chemical weapons, as brokered by the government of Russia, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

5. Calls upon all parties involved in the conflict to cease the use of deadly and debilitating industrial gases, such as chlorine, as arms not covered by the chemical weapons agreement.

6. Calls upon the Syrian government to cease the use of ‘barrel bombs’ and other weapons designed specifically to kill and maim massively and indiscriminately in ways that surpass any tactical military goal.

7. Calls upon all opposition forces and armed groups to end the practice of kidnapping noncombatant Syrians and holding hostage international personnel—journalists, relief workers, human rights observers, and clergy among others. Calls upon the government of Syria to end the practice of arbitrary arrests and holding hostage international journalists and human rights observers.

8. Commends those engaged in reported acts of reconciliation that have reduced the level of conflict in some locations, and urges all outside powers to look for ways to help Syrians to sit together to negotiate, reconcile, and cooperate in building a better future together.

Taking note that our Christian partners in the Middle East, including Syria, have sought to remain neutral in the struggle going on about them, denounced all outside interference that is fueling the conflict in Syria, and noting that they oppose foreign intervention, overt or covert, in support of any of the participants in the conflict in Syria, including the provision of weapons, intelligence, combat training, or financial or diplomatic support, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

9. Calls upon the government of the United States to avoid all military interference in the region. Our government should also avoid participating in the “proxy war” by supporting the armed opposi-
tion. All foreign interference, including that of our government, has been counterproductive, if not directly contributing to increase of the violence and [that threatens further] destruction of Syria [and regional stability].

10. Calls upon the government of the United States to extend generous financial assistance directly, through international agencies, and in support of the governments of countries beset by refugees with needs that far outrun the abilities of these governments and their institutions to cope.

11. Calls upon our government and the international community to end the use of economic sanctions against Syria as a tool of war or diplomacy. These sanctions are imposing a terrible burden on a desperate people without having any perceptible effect toward ending the conflict or reducing the suffering of noncombatants.

Concerning the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the 221st General Assembly (2014)

12. Calls upon our own members and congregations to pray for the 6.5 million displaced persons within Syria and the 2.6 million others who are now refugees in surrounding countries, to pray for their healing, for their safety, for their sustenance, and for the strength to overcome the psychological traumas that so often accompany such massive social upheaval; to pray also for the congregations and members of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon [and all Christian denominations], as they mount efforts to meet the human need that surrounds them whether in Syrian cities and villages or in host families and refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and other countries offering refuge.

13. Calls upon our own members and congregations to make concrete the spirit of prayer through acts of sacrificial giving as noted above. Whenever possible, let these gifts be above and beyond other commitments rather than a mere reordering.

14. Calls upon our Presbyterian congregations, wherever possible, to coordinate fundraising for relief efforts not only with other churches and community groups, but also with synagogues, mosques, temples, and other religious institutions as a demonstration that our differing faiths and traditions unite us in the face of human tragedy and need.

Finally, the 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to communicate these deep concerns, by the most effective means and as soon as possible, to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies and congregations, to our ecumenical partners in the Middle East, and to the government of the United States, and to the relevant organizations and countries, as identified by appropriate denominational staff.

Rationale

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses its anguish over the tragedy of Syria and shares the lament of Jesus, “... If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! ...” (Lk. 19:42).

The assembly is guided by the biblical meaning of peace that is more than the absence of war; it is peace rooted in ideas of wholeness, completeness, and well-being together. That is the peace the assembly seeks for Syria and to which individuals, congregations, and governments are urged to contribute.

This 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) begins its response to the continuing tragedies of the civil war in Syria by reaffirming the actions of the 220th General Assembly (2012). Since then, the situation has become far graver, thus demanding further action.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-16

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-16—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 11-16 with amendment: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“Concerning the humanitarian crisis, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. Calls upon PC(USA) congregations and their members to give even more generously for Syrian humanitarian relief through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance account #DR000081—Middle East/Syria.

2. Calls upon the Syrian government and all opposition forces and armed militants to open the country fully to relief efforts of the United Nations and collaborating international agencies.

3. Calls upon all relief organizations to observe strict political neutrality, avoiding any action that serves the political or military interest of any group, faction, or nation.

“Concerning all parties involved in or interfering in the conflict, the 221st General Assembly (2014)
4. Calls upon the government of Syria, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, as well as all other groups to end their savage confrontation, beginning with an immediate ceasefire.

While praising the evident compliance of the Syrian government in surrendering its stock of chemical weapons, as brokered by the government of Russia, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

5. Calls upon all parties involved to cease the use of deadly and debilitating industrial gases, such as chlorine, as arms not covered by the chemical weapons agreement.

6. Calls upon the Syrian government to cease the use of “barrel bombs” and other weapons designed specifically to kill and maim massively and indiscriminately in ways that surpass any tactical military goal.

7. Calls upon all opposition forces and armed groups to end the practice of kidnapping noncombatant Syrians and holding hostage international personnel—journalists, relief workers, human rights observers, and clergy among others. Calls upon the government of Syria to end the practice of arbitrary arrests and holding hostage international journalists and human rights observers.

8. Commends those engaged in reported acts of reconciliation that have reduced the level of conflict in some locations, and urges all outside powers to look for ways to help Syrians to sit together to negotiate, reconcile, and cooperate in building a better future together.

Taking note that our Christian partners in the Middle East, including Syria, have sought to remain neutral in the struggle going on about them, denounced all outside interference that is fueling the conflict in Syria, and noting that they oppose foreign intervention, overt or covert, in support of any of the participants in the fighting in Syria, including the provision of weapons, intelligence, combat training, or financial or diplomatic support, the 221st General Assembly (2014)

9. Calls upon the government of the United States to refrain from any military interference in the region. Our government should also avoid participating in the “proxy war” by supporting the armed opposition. All foreign interference, including that of our government, has been counterproductive, if not directly contributing to increase of the violence and destruction of Syria and regional stability.

10. Calls upon the government of the United States to extend generous financial assistance directly, through international agencies, and in support of the governments of countries beset by refugees with needs that far outrun the abilities of these governments and their institutions to cope.

11. Calls upon our government and the international community to end the use of economic sanctions against Syria as a tool of war or diplomacy. These sanctions are imposing a terrible burden on a desperate people without having any perceptible effect toward ending the conflict or reducing the suffering of noncombatants.

Concerning the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the 221st General Assembly (2014)

12. Calls upon our own members and congregations to pray for the 6.5 million displaced persons within Syria and the 2.6 million others who are now refugees in surrounding countries, to pray for their healing, for their safety, for their sustenance, and for the strength to overcome the psychological traumas that so often accompany such massive social upheaval; to pray also for the congregations and members of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and other Christian denominations, as they mount efforts to meet the human need that surrounds them whether in Syrian cities and villages or in host families and refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and other countries offering refuge.

13. Calls upon our own members and congregations to make concrete the spirit of prayer through acts of sacrificial giving as noted above. Whenever possible, let these gifts be above and beyond other commitments rather than a mere reordering.

14. Calls upon our Presbyterian congregations, wherever possible, to coordinate fundraising for relief efforts not only with other churches and community groups, but also with synagogues, mosques, temples, and other religious institutions as a demonstration that our differing faiths and traditions unite us in the face of human tragedy and need.

Finally, the 221st General Assembly (2014) directs the Stated Clerk to communicate these deep concerns, by the most effective means and as soon as possible, to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies and congregations, to our ecumenical partners in the Middle East, and to the government of the United States, and to the relevant organizations and countries, as identified by appropriate denominational staff.

This resolution, as amended, is consistent with the General Assembly’s 2012 position on the expanding Syrian and proxy conflict, and with the guidance of our church partners in the region.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-16

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-16—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 11-16.
Events have unfolded in Syria over the last two years in a most tragic way with terrible loss of life and destruction of entire towns and villages. New refugee populations have been created, some of whom were already refugees from previous conflict situations. Loss upon loss has amounted to unbearable conditions, including death from starvation.

The ACREC commends this resolution to the General Assembly and urges its approval.

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**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 11-16**

*Comment on Item 11-16—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.*

Because of the involvement of foreign fighters in many of the armed opposition groups, and because of support from other countries that provide financial and diplomatic support to various fighting parties, most Christians in Syria prefer to identify the conflict in Syria as a proxy war.

Christians in the Middle East have not “sought to remain neutral.” Rather, they have denounced all outside interference that is fueling the conflict in Syria, and they have continued to oppose all foreign intervention, overt or covert, in support of any of the participants in the fighting, including the provision of weapons, intelligence, combat training, financial or diplomatic support.

Our partners support the Syrian people’s right to determine the future of their own country, and have called on the Assad Administration to implement needed reforms and end corruption.

Previous General Assemblies have affirmed the right to self-determination. This is consistent with our partner’s requests.

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**Item 11-17**

[The assembly approved Item 11-17 with amendment. See pp. 15, 71.]

*Commissioners’ Resolution. On Iran.*

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) takes the following actions:

1. Commends and thanks the participants in negotiations with The Islamic Republic of Iran under the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); strongly supports their efforts; and assures them of our prayers, as they work for successful outcomes.

2. Recognizes that Iran, as a signatory of the NPT, has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes, on condition that they remain in full compliance with the terms of the treaty, including full allowance for inspection of their nuclear facilities to ensure that these are only for non-military purposes.

3. Calls on all participants to refrain from imposing new conditions or new sanctions that would hinder negotiations.

4. Calls on all governments, including the U.S. as well as Iran, to safeguard the rights of all citizens, including the freedom of worship for all people.

5. Commends to those involved in the NPT negotiations innovative, nonviolent, diplomatic approaches including
   a. taking independent initiatives to reduce threats; and
   b. acknowledging complicity/responsibility for past actions as a basis for progress towards resolution of differences.

6. Encourages grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations, including churches, to become informed and active participants in supporting the work of peace building and reconciliation.

7. Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to nurture relationships that the PC(USA) shares with the churches in Iran through our common membership in ecumenical bodies; also to continue to look for ways of supporting and building relationships with the Christian communities in Iran.

8. Directs the Stated Clerk to convey these decisions to the President of the United States; the secretary of state and the secretary of defense; all members of the U.S. Congress; appropriate officials of countries involved in the nuclear nonproliferation negotiations, including the government of Iran; and the congregations of the PC(USA), all with the advice of appropriate officials in the PMA.
Rationale

This resolution rests on six foundation blocks: (1) the Holy Bible; (2) historic Presbyterian mission work in Iran; (3) “On Supporting a Peaceful, Diplomatic Solution to the U.S.-Iran Issues,” the action of the 220th General Assembly (2012); (4) new developments in nuclear nonproliferation negotiations; (5) nonviolent approaches to peacemaking, as outlined in the denomination’s Peace Discernment Process; (6) the Presbyterian church’s “The Confession of 1967.”

(1) Biblical bedrock: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt. 5:9). With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we seek to discern what it means to be peacemakers, in the conflict-ridden context of relationships between the U.S. and Iran.

(2) Some history: Christianity was brought to Persia (the land now called Iran) before the end of the first century A.D. Over the centuries, the church there took many paths, reflecting diverse doctrinal positions, national affiliations, and language groups. The churches waxed and waned, as empires came and went. The involvement of American Presbyterian missionaries in Iran started in 1832, when emissaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions visited the city of Urumia, in what is now far northwestern Iran. Over time, their mission work spread to the rest of the country. From their first engagement there in 1832 until Western mission workers were asked to leave the country in 1980, American Presbyterians had an active presence; the roll of Presbyterians who served in Iran for the period up to 1960 has nearly 400 names. Active in establishing outstanding hospitals and schools as well as churches throughout the country, they built a very significant legacy in the country. Iran produced the first modern era constitution in the Middle East in 1906. Presbyterian Missionary Howard Baskerville arrived in Iran in 1907 and was part of the “Constitutional Revolution,” which strived to establish a republic. Baskerville, who died for this cause, is buried in Iran and is remembered as a hero of the early democratic movement. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Iran, affiliated in its early years with the Synod of New York of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., was officially established in 1935 as an independent member of the worldwide family of Presbyterian churches (Source: History of the American Presbyterian Mission to Iran, 1834–1960, by John Elder). Today the churches in Iran, impacted by the emigration of Christians, seek to remain strong and faithful, even in the midst of a constantly changing environment. While many Christians in Iran are able to worship freely, others find the practice of their faith to be severely restricted.

This resolution recognizes that freedom of worship has not always been assured in our own country and asks our government to be ever vigilant in protecting it in our own country, especially for Muslims. It also asks the government of Iran to protect the rights of all its citizens, including freedom of worship for all.

(3) The 219th General Assembly (2012) approved “On Supporting a Peaceful, Diplomatic Solution to the U.S.-Iran Issues,” which:

• Acknowledged the church’s support of a peaceful, diplomatic means to resolve the tensions developing as a result of Iran’s nuclear program between the United States, Iran, European nations, Iran’s Arab neighbors, and Israel, and affirmed that the provisions of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Act should apply to all nations in the region without double standards.

• Called for the direct, unconditional negotiations between the United States and Iran with the goal of finding and implementing a peaceful resolution and affirmed the longer term goal of reestablishing diplomatic relations.

The full action, approved by vote of 531-127-1, is available on pc-biz (http://pc-biz.org/PC-Biz_WebApp_deploy/(S(31we4zmhnz221iqj3li2s2ta))/IOBView.aspx?m=ro&id=3825).

(4) In June 2013, a new reformist president was elected in Iran with a mandate for change and was installed in office in August. The situation changed profoundly in late 2013 with the initiation of direct negotiations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, involving the governments of Iran, the United States, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Germany. In November 2013, those countries negotiated a historic agreement that provided the best chance in decades to ensure that Iran never develops a nuclear weapon. This six-month interim agreement is already rolling back the most dangerous aspects of Iran’s nuclear program. This is a critical moment. We’re closer than we’ve ever been to solving one of the world’s most challenging nuclear proliferation problems (Source: The Field Brief, the Plowshares Fund, Spring 2014).

(5) The PC(USA) action initiated by General Assembly action in 2010 (Item 13-11) and often referred to as the “Peace Discernment Process” explores various nonviolent steps that can be taken to avoid war and promote peace. Three such approaches could be particularly relevant to the current situation in Iran:

• Take independent initiatives to reduce threat. Independent of the slow process of negotiation and aimed at demonstrating a strong wish for success in the negotiations, such initiatives should be visible, verifiable, and ongoing, inviting but not demanding reciprocity. An example might be a gradual relaxation of restrictions on travel to the United States by Iranians, including diplomats nominated to serve their country here. Iran has already relaxed visa requirements for Americans seeking to visit their country.
• Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice, seeking repentance and forgiveness for past actions. The PC(USA) urges the U.S. government to acknowledge its complicity in the overthrow of a freely elected government in Iran in 1953, installing in its place one that was notorious for human rights abuses. The church needs to take the lead in expressing repentance, asking for forgiveness for past actions of our government.

• Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations. Churches can play a major role in this process.

(6) The PC(USA)’s Confession of 1967 states (Book of Confessions, 9.45):

God’s reconciliation in Jesus Christ is the ground of the peace, justice, and freedom among nations which all powers of government are called to serve and defend. The church, in its own life, is called to practice the forgiveness of enemies and to commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace. This search requires that the nations pursue fresh and responsible relations across every line of conflict, even at risk to national security, to reduce areas of strife and to broaden international understanding. Reconciliation among nations becomes peculiarly urgent as countries develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, diverting their manpower and resources from constructive uses and risking the annihilation of mankind. ...

Iran and the United States have endured more than thirty years of conflict and animosity. Each has done things that the other has regarded as hostile, illegal, and wrong. Neither side trusts the other, often with some justification. In such a situation, movement towards a negotiated settlement, even if both sides agree on the desired outcome—an Iran that is a fully accepted member of the international community, able to develop a nuclear industry for peaceful purposes but with no interest in or ability to produce nuclear weapons—will require time and careful steps to rebuild mutual trust. The United States is by far the stronger party in those negotiations and is allied with several nations (not party to the negotiations) that have obtained nuclear weapons without complying with the NPT. The U.S. government could use its strength—military or otherwise—to seek to impose its will on Iran, which most likely would result in a speedy breakdown of the negotiations, confirming their fears of plots of Western domination in the Middle East. Alternatively, our country could be the leader in taking careful steps to prove our serious intent to resolve the conflict through peaceful negotiations. The church can be a powerful force encouraging our leaders to make this our deep and abiding commitment. As we seek to be Christ’s blessed peacemakers in this particular conflict, may this be our calling.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-17

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-17—from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 11-17. This resolution is consistent with previous General Assembly resolutions on this issue.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-17

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-17—from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 11-17. The ACREC commends this peacemaking resolution and its emphasis on diplomacy and dialogue. We are bound by our scriptures and confessions to be peacemakers. Recognizing that Presbyterians have a long history of mission and witness in Iran, we believe every effort must be made to further the dialogue with the new reform-minded president of Iran who came into office in August 2013 with a mandate to change Iran’s relationships with countries it has been at odds with for years. After thirty-five years of hostility and disagreement between the U.S. and Iran, this is a crucial moment for changing the dynamic. By looking forward and stressing dialogue, condemnation and vilification on both sides can subside, and in time, a better and more trusting relationship can be built, having a beneficial outcome for the entire region.

Item 11-18

[The assembly approved Item 11-18 with amendment. See pp. 15, 71.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Concern, Prayer, and Action for Syria and Iraq.

In light of the devastation of prolonged civil [and proxy] war in Syria and Iraq, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

[In the immediate context of suffering in Syria, Iraq, and among the refugees from those countries:]

1. Encourages congregations and members to pray for the peoples of Syria and Iraq suffering horrific human rights abuses amidst bloody civil wars[,] [that have been expanded by the provision of weapons and fighters from outside countries using these conflicts as proxies for larger power and religious interests];
2. Stands with our Reformed[3] and ecumenical partners in Syria and Iraq who are caught in those conflicts[5][7]

3. Commends the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and other agencies, working in partnership with Middle Eastern churches, to bring relief to refugees and internally displaced persons from the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts, and urges congregations and members to give generous support to that work[4][5]

4. [Asks][Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency and other Presbyterians and congregations to advocate for] the United States and other governments to do what is possible to mediate a just and peaceful settlement of those conflicts.

Rationale

After three years, the Syrian civil war has claimed well more than 100,000 lives, by United Nations and other estimates, a staggering proportion of whom are innocent civilians. More than 2 million refugees have fled the country, and another 6 million are internally displaced. Human rights monitors report indiscriminate attacks, summary executions, kidnappings, torture, rape, and denial of food and medicine as tactics commonly used in the war. Both government and insurgent forces are implicated in the abuses.

The Syrian civil war has become perhaps the largest humanitarian crisis of this century so far. It threatens to split the country apart. The situation grows ever more complicated as rebel factions battle one another as well as the government; foreign actors (including the United States) intervene by supplying weapons, volunteers, and training to various parties; and the overflow from the Syrian conflict strains the capacity and threatens the stability of neighboring countries.

Most recently, the violence in Iraq seems to have become a full-scale civil war that threatens to divide that nation. The civilian death toll—hundreds every month for the past decade—has spiked sharply upward. This conflict, too, has featured multiple armed parties, human rights violations on all sides, foreign involvement, and refugees by the millions.

We in the U.S. churches do not know the solutions to these conflicts. It is hard to anticipate the course they may take in the coming months and years. What we can do is hold the endangered people up in prayer, lend our assistance in relieving their suffering, communicate solidarity to the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon and other Christian bodies in the region, and encourage the kind of mediated peace processes that hold the best hope for some movement toward peace and justice in Syria and Iraq. That is what this resolution asks the General Assembly to do.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-18

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-18—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this resolution be approved with amendment: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“In light of the devastation of prolonged civil war in Syria and Iraq, the growing tensions among power blocs, and the need for a more just world order, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

“A. In the immediate context of suffering in Syria, Iraq, and among the refugees from those countries:

1. Encourages congregations and members to pray for the peoples of Syria and Iraq suffering horrific human rights abuses amidst bloody civil wars[4][5] [that have been expanded by the provision of weapons and fighters from outside countries using these conflicts as proxies for larger power and religious interests;]

2. Stands with our Reformed and ecumenical partners in Syria and Iraq who are caught in those conflicts[5][7]

3. Commends the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and other agencies, working in partnership with Middle Eastern churches to bring relief to refugees and internally displaced persons from the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts, and urges congregations and members to give generous support to that work[5][7]

4. [Asks][Directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency and other Presbyterians and congregations to advocate for] the United States and other governments to do what is possible to mediate a just and peaceful settlement of those conflicts[4][5], grounded in the theological and ethical bases noted below.

“B. In the larger frame and longer term, given the transnational character of these conflicts:

1. Affirms that both the church and the world are called to follow the biblical command to love our neighbors as ourselves (Lev. 19:18; Mt. 22:39), with the understanding that faithful execution of this command requires an exercise of
moral imagination: to envision how other peoples and nations view conflicted situations from their vantage points, their values and their interests, and to envision new initiatives for reconciliation;

“[2. Calls on Presbyterians and other U.S. citizens of goodwill to take care in how we look at the world: (a) to resist a simplistic ‘clash of civilizations’ model that pits all Muslims against Western democracy and overlooks political failures and other contributing factors (including blowback against our own policies) that give rise to Islamic extremism; and (b) to resist viewing the conflicts with Russia and China, including the tensions in and around Ukraine, through the old, bipolar, Cold War lens, understanding that new conflicts require development of new frameworks and vision;

“[3. Recognizes that developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan contain some similar dynamics to those in Syria and Iraq and recommends that any continuing foreign presence in Afghanistan be requested by a democratically elected government of that country, that it should be a genuinely multinational force on a time-limited basis, and that human rights, economic development without corruption, and a judicial system that protects the standing of women (as equals, able to testify against family members, receive education, etc.) should be requirements for any continuing U.S. financial aid and security assistance;

“[4. Calls upon the United States government, in concert with other governments, to strengthen and work within the institutions of a just global order (the United Nations, our treaty partners, etc.) so that they more effectively address conflicts within and among nations and emerging power configurations;

“[5. Affirms both that the legitimacy of political authorities rests on their pursuit and execution of justice and that peoples have a right to self-determination through democratic processes that are more than simply elections;

“[6. Honors the prophetic insight that seeking God’s rule and righteousness (Mt. 6:33) means turning from idols of nation and economic security to serve the living God in community with other people and creatures (Deut. 5:7);

“[7. Directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, within its current budget, to consult with Presbyterian political scientists and others to offer theological and ethical guidance regarding the emerging international order, the challenges of peacekeeping in weak and ecologically threatened states, and the role of Christian communities in overcoming resentments, fears, and past injustices].”

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy supports this resolution, but believes, in concurrence with World Mission staff of the Mission Agency, that it is better to characterize the wars devastating Syria and Iraq as proxy wars rather than civil wars. Also, ACSWP believes these wars are an instance of a larger pattern of significant challenges to the relatively unipolar global order that emerged after the Cold War. Other challenges include: possible civil wars in Afghanistan and Libya, China’s assertion of territorial claims over weaker nations in the South China Sea, and Russia’s invasion of another former member of the old Soviet Bloc, seizing territory and pressuring its neighbors.

While no one can know exactly how to address the tragedies in Syria and Iraq, there are many dedicated Presbyterian thinkers in foreign service, the military, corporations active in the Middle East, and in nongovernmental organizations and universities who are called to work on matters of world order and governance. Based on our Christian traditions and peacemaking commitments, it is important to reach out to them, to learn from them, and to work with them in helping shape our nation’s foreign policies, particularly in the wake of two grinding wars that have actually limited future U.S. influence.

The Syria and Iraq conflicts seem to beg the international community to respond to protect human rights, defend the weak, and uphold order and justice. Yet in recent decades the institutions of international order, created by the United States in concert with other nations following World War II, have atrophied. Some are badly dysfunctional. Others are outdated and do not include emerging powers. In light of this situation it is not surprising that voices within and outside the United States of America call for the U.S. to respond with military action.

The situation is not helped by the fact that some frameworks for viewing these challenges are quite limited. Some analysts view conflicts with Russia and China through the old Cold War lens. Others recast the Cold War dualism to see a global contest between a Christian America and Muslim extremists. Those who do not share these simplistic inclinations do wonder what sort of global order should emerge and what America’s role should be in it. Indeed, it would help the church and the world to have more adequate frameworks for understanding the global order. Hence the expansion of this good resolution and the recommendation for further awareness and outreach to Presbyterians involved in these matters.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 11-18

Advice and Counsel on Item 11-18—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC).

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 11-18.
Events have unfolded in Syria over the last two years in a most tragic way resulting in the terrible loss of life and destruction of entire towns and villages. New refugee populations have been created; some were already refugees from previous conflict situations. In Iraq, more than 1,000 civilians have been killed over the past year and, in news as recent as this weekend, violence has erupted again in Iraq where more persons were killed. All efforts for a peaceful settlement by the PC(USA), including those suggested in the resolution, should be advocated and supported.

Item 11-A

[The assembly approved Item 11-A with comment.]

[Comment: The minutes were approved with minor typographical corrections.]

Minutes, Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

Item 11-Info

Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) Agency Summary

1. Assigned Responsibilities: Strengthening Presbyterian Social Witness

   Social witness is part of what it means for the church to be “salt” and “light” in the world today. Coming from Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:13–14, the images of Salt & Light also give name to the ACSWP on-line newsletter. They undergird the committee’s faithfulness to its charge:

   The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) serves the prophetic calling of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by providing the General Assembly with careful studies of pressing moral challenges, media for discussion and discernment of Christian responsibilities, and policy recommendations for faithful action.

   This brief narrative summarizes the committee’s responsibilities, its procedures and personnel, its accomplishments and activities.

   In every age, the Spirit calls on the church to discern afresh God’s redemptive purpose in our particular time and place in history. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)’s work is to help the church discern what it means to proclaim and embody the Gospel in relation to contemporary society. In this work, the ACSWP and its task forces draw upon a great wealth of resources:

   - the voices of the biblical text;
   - the wisdom of theological discourse;
   - the guidance of the Reformed confessions;
   - the tradition of past policy statements;
   - the insights of sociopolitical disciplines;
   - the advice of members and all governing bodies of the church;
   - the insights of people who are poor, victims of existing policies, and those who have not had a voice in councils of the church; and

   Social witness can occur at many different points: in a church session, in a presbytery, in an advocacy group, in the participation of Christians in mission, in a meeting of the ecumenical church, in an individual Christian’s brave refusal to “go along” with injustice.

   For Presbyterians, however, decisions about the church’s social witness are made by persons elected to serve in governing bodies (session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly). As councils of the church meet, the elected persons are commissioned “… not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ” (Book of Order, F-3.0204). The advisory committee’s structure and function go back to 1936 when “consecrated” and justice-oriented persons from the Boards of Christian Education and National Missions were elected to a Social Education and Action Committee.

   In providing service and resources to meet the needs of congregations, mid councils, and the General Assembly, ACSWP members find guidance in the mission statement quoted above. Theologically grounded ethical reflection is part of the salt and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The ACSWP engages with the grassroots in assisting the General Assembly to discern what it means to proclaim and embody the Gospel in a world that remains too grim for too many. At the same time, the committee’s membership contains persons with expertise in theology, social ethics, and various other disciplines, almost all of whom hold advanced degrees.
Making a personal social witness begins with very individual ways of growing and developing as a Christian—
prayerfully studying the Scriptures, being inspired by Jesus; the prophets, and courageous stands of the church; gaining
insight from past ethical witness; connecting one’s faith with others in the Christian community; and then being faithful in the
world beyond the church. The ACSWP seeks to be a partner in the ministry of reconciliation, for “each member [who] is the

The churchwide work of the ACSWP is based on ethical guidance from the Scriptures, the Book of Confessions, and the
Book of Order. The 1993 General Assembly policy statement, Why and How the Church Makes a Social Policy Witness
(oga-93-019), provides extensive documentation of key biblical passages and is a useful document in congregational inter-
pretation of the ACSWP and its mission.

All of those biblical texts have a common theme. The Gospel says that to confess Jesus Christ as Lord is to believe that
God can and has overcome the powers of sin in the world. Christians do not work alone, but join Christ Jesus who is already
at work in our world. John Calvin taught that social concern, expressed by action on behalf of our neighbors, is a central part
of the faith. Our historic confessions, the work of theologians, and the actions of 220 General Assemblies have reaffirmed
that message. Our faithfulness as Reformed Christians is to be embodied in love and justice.

a. New Developments

The traditional way of transmitting the church’s social witness was print. In addition to the Minutes of the General As-
ssembly, since 1908, there were print journals that provided analysis and “how to” for congregations and individuals, agencies
and councils of the church.

In 2011, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy launched an internet justice journal, with the support of the
Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries Area and the larger General Assembly Mission Council [now Presbyterian Mis-
sion Agency]. The new journal, Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice, was designed to strengthen
the social witness of the whole church and to be an open forum on areas where new witness is needed. The url (internet address)
for the journal is http://justiceunbound.org/: the name “unbound,” refers not only to the lack of binding, but to Jesus’ words at
the resurrection of Lazarus, “unbind him,” and to images of prisoners freed. In September 2011, the then General Assembly
Mission Council designated the journal to be the successor to Church & Society magazine, which itself continued the work of
print journals going back to 1908 (The Amethyst, Moral Welfare, and Social Progress). Back issues of all of these journals
have made available through the American Theological Library Association.

A key goal has been to reach twenty- and thirty-something readers, using an intergenerational editorial staff. Despite lim-
itations in the committee’s budget, a recent seminary graduate, Patrick Heery, was hired as managing editor and associate
staff of ACSWP. Recognizing his work with Unbound as a form of ministry, Scioto Valley Presbytery ordained him in 2012.
A gifted editor and writer, Heery was hired to edit Presbyterians Today and other mission publications of the Presbyterian
Mission Agency in March of 2013.

Ms. Ginna Bairby, another recent seminary graduate, was hired as Unbound’s managing editor and associate for Young
Adult Social Witness, starting in September 2013. In the interim, the publication was sustained by Robert S. Moore and the
Reverend Tricia Lloyd-Sidle, working on the technical and editorial sides respectively. Ms. Bairby, a former young adult
volunteer in Peru and Office of Public Witness (d.c.) intern, is a candidate for ordination in the Presbytery of the James. She
has continued the strong performance of the journal and plans for a newer young adult board to complement the twelve estab-
lished church leaders and thinkers on the current advisory board. Unbound is also guided by staff colleagues from several of
the Louisville offices.

In addition to the internet journal, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy maintains a website and distributes
an e-newsletter, “Salt & Light.” Unbound links to these and to the various sites of other Compassion, Peace, and Justice mis-
nistries. The emphasis on new technology and nurturing communities of people reflects the findings of the self-study ACSWP
presented to and which was approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010). New approaches include using the Thoughtful
Christian on-line curriculum to test and distribute timely studies (in 2013 one on drones), building on previous posting of
short policy summaries free-of-charge on the Presbyterian Leader website.

Another new development has been the exploration of a “Social Teaching” track or modification of the inter-seminary
course long taught at the General Assembly by former Moderator Jack Rogers and David Tomlinson, both professors at San
Francisco Theological Seminary. That course, tentatively titled “Presbyterianism: Principles, Practice, and Social Teaching,”
was designed for seminarians but may also welcome auditors and others seeking to understand the assembly in-depth and see
it as a window into the church. That course was not taught in 2012 but an “open” version is being explored for 2014.

Since the 2012 General Assembly, the committee met in Charlotte, North Carolina; Parkville, Missouri (near Kansas
City); Detroit, Michigan (Coordinating Committee); Albany and Schenectady, New York; Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mex-
tico; and Louisville, Kentucky. In all but the last location, the committee met with representatives of the presbyteries and or-
ganizations and congregations doing vital forms of social witness.
In Charlotte, guided by the Reverend Arthur Canada (then on ACSWP), the committee met with the presbytery’s interim executive and a range of mission leaders, visiting sites of ministry for children, homeless women, and victims of human trafficking sponsored by dedicated congregations.

At the Heartland Center, Heartland Presbytery’s conference and camping facility, the committee heard a panel of speakers on renewal of the church, and also spoke with the presbytery executive on ministerial compensation and other issues. The guests discussed ethical and spiritual connections involving food, eating, and health; climate change and repercussions of Midwestern drought; a downtown ministry of hospitality and its insights for the peace discernment process; trends of being connectional but not traditionally institutional; finding consensus rather than division over matters of sexuality and biblical authority; and a review of issues and challenges in which the Heartland Presbytery is involved.

In Detroit, Michigan, the ACSWP Coordinating Committee discussed intensifying pressures on and within that city, and heard updates on the several study teams and resolution projects, visiting a range of church and industrial sites.

In Albany, New York, the committee was informed of downtown ministries including racial and immigrant support and a movement of primarily young adults seeking to strengthen the common good in a context of inequality and unemployment. Meeting with pastors and elders from churches of varying sizes, the committee discussed forms of witness and service including feeding programs, foci on women’s health, early childhood education, voting rights, and the dynamics of ministry in a state capitol. In nearby Schenectady, New York, the committee learned of work with cooperative social ministries, including an outreach to sex workers and an innovative approach to joint congregational witness with a Presbyterian congregation joining with a Reformed Church in America for critical mass in outreach and Christian formation.

At Ghost Ranch, the committee heard from the chairs of the Peace Discernment and Tax Justice study teams, heard from an expert on urban ministry and community organizing, and learned of current conditions in the Presbyterian Church of Cuba at a time of important transition. The committee also discussed the challenge of sexual abuse and violence among vulnerable populations, including church contexts (Roman Catholic and Protestant), among migrant laborers and those in domestic service, and in the U.S. military and around its bases.

In Louisville, the committee concentrated on finalizing reports and consulting with a range of staff and elected leadership.

b. Procedures and Personnel

In support of the work of the assembly, the ACSWP is given direct access to the assembly as it meets biennially. Between sessions of the assembly, the ACSWP also assists the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB), the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), and other agencies of the church as their work involves the development and interpretation of social witness policy.

The committee carries out its responsibilities in five major ways. They are the

• development and recommendation of new social witness and policy for approval by the General Assembly;

• interpretation and communication of the General Assembly’s social witness and policy, both to the church and the world at large; • providing advice and counsel to the entities and governing bodies of the church on matters of social witness policy when developments merit social-ethical attention; • providing advice and counsel to the General Assembly when it meets as a governing body (in oral and memoranda form); and • monitoring peace and justice concerns per mandates from the General Assembly. The ACSWP develops and recommends new social witness and policies primarily in response to referrals from the General Assembly (GA) and its entities, and in a manner consistent with the Manual of the General Assembly, “On Forming Social Policy.” This policy development requires depth of theological reflection, breadth of input, and diversity of participation. Before a policy statement is approved, extensive consultation is mandated at all stages of development. Thus, the committee’s work is connected to the concerns of Presbyterians gathered in worshiping and serving communities across the land.

The committee’s Advice and Counsel group carries out the task of providing advice and counsel at the meeting of the General Assembly (GA). This group of elected committee members, together with other staff and resource persons from several Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and Office of the General Assembly (OGA) entities, advises commissioners in assembly committees and other entities about social policies applicable to issues before the assembly. It may also comment on the need or direction for future social policy. Such analysis and recommendations are provided through “Advice and Counsel Memoranda,” by oral testimony before assembly committees, and informally. The ACSWP chair or a co-chairperson is an expert on urban ministry and community organizing, and learned of current conditions in the Presbyterian Church of Cuba operating an outreach to sex workers and an innovative approach to joint congregational witness with a Presbyterian congregation joining with a Reformed Church in America for critical mass in outreach and Christian formation.

The committee’s work is connected to the concerns of Presbyterians gathered in worshiping and serving communities across the land.
The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) members and staff make themselves available for interpretive events and preaching as requested and as time allows. Such events included presentations in nine presbyteries and seven congregations and consultations with a number more. Staff represented ACSWP and Unbound at the Company of New Pastors meeting in Louisville (October 2013), introducing participants to the committee’s work and the social witness policy of the PC(USA) and led workshops at the Montreat College Conference on the theory and practice of social witness and its role in the church.

As part of the peace discernment process, the committee helped the Steering Team convene a consultation at Montreat on New Approaches to Peacemaking with 135 chaplains, professors, and students from thirty-two colleges and universities, almost all related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Papers and presentations from that event contributed to the report, “Risking Peace in a Fearful World,” and brief video interviews of speakers, students, and several professors and chaplains were posted as a special issue of Unbound. In addition to cooperation with Presbyterian college ministry leadership, the Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel sent several experienced military chaplains to participate.

The committee welcomes inquiries through its office in Louisville. All mid councils, churches, and members are encouraged to use the “Presbyterian Social Witness Policy Compilation,” which contains the core of the assemblies’ social policy statements since 1946. It is revised regularly to meet the needs of the church and can be downloaded from the worldwide web at (www.pcusa.org/acswp). The ACSWP holds a stated meeting following each General Assembly to discern and prioritize its work; periodically between the assemblies, to review progress on papers and projects; and in January before an assembly, to edit and approve final drafts for submission to the assembly. This year the committee has prepared the following reports to strengthen current social witness policies:

- Resolution on Sexual Violence within the U. S. Military Services: A 2014 Human Rights Update;
- Risking Peace in a Fearful World: Recommendations from the Peace Discernment Process;
- Tax Justice: A Christian Response to a New Gilded Age;
- ACSWP Agency Narrative;
- Resolution on Justice for Western Sahara;
- Ministerial Compensation and the Theology of Compensation: Incentives and Solidarity;
- The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing our Urban Vision/Mission;
- Resolution on Drones, War and Surveillance;
- Resolution on Equal Rights for All Inhabitants of Israel and Palestine and on Conversations with Prophetic Voices.

In preparing this year’s General Assembly reports, ACSWP took into consideration the comments and reflections shared by individual Presbyterians and adult education classes, Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB) program ministry areas, and other bodies within our church. From 2012–2013, the committee assisted the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) in the publication of the following reports: World of Hurt, Word of Life: Renewing God’s Communion in the Work of Economic Reconstruction and For Human Rights and Civic Freedom: Movements for Democratic Change in the Arab World. These resources can be downloaded at http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications or http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/resources.htm.

The ACSWP works collaboratively with the six mission and ministry areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), other General Assembly agencies, and the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). The ACSWP has liaisons from the Compassion Peace and Justice ministry area and from the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC). When possible, the committee spends time with local church members, relevant presbytery committees, and with ecumenical contacts during its stated meetings. Members and staff of ACSWP have spoken at and distributed policy resources at several presbytery meetings and one synod educational event, and gave workshops at the Ecumenical Advocacy Days cosponsored by the Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C.

As invited, the committee assists in programming an annual gathering of the Social Ethics Network (SEN) (formerly known as the Theological Educators for Presbyterian Social Witness (TEPSW)). This group is composed primarily of Christian ethicists currently or formerly serving in seminaries and other educational institutions related to and/or in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Since the last General Assembly, the committee assisted with two such gatherings. In the fall of 2012, the SEN met at Auburn and Union Theological Seminaries, New York City, New York; and in the fall of 2013 at Wake Forest Divinity School, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The ACSWP also hosts a reception for Presbyterians at the annual meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics. The January 2013 meeting was held in Chicago; and the Jan-

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January 2014 meeting in Seattle, Washington. Other responses by the committee to General Assembly (GA) assignments may be found in the responses to referrals section of the reports to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

vi One of Zunes’ recent books is *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism and Conflict Irresolution* (Syracuse University Press, 2010), co-authored with Jacob Mundy. It may be noted that the commissioner who initiated this assessment has affirmed that it fulfills the Assembly’s assignment.

ii This statement comes in an interview with Mark Lane, another political scientist, which was broadcast by Al Jazeera: [http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/09/20129292359252942.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/09/20129292359252942.html).

East Timor did receive its independence after years of horrific repression and war. Kashmir involves the line of religious division between two nuclear states dating back to their separation. Tibet is acknowledged by most countries to be part of China even if many would favor its cultural autonomy, which seems to be the current position of the Dalai Lama. Zunes points out that centralized autocracies rarely respect the rights of subordinate jurisdictions.


x See [http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/UNSC/toc-W.html](http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/UNSC/toc-W.html).

xi These references are drawn from Professor Mundy’s Dec. 14, 2013 communication that cites his own direct communication and analysis.

xii In analyzing the Wikileaks material, Stephen Zunes summarizes a cable from the U.S. Charge d’Affaires that shows an effort to weaken the position of the Polisario, noting that they do not claim the Tefaya region of Southern Morocco inhabited by Sahrawis, and treating the struggle with Algeria as central to resolving the conflict ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-zunes/wikileaks-cables-on-western-sahara-792862.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-zunes/wikileaks-cables-on-western-sahara-792862.html)). Zunes notes that the Polisario do not practice terrorism and respect the long incorporation of the Tefaya region in Morocco.

**Item 12-01**

[The assembly disapproved Item 12-01. See pp. 16, 17.]

On Amending G-2.0504b to Require Participation in the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas.

The Presbytery of Kiskiminetas overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote:

Shall G-2.0504b be amended by adding a third paragraph to read as follows:

“For any temporary pastoral relationship filled by a non-retired teaching elder serving more than half time (20 hours per week), the contract must include participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly for the duration of the temporary pastoral relationship contract and future extensions.”

**Rationale**

The terms of call for installed pastoral positions require participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly (Book of Order, G-2.0804).

Only 5,584 congregations have installed pastoral positions covering 6,722 installed pastors (Comparative Statistics 2011). There are 702 fewer congregations with installed positions covering 885 fewer installed pastors than in 2006 (Comparative Statistics 2006).

In 2011, 2,846 congregations have “other leadership,” of which are temporary supply teaching elders (710). At the Board of Pensions minimum participation basis of $40,000, the lost major medical dues is $1,252,440 for 2013. Minimum participation basis for 2014 is $42,000 and for 2015 is $44,000.

**Concurrence to Item 12-01 from the Presbyteries of Albany, Chicago, Homestead, and Lackawanna.**

**ACC ADVICE ON ITEM 12-01**

Advice on Item 12-01—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to disapprove Item 12-01.

Item 12-01 proposes to amend G-2.0504b by adding a third paragraph:

“For any temporary pastoral relationship filled by a non-retired teaching elder serving more than half time (20 hours per week), the contract must include participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly for the duration of the temporary pastoral relationship contract and future extensions.”

The proposed amendment would diminish the presbytery’s authority to set minimum requirements for the terms of service for temporary pastoral relationships. The terms of service for such relationships must meet or exceed any minimum requirements set by the presbytery. The Book of Order does not include a requirement for participation in the benefits plan for temporary pastoral relationships. Determination of titles and terms of service for temporary pastoral relationships are explicitly left to the presbytery.

Terms of service for temporary pastoral relationships, including participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), remain the prerogative of the presbytery, as well as deferring to sessions the option of including such participation.

**BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 12-01**

Comment on Item 12-01—From the Board of Pensions.

Item 12-01 from the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas seeks to amend the Book of Order to mandate participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by all “non-retired teaching elder(s) serving more than half time (twenty hours per week)” in temporary pastoral relationships.
While the Board of Pensions ("the Board") joins the larger church in believing that all people should have healthcare and retirement benefits, it advises that the General Assembly disapprove this overture.

The language proposed, which appears to be modeled on the similar language of G-2.0804 of the Book of Order, would not make anyone eligible for benefits who is not already eligible and could actually be detrimental to the financial condition of the Medical Plan. The Board notes first that any individual meeting the requirements presented by the overture—employment relationship with a particular church, working at least twenty hours—is already eligible to be enrolled in the Benefits Plan. There is no impediment to enrollment due to the temporary nature of their employment relationship. If the goal of the overture is to make individuals eligible, the amendment language fails to do so.

The Board understands that many temporary relationships are structured as such for the express purpose of avoiding mandated participation in the Benefits Plan. Often borne of affordability concerns, the decisions of sessions—and those teaching elders who serve in these positions—to structure positions in a particular way should be respected. A constitutional amendment to mandate participation of those working at least twenty hours could do little other than increasing the number of positions reported as being nineteen hours per week.

Based on the available data, the Board believes that many of those in these non-installed—and currently non-mandated—positions have lower effective salaries than their installed counterparts, even adjusting for the number of hours worked. If this language was added to the Book of Order and enrollment of this population in the Benefits Plan was compelled, it would have the effect of adding individuals at salaries that require subsidization to reach median benefit levels rather than adding a population of those at or above the median. If the goal of the overture is to benefit the financial condition of the Medical Plan, the amendment language fails to do so.

Finally, the overture runs counter to the spirit of the current Form of Government, adopted just four years ago, which has sought to minimize regulation at the national level and encourage flexibility and choice in administration of the church. The presbyteries proposing this overture could choose to adopt this policy for their own churches without requiring a constitutional amendment.

While the Board could administratively manage the influx of members that this proposed amendment may generate, and noting that it shares the concern for all those who serve the church, the Board advises the disapproval of the overture.

Item 12-02

[The assembly disapproved Item 12-02. See pp. 16, 17.]

On Directing the Board of Pensions in the Distribution of Pension Benefits of Church Leaders and Administrators of Churches Leaving the PC(USA)—From the Presbytery of Tropical Florida.

The Presbytery of Tropical Florida overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to direct the PC(USA) Board of Pensions to remove and distribute all accumulated pension benefits as a lump check or electronic transfer within 120 days after a teaching elder or administrator, not yet retired, becomes ordained, commissioned, or affiliated with another faith denomination in the position as teaching elder, priest, pastor, minister, clergy, working as an administrator, or a leadership position within another denomination.

Rationale

Why the need for this overture.

By removing all leaving churches, administrators, and teaching elders under the GSA (Gracious Separation Agreement) now participating in the PC(USA) pension programs, it will strengthen the PC(USA) Board of Pension financial position going forward due to the current low-interest rate environment, and removing future financial liabilities associated with departing participants.

Church leaders and administrators of churches leaving the PC(USA) denomination to join other faiths and denominations based on theological and doctrinal differences should not be allowed to continue their participation in the PC(USA) pension benefit program offered to churches, teaching elders, and administrators that remain faithful to the teachings and doctrines of PC(USA).

Currently the PC(USA) pension program is recognized as one on the best administered and funded religious foundations in America. Teaching elders and churches leaving our denomination under GSA currently could be allowed to participate fully in all current and future benefits offered by the PC(USA) Board of Pensions, if this overture is not approved by the 221st General Assembly (2014).
Comment on Item 12-02—From the Board of Pensions.

The Board of Pensions (the “Board”) advises the disapproval of Item 12-02 from the Presbytery of Tropical Florida, which directs the Board to distribute “all accumulated pension benefits” as a lump sum within 120 days after a teaching elder or administrator not yet retired joins another denomination as a clergy member, administrator, or leader in another denomination.

The rationale provided for the recommendation is that this position would strengthen the financial position of the pension fund due to the current low interest rate environment and remove future liabilities. The Board disagrees with the benefits cited by the overture advocate. If the Board’s investment performance exceeds its economic assumptions, having the assets remain in the plan until the former members reach retirement age strengthens the position of the fund. The interest rate to be used for computing the present value of the member’s accrued benefit is 4.5 percent; the lower the interest rate, the greater the liability for the plan.

The proposal is legally and administratively unadvisable. A member’s accrued pension benefits are vested. Under the current terms of the Benefits Plan, with the exception of members who have accrued only a very small benefit due to a short length of service, no member who leaves the employment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and their active participation in the Pension Plan, known as “terminated vested members” or “TVMs”, has the right to cash out their annuity benefit in a lump sum. The only distribution option under the defined benefit plan is an annuity benefit.

Under the Internal Revenue Code, a pension plan can only cash out a pension benefit involuntarily if the present value of the accrued benefit is less than $5,000. Any other form of cash out would require the consent of the pensioner.

To accomplish the goal of the overture, the Pension Plan distribution provisions would have to be amended by the Board to (1) define as a separate class of terminated vested members those members who are targeted by this overture and (2) provide that the sole distribution option available under the Pension Plan to that class of terminated vested members is a lump sum distribution of the present value of their accrued pension credits upon termination of eligible service and employment by another denomination as a clergy member, administrator, or leader. The board of directors has the duty to act in the sole and exclusive benefit of all members and their beneficiaries. Under the Plan, all TVMs are treated equally, whether they have left the service of the church to retire early, change vocations, or work for a corporation or another nonprofit entity, including another denomination. Their accrued pension represents deferred compensation that they accrued for their years of service for Presbyterian employers. The Board does not have the ability to monitor where a terminated employee goes after his or her service with the employing organization and does not have an interest in administering provisions that treat certain former members punitively or differently (better or worse) than others.

Finally, while the Board administers the Benefits Plan within the social norms of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and takes seriously urgings of the General Assembly, the Board notes that the General Assembly does not have the authority to direct the Board of Pensions to amend the Plan. The Board is a separate civil corporation with the fiduciary responsibility to design and administer the Benefits Plan.

The Board appreciates the overture’s compliments about the pension plan’s administration.

Item 12-03

[The assembly approved Item 12-03. See pp. 16, 17.]

On Publishing the Current List of Churches Certified as Relief of Conscience Churches—From the Presbytery of National Capital.

The Presbytery of National Capital overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to urge the Board of Pensions to post on the website the current list of the churches certified as Relief of Conscience churches.

Rationale

In 1998, the Board of Pensions (BOP) established a Relief of Conscience mechanism (ROC) whereby sessions that objected on grounds of conscience to the BOP Medical Plans policy of paying for abortions could have a portion of their dues set aside into the Adoption Assistance Fund. The Board of Pensions 2012 Annual Review states, “Churches and employing organizations that object as a matter of conscience to the use of their dues for abortion procedures may apply for relief of conscience. A dollar amount equal to the cost of abortion procedures from the prior year is set aside from the Medical Plan dues of employers that have relief of conscience status. These monies are transferred to the Board of Pensions Assistance Program, where they provide a small portion of the funding for Adoption Assistance Grants to Benefits Plan members.”
As of December 31, 2012, there were 491 congregations that have applied for and received ROC status. These congregations wish to publically and practically distance themselves—for reasons of conscience—from the PC(USA)’s practice of paying for abortions because Scripture leads them to conclude that abortion is a grave moral wrong and thus to pay for abortion is to be complicit in sin. To participate in ROC is thus a desire to bear public witness to this conviction without binding the conscience of other Presbyterians who come to differing conclusions. The church has discerned that with its diverse membership, this particular area of disagreement is one in which it is appropriate to offer a formal conscience mechanism, and so it is of concern to the whole church that it functions effectively and efficiently.

Unfortunately, many congregations are unaware that ROC exists at all, and the process to apply, receive, and maintain ROC status is unnecessarily bureaucratic and cumbersome. The congregation’s session must know that ROC exists, must pass a resolution that is directed to the presbytery of jurisdiction that then must act to grant or deny relief of conscience. “If the presbytery grants relief of conscience, it notifies the Board of Pensions. The Board of Pensions in turn acknowledges to the session and the presbytery receipt of their actions and places the congregation or employing organization on the relief of conscience roll.”

In 2008, in response to confusion as to whether a particular congregation had in fact been placed on the ROC roll, the General Assembly directed the Board of Pensions to communicate yearly by mail to each congregation on the ROC roll confirming their status. This communication is important but the process is needlessly burdensome, complicated, costly and ineffective. In the past few years churches who thought they had been on the ROC roll discovered that simple bureaucratic errors had resulted in their failure to be placed on the ROC roll, and thus, learned that their mandatory dues were inadvertently being used for years in ways that violated their consciences. Other churches have missed the yearly letter and thus have had to make inquiries as to their continued participation in ROC.

Publishing the ROC congregations on the BOP website would serve to publicize and promote an established BOP program, avert continued confusion, and streamline the process of confirming ROC status, and utilize the website to save financial and personnel resources related to the yearly mailing. Moreover, publishing the Relief of Conscience congregations provides them the opportunity to effectively bear public witness to the church and the world of their conviction that has caused them to seek ROC status in the first place. In other words, these current unnecessary bureaucratic layers not only cost time and money, but they also act to bind the conscience of churches who wish to make this matter of conscience a matter of public witness. All these problems could be easily solved by simply publishing the list of ROC churches on the website.

Endnotes

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

Concurrence to Item 12-03 from the Presbytery of Nevada.

BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 12-03

Comment on Item 12-03—From the Board of Pensions.

Item 12-03 from the Presbytery of National Capital would urge the Board of Pensions (“the Board”) to post on the website the current list of the churches certified as Relief of Conscience churches.

If the General Assembly asks the Board to publish this list on www.pensions.org, we will do so.

As these are matters of conscience, the Board would offer any church or other employer on the Relief of Conscience roll the opportunity to opt out of that listing.

In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, if this overture is approved, the Board would treat it as replacing the direction of the 218th General Assembly (2008) to report information annually.

Item 12-04

[The concurrence from the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca was withdrawn. Therefore, this item has been withdrawn from action at the General Assembly.]
Item 12-05

[The assembly approved Item 12-05. See pp. 16, 17.]

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) confirm the following named individuals elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Board of Directors, Class of 2018:

1. Linda Bailey WFT 56–65 Grand Canyon SW AL REN
2. Margaret Jorgensen WFT 56–65 Mid-South LW AL REN
3. Terry Nall WMR 46–55 Greater Atlanta SA ALP REN
4. Ronald Patterson BMR 66–75 New Covenant SUN P NEW
5. Linda D. Scholl WFR 46–55 Mid-South SA ALP REN
6. David Shinn AMT 36–45 Detroit COV PMAB NEW
7. Joyce Smith BFR 66–75 Scioto Valley COV AL NEW
8. Richard H. White WMT 66–75 New Brunswick NE FDN NEW

Key to Report:

- BFR = African American/Black Female Ruling Elder
- BMR = African American/Black Male Ruling Elder
- WFR = Caucasian Female Ruling Elder
- WFT = Caucasian Female Teaching Elder
- WMR = Caucasian Male Ruling Elder
- AMT = African American/Black Teaching Elder
- GFC = Caucasian Female Church Executive
- GMT = Caucasian Male Teaching Elder
- AT = At-Large
- ALP = At-Large PILP Nominee
- AL = At-Large
- PMAB = Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
- FDN = Foundation Representative
- NEW = New Member

Statistical Information

Total membership of PILP is 15 members—8 Nominated by the GANC (6 at-large, 1 synod representative, 1 presbytery representative); 2 PMAB members, nominated by PMAB; 2 Foundation nominees, nominated by Foundation; and 3 PILP nominated at-large.

Class of 2018—2 female ruling elders, 2 female teaching elders, 2 male ruling elders, 2 male teaching elders; 2 African American, 1 Asian American, 5 Caucasian.

Class of 2016—2 female ruling elders, 2 female teaching elders; 1 male ruling elder, 2 male teaching elders; 1 Asian American, 6 Caucasian.

Item 12-06

[There is no recommendation assigned to Item 12-06.]

Item 12-07

[The assembly approved Item 12-07. See pp. 16, 17.]

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) confirm the reelection of Thomas F. Taylor by the Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, for an additional four-year term as Foundation president and chief executive officer.

Rationale

At a special telephonic meeting, the trustees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation unanimously, and with gratitude to God, called and elected Thomas F. Taylor to a second, four-year term as president of the Foundation subject to the confirmation of the General Assembly.

During his first term of service, Taylor led the Foundation through the development and implementation of a strategic plan that has resulted in several significant accomplishments:

- Reversed a downward trend in new assets under management by increasing new assets each year, from $18 million in 2010, to $30 million in 2013.
• Forged key partnerships with Cambridge Associates to manage the Foundation’s fiduciary investments, and with SEI to be the investment adviser to the New Covenant Funds. Both Cambridge and SEI maintain the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s commitment to faith-based, socially responsible investing.

• Restructured field staff to emphasize building relationships with congregations and the ministries they support, and building partnerships with pastors. Ministry relations officers determine the stewardship and fundraising needs of partner ministries, and then offer the Foundation’s services to help meet those needs.

• Introduced new services to meet particular needs of the church, including online giving for congregations and ministries, new investment options for church-held endowments, Project Regeneration to assist congregations with repurposing assets for new ministry, and a Financial Health Assessment for congregations.

Taylor received his undergraduate degree with honors in history from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he also earned his Juris Doctorate in law. He received his Masters of Divinity from Yale University—Divinity School, and his Ph.D. from Fuller Theological Seminary in Intercultural Studies.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Taylor was deputy executive director for mission for the General Assembly Mission Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), overseeing six ministry areas that administer the mission work of the PC(USA)’s national offices in more than one hundred countries.

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**Item 12-08**

[The assembly approved Item 12-08. See pp. 16, 17.]

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) confirm the following directors of its subsidiary, New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., that have been elected for the year 2013–2014, consistent with the Deliverance for New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., as approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999) and amended by the 212th and 214th General Assemblies (2000) and (2002), and subject to applicable law:

_Foundation Trustee:_ Stephen C. Kelly, banker, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Living Waters.

_Other:_ Richard H. White, retired hospital chaplaincy director, white, male, married, clergy, over 50, Synod of the Northeast.

**Rationale**

Shareholder action was taken on May 14, 2013, to increase the size of the New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., board of directors to seven. Richard H. White was elected to fill the newly created vacancy.

Stephen C. Kelly was elected on September 10, 2013, to fill the vacancy created upon the retirement of Director Lois A. Clarke. Kelly is a current Foundation trustee in his first term.

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**Item 12-09**

[The assembly approved Item 12-09. See pp. 16, 17.]

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) direct the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation to

1. continue its churchwide gifts program, as well as utilize the Foundation’s subsidiary, New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., for the benefit of churches, church organizations, and individuals who wish to use the foregoing to make gifts as an expression of Christian faith and stewardship;

2. explore and initiate ways to enhance its expertise and capacity in support of planned and deferred giving (including wills emphasis) and to explore the services of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A., that will allow these programs and entities to be ever more effective contributors toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission for the Glory of God.

**Rationale**

Each General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation trustees ask the General Assembly to endorse the Foundation's work in support of mission and ministry throughout the church. This unbroken series of affirmations allows the Foundation to confidently pursue its ministry among congregations, presbyteries, synods, related organizations, and individual Presbyterians. General Assembly validation of our vital work on behalf of mission and ministry is essential to our effectiveness throughout the church.
The amount of $55.8 million was made available through the Foundation for mission in 2013. Additionally, as a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation’s efforts to nurture the accumulated resources of Presbyterians to further the mission of the church call us to grow the resources that support mission giving for the future. New gifts and accounts amounting to more than $30 million were received over the course of the year.

These striking results are a testament to the power of giving witnessed by the Foundation as it lives its goal of bringing people and mission together. Because of the generosity of faithful Presbyterians over the past five years, the Foundation has made available more than $325 million for the work and mission of the church.

**Item 12-10**

[There is no recommendation assigned to Item 12-10.]

**Item 12-11**

[The assembly approved Item 12-11. See pp. 16, 17.]

The Board of Pensions recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) confirm the election of Frank C. Spencer as president of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

*Rationale*

Section 2.1 of the Bylaws of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states that,

The President shall be elected by the Board of Directors with confirmation by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The President-elect may assume the position of president with full authority of that office upon election by the Board of Directors and before the next General Assembly at which confirmation will be sought. If the General Assembly declines to confirm the President-elect, the position will be declared vacant immediately with no further action required on the part of the Assembly.

The Board of Pensions, at its meeting on February 28, 2014, elected Frank C. Spencer to the position of president-elect, to assume the office of president on July 1, 2014, contingent on the confirmation of the General Assembly. Mr. Spencer succeeds Robert W. Maggs Jr., as president of the Board of Pensions. Mr. Maggs was elected to the position in May 1999, with his election confirmed by the 211th General Assembly (1999), and will retire in the summer of 2014.

Mr. Spencer most recently served as CEO/president of Habitat for Humanity of Charlotte, North Carolina, where he directed the efforts of that ministry to provide affordable housing and ongoing support to families in Charlotte and El Salvador. Previously, Mr. Spencer served as CEO of Cogdell Spencer Inc., an NYSE traded health-care real estate investment trust. During his tenure, Cogdell Spencer was named one of Charlotte’s Best Places to Work (2009, 2010) and was the leading healthcare design/build company in the United States ranked by annual revenue (2008). Mr. Spencer was honored as a 2009 Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year for the Carolinas.

Mr. Spencer is a candidate for a Master of Divinity degree (2014) at Union Presbyterian Seminary. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in German from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was a Morehead Scholar, and a Master of Business Administration from Harvard Business School, where he was designated a Baker Scholar.

Born in Staunton, Virginia, Mr. Spencer is a ruling elder at Selwyn Avenue Presbyterian Church, a congregation in the Presbytery of Charlotte, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic. In addition to serving on the Board of Directors of the Board of Pensions since 2012, he also served the PC(USA) from 2005 to 2011 on the Board of Montreat Conference Center, including four years as chairman of that board.

**Item 12-12**

[The assembly approved Item 12-12 with comment. See pp. 16, 17.]

[Comment: The Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, and Foundation recommends that the 221st General Assembly approve Item 12-12 with the following supportive comment: We, as the 221st General Assembly (2014), deeply appreciate the faithful work of the 220th General Assembly (2012) and the Board of Pensions on this matter and respectfully request the Board of Pensions provide an interim progress report to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on this issue of the relief of conscience following their next board meeting.]
B. Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Referral in Progress.

2010 Referral: Item 18-06. On Directing the Board of Pensions to Extend Benefits to Same-Gender Spouses and Domestic Partners, Comment: BOP Highly Urged to Provide Relief of Conscience for Congregations with Moral Dilemma Regarding This Issue—From the 219th General Assembly (2010) (Minutes, 2010, Part I, pp. 54, 56, 393).

Final response will be presented to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

Item 12-NB

[The assembly approved Item 12-NB. See pp. 16, 17–18.]

The Assembly Committee on BOP, PILP, PPC, & Foundation (12) recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014)

1. Endorse the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation’s work;

2. Urge congregations and individual Presbyterians to use the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation for investments, financial advice, charitable gifts of liquid and illiquid assets, and growing generosity;

3. Explore and cultivate the growing number of national and worldwide ecumenical and business relationships consistent with the mission and witness of the PC(USA) to further advance the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation’s & New Covenant Trust Company’s (NCTC’s) work to serve the church in ministry and mission.

Item 12-A

[The assembly approved Item 12-A. See p. 18.]

General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Board of Pensions

Introduction

The General Assembly committee elected to conduct the six-year review of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is pleased to present this report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Mandate and Process

By action of the 213th General Assembly (2001), all six agencies related to the General Assembly undergo regular review. The purpose of the review process is “to provide an equitable evaluation of the ministries” of these agencies.” The review is to focus on

the quality of the relationship of the agencies’ ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),
the agencies’ collaborative efforts with other agencies, and
the quality of the agencies’ program based on the standards for review. (Agency Review Manual).

Committees on review conduct their work according to the Standards for Review of General Assembly Agencies and present a written report to the next General Assembly. The last review of the Board of Pensions (BOP) was conducted in 2005–06 and reported to the 217th General Assembly (2006).

Agencies are required to do an in-depth self-study as an initial step in the review process. The Board of Pensions (BOP) produced a comprehensive report in 2013. “The Work of the Board: A Self-Study” was forwarded to the review committee and served as a basic and valuable resource for our evaluation. Content of the BOP self-study will not be reiterated here; rather, it stands as a companion to this report.

A review committee of twelve members elected by the General Assembly then engages the agency in a further study and evaluation process that includes on-site visits and interviews. The 2006 BOP agency review included a denomination-wide survey; the current review committee decided not to pursue that option for several reasons. There were cost constraints; the estimated cost of a survey was more than $15,000 and the total budget for the committee’s work was $16,000. The Board of Pensions had just completed a denomination-wide demographic survey, which was presented to a plenary session of the last General Assembly (2012). Further, the time frame coincided with the BOP’s announcement of pending changes to the healthcare benefits plan and the broader context of uncertainty surrounding the Affordable Care Act. Committee members and our advising staff were concerned that any survey designed around the set standards of review would, in fact, elicit responses that, no matter how thoughtful or impassioned, are beyond the parameters of the review we were tasked with con-
ducting. However, this context did alert the review committee to the vital role of good and timely communication in the BOP’s ministry with its members, which was a major focus of our review.

The following persons were elected by the 220th General Assembly (2012) to serve as the Agency Review Committee: Teaching Elders Deborah Block, moderator; Fahed Abu-Akel, Faith Jongewaard, Jim Kitchens, Scott Prouty, Judith Wellington; Ruling Elders Teresa Bryce Bazemore, Dick Coffelt, Karen Garrett, Kent Grimes, Douglas Megill; Ecumenical Representative Maria Curatolo, Episcopal Church.

The members of the committee brought a wide variety of skills and experience to our work with the BOP. Of the teaching elders, five were actively involved in parish ministry at the time and one was honorably retired. There is a perhaps obvious matter of full disclosure here: The teaching elders are members of the health, disability, and retirement plans of the BOP. We hope that this inevitable connection has brought a convergence of interest to this review. We are personally invested in the BOP’s fidelity to its mission. Among the ruling elders was a doctor, lawyers, current and former business and finance professionals—even stated clerks! All teaching and ruling elders have long and deep involvements across the PC(USA), including work with the General Assembly and other General Assembly agencies.

Ms. Curatolo is an executive vice-president of the Church Pension Group of The Episcopal Church.

The committee met twice in person with additional phone conversations and email exchanges over the course of nearly a year. After an initial organizational meeting in May 2013, the committee gathered in September 2013 in Philadelphia for a multi-day opportunity to interview Board of Pensions staff, Board of Pension members and leadership; subsequent interviews were also conducted, in person and by phone, with a sampling of church leaders and plan members. The committee reviewed the extensive self-study and supplementary materials provided by the Board of Pensions, along with board of directors organizational papers and minutes, financial and audit reports, employee training manuals, and member information resources, including the web site. Information was freely offered when requested.

The committee was specifically charged to examine the Board of Pensions in four areas: Church relatedness, collaboration with other agencies, policy and program effectiveness, and cultural proficiency. In every area the Board of Pensions meets or exceeds the goals set by the PC(USA).

Conclusions: Commendations and Encouragements

In concluding its work, the Committee on Review finds no matters within the scope of its responsibility that require recommendations to and deliberation by the General Assembly; however, we have identified the following specific strengths for commendation and areas for ongoing emphasis in meeting the needs of a changing church:

We commend the Board of Pensions for

• Commitment to its mission: providing pension, healthcare, death and disability benefits, and financial assistance for qualifying members who serve or who have served the PC(USA).

• Proactive opportunities for clergy support and development, especially the CREDO program.

• Effective programs for increasing staff diversity, retention, and professional development. We lift up to the church the twenty-five-year average length of employment as a sign of high morale and workplace effectiveness, the emphasis on collaborative and collegial work relationships, and cross-functional teams.

• Initiatives to work collaboratively with the Presbyterian Historical Society and the Presbyterian Foundation.

• A thorough self-study, including a comprehensive demographic study that will provide an essential foundation for its ongoing work, especially with its new executive leadership.

• A new commitment to and a strategy for communicating and interpreting changes in the national healthcare environment (Affordable Care Act) and the denominational plan.

We encourage the Board of Pensions to

• Continue to emphasize and develop effective, strategic communication with an increasingly diverse plan membership (rural/urban; special ministry/traditional pastorates; ethnic and language diversity) in a time of significant change in healthcare benefits.

• Take a leadership role in conversations about the relationship between the current structure for Board of Pensions participation and changing models of congregations and congregational leadership.
• Continue efforts toward lowering administrative expenses. In conversations beyond members of the staff and board, concern was often voiced that the agency’s public lifestyle be more consistent with the economic values of the larger church community.

• Have its board of directors reexamine the extent of authority delegated to its committees (for example, the authority delegated to the Compensation Committee to establish the CEO’s compensation without board approval).

• Review the practice of using the same auditors over many years.

• Consider reestablishing representation between the BOP and the PMA to further the spirit and the fruits of collaboration.

• Maximize the contact of regional representatives with plan members to inform, interpret, listen, and communicate member concerns back to the BOP as a new plan is developed and introduced.

We invite the prayerful support of the church as the BOP moves through a significant leadership transition with the retirement of its president and chief executive, Mr. Robert W. Maggs, and the subsequent planned retirement of the executive vice president and chief operating officer, Mr. Francis “Frank” Maloney. We thank both Mr. Maggs and Mr. Maloney for their dedicated and successful tenures in the service of the PC(USA).

Finally, the committee thanks the staff of the Board of Pensions and the Office of the General Assembly for their cooperation and helpfulness to us, and for their service to the church.

Supplementary Information

I. BOP Mission

“Our mission is to provide to qualifying members who serve the community of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pension, healthcare, death and disability benefits, as well as financial assistance.” Today, with a staff of 185 people, the BOP seeks to fulfill the following responsibilities:

• Design and administer a comprehensive program of retirement, death, disability, medical, and optional benefits for ministers, missionaries, and other church workers.

• Design and administer a program of financial assistance to help meet needs that are beyond the scope of the pension and benefits program.

• Establish and operate a retirement housing program for eligible retirees and their spouses.

• Receive, invest, and disburse the funds required to support these plans and programs for the sole and exclusive benefit of members and beneficiaries of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and other beneficiaries of the assistance and retirement housing programs.”

II. Compliance to the Standards of Review

The Review Committee had the opportunity to examine the work of the BOP and to meet and interview numerous members of the BOP staff as well as members of the board of directors. As a result the committee affirms that the BOP is in compliance with these “Standards of Review” and:

• Has the experience necessary to accomplish its work and has completed it in a manner that is consistent with its servant role in the life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

• Demonstrates fidelity to the mission and accountability procedures set forth in its articles of incorporation and has the exhibited leadership as it guides the church in the work of administering benefits and assistance programs for ministers, church workers, and their families.

• Exhibits practical cooperation with agencies of the church, clearly identifies itself as a part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and honors the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

• Receives directors and officers in a manner consistent with the nomination, election, concurrence, and confirmation process outlined in its bylaws and articles of incorporation and understand the corporate relationships within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

• Has responded to the directives and requests of the General Assembly.

• Recognizes that they manage the Board of Pensions’ assets exclusively for the members of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
• Has properly constituted its board of directors and management in a manner that meets the criteria specified in the review program.

• Is in full compliance with all appropriate external and accrediting agencies and has employed Deloitte & Touche LLP, a qualified and disinterested party, as its auditor.

• Engages in a long-range and short-range planning process, and the results of that planning process have been reported in this document

• Has a clear understanding of and is conversant with the mission, overall condition, and the responsibilities of the various administrative leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

• Has called officers and management who provide excellent overall management of the Board of Pensions and are comfortable in their relationships with staff, staff colleagues in other entities of the General Assembly, and the various constituencies of the church.

III. Church Relatedness

Relationship with the General Assembly

As an agency of the General Assembly, the Board of Pensions is accountable to the General Assembly, and appears as a General Assembly-related corporate body in the Organization for Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) may elect one of its directors to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Board of Pensions, but has chosen to forgo this privilege in recent years out of consideration for the workload of its board members.

The president of the Board of Pensions and the chair of its board of directors have the privilege of the floor at PMA meetings but without a vote. They are also members of an informal group comprising the chairs and executives of the General Assembly agencies.

Regional Benefits Consultations

The Board of Pensions presents two Regional Benefits Consultations (RBCs) a year, one in the east, another in the west. The RBCs provide synod and presbytery executives, stated clerks, moderators, pension liaisons, and other church leaders an opportunity to learn about Board of Pensions’ plans and programs. They also provide a forum for raising questions and providing important input and feedback. One of our committee members has participated in these consultations and offered a helpful participant evaluation.

Executive Presbyter Forums

The Board of Pensions hosts Executive Presbyter Forums at its offices in Philadelphia three times a year, seeking input from church leaders. Current participants are from California, Colorado, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington. Through these forums, the Board of Pensions gathers feedback on proposed changes to the Benefits Plan and other programs, and exchanges ideas and listens to input. Executive presbyters gain an early understanding of critical issues before the Board of Pensions and engage in dialogue on the relevant topics.

Pastor Advisory Council

Twice a year, the Board of Pensions hosts the Pastor Advisory Council at its offices in Philadelphia. The Board of Pensions seeks input from this group of fourteen pastors, who serve congregations in California, Georgia, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin. Board staff members engage them in conversations about proposed changes to the Benefits Plan and other programs, and seek feedback about the needs and concerns of church workers. Our chairperson has been a member of this group and offered helpful information from that perspective.

Relationships with National Presbyterian Organizations

Through the regional representatives and other staff, the Board of Pensions provides liaisons or otherwise relates with the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); Association of Presbyterian Church Educators; Association of Presbyterian Interim Ministry Specialists; Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers; Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors; Presbyterian Women; National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC); National Presbyterian Hispanic/Latino Caucus; National Korean Presbyterian Council; Presbyterian Association of Musicians; Presbyterian Church Business Administrators’ Association; Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association; Presbytery Pastoral Care Network; Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging; and “Wee Kirk” network.

IV. Policies and Practices
Benefits and Pension Plan

The BOP serves ordained ministers and missionaries of the church, as well as many lay persons employed in various capacities in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) The Benefits Plan is funded by employing organizations and is designed to ensure portability of benefits for members who move from one call to another within the denomination. An underlying principle of the Plan is its “community nature.” The church as a community shares the cost of benefits for all Plan members and their families. Dues are assessed based on the member’s compensation, subject to minimum and maximum amounts that vary by type of benefit, generating dedicated funds from which the needs of all participants may be met. Because of the community nature, there is no direct correlation between contributions made on behalf of a member and the benefits that member will receive. The Pension Plan provides a monthly defined benefit pension payment to each participant for life and a monthly survivor’s pension payment to an eligible survivor, based on credits accrued by a member during his/her service with the church.

The Board of Directors

Management and control of the BOP is vested in the board of directors, members of which are nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) and elected by the General Assembly. The principal committees of the board of directors are Assistance and Retirement Housing, Health Care, Investment, Audit, and Pensions. All of the committees have charters. The directors oversee the investment of Plan funds; the management and administration of pension, death, and disability, and medical benefits; and the operation of the board’s housing and assistance programs. They are responsible for oversight of the management of the BOP.

Process for Selection and Review of the President and Chief Executive Officer

The president is elected by the board of directors with confirmation by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The president is the chief executive officer of the corporation and reports to and is responsible to the board of directors for overall management of the corporation. The BOP has in place a process for the selection and review of its president and chief executive officer.

Robert W. Maggs Jr. plans to retire as president and chief executive in 2014 following confirmation of his successor. A search committee, drawn from the board of directors is working with the executive search firm Fraser Keating Associates LLC of New York City. The goal is to present a candidate to the directors for election in the spring of 2014. The president-elect will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014) for confirmation. One of the members of this review committee also served on the search committee.

Staff Resources

The Board of Pensions’ goal is to maintain an employee work culture where faith-based values are evident and incorporated into its day-to-day dealings with employees and plan members. In 2012, 81 percent of the 185 employees were exempt, and 19 percent were nonexempt. This reflects a continued transition to a more professional workforce to manage the more sophisticated demands of the Board of Pensions’ operation. Sixty-seven percent of the workforce is female. The workforce is 32 percent racial ethnic, reflecting a positive and consistent level since 2001 and remaining highly reflective of the BOP’s urban northeast location. Ninety-four percent of the nonexempt staff is female and 6 percent is male. More than half, 57 percent, of this group is racial ethnic. This distribution has remained relatively constant since 2000.

Investment Policy and Practice

An important part of BOP’s mission is to prudently manage the assets entrusted to it for the Benefits Plan and other programs. Although held in separate accounts, one portfolio, the Board of Pensions Balanced Investment Portfolio, is the primary investment fund for the assets of multiple plans and programs. A long-term investment strategy is required to ensure that benefits will be paid not only today and tomorrow but in decades to come. The Board of Pensions Balanced Investment Portfolio had a market value of approximately $7.5 billion on December 31, 2012.

Annual Audit and Compliance with External Regulatory and Accrediting Agencies

The Board of Pensions maintains a professional Internal Audit team and also employs an external audit firm. The team’s primary objective is to assist management and the Audit and Compliance Committee by providing assurance as to the adequacy of internal controls that safeguard the Board of Pensions’ assets, provide reliability of financial data and recordkeeping, and promote compliance with policies, procedures, laws, and regulations. The most recent audit was for the year 2012 completed by Deloitte & Touche LLP.


In concluding the previous review of the Board of Pensions (BOP) at the end of 2005, the General Assembly Committee on Review noted that it was “well satisfied that the BOP is fulfilling its mandate from the General Assembly, doing all that has been asked of it and more.” The review committee made a series of twenty-nine recommendations that were “intended to help
strengthen the programs and services of the BOP”. The Board of Pensions leadership has attempted to respond to each of those in the intervening seven years. Our review committee reviewed all the recommendations and the Board of Pensions’ written responses outlined in BOP’s Self-Study. We believe the BOP has properly responded to each of the recommendations.

V. Benefit Plans Update

Demographic Study

A team of staff members conducted the 2010–11 Board of Pensions Demographic Study, the first completed since 1995. The goal of the study, the results of which were presented to the 220th General Assembly (2012), was to create a profile of PC(USA) church servants from multiple perspectives in an effort to gain an accurate picture of the changing face of ministry. The hope is that the findings will help in the analysis of pension and medical plan assumptions as well as in Benefits Plan design. The study threw into sharp focus two trend lines with significant ramifications for the Board of Pensions: a declining PC(USA) membership and an aging population, in both pew and pulpit. The research also showed that the number of small employers within the church community was large enough to be a concern for the vitality of the Benefits Plan. Finally, the study found that, overall, members are satisfied with the value of the plan.

Since the Last Agency Review

Significant events have affected the Benefits Plan since the Board of Pensions last underwent an agency review in 2005. The 219th General Assembly (2010) urged the Board of Pensions to extend benefits to the same-gender domestic partners of members, healthcare reform was signed into law, and volatility marked global financial markets. Rising healthcare costs, already a concern during the last review, are even more critical today. There have been increases in Medical Plan dues as well as in out-of-pocket member costs. The situation led the Healthcare Committee of the board of directors to consider a new medical dues model. The committee announced that it would modify its original consideration and focus on three options agreed upon at its March 2013 meeting. The Healthcare Committee expected to have a formal recommendation for a vote by the full board in June 2013. In the meantime, the board was listening to the concerns of members and churches and other employing organizations and receiving feedback on the three options. As a result the Healthcare Committee postponed providing recommendation to the board of directors for 2014 Medical Dues.

Qualified Domestic Partners

In July 2010, the General Assembly urged the Board of Pensions to amend the Benefits Plan to extend eligibility for spousal and dependent benefits under the plan to same-gender domestic partners of plan beneficiaries on the same basis as it does for opposite-gender married partners. A special committee of the board of directors studied various issues surrounding the matter for more than a year before recommending that directors approve the coverage, which they did on March 3, 2012, with new beneficiaries eligible for coverage under the Benefits Plan effective January 1, 2013.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act or healthcare reform, which President Obama signed into law in March 2010, became a driving force at the Board of Pensions. The BOP staff began studying the law’s requirements, how the requirements might affect the Medical Plan, and how to implement them. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld most key provisions of the law in June 2012. Healthcare reform poses a unique challenge for the board for the following reasons: Unlike most employers that subsidize medical benefits as a tax-free part of total pay, the board plan is structured to subsidize coverage as an integral part of the mission to provide for the health and welfare of those who are called as servants to the church. Any changes considered to the board-sponsored plan need to balance “mission” with escalating costs and long-term dues pressures. The coverage requirement for teaching elders mandated by the Book of Order and the other underlying principles that have guided the plan for decades make achieving premium tax credit eligibility for lower-paid workers difficult. Board communication with all constituent groups, most especially churches and members, needs to reflect an understanding of the potential for conflict between and among the unique interests of each.

The Board of Pensions implemented the design and administrative changes required by incremental healthcare reform regulations, including extending coverage to adult children up to age 26, eliminating lifetime maximums, and eliminating the preexisting condition exclusion for dependent children under age 19. The Board of Pensions changed the prescription drug part of the board’s Medicare Supplement Plan. After researching numerous options that would allow for the maximization of available federal dollars, the board opted to formally establish a Medicare Part D arrangement. The estimated savings of $3 million in the first year meant that the board was able to raise retirees’ dues at a much more modest rate than would have otherwise been necessary.

VI. Closing Remarks

Clearly the BOP possesses the expertise to accomplish the task that has been assigned to it. From President Rob Maggs to the individual representatives on the regional service teams, the Review Committee was impressed with the level of expertise and high commitment to service. This expertise and commitment also extends to the Board of Directors of the BOP. The
people serving on the board of directors bring a depth of professional experience and expertise to oversee and set directions for the BOP. The Review Committee was well satisfied that the BOP has both the competence and resources necessary to fully meet the needs of Plan members and their families. The Review Committee was particularly impressed with the ability of the BOP staff and board of directors to articulate a sense of mission. In different ways, each person expressed a sense of being part of an important ministry to the servants of the church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Among the staff are several persons from other communions who share the same strong sense of mission.

We are navigating dramatic, complex, and rapid changes in our church and society in the areas of healthcare and pensions. Our own plan will necessarily face changes as a consequence of global, national, and denominational factors. We look to the BOP for the continued wise management and strong leadership that are hallmarks to its ministry to the PC(USA).

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Item 12-B

[The assembly approved Item 12-B. See p. 18.]

**General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation**

The Agency Review Committee on the Presbyterian Foundation brings no recommendations for the 221st General Assembly (2014).

A. **Introduction**

**Background:** The General Assembly Committee on Review (“Committee” hereafter) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (“Foundation” hereafter) is pleased to present the 221st General Assembly (2014) a written review of the Foundation.

The Foundation, as one of the six agencies of the General Assembly, is charged by the General Assembly with the responsibility and accountability for raising, stewarding, and distributing funds to support the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)]. The Foundation, founded in 1799, serves as the fiduciary corporation for the General Assembly, assists all Presbyterians to reach their missional goals through a variety of giving options. In addition to raising money for mission, another of the Foundation’s primary and continuing tasks is to invest and safeguard the assets entrusted to it and to grow them in order to support and enhance the mission of the church. The Foundation works to strengthen congregations, councils, agencies and other entities to ensure that they have resources for mission today, tomorrow, and into the future, and they do this in part by developing gifts and managing funds on their behalf.

The Foundation is the PC(USA)’s national entity specifically called to offer charitable expertise and services that unite and empower Presbyterians and the ministries about which they are passionate. With assets of more than $1.6 billion, the Foundation is one of the largest religious foundations in the United States. Mission programs benefiting from Foundation-held endowments and investments range from scholarships for seminary students to outreach in urban areas to mission fields around the world. In 2013, the Foundation received gifts and deposits of $30 million and in 2012 the Foundation received $25.4 million. The Foundation distributed funds in support of various mission causes in the amount of $63.4 million during 2013, and in 2012 the Foundation distributed $55.9 million.

In 2010 a new vision and strategic plan was adopted by the board of trustees and the Foundation staff. More information about the new innovative tools, services, giving options, and the changed structure of the Foundation’s investment options and management are addressed in Section C. Investment Management, Section D. Foundation Services, and Section E. New Foundation Services.

**Foundation Review Process:** This review is part of an evaluation process of the agencies related to the General Assembly of the PC(USA) established by the 213th General Assembly (2001). The purpose of the review process is “to evaluate the relationship of their individual [agency] ministry with the mission of the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” (Minutes, 2001, Part I, p. 67, Standing Rule E.10.—Agency Review [new Standing Rule M.4.a.]). The instructions to the Committee on Review were that the committee must conduct the process according to predetermined standards and present a written report to the next General Assembly (Manual of the General Assembly, pp. 83–84).

**Purpose of the Review of General Assembly Agencies:** The PC(USA) is committed to the understanding that the unity of the Church is a gift of its Lord and finds expression in its faithfulness to the mission to which Christ call it (F-1.030 2a). The basic principles of Presbyterian polity include the responsibility of a higher council to review those ministries for which it is accountable (F-3.0206). The purpose of the review process is to provide an equitable evaluation of the ministry of the agencies of the General Assembly (GA). The review will focus on the quality of the relationship of the agencies’ ministry with the mission of the whole PC(USA), the agencies’ collaborative efforts with other agencies, and the quality of the agencies’ program based on the standards for review.
Two agencies of the General Assembly are reviewed following each meeting of the General Assembly, rotating until all agencies have been reviewed during a six-year time period. Each review process is initiated when a Committee on Review (“committee”) is elected by a General Assembly to participate with a specific agency in a study process, the scope of which is limited to helping the assembly and its agency see that the mission of the church is being fulfilled according to certain standards. (See, *Manual of the General Assembly*, pp. 83–84.) It is not the intent of the review process to find fault, but rather to evaluate, offer suggestions to strengthen the agency, as well as to offer recommendations for improvement. The agency being reviewed prepares a self-study that becomes part of the materials used by the committee to support the research and preparation of their report to the General Assembly held following their election.

It is important to note that the scope of the review is also limited by the amount of time and resources allocated for the review process. Initially, the eleven members of this committee spent the better part of three days together in October 2012 to be trained for their task by Tom Hay, director of operations for the Office of the General Assembly, who presented a short briefing on the review process and provided the Foundation’s self-study as well as other resources to the committee to introduce information about the Foundation, answer questions, and guide the committee through preparation for the review.

The committee also arranged for the Office of the General Assembly’s (“OGA”) Research Services Office to conduct a survey, based upon input from the committee and following the format and content of the review completed by the previous committee which was subsequently presented to the 217th General Assembly (2006). By keeping similar format and content between the previous and current surveys, changes of responses over time could be compared and included in the summary analyses of the survey responses. The survey was sent to congregations, presbyteries, synods, donors, beneficiaries, life income recipients, and Foundation and other General Assembly agency leaders. The survey was also to be sent to the New Covenant Funds shareholders, however, since the New Covenant Funds were outsourced in 2012 to an investment advisory company (see Section C), it was not possible to survey the shareholders. In August 2013, the committee met for three days to conduct interviews with Foundation staff and board members, as well as leadership and staff from other GA agencies. The results of the survey were reviewed at this same time. (See summary survey findings in Section H; also detailed survey resulted in Appendix C). The committee held a conference call in January 2014 to finalize the written report, following which the report was submitted to the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). The OGA forwarded a copy of the report to the Foundation for their comments prior to presentation of the completed report at the 221st General Assembly (2014).

The committee gathered information for the report during interviews with staff of several other agencies of the General Assembly and organizations within those agencies (See Appendix A for a list of those interviewed). The committee is grateful to the Foundation, New Covenant Trust Company (NCTC), Foundation board members, and the Office of the General Assembly for their helpfulness and cooperation in this process.

The following report is the result of the work of the members of the committee who possessed skills from all facets of church and society. They were versed in matters related to PC(USA) theology, polity, and ethos, as well as investment industry and business communities. The committee notes that it is responsible for the contents of this report and that any errors or omissions are those of the committee and its’ understanding of the information and materials provided to it. The committee relied on the common bond of the mission of the church and the common desire to be faithful to Jesus Christ to complete its task.

B. **Collaboration with Other Agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

The overwhelming message heard by the Review Committee is that under the Foundation’s current executive leadership the relationships, communication, and collaborative work between the Foundation and the other Presbyterian agencies have improved and grown in recent years. Representatives from the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), Office of the General Assembly (OGA), Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP), as well as the Presbyterian Historical Society all noted that interaction and collaboration between the Foundation and their agency have increased as a result of greater communication and cooperation between the agencies. The improved relationship with PMA is perhaps the most visible example of reconciliation between the Foundation and its ministry partners. In the words of one Foundation leader, “under Foundation President Tom Taylor’s leadership, the Foundation wants to be helpful with no other goal than being helpful.”

One important example of improved cooperation is the Foundation’s approach to finding ways to leverage restricted and underutilized funds to fit current needs. Agencies feel that there is better transparency on the use of funds invested with the Foundation and the Foundation is viewed as a partner in ensuring that the PC(USA) is a faithful steward of its funds and the support of mission in the church.

Improved collaboration of field staff and programs for interaction and more awareness about the field staff of both the Foundation and the PMA was mentioned by several interviewees. There is shared management of the Board of Pensions (BOP) and Foundation field staff and information technology (IT) resources along with shared investment staff. The *One Church, One Field, One Staff* initiative started a few years ago is improving coordination of field staff through shared activities, increased collaboration and communication. Regular meetings held by senior management in a program called “Chairs and Chiefs” and “Chief Operating Officers Table” bring together the leadership of the six agencies to work on key initiatives and joint endeavors.
C. Investment Management

The Foundation encompasses three types of investment funds: the Foundation Endowment Fund, New Covenant Trust Company (NCTC), N. A., and New Covenant Funds (NCF). The New Covenant Trust Company, N. A., started in 1998, is a federally chartered, limited-purpose bank, which has trust powers and can serve as a corporate trustee in all fifty states. This subsidiary provides investment advisory services and trust services for individuals, churches, endowments, and charitable organizations. New Covenant Funds (NCF), an open-ended investment family of four mutual funds, was formed in 1999 with moneys from the Foundation’s common trust funds.

The Foundation assets total more than $1.6 billion under management as of December 31, 2013. The largest part of the Endowment Fund (the “Permanent Funds”) is $705 million and the funds held for the benefit of others are $344 million. The largest beneficiary of funds held at the Foundation is the Presbyterian Mission Agency, which includes, among numerous mission funds, two large mission projects, the Jarvie Fund that focuses on constituents in the New York area and the Jinishian Fund that focuses on constituents in the Armenian community. The four mutual funds that comprise the New Covenant Funds and the New Covenant Money Market fund have collective assets of $539 million; the New Covenant Trust Company manages assets totaling $67 million. These assets encompass more than twenty thousand accounts of many different types, from various types of individual trusts and annuities to funds held for other agencies, the largest being the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) for the benefit of mission work of that agency.

The Foundation has heard from donors and beneficiaries who expressed a desire for better opportunities for improved investment performance. Out of the strategic plan adopted by the board of trustees in 2010, it was determined that the Foundation’s investors and shareholders would be best served by a professional asset management company. In 2012, after a multyear investigation and vetting process, the Foundation forged partnerships with Cambridge Advisors (CA) to manage investments of Foundation assets and separately with SEI Investment Management (SEI) to manage New Covenant Funds. Outsourcing of investment management was a significant change in Foundation operations. The Foundation viewed this move as a strategy that allowed the Foundation to focus on its core mission, which is to serve the church. The Foundation included the following comments in their Oct. 2012 Self-Study report:

New partners were identified with Cambridge Associates as the investment advisor to the Foundation fiduciary assets and SEI as the investment advisor to the Foundation sponsored mutual funds, New Covenant Funds. Both firms are experts in their respective areas with Cambridge Associates serving Foundation and Endowment organizations and SEI serving institutional and mutual fund clients. In addition to their investment expertise in their respective field, both offer expertise in mission responsible investing. Due to their scale, both firms have the ability to direct investment managers and funds to comply with the MRTI policies of the church. The Foundation has been and remains committed to upholding the work of MRTI as directed by the General Assembly.

The change in operations transferred certain roles and responsibilities from the Foundation to Cambridge and SEI. As a result, several positions were eliminated or consolidated at the Foundation. Additionally, the appointment of SEI changed the mutual fund governance responsibilities for the Foundation. The net economic effect of these changes was a reduction in net operating expense of roughly $1 million for the Foundation. While the Foundation retains oversight responsibility for the mutual funds and trust fund investments and provides CA and SEI with investment guidelines, the staff time devoted to Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) or Financial Industry Regulatory Agency (FINRA) regulatory activities has been greatly reduced as well as decreased risk of exposure to potentially damaging liability. The change to external management of funds allowed more focus on the Foundation’s primary mission to provide financial expertise to raise funds for ministry and mission.

The Foundation no longer has unilateral decision making ability on fund investments or fund managers. Individual investment holdings and asset managers are now determined by Cambridge and SEI in accordance with investment objectives set by the Foundation. As noted above, the Foundation remains committed to MRTI and Cambridge and SEI have strong track records in that area and both companies include a commitment to MRTI in their respective funds’ prospectus.

The Foundation received criticism in the past for investment performance that trailed certain benchmarks. While it is too soon to reach any conclusion about the long-term performance that CA and SEI produce, the investment performance rationale outlined by the Foundation for choosing investment advisory firms, CA and SEI, seems solid. Initial returns indicate reasonable performance. Investment strategy includes maximum return at an appropriate level of risk; multiple approaches to risk management strategies have been implemented including diversified asset structure, tactical asset allocation, and rebalancing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund Name</th>
<th>1-year</th>
<th>3-year</th>
<th>5-year</th>
<th>10 year</th>
<th>Since Inception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCF Growth Fund</td>
<td>27.55</td>
<td>13.15</td>
<td>16.12</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmarks:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell 1000 Index (USD)</td>
<td>33.11</td>
<td>16.51</td>
<td>18.14</td>
<td>7.49</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Growth Secondary Benchmark</td>
<td>29.42</td>
<td>14.22</td>
<td>17.13</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Income Fund</td>
<td>-1.63</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmark:</strong> Barclays Intermediate US Aggregate Bond Index (USD)</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance Table for New Covenant Funds (NCF)
### Performance Table for New Covenant Funds (NCF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund Name</th>
<th>Annualized (%) as of 12/31/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Balanced Growth Fund</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmarks</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Balanced Growth Benchmark</td>
<td>18.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Balanced Growth Reporting</td>
<td>16.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Balanced Income Fund</td>
<td>7.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmarks</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Balanced Income Benchmark</td>
<td>9.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCF Balanced Income Reporting</td>
<td>8.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Performance Table for Presbyterian Endowment Fund (PEF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund Name</th>
<th>Total Assets</th>
<th>December 11/30/2013</th>
<th>QTD 9/30/2013</th>
<th>CYTD 12/31/2013</th>
<th>CYTD 12/31/2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA Managed PEF</td>
<td>$705.4 mm</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmarks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Benchmark</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Benchmark</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The committee heard questions from various ministry partners regarding fees charged by the Foundation for both trust and investment management. The committee felt that the Foundation services are a good value for the fees charged. The Foundation currently offers complete transparency of fees, but perhaps a better strategy for communicating those fees and use of fees would further strengthen ties to all ministry partners and improve investor understanding of the value of the Foundation services provided through those fees.

The committee noted that the service fees charged by the Foundation are used to support the Foundation and are regenerated for mission. Fees charged by the Foundation go directly to pay for the raising of more funds for the mission of the church, which is carried out through local congregations, mid councils, national and international mission efforts, seminaries, camps and conference centers, and other Presbyterian mission endeavors. In the case of for-profit financial services providers, fees charged go to pay either dividends to stockholders or profits to private investors or financial managers, differing from the Foundation’s focus, which is on mission support. Christian benevolence is an opportunity to witness to others.

**D. Foundation Services**

The Foundation has three basic revenue-generating service areas, as follows:

1. Endowment management
2. Trust company services
3. Mutual funds
In preparation for their work, most committee members did not see on the Foundation Web site that the Foundation services can be split into these clear categories. The “New Covenant” branding of the Trust Company and the Mutual Funds contributed to the lack of clarity about the investment services of the Foundation.

The Review Committee was impressed with the services that the Foundation can provide and has heard from several constituents about the ease of engaging trust services for the benefit of mid councils and other investors. The committee learned that NCTC is more accessible than most trust companies. The church is getting a great resource at a very reasonable cost and the committee feels this message needs to be communicated more effectively throughout the church, in particular to local congregations.

One of the distinctive features of the Foundation is that it reinvests its fees to further the mission of the church and follows investment strategies that accord with PC(USA) values. Such reinvestment allows the Foundation to fund new services that help churches stay relevant, improve financial performance, and promote mission. Three of the many new services are summarized in Section E of this report.

One of the Foundation’s greatest assets is its very competent staff. In 2010, a new president was confirmed by the General Assembly and additional management changes were made in subsequent months that, in concert as the leadership of the Foundation planned and implemented many changes to the benefit of the agencies of the General Assembly, donors, and local congregations, and councils. During 2009, the board of directors developed a 5-Year Strategic Plan that included outsourcing of investment advisory services; implementation began in 2010 and was completed in 2012. The Foundation added new services in response to conversations and input from donors. More information about the Foundation’s Strategic Plan can be found in Appendix B. The importance of having a leader deeply committed and intimately connected to the purpose and witness of the PC(USA) is illustrated by Foundation president, Tom Taylor, who the committee heard is characterized as a face of “church heart and business head” for the Foundation and through his management team and with the board of directors, has inspired and implemented many new dimensions for the Foundation.

E. New Foundation Services

The Foundation has developed several new services for churches and individuals. This section of the report briefly summarizes the key new services.

1. Financial Health Assessment for Churches

This online tool (available at http://assessment.presbyterianFoundation.org) asks the user congregation a short series of questions and incorporates the answers with previously published data about a congregation and a group of similarly situated congregations. The assessment is free and confidential.

The tool provides the user congregation with a report noting both successes and areas for improvement, along with links to helpful resources. Customized recommendations of best practices and other identified opportunities intend to help congregations maximize giving through tithes, offerings, and other means of support for mission and ministry.

2. Project Regeneration

Project Regeneration is a program whereby the Foundation helps congregations transform financially burdensome church buildings into new opportunities for ministry. This Foundation service recognizes that many small congregations are wrestling with the upkeep of a building that has strong emotional value but is creating a financial drain. Project Regeneration also recognizes that many congregations need help responding to changing demographics and are struggling to stay relevant. Examples of the type of work that is done under Project Regeneration are:

- Congregation opted for new ministry for homeless using their church property.
- Congregation decided to allocate a percentage of its resources to join a “parallel start” for a Hispanic new church development.
- Congregation decided to use its building to host neighborhood programs.

3. Presbyterian Mission Exchange

This online service intends to connect donors with mission projects. Donors can connect with ministries that they wish to support, such as a local congregation, the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, or Wycliffe Bible Translators. Churches can use the tool to develop a culture of generosity within their congregation or enhance an existing stewardship program.

The Mission Exchange offers online giving features plus access to capital campaign, legacy or planned giving, endowment development, and many other stewardship resources. The Foundation provides churches with a suite of tools to help manage the gifts made by members, choose among different investment portfolios, make withdrawals at any time, and enjoy
the convenience of online account access. Churches can leverage the Mission Exchange to share specific mission programs of the congregation, the local community and even programs that meet global needs. The Foundation believes that communicating the impact of gifts to a mission program helps keep church members connected and engaged.

Additional services include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministerial</th>
<th>Individual Resources:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Tool Box</td>
<td>Gift Matrix Forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship Resource Center</td>
<td>Help For You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Annuities Program</td>
<td>Planning Tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Giving (Ministry Partnership Program)</td>
<td>Financial Resource Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Resource Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sermon CDs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wills Program</td>
<td>More information is available at <a href="http://www.presbyterianfoundation.org">www.presbyterianfoundation.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Donor Attitudes

The Foundation is adapting to a major paradigm shift in philanthropy and mission giving by changing the focus to mission from ministries. The Foundation has found that today’s donor seems to require a more “direct line of sight” to the missions they support. Donors seem less likely to support general appeals for ministry and are more likely to support specific causes. Large unrestricted gifts are not as common today as they were in prior decades. The Review Committee notes that the Presbyterian Mission Exchange is an example of how the Foundation is adapting to this emerging paradigm. Donors can contribute directly online via the Mission Exchange website.

The shift in donor attitudes has created some tension for those in the PC(USA) accustomed to a more traditional, unrestricted donor model but the Foundation is working hard to be responsive to today’s donor. One challenge is managing individual donor desires without creating too many small projects.

G. Cultural Proficiency

The 219th General Assembly (2010) approved *A Review of Efforts Regarding Cultural Proficiency and Creating a Climate for Change in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* with a recommendation for each of the six agencies of the General Assembly to work with the associate for Organizational Diversity, Education, and Recruitment in developing its six-year plan to help implement a cultural proficiency policy at all levels and to develop training and cultural-sensitive programs. The Foundation has developed such a plan that includes: a commitment to *Book of Order*, F-1.0403; a stated policy for increasing diversity, measurable targets and goals, production of biennial reports.

The Foundation’s policy states that it is committed to the continual review of its policies, procedures, and practices to address issues of inclusiveness in an effort to fully endorse the concepts and principles of cultural diversity. Between 2005 and 2013, the Foundation experienced significant reductions in overall staff (105 employees to 56); however, racial ethnic (increased from 21 percent to 25 percent) and female (increased from 62 percent to 67.9 percent) representation increased. The area of challenge remains in the job category of senior management where there is currently no racial ethnic representation. For the Cultural Proficiency Plan Period 2013 through 2018, the Foundation expects to meet and/or exceed the goals set by the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.

Goals for the first two-year phase included:

- Staff to be proactive in recruitment, promotion, and employee retention strategies to achieve affirmative action employment goals at all levels of the organization with an emphasis on senior management. Likewise the board committee charged with selecting new trustees also set goals for representation—40 percent female and 20 percent racial ethnic workforce representation at all EEO levels.
- Policy Development and Implementation will address cultural proficiency and produce reports for General Assembly.
- Training will encompass anti-harassment, antiracism, and cultural proficiency and inclusiveness for both current staff and new hires.
- Other areas of goal setting include: supplier diversity, organizational evaluations, and communications.

H. Constituent Surveys—Highlights

During the first half of 2013, Research Services was engaged to conduct a review of the Foundation’s church relations, policies, and effectiveness by surveying PC(USA) constituent groups. The Review Committee spent a great deal of time organizing and structuring the survey, which was an expense to the review process. The committee thanks Jack Marcum Jr., Ph.D., coordinator, Research Services at PMA, who orchestrated the resources to complete and analyze the surveys and who was critical to the survey process of the committee’s work.
Six constituent groups were surveyed and are listed in the table below that shows the response rates to the two most recent surveys. To the Review Committee’s knowledge, there were no similar Foundation surveys done in the intervening years. Absent from the survey group in 2013 are New Covenant Funds (NCF) shareholders. Since Foundation investment management was outsourced to SEI it is no longer feasible to survey NCF shareholders as these mutual funds are now open to investors other than only PC(USA) investors. In addition, Cambridge and SEI have oversight by regulatory agencies, such as FINRA, that would need to have oversight of the survey process and selection of shareholder participants. SEI now has the responsibility and decision-making ability about communication and contact with shareholders through the survey process. SEI effectively blocked any survey of NCF shareholders stating that FINRA and other securities regulators would need to approve this survey process, which would have delayed the survey process and added considerable expense for legal services in order to gain approval to contact NCF shareholders. The committee decided not to pursue a survey of NCF shareholders due to the negative impact of delay and added expense for such solicitation of feedback for the select groups within the shareholders of the funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituent Survey Group</th>
<th>2004 Response Rate</th>
<th>2013 Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery &amp; Synod Executives</td>
<td>62% (117 returned / 188 mailed)</td>
<td>42% (80 returned / 189 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders of GA Agencies</td>
<td>72% (49 returned / 68 mailed)</td>
<td>63% (53 returned / 84 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregations Selected Randomly</td>
<td>32% (290 returned / 900 mailed)</td>
<td>41% (246 returned / 600 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>52% (367 returned / 700 mailed)</td>
<td>33% (164 returned / 503 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Recipients</td>
<td>47% (417 returned / 955 mailed)</td>
<td>59% (361 returned / 608 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary Organizations</td>
<td>37% (263 returned / 697 mailed)</td>
<td>42% (211 returned / 500 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Covenant Fund Shareholders</td>
<td>32% (221 returned / 700 mailed)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The surveys asked respondents to comment on their familiarity with the Foundation’s mission, services and effectiveness. Interesting data points from the surveys include:

- The response rate decreased materially from 2004 to 2013 for presbytery & synod executives, GA agency leaders and donors. Jack Marcum felt this decrease could be due to the number of different times these constituencies are surveyed. The committee notes that if response rates continue to decrease, the value of the survey may become compromised and be less useful.
- The vast majority of survey respondents listed the following three items as the Foundation’s greatest strengths.
  - Foundation’s reputation.
  - Foundation’s support of the mission of the church.
  - Foundation’s integrity, honesty, and ethics.
- There were eighty-two presbyteries or synods that reported assets invested with the Foundation (endowment, trust company, or mutual funds) in 2004. In the 2013 survey that number decreased to 40 (part of the decrease must be due to a smaller number of presbytery or synod respondents but the committee does not have that data). When asked why the presbytery or synod did not have money with the Foundation in 2013, twelve out of twenty respondents to the question indicated they could get better investment income elsewhere. The committee notes that the Foundation has taken steps to improve investment performance and improved performance that will gradually attract investors back to the Foundation as well provide more information on the use of funds for mission support.
- Respondents were asked to assess the Foundation’s effectiveness in providing various services (e.g., asset management, online giving, socially responsible mutual funds, charitable trusts, etc. The respondents rated the effectiveness by choosing among the following answers:
  - Very effective
  - Effective
  - Somewhat effective
  - Not very effective
  - Not at all effective
  - Don’t know

Respondents were also asked to assess how helpful the same Foundation services would be.

Interestingly, “Don’t know” was often one of the highest percentage answers for effectiveness—even among the presbytery & synod executive and GA agency leader respondents. At the same time, the vast majority of respondents said that the services would be Very Helpful, Helpful, or Somewhat Helpful. This may indicate a communication issue. Respondents have said that various Foundation services could be helpful yet many do not know if the Foundation services are effective.
• When asked to rate the importance of the Foundation’s work to the PC(USA), the vast majority of the respondents replied Very important, Important or Somewhat important. Interestingly, 27 percent of the 246 congregations that responded had no opinion on this question. No other respondent group had such a high percentage of respondents choose this answer. As with the prior bullet, this may indicate a communication challenge in that many congregations may not know about the work of the Foundation. Additional detail on survey highlights is located in Appendix C.

I. Foundation Response to Prior Agency Review Recommendations

[The following text has been paraphrased from the Foundation’s 2012 Self-Study Report]

The Foundation has undergone numerous changes since the last agency review in late 2004 and 2005. The board has turned over, the Foundation and its subsidiary have new CEOs, a majority of the senior management team has changed, and a new strategic plan is in the process of implementation. Some of the key recommendations and responses are listed below.

1. **2004 Recommendation**: It is important that the Foundation track progress of the development effort on a monthly or quarterly basis and provide appropriate training and ongoing support for the field staff. The goals and objectives by which the work of the field staff is measured should be refined in light of experience on a regular basis. It would be helpful for the Foundation to consider appropriate strategies by which to reward excellent performance by members of the development staff (e.g. merit raises, other benefits, as funds become available).

   **Response**: The Foundation restructured its development function into three teams, Ministry Relations, Advisors, and Project Regeneration. These teams conduct quarterly meetings that include training and review of metrics. Metrics have been fine-tuned recently and the teams have received training. In addition, tools have been implemented to track progress against the metrics.

   The Foundation performs salary surveys that are conducted by external parties. The Foundation ensures that ministry relations officers, advisors, and project regeneration staff are compensated in accordance with market salaries and benefits. The Foundation does have a performance management and appraisal process in place. Each person is provided with a mid-year review and annually they receive a formal performance appraisal. Employees are awarded merit increases based on performance against agreed upon metrics.

2. **2004 Recommendation**: Development officers should be encouraged to meet with presbytery and synod leaders and make appearances at meetings of presbyteries and other functions as time and funding allows. The committee believes that such a commitment will lead to the building of trust and will result in more opportunities to build relationships with those who might want to use the services of the Foundation.

   **Response**: The Foundation’s Ministry Relations Officers focus on churchwide relationships. In addition, the Foundation has entered into a partnership with the Board of Pensions where the Board of Pensions regional representatives and the Foundation Ministry Relations officers work together to represent both agencies at mid council meetings. This allows for better coverage and representation to create awareness of how the Foundation can serve the church.

3. **2004 Recommendation**: It is important that the Foundation find a senior vice president for marketing who will inspire and lead the marketing staff to provide fresh and effective materials, including the Foundation’s commitment to Mission Responsibility Through Investment or Socially Responsible Investment. The marketing materials of the Foundation should make it clear that MRTI is one of the distinctive commitments that separates the Foundation from standard investment firms.

   **Response**: The Foundation has employed several marketing directors since the last agency review report. Currently Rob Bullock leads the Foundation’s marketing and communications function. Rob brings a wealth of experience in serving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Rob has topnotch marketing and communications expertise and leadership. The Foundation believes that with Rob’s leadership the Foundation has more than accomplished the intent of the agency review committee’s recommendation.

4. **2004 Recommendation**: Trustees and officers must commit to improved long-term investment performance. The Foundation should consider the use of a consultant to help evaluate its investment strategy. In addition, the Foundation’s leaders should commit to a goal of having the Foundation be a leader among socially responsible funds in terms of investment return every year from 2005 onward.

   **Response**: The Foundation has made major changes in the structure of its investment function. The Foundation elected to outsource investment management to world-class firms that the Foundation believes provide the best opportunity for benchmark exceeding performance. The complexity and volatility of the financial markets demand that competent investment professionals monitor and have the authority to take action when necessary within the policies set by the Foundation board. The Foundation believes it has engaged firms that have more breadth and depth of expertise than could be hired. In addition, the investment firms have significant influence in the investment industry that allows the Foundation to have more impact in the area of socially responsible investing.
5. **2004 Recommendation**: Representatives of the Foundation should meet periodically with persons with similar responsibilities from the Board of Pensions in order to compare notes on investment strategies and returns.

*Response*: The Foundation and Board of Pensions have collaborated on numerous initiatives over the last several years, including investments. The Foundation has always been very appreciative of the Board of Pensions and the graciousness in which they share their time and expertise with the Foundation. The Board of Pensions was extremely helpful and responsive as the Foundation studied and prepared recommendations for the Foundation’s investment function. Foundation management continues to have productive and ongoing discussions with the Board of Pensions.

### J. Recommendations to the Foundation

The committee was impressed by the quality, commitment, and enthusiasm of the Foundation’s senior managers and its board members. All expressed an understanding that the work of the Foundation is to be a good steward of the resources of PC(USA) and to encourage potential donors and investors to support the mission of PC(USA). The committee was also impressed with by the number of interviewees who praised the improved relationships the Foundation has with other agencies and the PC(USA) at large. Based on its work, the Review Committee respectfully offers the following recommendations:

1. We recommend that the roles of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and Foundation be clarified as related to raising funds for mission, and to stewardship of those mission funds once raised. The Presbyterian Mission Exchange is an excellent way to use technology to connect today’s donor to mission projects but it can lead to confusion between the roles of the PMA and Foundation.

2. We recommend the Foundation take steps to communicate the relationship of its three main investment services (endowments, trust company, and mutual funds) and reflect this better on the website. As mentioned in the text above, the “New Covenant” label for the trust company and the mutual funds can lead to confusion.

3. We recommend expanding collaboration of field staff beyond the Foundation and Board of Pensions.

4. We recommend that the Foundation expand its efforts to communicate the value of the Foundation’s services, and that the fees charged by the Foundation for its services represent a unique value to PC(USA) constituents, especially in light of the reinvestment of fees to further the mission of the church.

5. We encourage the Foundation to review its board structure to ensure that it has the proper competencies to fulfill its mandate and to encourage greater collaborating with the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC) as they seek to fill these vacancies in service to the whole church. In addition, we encourage the Foundation and the GANC to work diligently with each other to ensure balance of the competency, performance and representation requirements in recruiting and nominating board members.

### K. Concluding Comments

We encourage all Presbyterian to seriously consider the Presbyterian Foundation for investment services, financial advice, endowments, and assistance in growing a culture of generosity with the church, and to explore and utilize the newly developed services available to all organizations and individuals in the church.

The following persons were elected by commissioners of the 220th General Assembly (2012) to serve as the General Assembly Committee on Review: Donna Misterly, chair; Clemente H. “Andy” Anzaldua; the Reverend David Bennett; Paul Costel; Anne Drennan; Gordon Enderle; Alan Ford; the Reverend Gary Kidwell (president of the Christian Church Foundation); the Reverend Nancy Muth; the Reverend Irene Pak; and James Tse. Several committee members were able to participate in limited parts of the committee’s work due to illness and other time conflicts.

The members of the committee are grateful to all of the Foundation staff, as well as members of the PMA, OGA, PILP, Presbyterian Publishing Company (PPC), BOP, and the Presbyterian Historical Society for their willingness to meet with the committee, answer all the questions asked, and to provide all the materials that were requested. Their cooperation enabled the committee to perform its work in a thorough and efficient manner.

The committee’s task would have been impossible without the excellent support of Gradye Parsons, Thomas Hay, Kay Moore, and Jack Marcum of the Office of the General Assembly, and Rob Bullock and Anita Clemons of the Foundation.

### APPENDIX A

#### COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) FOUNDATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tom Taylor</td>
<td>President, CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Rousos</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, NCTC/EVP &amp; COO, Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) FOUNDATION

Foundation Strategic Plan
2010–2015
Highlights through 2012

A. Board of Trustees Oversight & Direction

The board of trustees of the Foundation commenced a strategic planning process at its June 2009 board meeting. The board began with discerning and agreeing to the process it would follow. The process included the board developing a five-year vision for the Foundation and turning that vision over to management to develop the plan to achieve the vision. The board appointed an ad hoc committee that consisted of board members and staff to develop the vision. The vision was approved by the board at the February 2010 meeting. The vision is as follows:

Offering gratitude to God and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Trustees and staff of the Foundation seek to be faithful to the call of Christ. The vision of the Foundation is to further Christ’s mission through the PC(USA) by:

1. Demonstrating excellence in gathering, administering, responsibly investing, and distributing assets according to our fiduciary call,
2. Partnering in trusted and helpful relationships that advance our stewardship responsibility both within the PC(USA) and beyond,
3. Connecting donors to beneficiaries as a means to increase resources to support Christ’s mission, and
(4) Maintaining a responsible and respectful work environment for our staff and partners while operating a financially sustainable model.

The board directed staff to develop a strategic plan based on this vision and present an update at its June 2010 board meeting and a draft plan at the October 2010 board meeting.

B. Strategic Plan Process

The Foundation staff began drafting the strategic plan in the spring of 2010. During a planning session an external consultant that works extensively with religious and community foundations presented trends in philanthropy, donor preferences and best practices. The senior staff utilized the following process to develop the strategic plan.

1. PEST Analysis:
   a. Political and Legal
   b. Economic and Environmental / Field Work
   c. Sociocultural and Geographic
   d. Technological

2. SWOT Analysis
   a. Strengths
   b. Weaknesses
   c. Opportunities
   d. Threats

C. Establishing Goals

Conclusions from the environmental scan exercises, the PEST and the SWOT, were used to form the process of determining what activities need to take place to reach the vision. Additionally, senior staff contacted and had sessions with numerous nonprofit consultants and religious and community foundations. All of this information assisted in the establishment of goals. Goals were discussed and prioritized based on impact, work plans, budgets, and likelihood of success. After prioritizing the goals, senior staff identified eight key initiatives. The initiatives are discussed in more detail below.

D. Strategic Plan Accomplishments

Accomplishments for each initiative to date are listed below

1.0 Capture the voice of our constituency

   Focus on this initiative has been delayed until other initiatives were complete. At this point, the Foundation is ready to begin working on this initiative. The staff has had in-depth discussions on capturing the voice of our constituency and recognizes that this is not done effectively by distributing periodic surveys. The staff is committed to instilling this in the culture of the organization where the voice of our constituencies is constantly sought and received.

2.0 Clarify our identity

   Senior staff spent considerable time developing the Foundation’s value proposition which serves as our identity. The identity is:

   The Presbyterian Foundation is the PC(USA)’s national entity specifically called to offer charitable expertise and services that unite and empower Presbyterians and the ministries about which they are passionate. The Foundation does so in a trustworthy, clear, and accessible manner that reflects the PC(USA)’s faith-based values.

3.0 Connect potential donors to mission

   This area has received tremendous focus. Numerous external studies, discussions with consultants and informal discussions with donors indicate that donors want transparency with how their gift is used, flexibility and control, and donors want to be able to communicate or be involved with the charitable beneficiary. After numerous discussions, the Foundation decided to invest in technology that will allow for transparency and interaction between the donor and the charitable beneficiary. The Foundation launched a new website in the spring of 2012 called the Presbyterian Mission Exchange. While all of the capabilities are not functional yet, this website begins to offer donors and beneficiaries the capabilities noted above.

   The Foundation has developed or enhanced several services for donors and charitable beneficiaries. With donor preferences changing the Foundation is offering “The Creative Gift Fund.” The Creative Gift Fund is a donor-advised fund that meets the needs of today’s donors. The creative gift fund allows donors to grant principal and/or income and to grant monies to a variety of charitable beneficiaries giving donors the ultimate flexibility and control over their gift. The Foundation has enhanced its ability to accept gifts that are funded with illiquid assets. More and more donors are recognizing the most efficient way to give is making a gift with an asset other than cash. The Foundation has created a network of partners that can assist in liquidating assets and turning those assets into dollars for mission.

   Finally, the Foundation has created a program to assist congregations that are assessing their viability or that have decided to cease doing ministry in their current form. This program is called Project Regeneration. The Foundation is actively working with over
two dozen congregations that are prayerfully discerning their future ministry. To date the Foundation is managing over $4 million in assets from this program.

4.0 Define our investment strategy

This initiative is complete. The Foundation board and staff began to study the investment strategy, function, and structure in 2010. This culminated with the decision to outsource the Foundation’s investment functions. New partners were identified with Cambridge Associates as the investment advisor to the Foundation fiduciary assets and SEI as the investment advisor to the Foundation sponsored mutual funds, New Covenant Funds. Both firms are experts in their respective areas with Cambridge Associates serving Foundation and Endowment organizations and SEI serving institutional and mutual fund clients. In addition to their investment expertise in their respective field, both offer expertise in mission responsible investing. Due to their scale, both firms have the ability to direct investment managers and funds to comply with the MRTI policies of the church. The Foundation has been and remains committed to upholding the work of MRTI as directed by the General Assembly.

5.0 Develop an asset gathering system

Early on, the Foundation identified its passion for healthy and vibrant ministries. The Foundation understands its call is to raise, manage, and distribute money for these ministries. Within this context an asset gathering system needed to be implemented that assisted ministries with gathering, managing and distributing assets for their use, not the Foundation’s use. The Foundation decided to structure its asset gathering system for ministries into three different teams.

The first team is the ministry relations team. This team is focused on cultivating and nurturing relationships with congregations, mid councils, institutions, and agencies of the church. With these relationships the ministry relations team will present resources and assist these ministries with raising funds for their benefit.

The second team is the advisor team. As noted above donor preferences have changed and the manner in which donors are making gifts have changed. Gifts and financial services have become much more complex. With this in mind the Foundation has constituted a team of experts in the areas of financial planning, charitable gift planning, estate planning, and investment management. The advisor team is available to any ministry or donor seeking assistance with any of these technical areas.

6.0 Charitable Gift Annuities

Charitable gift annuities are contracts that the Foundation enters into with a donor. The contract calls for the Foundation to pay a fixed annuity to the annuitant for their life. Any residuum from the contract is paid to the charitable beneficiary named in the contract. Over the years, certain contracts have had funding issues due to mortality risk and investment risk. The Foundation has been monitoring its gift annuity program for years to ensure it can meet its commitment to annuitants. Over the past several years, the Foundation has engaged an actuarial firm that specializes in assessing charitable gift annuity programs and developing plans to ensure the pools are funded properly. The Foundation has carried out the plans and is in compliance with all regulatory requirements.

7.0 Simplify systems, workflow and workload

The Foundation has made tremendous progress in this area. The broker dealer formerly owned by the Foundation’s subsidiary has been dissolved and has withdrawn its registration. This eliminated four board meetings per year and reduces regulatory filings and fees. The Foundation’s subsidiary is no longer the investment advisor to the Foundation’s sponsored mutual funds, New Covenant Funds. This eliminated the need for staff to attend New Covenant Funds board meetings and eliminates the regulatory filings and fees associated with operating a registered investment advisor. These actions essentially cut staff board time in half and significantly reduce risk and liability as the Foundation will no longer be subject to SEC and FINRA regulations and exams.

Current initiatives in this area include several systems conversions and some departmental restructuring. The systems conversions focus on moving to industry standard software that is hosted externally. This reduces or eliminates software development responsibilities and the need for the Foundation to maintain hardware, perform back-ups, and ensure disaster recovery as these are the responsibility of the hosting site. Department restructures involve changing or enhancing processes to accommodate the new services offered by the Foundation.

The Foundation has developed a disciplined approach to eliminate unnecessary activities and it is internally known as the Culture of Excellence. It is based on business process management methodologies. The Culture of Excellence program also implements tools and metrics to monitor processes to provide focus for continuous improvement.

8.0 Define better ways to contact and communicate with key constituents

The Foundation has just started the items related in this initiative. These are focus areas for 2012 and will be led by our Marketing department. The Foundation has committed the requisite resources to accomplish this initiative.

APPENDIX C

COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) FOUNDATION
Presbyterian Foundation Survey
Highlights

In the late spring and summer of 2013, PC(USA) Research Services surveyed representatives of six constituencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) about the Presbyterian Foundation, one of six agencies of the General Assembly. These surveys were developed in consultation with, and at the request of, the General Assembly Committee on Review of the Presbyterian Foundation, which is examining the Foundation as part of a periodic General Assembly-mandated review. A similar review was undertaken in 2004–2005, and most of the questions used on the surveys in 2013 were repeated from that earlier study to allow for exact comparisons.
The six constituencies surveyed are: General Assembly agency leaders; presbytery and synod executives; congregations; beneficiary organizations; donors; and income recipients. Absent from the survey group in 2013 are New Covenant Funds (NCF) shareholders. Due to the change in NCF investment management from FOUNDATION to SEI, NCF no longer has decision making ability about all communication with shareholders. SEI effectively blocked any survey of NCF shareholders claiming that FINRA and other securities regulations do not allow for such solicitation of feedback.

Response rates decreased materially from 2004 to 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituent Survey Group</th>
<th>2004 Response Rate</th>
<th>2013 Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery &amp; Synod Executives</td>
<td>62% (117 returned / 188 mailed)</td>
<td>42% (80 returned / 189 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders of GA Agencies</td>
<td>72% (49 returned / 68 mailed)</td>
<td>63% (53 returned / 84 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregations Selected Randomly</td>
<td>32% (290 returned / 900 mailed)</td>
<td>41% (246 returned / 600 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>52% (367 returned / 700 mailed)</td>
<td>33% (164 returned / 503 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Recipients</td>
<td>47% (417 returned / 955 mailed)</td>
<td>59% (361 returned / 608 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary Organizations</td>
<td>37% (263 returned / 697 mailed)</td>
<td>42% (211 returned / 500 mailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Covenant Fund Shareholders</td>
<td>32% (221 returned / 700 mailed)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Many PC(USA) congregations surveyed (53 percent) had assets, but fewer than half (39 percent) had endowments.
- For those who had assets, 90 percent of presbyteries and synods and 64 percent of congregations invested with the Foundation or New Covenant Funds.
- Two of three presbyteries and synods (67 percent)—but only one in five congregations (21 percent)—had received gifts made through the Foundation.
- Nearly all presbyteries and synods (92 percent)—but only fewer than two-thirds of congregations (57 percent)—indicated that they were very familiar, familiar, or somewhat familiar with the Foundation.
- Majorities of presbyteries and synods believed that the Foundation is very effective, effective, or somewhat effective in serving presbyteries or synods with existing endowments (74 percent) and those with investment needs (60 percent).
- The table below shows the top 6 responses from the presbyteries and synods when asked to identify the Foundation’s greatest strengths. The rise in importance of social responsibility is interesting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation’s greatest strength is…</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Its reputation</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It supports the mission of the church</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its integrity, honesty, and ethics</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its social responsibility</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a Presbyterian organization</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fact that it’s been around for a long time</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Respondents to question</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, the next table shows the top 6 responses from congregations when asked to identify the Foundation’s greatest strengths. The decline in importance of being Presbyterian is interesting as is the decline in importance of reputation. The survey did not contain follow-up questions to determine whether the Foundation’s reputation is just less important to respondents today or whether the Foundation’s reputation has become tarnished in the eyes of congregations between 2004 and 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation’s greatest strength is…</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Its reputation</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It supports the mission of the church</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its integrity, honesty, and ethics</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a Presbyterian organization</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fact that it has been around for a long time</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Respondents to question</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Congregations that did use the Foundation or New Covenant Funds to manage their assets identified the Foundation’s support for the PC(USA)’s mission and the security of their Foundation investments as reasons why they used the Foundation and NCF. Congregations with assets that did not use the Foundation or NCF to manage those assets identified their relationships with individual bankers or brokers as a primary reason for not using the Foundation. The second largest reason for congregations not using Foundation investment services was a lack of familiarity with Foundation or NCF services.
- Nearly all presbyteries and synods (93 percent) and Foundation and other GA agency leaders (97 percent)—but only seven in ten congregations (71 percent)—believed the work of the Foundation is very important, important, or somewhat important to the denomination.
- Almost all Foundation and other GA agency leaders (94 percent) believed to a very great extent, to a great extent, or to some extent that the Foundation is effective in accomplishing its mission.
• Most Foundation donors described their most recent contacts with Foundation staff as excellent or good (81 percent) and said they would definitely or probably recommend the Foundation to others who want to make gifts (84 percent).

• More than three-quarters of Foundation beneficiaries (79 percent) described their most recent contacts with the Foundation as excellent or good. Two-thirds (67 percent) also would definitely or probably recommend the Foundation to others who want to make gifts. Interestingly, the percentage of Foundation beneficiaries who were not sure they would recommend the Foundation rose from 4 percent in 2004 to 24 percent in 2013.

• Seventy-one percent of Foundation life income recipients described their most recent contacts with Foundation staff as excellent or good and seventy-seven percent would definitely or probably recommend the Foundation to others who want to make charitable gifts.

• Foundation donors regarded as the Foundation’s greatest strengths the Foundation’s reputation and its integrity, honesty, and ethics.

• Large proportions of donors (80 percent), beneficiaries (86 percent) and life income recipients (81 percent) viewed the Foundation’s work as very important, important, or somewhat important to the denomination.

APPENDIX D

COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) FOUNDATION
Investment Advisors and Managers for the Foundation Assets
Engagements began in 2012

Cambridge Associates

Overview

Cambridge Associates (CA) is a privately held consulting firm that seeks to help institutional investors and private clients around the globe meet or exceed their investment objectives. They provide comprehensive discretionary management service that is customized for each client’s individual need, free of any conflicts of interest grounded in intensive and independent research.

History

CA was founded in 1973 to serve as an external research arm to educational endowments. Their consulting practice grew out of this solid research foundation and, in turn, their discretionary practice developed organically from their consulting work. Our first discretionary client was in 2001 (for a hedge fund program), and they began their total portfolio discretionary service in 2005. We serve more than 950 current clients, ranging from endowments with $50 million in assets to some of the largest government entities and sovereign wealth funds in the world.

SEI Investment Managers

Overview

SEI (NASDAQ:SEIC) is a leading global provider of investment processing, fund processing, and investment management business outsourcing solutions that help corporations, financial institutions, financial advisors, and ultra-high-net-worth families create and manage wealth. As of September 30, 2013, through its subsidiaries and partnerships in which the company has a significant interest, SEI manages or administers $529 billion in mutual fund and pooled or separately managed assets, including $219 billion in assets under management and $310 billion in client assets under administration.

FOUNDATION COMMENT ON ITEM 12-B

Comment on Item 12-B—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

The Foundation is tremendously grateful for the work of the Agency Review Committee. Their careful examination of our agency, and thoughtful engagement with our staff and elected leaders and multiple constituents has led to a holistic report and a helpful set of recommendations. We have already begun working to implement several of the recommendations, and will address the others in the months ahead.

Item 12-C

[The assembly approved Item 12-C. See p. 18.]

Benefits Plan Amendments Report—From the Board of Pensions

The Board of Pensions reports the following amendments to The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Plan”) adopted by the Board of Pensions since the 220th General Assembly (2012).

Rationale

As set forth in Article XIX of the Plan, the Board of Pensions has the sole discretion and authority to amend the Plan, subject to certain approvals and reports to the General Assembly.
• Amendments to the Pension Plan (Articles VI, VII, VIII, and IX) that are in the nature of a benefit reduction or a Pension Plan dues increase are effective only upon approval of the General Assembly. The board must provide written notice of its intent to submit such Pension Plan amendments to the General Assembly and the Plan Members, local churches, and presbyteries at least sixty (60) days prior to the commencement of the General Assembly.

• All other amendments to the Plan adopted by the board are effective as determined by the board, but the board must report the amendments to the next succeeding General Assembly and to the members, local churches, and presbyteries in a reasonable manner.

Since the 220th General Assembly (2012), the board has not adopted any amendment to the Pension Plan that requires the approval of General Assembly prior to becoming effective.

Since the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Board granted Pension Plan experience apportionments in 2013 and 2014, approved disability income benefit increases in 2013 and 2014, and adopted amendments to the Medical Plan to comply with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, to increase copayments for generic drugs, and to authorize employers to establish employee contribution requirements for family coverage.

The Pension and Retirement Savings plans were also amended to comply with changes to the Internal Revenue Code of Puerto Rico. Those amendments apply only to members who are bona fide residents of Puerto Rico. A table summarizing the Plan amendments is provided below. The effective dates of the amendments are also noted. A copy of the verbatim text of the Plan amendments is available from the Board of Pensions’ corporate secretary.

A letter advising the Benefits Plan Members, local churches, and presbyteries of this report and the amendments was posted to the website of the Board of Pensions on April 10, 2014, and an email was directed to all of the email addresses in the Board of Pensions records advising of that posting. The letter and a complete copy of The Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2014) are available on the website of the Board at pensions.org or by calling 1-800-PRES-PLAN (1-800-773-7752).

**BENEFITS PLAN OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) AMENDMENTS APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF PENSIONS SINCE THE 220th GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2012)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan and Section Number</th>
<th>Purpose of the Amendment</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pension Plan, Appendix B</td>
<td>Grants an experience apportionment of 1.0% of pension credits as of 12/31/12 of active and terminated vested Members and 1.0% of pension and survivor pension benefits for Members receiving benefits as of 12/31/12.</td>
<td>July 1, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension Plan, Appendix B</td>
<td>Grants an experience apportionment of 4.6% of pension credits as of 12/31/13 of active and terminated vested Members and 4.6% of pension and survivor pension benefits for Members receiving benefits as of 12/31/13.</td>
<td>July 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension Plan, Sec. 1.4, Appendix E</td>
<td>Modifies terms of the Pension Plan for Puerto Rico Members (bona fide residents) to comply with the Puerto Rico Internal Revenue Code of 2011. The modifications do not impact the amount or duration of pension benefits.</td>
<td>January 1, 2011, and January 1, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Plan, Appendix C</td>
<td>Increases disability income benefit by 2%.</td>
<td>July 1, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Plan, Appendix C</td>
<td>Increases disability income benefit by 2%.</td>
<td>July 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Plan, Sec. 13.6</td>
<td>Adds a cap on a Member’s annual maximum copayment amount for essential benefits.</td>
<td>January 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Plan, Secs. 5.2(c), 5.3, 5.3(b), 5.4(b)</td>
<td>Reduces the allowable waiting period for Medical Plan enrollment to be established by the employer from one year to the period allowed by law (no more than 90 days from the date of eligibility for coverage).</td>
<td>January 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare Supplement Plan, Secs. 14.1(b) (amended) and 14.1(c) (eliminated)</td>
<td>Recognizes any qualified health plan coverage for purposes of satisfying the Medicare Supplement Plan continuous coverage requirement.</td>
<td>January 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Plan, Secs. 13.4(b)(1)(A) and 13.4(b)(2)(A)</td>
<td>Increases Member copayments for prescription drugs for generic drugs from $8 to $10 at retail pharmacies and from $20 to $25 through mail order (90-day supply).</td>
<td>January 1, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Plan, Secs. 4.1(a), 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, and 13.2</td>
<td>Authorizes employers to impose employee dues-sharing contributions for eligible family coverage up to an amount or percentage established annually by the Board of Pensions.</td>
<td>January 1, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Plan, Sec. 13.5(a)(2)(A)</td>
<td>Increases annual deductibles for network and non-network medical costs to 1.5% of Member’s Medical Participation Basis.</td>
<td>January 1, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement Savings Plan, Sec. 2.1</td>
<td>Terminates active participation by Puerto Rico Members because P.R. law does not recognize Sec 403(b)(9) plans.</td>
<td>January 1, 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Item 12-D

*Minutes, Board of Pensions*

[The assembly approved Item 12-D. See p. 18.]

### Item 12-E

*Minutes, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation*

[The assembly approved Item 12-E. See p. 18.]

### Item 12-F

*Minutes, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc.*

[The assembly approved Item 12-F. See p. 18.]

### Item 12-G

*Minutes, Foundation*

[The assembly approved Item 12-G. See p. 18.]

### Item 12-Info

**A. Presbyterian Church (USA) Investment and Loan Program, Inc. Report to the 221st General Assembly (2014)**

*Vision and Mission Statement:* In gratitude for God’s abundance, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc (“PILP”) promotes the growth of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Bringing together the visions of church developers and the resources of Presbyterian investors and financial partners.

PILP offers investments providing a competitive financial return plus the opportunity to participate in the expansion of the church through Presbyterian congregations, governing bodies, and mission agencies. PILP offers loans to Presbyterian congregations and mid councils to purchase, renovate, and expand worship and mission space and to promote the growth of the church. Guided by the best practices of the financial industry, PILP is committed to faithful stewardship of the resources entrusted to us for the support of the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

PILP began 2012 with a disbursed loan portfolio of $79.8 million and an additional $12.1 million in commitments pending close and construction loans not yet disbursed. At the end of 2013, PILP had a disbursed loan portfolio of $75.9 million...
In 2013 PILP experienced our thirteenth consecutive year with an annual surplus. It is essential that PILP generate surpluses to assure investors of the strength of our program, to meet regulatory requirement to be profitable three out of the most recent past five years, and to provide capital for future expansion of the program. The combined surpluses from 2012 and 2013 have helped us toward our goal of building our capital adequacy beyond the 5 percent required by regulators. At the end of 2013, PILP had $8.2 million in unrestricted net assets.

PILP’s investment products are securities regulated under The Uniform Securities Act, which is administered by state-by-state. The North American Securities Administrators Association establishes program guidelines for denominational investment and loan programs. At the end of 2013, PILP met or exceeded all of the guidelines. PILP is expected to maintain a capital adequacy ratio of net worth to total assets of 5 percent. At the end of 2013 our capital adequacy ratio was 7.9 percent. PILP is expected to maintain a liquidity ratio of liquid assets to Term Notes and Denominational Account Receipts ("DARs") of at least 8 percent. At the end of 2013 our liquidity ratio was 32.1 percent. PILP is required to limit senior secured debt to no more than 10 percent of total assets. At the end of 2013, PILP had no senior secured debt.

Some commercial lenders may offer low rates or waive certain fees, but PILP is the only lender we know who gives money back to borrowing congregations. Through the “Get the Point” program, borrowing congregations earn rebates based on supporting investments. For 2013 PILP returned $326,608 to borrowing congregations, bringing the total returned to congregations since the inception of the rebate program to $2.8 million.

PILP provides consulting services to congregations and presbyteries to help them develop the appropriate size and timing for construction plans. We explore fundraising, financing opportunities, and requirements for capital projects. Each congregation benefits from the PILP staff’s experience in working with hundreds of congregations.

Demand for new construction loans has decreased in 2012 and 2013. In 2013 we began the process of transferring the ministry of the Church Development Corporation, an investment and loan program of the Synod of Mid-America, to PILP. We are continuing to refinance the loan portfolio of the Synod of the Northeast as their loans mature. These transfers are being implemented at the request of the synods. PILP has maintained careful underwriting standards, believing that relaxed standards do not benefit the lender or the borrower. We maintain a review process for all lending relationships and work intentionally with mid councils, who guarantee our loans. This process has resulted in a loan portfolio that is the envy of most lending institutions. At the end of 2013, PILP had five 30-day or longer delinquencies. These delinquencies have been resolved.

The Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program administers the Church Loan Program, ("CLP") for the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The CLP is the result of many gifts, campaigns, and bequests to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since 1843. By December 31, 2013, the total endowment for church loans had grown to more than $215 million. The Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program has worked with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation to develop a capital grant program to supplement the existing loan program. We have worked with the Foundation and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board to secure funding from the Church Loan Program for the 1001 New Worshipping Communities Initiative and the Mission Program Grants Program for the foreseeable future.

The CLP began 2012 with a disbursed loan portfolio of $102.2 million and an additional $6.4 million in commitments pending close and construction loans not yet disbursed. At the end of 2013 CLP had a disbursed loan portfolio of $89.3 million and an additional $6.6 million in commitments, pending closing and construction loans, not yet disbursed. This represents a decrease of 11.7 percent over the two-year period. In 2012 PILP disbursed $7.0 million in new loans from CLP endowment funds and in 2013 disbursed $11.3 million. The maximum loan from CLP is currently $450,000. The maximum project in which CLP participates is $2.5 million. Larger loans are funded by investor funds or participations with synod loan programs or banking partners. Many loan applications received by PILP qualify for funds from both PILP and CLP. These loans are offered to churches as one loan with a blended rate.

Together PILP and CLP represent the Coordinated Loan Program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) The Coordinated Loan Program is dedicated to providing low-cost loans to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and mission agencies. At the beginning of 2012 the base interest rate for loans from investor funds for existing congregations was 4.95 percent and 4.0 percent from endowment funds. By the end of 2013 the base interest rate for loans from investor funds rate for existing congregations was 4.45 percent and 3.5 percent from endowment funds. We have introduced special interest rates for congregations refinancing loans from commercial lenders. PILP has remained competitive in an interest rate environment that has experienced large decreases in the cost of funds for all lending institutions.
The program is in sound financial shape. The balance sheet is strong with total assets of more than $104 million. We have received an unqualified audit every year. We have solid relationships with most mid councils and with all of the other General Assembly agencies. We continue to serve a growing number of borrowing congregations. We welcome new individuals, congregations, and mid councils into our investment family almost every week.

Our hope is that PILP will be the premier provider of financing for capital projects within the PC(USA). We want Presbyterians to think about PILP when it comes to financing a capital project. We will not compromise our underwriting standards to grow the business, but will build the kind of relationships that help congregations determine what they can afford and what they cannot. We are building an investment base of individuals that has a vision of investing for financial and mission return.

We remain committed to promoting awareness of the program throughout the church. We will maintain strong and healthy ties with General Assembly agencies and mid councils. We will continue to build a competent and diverse staff to serve the church. PILP is addressing emerging issues within the church and the culture. The program will focus energy on the following areas of activity in 2014:

1. We anticipate that interest rates will increase gradually in 2014. We anticipate that our cost of funds will increase more rapidly than our income from interest on loans. We will manage our interest rates to maintain a margin between our cost of funds and the interest earned on loans of at least 3 percent.

2. We anticipate that more congregations with existing PILP loans will experience financial pressures in meeting their debt obligations. We anticipate requests for modification of loan terms. We will respond to each request individually, while maintaining our policies and practices to safeguard the investments that have been placed with us. We will work with congregations and presbyteries to evaluate every option available to maintain debt service payments. We will continue with the regularly scheduled reviews of each loan in our portfolio in an attempt to identify concerns before they become problems.

3. We anticipate that additional congregations with loans and mortgage grants will ask to be dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We will work with presbyteries to reinforce the language of the loan documentation, including the acceleration clause making the loan due and payable before the congregation can be released. We will work with presbyteries seeking to provide “gracious separation” for congregations wanting to leave the denomination to understand that the mortgage and guarantee remain in place until the loan is paid in full. This will require working with PC(USA), A Corp., the presbyteries, and congregations to ensure the repayment of existing loans and to provide the documentation and recovery of the funds provided many years ago through mortgage grants.

4. The program will continue to transfer the ministry of the Church Development Corporation to the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program. We are currently administering their $11 million loan portfolio of eighteen loans. We are administering the interest payments, redemptions, and reporting to their board of directors for the $21 million of investments they have sold to individuals, congregations, and mid councils. We will continue to work toward refinancing their loans into the PILP portfolio, and we will use the proceeds of this refinancing activity to redeem the savings certificates and stewardship accounts. We will offer their investors the opportunity to invest the funds from these redemptions in PILP term notes and denominational account receipts.

5. The staff and the board will use the 221st General Assembly (2014) as an opportunity to promote the program, to further strengthen existing relationships, and to establish new relationships among PC(USA) entities, mid council leaders, and congregational leaders.

6. The senior leadership will evaluate and refine the staffing rationale based on staff transitions and shifting workloads that are anticipated in 2014.

7. The program will continue to develop more effective use of social networking and other new technologies. The program will roll out a Facebook page in 2014, as a forum for borrowers, the board, and staff to exchange news and ideas.

8. The staff will further develop our consulting role in advising and guiding churches and presbyteries on financial implications of debt financing.

9. The staff will work to strengthen connections between the marketing team and the underwriting team to create a seamless organization for our customers and prospects.

10. The staff will continue to explore strategic initiatives to fulfill our desire for continued growth in the loan portfolio during this protracted slowdown in loan demand. The marketing staff will use leads from the Annual Statistical Reports and conversations with mid council leadership.

11. Senior leadership will work with the board of directors to determine the best structure for board effectiveness. The board of directors will work with the senior leadership to develop a succession plan for replacement of board members and senior leadership that may result from emergencies or planned events. The board and staff will work collaboratively to explore new markets and products to meet changing needs within the church and the program.
12. We will develop an investment policy to allow for longer term investments of our net assets.

13. We will collaborate with the other agencies of the PC(USA) to determine the appropriate role for the program within the 1001 Worshiping Communities initiative.

14. We will collaborate with the other agencies of the PC(USA) to develop a strategy for the program to begin transferring some of the cost of dependent health care coverage to employees.

The following are just few examples of how endowment and investor funds are helping the church grow:

**Neema Community Church, Overland Park, Kansas:** Begun in 2003 as a prayer group meeting in an apartment with the participation of only a few African immigrants, Neema Community Church has grown into a vibrant congregation of nearly two hundred souls. Shortly after their formation, Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, generously provided a meeting place for the fellowship allowing them space and time to grow. In 2011, they were officially chartered and began a search for a home of their own. Aided with a loan from the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Neema Community purchased an existing church building which will provide more space for worship, Christian education and outreach ministries to immigrants of all faiths that are new to their area. [http://neemacommunitychurch.org](http://neemacommunitychurch.org)

**Huguenot Memorial Church, Pelham Manor, New York:** After contending for years with an antiquated boiler system, numerous broken pipes and resulting water damage, Huguenot Memorial Church began an extensive search for a long-term solution. The more they studied the problem, the more serious they became about geothermal as a solution. With member contributions and a loan through PILP, they have completed installation of a geothermal HVAC system utilizing deep underground water pipes that take advantage of the consistent subterranean temperatures to provide warmth in the winter and cooling in the summer. Though expensive to install, geothermal is touted to have the lowest ongoing cost to operate. The church estimates that their energy cost will be cut in half while providing more consistent and comfortable temperatures throughout all of their buildings. [www.huguenotchurch.org](http://www.huguenotchurch.org)

**Covenant Presbyterian Church, Lubbock, Texas:** For the people who gather in this Lubbock, Texas, church, the term, “Covenant” is not just a name but a way of life. After several years of discernment, they set out to live into a larger vision of God’s mission by making their church a more visible, practicing presence of God’s kingdom and resource to their community. The church building, last renovated thirty-five years ago, had not kept pace with their changing ministry. With a new vision of invigorating programs for children, music, and creating an atmosphere of hospitality, they have reconfigured existing space, expanded and opened up the gathering area, and added classrooms specifically for children ministries. Through the amazing generosity of their members and a loan from PILP, Covenant is embarking on new ministries to reach their community. [http://covenantpresbylbk.org](http://covenantpresbylbk.org)

The Board of Directors of PILP is elected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and is confirmed by the General Assembly. The 2013 board of directors included: Stephen Bacon, chair; James B. Rea Jr.; Louise Westfall; Linda Scholl; William Nelson; Joyce Smith; Catesby Woodford; Terry Nall; Samuel McNairy; Margaret Jorgensen, vice chair; Linda Bailey; Rebecca New; Josephine Stewart; Connie Tubb; In Yang.

The officers of the corporation in 2013 were: James L. Hudson, president and CEO; James G. Rissler Sr., vice president Finance and Administration and treasurer; Ben W. Blake, vice president, Sales and Marketing; Martha E. Clark, secretary; Mike Kirk, assistant secretary; Laura Olliges, assistant treasurer.

**B. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation Agency Summary**

1. **Mission Statement**

A vital part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation cultivates, attracts, and manages financial resources of individuals and institutions to serve Christ’s mission.

2. **Summary**

The Presbyterian Foundation was established in 1799 to raise, steward, and distribute funds for mission. We work with congregations, councils, agencies, and related ministries to ensure that they have resources for mission today, tomorrow, and two hundred years from now.

The Foundation exists to serve the church and its mission. Our nationwide staff of ministry relationship officers works with pastors, ministry leaders, and individual donors to develop communities of Christian generosity in support of Christ’s mission in the world.

In countless ways, the Foundation offers charitable expertise and services that unite and empower Presbyterians and the ministries about which they are passionate. We strive to do so in a trustworthy, clear, and accessible manner that reflects the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s faith-based values.
The Foundation has much to offer the church:

*Stability.* The Foundation has been bringing together people and mission for more than two centuries. One of six national agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Foundation is composed of highly skilled officers and support staff trained in the areas of gift administration and compliance, accounting, law, marketing, and a specialized group of ministry relationship officers located around the country to better serve the church.

*Connection.* We work in leadership and partnership with the whole denomination to fund its mission. The Foundation does not compete with local congregations or any other institution of the church for charitable gifts. To the contrary, we are committed to strengthening these entities by developing gifts and managing funds on their behalf.

*Commitment.* We provide all Presbyterians with an avenue to realize their philanthropic goals through a variety of giving options. We maintain a strong focus on the Presbyterian values and principles that drive our stewardship initiatives.

3. **Ministry Relationships**

The Foundation remains true to its original charge from the 1799 General Assembly to solicit from individuals and congregations “pious donations and bequests in order to supply the funds which are absolutely necessary to carry on with advantage the great and charitable work” of the Church.

Our nationwide staff of ministry relationship officers works to cultivate funds for mission and build communities of generosity throughout the church. Combining decades of pastoral and development experience, these officers help church leaders assess the financial health, generosity capacity, and stewardship practices of their congregations, then build on their strengths and address their weaknesses.

4. **Project Regeneration**

Faithful stewardship of church resources always looks to the future because congregations go through life cycles. The re-invention of a congregation, the closing of a church building, or the merger of multiple congregations can mean more than the end of a previously vibrant ministry. It can also mean the opportunity for the sale or transformation of excess church property into funds for new ministry. It can mean freeing an existing congregation from the burden of supporting a facility that no longer meets its mission needs.

The Presbyterian Foundation is partnering with churches and presbyteries across the denomination to discover and explore creative options for ministries that need adequate funding in order to grow and prosper. Endowment funds are among the many options available to leave a lasting legacy of the faith community by naming a ministry and specific purpose for the use of the fund and provide support in perpetuity.

5. **Presbyterian Mission Exchange**

Presbyterians are generous by nature—we are passionate about mission and give joyfully to the projects, causes, and organizations that touch our hearts and engage our minds.

To help expedite that generosity, the Foundation has created the Presbyterian Mission Exchange—a web-based giving hub with tools to facilitate easy online donations. Congregations can quickly and easily offer online giving to their members through the Mission Exchange.

Presbyterians can use the Mission Exchange to discover and fund churches and charities that are sharing their gifts to heal the sick, feed the hungry, clothe and shelter the poor, educate and build up their communities, and promote the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

In 2013 alone, 445 donors gave more than $875,000 to 130 congregations and ministries using the Presbyterian Mission Exchange.

6. **Wills Program**

Annually, the Presbyterian Foundation offers a Wills Emphasis program to congregations throughout the denomination. At the program’s beginning in the 1950s, wills were the main focus of gift development. Currently, that focus has shifted to remembering the church in estate planning. While simple bequests in a will are still important, now the Foundation can provide guidance for complex estate plans in coordination with an individual’s tax and legal advisors.

To complement congregation-based bequest and planned giving efforts, the Foundation offers a package of wills program resources including a leadership guide, website, sample appeal letters, bulletin inserts, social media content, and more. These materials are provided free of charge to any Presbyterian congregation—the only expenses are the shipping and handling costs.
7. **Expanded Investment Options**

The Foundation and its subsidiary, New Covenant Trust Company, offer a range of investment services to congregations and related Presbyterian institutions. New Covenant Funds provide an easy entry point and daily liquidity for congregations who want to self-direct their investment portfolio within the PC(USA)’s mission responsibility through investment framework. New Covenant Trust Company offers a variety of more customized investment options to match the congregation’s policy objectives. Presbyterian Endowment Funds are held permanently by the Foundation, invested in a diverse yet socially responsible portfolio by Cambridge Associates, and pay out according to an established spending formula designed to provide stable funding over many years.

Transformational investment options allow congregations and other Presbyterian institutions to invest positively in a series of development projects in Palestine. These projects have been developed in response to the 220th General Assembly (2012)’s call for positive investment in the Palestinian territories.

To learn more about the Presbyterian Foundation, visit our website at www.PresbyterianFoundation.org or call 800-858-6127.

C. **New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.**

New Covenant Trust Company, N.A. (NCTC), a subsidiary of the Presbyterian Foundation, was chartered January 2, 1998. The company serves as trustee of various types of trust instruments and provides investment management services. NCTC’s board has enacted policies and procedures to ensure compliance with banking laws and provides oversight of the delivery of services to the Presbyterian community.

NCTC partners with individuals and Presbyterian and related organizations in the delivery of trust services, such as personal trusts, wholly charitable trusts and charitable remainder trusts, and investment management services. These services allow NCTC to create custom solutions such that trust, investment management, and philanthropic goals and objectives can be met. NCTC consistently strives to deliver superior service to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and seeks to enhance opportunities available to Presbyterians to express their Christian faith and generous stewardship.

NCTC provides shareholder services to New Covenant Funds, a family of mutual funds organized with participation from the Presbyterian Foundation. The services provided by NCTC help ensure the investments in New Covenant Funds are aligned with the social witness principles of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The following individuals were confirmed by the 220th General Assembly (2012) and continue in their service as directors of New Covenant Trust Company, N.A.

1. **Former Foundation Trustees**: Timothy P. Clark (senior bank officer, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Living Waters); Sharon Z. Fesler (retired trust officer, white, female, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Lincoln Trails).
2. **OGA Designee**: Christopher Y. Nicholas (OGA staff, Asian, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Living Waters).
3. **Presbyterian Mission Agency Designee**: Donald S. Hunt (retired bank executive, white, male, married, lay, over 50, Synod of Lincoln Trails).
Item 13-01

[The assembly approved Item 13-01 with amendment. See p. 24.]

Report and Recommendations from the General Assembly Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar to the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The General Assembly Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar unanimously recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

   Shall the Confession of Belhar be included in the Book of Confessions. [Explanatory notes: (a) Text for the Confession of Belhar can be found as Attachment 1., (b) Biblical citations should be listed in the margins by the relevant text as is shown in Attachment 1, and (c) While not of constitutional character, whenever the Confession of Belhar is printed in the Book of Confessions, it should be accompanied by the original Accompanying Letter from Belhar to explain the context of the confession. This letter is Attachment 2.]

2. Approve “The Accompanying Letter to the Confession of Belhar from the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” as a statement reflecting the confession, conviction, and rationale of the PC(USA) based on the implications of this confession for our life and ministry as a Reformed and Presbyterian community in 21st century North America and commend it to our congregations and presbyteries as they deliberate adding the Confession of Belhar to our Book of Confessions. [Like with the original Accompanying Letter, while not of constitutional character, whenever the Confession of Belhar is printed in the Book of Confessions, it should be accompanied by the Accompanying Letter from the 221st General Assembly (2014) to explain the context of the confession for the PC(USA). This Accompanying Letter for the PC(USA) can be found in Attachment 3.]

3. Call upon all congregations, councils, seminaries, and denominational conferences to engage in serious and prayerful study of the Confession of Belhar and the Accompanying Letters of Belhar during the next twelve months, making use of the variety of resources produced by the special committee and others, which can be found at www.pcusa.org/belhar.

4. Dismiss the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar with thanks and request that members of the special committee who are willing be available as speakers and resource persons for congregations, councils, and special conferences (noted in Recommendation 3).

Rationale

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved the action to begin the process of amending the Book of Confessions to include the Confession of Belhar, as provided in G-6.03, and approved the authorization of a budget for education across the church about the confession, in addition to its committee budget for direct expenses (Minutes, 2012, Part I, p. 1527).

Moderator Neal Presa appointed Teaching Elder Clifton Kirkpatrick (Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky) and Ruling Elder Matilde Moros (Presbytery of Hudson River) to serve as co-moderators of the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar. He also appointed as members of the committee Teaching Elder Edwin Antonio Gonzalez-Castillo (Presbytery of San Juan), Teaching Elder Karen Herbst-Kim (Presbytery of Blackhawk), Teaching Elder Cynthia Holder Rich (Presbytery of Heartland), Ruling Elder Susan Krivenko (Presbytery of Elizabeth), Teaching Elder Mark A. Lomax (Presbytery of Greater Atlanta), Teaching Elder Albert Franklin Masters III (Presbytery of Foothills), Teaching Elder Eliana Maxim (Presbytery of Seattle), Ruling Elder Rodger Y. Nishioka (Presbytery of Greater Atlanta), Teaching Elder Kevin Park (Presbytery of Newark), Teaching Elder Catherine J.S. Purves (Presbytery of Pittsburgh), Ruling Elder Brandt Shields (Presbytery of John Calvin), Teaching Elder Jerry Tankersley (Presbytery of Los Ranchos), and Ruling Elder Elizabeth Raver Wagner, (Presbytery of Charlotte).

The committee held one face-to-face meeting in October 2012, and monthly conference calls between December 2012 and January 2014. Much of the committee’s work was focused on developing educational resources for churchwide use. These can be accessed through the committee’s website, www.pcusa.org/belhar. They consulted with several different constituency groups within the PC(USA) as well as consulting with ecumenical partners in the U.S. and South Africa. They gave significant consideration to the implications of the Confession of Belhar for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at this moment in the church’s history. The sub-themes of Justice, Unity, and Reconciliation framed their approach to the Confession of Belhar and the development of interpretative materials.
The Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar reached a unanimous decision to recommend inclusion of the Confession of Belhar into the Book of Confessions.

**Attachment # 1: The Confession of Belhar**

**The Confession of Belhar**

**Revelation 21:6–7**

We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

**Matthew 28:19–20**

We believe in one holy, universal Christian church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

We believe

**Ephesians 2:13–20**

- that Christ’s work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;

**Ephesians 4:11–16, Psalm 133**

- that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God’s Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought; one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain;

**John 17:20–23**

- that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted;

**John 13:34**

- that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways;

**Colossians 3:12–16**

- in that we love one another;

**Philippians 2:1–5**

- that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another;

**1 Corinthians 1:10–13**

- that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another;

**Ephesians 4:1–6**

- that we share one faith, have one calling, are of one soul and one mind;

**1 Corinthians 10:16–17**

- have one God and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one name, are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope;

**Ephesians 3:18–20**

- together come to know the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ;

- together are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity;

**Galatians 6:2**

- together know and bear one another’s burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ;

**2 Corinthians 1:3–4**

- that we need one another and upbuild one another, admonishing and comforting one another;

**1 Corinthians 12:24b–28, Ephesians 3:14–20**

- that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity;

**1 Corinthians 12:4–11, Romans 12:3–8**

- that this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint; that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various

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1 This is a translation of the original Afrikaans text of the confession as it was adopted by the synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa in 1986. In 1994, the Dutch Reformed Mission Church and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa united to form the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). This inclusive language text was prepared by the Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and updated by the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar.
languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God;

Galatians 3:27–29

- that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this church.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

- which absolutizes either natural diversity or the sinful separation of people in such a way that this absolutization hinders or breaks the visible and active unity of the church, or even leads to the establishment of a separate church formation;

- which professes that this spiritual unity is truly being maintained in the bond of peace while believers of the same confession are in effect alienated from one another for the sake of diversity and in despair of reconciliation;

- which denies that a refusal earnestly to pursue this visible unity as a priceless gift is sin;

- which explicitly or implicitly maintains that descent or any other human or social factor should be a consideration in determining membership of the church.

We believe

2 Corinthians 5:17–21

- that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ;

Matthew 5:9, 13–16;
2 Peter 3:13;
Revelation 21:1–5

- that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells;

Romans 6:12–14,
Colossians 1:11–14

- that God’s life-giving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God’s life-giving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world;

James 2:8–9

- that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;

- that any teaching which attempts to legitimize such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine which, in such a situation sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and color and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.

We believe

Isaiah 42:1–7

- that God has revealed God’s self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;

Luke 6:20–26

- that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;


- that God calls the church to follow God in this; for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;

Luke 7:22

- that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;

Psalm 146

- that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps the orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;

James 1:27

- that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
Micah 6:8 • that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;

Amos 5:14–15, 23–24 • that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;

Psalm 82:1–5 • that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged;

Leviticus 19:15 • that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

Therefore, we reject any ideology which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.

Acts 5:29–32; 1 Peter 3:15–18 We believe that, in obedience to Jesus Christ, its only head, the church is called to confess and to do all these things, even though the authorities and human laws might forbid them and punishment and suffering be the consequence.

Jesus is Lord.

To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honor and the glory forever and ever.

Attachment # 2

Accompanying Letter to the Confession of Belhar

This letter was a statement made upon the adoption of the Belhar Confession by the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa

1. We are deeply conscious that moments of such seriousness can arise in the life of the Church that it may feel the need to confess its faith anew in the light of a specific situation. We are aware that such an act of confession is not lightly undertaken, but only if it is considered that the heart of the gospel is so threatened as to be at stake. In our judgment, the present church and political situation in our country and particularly within the Dutch Reformed church family calls for such a decision. Accordingly, we make this confession not as a contribution to a theological debate nor as a new summary of our beliefs, but as a cry from the heart, as something we are obliged to do for the sake of the gospel in view of the times in which we stand. Along with many, we confess our guilt, in that we have not always witnessed clearly enough in our situation and so are jointly responsible for the way in which those things which were experienced as sin and confessed to be sin have grown in time to seem self-evidently right and to be ideologies foreign to the Scriptures. As a result many have been given the impression that the gospel was not really at stake. We make this confession because we are convinced that all sorts of theological arguments have contributed to so disproportionate an emphasis on some aspects of the truth that it has in effect become a lie.

2. We are aware that the only authority for such a confession and the only grounds on which it may be made are the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God. Being fully aware of the risk involved in taking this step, we are nevertheless convinced that we have no alternative. Furthermore, we are aware that no other motives or convictions, however valid they may be, would give us the right to confess in this way. An act of confession may only be made by the Church for the sake of its purity and credibility and that of its message. As solemnly as we are able, we hereby declare before men that our only motive lies in our fear that the truth and power of the gospel itself is threatened in this situation. We do not wish to serve any group interests, advance the cause of any factions, promote any theologies, or achieve any ulterior purposes. Yet, having said this, we know that our deepest intentions may only be judged at their true value by him before whom all is revealed. We do not make this confession from his throne and from on high, but before his throne and before men. We plead, therefore, that this confession would not be misused by anyone with ulterior motives and also that it should not be resisted to serve such motives. Our earnest desire is to lay no false stumbling blocks in the way, but to point to the true stumbling block, Jesus Christ the rock.

3. This confession is not aimed at specific people or groups of people or a church or churches. We proclaim it against a false doctrine, against an ideological distortion which threatens the gospel itself in our church and our country. Our heartfelt longing is that no one will identify himself with this objectionable doctrine and that all who have been wholly or partially blinded by it will turn themselves away from it. We are deeply aware of the deceiving nature of such a false doctrine and know that many who have been conditioned by it have to a greater or lesser extent learnt to take a half-truth for the whole. For this reason we do not doubt the Christian faith of many such people, their sincerity, honor, integrity,
and good intentions and their in many ways estimable practice and conduct. However, it is precisely because we know the power of deception that we know we are not liberated by the seriousness, sincerity, or intensity of our certainties, but only by the truth in the Son. Our church and our land have an intense need of such liberation. Therefore it is that we speak pleadingly rather than accusingly. We plead for reconciliation, that true reconciliation which follows on conversion and change of attitudes and structures. And while we do so we are aware that an act of confession is a two-edged sword, that none of us can throw the first stone, and none is without a beam in his own eye. We know that the attitudes and conduct which work against the gospel are present in all of us and will continue to be so. Therefore this confession must be seen as a call to a continuous process of soulsearching, a joint wrestling with the issues, and a readiness to repent in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in a broken world. It is certainly not intended as an act of self-justification and intolerance, for that would disqualify us in the very act of preaching to others.

4. Our prayer is that this act of confession will not place false stumbling blocks in the way and thereby cause and foster false divisions, but rather that it will be reconciling and unifying. We know that such an act of confession and process of reconciliation will necessarily involve much pain and sadness. It demands the pain of repentance, remorse, and confession; the pain of individual and collective renewal and a changed way of life. It places us on a road whose end we can neither foresee nor manipulate to our own desire. On this road we shall unavoidably suffer intense growing pains while we struggle to conquer alienation, bitterness, irreconciliation, and fear. We shall have to come to know and encounter both ourselves and others in new ways. We are only too well aware that this confession calls for the dismantling of structures of thought, of church, and of society which have developed over many years. However, we confess that for the sake of the gospel, we have no other choice. We pray that our brothers and sisters throughout the Dutch Reformed church family, but also outside it, will want to make this new beginning with us, so that we can be free together and together may walk the road of reconciliation and justice. Accordingly, our prayer is that the pain and sadness we speak of will be pain and sadness that lead to salvation. We believe that this is possible in the power of our Lord and by his Spirit. We believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers hope, liberation, salvation, and true peace to our country.

The Confession of Belhar calls us to renew our understanding and confessional affirmation of the “one triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” The confession centers us in the reality of the Holy God of creation, the covenant, and the prophets, who was incarnate in Jesus Christ. The Spirit fills all who have come to know God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. As the Confession of Belhar affirms, the God whom we worship and serve has gathered us, protected us, and cared for us through the Word and Spirit. “This, God has done and will do, in order to reconcile all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1:9–10).

Attachment # 3

THE ACCOMPANYING LETTER TO THE CONFESSION OF BELHAR
from the 221st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
on the occasion of the adoption of the Confession of Belhar

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is again facing a critical time in its history. We are rent apart by division and schism, we have yet to confront directly and confess the racism that has been a significant force in our own history, and we have shown a failure of resolve to make courageous stands for justice. We believe that the Confession of Belhar, a profound statement on unity, reconciliation, and justice in the church, comes to us as a word from God for this particular time and place for the PC(USA).

We understand confession as both the church’s response to human sin and as witness to our faith. Confession by the church is necessary because sin is present in social injustice and in our conscious or unconscious participation in human suffering. Confession is not a way to cast aspersions or in any way denigrate, castigate, or delimit any person or group of persons. We the church are called to confess sin because the Word of God as revealed in and through the life of Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures calls us to bear witness to a just, loving, and compassionate Creator.

The Confession of Belhar calls us to renew our understanding and confessional affirmation of the “one triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” The confession centers us in the reality of the Holy God of creation, the covenant, and the prophets, who was incarnate in Jesus Christ. The Spirit fills all who have come to know God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. As the Confession of Belhar affirms, the God whom we worship and serve has gathered us, protected us, and cared for us through the Word and Spirit. “This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.”

The Confession of Belhar is particularly helpful to our common life as Presbyterians for two reasons. First, it comes to us in a time of Kairos in South Africa, when the church dared to speak with unusual clarity. It can help the PC(USA) speak and act with equal clarity. Second, it focuses the church’s confession on its own life. It is far too easy for the church to look outside of its walls and find fault, all the while ignoring the sin in its own life. Belhar focuses the church’s attention on the way its own life and witness have fallen short of the gospel.

Unity.

We believe that the gospel of God calls the entire universal church into the unity of the one triune God. At the heart of the Creator God revealed in Scripture is the invitation to enjoy the fellowship of the personal God who is one, yet three. The Lord whom we confess has a purpose and plan for the cosmos into which we have all been born by God’s providence. We learn from Scripture of “… the mystery of [God’s] will … set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up [unite] all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1:9–10).
To this end, Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, fully human and fully God, offered us new life when he gave his life for us through his incarnation, his crucifixion, and his resurrection. This new life broke down dividing walls of hostility within humanity; transforming hatred into love and making unity a mandate from God. Unity is God’s will for humanity, beyond the differences of Jews and Gentiles, slave and free, male and female, educated and uneducated, rich and poor, and beyond social categories of races. All who heard the good news and believed in God through Christ the Savior were incorporated into the new humanity. Through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, those who trusted in Jesus Christ became members of the household of God and experienced themselves as being built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God. This spiritual temple called “the church” was given a mission of proclaiming, living, making visible, and extending the good news of the New Creation in Christ (Eph. 2:11–22).

Presbyterians have confessed this gospel from the early years of our history in America. Yet we have had great difficulty of living into the gift of God’s unity and mission revealed and made possible through the cross of Jesus Christ. Like our brothers and sisters in South Africa, we have been afflicted by the division of the church along racial, political, cultural, theological, and class divisions.

In South Africa the system of “apartheid,” or separation of the races, divided both nation and church into separate spheres. The Reformed Churches of South Africa justified this division and developed theological rationales for this division so that blacks and whites were not allowed to come to the same Lord’s Table. The white settlers who came from Europe to the tip of the African continent came with a vision of a Promised Land that required either the removal of the native Africans or the separation of the races for the sake of racial purity, spiritual well-being, and economic development. The spiritualized gospel adopted by the white church focused upon the saving of souls but had lost its prophetic word and mission for the healing of the divisions caused by human sinfulness.

Reformed/Presbyterian Christians who came to the New World of the North American continent carried with them a sense of their own election and privilege. They too came to a “Promised Land” of new beginnings, seeking freedom and opportunity for themselves. They brought with them an understanding of the gospel that was not whole, that did not understand the completed work of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and that did not call for the church to be visibly one. To complicate matters, in order to develop the New World’s economic base, lands and workers were needed. Native Americans were removed from their lands and African slaves imported to be a source of cheap labor. Human persons were oppressed, defined as property, and denied basic human rights. The church embraced a spiritualized gospel that justified the enslavement of people forcefully and violently captured and held in dehumanizing slavery for the good of white masters and landowners. Every aspect of American culture became divided. Slaves were only counted as 3/5ths persons under the new Constitution of the United States. God’s election, interpreted as social privilege, became a theological justification for chattel slavery and racial segregation.

Privileges based on race, wealth, gender, class, and power became institutionalized and legalized. As a result, we have witnessed to the eleven o’clock hour of Sunday morning as the most segregated hour of life in the United States of America. We Presbyterian Reformed churches found ourselves in betrayal of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in our own internal worship, fellowship, and witness. We continue to live under the specters of racism, classism, sexism, and division, which remain as enduring conflicts and challenges for both church and culture.

Beyond the issues of race and class, Presbyterians in the United States of America have, from the beginning, been troubled by differing theological world views and practices. We have been willing to divide over and over again. Political ideologies, hermeneutical theories, racial prejudices, economic ideologies, and powerful personalities have driven wedges between believers, causing congregations to divide and to seek new affiliations of like-minded believers. Old School/New School believers separated and debated theology. Racial theologies divided the church and nation into north and south and led to the American Civil War. Brothers and sisters went to war reading the same Bible and praying to the same God with the confidence that God was on their sides. Fundamentalists and Modernists did battle over issues of biblical and scientific interpretations. The divisions over the ordination of women remained present into the last century. For the last quarter of the 20th century, the Presbyterian church has argued and divided over human sexuality and how to read its Scriptures in these matters. Once again the reality of diversity has threatened to divide us so that the visible unity of the church now hangs by a slender thread.

We believe that the PC(USA) needs to be called to the unity taught and proclaimed in the Confession of Belhar. Belhar’s witness to the unity of God, the unity created by the good news of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, calls us to the hard work of spiritual transformation and surrender to the way of Jesus Christ who came to unite all believers in the visible communion of the body of Christ, the church.

Belhar asks us to look first at ourselves when faced with church division, rather than moving quickly to blaming those with whom we are separated. It is far too easy to look at others and blame them for division. Belhar directs us to look at our own behavior that has led to disunity. What is the log in our own eye?

**Reconciliation.**

The Confession of Belhar reaffirms the vision of mission articulated in the Confession of 1967: that God in Christ has done what we could not do for ourselves. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, “All this is from God, who recon-
ciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:18–20).

In the 1960s, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) confessed its faith in the reconciling power of God in the context of a society being driven apart by racial divisions, issues of war and peace, poverty and abundance, and by anarchy in sexual relationships.

The Confession of Belhar reaffirms this witness, but more specifically calls the members of this church and the corporate structures of the church to be claimed by the gospel of God, who alone can bring us together as one family of Christ, healing the deep divides that still haunt us all.

We believe that all who have trusted in Jesus as Savior and Lord, and been baptized into the fellowship of Christ’s church, have been welcomed to the Lord’s Table. At the Lord’s Table, we receive by faith the presence of the resurrected Lord. His spiritual presence feeds us with bread and wine. At his Table we are reconciled to God, united as races, tribes of peoples speaking different languages, and representatives of many nations. We are Jew and Gentile, male and female, rich and poor, black and white and every color. We are blue and red, Democrat and Republican, Independent, Conservative and Progressive, Protestant and Catholic and Orthodox. We share in the Lord’s Table as a foretaste of the Reign of God.

In Christ, the hope of glory, we are members of the one family of God. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. And like all human families, we have our differences; we engage in conflicts. We often agree to disagree. We at times are arrogant; other times we are humble toward one another and serve one another. At each moment in time we live by the forgiveness of sins. Over time we come to realize that our life together is only in and through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. This side of the perfection of the New Creation we will all remain sinners and in need of spiritual transformation.

Nevertheless, Christians are called to be seekers of justice, peacemakers, reconcilers, mediators, who extend hospitality and love toward those with whom we differ. Down deep we are longing to embrace our calling, “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:2–6).

Therefore, as God’s reconciled people we have promised not to break the covenant in which we are bound through the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. At reunion we attempted to create the PC(USA) as a reunited church in the absence of confessing the sin that had created our original division. In the last several decades, we in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have become increasingly separated into different political, economic, and theological camps. More than ever, we need to be claimed by the gospel of God’s reconciling love. This gospel allows believers to come together, knowing that we have more in common that unites us, than what divides us.

We American Presbyterians have not been able to fully confront our own past in regard to race. The fact is that both streams that came together to form the PC(USA), southern and northern, used theology to justify permanent inequality in church and society. A theology that grew out of giving all glory to God became justification for divinely sanctioned inequality, particularly directed at African Americans. To fully embody God’s ministry of reconciliation, we Presbyterians must confess that we have used God against others in our own church and commit ourselves to new patterns of relationship.

Reconciliation implies repair of that which has been broken. Our verbal and written confessions, while important, are far less than adequate means of repairing the harms done, restoring the losses, and reconciling the relationships that have been historically distorted. Concrete steps are required to produce the healing that we so desperately want and need.

The Confession of Belhar calls us to renew the covenant, to embrace one another as members of one family of God. Jesus Christ calls us to a costly discipleship of dying to ourselves so that we might allow his light to shine through us as a witness into the darkness of our world.

Justice

Jesus began his public ministry in his hometown synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4). He read from the Scripture of the day, Isaiah 61. ‘“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor’” (Lk. 4:18–19). Then he announced that in the reading of this Scripture, on that day, it had been fulfilled. He was God’s Spirit anointed Messiah who had been sent to inaugurate the Year of Jubilee, the year in which wrongs would be righted, wounds be healed, sins forgiven, slaves set free, sight restored, lands returned to their rightful heirs. It was a day of new beginnings. The kingdom of God was at hand in the person and words of Jesus. With his coming in the power of the Holy Spirit, God’s vision of justice and social righteousness were breaking into a troubled and unjust world.

Isaiah 61 was Jesus’ mission statement and it became the mission statement of the church. His mission was God’s project of healing the cosmos, making right ancient wrongs, reversing the injustices of human society, of lifting up the poor and
humble and bringing down the high and mighty, (“to be repairers of the devastations of many generations”). His mission was not only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but also to believing Gentiles who would welcome his good news. Not all received Jesus, but as to many as turned around and believed, he gave the power to become the children of God (John 1).

As Jesus launched his mission, the poor, the sinners, the wounded, the oppressed, the blind, and the tax collectors gladly welcomed him. It was those whose privilege was threatened by transformation who rejected Jesus. They realized that he was turning the world upside down in a new day of justice and righteousness.

As the ambassadors of Christ’s reconciling love, the apostles, the sent ones, often met resistance and persecution. Many gave their lives to advance the reign of God in their announcement of the good news of God’s gracious presence and new life for those who repented and believed.

We are being called to launch this mission again in our place and time. While the Confession of Belhar arose from the struggle of South African Christians to give witness to the Gospel amidst the injustice of apartheid, we are also being called to give witness in the face of injustice here among us in the U.S.A. We see that injustice in the faces of thousands of First Nation peoples who still live in dire poverty on reservations; in young African American men who are incarcerated disproportionate to their percentage of the population; in the “legal limbo” status of immigrants, and in both native born Latinos who are subject to question in virtually every quarter of the nation; in public policies such as “stop and frisk” and “stand your ground” that put poor, black and brown young men at risk in the public square.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) confesses its commitment to God and to the biblical principles of unity, justice, and reconciliation because in times like these in which we live, we need to remind ourselves and others of our discipleship to Christ and follow God’s mission in the world.

Some will no doubt say that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) already has confessions for the reasons identified herein and more. But we say that these are unique times in the United States of America. The winds of polarization blow strong and threaten the body politic as never before. There is a not-so-subtle dangerous intermingling of God and nation that makes discerning the difference between the two difficult. Historic Reformed theological values are under constant attack. The forces of evil tempt followers of Christ to walk in the spirit of disunity, conflict, and injustice. As we claim the church’s earliest confession, JESUS IS LORD, we put on notice, every principality and power, that the only Sovereign in heaven and earth is on the move.

We, therefore, close with the ringing affirmation found in the final words from the Confession of Belhar:

“Jesus is Lord.

“To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honor and the glory for ever and ever.”

Endnote for Attachment 3

1. Confession of Belhar, first article.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 13-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the report and recommendations of the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar to the 221st General Assembly (2014) be approved.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy affirms the recommendations of the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar to include The Confession of Belhar and the accompanying letters in the Book of Confessions because they may help renew our commitment to Jesus Christ and to unity, reconciliation, and justice within the church here and within the worldwide Reformed communion. Reformed confessions serve a range of purposes: teaching, church-uniting, polemic, irenic, prophetic and pastoral, among others. Belhar brings its particular gifts, among which we recognize:

1. Belhar is a prophetic expression of the Reformed Christian faith made by a sister church in a critical context of oppression, reminding us of God’s capacity to call the church to creative witness and resistance, and thus may inspire other Christians in similar situations.

2. Belhar’s theological emphasis on reconciliation in relation to justice and unity is important, clear, and especially biblically resonant.

3. Belhar would enrich our church’s understanding of its Reformed confessional heritage by including a Reformed document that does not hail either from Europe or North America.
4. While our circumstance is not the South African one of the 1980s, there are similarities that make the message of Belhar also critical for us, as the special committee’s letter underlines.

5. Belhar combines biblical understandings of grace and gratitude with vocation and responsibility to reform the larger community as well as the hearts of believers. It thus presents a Reformed social ethic in short compass.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy affirms the wisdom of including an accompanying letter from our current situation, understanding that the inclusion of The Confession of Belhar should not be taken to preclude further confessional development by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), possibly involving full communion partners. It is our understanding the accompanying letter seeks to contain elements contained informally in the Frequently Asked Questions brochure about the potential place of Belhar within the Book of Confessions and important considerations concerning the current situation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The matters of disunity and injustice that we face, within and outside the church, need to be named with clarity, and principles and purposes of Reformed confessing need to be reaffirmed, including the understanding that confessions may focus on particular points and do not need to canvass all of scripture. That is, again, a purpose for having a Book of Confessions.

Overall the letter is strong and contains necessary current concerns and some sections that were particularly affirmed by ACSWP:

We are… being called to give witness in the face of injustice here among us in the U.S.A. We see that that injustice in the faces of thousands of First Nation peoples who still live in dire poverty on reservations; in young African American men who are incarcerated disproportionately to their percentage of the population; in the “legal limbo” status of immigrants, and in both native born Latinos who are subject to question in virtually every quarter of the union; in public policies such as “stop and frisk” and “stand your ground” that put poor, black and brown young men at risk in the public square.

Like-wise, the accompanying letter recognizes division in the church and the political economy: “The winds of polarization blow strong and threaten the body politic as never before… the forces of evil tempt followers of Christ to walk in the spirit of disunity, conflict, and injustice.”

Overall, however, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy—God forgive us!—found the letter to be perhaps a bit longer than it needs to be. Several ways of condensing and editing were proposed, seeking simply to streamline, understanding that the letter represents a creative balance of concerns embodied in the special committee. In one or two places, such as paragraph 21, the committee came up with an alternative way of stating a concern that does not suggest that previous General Assemblies explicitly sought to justify inequality:

We American Presbyterians have not fully confronted our own past regarding race. Both streams that came together to form the PC(USA) contained too many individuals and groups who used theology to justify permanent inequality in church and society. A theology committed to giving glory to God was twisted to sanction inequality, particularly directed at African Americans. To embody fully God’s ministry of reconciliation, we Presbyterians must confess that we have used God against others in our own church and commit ourselves to new patterns of relationship.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy did not, however, feel that it should propose amendments to the letter. The intent of the letter is clear. As a body of persons elected by the General Assembly to address matters of Christian conscience in light of our confessional heritage and social teachings, the committee believes that Belhar will strengthen the social witness dimension of the church’s mission, and that the confession itself is the key order of business before this General Assembly.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 13-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 13-01.

The members of ACREC support the report and recommendations of the General Assembly Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar with enthusiasm and deep gratitude. We concur with the special committee that the Confession of Belhar is indeed a word from God for the PC(USA) in our time. With the committee we urge congregations, councils, and seminaries to study the Confession of Belhar and the two accompanying letters prayerfully as they consider not only whether the Confession of Belhar should be included in the Book of Confessions but also the implications of the confession and the two accompanying letters for their life and ministry.

We concur with each part of the special committee’s recommendation, including the approval of the Accompanying Letter from the 221st General Assembly (2014). We uphold the Confession of Belhar as a whole and acknowledge its profound relevance for the United States in 2014. To name just one example: although our legal structures are not the same as those of South Africa when the Confession of Belhar was written, the racism of the United States today provides advantages to some and disadvantages to others based solely on “race,” a reality that leads to the “separation of people on a racial basis [and] promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred, and enmity.” In our situation, we believe with the authors of the Confession of Belhar, that “the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the
wronged, ... [and] that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.”

We have been inspired, and convicted, by the Confession of Belhar for many years. We now urge the General Assembly to approve the recommendations of the special committee and so provide an opportunity for the denomination as a whole to study the Confession of Belhar, consider its relevance for the PC(USA) in our time, and give thanks for the grace of the triune God “who gathers, protects, and cares for the church through Word and Spirit.”

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**ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-01**

Advice and Counsel on Item 13-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 13-01.

The ACWC strongly supports the adoption of Belhar as a testimony to the church’s solidarity with South Africa’s struggle against apartheid and a reflection of the church’s contemporary awareness of the ongoing struggles for justice in our world. The confession is timely and an essential witness against the evils of race hatred that still plague our world. The church has been called to advocate and stand in solidarity with all who are affected by marginalization and oppression for whatever reason. The Belhar Confession is a confession that perfectly reflects this concern of the church and how we have been called to be the church in the world of diversity.

The ACWC recognizes that the South African church context in which Belhar was written has differences from the context of discussions in the United States; however, the truth of this confession stretches across all contexts of race, culture, gender, and ethnicity. We agree that the citations of Scripture should be included as well as the attached letters. We also concur for the request of dismissal from the special committee with much thanks, noting their incredible work and dedication in this ministry.

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**GACOR COMMENT ON ITEM 13-01**

Comment on Item 13-01—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation.

GACOR advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the report and its recommendations. The Belhar Confession makes a profound statement on unity, reconciliation, and justice in the church. It will be an important tool for committees on representation to use in encouraging wide participation and discussion in councils.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation is made up of 16 persons, elected by the General Assembly, who are drawn from ruling and teaching elders from across the church. Its mandate and functions are described in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order (Form of Government).

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**Item 13-02**

[The assembly approved Item 13-02. See pp. 16, 24, 25.]

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) forward the draft of the proposed Directory for Worship to the church for study and comment in consideration of submitting it to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) for approval. All comments should be directed to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly by July 1, 2015.

**Rationale**


In the context of revisions to the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the 216th General Assembly (2004) called the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Theology and Worship to undertake a similar analysis of the Directory for Worship to evaluate its effectiveness with guidance in planning and conducting worship that is Reformed and culturally appropriate. A staff team from the Office of Constitutional Services and the Office of Theology and Worship, with assistance from the Office of Research Services, conducted a 2005 study to evaluate the effectiveness and use of the Directory for Worship. On the basis of these findings, the staff team recommended that the Directory for Worship would be more accessible and helpful if it were rewritten in a form that was somewhat shorter and better organized. This recommenda-
tion was approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006); however, the response was delayed due to ongoing consideration of a new Form of Government.

Now that this process is complete, the Office of Theology and Worship has produced a revised draft of the Directory for Worship, fulfilling the recommendations given above: shorter, better organized, more accessible, and thoroughly Reformed. In the spirit of the new Form of Government, the revised Directory for Worship seeks to foster freedom and flexibility, with openness to a broader range of worship styles and cultural expressions. In the spirit of Calvin’s “third use of the law,” the revised Directory for Worship is intended to be more than a rule book or scolding finger; this revision emphasizes guidance for those who plan and lead worship, and teaching for the whole people of God.

The Office of Theology and Worship and the Office of the General Assembly organized a consultation on the revised Directory for Worship in September 2013. A diverse group of scholars, pastors, and mid council leaders provided feedback on the proposed revision, which is being incorporated into a second draft. A final report, including the proposed revision of the Directory for Worship, will be presented to the 221st General Assembly (2014). PLEASE NOTE that the revised Directory for Worship leaves the section on marriage in the current Directory for Worship (W-4.9000) untouched as that issue will come before the assembly as a separate item. As with the section on ordination in the new Form of Government, the Office of Theology and Worship asks that the church consider this revision of the Directory for Worship apart from debates over the definition of marriage.

This draft will be sent to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly for their information.

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Directory for Worship**

**DRAFT OF REVISION**

**Preface**

This Directory for Worship reflects the conviction that the faith, life, and worship of the church are inseparable. Its theology is based on the Bible, instructed by the *Book of Confessions* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and attentive to ecumenical relationships. It reflects and encourages a rich heritage of traditions and diversity of cultures.

A Directory for Worship is not a service book with fixed orders of worship and collections of prayers. Rather, it describes the theology that underlies our worship, outlines appropriate forms for worship, and highlights connections between worship and Christian life, witness, and service.

This directory presents standards and norms for worship in the congregations and councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As the constitutional document ordering our worship, the Directory for Worship is authoritative for this church. At the same time, this directory is intended to suggest possibilities, invite development, and encourage ongoing reform.

Direct references to Scripture, the *Book of Confessions*, and other sections of the *Book of Order* are provided in parentheses; other biblical and confessional sources will be indicated in footnotes.

**Chapter One: The Theology of Christian Worship**

**W-1.01: Christian Worship: An Introduction**

**W-1.0101: Glory to God**

Christian worship gives all glory and honor, praise and thanksgiving to the holy, triune God. We are gathered in worship to glorify the God who is present and active among us—particularly through the gifts of Word and Sacrament. We are sent out in service to glorify the same God who is present and active in the world.

**W-1.0102: Grace and Gratitude**

God acts with grace; we respond with gratitude. This rhythm of divine action and human response—found throughout Scripture, human history, and everyday events—shapes all of Christian faith, life, and worship.

**W-1.0103: God’s Covenant**

The Old Testament tells the story of God’s steadfast love from generation to generation. To Noah and his family, to Abraham and Sarah, to Moses and Aaron, and to the house of David, God made promises of faithfulness, calling the people to respond in faith. In the fullness of time, God made a new and everlasting covenant with us through Jesus Christ.

**W-1.0104: Jesus Christ**

Fully human and fully divine, Jesus Christ came into the world to show God’s love, to save us from sin, and to offer eternal, abundant life to all. Jesus is God’s Word—spoken at creation, promised and revealed in Scripture, made flesh to dwell among us, crucified and raised in power, returning in glory to judge and reign.
Jesus Christ is the embodiment of God’s gracious action in history and the model for our grateful response to God. In Jesus we find the full and clear revelation of who God is; in him we also discover who God is calling us to be. Therefore we worship Jesus Christ as Lord, even as he leads us in the worship and service God desires.

W-1.0105: The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit manifests God’s gracious action and empowers our grateful response. The Scriptures describe how the Spirit moved at the dawn of creation, anointed Christ in baptism, and was poured out on the church at Pentecost. The same Spirit is still at work in the life of the church and the life of the nations.

The Holy Spirit gathers us for worship, enlightens and equips us through the Word, claims and nourishes us through the Sacraments, and sends us out for service. To each member of Christ’s body, the Spirit gives gifts for ministry in the church and mission in the world.

W-1.0106: Word and Sacrament

In Christian worship Jesus Christ is truly present and active among us, by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the gifts of Word and Sacrament. Wherever the Scriptures are read and proclaimed and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are celebrated, the church bears witness to Jesus Christ, the living Word. Through these means of grace, God imparts and sustains our faith, orders our common life, and transforms the world. Through these same acts of worship, we share in the life of the Spirit, proclaim the mystery of faith, and give glory to God.

W-1.02: Time, Space, Matter

W-1.0201: Creation and Redemption

All time, space, and matter are created by God, redeemed by Christ, and made holy by the Spirit. Through Christian worship—at certain times, in particular places, and with special things—we participate in God’s plan for the redemption of all time, space, and matter for the glory of God.

W-1.0202: Time

Because God is the author of history, we may worship at any time. The Old Testament records the daily worship of the people of God, but teaches that one day in seven is to be set apart as holy to the Lord. The Gospels all testify that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. The apostles came to speak of this as the Lord’s Day, alluding to the day of the Lord anticipated by the prophets.

The first Christians began to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection every Lord’s Day, gathering to proclaim the Word and celebrate the Sacraments. The church continues to gather, especially on the first day of the week, to hear the gospel and break bread in Jesus’ name, with the confidence that the risen Lord is with us.

Through two thousand years of Christian history, the church has developed ways of keeping time in Christ—many of them adapted from the feasts and fasts of ancient Israel that Jesus kept. Through the festival days of the Christian year, we mark the Lord’s Nativity, Epiphany, Baptism, Transfiguration, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and Reign. Other festival days, such as Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, surround the holy mystery of Jesus’ dying and rising. Still others, such as Ash Wednesday, the Day of Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, and All Saints Day, focus on the church’s life and faith. The seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter offer further opportunities for growth in faith and discipleship as we prepare for or celebrate the major festivals of the Christian year.

The pattern of daily prayer also connects the church with the worship of ancient Israel, centuries of Christian tradition, and Jesus’ own practices. Whether in large assemblies, with small groups, or at home, daily prayer serves as a bridge between public worship and personal affairs, helping us to live out our faith each day.

We mark other occasions in worship, reflecting the cycles of civic and agricultural life, cultural and family celebrations, the commemoration of significant persons and events, and the programs and activities of the church. It is appropriate to observe such things, provided that they never distract from the worship of the triune God.

W-1.0203: Space

Because heaven and earth belong to God, we may worship in any place. The Old Testament describes stone altars, tabernacles, temples, and other places where the people gathered and encountered God. The Gospels tell us that Jesus worshiped at the synagogue and temple, but he also worshiped in the wilderness, on hillsides, and at lakeshores.

The first Christians worshiped at the temple and in synagogues, homes, catacombs, and prisons. The important thing was not the place, but the gathering of Christ’s body—the people of God—and the presence of Christ among them in Word and Sac-
When a space is set apart for worship it should evoke reverence, encourage community, and be accessible to all. A space for Christian worship should include a place for the reading and proclamation of the Word, a font or pool for Baptism, and a table for the Lord’s Supper. The arrangement of these things should express their relationship to one another and their centrality in Christian worship. A space for worship should not be understood as an escape from the world, but a threshold between heaven and earth.

W-1.0204: Matter

Because God created the world and called it good, we use physical things in worship. The Old Testament tells of various things that were used in the worship of God: the ark, linens and vessels, oil and incense, musical instruments, grain, fruit, and animals. At the same time, the prophets warned of the danger of idolatry: mistaking physical things for divine presence and offering objects, instead of ourselves, to God. The Gospels show how Jesus used common things—nets and fish, jars and ointment, a towel and basin, water, bread, and wine—in his ministry of teaching, healing, and feeding. On the cross, he offered his body as a living sacrifice.

The first Christians, following Jesus, took three primary elements of life—water, bread, and wine—as symbols of God’s self-offering to us and our offering of ourselves to God. We have come to call these things Sacraments: signs of God’s gracious action and our grateful response. Through the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, God claims us as people of the covenant and nourishes us as members of Christ’s body; in turn, we pledge our loyalty to Christ and present our bodies as a living sacrifice of praise.

The offering of material gifts in worship is an expression of our self-offering, as an act of gratitude for God’s grace. We give our lives to God through Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us. The practice of offering also reflects our stewardship of God’s good creation. Mindful that the earth and everything in it belong to God, we present tithes and offerings for use in Christ’s ministry and mission.

We offer creative gifts in worship as well, including music, art, drama, movement, media, banners, vestments, vessels, furnishings, and architecture. When such gifts only call attention to themselves, they are idolatrous; when, in their simplicity of form and function, they give glory to God, they are appropriate for worship.

W-1.03: Language, Symbols, and Culture

W-1.0301: The Word Made Flesh

God brings all things into being by the Word. By the gift of the incarnation, this same, eternal Word of God became flesh and lived among us, in a particular person in a particular time and place—Jesus of Nazareth. Our use of language, symbols, and cultural forms in Christian worship is founded on the doctrine of Jesus’ incarnation. Through Jesus Christ, God speaks to us in truth and reaches out to us with grace; through Jesus Christ, we may speak truthfully to God and lift up our hearts with gratitude.

W-1.0302: Language

The mystery and reality of God transcends our experience, understanding, and speech. Our minds cannot comprehend God, and God cannot be reduced to our ways of speaking. Yet we are compelled to speak of the goodness, grace, and glory of the God who is revealed in the world around us, in Scripture, and above all, in Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament speaks of God in personal ways, as creator, covenant-maker, comforter, liberator, judge, redeemer, shepherd, sovereign, bearer, begetter. It addresses God as “Lord,” a word that conveys the sovereignty of God while standing in for the hidden name revealed to Moses at the burning bush. It also borrows images from nature, describing God as rock, well-spring, fire, light, eagle, hen, lion. The Gospels show how Jesus used and adapted these images when speaking to and about God, particularly in his intimate use of Abba, Father. He also claimed some of these terms in speaking about himself—as good shepherd, bridegroom, and Son of Man. New Testament writers continued to use and adapt Old Testament language in speaking about Jesus—especially in their use of “Lord” to convey his sovereignty over the powers of this world, and to connect him to the Holy One of Israel.

Language that faithfully describes and addresses God in worship is expansive, drawing from the full breadth and depth of biblical terms and images for the triune God as it remains faithful to the witness of Scripture. Language that describes and addresses the people of God is inclusive, respecting the diversity of persons, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences of the gathered community. Furthermore, the words we use in worship should be in the common language or languages of those who are gathered, so that all are able to receive good news and respond with authentic expressions of their faith.

W-1.0303: Symbols

Certain biblical images have come to have deeper significance, multiple associations, and lasting meaning for the people of God. We call these symbols. There are numerous examples in the Old Testament—tree, temple, rainbow, river, sheep,
scroll, building, body. New Testament writers drew on this deep reservoir of common meaning to convey their understanding of Christ, the gospel, the church, and the realm of God. Certain prominent symbols from Scripture, such as light, book, water, bread, cup, and cross, play an important role in Christian worship. Such things are not to be objects to be worshiped, but signs that point to the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

We come to know God’s Word more fully when it is both proclaimed and enacted in worship. The Old Testament describes symbolic actions in the worship of ancient Israel—fasting and feasting, rejoicing and lamenting, dancing and singing, marking and anointing, cleansing and offering, doing justice and showing mercy. The Gospels demonstrate how Jesus brought new meaning to existing practices of faith—especially baptism and breaking bread—and transformed ordinary acts of compassion—healing the sick, giving alms to the poor, feeding the hungry, and washing feet—into new ways of serving God. Christian worship includes a variety of symbolic actions, with strong ties to these and other biblical practices—gathering and sending, kneeling and standing, speaking and singing, cleansing and offering, marking and anointing, eating and drinking, blessing and laying on of hands. These things convey the gracious action of God, and communicate our grateful response.

W-1.0304: Culture

From its beginning at Pentecost, the church of Jesus Christ has been a community of many cultures and languages, united by the power of the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts and the New Testament epistles record the challenges and controversies of an emerging church that would be “neither Jew nor Greek,” but one in Jesus Christ. As the church has grown and spread over two thousand years, it has taken root and flourished in cultures and lands all around the globe—bearing witness to the love of God for all the world and Christ’s sovereignty in every place. Finally, from the book of Revelation, we know that the company of the redeemed will be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, and people, singing praise to the Lamb of God.

Christian worship is, by its very nature, a cross-cultural event. It emerges from the context of a particular congregation and community. Faithful worship is sensitive to the diversity of traditions and cultures within and beyond the church, incorporating the words, images, symbols, and actions that best convey the good news of Jesus Christ in a particular gathering of God’s people. Furthermore, whenever and wherever we gather in Jesus’ name, we join the praise and prayer of the people of God in every time and place. Therefore, it is fitting that we share stories and sing songs from cultures other than our own as we pray for the church throughout the world.

Chapter Two: The Ordering of Reformed Worship

W-2.01: Sources and Principles

W-2.0101: Sources of Order

Reformed worship is to be faithful to the Holy Spirit who speaks in Scripture. The witness of Scripture provides the church’s preeminent, authoritative source for the ordering of worship. Those responsible for planning and leading worship should also be guided by the wider traditions of the universal church, the wisdom of our Reformed tradition, the culture and context of the worshiping community, and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

W-2.0102: Form and Freedom

Christian worship has always been marked by a tension between form and freedom. Some traditions have emphasized established orders of worship, seeking to be faithful to the Scriptures. Others have resisted fixed forms of worship, asserting our freedom in Christ. We acknowledge that all forms of worship are provisional and subject to reformation. Fixed forms of worship are valuable in that they offer consistent patterns and practices help to form lives of faith and faithfulness. More spontaneous approaches to worship are valuable in that they provide space for unexpected insight and inspiration. In whatever form it takes, worship is to be ordered by God’s Word and open to the creativity of the Holy Spirit. (F-1.04)

W-2.02: The Worshiping Assembly

W-2.0201: A Royal Priesthood

In Jesus Christ, the church is called to be a royal priesthood, devoted to the service of God in the world. Worship is a collective activity of the people of God and an expression of our common life and ministry. It demands the full and active participation of the whole body of Christ, with heart, mind, soul, and strength. (G-1.03)

The ordering of worship should reflect the richness of cultural diversity in the congregation and the local context in which it ministers. The order of worship should provide for and encourage the participation of all; no one should be excluded for any reason.

Children and youth bring special gifts and grow in their faith through their regular participation in the church’s worship. Those who plan and lead worship should provide for their full participation in the Service for the Lord’s Day.

W-2.0202: Prayerful Participation

Prayer is a gift from God, who desires dialogue and relationship with us. It is a posture of faith and a way of living in the world. Prayer is also the primary way in which we participate in worship. Christian prayer is offered through Jesus Christ and
empowered by the Holy Spirit. Faithful prayer is shaped by God’s Word in Scripture and inspires us to join God’s work in the world.

There are many kinds of prayer—adoration, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, intercession, dedication. There are many ways to pray—listening and waiting for God, remembering God’s gracious acts, crying out to God for help, or offering oneself to God. Prayer may be spoken, silent, sung, or enacted in physical ways.

The singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs is a vital and ancient form of prayer. Singing engages the whole person, and helps to unite the body of Christ in common worship. The congregation itself is the church’s primary choir; the purpose of rehearsed choirs and other musicians is to lead and support the congregation in the singing of prayer. Special songs, anthems, and instrumental music may also serve to interpret the word and enhance the congregation’s prayer. Furthermore, many of the elements of the service of worship may be sung. Music in worship is always to be an offering to God, not merely an artistic display, source of entertainment, or cover for silence.

Participation in worship may involve a range of other actions: kneeling, bowing, standing, lifting hands; dancing, drumming, clapping, embracing, or joining hands; anointing and laying on of hands.

The gifts of the Spirit are for building up the church. Every action in worship should glorify God and contribute to the good of the people. Worshipers and worship leaders should avoid actions that only call attention to themselves and fail to serve the needs of the whole congregation.

W-2.03: Ordered Ministries and Leadership in Worship

W-2.0301: Gifts for Service

By their gifts and training, some members of the church are called to particular acts of leadership in worship and have particular responsibilities for ordering the service. These specific roles and responsibilities are undertaken in service to God and to the congregation, and should in no way diminish or overshadow the primary participation of the worshiping assembly. (G-1.03, G-2.01)

W-2.0302: Deacons

Deacons are called to lead the congregation in witness, compassion, and service. While deacons have no particular responsibilities for the ordering of worship, the session and teaching elder(s) should ensure that deacons have regular opportunities to lead in worship, and that their ministries of service, compassion, and witness are reflected in the public services of the church.

In the Service for the Lord’s Day, it is especially appropriate for deacons to read Scripture, lead the prayers of the people, prepare the table for the Lord’s Supper, and offer the charge at the conclusion of worship. (G-2.02)

W-2.0303: Ruling Elders

Ruling elders are called to nurture the common life of the people of God through their gifts of discernment and governance. In a particular congregation, they provide for the church’s worship and encourage the people’s participation. Specifically, when serving on the session, ruling elders: make provision for the regular preaching of the Word and celebration of the Sacraments, corporate prayer, and the offering of praise to God in song; oversee and approve all public worship in the congregation, with the exception of responsibilities reserved for the pastor; determine occasions, days, times, and places for worship; and have responsibility for the arrangement of worship space, the use of special appointments (flowers, candles, banners, paraments, and other objects), and the ministries of music, drama, dance, and visual arts.

In the Service for the Lord’s Day, it is especially appropriate for ruling elders to lead the call to worship, read Scripture, lead in prayer, receive the offering, serve communion and assist at baptisms, and offer the charge at the conclusion of worship. Ruling elders should also cultivate an ability to teach the Word, when called upon to do so. (G-2.03, G-3.02)

W-2.0304: Teaching Elders

Teaching elders (also called ministers of Word and Sacrament) are called to proclaim the Word, preside at the Sacraments, and equip the people for ministry in Jesus’ name. Specifically, teaching elders are responsible for: the selection of Scriptures to be read, the preparation of the liturgy and sermon, the selection of congregational songs, and the use of drama, dance, and other art forms in a particular service of worship.

In the Service for the Lord’s Day, a teaching elder is responsible for proclaiming the Word and presiding at Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. It is especially appropriate for teaching elders to speak the declaration of forgiveness and offer the blessing at the conclusion of worship; like the Word and Sacraments, these are focused expressions of the good news of the gospel. (G-2.05)
In a particular congregation, the order of worship, including printed worship aids or media presentations for a given service, is the responsibility of the teaching elder with the concurrence of the session. The selection of hymnals, service books, Bibles, and other more permanent worship resources is the responsibility of the session with the concurrence of the pastor, and in consultation with church musicians and educators. (G-2.05, G-3.02)

The teaching elder may confer with a worship committee in planning particular services. Where there is a music leader or choir director, the teaching elder will confer with that person on anthems and other musical offerings; the session will see that these conferences take place appropriately and on a regular basis. (G-2.05)

The session is responsible for educating the congregation about the church’s worship, in order to facilitate their full and active participation. The session should also provide for the regular study of this Directory for Worship, particularly in the training of ruling elders and deacons. (G-3.02)

In fulfilling their responsibilities for worship, sessions and teaching elders are accountable to presbytery. Presbyteries should discuss with sessions the character of their congregation’s worship, the standards governing it, and the fruit that it bears in the mission and ministry of the church. Presbyteries should provide instruction in worship, making use of this Directory for Worship in educational events for congregations, the preparation of candidates for ordination, and in the ongoing nurture of teaching elders. (G-3.03)

Chapter Three: The Service for the Lord’s Day

W-3.01: Worship on the Lord’s Day

W-3.0101: The Day of Resurrection

We gather to worship God on the Lord’s Day (Sunday) because the gospels testify that Jesus rose from the dead early on the first day of the week. The Lord’s Day is also called the “eighth day” of creation, a sign of the new creation that has begun with Christ’s resurrection. While we may worship God on any day and at any time, every Sunday service is a celebration of Christ’s resurrection and an anticipation of the fullness of God’s coming reign.

W-3.0102: Word and Sacrament

The Service for the Lord’s Day is a service of Word and Sacrament. We meet in the presence of the living Lord, who appeared to his disciples on the first day of the week—the day he rose from the dead—to interpret the Scriptures and break bread. Following Jesus’ example, the church proclaims the fullness of the gospel in Word and Sacrament on the Lord’s Day.

The Service for the Lord’s Day includes other actions as well: gathering and singing, confession and pardon, prayer and offering, blessing and sending. Through all of these actions, we are drawn into Christ’s presence and sent out in the power of the Spirit.

W-3.0103: The Order of Worship

An order of worship offers a meaningful and reliable structure for the church’s encounter with the living God. Over time, an order of worship helps to shape our faith and faithfulness as the people of God, becoming a pattern for how we live as Christians in the world.

The order of worship offered here for the Service for the Lord’s Day is rooted in Scripture, the traditions of the universal church, and our Reformed heritage. In particular, it seeks to uphold the centrality of Word and Sacraments in the church’s faith, life, and worship. Other orders of worship may well be appropriate in the context of a particular congregation or culture, provided that they are faithful to the Word, open to the Spirit, and dedicated to the glory of God.

W-3.02: Gathering

W-3.0201: Preparing for Worship

Worship begins as the people gather—greeting one another, praying in silence, sharing announcements, or offering music to the glory of God. The act of assembling in Jesus’ name bears witness to the church’s identity and mission as Christ’s body in the world.

W-3.0202: Opening Sentences

A call to worship, typically drawn from sentences of Scripture, expresses God’s invitation to gather as Christ’s body in this place. This action may include a greeting in the name of Jesus Christ or the triune God. Because the session is responsi-
ble for the nurture of the community, as well as the oversight of times and places for worship, it is especially appropriate for a ruling elder to lead the call to worship.

**W-3.0203: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs**

For millennia the people of God have sung psalms as praise and prayer to God. Early Christians continued to sing, pray, and study the psalms, interpreting them in the light of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Singing psalms remains an important part of the Reformed heritage. To the psalms the church began to add other hymns, canticles, and spiritual songs. Through the ages and from varied cultures, the church has developed many other forms of congregational song, accompanied by a great array of instruments. We draw from this rich repertoire in the Service for the Lord’s Day, singing glory to God.

**W-3.0204: Opening Prayer**

An opening prayer may be offered, giving thanks and praise to God, expressing joy in the presence of Christ, and calling on the gifts of the Spirit for the gathered community. Alternately, a prayer of the day may introduce primary themes and biblical images for the service that follows.

**W-3.0205: Confession and Pardon**

Having praised the holiness of God, we must also face the sinful state of our lives, confessing our unworthiness to enter into God’s presence. This turn from praise to confession, emphasized in the Service for the Lord’s Day, is one of the hallmarks of the Reformed tradition.

A call to confession expresses God’s initiative in calling for repentance and promising grace. We approach God with confidence, confessing the reality of sin, captivity, and brokenness in personal and common life and asking for God’s saving grace. The prayer of confession may include the singing of a prayer for grace, such as “Lord, have mercy.” A declaration of forgiveness proclaims the good news of God’s mercy and offers the assurance of pardon in Jesus’ name. Leading this element of worship from the font connects our confession with the grace and cleansing of Baptism, and the baptismal call to new life in Christ. Because of these associations with the ministry of Word and Sacrament, it is especially appropriate for a teaching elder to lead the confession and pardon.

Other actions may follow—a song of praise, such as “Glory be to the Father” or “Glory to God”; a summary of the law or call to faithfulness; and the sharing of peace as a sign of reconciliation in Christ.

**W-3.03: Word**

**W-3.0301: Theology of Proclamation**

The Scriptures bear witness to the Word of God, revealed most fully in Jesus Christ, the Word who “became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14). Where the Word is read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ the living Word is present by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the reading, hearing, preaching, and affirming of the Word are central to Christian worship and essential to the Service for the Lord’s Day.

A teaching elder is responsible for the selection of Scriptures to be read in public worship. Selected readings should be drawn from both Old and New Testaments, and over a period of time should reflect the full message of Scripture. Selections for readings should be guided by the seasons and festivals of the Christian year, events in the world, and pastoral concerns in the local congregation. Schedules of readings, such as the Revised Common Lectionary, ensure a broad range of biblical texts as well as consistency and connection with the universal church. The teaching elder is also responsible for the version of the Bible to be used in public worship. The Scriptures should be read in the common language(s) of the worshiping community. The congregation should be informed of significant adaptations, paraphrases, or new translations.

The Word proclaimed is to be based on the Word written in Scripture. Preaching requires diligence and discernment in the study of Scripture, listening for the voice of God through the discipline of daily prayer, theological reflection on the message of the gospel, sensitivity to the context of the congregation, attentiveness to what the Spirit is saying to the church, awareness of events in the world, and consistent and personal obedience to Jesus Christ. The sermon should present the gospel with clarity and simplicity, in language that all can understand. The gifts of song, drama, dance, and visual art may be employed in the proclamation of the Word. These other forms of proclamation should be overseen by the session and teaching elder, to ensure that the gospel is presented faithfully. (G-2.03, G-3.02)

We respond to the proclamation of the Word in a variety of ways: confessing the faith of the church, celebrating or reaffirming the Sacrament of Baptism, praying for the church and world, and offering our lives in gratitude for God’s grace. The proclamation of the Word is incomplete if it fails to evoke the response of the people of God. When the Word is proclaimed, we are called, above all, to discern Jesus Christ, receive his grace, and respond to his call with obedience. All of these things depend on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, whom we seek in prayer.
W-3.0302: Prayer for Illumination

A prayer for illumination calls on the Holy Spirit to empower the reading, understanding, proclaiming, and living of God’s Word. This sense of utter reliance on the illumination of the Spirit is an important and distinctive mark of the Reformed tradition. The prayer for illumination precedes the reading of Scripture and preaching of the sermon and applies to all of the readings, as well as the proclamation of the Word.

W-3.0303: Scripture

The public reading of Scripture should be clear, audible, and attentive to the meaning of the text. The session should ensure that readers are prepared for this important ministry. Reading from the church’s Bible, as opposed to loose sheets of paper, conveys a sense of the permanence and weight of the Word of God, and demonstrates the communal nature of the biblical story.

Anyone may be invited to read Scripture, including children and youth. Because deacons are charged with the ministry of witness to the gospel, and ruling elders are responsible for providing for the proclamation of the Word, it is especially appropriate for a deacon or ruling elder to read Scripture.

The role of the congregation is to listen prayerfully, actively, and attentively to the Word that is read and proclaimed. Listening requires expectation, concentration, and imagination. The congregation may also participate in the presentation of Scripture through unison, responsive, or antiphonal readings, or by following along with printed or projected materials. Spoken responses may conclude the reading of Scripture.

W-3.0304: Musical Responses

Psalms, canticles, anthems, alleluias, songs of praise, or other musical responses may accompany the reading of the Word. In the design of the Revised Common Lectionary, the psalm for the day is intended to be a sung response to the first Scripture reading (Old Testament or, in Easter, Acts), giving the congregation an opportunity to reflect on and pray from that text.

W-3.0305: Sermon

A sermon, based on the Scripture(s) read in worship, proclaims the good news of the risen Lord and presents the gift and calling of the gospel. Through the sermon, we are instructed by God’s Word, equipped to follow Christ more faithfully, and inspired to proclaim the gospel in our own words and deeds. The sermon may conclude with prayer, an ascription of praise, or a call to discipleship. In keeping with the ministry of Word and Sacrament, a teaching elder ordinarily preaches the sermon.

W-3.0306: Affirmation of Faith

Responding to the Word proclaimed, we affirm our faith in the holy, triune God. This affirmation of faith is drawn from sentences of Scripture or the creeds, confessions, and catechisms of the church. A congregational song, anthem, or other musical response may serve as an affirmation of faith. Opportunities for personal testimony may also be provided at this time. When Baptism or the reaffirmation of Baptism is to take place, the Apostles’ Creed is spoken in the context of the baptismal liturgy. The Nicene Creed, our most ancient and universal confession of faith, is especially appropriate when the Lord’s Supper is celebrated.

W-3.0307: Baptism and Baptismal Discipleship

The Sacrament of Baptism (W-3.0402–.0408) and other services associated with the baptismal covenant take place as a response to the Word. Such services include the reaffirmation of baptism on profession of faith (W-4.0203), the reception of new members (W-4.0204), commissioning for service (W-4.03), ordination and installation to ordered ministry (W-4.04), transitions in life or ministry (W-4.05), commemorations of communal events, Christian marriage (W-4.06), and witness to the resurrection (W-4.07). An invitation to discipleship may also be spoken at this time, calling worshipers to be baptized or to live into the promises of their baptism.

W-3.0308: Prayers of the People

In response to the Word, we pray for the world God so loves—joining Christ’s own ministry of intercession and the sighs of the Spirit, too deep for words. These prayers are not the work of a single leader, but an act of the whole congregation, as Christ’s royal priesthood. They are to be voiced in such a way that the whole church may say “amen.”

Prayers of intercession and supplication are offered for: the mission and ministry of the universal church and the local congregation; care of creation and the right use of resources; peace and justice in the world; the leaders and peoples of all nations; the poor, hungry, and oppressed; compassion and reconciliation in the local community; healing and wholeness for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; and other special needs. These prayers may be led from the communion table or from the midst of the congregation. They may include musical responses or symbolic action.
Because deacons are responsible for ministries of compassion and ruling elders are charged with the nurture of the congregation, it is especially appropriate for a deacon or ruling elder to lead the prayers of the people.

W-3.04: Sacrament

W-3.0401: Theology of the Sacraments

The Sacraments are the Word of God enacted and sealed in the life of the church, the body of Christ. Sacraments are gracious acts of God, by which Christ Jesus offers his life to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. Sacraments are also human acts of gratitude, by which we offer our lives to God in love and service. Sacraments are both physical signs and spiritual gifts, including words and actions, surrounded by prayer, in the context of the church’s common worship. They employ ordinary things—the basic elements of water, bread, and wine—in proclaiming the extraordinary love of God. The Reformed tradition recognizes the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (or Eucharist) as having been instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ through the witness of the Scriptures and sustained through the history of the universal church.

W-3.0402: Theology of Baptism

Baptism is the sign and seal of our incorporation into Jesus Christ. In his own baptism, Jesus identified himself with sinners—yet God claimed him as a beloved Son, and sent the Holy Spirit to anoint him for service. In his ministry, Jesus offered the gift of living water. Through the baptism of his suffering and death, Jesus set us free from the power of sin forever. After he rose from the dead, Jesus commissioned his followers to go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to obey his commands. The disciples were empowered by the outpouring of the Spirit to continue Jesus’ mission and ministry, inviting others to join this new way of life in Christ. As Paul wrote, through the gift of Baptism we are “dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 6:11).

The Sacrament of Baptism holds a deep reservoir of theological meaning, including: dying and rising with Jesus Christ; pardon, cleansing, and renewal; the gift of the Holy Spirit; incorporation into the body of Christ; and a sign of the realm of God. The Reformed tradition understands Baptism to be a sign of God’s covenant. The water of Baptism flows from the waters of creation, the flood, and the exodus. Baptism thus connects us with God’s creative purpose, cleansing power, and redemptive promise from generation to generation. Like circumcision, a sign of God’s gracious covenant with Israel, Baptism is a sign of God’s gracious covenant with the church. In this new covenant of grace we are washed clean, made holy and whole. Baptism also represents God’s call to justice and righteousness, rolling down like a mighty stream, and the river of the water of life, flowing from God’s throne.

Baptism enacts and seals what the Word proclaims: God’s redeeming grace offered to all people. Baptism is God’s gift of grace and also God’s call to respond to that grace. Baptism calls us to repentance, faithfulness, and discipleship. Baptism gives the church its identity and commissions the church for service in the world.

Baptism is the bond of unity in Jesus Christ. When we are baptized, we are made one with Christ, with one another, and with the church of every time and place. In Christ, barriers of race, status, and gender are overcome; we are called to seek reconciliation in the church and world, in Jesus’ name.

Both believers and their children are included in God’s covenant love. The baptism of believers witnesses to the truth that God’s gift of grace calls for our grateful response. The baptism of our children witnesses to the truth that God claims people in love even before they are able to respond in faith. These two forms of witness are one and the same Sacrament.

God’s faithfulness to us is sure, even when human faithfulness to God is not. God’s grace is sufficient; therefore baptism is not repeated. There are many times in worship, however, when we may remember the gift of our baptism and acknowledge the grace of God continually at work in us. These may include: profession of faith; when participating in another’s baptism; when joining or leaving a church; at an ordination, installation, or commissioning; and at each celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Indeed, Baptism calls for development in faith and decision at every stage of life’s way as we seek to respond with gratitude to God’s gift of grace.

Baptism is to be celebrated on the Lord’s Day, along with the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in the company of the whole congregation. The presence of the covenant community bears witness to the one body of Christ, into whom we are baptized. When extraordinary circumstances call for the administration of Baptism apart from public worship, the congregation should be represented by one or more members of the session.

As there is one body, there is one Baptism. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes all baptisms by other Christian churches that are administered with water and performed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

W-3.0403: Responsibility for Baptism

Baptism is to be overseen by the session and administered by a teaching elder or ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service. The session’s responsibilities for Baptism include: encouraging parents to present their children for Baptism without
undue haste or undue delay; encouraging new believers to be baptized; examining candidates for Baptism, or their parents or guardians, and instructing them in the significance of the Sacrament; enrolling those who are baptized as members of the congregation; and providing for their ongoing nurture and formation. The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the universal church, is responsible for nurturing baptized persons in Christian life. The session may designate certain members of the congregation as sponsors or mentors for those who are baptized or for their parents or guardians. (G-2.05, G-2.10, G-3.02)

When a child is presented for Baptism at least one parent or guardian will be an active member of a particular congregation, normally the one in which the baptism takes place. The session may consider a request to baptize a child whose parent or guardian is an active member of another congregation. If the session approves such a request, it must consult with the council of the other congregation and notify them when the Sacrament has been administered. Those presenting children for Baptism will promise to nurture and guide them until they are ready to make a personal profession of faith and assume the responsibility of active church membership. (G-1.04)

A council may authorize a teaching elder to preside at Baptism in certain situations beyond the congregational setting, such as hospitals, prisons, schools, military bases, and new worshiping communities. In these cases, the teaching elder is responsible for ensuring that the newly baptized person is enrolled as a member of a congregation. (G-3.02, G-3.03)

W-3.0404: Presentation

Following the sermon, the teaching elder introduces the Sacrament of Baptism with sentences of Scripture; other sentences of Scripture may be spoken by ruling elders, members of the congregation, or ecumenical witnesses. On behalf of the session, a ruling elder presents each candidate for Baptism. Those desiring baptism for their children or themselves express their intent to receive the sacrament. Parents or guardians, sponsors (if applicable), and the congregation make vows to support and nurture those being baptized. No one comes to Baptism alone; we are encouraged by family or friends and surrounded by the community of faith.

W-3.0405: Profession of Faith

Candidates for baptism or their parents or guardians renounce evil and profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Those who are being baptized upon profession of faith declare their intent to participate actively and responsibly in the worship and mission of the church. They join the congregation in professing their faith, using the Apostles’ Creed, the ancient baptismal affirmation of the early church.

W-3.0406: Thanksgiving Over the Water

At the place of baptism, a teaching elder leads the people in prayer: giving thanks for God’s covenant faithfulness through history; praising God’s gracious and reconciling action in Jesus Christ; and asking the Holy Spirit to attend and empower the baptism, give deliverance and rebirth, and equip the church for faithfulness.

W-3.0407: The Act of Baptism

Accompanied by a visible and generous use of water, the teaching elder addresses each person by their Christian or given name, and says: “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). The water used for Baptism should be from a local source, and may be applied by pouring or immersion.

Other actions signifying the gift of the Holy Spirit, such as the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, may be included. However, the central act of baptizing with water in the name of the triune God must not be overshadowed.

W-3.0408: Welcome

The newly baptized person is welcomed as a member of the church, the body of Christ. Appropriate gifts may be given, such as a candle (reflecting the light of Christ) or a baptismal garment (signifying being clothed with Christ). The peace of Christ may be exchanged. The Lord’s Supper appropriately follows; those who have just been baptized may be invited to receive communion first.

W-3.0409: Theology of the Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper (or Eucharist) is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord. Jesus shared meals with his followers throughout his earthly life and ministry—common suppers, miraculous feasts, and the covenant commemorations of Israel, in which the people ate and drank in the presence of the Lord, rejoicing. Jesus spoke of himself as the bread of life, and the true vine, in whom we are branches. On the night before his death, Jesus met with his disciples to share bread and wine, speaking of them as his body and blood, signs of the new covenant. He told them to keep this feast, remembering him. On the day of his resurrection, Jesus made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. The disciples continued to devote themselves to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, prayers, and the common meal. As Paul wrote, as often as we share this bread and cup, we “proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Cor. 11:26).
The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper offers an abundant feast of theological meaning, including: thanksgiving to God the Father; remembrance of Jesus Christ; invocation of the Holy Spirit; communion in the body of Christ; and a meal of the realm of God. The Reformed tradition understands the Lord’s Supper to be a sign of God’s covenant. The bread of the Lord’s Supper is linked with the bread of Passover and the gift of manna in the wilderness. The Lord’s Supper thus connects us with God’s saving power and providential care from generation to generation. Like the offering of sacrifices, a sign of Israel’s thanksgiving for God’s faithfulness, the Lord’s Supper is a sacrifice of praise and a sign of our gratitude for God’s steadfast love. The Lord’s Supper represents God’s gracious invitation to an everlasting covenant. The Lord’s Supper also reflects our calling to feed others as we have been fed, and offers a foretaste of that heavenly banquet when God will wipe away every tear and swallow up death forever.

The Lord’s Supper enacts and seals what the Word proclaims: God’s sustaining grace offered to all people. The Lord’s Supper is God’s gift of grace and also God’s call to respond to that grace. The Lord’s Supper nourishes us in righteousness, faithfulness, and discipleship. The Lord’s Supper renews the church in its identity and sends the church to mission in the world.

When we gather at the Lord’s Supper we are drawn into the presence of Christ and united with the church in every place. We join with all the faithful in heaven and on earth in offering thanksgiving to the triune God. We renew the vows we have taken in our baptism, and recommit ourselves to love and serve God, one another, and our neighbors in the world.

The opportunity to eat and drink with Christ is not a right bestowed upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. All who come to the table are offered the bread and cup, regardless of their age or understanding. If some of those who come have not yet been baptized, an invitation to baptismal preparation and baptism should be graciously extended.

Worshipers prepare themselves to celebrate the Lord’s Supper by putting their trust in Christ, confessing their sin, and seeking reconciliation with God and one another. Even those who doubt may come to the table in order to be assured of God’s love and grace in Jesus Christ.

The Lord’s Supper is to be celebrated as a regular part of the Service for the Lord’s Day, along with the proclamation of the Word, in the company of the whole congregation. When local circumstances call for the Lord’s Supper to be celebrated less frequently, the session may approve other schedules for celebration, in no case less than quarterly. If the Lord’s Supper is celebrated less frequently than on each Lord’s Day, public notice is to be given at least one week in advance so that all may prepare to receive the sacrament.

W-3.0410: Responsibility for the Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper is to be overseen by the session and administered by a teaching elder or ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service. The session may authorize the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at events other than the Service for the Lord’s Day, including services of Christian marriage, ordination and installation, services of wholeness, ministry to the sick, and services of witness to the resurrection. At all such events, the Word is to be read and proclaimed. Even when such services involve only a few members of the congregation, the Lord’s Supper is to be understood as an act of the whole church, not a private ceremony. (G-2.05, G-2.10, G-3.02)

A council may authorize the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in certain situations beyond the congregational setting, such as hospitals, prisons, schools, military bases, and new church developments. (G-3.02, G-3.03)

W-3.0411: Offering

Christian life is an offering of one’s self to God. In the Lord’s Supper we are presented with the costly self-offering of Jesus Christ for the life of the world. As those who have been claimed and set free by his grace, we respond with gratitude, offering him our lives, our spiritual gifts, and our material goods. Every service of worship should include an opportunity to respond to Christ’s call to discipleship through self-offering. The gifts we offer express our stewardship of creation, demonstrate our care for one another, support the ministries of the church, and provide for the needs of the poor.

Tithes and offerings are gathered as an act of thanksgiving to God. Gifts of food for the poor may also be collected at this time, and the table may be prepared for the Lord’s Supper. All of these gifts are received with a prayer of dedication to God, spoken or sung. Because ruling elders and deacons are charged with the stewardship of the church’s resources and leadership in ministry to the poor, it is especially appropriate for a ruling elder or deacon to lead this prayer. Signs of Christ’s peace and reconciliation may be exchanged, if this did not take place earlier in the service.

W-3.0412: Great Thanksgiving

Following the offering and the preparation of the table, a teaching elder may invite worshipers to the Lord’s Supper with sentences of Scripture. At the table, the teaching elder leads the people in a threefold prayer to the triune God: giving thanks for God’s creative power, providential care, and covenant faithfulness, along with particular blessings of the day; remembering God’s acts of salvation through Jesus’ birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promised return, as well as his insti-
tution of the Sacrament (if not otherwise spoken at the invitation to the table or the breaking of the bread); and calling on the Holy Spirit to draw worshipers into the presence of the risen Lord, nourish them in the body and blood of Christ, unite them with Christ in the communion of saints and the church in every place, and send them in mission to the world. The prayer ends with an ascription of praise to the triune God. Musical acclamations, such as “Holy, holy, holy,” “Christ has died,” and “Amen,” may be included. The Lord’s Prayer follows.

W-3.0413: Breaking the Bread

In full view of the people, the teaching elder breaks the bread and pours the cup, or lifts a cup that has already been filled. These actions may be accompanied by sentences of Scripture or performed in silence. The use of one loaf and one cup expresses the unity of the body of Christ and the communal nature of the sacrament. The bread used for the Lord’s Supper should be common to the culture of the congregation; those who prepare the bread should make provision for persons with food allergies. The session will determine what form of the fruit of the vine is used; a non-alcoholic option should always be provided.

W-3.0414: Communion

The bread and cup are shared in the manner most appropriate to the occasion. Worshipers may gather at the table, come forward to meet the servers, or receive the bread and cup where they are. The bread may be broken and placed in people’s hands or they may receive pieces of bread prepared for distribution. They may drink from a common cup, receive individual cups, or dip the broken bread into the cup. Ordinarily ruling elders, deacons, and teaching elders serve the bread and cup; the session may authorize other church members to do so. While the bread and cup are shared worshipers may sing; other music may be offered; appropriate passages of Scripture may be read; or the people may pray in silence.

When all have received the bread and cup the remaining elements are placed on the table. The teaching elder then leads the people in prayer, thanking God for the gift of the Sacrament and asking for grace to live and serve faithfully until the coming of Christ’s realm in fullness.

Immediately after the service, the bread and cup may be shared with absent, homebound, or hospitalized members by two or more persons in ordered ministry. Those who carry out this extended service of communion should be authorized by the session; equipped with the necessary theological, pastoral, and liturgical gifts and resources; and instructed to maintain the unity of Word and Sacrament through the reading of Scripture and offering of prayers.

At the conclusion of the Service for the Lord’s Day, the bread and cup should be removed from the table and used or disposed of in a manner approved by the session, in keeping with the Reformed understanding of the Sacrament and principles of good stewardship.

W-3.0415: If the Lord’s Supper Is Omitted

The Lord’s Supper is integral to the Service for the Lord’s Day, a service of Word and Sacrament. If, in local circumstances and by the decision of the session, the Lord’s Supper is to be omitted from Sunday worship, the service continues after the prayers of the people with the offering and a prayer of thanksgiving and dedication, followed by the Lord’s Prayer.

W-3.05: Sending

W-3.0501: Acts of Commitment

In response to the Word we have received in the Sacraments, we affirm Christ’s call to discipleship through acts of commitment. Such acts of commitment may include: closing hymns, psalms, or spiritual songs that send us out to live the gospel by God’s grace; creative or symbolic actions expressing our resolve to share in Christ’s mission; declarations of intent to prepare for or desire to receive the Sacrament of Baptism, or to reaffirm the baptismal covenant; commissioning to ministries of evangelism, compassion, justice, and reconciliation; farewells to members of the church who are departing; and brief invitations or announcements related to the church’s mission.

W-3.0502: Blessing and Charge

The Service for the Lord’s Day concludes with a blessing in the name of the triune God, such as the priestly blessing or apostolic benediction. Because this blessing is an expression of the gospel of God’s grace and an extension of the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, a teaching elder ordinarily speaks the blessing.

We are blessed in order to be a blessing to others. The charge to the people calls the church to go forth as agents of God’s mission in the world. Because deacons are responsible for the church’s ministry of witness and service, and ruling elders have oversight of the church’s faithfulness to God’s mission, it is especially appropriate for a deacon or ruling elder to speak the charge.

W-3.0503: Service in the World

Christian worship and service does not end at the conclusion of the Service for the Lord’s Day; we go forth to love and serve the Lord in daily living. In so doing, we seek to fulfill our chief end: to glorify and enjoy God forever.
Chapter Four: Pastoral and Occasional Services

W-4.01: Pastoral and Occasional Services

W-4.0101: Flowing from Baptism

As a sign and seal of God’s gracious action and our grateful response, Baptism is the foundation for all Christian commitment. The following pastoral and occasional services are all rooted in the baptismal covenant and flow from the promises of Baptism. Such occasions may be appropriately celebrated following the proclamation of the Word during the Service for the Lord’s Day, or may be recognized in other services of public worship. They are fittingly led from the church’s baptismal font or pool.

W-4.02: Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant

W-4.0201: Nurturing the Baptized

In Baptism each Christian is set free from sin, marked as Christ’s own, sealed by the Holy Spirit, made a member of the church, welcomed to the Lord’s Supper, and set apart for a life of service. It is the responsibility of the whole congregation, particularly exercised through the session, to nurture those who are baptized as they grow in faith and seek to respond to Christ’s call to discipleship. When a person is baptized as an infant or child, the session should equip and support the parent(s) or guardian(s) in this endeavor. When a person is baptized as an adolescent or adult, the session should provide ongoing opportunities for Christian formation and instruction.

W-4.0202: Welcoming to the Table

When children who have been baptized begin to express a desire to receive the Lord’s Supper, the session should provide an occasion to welcome them to the table in public worship. Their introduction to the Lord’s Supper should include ongoing instruction or formation in the meaning and mystery of the sacraments.

W-4.0203: Public Profession

When those who have been baptized as children are ready to make a public profession of faith and accept the responsibility of life in the church (sometimes called “confirmation”), the session should provide an opportunity for them to do so. They are to be instructed in the faith, examined by the session, received as active members, and presented to the congregation in public worship. At this time, they reaffirm the vows of Baptism by renouncing evil and affirming their reliance on God’s grace, professing their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and declaring their intent to participate actively and responsibly in the worship, life, governance, and mission of the church. On such occasions, it is fitting for all worshipers to reaffirm the baptismal covenant. (G-1.04, G-3.02)

W-4.0204: New Members

The congregation receives new members by transfer of certificate or by reaffirmation of faith. After they are examined and received by the session, new members should be welcomed in worship. It is appropriate for them to reaffirm the commitments made in Baptism, profess their faith in Jesus Christ, and declare their intent to participate actively and responsibly in the worship, life, governance, and mission of the church. On such occasions, it is fitting for all worshipers to reaffirm the baptismal covenant.

W-4.0205: Renewal and Fresh Commitment

In the lives of believers and in congregational life there are special occasions of awakening, renewal, or commitment; these are appropriately celebrated through the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant. People should be encouraged to share these decisive moments and stirrings of the Spirit with the teaching elder and session, so that they may be acknowledged and affirmed in public worship.

W-4.03: Commissioning for Service

W-4.0301: Acts of Christian Service

In Baptism each Christian is called to discipleship and sent in service to the world. God also calls people to particular acts of service in the church and world: within the congregation, as teachers, trustees, musicians, or committee members; on behalf of the congregation, through its ministry in the local community; in the larger church, through service on denominational and ecumenical councils; and beyond the church, cooperating with others who work for compassion, justice, and reconciliation. These kinds of vocation are appropriately confirmed in the Service for the Lord’s Day, either as a response to the proclamation of the Word or as an act of sending. They may also be recognized in other services of worship.

W-4.04: Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning

W-4.0401: Called to Ministry

In Baptism each Christian is called to ministry in Christ’s name. God calls some persons to serve in congregations in particular ways. In ordination the church sets apart with prayer and the laying on of hands those who have been called by God
through the voice of the church to serve as deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders. In installation the church sets in place with prayer those who have been previously ordained as deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders, and are now called anew to service in that ministry. In commissioning the church recognizes other forms of ministry in the church: ruling elders called to pastoral service, certified Christian educators, and other certified persons.

_W-4.0402: Setting for the Service_

Ordination, installation, and commissioning may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. Ordination, installation, and commissioning may also take place in a special service that focuses on Jesus Christ, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the mission and ministry of the church, and which includes the proclamation of the Word and celebration of the Lord’s Supper. The ordination and/or installation of a teaching elder should take place at a time that enables substantial participation from the presbytery.

_W-4.0403: Order of Worship_

A service of ordination, installation, or commissioning should focus on Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church. Following the sermon, a teaching elder briefly states the nature of the ministry to which persons are being ordained, installed, or commissioned. Those who are being ordained, installed, or commissioned gather at the baptismal font. The moderator of the appropriate council (session for deacons, ruling elders, educators, and other certified persons; presbytery for teaching elders and ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service) asks them the constitutional questions, using the forms provided in this _Book of Order_. A ruling elder asks the corresponding questions of the congregation. When all questions have been answered in the affirmative, those to be ordained will kneel, if able, for the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination. (The presbytery commission lays on hands at the ordination of teaching elders; its moderator may invite other teaching elders and ruling elders to participate. Members of the session lay on hands at the ordination of ruling elders and deacons; the session may invite other ruling elders and teaching elders to participate.) Those previously ordained will stand, if able, along with the congregation, for the prayer of installation. After this, the moderator makes the declaration of ordination, installation, or commissioning. Members of the session or presbytery welcome the newly ordained, installed, or commissioned person(s). In the case of the installation of a teaching elder, persons may be invited to charge the teaching elder and congregation to faithfulness in ministry and mutuality in relationship. When a teaching elder is ordained or installed, it is appropriate for that person to preside at the Lord’s Supper in the same service; she or he will also give the blessing at the conclusion of the service. When ruling elders or deacons are ordained or installed, it is appropriate for one or more of them to give the charge.

_W-4.05: Marking Transitions_

_W-4.0501: God’s Constant Grace_

In Baptism each Christian is assured of God’s constant grace and sustaining care through every transition, season, trial, and celebration of life. Services on occasions of transitions in ministry bear witness to this grace, and allow worshipers to express their thanksgiving, support, or concern.

_W-4.0502: Departing Members_

When members leave a congregation, we rejoice in gifts of their presence among us, acknowledge the sense of loss that will come with their absence, and celebrate our ongoing relationship in Christ through the baptism we share. The recognition of departing members appropriately takes place in the context of the Service for the Lord’s Day, either as a response to the proclamation of the Word or as an act of sending. The service should include prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for those members who are departing: that they may remain in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

_W-4.0503: Conclusion of Ministry_

It is appropriate to recognize the conclusion of a period of ministry, giving thanks for the gifts and service of particular persons—whether through ordered ministry, as deacons, ruling elders, or teaching elders; in specific acts of discipleship; or in other forms of service to the church or in the world. This recognition may take place in the context of the Service for the Lord’s Day, either as a response to the proclamation of the Word or as an act of sending, or in other services of worship. The service should include prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for those concluding their ministries. Other significant honors or accomplishments may also be celebrated in worship, provided that this occurs in the spirit of giving glory to God.

_W-4.0504: Censure and Restoration_

The church administers discipline as an expression of the authority of Christ, for the sake of the welfare of the church, and toward the goal of redemption and reconciliation, by God’s grace. Forms for censure and restoration are provided in the Rules of Discipline of this _Book of Order_. (D-12.0100, D-12.0200) These occasions should be observed in the spirit of deep prayer and pastoral concern, and in the context of worship within the appropriate community or council of the church.
W-4.06: The Covenant of Marriage

W-4.0601: Christian Marriage

In Baptism each Christian is claimed in the covenant of God’s faithful love. …

Because of current debates about this section of the Constitution, we have been advised to let it receive separate consideration, apart from the project to revise the Directory for Worship. A similar approach was taken with the section on ordination in the new Form of Government.

W-4.0602: Preparing for Marriage

W-4.0603: Setting for the Service

W-4.0604: Order of Worship

W-4.0605: Recognizing Civil Marriage

W-4.07: Death and Resurrection

W-4.0701: Witness to the Resurrection

In Baptism each Christian shares in Christ’s dying and rising, and receives the promise of eternal and abundant life in him. In the face of death, Christians affirm with tears and joy the good news of the gospel and the hope of the resurrection. We do not grieve in isolation, but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith.

W-4.0702: Preparing for Death

The session should encourage members to discuss and make necessary arrangements for the time of death. Such arrangements should include plans for worship and decisions about burial, cremation, or medical donation. These plans should express simplicity and dignity, bear witness to resurrection hope, and convey the centrality of Christian community. The session is responsible for establishing general policies concerning services on the occasion of death.

W-4.0703: Setting for the Service

The service of witness to the resurrection is best held in the congregation’s usual place of worship, demonstrating continuity with the community’s faith, life, and hope. When there are important reasons not to hold the service in the usual place of worship, it may be held in another place, such as a home, funeral home, crematorium, or graveside. It may be observed on any day, and may, with the approval of the session, occur as a part of the Service for the Lord’s Day. The service may take place before or after the committal of the body. The service is under the direction of the teaching elder of the congregation in which it is held. Others may be invited to share in leadership at the discretion of the teaching elder.

W-4.0704: Order of Worship

The service begins with sentences of Scripture, bearing witness to the resurrection and the living hope we have in Christ. Worshipers may sing hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs that affirm our faith in the resurrection, everlasting life, and the communion of saints. The act of confession and pardon should be included as an opportunity for healing and reconciliation. Scripture is read and the Word is proclaimed, expressing our trust in the risen Lord; an affirmation of faith may follow. Prayer is offered: giving thanks to God for life in Christ, the promise of the gospel, the life and witness of the one who has died, the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and the presence of the community of faith; making intercessions for those who grieve, those who minister to the bereaved, and all who suffer loss; and asking for faith and grace in this time of loss. The Lord’s Supper may be celebrated, with the approval of the session. The service ends by commending the one who has died to the care of the eternal God, and sending the people forth with God’s blessing.

In order that God will be the focus of the service, ordinarily the casket (if present) is closed; if open, it should be closed at the conclusion of the service, and remain closed. The casket may be covered with a pall, suggesting the image of being clothed with Christ in Baptism. If using a paschal candle is part of the practice of the congregation, it may be placed near the casket. Music should direct attention to God and express the faith of the church. Flowers and other decorations should reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life. The service may include other actions common to the community of faith and its cultural context, provided that these actions do not distract from the Christian understanding of death and resurrection. Fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately.

W-4.0705: Committal

The committal is to be conducted with simplicity, dignity, and brevity. The family and friends of the one who has died, along with members of the congregation, gather at the graveside or crematorium. The service includes readings from Scrip-
ture, prayers, words of committal, and a blessing. It should reflect the reality of death, express our trust in God to receive the one who has died, and bear witness to our resurrection hope.

Chapter Five: Worship and Christian Life

W-5.01: Worship and Personal Life

W-5.0101: Personal Life

We respond to God’s grace both in public worship and service and in personal acts of devotion and discipleship. Personal life and public worship are deeply connected. Christian life springs from Christian worship, where we find our identity as believers and discover our calling as disciples. Christian life flows back into worship as we present to God the prayers of our hearts and the offering of our lives.

In personal life we seek to live out our faith through daily disciplines of prayer, other practices of faith, household worship, and Christian vocation. Our lives as Christians are shaped by the Word and empowered by the Spirit as we grow more and more each day into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

W-5.0102: Daily Prayer

We respond to God’s grace through the gift of prayer. The Christian life is one of constant prayer. Prayer is a way of opening of ourselves to God, who desires communication and communion with us. Prayer may take a variety of forms, including: conscious conversation with God; attentive and expectant silence; meditation on Scripture; the use of service books, devotional aids, and visual arts; and singing, dancing, labor, or physical exercise. Prayer may also be expressed in action, through public witness and protest, deeds of compassion, and other forms of disciplined service.

The daily challenges of discipleship require daily disciplines of prayer. Daily prayer is meant to be a gracious gift from God, not a task or obligation. It is an opportunity to draw inspiration and strength from one’s relationship with God in Jesus Christ. It is a way of continually seeking the gifts and guidance of the Holy Spirit for daily living. Daily prayer is a practice to cultivate throughout one’s life, and one that will bear much fruit.

Structured services of daily prayer may occur in councils of the church, in the congregation, in small groups of believers, in households, or in private. They offer us a way of joining Christ’s ceaseless prayer with the church throughout the world. Such services typically include: the singing or praying of psalms; the reading of Scripture; and prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer. Services of daily prayer may take place at appointed times throughout the day (such as morning, midday, evening, and close of day) or may follow other patterns according to the demands of daily life and the needs of the individual or community. In the congregational setting these services are to be authorized by the session, but they may be led by any member of the church.

W-5.0103: Other Practices of Discipleship

We respond to God’s grace through other practices of discipleship. God has given us a variety of ways to pray: keeping Sabbath, studying Scripture, contemplation and action, fasting and feasting, stewardship and self-offering. All of these practices are meant to help us attend to the presence and action of God in our lives.

God calls us to keep one day in seven holy. Since the earliest days of the church, Christians have observed this commandment by gathering for public worship on the Lord’s Day (or Sunday). As the first day of the week, this day shapes our lives of discipleship. Therefore the Lord’s Day is a time for participation in public worship; engagement in ministries of service, witness, and compassion; and activities of rest and recreation. Those who must work on Sunday should find other ways to keep Sabbath in the course of the week.

Through the Scriptures we hear the voice of God and find meaning, direction, comfort, and challenge for our lives. Regular, disciplined engagement with the Bible may include: simply reading the Word, praying with Scripture, studying commentaries, memorizing key passages, and putting the Word into action in our lives. One should seek to read a wide range of Scripture, always relying on the illumination of the Spirit.

The practices of fasting and feasting are ancient expressions of lament and celebration. The festivals and seasons of the Christian year provide rhythms of fasting and feasting centered on the life of Christ and the events of salvation history. Events in the life of the world, nation, community, or individuals may also call for acts of thanksgiving, sorrow, penitence, or protest.

The disciplines of stewardship and self-offering are a grateful response to God’s love for the world and self-giving in Jesus Christ. As Christians, we are called to lives of simplicity, generosity, hospitality, compassion, and care for creation. Tithing is a primary example of Christian stewardship and self-offering. We should be able to account for how we use our material goods, spiritual gifts, and time in the service of God.

W-5.0104: Household Worship

We respond to God’s grace in the context of personal relationships. Christians who live together should worship together. Opportunities for household or family worship include: Sabbath-keeping and rhythms of daily prayer; Bible reading,
study, or memorization; prayers before meals; singing hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs; and expressions of giving, sharing, and service to others. Given the complexities of contemporary life, it is especially important to cultivate these disciplines.

Household worship offers a valuable opportunity to remember and anticipate the Lord’s Day, studying appointed Scriptures and reflecting on and preparing for the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The seasons of the Christian year, such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, provide further shape and meaning for household worship. Worship in the household setting should include recognitions of birthdays, baptismal days, and other significant anniversaries, and may also reflect the cycles of nature, civic observances, and events in the local, national, and global spheres.

Children come to know, trust, and worship God by worshiping and praying with their parents or guardians. Children may lead and participate in household worship by singing and praying, listening to and telling Bible stories, learning catechisms, and serving and sharing with others. Parents and guardians should use these opportunities to teach children the shape and elements of the Service for the Lord’s Day, so that they may be full and active participants in the church’s worship.

**W-5.0105: Christian Vocation**

We respond to God’s grace through our Christian vocation. In Baptism we offer our whole lives in service to God, and are empowered by the Holy Spirit with gifts for ministry in Jesus’ name. Therefore we are called to honor and serve God in every aspect of our lives: in our work and play, in our thought and action, and in our private and public relationships. Such service and love is an act of gratitude for God’s grace. This has been a particularly important theme of the Reformed tradition: the life and work of every Christian can and should give glory to God. As we honor and serve God in our daily life and labor, we worship God. Whatever our situation, we have opportunities each day to bear witness to the power of God at work within us. Therefore, for Christians, worship, work, and witness cannot be separated.

**W-5.02: Worship and the Church’s Ministry within the Community of Faith**

**W-5.0201: The Church’s Ministry within the Community of Faith**

God calls the church in the name of Jesus Christ to mutual love and service. The church’s ministry and worship are deeply connected. The church’s ministry springs from its worship, where God builds up the body of Christ through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The church’s ministry flows back into worship as we bring to God the celebrations and concerns of the community of faith.

Within the church, we seek to love and serve one another through the ministries of Christian education and pastoral care, special gatherings for fellowship and prayer, and the activities of councils of the church. The church’s ministries are shaped and nourished by the Word and Sacraments, and are to be carried out in the spirit of constant prayer.

**W-5.0202: Christian Education**

God calls the church to continue the teaching ministry of Jesus Christ, guiding and nurturing one another through all the seasons and transitions of life. In particular, the church offers opportunities for education and formation as members enter the community of faith, discover Christian vocation, and assume responsibility in the world. The church’s primary standard and resource for Christian nurture is the Word of God in Scripture, bearing witness to Christ’s way of truth and life.

The central occasion for Christian nurture is the Service for the Lord’s Day, where the Word is proclaimed and the Sacraments are celebrated. Beyond the process of Christian formation that takes place in public worship, the words and actions of the service can be a particularly fruitful source of study and reflection. Therefore all members should be encouraged to be present and participate in this assembly.

Educational activities should not be scheduled so as to prevent or discourage participation in this service. The educational ministries of the church are rooted in the promises of Baptism, in which the congregation pledges responsibility for Christian nurture. The session is responsible for the development and supervision of the church’s educational programs, the instruction of ruling elders and deacons, and the discipleship of all members. The teaching elder contributes to the nurture of the community through the ministries of Word and Sacrament, church school classes, the gift of prayer, and by example. Trained Christian educators bring special skills and expertise in teaching to the church’s ministries of nurture and formation. The session should identify, encourage, and equip others who have gifts for Christian education. The session should also support parents and guardians in the nurture of their children. (G-2.02, G-2.03, G-2.05, G-3.02, G-2.11)

Church school gatherings offer opportunities for worship, including singing, praying, and hearing the Word. These gatherings may also include occasions for self-offering and service. However, worship in the church school is not a substitute for participation with the whole congregation in the Service for the Lord’s Day.

The church provides other opportunities for Christian nurture, including: seminary instruction and continuing education; workshops on particular themes or topics; music programs and rehearsals; mission and program interpretation; meetings of committees, boards, and councils; and retreats, camps, and conferences.
**W-5.0203: Pastoral Care**

God calls the church to continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ, caring for one another, sharing joys and sorrows, providing support in times of stress and need, and offering admonition, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Relying on Christ’s grace and the Spirit’s gifts, the church seeks to shepherd its members through times of danger and death, illness and loss, crisis and celebration, struggle and sin. In particular, these ministries flow from and are nourished by the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, signs and seals of our relationship in the body of Christ.

The worship of God in Christian community is the foundation and context for the ministry of pastoral care. Members draw on the resources of worship in their care for one another, sharing the grace and challenge of the Word, the gift and calling of the Sacraments, the presence and power of God’s Spirit in prayer, and the fellowship and comfort of the community of faith. They take these resources with them, extending Christ’s grace and peace in homes, hospitals, hospices, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces.

All members are called to take part in the ministry of pastoral care, visiting the sick, supporting the weak, and comforting those who mourn. Ruling elders, deacons, and teaching elders have particular responsibility for the exercise of pastoral care within the community of faith. Those with special gifts and appropriate training may be called to the ministries of pastoral counseling or chaplaincy. In certain circumstances, persons may need to be referred to other qualified and credentialed professionals to receive appropriate counseling and care. (G-2.02, G-2.03, G-2.05)

Services of wholeness and healing are one way of enacting the church’s ministry of pastoral care. The central element in these services is prayer, calling upon God’s saving grace or giving thanks for healing received. A service of wholeness should include the proclamation of the Word, focusing on the promise of abundant life in Christ. Prayer may be enacted through the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, provided that these actions are carefully introduced and interpreted: healing always comes as a gift from God, not as a product of human prayer. The Lord’s Supper is a fitting way to seal the promise of wholeness proclaimed in the Word. Services of wholeness are to be authorized by the session and are under the direction of the teaching elder, but should involve leadership from ruling elders, deacons, and others with gifts for prayer. They may take on a regular basis, as an occasional event, or as a part of the Service for the Lord’s Day.

Services of acceptance and reconciliation acknowledge the reality of sin and suffering and seek the redeeming grace of God. They provide an appropriate way to acknowledge our involvement and responsibility in broken relationships and sinful social structures. The central element in these services is confession and pardon, along with appropriate signs of peace and reconciliation. They should include readings from Scripture that reveal the grace of God, and may involve elements of prayer, expressions of thanksgiving, and enactments of commitment.

**W-5.0204: Other Gatherings**

God calls the church to gather as the body of Christ at other times and places to learn, pray, serve together, and enjoy Christian fellowship. Bible studies, prayer circles, covenant groups, and other meetings may take place throughout the week and various times of day, whether on the church grounds, at members’ homes, or elsewhere. These gatherings present valuable opportunities for: reading, studying, and discussing the Scriptures; Christian formation and nurture; praying for one another, the church, and the world; sharing personal stories, celebrations, and concerns; common work, meals, fellowship, and recreation; and living out the gospel through acts of witness and service.

Christians also gather at retreats, camps, and conferences for learning, worship, service, and recreation. Services of worship in these places are to be authorized by an appropriate council, and should be guided by the principles of Scripture, the confessions, and this directory. Depending on the nature of the event, orders of worship may be adapted from the services for daily prayer, the Service for the Lord’s Day, or other services described in this directory. Celebrations of the Lord’s Supper are to be approved by the council overseeing the event.

We bear witness to the unity of the body of Christ when we gather in ecumenical groups for the worship of the triune God. Such services are rooted, despite denominational differences, in the Baptism we share. Teaching elders invited to participate in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in such gatherings may do so, provided that their participation does not contradict the Reformed understanding of the Sacrament. (G-5.01)

We bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ when we pray in the presence of others, particularly at interfaith gatherings. Such gatherings are opportunities to live and share our faith, even as we listen to and learn from our neighbors. Those who participate in interfaith events should be careful that their words and actions reflect the Christian faith, while respecting the autonomy, integrity, and diversity of others’ beliefs and practices. (G-5.01)

**W-5.0205: Councils of the Church**

God calls the church to seek the mind of Christ together in councils, through meetings of the session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly. These councils should worship regularly, in keeping with the teaching of Scripture, the witness of the confessions, and the principles of this directory. In councils beyond the session, provision should be made for the regular
proclamation of the Word and celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Every meeting of a council should open and close with earnest prayer. Councils should also provide other opportunities for praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, and supplication in the course of their discernment and deliberation. (G-3.01)

W-5.03: Worship and the Church’s Mission in the World

W-5.0301: The Church’s Mission in the World

God sends the church in the power of the Holy Spirit to join the mission of Jesus Christ in service to the world. The church’s mission and worship are deeply connected. The church’s mission springs from its worship, where we glimpse the reality and the promise of God’s eternal realm. The church’s mission flows back into worship as we bring to God the joy and suffering of the world.

In its mission to the world, the church seeks to bear witness to God’s reign through the proclamation of the gospel, acts of compassion, work for justice and peace, and the care of creation. The church’s mission is shaped and nourished by the Word and Sacraments, and represents the living out of our prayer for the world.

W-5.0302: Evangelism

God sends the church to proclaim the gospel in the world: announcing the good news of God’s liberating love; calling all people to repent and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; baptizing, teaching, and making disciples in Jesus’ name; and offering the promise of eternal and abundant life in Christ.

The Service for the Lord’s Day is the primary context in which we regularly hear the proclamation of the gospel and have the opportunity to respond in faith, committing and recommitting their lives to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, an invitation to prepare for Baptism and live out baptismal discipleship should be a regular part of Sunday worship. Christian worship also prepares believers to go forth, in the power of the Spirit, to share with others the good news they have received, inviting them to join in following Christ’s way.

Special services for evangelism may be authorized by the session. The central element in these services is the proclamation of the Word, with emphasis on the saving grace of God in Christ, Jesus’ claim upon our lives, and his invitation to discipleship. This act of proclamation should be surrounded by prayer. Those who respond to Christ’s invitation should receive nurture and support from the community of faith, equipping them for Christian discipleship. If they have not been baptized, they should make a public profession of faith and receive the Sacrament of Baptism in the Service for the Lord’s Day. Those who were previously baptized should be given the opportunity to express their renewed commitment to Christ through the reaffirmation of Baptism.

W-5.0303: Compassion

God sends the church to show compassion in the world: feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, visiting prisoners, freeing captives, sheltering the homeless, welcoming strangers, comforting those who mourn, and being present with all who are in need. These acts of compassion, done corporately or individually, are the work of the church as the body of Christ. The church is called to minister directly to people’s immediate hurts and needs. The church is also called to confront and challenge systems that perpetuate human misery. We participate in Christ’s compassionate ministry through local acts of witness and advocacy, through the programs of the larger church, and in cooperation with other agencies and organizations committed to human welfare.

In the Service for the Lord’s Day, God’s call to compassion is proclaimed in the Word and enacted through the Sacraments. We confess our complicity in oppressive structures, pray for those who are hurting, offer our resources to alleviate suffering, and commit our time and energy to care for those in need. Following the example of Jesus Christ, we pledge that we will respect the dignity of all, reach out to those judged undeserving, receive as well as give, and even risk our lives to show Christ’s love.

W-5.0304: Justice and Peace

God sends the church to work for justice in the world: exercising power for the common good; dealing honestly in personal and public business; seeking dignity and freedom for all people; promoting justice and fairness in the law; overcoming disparities between rich and poor; bearing witness against political oppression; and redressing wrongs against individuals, groups, and peoples. God also sends the church to seek peace: in the church universal, within denominations, and at the congregational level; in the world, where nations and religious or ethnic groups make war against one another; and in local communities, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and homes. These acts of peacemaking and justice are established upon God’s gracious act of reconciliation with us in Jesus Christ, and are a way of participating in Christ’s priestly intercession or advocacy for the world.
In the Service for the Lord’s Day we proclaim, receive, and enact reconciliation with God in Christ. Through the proclamation of the Word we are given the assurance of freedom and peace in Christ and are inspired to share these gifts with others. Through Baptism and the Lord’s Supper we are united with Christ, made one in the Spirit, and empowered to break down the dividing walls of hostility that still separate us from one another. We confess our participation in unjust systems, pray for an end to violence and injustice, offer our gifts to support Christ’s liberating work, and commit ourselves to pursue peace and justice in Jesus’ name.

**W-5.0305: Care of Creation**

God sends the church to share in the stewardship of creation, preserving the goodness and glory of the earth God has made. God cares for us through the gifts of creation, providing all that we need in abundance. As caretakers of God’s creation, we are called to: tend the land, water, and air with awe and wonder at God’s gifts; use the earth’s resources wisely, without plundering, polluting, or destroying; use technology in ways that preserve and enhance life; measure our production and consumption in order to provide for the needs of all; foster responsible practices of procreation and reproduction; and seek beauty, order, health, harmony, and peace for all God’s creatures.

In the Service for the Lord’s Day we express our care for creation by: giving thanks for God’s creative power and sustaining care; acknowledging God’s call to stewardship of the earth and confessing our failure to care for creation; rejoicing in the promise of redemption and renewal in Jesus Christ, proclaimed in the Word and Sacraments; offering our lives and resources in service to the creator of all; and committing ourselves to live as good stewards of creation until the day when God will make all things new. One way in which the church demonstrates integrity in caring for God’s creation is through responsible choices about materials for worship, including the use of paper, sacramental elements, the construction of worship space, and other resources.

**W-5.04: Worship and the Reign of God**

*W-5.0401: The Reign of God*

The church in its worship and service is a living sign of the reign of God, which is both a present reality and a future promise. The church’s activities do not bring about God’s realm; they are our grateful response to the grace of God at work in the world. We seek to worship and serve God faithfully, with the confidence that God’s reign has already been established and the hope that it will soon be revealed in fullness and glory. (F-1.01)

We do all of this in the name of Jesus, looking for the day when “every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10–11).

Amen!

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever!

Amen. (Rev. 7:12)

**Item 13-03**

[The assembly approved Item 13-03. See pp. 16, 24, 25.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Approve M. Craig Barnes as president of Princeton Theological Seminary.
2. Approve docket time in the plenary session for Barnes to make brief remarks.

*Rationale*

General Assembly approval of the Rev. Dr. Barnes’s appointment as president of Princeton Theological Seminary is required by “A Plan for the Governance and Funding of the Theological Institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),” approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) and by the seminary’s current bylaws.

M. Craig Barnes began as the seventh president of Princeton Theological Seminary in January 2013, and also serves as professor of pastoral ministry. Barnes earned his Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Seminary in 1981 and his Ph.D. in church history from the University of Chicago in 1992.

Before becoming president of Princeton, Barnes was a chaired professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary while also serving as the pastor and head of staff of Shadyside Presbyterian Church. He previously served pastorates in Madison, Wis-
His writing and academic work reflect his deep commitment to the theological formation of pastors to lead the church in changing times. Craig was raised on Long Island, New York. After graduating from The King’s College and Princeton Seminary, he received a Ph.D. in The History of Christianity from The University of Chicago under the supervision of Martin E. Marty.


Item 13-04

[The assembly approved Item 13-04 with amendment. See pp. 16, 25.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) grant permission to the following theological institutions to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper in 2015–2016: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Seminario Evangelio de Puerto Rico, and Auburn Theological Seminary.

**Rationale**

Beginning in 1989, the General Assembly became the governing body that grants permission to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper at Presbyterian theological institutions. Each seminary is entrusted with identifying a governing group on campus to discern appropriate occasions and leaders to celebrate on each campus. The 220th General Assembly (2012) granted permission for celebrations in 2013–2014.

Item 13-05

[The assembly approved Item 13-05. See pp. 16, 25.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve the new trustees elected by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological institutions in 2012–2013:

1. Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary: Katherine B. Cummings, Rhashell Hunter, Lana E. Russell.

2. Columbia Theological Seminary: Jeffrey D. McEwen, Travis V. Olmert, Millie Snyder.


10. Union Presbyterian Seminary: Jennifer Britton, Carol Anne Love Jennison, Tonya Johnson, Gay Muthershed, Agnes Norfleet, One Ho Park, Peter Ro.


**Rationale**

“A Plan for the Governance and Funding of the Theological Institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) requires the COTE to present presidents and trustees of PC(USA)-related seminaries to the General Assembly for approval. A list of the entire board of trustees of each of the PC(USA)-related seminaries as well as biographical information about trustees to be approved will be made available by the COTE for review by the appropriate committee during the 221st General Assembly (2014). Similar information will also be made available about those currently serving on the boards of Auburn Theological Seminary and the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, which are related to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through covenant agreements.

In addition, and as required by vote of the 209th General Assembly (1997), the following information is offered in regard to racial ethnic, gender, and clergy/lay representation on the various seminary boards.

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<td>1</td>
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| Covenant Schools | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|-------------|------|----------------|-------------|------|--------|--------|-----|
| Auburn           | 23              | 19       | 0        | 2           | 2    | 0              | 0           | 13   | 10     | 7      | 16  |
| SEPR             | 26              | 0        | 26       | 0           | 0    | 0              | 0           | 23   | 3      | 17     | 9   |
| Overall          | 390             | 294      | 30       | 52          | 13   | 0              | 1           | 259  | 130    | 149    | 240 |

**Item 13-06**

[The assembly approved Item 13-06. See pp. 16, 25.]

Approval of List of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Related Schools, Colleges and Universities

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Approve the following list of colleges and universities as those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

   Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Ga.; Alma College, Alma, Mich.; Arcadia University, Glenside, Pa.; Austin College, Sherman, Tex.; Barber-Scotia College, Concord, N.C.; Belhaven University, Jackson, Miss.; Blackburn College, Carlinville, Ill.; Bloomfield College, Bloomfield, N.J.; Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa; Carroll University, Waukesha, Wisc.; Centre College, Danville, Ky.; Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho; College of the Ozarks, Point Lookout, Mo.; The College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio; Cook Native American Ministries, Tempe, Ariz.; Davidson College, Davidson, N.C.; Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, W.V.; Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Grove City College, Grove City, Pa.; Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden-Sydney, Va.; Hanover College, Hanover, Ind.; Hastings College, Hastings, Nebr.; Illinois College, Jacksonville, Ill.; Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N.C.;
King University, Bristol, Tenn.; Knoxville College, Knoxville, Tenn.; Lafayette College, Easton, Pa.; Lake Forest College, Lake Forest College, Ill.; Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, N.C.; Lindenwood University, St. Charles, Mo.; Lyon College, Batesville, Ark.; Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn.; Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, Va.; Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.; Millikin University, Decatur, Ill.; Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Mo.; Monmouth College, Monmouth, Ill.; Montreat College, Montreat, N.C.; Muskingum University, New Concord, Ohio; Presbyterian College, Clinton, S.C.; Queens University of Charlotte, Charlotte, N.C.; Rhodes College, Memphis, Tenn.; Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Mont.; St. Andrews University, Laurinburg, N.C.; Schreiner University, Kerrville, Tex.; Sterling College, Sterling, Kans.; Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex.; Tusculum College, Greenville, Tenn.; Universidad InterAmericana de Puerto Rico, San Juan P.R.; University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa; University of Jamestown, Jamestown, N.D.; University of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Ark.; University of Pikeville, Pikeville, Ky.; University of Tulsa, Tulsa, Okla.; Warren Wilson College, Asheville, N.C.; Waynesburg University, Waynesburg, Pa.; Westminster College, Fulton, Mo.; Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.; Westminster College, Salt Lake City, Utah; Whitworth University, Spokane, Wash.; William Peace University, Raleigh, N.C.; Wilson College, Chambersburg, Pa.

2. Approve the following list of secondary schools as those related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Bachman Academy, McDonald, Tenn.; Blair Academy, Blairstown, N.J.; Chamberlain-Hunt Academy, Port Gibson, Miss.; French Camp Academy, French Camp, Miss.; Goodland Academy, Hugo, Okla.; Menaul School, Albuquerque, N.M.; Presbyterian Pan-American School, Kingsville, Tex.; Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, Rabun Gap, Ga.; Wasatch Academy, Mt Pleasant, Utah.

**Rationale**

It has been customary for the General Assembly to approve a list of educational institutions related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The criteria for being included on this list is that the institutions can identify a historic connection to the PC(USA) and demonstrate a commitment to Reformed values through the education they provide. Among these values are a commitment to faith, truth, learning, service, community, character, and the dignity and worth of each person.

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**Item 13-07**

[The assembly approved Item 13-07. See pp. 16, 25.]

**Report of the Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions**

The Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Direct the transfer of the Theological Education Fund (the “Fund”) from the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“PMA”) to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation (“Foundation”), to be managed, administered, and distributed by the Foundation for the benefit of seminaries related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pursuant to a fund advisory agreement between the Foundation and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, on behalf of the PMA and on behalf of the Committee on Theological Education (“COTE”), the fund agreement to provide that future contributions to the Fund will be irrevocable contributions to the Foundation and distributed only as directed by COTE, effective January 1, 2015.

2. Direct that responsibility for marketing and administering the Fund be transferred from the PMA to the Foundation, effective January 1, 2015, and that the Foundation and COTE engage in a process, as spelled out in a fund advisory agreement, to hire an experienced, full-time fundraiser, whose work shall be under the direction and ultimate performance management of COTE and dedicated solely to generating financial support for theological education.

3. Direct that the existing Seminary Support Network be maintained by COTE and the Foundation until such time as the Foundation, in consultation with COTE, shall determine the future role of this network. The Foundation, in consultation with COTE, shall establish a full-time staff position that is under the direction of COTE and dedicated to supporting this network until a decision about the network’s future has been determined.

4. Direct that the marketing information and databases for the Fund be transferred from the PMA to the Foundation, as permitted by applicable law and consistent with written representations or other appropriate communications to donors, to be used only for marketing of the Fund, effective January 1, 2015.

5. Direct that the responsibility for the denomination’s relationships with PC(USA)-related seminaries will continue to be lodged under COTE, and that any mission program support for COTE will continue to be provided by the PMA in consultation with COTE.
Rationale

The 220th General Assembly (2012) directed that a Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions be appointed by the General Assembly Moderator “with a charge to review the funding relationship of theological institutions to the General Assembly and the church, and to propose any needed changes, including a strengthened funding mechanism for the support of theological institutions by the church” (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 75, 870). The special committee was instructed to make its report to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

A. Background on the Theological Education Fund

The 198th General Assembly (1986) established COTE and proposed the creation of the Fund with the hope that an amount equal to “1 percent [1.0%] of the dollar figure reported by each congregation [of the church] for local program” would be contributed as an additional benevolence by each congregation for the education of present and future ministers and educators of the church (Minutes, 1986, Part I, p. 271). The Fund was subsequently created and COTE was charged with administering the Fund and preparing an appropriate formula for disbursements of monies from the Fund to the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The COTE was also charged with advocating for their financial support. Since its establishment, the Fund has been managed, administered, and distributed by staff persons employed by the PMA or its predecessors on behalf of COTE.

In 1986, the church had hoped to replace the funding for theological education that came directly from the denomination with funds that would be received from congregations, not simply as benevolence gifts but as direct investments in the future leadership of the church. This has not been the result. From 2002 through 2012, amounts contributed to the Fund have fallen by 54 percent, from $2,665,466 to $1,225,380. In 2010, less than 2 percent of the total budgets of seminaries were funded by the Fund instead of the hoped-for 20 percent when the Fund was established. Since its inception, no more than 20 percent of the church’s congregations have contributed to the Fund in any given year. The continued pattern of decline in receipts has been of great concern to the seminaries and the denomination.

In 2008, the General Assembly directed the PMA (then known as the General Assembly Mission Council) to develop a system of giving that would “fairly and accurately allocate all costs associated with individual projects in the General Assembly mission budget, including the costs associated with the systems necessary for the support, promotion, and accountability of each item” (Minutes, 1986, Part I, p. 668). Implementing this system would have led to increased support, promotion, and accountability costs being charged to the Fund, reducing receipts available for the seminaries.

The COTE sought to involve the 220th General Assembly (2012) in taking a new look at the relationship between seminaries, the denomination, and its congregations, and considering a different mechanism by which the church provides opportunities for congregations and others to contribute to the funding of theological institutions.

As a result of the efforts of COTE, the 220th General Assembly (2012) directed the PMA not to recover its full costs from the Fund in 2013–2014, and formed the aforementioned special committee.

B. The Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions

The Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions consisted of fourteen members, all of whom were persons who were especially knowledgeable about theological institutions. One member was the director of COTE, and a second the director of the PMA’s Theology, Worship and Education Ministry Area. The remaining twelve included not only elected members of COTE, but also five PC(USA) seminary presidents and a PMA Board member. The remaining members were also persons with knowledge and experience in the field of theological education, one of whom had expertise in fundraising. Because of the resignation of one member, the special committee ultimately finished its work with thirteen members.

The special committee met at in-person meetings held on January 23–24, June 25, and October 28, 2013, and had additional conference telephone meetings on March 25, April 30, and June 6, 2013. The final meeting was a conference telephone meeting on January 21, 2014.

The special committee considered whether continuing to have the Fund staffed, managed, administered, and distributed by the PMA would be the most efficient and productive way to proceed in the future. The committee evaluated several alternatives but ultimately concluded that the question at its essence was whether the Fund should continue to be managed by the PMA or whether it should be staffed, managed, administered, and distributed by and physically located at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

The direct staffing costs of the Fund will be the same whether lodged at the PMA or the Foundation. The Foundation, however, has agreed to manage, administer, and distribute the Fund for a fee of up to 1.25 percent of receipts, rather than the 19 percent required by the cost allocation and recovery process of the PMA. In addition, the Foundation has agreed to share its expertise in funds development with the staff of the Fund. The Foundation can generate numerous reports to help track giving patterns, and the Foundation’s staff and technical resources would enlarge giving opportunities for the Fund. The Foundation does not have dedicated funds development personnel for any other specific cause or beneficiary. Nonetheless,
the Foundation in this case will employ dedicated personnel for funds development of the Fund pursuant to a fund advisory agreement between the Foundation, the PMA, and COTE. The COTE will be responsible for setting performance metrics, monitoring performance against those metrics, and recommending personnel actions to the Foundation. The Foundation will be responsible for providing personnel with tools, systems, and resources and for implementing personnel actions as recommended by COTE.

According to the COTE Manual of Operations, selection of personnel for coordinating COTE’s work is done by the PMA in consultation with COTE. In a similar manner the special committee has recommended above that the selection of funds development staff be the responsibility of the Foundation and COTE by a process spelled out in the funding agreement between the Foundation, the PMA, and COTE. The committee noted that the fundraising atmosphere has shifted significantly over the last two decades and, therefore, a dedicated professional in this area is needed if efforts to increase funding for theological education are to be successful. The PMA has affirmed to the special committee that a full-time funds development position focused exclusively on raising financial support for PC(USA) seminaries will be helpful for funds development efforts.

The committee researched and interviewed members of the Seminary Support Network and found this mostly volunteer network to be effective in raising awareness and support for the schools through the Fund model. Presbytery- and synod-level representatives staff the network, which meets annually and usually on a PC(USA) seminary campus. The committee agreed that it would be wise to continue the network with a central staff support person selected by the Foundation for resourcing this group. Similar to above, COTE will be responsible for setting performance metrics, monitoring performance against those metrics, and recommending personnel actions to the Foundation while the Foundation will be responsible for providing the central staff person with tools, systems, and resources and for implementing personnel actions as recommended by COTE. The committee further recommended that any changes to this network or staffing pattern should be done in consultation with and with the approval of COTE.

While recommending the transfer of the Fund to the Foundation, the special committee also affirmed the importance of maintaining through COTE the denomination’s ministries and relationships with the seminaries. Therefore, the special committee also concluded that the responsibility for the denomination’s relationships with PC(USA)-related seminaries should continue to be lodged with COTE, and that program support for COTE should continue to be provided by the PMA’s Theology, Worship and Education Ministry Area in consultation with COTE.

The primary change created by the recommendations of the special committee would be that the PMA’s Theology, Worship and Education Ministry Area would have no further responsibility for the Fund, although COTE will continue to be the advisor to the Fund under a fund advisory agreement and will also continue to be the denomination’s primary instrument for interpreting to congregations the importance of the church’s seminaries and the necessity for the Fund.

COTE COMMENT ON ITEM 13-07

Comment on Item 13-07—From the Committee on Theological Education.

The Committee on Theological Education recognizes the importance of theological education to the development of leaders in the PC(USA); believes this recommendation represents a significant improvement in the stewardship of the contributions of congregations and individual donors to the Theological Education Fund, both in their management and generation; and this recommendation represents the combined effort of four PC(USA) entities (Presbyterian Mission Agency, Committee on Theological Education, the Presbyterian Foundation, and the Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions).

In summary, the Committee on Theological Education unanimously recommends the approval of the report and all recommendations of the Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Item 13-08

[The assembly approved Item 13-08 with amendment. See pp. 24, 25.]

On Celebrating the 500th Birthday of John Knox—From the Eastern Korean Presbytery.

In celebration of the 500th birthday of John Knox, who laid the foundation of Presbyterianism through fervent prayer and spiritual renewal, Eastern Korean Presbytery overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Designate the month of October 2014 as the John Knox memorial month, aiming to position the church’s ministry and mission for another half millennium through rediscovering Presbyterian roots and future-driven revitalization.

[2. Direct the whole church to plan root-searching events through fasting, prayer, Bible study, and spiritual gathering to realign the church to God's purpose for the broken world.]
[3.] Encourage all councils and congregations to create special activities in reaffirmation of Presbyterian faith as expressed in the confessions, to inspire each other to cultivate a deeper prayer life, spiritual disciplines such as fasting, prayer, Bible study, spiritual gatherings, and acts of service and to encourage all to witness to the Presbyterian heritage through community-oriented events.

[3. Encourage congregations to celebrate intentionally the faithful witness of John Knox on Sunday, October 26, 2014 (Reformation Sunday).]

4. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to develop and disseminate worship aids, including public prayers and resource materials for the month.

Rationale

John Knox, along with such reformers as John Welch, Robert Bruce, and John Livingstone, was saturated not only with the Scriptures but also with prayers, which fueled passionate preaching and compassionate ministry that sustained the revival movement in Scotland.

The church, as well as our nation, is facing moral and spiritual breakdown. Throughout church history, Presbyterians have met challenges through prayer: when our nation was born in a “hazardous and afflictive situation,” the Presbyterian General Assembly called for a national day of prayer, which led John Adams to declare May 9, 1798, a national day of “Solemn Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer” to “[implore] the mercy and benediction of Heaven on our country” (http://www.40daysofprayerandfasting.org/john_adams.asp).

Starting from the “frontier revival movement” of John Tennant and Jonathan Edwards and the “burned-over district” revivals of Charles Finney, Presbyterians have been at the forefront of the Great Awakening and other revival movements: the spiritual fire of a handful people with deep faith in the power of God who works mightily through prayer has helped to transform the very fabric of American life.

We live in a rapidly changing world. This demands that each congregation and member rediscover the power of prayer in order to enable us to prophetically declare the gospel to our community, as we stand firm on true faith preached to us by the founding reformers. No better preparation can equip us to meet the challenge than private and collective prayers. Borrowing John Knox’s own words, “if the fire be without heat, or the burning lamp without light, then true faith may be without fervent prayer” (http://www.ccel.org/ccel/knox/prayer.iii.html).

Concurrence to Item 13-08 from the Atlantic Korean and Midwest Hanmi Presbyteries.

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-08

Advice and Counsel on Item 13-08—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that this overture be approved with amendment by adding a new Recommendation 5. to read as follows:

“[5. Recognizing the significance of John Knox to the reform of the Scottish church and society (including education), to the Reformed understanding of the moral duties of governments and of citizens to correct abuses, and to the public impact of Protestantism in Great Britain itself, as well as other countries influenced by Scottish Presbyterianism, the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) directs the Stated Clerk to communicate to the Church of Scotland commendation for its contribution to the public debate over the potential separation of Scotland from Great Britain (to be voted on September 18, 2014) and appreciation for the vibrant spirit and transnational influence of John Knox as a strong and very human Christian leader.]”

The presbyteries bringing this overture rightly note John Knox’s deep piety and very appropriately share with the whole church their international awareness of his influence. The actual birthdate of John Knox is unknown but generally considered to be in 1514. The contribution of Montreat Conference Center and several organizations and scholars to remembering the 500th anniversary of Knox’s birth in the United States should be noted (http://www.johnknox500.com/).

As a Scottish patriot deeply involved in the international struggle of Protestantism in his time, it is impossible to imagine Knox not being interested in the debate among our Scottish sisters and brothers over independence or further devolution of the bond of union brought about first through the union of Scottish and English crowns in 1603 and then the Acts of Union in 1707. The amendment proposed is not to stipulate any particular elements in the worship and education material that may be developed by the Presbyterian Mission Agency if the commissioners approve this overture, but to note the timeliness of a remembrance of John Knox in this year of decision for the country he deeply loved.
The Church of Scotland determined in 2012 that it would not take a side in the debate over independence from Great Britain. Their love of God and of their nation is seen, however, in the report, “Our Vision: Imagining Scotland’s Future” (http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/19243/our_vision.pdf), which came out of thirty-two events across Scotland, including one at their National Youth Assembly. This report continues the Reformed Christian integration of theological and practical reflection on the witness of the Church within the life of society as it looks directly at the values and needs of human beings in Scotland today.

Ernest Campbell, one of the many preachers of Scottish background influential in our church’s life, in preaching on Knox’s life, recalled two key phrases of Knox: “The man who is famous for having said, “Give me Scotland or I die,” had earlier said, “Give me Christ or I cannot live!” (https://archive.org/details/sermonlegacyofjo00camp).

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 13-08

Comment on Item 13-08—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

American Presbyterianism has been shaped decisively by the Scottish Presbyterian tradition, brought to North America by Scottish immigrants. John Knox decisively shaped the Scottish Presbyterian tradition through his theological and ecclesiastical work. The 500th anniversary of John Knox’s birth is a good occasion for the PC(USA), its presbyteries, congregations, and members to remember and explore the work of John Knox, considering the ways in which Knox’s work and the Scottish Presbyterian tradition continue to shape us. Central to that tradition is fervent prayer and a powerful urgency to invite all to join in living lives that embody a gracious response to and sharing in the love of God incarnate in Jesus Christ.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency, through its Office of Theology & Worship, is ready to prepare worship aids and accompanying resource materials to mark this occasion.

Item 13-09

[The assembly disapproved Item 13-09. See pp. 16, 25.]

Commissioners’ Resolution. On Endorsing a Clergy Letter Project and Evolution Sunday.

The 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does the following:

1. Joins with the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Southeast Florida Diocese of the Episcopal Church, the Southwestern Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and with 12,794 members of Christian clergy, 482 rabbis of Judaism, and 251 clergy of Unitarian Universalists in endorsing the Clergy Letter Project and the Christian Clergy Letter printed below:

“Within the community of Christian believers there are areas of dispute and disagreement, including the proper way to interpret Holy Scripture. While virtually all Christians take the Bible seriously and hold it to be authoritative in matters of faith and practice, the overwhelming majority do not read the Bible literally, as they would a science textbook. Many of the beloved stories found in the Bible—the Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah and the ark—convey timeless truths about God, human beings, and the proper relationship between Creator and creation expressed in the only form capable of transmitting these truths from generation to generation. Religious truth is of a different order from scientific truth. Its purpose is not to convey scientific information but to transform hearts.

“We the undersigned, Christian clergy from many different traditions, believe that the timeless truths of the Bible and the discoveries of modern science may comfortably coexist. We believe that the theory of evolution is a foundational scientific truth, one that has stood up to rigorous scrutiny and upon which much of human knowledge and achievement rests. To reject this truth or to treat it as ‘one theory among others’ is to deliberately embrace scientific ignorance and transmit such ignorance to our children. We believe that among God’s good gifts are human minds capable of critical thought and that the failure to fully employ this gift is a rejection of the will of our Creator. To argue that God’s loving plan of salvation for humanity precludes the full employment of the God-given faculty of reason is to attempt to limit God, an act of hubris. We urge school board members to preserve the integrity of the science curriculum by affirming the teaching of the theory of evolution as a core component of human knowledge. We ask that science remain science and that religion remain religion, two very different, but complementary, forms of truth.”

2. Designates the 2nd Sunday in February as Evolution Sunday to recognize the influence that the theory of evolution has had in changing the world view of our natural environment.

Rationale

This overture is brought in the spirit of faith that joyfully acknowledges
• that “God brings all things into being by the Word” (*Book of Order*, W-1.2001);
• that “God transcends creation and cannot be reduced to anything within it” (*Book of Order*, W-1.2002);
• that God created the material universe and pronounced it good;
• “that the material world reflects the glory of God” (*Book of Order*, W-1.3031); and
• with the understanding that in prayer we earnestly thank “God for creation and providence” (*Book of Order*, W-3.3613).

Evolution has been wrongly viewed in some Christian communities as contrary to Christian beliefs. As a scientific theory based solidly on extensive scientific evidence, it has shaped our thinking in the natural sciences and has become the underlying theory for numerous medical advances. As a scientific theory it does not contradict the existence of God, but can be seen as a natural, creative process in God’s creation.

In a recent study of why young people are leaving the church, 29 percent of the youth reported being discouraged by the church’s antagonistic view of science, and that many young people are “turned off by the creation-versus-evolution debate.” The research also “shows that many science-minded young Christians are struggling to find ways of staying faithful to their beliefs and to their professional calling in science-related industries” (Ref. *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving the Church ... and Rethinking Faith*, David Kinnaman, 2011, The Barna Group.)

The 214th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has stated that it:
1. Reaffirms that God is Creator, in accord with the witness of Scripture and The Reformed Confessions.
2. Reaffirms that there is no contradiction between an evolutionary theory of human origins and the doctrine of God as Creator.
3. Encourages State Boards of Education across the nation to establish standards for science education in public schools based on the most reliable content of scientific knowledge as determined by the scientific community.

Other denominations have also recognized the compatibility of modern science and theology. For example, *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church - 2008 states, in part, “We recognize science as a legitimate interpretation of God’s natural world. We affirm the validity of the claims of science in describing the natural world and in determining what is scientific. We preclude science from making authoritative claims about theological issues and theology from making authoritative claims about scientific issues. We find that science’s descriptions of cosmological, geological, and biological evolution are not in conflict with theology.”

The Clergy Letter Project, www.theclergyletterproject.org, founded by Dr. Michael Zimmerman, and signed by nearly 13,000 Christian clergy has helped clergy and congregations present the scientific theory of evolution in a manner that respects and engages a thinking faith.

Thus, it is fitting to endorse The Clergy Letter Project and to set aside the 2nd Sunday in February as Evolution Sunday to celebrate the importance of evolution by honoring the birthday (12 February 1809) of the founder of evolutionary theory, Charles Darwin.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 13-09**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 13-09—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 13-09 be disapproved.

We affirm the comment of Theology & Worship as an accurate citation and summary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s approach, which honors the scientific method and scientific discoveries but does not require affirmations of same. The commissioners’ resolution does not contradict the assembly’s previously approved positions on science, evolution, and faith, but it is too narrowly construed and invites multiplication of special recognition days on a range of scientific topics, and other topics. Many churches may currently observe Earth Day informally; this is not to proscribe the observance of particular Sundays by congregations, such as an umbrella Science and Faith Sunday, or a Water Resources Sunday.

**PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 13-09**

*Comment on Item 13-09—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.*

Presbyterians have a history of strong support of scientific endeavors throughout its history. The assembly has spoken on issues such as “Christianity and Health” and “The Dialogue Between Theology and Science.” In addition, the assembly has delved deeply into numerous scientific issues in social witness statements on healthcare, technology, and many other areas.

The assembly has spoken most clearly in the 1969 statement, “Evolution and the Bible,” from the former PCUS, reaffirmed by the 214th General Assembly (2002). The statement affirms that there is no necessary contradiction between Christian faith as
expressed in our church’s confessions and an affirmation of evolution as the means of creation. It does not go so far as to suggest Christians must affirm the scientific consensus on evolution: “Neither Scripture, our Confession of Faith, nor our Catechisms, teach the Creation of man by the direct and immediate acts of God so as to exclude the possibility of evolution as a scientific theory,” and that “it is not necessary to understand the Genesis account as a scientific description of Creation” (Minutes, PCUS, 1969, Part I, p. 59, http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theologyandworship/evolution/).

In addition, the Study Catechism, approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998), takes up this question in Question 27 on creation (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/study-catechism-full-version-biblical-references/):

**Question 27. Does your confession of God as Creator contradict the findings of modern science?**

No. My confession of God as Creator answers three questions: Who?, How? and Why? It affirms that (a) the triune God, who is self-sufficient, (b) called the world into being out of nothing by the creative power of God’s Word (c) for the sake of sharing love and freedom. Natural science has much to teach us about the particular mechanisms and processes of nature, but it is not in a position to answer these questions about ultimate reality, which point to mysteries that science as such is not equipped to explore. Nothing basic to the Christian faith contradicts the findings of modern science, nor does anything essential to modern science contradict the Christian faith. ...

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**Item 13-A**

[The assembly approved Item 13-A. See p. 26.]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) docket up to eight minutes in a plenary session to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the Assembly Training School, which later became the Presbyterian School of Christian Education by its successor institution, Union Presbyterian Seminary.

**Rationale**

November 4, 2014, will mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the General Assembly’s Training School for Lay Workers (ATS) by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (PCUS). In 1959, the PCUS General Assembly approved that the name be changed to the Presbyterian School of Christian Education (PSCE). On May 3, 1997, by simultaneous action by its two boards, PSCE and Union Theological Seminary became Federated partners (UTS-PSCE). This rich heritage and productive relationship continues and is known as Union Presbyterian Seminary (UPSem). The celebration would likely include a brief statement by UPSem’s president, Brian Blount, followed by a five minute video created for the upcoming centennial celebration.

The influence of one of the few institutions in the U.S. ever chartered for the teaching of Christian education for the preparation of persons called to serve as church educators, missionaries, pastors, and leaders in the Protestant and global church cannot be understated. The ATS/PSCE equipped internationally and nationally recognized leaders who have served as General Assembly Moderators, as APCE Educators of the Year, and mission co-workers around the world. Generations of leaders serve in the varied ministries of recreation, camps and conference centers, childhood education, youth, family, social justice, higher education, and on the campus of many colleges and universities.

At the forefront of equipping women for professional ministry, ATS/PSCE led the way for hundreds of women to live out a vocation as educators and leaders when women were not able to be ordained in the Presbyterian church. The ATS/PSCE was a driving force for the certification of Christian educators and was a place where professors modeled both teaching and learning in a creative environment where team teaching, liturgical exploration, and community involvement were the norm.

Union Presbyterian Seminary’s current commitment to and instruction in Christian education is built on the unique legacy of a school that has been unparalleled in its influence on creative educational models for ministry.

It is appropriate that the 221st General Assembly (2014) in plenary session be given the privilege to honor and celebrate the unique contributions of ATS/PSCE and its more than eighteen hundred living graduates who have served the church so creatively and faithfully.

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**Item 13-B**

[The assembly approved Item 13-B. See p. 26]

The Committee on Theological Education recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Recognize the Reverend Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell (president emeritus of McCormick Theological Seminary and pastor of Highland Presbyterian Church) and the Reverend Dr. Jack Bartlett Rogers (Moderator of the 213th General Assembly (2001) and professor emeritus at San Francisco Theological Seminary) for outstanding lifetime...
2. Docket time in plenary session to celebrate with each awardee.

**Rationale**

The Award for Excellence in Theological Education was established by the Committee on Theological Education in 1996 to “honor a person biennially who has made an outstanding lifetime contribution to theological education in and for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).” The award is normally presented during a plenary meeting of the General Assembly. The COTE selected two nominees in October 2013 for this biennium: The Reverend Dr. Jack B. Rogers and the Reverend Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell.

*The Reverend Dr. Jack Bartlett Rogers*

The Reverend Dr. Jack Bartlett Rogers is a consummate person of the church. Whatever else may be said, this statement is incontrovertible. His biographical information provides the skeleton, but his impact escapes the factual telling of his life history.

Dr. Rogers was eighteen years old when he discerned a call to enter the ministry. He was born in Lincoln, Neb., in 1934. Ordained in 1959, Rogers earned B.D. (’59) and Th.M. (’64) degrees from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and a Th.D. (’63) from the Free University in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. During his doctoral studies abroad, and by the joint action of Nebraska City Presbytery and the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Netherlands, Rogers was installed as the organizing pastor of Pilgrim Fellowship of the Hervormde Kerk in Dordercht.

Upon returning to the United States in 1963, he was hired as the associate professor of religion and philosophy at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pa. He became the college’s assistant academic dean in 1969. In 1971, Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., called Rogers as professor of philosophical theology, associate provost and director of the Office of Presbyterian Ministries. From 1988–90, Rogers served briefly as the associate for theological studies in the Theology and Worship ministry unit of the General Assembly in Louisville, Kentucky.

In 1990, Rogers accepted a call to San Francisco Theological Seminary, to the newly created position of vice president/director for Southern California and professor of theology. He retired from SFTS as professor emeritus in 2000.

Throughout his career, Rogers has attended, to date, thirty-seven General Assemblies, serving in committees, teaching Presbyterian Polity and observing. One committee that was particularly important to him was the committee that drafted A Brief Statement of Faith, begun in 1983 and finally issued in 1991. He founded and taught the course Presbyterian Principles and Practice, bringing numerous students from all the Presbyterian seminaries together to study and learn polity in the laboratory of the General Assembly.

He was endorsed for Moderator by San Gabriel Presbytery shortly after his retirement from SFTS, and elected by the 213th General Assembly (2001). The prominent issues facing the 213th General Assembly (2001) included a 60-40 percent vote to send the proposed “fidelity & chastity” amendment to the presbyteries that would delete G-6.0106b to remove the ordination prohibition for people who are gay/lesbian from the Book of Order (the amendment was subsequently defeated). In addition, a statement was issued about Christology. “The assembly was wonderfully strong and united on the basics,” Rogers recalled. “They were not so clear on the rest. Along with past Moderators Freda Gardner and Syngman Rhee, the assembly created a task force of twenty people—who represented the broad spectrum of the church—to study the question of what the Confessions say about Christology.” This group became the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, referred to as “PUP.” It was specifically asked to address issues of Christology, biblical authority and interpretation, ordination standards, and power.

“And then, September 11 happened,” said Rogers, who added this tragedy to the list of denominational items for which he served as spokesperson. “My greatest contribution to the PC(USA) during my term as Moderator was saying to the church that 90 percent of Presbyterians find our denomination a viable way to worship and serve their neighbors,” Rogers reflected. “Only 10 percent are dissident and distort our version of what is going on. I worked hard to be a moderating influence and project a message of hope.” Of his affiliation with the SFTS/Southern California program from 1990–2000, Rogers said, “It was a great privilege to work with a very diverse group of people from ethnic and language backgrounds; we taught classes in five languages! I became more sensitive to [our church’s] membership all over the country as I traveled as Moderator.”

Rogers was active in advocating for the recently adopted “modern language translation” of the Heidelberg Catechism. He is currently lending his hand to creating a new structure for ecumenical theological education in the Los Angeles area, and also currently under contract editing and updating his book on the Confessions.

A prolific writer, Rogers’ books include: *Claiming the Center: Churches and Conflicting Worldview*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995; *Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical*, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974; *Jesus, the Bible and...*
Rogers’ books have appeared a number of times on the list of “Ten books for Presbyterians to Read” and on the required books list of countless syllabi in Presbyterian seminaries, colleges, and churches across North America. Always attentive to the issues facing the church, he intended his writings to help create and disseminate the knowledge necessary for the peace and unity of the church. His latest book, Jesus the Bible and Homosexuality, is no exception. Rogers began the journey to this book with an enormous personal conversion from believing homosexuality is a sin and opposing the ordination of gay and lesbian persons to coming to believe that Scripture did not support this position. The context for his conversion was a committee of the General Assembly, upon which he reluctantly agreed to serve. As he began to examine the latest scholarship on the biblical texts undergirding the church’s official stance on homosexuality, he eventually came to the conclusion that a significant body of contemporary scholarship “[understands] these texts in their ancient context and shows that they have no relevance to 21st century Christian people of same-gender orientation,” (2009 response to the draft report of The Special Committee to Study Issues of Civil Union and Christian Marriage). “The process was both very serious and painful,” he wrote in the book. “I wasn’t swayed by the culture or pressured by academic colleagues. I changed my mind initially by going back to the Bible and taking seriously its central message in our lives.” Whether one agrees with where Rogers eventually landed, the integrity of his person and the process he engaged in is never in question.

A self-confessed Evangelical, Rogers nonetheless sought to be a reconciler in the church. In his statement to San Gabriel Presbytery on the occasion of his nomination as Moderatorial candidate, Rogers stated: “this assembly will confront very divisive issues. By God’s grace, I have worked and learned from people on many sides of our present divides while at Fuller and San Francisco Theological seminaries and on the General Assembly staff. I would hope to be a reconciling presence in our often tension-filled discussions. After the assembly, the Moderator will need to minister to people of many different perspectives, some triumphant and others feeling wounded. … I am committed to helping us find our common center in Jesus Christ so that we may go forward healthy in mission and ministry” (quoted in Alexa Smith, “Longtime seminary teacher wants to be an agent of healing,” Presbyterian News Service, January 11, 2001).

The Reverend Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell

The Reverend Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell, pastor and head of staff at Highland Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, was the ninth president of McCormick Theological Seminary. Campbell was born in Pasadena, California, in 1948. She received a Bachelor of Arts magna cum laude from Occidental College in 1970, where she majored in philosophy and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She earned a Master of Divinity magna cum laude from Harvard Divinity School in 1974 and a Doctor of Philosophy in systematic theology from Southern Methodist University in 1981. In 1991, Hastings College awarded her the honorary Doctor of Divinity.

Campbell was ordained by the Presbytery of San Gabriel on June 30, 1974, and began service in Dallas, Texas, as an associate pastor at Northminster United Presbyterian Church. While pursuing her doctoral studies, she served as interim pastor at St. Paul Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and Madison Square United Presbyterian Church in San Antonio, Texas. In 1981, she became associate professor of theology and ministry and director of the doctor of ministry program at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. In 1988, she became pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Salina, Kansas, one of the first large congregations in the denomination to call a woman as head of staff.

Within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Campbell has served on numerous task forces and committees. For the General Assembly, she chaired the Special Committee on Examination of Candidates, co-moderated the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee, and served on the Board of the Vocation Agency. She was a member of the Task Force on Christian Obedience in a Nuclear Age as well as the Special Committee of fifteen, which prepared the final text of A Brief Statement of Faith approved by the denomination in 1990. She was a member of the Committee on Theological Education, served on the General Assembly Council, and was the moderator of the Congregational Ministries Division. Campbell has made significant contributions to the ecumenical church as well. She represented the Presbyterian Church in the United States on the theology commission of the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) in the preparation of the final draft of the COCU consensus and chaired the General Assembly special committee on COCU.

She is author of a monograph, Theologies Written from Feminist Perspectives, published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She has written articles on theology, ministry, ethics, and worship for Presbyterian Outlook, Reformed World, Insights, Interpretation, and Reformed Liturgy and Music. She contributed the “Trinity” entry in the Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith and wrote the forward to Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers.

**Item 13-C**

[The assembly approved Item 13-C. See p. 26.]

Minutes, Committee on Theological Education.
Item 13-Info

Committee on Theological Education Agency Summary

Overview

A. Assigned Responsibilities

The Committee on Theological Education (COTE) has the responsibility for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for theological education from the perspective of the whole church. The committee seeks to identify, develop, and propose strategies for a denomination-wide approach to theological education. The committee serves as an advocate for theological education, seeking to support the seminaries and to strengthen them for their mission in the world. The Committee on Theological Education can be seen as a two-way communication link between the denomination and its graduate theological institutions. Voting members of the committee include thirteen people elected to represent the church at-large and a representative from each of the ten seminaries related directly to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Corresponding members of the COTE include: representatives from Auburn Theological Seminary and from the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (both institutions related to the General Assembly through covenant agreements negotiated every six years), a representative of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation, and representatives of two non-Presbyterian seminaries invited by the committee, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary.

B. Accomplishments

Under the leadership over the last two years of Kathy Wolf Reed, the youngest chair ever of the COTE and associate pastor for youth and campus at First Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa, Ala., and Jeffrey F. Bullock, vice chair of the COTE and longest serving PC(USA) seminary president serving the University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa, the COTE fulfilled its General Assembly assigned functions by working collaboratively on initiatives and projects facilitated by generative conversation time in the 220th General Assembly (2012) affirmed directions encouraged by the 219th General Assembly (2010) that "commend[ed] the recent reorientation of the agenda of [the] COTE toward various emerging themes" (Minutes, 2010, Part I, p. 11); urged it to “continue the important conversation begun in the Raising Leaders document, particularly in the areas of exploring the changing leadership needs of the Presbyterian churches” (Ibid, p. 10); and encouraged “COTE to continue to explore opportunities to develop additional funding, particularly in support of students and reducing the indebtedness of beginning clergy” (Ibid). The referrals from the 220th General Assembly (2012) also asked the COTE to begin tracking and sharing new data on persons and programs related to our PC(USA) seminaries. Therefore, in 2013 the COTE took action to seek, find, monitor, track, share, and incorporate into the committee’s structure reliable research for equipping PC(USA) seminaries. Data collected on boards of trustees, seminary charter changes, and institutional reports are included in this report. In addition, the COTE collected data on annual enrollees and graduates of PC(USA) seminaries. The committee processed this business by centering plenary and subcommittee meets on key questions to foster generative thinking and action. The COTE prioritized most agendas, meetings, and work to track, resource, and consult with the 220th General Assembly (2012)’s Special Committee on Funding Theological Institutions. Committee meetings were held on the campuses of the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa (October 2012); Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. (March 2013); Union Presbyterian Seminary’s Charlotte, N.C. campus (September 2013); and for the first time ever at the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico in San Juan, P.R., where the COTE learned firsthand about the ministry, mission, and worship life of each institution. During this biennium, academic deans from four COTE-related schools were sent as alternate members and welcomed as strong contributors to the conversations and business discussions. Likewise, COTE sent as corresponding members to each meeting of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board and was further represented at national meetings of Presbyterian Women, Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators, and the Presbyterian Youth Triennium.

1. Cooperative and Collaborative Initiatives

a. Research for Equipping the Church and Theological Schools

Four major and other smaller research project presentations fostered generative committee thinking. Based on solid research and data that the committee found to be critical when consulting and resourcing church entities and theological schools these presentations included:

(1) In October 2012, Anthony Ruger, senior researcher and co-director of the Center for the Study of Theological Education, presented “Past and Present of Funding Presbyterian Seminaries.”

(2) In September 2013, Sharon Miller, senior researcher and co-director of the Center for the Study of Theological Education, presented “Theological School Enrollment and Pathways to Seminary.” David Esterline, director of the Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education; associate professor of Cross-Cultural Education and Ministry, McCormick Theological Seminary, presented the 2013 Global Survey on Theological Education which he co-directed and presented to the World Council of Churches.
Theological Education Matters Video Project

In an effort to continue to increase support for and interpret theological education broadly in the PC(USA), the committee initiated a series of videos on Why PC(USA) Seminaries Matter. The COTE members and Presbyterian faculty and seminarians are featured in these video shorts available online on the Office of Theological Education website, a newly created PC(USA) Seminaries YouTube Channel, and on social networking websites and groups on Facebook and Twitter. Titles include “Presbyterian Seminaries Prepare Transformational Leaders,” “The Transformational Effect of a Seminary Education,” “Why Support PC(USA) Seminaries,” “Seminaries Think Outside the Box,” “A Diversity of Seminaries Is a Gift,” “Seminaries Have an Impact in the World,” and “We’ve All Been Touched by Seminaries.”

Other Representative Cooperative Projects

Through Theological Education Fund cooperative project funds, the COTE sponsored two grant requests for the work to foster collaboration among the academic deans as well as the director of doctor of ministry programs of PC(USA) related seminaries. Jointly offered programs were planned and launched and mutually beneficial consultations were held. The COTE consulted with and encouraged seminaries to welcome and host General Assembly Moderator Neal Presa’s Unity with Difference Summits and Liturgical-Missional Colloquia. Representatives of the Mountain Retreat Association (also known as Montreat Conference Center), Stony Point Conference Center, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the Office of the General Assembly, and multiple Presbyterian Mission Agency ministries consulted with the committee on common concerns, initiatives, and projects. Special Committees on the Belhar Confession, Funding Theological Institutions, Preparation for Ministry and Standard Ordination Exams also consulted with the COTE on business before their respective committees.

Funding for Seminaries Related to the PC(USA)

Raising money for the Theological Education Fund (1% Plan), which is the sole source of denomination-wide support for the ten PC(USA) seminaries and the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, was a priority for the COTE and the Office of Theological Education. The Theological Education Fund (TEF) was established by the 198th General Assembly (1986). Throughout the twenty-five years of the TEF’s operational life, more than $52 million has been contributed by more than half of the PC(USA) congregations contributing at some time during this history. In 2012, more than 1,300 PC(USA) congregations and middle governing bodies made voluntary contributions to the Theological Education Fund. As a result, $1,141,669 in TEF monies were distributed to eligible schools in 2013, according to a formula developed and monitored by the COTE Institutional Review Subcommittee on which only elected members not representing seminaries sit. In 2013, approximately 1,200 PC(USA) congregations and middle governing bodies contributed, and approximately $1,000,000 will be sent to support PC(USA) schools in 2014. While the number of contributing churches declined, the COTE celebrates that more than seventy congregations have given consecutively for all twenty-five years of this project, totaling more than $3.7 million and in 2013 over fifty congregations contributed for the first time. The TEF helps underwrite quality theological education at PC(USA) seminaries to provide for the leadership of the wider church.

A Seminary Support Network includes more than 130 enthusiastic volunteers and representatives from presbyteries and synods who advocate on behalf of the seminaries with passion for the message “Seminaries and Churches Together—For Generations to Come.” A network conference serves as a training event for representatives with the 2013 event being held in conjunction with the August 2013 PC(USA) Big Tent Event in Louisville, Kentucky, and at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Fifteen network synod-level representatives continue to work on a contract basis to make possible improved regional coordination for the Seminary Support Network. Pastors, clerks of sessions, presbytery resource centers, and designated contact persons in PC(USA) congregations receive interpretive materials about our seminaries and requests for support of the Theological Education Fund. Resources include a monthly emailed newsletter focusing on the mission and impact our seminaries are engaging to transform lives, newly revised view book that presents an overview of all PC(USA) seminaries, and videos posted online and distributed on DVD.

In cooperation with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, promotion of the Theological Schools Endowment Fund continues to grow at a modest pace. The Theological Schools Endowment Fund provides an opportunity for individuals to contribute monies to benefit PC(USA) seminaries through gifts and bequests. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) Foundation manages this fund.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Theological Institutions

Charter Changes

One of the governance functions assigned to the COTE by the Report of the Special Committee on Theological Institutions approved by the 198th General Assembly (1986) is the reporting of charter changes by the individual schools to the
General Assembly. Three seminaries reported changes in their charters or other constitutional documents since the 220th General Assembly (2012).

a. Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS)

Denominational seminaries exist to serve church congregations and the ministries of churches throughout the world. As such our responsibility is to respond to the changing contexts of our denominational, congregational, alumni/ae, donor, and accreditation constituencies through good stewardship of our spiritual, intellectual, informational, and material resources.

Governance within seminaries is complex. Traditionally the system has been characterized as a “shared” or “distributive” governance model, meaning that various aspects of governance are assigned to various constituencies. For example, the “curriculum” of a seminary is primarily determined by the faculty. It is influenced by such factors as the ordination requirements of our students’ denominations and certainly by the characteristics of the faculty who are chosen by the board of trustees, but it is still the domain of the faculty. Similarly, the board of trustees has particular vision and fiduciary oversight and responsibilities (which includes such concerns as the hiring, promotion, and tenuring of faculty), and administration has managerial authority with boundaries determined by the governance structure.

The governance documents that define the vision, values, vocation, and administration of a seminary are various. Primarily among these documents for Columbia as a PC(USA) seminary are the Bible; the Book of Confessions; the Book of Order; Columbia’s articles of incorporation, bylaws, board policy manual; faculty, staff, and student handbooks; and the school catalog. Each of these builds on those that undergird it. When one document higher in the priority list changes, the other documents must maintain alignment.

While Columbia makes many changes in our policies and practices every year to better respond to our mission and to stay in alignment, we do not change our more primary documents often. For example, our bylaws and plan of governance have not changed since 1994 and our articles of incorporation have not been revised since 1995. The denomination and our church partners continue to change, however, and this requires us to keep pace.

In 1998 the Board of Columbia Theological Seminary adopted Vision2020: Long-range Plan 1998–2020. This plan guided the seminary for the next decade of its life. The original writers of Vision 2020 foresaw that their work would need to be evaluated and updated given the ever-changing context of God’s world and the seminary’s work in that world. In 2009 the board assigned a Vision 2020 review team to reexamine the vision and rework it in light of changes in the world and the evolution of Columbia under the auspices of the previous vision work. The work of the new review team was heavily dependent on the original work, because that plan still powerfully expresses many of Columbia’s aspirations. But whereas the original plan laid out a rather specific timeline of goals, the “update” (completed in 2012 and entitled Moving Toward Our Third Century: A Vision Frame) focuses on a vision “frame” rather than a plan. This “frame” is designed to provide a context for planning—both shorter- and longer-term—which the board anticipates will shape the future of the seminary throughout the next decade and beyond.

The Statement of Mission of Columbia Theological Seminary was adopted in 1992, reaffirmed in 1997, and utilized in the Vision2020 Plan. It included a first paragraph that articulated the identity of CTS as follows: “Columbia Theological Seminary is an educational institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and a community of theological inquiry and formation for ministry in the service of the Church of Jesus Christ.” This definition of Columbia’s identity and the remainder of the rather lengthy statement of mission was revised and reordered as a part of the vision process. The new statement of Columbia’s mission identity, as approved by the faculty on August 29, 2012, and by the Board of Trustees on October 2, 2012, reads: “Columbia Theological Seminary exists to educate and nurture faithful, imaginative, and effective leaders for the sake of the Church and the world.”

In 2012, Columbia’s Board of Trustees authorized a complete revision of the bylaws and plan of governance (along with whatever corresponding changes would then need to be made in our articles of incorporation with the State of Georgia). What resulted was an almost complete rewriting of the bylaws to bring them into conformity with the current ecclesial environment, our changing context, and our visionary practice. The new bylaws were adopted by the board of trustees on September 30, 2013, and ratified by the Synod of South Atlantic in October 2013 and the Synod of Living Waters in January 2014. Once ratified, the articles of incorporation were revised to assure legal alignment.

The new Bylaws (2013) make no changes in the definition of Columbia’s relationship to the PC(USA). Article I.1 states the purpose of the seminary: “Columbia Theological Seminary, Inc. (the ‘Seminary’) is an educational institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [the ‘PC(USA)’], and a community of theological inquiry, leadership development and formation for ministry in the service of the Church of Jesus Christ. The Seminary shall have all authority and power to engage in and all activities which are necessary or incidental to such purpose, in addition to the powers conferred upon nonprofit corporations by law.”

The principle changes in the bylaws include:
• Changing the membership of the board from a requirement of 41 trustees (30 of whom would come from and be elected by the Synods of South Atlantic and Living Waters), to a range of 36–41 trustees, three fourths of whom shall be from ordered ministries in the PC(USA). The principles of diversity and inclusiveness shall be observed in the election of trustees.

• Changing the pattern of having one student representative on the board, to having both faculty and student representatives given the opportunity to attend all meetings of the board and the executive committee as observers with voice but without vote.

• Changing the stipulation that two thirds of the faculty needed to be ordained officers of the PC(USA), to the stipulation that a majority of the faculty must be members of the PC(USA) and that a majority of the faculty must also serve or have served as pastors or have other significant church leadership experience.

• Providing for electronic meetings of the board and its committees provided that the technology employed permits simultaneous aural communication among all participating members. Electronic voting is also made permissible when it has followed the opportunity for discussion in a meeting.

• Changing the amendment process from being proposed by the board to the Synods of Atlantic South and Living Waters and thereafter being adopted or amended by a majority vote of each, to being adopted by two-thirds vote of the board of trustees.

• Providing for parliamentary authority as contained in Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, except where these rules are inconsistent with the bylaws and any special rules that the board may adopt.

• Changing the property trust article from a statement that all property is held in trust for the use and benefit of the synods, to a statement that upon dissolution of the seminary and after the payment of any debts of the seminary, the remainder of property will be assigned as determined by the board to “such 501(c)(3) corporations or organizations related to or affiliated with the PC(USA).”

These changes will provide Columbia with greater governance flexibility and empower the seminary to serve current and future students and our constituent churches more faithfully. They do not in any way diminish our relationship with the PC(USA), but rather strengthen our overall effectiveness as we respond to the diversification of our constituencies.

Numerous other changes to the bylaws were made for the purpose of simplification or clarification. In some cases, where there was an overabundance of administrative detail, these administrative and/or managerial matters have been transferred to the board policy manual (BPM) rather than being included in the bylaws.

The revised bylaws and plan of governance (2013) are available upon request as well as Moving Toward Our Third Century: A Vision Frame (revised mission statement included) and the bylaws and plan of governance (1994).

b. Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

The Board of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary amended the bylaws April 26, 2013, to remove the temporary provisions in the addenda that were in the bylaws adopted October, 2011 and reviewed until May 31, 2012, to allow time for some of the parts of the old bylaws to be put in policies. The 220th General Assembly (2012) reviewed the more substantive changed made by the 2011 revised and restated bylaws.

c. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

In 2013, the Board of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary approved changes to articles, constitution, and bylaws.

(1) Articles of Incorporation and Constitution

(a) Provisions that require oversight by or reporting to PC(USA) have been altered to be consistent with the practices and the ecumenical nature of other PC(USA) seminaries. Other references to Presbyterian church or theology remain, given the heritage at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, although not in an exclusive manner. In some instances, use of “Christian” Church, or those denominations that accept Pittsburgh Theological Seminary graduates for ordination, is substituted. Overall, the intent is to reflect the much more ecumenical faculty and student body, making Pittsburgh Theological Seminary more welcoming to other denominations.

(b) The board of directors section has been modified to eliminate the classes of qualifications for directors. Also, the seminary’s prior articles of incorporation with Pennsylvania stated that the board will consist of 30–37 members. It was decided that the articles and constitution simply state a minimum number of directors to avoid any limitations. The amended articles require 12 as the minimum number. The constitution increases this a bit to 15. (The articles are more difficult to change so it has as low a number as the Department of Education has indicated they can accept.) Board committees by name have been reduced to those that have actual authority to act on behalf of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. The goal was to eliminate, as much as possible, the names of committees in the constitution.
(c) References to officers of the corporation, as opposed to the officers of the board, were eliminated as they are set forth in the bylaws. Officers of the board are limited to the chair and vice chair. All other officers are officers of the corporation.

(d) The article on faculty was left largely intact, except for the denominational qualifications that have been expanded, although some clarifications were inserted.

(e) Other changes reflect a desire to reduce the detail in the constitution, update titles, and provide flexibility.

(2) **Bylaws**

(a) As with the constitution, provisions that require oversight by or reports to PC(USA) have been altered to be consistent with the practices and the ecumenical nature of other PC(USA) seminaries.

(b) The president and dean may be PC(USA) or a member of a Christian denomination that recognizes Pittsburgh Theological Seminary graduates for ordination, but at least one of them needs to be PC(USA).

(c) Vice president descriptions were revised to remove the reference to “other responsibilities assigned by the President” as Article V Section 4.B. covers that matter.

(d) The tenure review section has been modified to clarify and ensure that Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has the flexibility to appoint full-time faculty on a non-tenure track.

(e) Other changes add flexibility (such as electronic voting), remove inconsistencies, update titles, and eliminate obsolete references.

The Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Board believes these revisions to the governing documents provide Pittsburgh Theological Seminary with sufficient authority to fulfill its mission and adapt to the challenges and changes it faces while maintaining its academic integrity. The 2013 revised articles of incorporation, constitution, and bylaws are available upon request as well as previous versions of each of these documents.

2. **Reports from Individual Institutions**

The Committee on Theological Education brings to the assembly a narrative report from each of the ten seminaries related to the PC(USA), Auburn Theological Seminary, the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, and the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation.

a. **Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary**

Since 2012, Austin Seminary has inaugurated a new degree program, the Master of Arts in Ministry Practice; has begun a new online Certificate in Ministry program; and has funded two new initiatives to help ministers and seminary students address economic challenges. We have raised more than $26 million toward our comprehensive fundraising campaign goal, including fully endowing the College of Pastoral Leaders—our cohort-based model for sustaining pastoral leadership—and securing three distinguished faculty chairs and five student fellowships. Austin Seminary called Asante Todd to teach in the area of Christian ethics and the Reverend Blair Monie to become the third Louis H. and Katherine S. Zbinden Distinguished Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Leadership. Finally, we welcomed the publication of new books by four faculty members.

b. **Columbia Theological Seminary**

Great changes have emerged since the Vernon S. Broyles Jr. Leadership Center began full use during 2012–2013, equipped with new tools for instructional technology and certified LEED gold by USGBC. Some students received the first diplomas for our dual degree program (MDiv/MAPT). Columbia hired three associate deans: Dr. Kevin Park (Advanced Professional Studies), Ms. Kelly Campbell (John Bulow Campbell Library), and Dr. Israel Galindo (Center for Lifelong Learning). Dr. Pamela Cooper-White became the first theologian to receive the Fulbright Award. Communications were upgraded culminating in a new website (www.CTSnet.edu). Accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges received a ten-year reaffirmation, including a new Quality Enhancement Plan adopted around the key statement: Educating imaginative, resilient leaders for God’s changing world.

c. **University of Dubuque Theological Seminary**

The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (UDTS) energetically pursues its mission to “Follow Jesus, Walk in the Spirit, and Join God’s Mission.” UDTS is the only seminary of the PC(USA) that offers two fully accredited master’s degrees online. Since the last General Assembly, UDTS has shortened the time required to earn the online Master of Missional Christianity to two years, launched online continuing education for clergy, and hosted two annual conferences for commissioned ruling elders. The faculty has published numerous books in service to the church such as *Presbyterians and American Culture: A His-
d. **Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary**

The most significant change that has occurred at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary since the last General Assembly has been the transition the seminary has made into the quiet phase of its Covenant for the Future campaign. The campaign, which will raise $35.1 million over ten years, seeks to, among other things, eliminate student indebtedness by offering a full-tuition scholarship for every student by fall 2015. Our goal is to liberate graduates from seminary debt so they are free to go wherever God calls them when they graduate, whether that be to a congregational ministry, service as a marriage and family therapist, or some other vocation as a servant and leader for the world.

e. **McCormick Theological Seminary**

McCormick Theological Seminary has launched a two-year Master of Arts in Ministry degree, centers for young adults and service and innovative ministry, and will vote on a new curriculum in 2014. The Reverend Dr. Melody Knowles became the vice president of academic affairs at Virginia Seminary. Dr. Luis Rivera became the vice president of academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Garrett-Evangelical. McCormick welcomed Dr. Reggie Williams as assistant professor of ethics and will complete faculty searches this spring in Hebrew Bible and homiletics. Dr. Ted Hiebert was elected vice president of academic affairs and service and innovative ministry, and will vote on a new curriculum in 2014. The Reverend Dr. Melody Knowles became family therapist, or some other vocation as a servant and leader for the world.

f. **Pittsburgh Theological Seminary**

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to educating well-prepared leaders for the global church. To that end, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has received a grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations to establish the Church Planting Initiative—an expansion of the Church Planting Emphasis within the M.Div. program. Today’s seminary graduates face a world that also, and increasingly, needs entrepreneurial, mission-minded pastors who are equipped to take the gospel to people in a wide variety of nontraditional settings. Supporting church planters with resources and the permission to try “new things” brings life and energy to the broader Church. To ensure this revitalization, Pittsburgh Seminary is providing the educational preparation relevant to such ministry.

g. **Princeton Theological Seminary**

The academic years 2012–2013 and 2013–2014 were celebratory years at Princeton Seminary. The first seminary founded by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (in 1812) marked its bicentennial with joyful worship, theologically stimulating academic conferences and lectures, and festive celebrations. In January 2013, Dr. M. Craig Barnes became the seminary’s seventh president; a pastor and leader who brings a deep commitment to the church and the formation of pastors. The seminary community again celebrated at his October 2013 inauguration. In gratitude to God, the seminary opened its new library in 2013, a beautiful, light-filled building that provides both the hospitality of public and private study spaces for students, faculty, and visitors, and accessibility worldwide to its digital resources.

h. **San Francisco Theological Seminary**

San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS) is seeking to become part of God’s new life in Christ and serve the PC(USA) and Church of Jesus Christ in the 21st century hopefully, attentively, critically, and constructively with the world. In 2013, the board of trustees approved a strategic plan emphasizing innovation, flexibility, increased access to programs, and a vital connection with the church. Therefore, SFTS is diligently working, as a faculty, to revamp the M.Div. curriculum; design new certificates; move into the world of online education, in addition to teaching; designing extracurricular events that encourage the participation of the community beyond the seminary including the Iona Community, South Africa, and Egypt; introducing certificate programs in trauma and spiritual care, worship leadership and, jointly with McCormick Theological Seminary, executive leadership; making plans to sell some properties and build new housing; launching a $6 million funding initiative—“Chapter 1: Designing a Mosaic for Ministry”; and introducing the Center for Innovation in Ministry, which will bring together scholars and practitioners to assess, share, and spread new models and methods of forward-looking, effective, relevant ministry essential to building a vibrant church.

i. **Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary**

Reformed, always being reformed. Today, Johnson C. Smith Seminary (JCSTS) perhaps is more keenly aware of the reforming work of the Holy Spirit than in recent memory. The theological consortium to which JCSTS belongs is facing tough challenges. Consequently, JCSTS is reexamining its mission, structure, and direction. Building on the legacy of the Black Church and the Reformed Tradition, JCSTS is becoming an innovative theological institution committed to serving the current and emerging leadership needs of the Church. We believe God is at work in this time of great change and that JCSTS is uniquely positioned to contribute to God’s reformation of the Church and the world. Moving forward, we expect to prepare
seminary graduates to be bi-vocational. We expect to become a greater resource for lay leaders who carry ministry responsibilities in smaller congregations, and we expect to make seminary education more accessible and affordable.

j. **Union Presbyterian Seminary**

Union Presbyterian Seminary (UPSem) completed its new Charlotte campus facility and has now been holding classes there for a year. The seminary has turned its focus to infrastructure needs on the Richmond campus, intending to renovate refectory and dormitory facility, Richmond Hall, while also building new family/married student housing. The school is currently completing its 2014–2019 strategic plan, to initiate on July 1, 2014, and has accomplished a unified calendar that brings programming on the Richmond, Charlotte, and Extended Campuses on the same academic schedule. The seminary has also raised significant funds toward endowing its church serve scholarship that is designed to assist seminary alumni/ae receive calls from small churches. UPSem also celebrates the call of two new members of the faculty: Joshua Ralston, instructor of theology; Christine Luckritz Marquis, assistant professor of church history.

k. **Auburn Theological Seminary**

Auburn Theological Seminary completed a strategic planning process that focuses Auburn on equipping leaders to work for justice through education, platforms for public leadership, and research. Auburn’s Center for the Study of Theological Education published “Theological Student Enrollment,” examining trends to help schools plan for the future, and released findings from “On Our Way,” studying students’ paths to seminary. Auburn’s Coach Training Program prepared students to coach church leaders in developing resilience, leading change, and thriving on the challenges of ministry. Through training and other resources, Auburn Media and Groundswell, our digital media platform, advanced faith leaders in uniting people of faith and moral courage in a multifaith movement for justice and in speaking on issues of social and moral concern that transcend partisan politics.

l. **Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico/Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico**

The Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico has continue working toward its academic and financial goals, which are to respond faithfully and efficaciously to the challenges that society and church impinges in the theological education of our students and to establish economical stability and balance to our institution. To pursue these goals we initiated three academic efforts: (1) a leveling program that prepares students without a bachelor degree to register and pursue a graduate degree, (2) a post-baccalaureate program for lay persons to explore their vocations and equip themselves to serve the church, and (3) specific areas of interest in Bible, spirituality, and pastoral care in our M. Div. program. We will continue working with the Apostolic Church in Los Angeles in providing theological education to their candidates. These efforts, along with other financial adjustments, helped us to end the 2012 to 2013 fiscal year with a modest surplus.

m. **Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation**

Since the 220th General Assembly (2012), the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation (OPSF), under the leadership of the Reverend Dr. Gary S. Eller, president, continued to provide scholarships for inquirers and candidates attending any of our ten PC(USA) seminaries. Financial assistance now exceeds $9 million with 762 merit scholarships, based on potential for ministry, awarded. Assistance to commissioned ruling elders increased including a distance education initiative with the University of Nebraska-Omaha, providing training in church administration. OPSF contributes to a number of lifelong learning events for clergy and lay leaders across our thirteen state primary service region and holds annual lifelong learning events in Hastings and Omaha, Nebraska, and Kansas City, Kansas, with an increased number of states being engaged through educational events and internship programs.
Item 14-01

[The assembly approved Item 14-01 with comment. See p. 44.]

[Comment: The comment is taken from the Rationale of Item 14-01 as shown below.]

1001 New Worshiping Communities

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) do the following:

1. Encourage each mid council to sponsor a training or awareness event on 1001 New Worshiping Communities in cooperation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

2. Encourage each session to pray for the fulfillment of the 1001 movement by daily praying at 10:02 AM the scripture passage Luke 10:2 that asks God to send more workers into the harvest field. (“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”)

3. Recommend each presbytery to view a new 1001 video at presbytery meetings and discuss, "How can we engage in ministry outside the walls of the church in our own context?"

4. Encourage each presbytery to start at least one new worshiping community within the next two years.

Rationale:

These recommendations are in response to the following referrals:


The 1001 New Worshiping Communities movement has the potential to make new disciples and revitalize the whole of the church; this has become one of the key directional goals of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The strategies for accomplishing the goal are outlined below and the progress to date is summarized. The recommendations summarized above will enhance the denomination’s commitment to the initiative and widen the base of participation. The 1001 New Worshiping Communities movement is a grassroots movement that is best implemented on a regional basis. Therefore, widespread understanding of and commitment to the movement is desirable. Local commitment can be cultivated if each presbytery and synod participates in planning an event tailored to its specific regional culture.

New worshiping communities are local and contextual. They will differ in style and strategy depending on the location. They are best planned, nurtured, and sustained at a local level. Starting something brand new has the potential to transform the entire body of Christ, including traditional congregations and councils. The possibility for transformation multiplies to the extent that it reaches each corner of the denomination. The goal is for every presbytery to experience firsthand the impact of new growth and missional ministry.

Strategies:

• Communicate the vision through producing videos and writing stories about innovative, creative communities.

• Employ a variety of communication tools such as Facebook, website, Twitter, newsletters, and YouTube to cast the vision.

• Recruit potential leaders for New Worshiping Communities (NWC) through visits to seminaries, presbyteries, conferences, colleges, and gatherings, meeting with potential leaders, helping them to discern a call to NWC leadership.

• Support NWC leaders with training, coaching, internships, and assessments through Presbyterian Centers for New Church Innovation.

• Continue to add regional Centers for New Church Innovation until there are six regional centers with national impact (currently two are fully functional and another two are in formative stages).
• Resource mid councils by visiting presbytery and synod meetings and presenting workshops at national conferences such as Big Tent, Triennium, New Wilmington Mission Conference, Wee Kirk, and Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant conferences.

• Present “Get in the Game” (vision casting) events at presbyteries, seminaries, conferences, and other gatherings.

• Provide resources such as Starting New Worshiping Communities to help leadership teams get started with solid theological and strategic foundations.

• Provide training and assessment for leaders.

• Provide some financial support for NWCs through Mission Development Resource Committee grants.

• Train prospective NWC leaders through offering internships for college and seminary students.

The initiative was launched during the 220th General Assembly (2012), and as of December 2013 the following milestones have been reached:

• Number of New Worshiping Communities launched to date: 173.

• Presbyteries with at least one new worshiping community: 89.

• Seed Grants given by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to encourage innovation: 73.

• Investment Grants awarded to sustain significant progress: 7.

• Health Insurance grants provided: 8.

• Seminary students who have completed NWC internships: 11.

• Potential NWC leaders who have completed Discerning Missional Leadership assessments: 60.

• Percentage of new worshiping communities that are racial ethnic or new immigrant predominantly: more than 50.

• Percentage of new worshiping communities that serve primarily young adults (age 18–30): 25.

• People who “like” 1001 new worshiping communities on Facebook: 1,341.

• Professionally produced videos that provide excellent examples of new worshiping communities: 18.

• Video contest launched to encourage new worshiping communities to tell their own stories.

• Centers for New Church Innovation support and resource new worshiping communities: two centers are active, and three more expected to launch in 2014.

• People who have participated in Starting New Worshiping Communities workshops: 100.

• Presbyteries that have sponsored a Get in the Game event to communicate the vision for starting new worshiping communities: 58.

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**Item 14-02**

[The assembly approved Item 14-02 with amendment. See pp. 44, 45.]

Educate a Child, Transform the World.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Acknowledge and celebrate the deep and rich history of Presbyterian church’s role in transforming society by providing access to quality education for children in this country and around the world.

2. Recommit itself to education as a core focus of mission in this nation and with our global partners.

3. Launch a churchwide initiative that will inspire, equip, and connect our congregations, mid councils, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to improve the quality of education for 1,000,000 children in the U.S. and globally over the next four years.
4. Encourage and support global partners and leaders here in the United States who have made a vocational commitment to provide a quality education to children in their communities.

5. In all of these efforts, place particular emphasis on children in poverty or otherwise at risk.

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to shape and guide this initiative, developing tangible metrics to determine success and impact, and to report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016), sharing progress made and identifying strategies for deeper engagement in 2016-18.

[7. Urge those developing this initiative and its metrics to build upon values, traditions, and analysis embodied in previous General Assembly policy on public education and the impacts of poverty, and to consider ways that this initiative continues the work of child advocacy approved by previous assemblies.]

**Rationale**

For 176 years, the Presbyterian church has served as one of the greatest forces for education in the world, helping hundreds of thousands of children to learn to read and write, to think critically, and to understand their work as their Christian vocation. Our church’s core belief that every child is created in the image of God motivated our early mission workers to reach out to new communities with the offer of a quality education. In hundreds of communities, Presbyterians were the first to open up opportunities for formal education for girls.

The Presbyterian church has a deep and rich commitment to providing access to education as a part of its core Missional identity. Our church is a church of educators, school administrators, PTA members, school board members, and school volunteers, and we believe God is calling our church to collectively impact the quality of education for children in this country and around the world.

The World Bank and other international organizations have shown that primary education for young children reduces poverty, improves health, and improves the distribution of income. Globally, the recent U.N. Development Goals have helped many communities in the Global South to bring previously uneducated children into the classroom. However, the sad reality is that in South Sudan, Guatemala, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, and many other countries, the combination of overcrowded classrooms, poorly trained teachers, and inadequate infrastructure prevent students from receiving the quality education they need.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency’s Mission Work Plan identifies “addressing the root causes of poverty, particularly as they impact women and children” as a priority focus of its work. The intersection of this critical need for children around the world today and our church’s commitment to education constitutes a clear calling to challenge the church to engage in mission together.

This initiative will support PC(USA) global partners and education leaders in the United States as they address persistent poverty through critical investments in quality education of young children. The goal is to reach 1 million children in the next four years, inspiring, equipping, and connecting hundreds of congregations and mid councils to focus a portion of their mission efforts in support of the following activities:

- Train teachers, develop curricula, and help partners adopt “best practices” in education;
- Help global partners build or refurbish school buildings;
- Financially support mission workers in education and specific education projects;
- Advocate for better funding in public education in the U.S., particularly for children at risk;
- Pray for educators, students and administrators, as well as this education initiative;
- Get involved in “Adopt a School” programs, offering tutoring and other forms of support for local schools, focusing on children at risk; and,
- Open the doors of the church during the week to offer afterschool programs that include tutoring, mentoring, and other enrichment opportunities.

Following the movement of the Holy Spirit and working together with our global partners, mid councils, congregations, and other leaders in education, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will transform the world, one child, one educator, one school at a time, collectively impacting more than one million children over the next four years.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-02**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 14-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 14-02 with amendment by adding two new recommendations as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]
7. Urge those developing this initiative and its metrics to build upon values, traditions, and analysis embodied in previous General Assembly policy on public education and the impacts of poverty, and to consider ways that this initiative continues the work of child advocacy approved by previous assemblies.

8. Commend the initiative for including domestic as well as international dimensions as the pattern of public education funding and effects of economically and racially segregated housing continue to restrict the aspirations of many children in the United States.

The ACSWP believes that this recommendation may provide an opportune time to encourage the church to recover and lift up the high calling of the teacher and the public school. Children are born unfinished. Teachers and the educational institutions in which they serve (along with parents and the broader community) participate with God in forming and equipping mature adults who are able to participate faithfully in the world. Certainly the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the larger Reformed tradition have benefitted from and helped create an educated laity.


Among other dynamics, this study looked at trends toward re-segregation and privatization in the United States, trends reinforced by inequities in funding and in some measures by testing-based curricula. Arguments over charter schools and national standards were also examined, and a holistic learning model, including learning about religion in older grades, was affirmed. A basic approach: “this report is founded on the assumption that every child has the right to equity and quality in education and that it is the responsibility of the whole church to protect and preserve this right for all children, in accordance with Jesus’ call to us to understand all in need as our neighbors, and in support of Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.” This report also refers to prior work of the church and ecumenical cooperation in this area, all of which might benefit those developing a new program.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 14-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 14-02.

As articulated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency in Item 14-02, “the Presbyterian church has served as one of the greatest forces for education in the world for 176 years, helping hundreds of thousands of children to learn to read and write, to think critically, and to understand their work as their Christian vocation.”

Endorsing in totality Item 14-02, the ACWC adds the acknowledgment of the need to educate girls in this country and around the world. Organizations like “Girl Rising” (www.girlrising.org) provide excellent educational, as well as informational insight into the necessity to continue to lift up and support the education of girls, articulating, “We know that educating girls is the smartest investment of our time. When girls are educated, communities thrive and economies grow. Yet 66 million girls are missing from classrooms worldwide, and tremendous opportunities are lost” (www.girlrising.org).

Hence, as the PMAB “directs the PMA to shape and guide this initiative … and to report back to the 222nd General Assembly (2016) strategies identified,” partnering with organizations like “Girl Rising” that are presently doing the hard work of furthering the education of girls may prove beneficial. On that note, “Girl Rising” says, “We use the power of storytelling, leveraged through partnerships, to share the simple truth that educating girls can transform societies;” and notes that “educating girls is the smartest investment opportunity in the world today,” and yet, “65 million girls are missing from classrooms worldwide.” Much work is yet to be done, and time’s a-wasting! Now is the time. Educate Girls, Change the World!

Item 14-03

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Acknowledge the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s historic commitment to joining Christ’s mission in local and global communities.
2. Encourage congregations, mid councils, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to join intentionally in God’s mission to transform our world and address root causes of societal injustices by following Christ’s example of service through faith, hope, love, and witness.

3. Launch a churchwide initiative that will inspire, equip, and connect Presbyterians to continue to go beyond the walls of their congregations and increase their engagement in service to their communities and the world.


Rationale

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a historical commitment to joining Christ’s mission in local and global communities and many have discussed and written about the concept of the missional church in recent years. The Presbyterian Mission Agency, in its 2013–2016 Mission Work Plan, has made engaging young adults through mission and volunteer service a priority and believes shaping multigenerational, faith-based relationships dedicated to service in local communities and the world will help the church better follow Christ’s mission.

For nearly 200 years, the Presbyterian church has served as one of the greatest forces for mission in the world. The church is called to minister to the immediate needs and hurts of people. The Book of Order states: “In the life of the congregation, individual believers are equipped for the ministry of witness to the love and grace of God in and for the world. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship to offer care and nurture to God’s children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, and to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world” (G-1.0101).

Presbyterians have sought to be a mission-centered church from their inception and have a strong, unwavering belief that there is no other way truly to be the church. Many have discussed and written about the concept of the missional church in recent years. One Presbyterian scholar, Darrell Guder, has written on this vital topic for the church today. In his book, Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America, Guder and his colleagues provide key insights into the recent missional church movement.

Guder and his colleagues discuss three themes that are important to this proposal: the shift the church must make, the purpose of the church, and the role of denominational structures. Guder argues that to be missional the church must “move from church with mission to missional church.” Most churches articulate a commitment to mission and have a mission program. If they are large enough, they likely will have a specific pastor devoted to mission. Many churches support several overseas missionaries and are probably contributing money and service to a local mission, homeless shelter, or food bank. In this construct, mission is seen as one of the many activities and programs of the church. The purpose of the local church is not to be what Guder calls “vendors of religious services and goods,” with mission merely being one of a myriad of programs. Rather, doing mission is central to what it means to be the church. This is the shift that the church must make.

The second major theme in Guder’s work challenges the very definition of what it means to be the church. Guder argues that it is “a new understanding of the church as a body of people sent on a mission.” The church is thus not only a body that gathers for a worship service. The church is also a group of people organizing together so they can serve the community around them most effectively. The purpose of gathering is to be sent. Guder states, “The public worship of the mission community always leads to the pivotal act of sending. The community that is called together is the community that is sent. Every occasion of public worship is a sending event.” To be a missional church, worship is driven more by what must happen after the service.

What it truly means to be the church, according to Guder, is “the people of God who are called and sent to re-present the reign of God. This vocation is rooted in the good news, the gospel: in Jesus Christ the reign of God is at hand and is now breaking in.” For Guder, the focus of the staff and the commitment of the resources are directed toward helping people to re-present Christ to their neighbors in their everyday lives. They do this through normal, day-to-day interactions with friends, family members, and colleagues. The activities of the church should model these forms of everyday interactions. Guder writes: “The ecclesial practices are never esoteric or supernatural but involve ordinary human behavior: joining and sharing,
eating and drinking, listening and caring, testing and deciding, welcoming and befriending. To do this effectively, the church must know its neighbors and understand what things they care about, so as to cultivate authentic, genuine friendships.

This initiative seeks to inspire Presbyterian congregations to reach out to their communities through acts of service that lead to connectivity with local communities and demonstrates the love of Christ to their neighbors such as:

- Every congregation would determine a number of volunteers and volunteer hours they would commit to their community and fulfill that commitment for the year.
- Adopt a community in need of refurbishing in the U.S.
- Actively engage youth and young adults in volunteer opportunities.
- Support young adults and others called to serve in God’s mission in the U.S. and abroad.
- “Re-presenting” Christ in their everyday lives through normal, day-to-day interactions with friends, family members, and colleagues.
- Support the Living Missionally initiative in prayer.
- Actively engaging at least 1,000 PC(USA) congregations each year (2014–2016) to focus on becoming “Missional Churches” through acts of service in communities around the world.

$Item 14-04

[The assembly approved Item 14-04 with comment. See pp. 44, 46–52.]

[Comment: The comment is taken from the Rationale of Item 14-04 as shown below.]

Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Church Growth Consultation Committee Report

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, on behalf of the Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Church Growth Consultation Committee, recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014):

1. Encourage local congregations to engage in relational ministries with people of all races and ethnicities in their neighborhoods.

2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Committee on Theological Education to consult with theological seminaries to develop culturally sensitive curriculum, theologies, language, teaching and learning styles for teaching elders and church leaders of all ethnicities.

3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to collaborate with mid councils to establish regional certified ministry training programs to prepare racial ethnic and immigrant church members to serve worshiping communities.


5. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and mid councils to create a network of racial ethnic and new immigrant coaches trained to address the culturally specific needs of racial ethnic and new immigrant congregations.

6. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Office of the General Assembly, and the mid councils to consult with each other to consider expanding the criteria for accepting the ordination credentials of new immigrant leaders.


Rationale

These recommendations are in response to the following referral: 2012 Referral: Item 16-06. Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation. Recommendation. Direct the GAMC (Office of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/PW, the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) and the Office of the General Assembly to Hold a National Consultation to Develop Strategies and Policies to Support Racial Ethnic, Multicultural, and New Immigrant Church Growth
This report and its recommendations address the four areas to which the 220th General Assembly (2012) requested response: (1) Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial, ethnic, and new immigrants into the church; (2) Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth; (3) Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregational levels; and, (4) include a strategy to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in the Book of Order, G-2.0505a(1).

The consultation upon which these recommendations are based concluded that our efforts have borne fruit when we have recognized the racial and cultural shifts in society and have sought to embrace them. We have also seen fruitful efforts when we have gone directly to the people affected by our efforts and sought to work alongside them. Thus, our recommendations are premised upon the belief that we can become an even more fruitful denomination if we learn to live more fully into these cultural shifts, as in that way our life together becomes more relevant and faithful. Rather than seeking ways to assimilate our racial ethnic and new immigrant sisters and brothers into the PC(USA) we must learn to embrace and embody, the diversity of which we are a part.

REPORT

Biblical and Theological Foundations

*All Scripture references are New Revised Standard Version

God is diverse and communal by nature. The triune God is Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, three persons, distinct, yet equal in substance (Book of Confessions, The Scots Confession, 3.01). Consistent with God’s nature, God creates a world of diversity and calls it good (Genesis 1). Our Brief Statement of Faith states, “In sovereign love, God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community” (Book of Confessions, 10.3, lines 29–32). Presbyterians make a commitment to racial ethnic diversity as a good and faithful response to God’s affirmation of diversity revealed in the triune God and mirrored in creation.

The call to diversity is not only underlined in God’s very being and inherent in creation, but affirmed in the ministry of the Old Testament prophets. The prophets taught Israel to “love the alien as yourself” (Lev. 19:34, Deut. 10:19, Exodus 22:21; 23:9), and to consider “foreigners” as “citizen[s] among you” (Lev. 19: 34). Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the law of the prophets, preaching the kingdom of God and calling us to observe the kingdom in our brothers and sisters. Boldly practicing a ministry of inclusion, Jesus broke down the barriers of exclusivity, as he shared life with diverse persons and challenged systems of economic, racial, and gender segregation. In the inauguration of his public ministry, Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to announce his mission to proclaim good news to those who are poor, imprisoned, and suffering oppression (Isa. 61:1–2, Lk. 4:18–19). A first century Palestinian Jew, Jesus ministered to a Roman officer (Mt. 8:5–13), a Canaanite woman (Mt. 15:21–28), and a Samaritan woman (Jn. 4:7–30), in addition to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt. 10:6). In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus challenged the long-standing enmity between Jews and Samaritans when he calls the Samaritan “good,” in appreciation for the Samaritan's benevolence towards a Jewish neighbor (Lk. 10:25–37). Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he commissioned his followers to go and “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 28:19, emphasis added). Baptism is the invitation to all who would become part of the body of Christ. Likewise, in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, Christ offers the invitation to commune to all who trust in him.

“By the indwelling of the Holy Spirit all believers … [are] united to Christ … [and] united one to another in the Church (Book of Confessions, The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.054). On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were gathered in one place when suddenly, they were filled with the Holy Spirit who enabled them to speak in various languages (Acts 2:4). When people from diverse multinational and multilingual backgrounds heard the preaching of the gospel in their own languages, they responded and three thousand people were baptized.

Presbyterians seek to be faithful to what God affirms, what Jesus’ ministry exemplifies, and what the Holy Spirit empowers—that is, unity in diversity. Yet, we struggle to be a community that reflects the diversity God desires. Sunday morning still remains a largely segregated hour. Our denomination has opportunity to be a more faithful witness of the body of Christ with its diverse parts (1 Corinthians 12). Informed by the witness of Scripture and our confessions, we seek to be obedient to the will of God when we embrace difference, intentionally build diverse communities of faith, and humbly and faithfully pray for the Holy Spirit to empower us. To this end, we make a commitment to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA).

The Process

In response to the directive from the 220th General Assembly (2012) that a consultation be held for the purpose of developing strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA), the
Presbyterian Mission Agency, through the office of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women convened a small group for the purpose of devising such a consultation.

The group charged with designing the consultation had two purposes: (1) to convene a consultation that would respond to the issues that the General Assembly wanted addressed; and, (2) to identify the persons who should attend such a consultation, keeping in mind that such a gathering should include representatives of specific offices within the General Assembly, experienced leaders in racial ethnic and new immigrant churches, and mid council executives. To that end, thirty persons were invited (see Appendix 1, List of Attendees to the Consultation). In addition, the agenda of the consultation was fashioned in such a way as to produce responses to Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 of the action of the General Assembly in response to the report from the 219th General Assembly’s (2010) Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth: Appendix 2, Item 16-06, Minutes, 220th General Assembly (2012).

The agenda of the consultation began with worship at the Presbyterian Center Chapel in celebration of Pentecost, followed by opening remarks, a panel discussion on “Fulfilling the Promise and Hope of Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Ministries,” and a description of what our ecumenical partners are doing in this area. The core of the consultation was fashioned around the attendees entering into conversations related to: (1) Signs of Hope; (2) Measures of Success; (3) Resources; (4) Challenges; and (5) Strategies. (See Appendix 3, Learning/Sharing Process, Leaders’ Guide). These conversations began with generating ideas around those five topics, and then moved to sorting and summarizing those topics.

The final step led the group in discerning the most important insights from those conversations. The attendees self-selected into smaller groups that could address, more deeply, one of the five topic areas. Each group was charged with discussing the key ideas presented, summarizing the wisdom of the group, filling in any gaps, adding new ideas, and preparing a statement for consideration by the entire body in plenary. Each group then reported their work results and responded to comments and questions.

The group then discussed the best way to fashion a final report of the consultation, and determined that a writing team would be given the task of putting all these pieces together in a cohesive and cogent report; a draft would then be circulated to the consultation attendees for additional comment, before finalizing the report for submission to the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Following the consultation, four individuals and one staff were identified to draft the initial report. This “writing team” subsequently met over a two-day period to discuss what had been written, heard, and said during the consultation and to begin the process of actually drafting the report. The report addresses these four particular areas raised by the 220th General Assembly (2012): (1) Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial, ethnic, and new immigrants into the church; (2) Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth; (3) Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregational levels; (4) Include a strategy to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1).

Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial, ethnic, and new immigrants into the church.

It is clear that there have been many instances of effective programs and initiatives that bear celebration—1001 New Worshiping Communities; New Beginnings, Engage, and Triennium to name a few. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of these church programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) is a relatively simple task. We identify those programs and initiatives, review their stated goals, and determine their effectiveness. In pursuing that task, however, it becomes abundantly clear that nothing we do as a church can be particularly effective unless and until we change the language we use to measure the efficacy and effectiveness of our programs and initiatives. Changing the language certainly means changing ourselves, as well.

In making such an assessment, however—and given that our efforts have borne fruit in numerous instances—the larger question is this: Why have we been unable to meet our goals for increasing the percentage of racial ethnic persons within our denomination? That question looms even larger at a time when the society around us has itself changed so dramatically over the past decade or more. Stated differently, the question is and should be: What in those initiatives and programs has spurred fruitfulness? The consultation concluded that our efforts have borne fruit when we have recognized the racial and cultural shifts in society and have sought to embrace them. Thus, an initiative such as the 1001 New Worshiping Communities bears fruit because it recognizes the need to use new language and new approaches as it exhibits the Kingdom of God to people outside our church walls. Likewise, new immigrant fellowships are fruitful when they recognize and address the actual needs of those whom they seek to reach. Rather than deciding from “on high” how to approach future congregants, they have, instead, gone directly to the people, asking, “How can we work alongside you?”

The instances of bearing fruit in our efforts to exhibit the Kingdom are, for the most part, the result of local initiatives; those realities deserve to be acknowledged and celebrated! Yet we believe that we would become even more fruitful as a denomination if we learn to live more fully into these cultural shifts; in that way, our life together becomes more relevant and faithful as...
well. We need to relinquish our customary habit of asking, “How do we assimilate our racial ethnic and new immigrant sisters and brothers into the PC(USA)?” Rather, the PC(USA) must ask, “How do we become a community that embodies the diversity God desires?” Implicit in that question are other questions such as “What do we need to learn about being faithful from our sisters and brothers outside the PC(USA)?” and “How do we enter more fully into their lives and circumstances?” and “How do we need to change the dominant culture so that there are places in the community of faith for everyone?”

In Tucson, Arizona, a Middle East Presbyterian Fellowship is composed of persons who share a common language, Arabic; though the group includes Muslims as well as Christians, they come together each week to worship the living God. So, too, a new worshipping community in a southern California trailer park has begun to witness to the love of Jesus Christ among transient, broken, lonely people. A newly ordained pastor in Colorado Springs serves as an evangelist to unchurched young people there. Even though we have built much of our denominational identity on chartered congregations, these fellowships may well never fit that mold; even so, if we fail to embrace them as part of our fold, we fail to exhibit the Kingdom of God to the world—a fundamental and essential part of our calling as a church.

We have 1001 New Worshipping Communities. We have the Middle East Presbyterian Fellowship. We have myriad other stories of sowing seeds for the Kingdom, and seeing them begin to grow up around us. Now we must find the language and the will to embrace them and to build on their fruitfulness. We must find a way for our dominant racial and cultural membership—the 91 percent—to learn how to embrace our changing context. We need to do this not as a way merely to increase our numbers. More importantly, we need to do it in response to Christ’s great commission. We are called to “go and make disciples”—not to go and make clones.

As we reach out to our brothers and sisters in the racial ethnic and new immigrant communities—and indeed to all our sisters and brothers in this world—we may well risk our corporate life. As we engage those instances of fruitfulness, we need to know that doing so will surely be at the cost of our comfortable identity and familiar life as the PC(USA). For many of us that will feel like a death; so we can expect resistance—sometimes very powerful resistance.

As a resurrection people, however, we have the powerful promise that God’s love has conquered death. That is why our Book of Order can acknowledge that we are called “to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life” (F-1.0301). That promise frees us and empowers us to engage the risks and to embrace the new life that will surely come to us as we welcome, encourage, and join in the lives and the faith of our racial ethnic and new immigrant sisters and brothers in Christ.

Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth. If our church is to be faithful to the calling to participate in God’s work of transforming the world around us, then we must first be open to the Spirit transforming us. The church has said repeatedly that it wants genuine and sustainable growth in ministries with racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant groups; likewise it has stated a desire for full inclusion of such other underrepresented populations as young adults and persons with disabilities. The first key to full inclusion of each of these constituencies is transformation of the church’s own corporate culture.

Such transformative changes will in turn necessitate changes in our customary, habitual means of numerical measurement, e.g., membership rolls, monetary contributions, operational and benevolence budgets, Sunday school enrollment, average attendance at Sunday morning worship. Instead, we will need to learn how to recognize and measure indicators of faithfulness and fruitfulness, rather than signs of success.

In that regard, the consultation offers the following four goals for consideration, along with strategies and key questions, as indicators of our faithfulness to God’s call that we be transformed:

GOAL ONE: MAKING DISCIPLES

Is the focus more on discipleship and less on formal membership? Are we sustaining the current emphasis on creating new worshipping communities, as distinct from establishing chartered congregations? Are we raising up—and equally importantly supporting—leaders who embody new understandings of leadership, e.g., the capacity to live and work among the poor, the capability of distinguishing between leadership and management, a willingness to surrender the privileges and habits of being part of the dominant culture?

Since poverty is a reality of life, either present or imminent, for a great many racial ethnic and new immigrant communities, as it is for a majority of persons with disabilities, how is our educational tradition preparing, and expecting, ordained church leaders to live and work among the realities of poverty? What new things do the church need to do to prepare leaders for standing among persons and communities in poverty?

GOAL TWO: TRANSFORMING CHURCH CULTURE

Are we transforming the church’s culture from regulatory to relational, from directional to collaborative? Are we able to allow the still new Form of Government to create possibilities rather than restrictions?
Are we able to avoid returning to the comfortable habit of endlessly amending the Book of Order?

Are we moving from institutional maintenance towards community relevance? Are we being faithful stewards of God’s resources within God’s world?

**GOAL THREE: REFORMING STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

How have we reformed our understanding of what ordination does and should mean? How have we aligned our preparation-for-ministry process with that reformed understanding?

Are we able to reform theological education to include a focus on missional, racial ethnic, and multicultural contexts? Have we struck a healthy balance in theological education between technical proficiency and creative imagination?

Have we created programs for developing lay ministry that bridge the leadership gap for racial ethnic and new immigrant communities?

**GOAL FOUR: BEARING EVANGELICAL WITNESS**

Are we bearing witness to the power of the Gospel, as distinct from bearing witness to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)? Are we establishing ministries of reconciliation, such as interfaith dialogue, doing racial justice, advocating for the excluded, the oppressed, the marginalized, and the vulnerable? How open are we to the Spirit doing really new things among us?

Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregational levels.

The consultation’s vision for the church is colorful and friendly. Led by authentic leaders reflecting the changing demographic of America, worship participants also reflect a diverse America. Everyone is welcome. The church embodies radical hospitality to everyone: racial and ethnic minorities, new worshipping communities, people with disabilities. New forms of worship and mission are valued. To morph from the culture of the current church with its strong history of technically proficient leaders, to the radically imaginative, open, and accepting nature of the envisioned church will require comprehensive changes to the church body at all levels: from local congregational levels though the presbyteries, and at the General Assembly and our seminaries.

The consultation had wide-ranging discussions around the roles of local congregations, presbyteries, synods, the General Assembly, and those involved in theological education regarding how they might best support enhanced racial ethnic and new immigrant outreach:

* **Local congregations**
  - Form full partnerships with racial and ethnic ministries and new worshipping communities where the gifts and talents of each group have equal weight. Rethink the use of church buildings so that they are open, attractive beacons in the community used daily and fully for ministry by diverse groups.
  - Expand the role and empower formalized lay ministries.

* **Presbyteries and Synods**
  - Clarify their own vision of faithful mission, particularly as it relates to inclusive ministries.
  - Create a network of coaches and peer mentors to clarify and implement the vision for inclusive ministries.
  - Create lay leadership programs, including internships, coaches and peer mentors, to prepare culturally sensitive and theologically grounded leaders for new inclusive ministries.

* **The General Assembly**
  - Identify funds that can be utilized to support a variety of inclusive ministries.
  - Commit as a corporate body to the distribution of all official documents in culturally sensitive language.
  - Lead the church in the important work of engaging in conversations and in making opportunities available for discussing white privilege and racial prejudice in the church.
  - Investigate new methods of developing and nurturing leadership for more inclusive ministries.

* **Those Involved in Theological Education**
• Establish a perpetual dialogue with the entire theological education community, focusing on ministry in diverse contexts.

• Identify those functions, historically carried out by synods, e.g., first call programs and early ministry initiatives that might need to be included within initial and continuing theological education settings.

• Cultivate the innovative ministry skills demanded by a changing context within teaching communities that focus on continuing education and lifelong learning.

• Investigate new methods of developing and nurturing leadership for more inclusive ministries.

• Develop specific skill sets for working with persons living in poverty and integrate those skills into theological education.

• Develop alternative, practical forms of education such as internships, coaching teams, and peer mentors to provide emerging leaders with hands-on training and support, so that they can relate effectively to their particular church family and context, as well as to the broader denomination.

The time is now to commit to developing strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA), to embody unity in diversity and to be a church for all people.

Include a strategy to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1). Along with the approval of the 1001 New Worshiping Communities initiative, the language of G-2.0505a(1) presents a new opportunity for expanding the reach of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and celebrating our diversity. Section G-2.0505a(1) is a tool for presbyteries hoping to encourage and nurture new worshiping communities under their jurisdiction, permitting presbyteries to receive teaching elders who have been ordained by other denominations into membership of the presbytery. The most qualified leader for a new immigrant community possesses cultural and language fluency as well as theological training. Finding a qualified teaching elder of the PC(USA) able to communicate in the language of a new immigrant congregation may be difficult or impractical. Each partner denomination throughout the world determines its requirements for ordination. Many of our new immigrant leaders have been educated and have served faithfully in the denomination of their ordination and have been called by God and by the congregation to be the pastor for the community.

Section G-2.0505a(1) gives authority to a presbytery to accept qualified leaders to be received as teaching elders when the mission of the presbytery requires it. The language of “may” is meant to provide options, not to make requirements that would overstep a presbytery’s authority to make mission decisions. The following questions are designed to provide a presbytery with some guidance in applying the authority granted to it. Each situation needs to be considered on its own merits. There is no formula for inclusion.

The questions below are provided to stimulate appropriate conversations.

Some considerations:

Does the new immigrant ministry fit into the mission plan for evangelism and ministry of the presbytery? Who provides oversight and guidance to this new ministry? Is there a relationship of nurture and accountability with the presbytery or with a congregation of the presbytery?

Is the leader ordained as a teaching elder (or equivalent)? What is the denomination of membership? Does this denomination have any historic relationship to the PC(USA)? Denominations in correspondence with the PC(USA) can be found at http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/ecumenical-relations/list-churches-correspondence/. The presbytery may ask the candidate to provide proof of ordination such as an ordination certificate or a letter from the denomination of membership.

What kind of education or training for ministry has the candidate received? The presbytery may ask the candidate to provide transcripts, diploma, or other confirmation of the training.

What ministry experience has the candidate had? The presbytery may ask the candidate to provide a resume or personal information form and letters of reference.

Does the candidate demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and competence in areas of study that the presbytery deems relevant to faithful ministry? Areas may include: theology, church history, worship and sacraments, polity, Bible content, exegesis, or others.

Has the presbytery had opportunity to get to know and to examine the candidate? The presbytery may require further training or mentoring as a condition for reception into the presbytery.
Note on immigration status: A religious worker visa allows mid councils and churches to call religious workers who are not residents of the U.S. to serve the church. The Office of Immigration in the PC(USA) can help explore eligibility and guide petitioners through the process of application.

In all cases the attitude toward the leaders of new worshiping communities ought to be one of warm hospitality and collegiality.

Study the successes of other denominations.

The desire of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be intentional about developing racial ethnic and new immigrant church growth resonates with several of the denominations in the United States. The United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ, for example, both have longstanding Hispanic/Latino-a, African American, and Asian ministries that, like PC(USA), are in the discernment and goal setting stage of racial ethnic and immigrant church growth.

The United Methodist embraced the important role the racial ethnic and immigrant community will play in the future of the church, and the more cross-cultural ministries are emerging. In response, the Unified National Plans for Strengthening Ethnic/Racial Ministries was initiated within the United Methodist structure. The five racial ethnic/immigrant national plans include: Hispanic and Latino, African American, Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islanders. The primary goals are: (1) leadership development that will cultivate disciple who can reach a racially diverse mission field, (2) foster growth in membership and worship attendance, and (3) ensure the presence of a younger generation.

Appendix 1
Attendees Racial Ethnic & New Ministries Consultation

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Appendix 2

Item 16-06 from the 220th General Assembly (2012)


Item 16-06

[The assembly approved Item 16-06 with amendment. See pp. 48, 49.]

Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation—From the General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth

The General Assembly Special Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth recommends that the 220th General Assembly (2012) direct the General Assembly Mission Council (specifically, the Office of Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women and the Office of Evangelism and Church Growth) and the Office of the General Assembly (specifically, the Mid Council Commission in the Office of the Stated Clerk) to hold a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth in the PC(USA). This consultation shall bring together representatives of these offices, experienced leaders in racial ethnic and new immigrant churches, and mid council executives. [The consultation shall be held in coordination with the African American Church Growth Strategy consultation.] The consultation shall:

1. Assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs and initiatives of the PC(USA) at national, regional, and local levels in integrating racial ethnic and new immigrants into the church.
2. Create measurable goals for racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth.
3. Develop a cohesive coordinated strategy for realizing the goals and mechanisms for deploying resources at the presbytery and local congregation levels.
4. [Designate a monitoring group to assess progress toward these goals that shall report at each General Assembly.] [Designate the GAMC to monitor and report on the progress toward these goals at each General Assembly.]
5. Include in its strategies a plan to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant fellowships and congregations as authorized in G-2.0505a(1).
[7. Study the successes of other denominations.]

Appendix 3: Learning/Sharing Process, Leaders’ Guide

Racial Ethnic/New Immigrant Convocation (RE/NI)
Learning/Sharing Process
Leaders’ Guide

Conversation Questions:

• Signs of Hope: Where do you see signs of life/hope in RE/NI ministry? Where is RE/NI ministry happening effectively? What specific success stories can you identify? What programs are working effectively?
Measures of Success: What do we mean by “success” in RE/NI ministry? How will we know if we are effectively growing and making disciples? What measurements/benchmarks would indicate success?

Resources: What resources do we currently have to support RE/NI ministries? How helpful are they? What do we need?

Challenges: What are the challenges ahead? What are the obstacles to growth and sustainability?

Strategy: What is your vision for the future? What does the denomination need to do to nurture growth and health in RE/NI ministry? What do presbyteries and synods need to do? What do congregations need to do?

Process

Part I—Generating Ideas

Ideas and Inspiration: Each person will spend ten minutes at each of five tables participating in brainstorming sessions around the five topics. Ideas will be written on sticky notes and added to a piece of newsprint. A leader will time the event and move people from table to table. A process will be devised to make sure the groups are mixed up at each table.

Leader’s Task: Table leaders will stay at the same table throughout this part of the exercise instead of moving around to other tables. Encourage participants to stay on task. Ask follow-up questions using the suggestions above. Ask for input from quiet or reserved participants.

Sorting and Summarizing: At the final table the group will sort and summarize the comments at that table by combining the comments that are similar, removing repeats, and eliminating responses that are not relevant. At the end of this time the newsprint sheets will be hung on the walls.

Leader’s Task: Try to consolidate the suggestions without losing valuable input. Perhaps 2 or 3 responses can be combined into one.

Discerning and Voting: After a time of silence and listening to the Spirit, each person will be given 10 dots or stars which they can place on any ideas or comments that they think are particularly important to the conversation.

Part II—Going Deeper

Small Group Work: Each person will elect to be part of one of the five groups, each addressing one of the Conversation Questions. The group will be given the newsprint sheets generated during Part I. During Part II, the group will attempt to come up with a statement in which they summarize what the whole team has brainstormed and use that information as the basis for going deeper. Each small group will come up with a statement that can be presented to the whole group for review and comments. The goal of each team will be to contribute to a denomination-wide strategy for the long-term health and growth and sustainability of RE/NI ministry. The process followed by each small group will be:

- Discuss the key issues presented
- Summarize the wisdom of the group
- Fill in the gaps
- Add new ideas
- Prepare a statement

Leader’s Task: Help the group go beyond just summarizing the input from the brainstorming process. This is an opportunity to think deeply about significant issues. Encourage one participant to take notes. Lead the group to make a decision about how they will report to the whole gathering.

Reporting: Each group will have 15–20 minutes to report to the whole group and respond to questions and comments.

Part III—Recommending

Summarizing: The whole body will do this section. Leader will ask: What message do we have for the denomination? What strategies, resources, and benchmarks will result in health and sustainability? What do we expect the denomination and its constituent organizations to do as a result of our work? There should be a focus on new behaviors.

Leader’s Task: Review the purpose of the consultation. Are all the assigned tasks being addressed? Will the suggestions make a real difference in the life of the PC(USA)?

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 14-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 14-04.
It is necessary for our local churches to open their ministries to people of all races and ethnicities in their neighborhoods. This openness will not only help us grow quantitatively but also qualitatively since we will be able to embrace the real diversity that exists in our country.

We cannot pretend that our local congregations, mid councils, and national ministries will be leading our denomination toward diversity and openness if our leaders are not receiving education accordingly. Our teaching elders and church leaders have to be trained by seminaries that provide knowledge and experiences that are culturally sensitive to the diversity that we are confronting on a daily basis.

For this purpose, we have to promote training programs that will prepare sensitive and competent racial ethnic leaders to work effectively with racial ethnicities and new immigrant worshiping communities. They should tend to each community according to their needs while valuing their cultural richness and unique blend.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 14-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 14-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 14-04.

Many of the recommendations in this report also appeared in the report of the Special Committee on the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century (Item 16-07 of the 220th General Assembly (2012) as well as the other citations contained in the rationale; Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 48, 49–50, 1462).

The ACWC recognizes PC(USA) goals for the development of new congregations in the 21st century. Racial ethnic, new immigrant, and multicultural new churches depend on the ability of presbyteries to embrace these congregations, supporting them with new definitions of “church” and flexibility in ordination requirements. The denomination can be supportive by designing resources in languages other than English that are culturally appropriate. Seminaries can provide courses in languages other than English so new immigrant pastors can receive training in polity and reformed theology.

The ACWC also recognizes that many of these new churches retain the patriarchy of the cultures from which they have come. It is the ACWC’s hope that gender justice will be at the forefront as various structural areas of the PC(USA) pursue the work assigned to them with General Assembly approval. The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns offers to consult and to review new material with an eye toward removing gender biases from new resources.

Item 14-A

[The assembly approved Item 14-A. See p. 52.]

Women of Faith Award Nominees to the 221st General Assembly (2014)

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) recognize the following Women of Faith award recipients at the 221th General Assembly (2014):

- Ruling Elder Joanie Lukins,
- Ruling Elder Helen Morrison,
- The Reverend Joyce Shin.

Rationale

Women of Faith Awards

The Women of Faith Awards were established in 1986 to honor women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) whose lives exemplify their Christian commitment through witness, service, and leadership.

Each year a theme is chosen. Nominations are received from throughout the church and honorees are selected by a committee of representatives from various groups.

Awards are presented at the Women of Faith Breakfast during the General Assembly. This breakfast is a biennial celebration of God’s activity in the lives of women and their response to God’s presence.

The theme for this year’s awards is “Prophetic Women of Faith” and it honors women who are part of the prophetic tradition in the church who are following the examples of prophets and apostles who came before them.
The 2014 selection committee included Carol Hylkema, moderator; Mary “Molly” Baskin, Presbyterian Mission Agency Board; Louise Davidson, Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns; Janice Dorbu, Racial Ethnic Young Women Together; Hannah Schorr, National Network of Presbyterian College Women; and Susan Skoglund, Presbyterian Women Churchwide Coordinating Team.

The selection committee members were instructed to consider the following criteria in reviewing nomination forms and in making their selection of the four women who receive this award:

- Selection of the Women of Faith awardees are based on the theme.
- How is she prophetic?
- How has she demonstrated her gift of prophesy?
- Three nominees will be selected.
- Strive for racial ethnic diversity.
- Strive for geographic diversity.
- Awardees will be women.
- Awardees will be Presbyterian.
- Current staff serving the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are ineligible for nomination.
- Previous award recipients are ineligible to be nominated again for the Women of Faith Award (one-time recipients; no duplications).

The election of the three honorees was approved by the Leadership Committee and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

Biographical sketches of these three women are as follows:

1. **Ruling Elder Joanie Lukins—Danville, Ky., in the Presbytery of Transylvania and the Synod of Living Waters.**

   Ruling Elder Joanie Lukins has served Living Waters for the World in almost every capacity of the organization. She is a lead instructor for the training school, Clean Water U, and created the Health, Hygiene, and Spiritual teachings curriculum used in one of the workshops. She has served as the moderator of the Living Waters for the World Committee and is now serving as a board member. She is moderator of the Yucatan Network Coordinating Team and helps oversee the water systems in that area of the world. Lukins also leads the water team at her church and takes presbytery-wide teams to the Yucatan to work on water partnerships there.

2. **Ruling Elder Helen Morrison—Grosse Ile, Mich., in the Presbytery of Detroit and the Synod of the Covenant.**

   Ruling Elder Helen Morrison has contributed to the Presbyterian church’s ministries on aging almost since its beginnings. She has served as a ruling elder for multiple terms; as a presbytery vice moderator, moderator, and staff person and as a two-term member of the General Assembly Council (now the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board). In addition, she chaired one of the General Assembly Council Divisions and served on several of its committees and task forces. Morrison also has served as a member of countless boards and agencies, including the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services to the Aging, and as a delegate to the 1981 White House Conference on Aging.

3. **The Reverend Joyce Shin—Chicago, in the Presbytery of Chicago and the Synod of Lincoln Trails.**

   The Reverend Joyce Shin is the associate pastor for Congregational Life at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago, a congregation with a long history of prophetic ministry, where she serves as the staff liaison to the Congregational Life Committee of the Session. Under her leadership, the Interfaith Resource Committee at Fourth Presbyterian developed a close relationship with the local Muslim community, including the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, as well as maintaining a strong relationship with the Chicago Sinai Congregation. She is an elected member of the Presbytery of Chicago’s Ecumenical and Interreligious Work Group, which cares for the presbytery’s relationships with other Christian denominations, other spiritual and religious communities, and ecumenical and interreligious organizations and bodies.

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**Item 14B**

[The assembly approved Item 14-B. See p. 52.]

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board reports the recipients of the Sam and Helen R. Walton Awards for 2013 and 2014 and recommends that the 221st General Assembly (2014) recognize the recipients as outstanding new church developments:
1. 2013:
   a. New Vision New Church Development (NCD), Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Presbytery of Western North Carolina—$35,000;
   b. Iglesia Presbiteriana Nuevas Fronteras (NCD), Synod of the Northeast, Presbytery of Elizabeth—$35,000;
   c. Bare Bulb Coffee (NCD), Synod of South Atlantic, Presbytery of Flint River—$35,000.
2. 2014:
   a. New Faith Presbyterian Church NCD, Trinity Presbytery, Synod of South Atlantic—$50,000
   b. Community Fellowship Presbyterian Church NCD, Mission Presbytery, Synod of the Sun—$50,000

Rationale

In late December 1991, Sam and Helen Walton made a generous gift through the Presbyterian Foundation of $6 million that included $3 million to be used for new church developments that have placed an emphasis on site acquisitions. All nominees must meet the qualifications as set forth in the application. The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, acting on behalf of the General Assembly between meetings, approved the above recipients during its March 2013 and April 2014 meetings.
Item 15-01

[The assembly referred Item 15-01 to the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) with comment. See p. 56.]

[Comment: Request the 221st General Assembly (2014) to refer the subject matter of this overture to the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) for action and discernment in accordance with its long-standing and detailed procedures to engage with individual corporations to advance their actions in support of important social policy issues. MRTI is asked to make a report to 222nd General Assembly (2016). The Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues (15), is deeply concerned about both the need for action and the need to remain in dialogue with companies that are in the fossil fuel industry.]

On Divestment from Fossil Fuel Companies—From the Presbytery of Boston.

The Presbytery of Boston overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Express its profound concern about the destructive effects of climate change on all God’s creation. Climate change has had a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and in the least developed countries, the elderly and children, and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases. The 221st General Assembly (2014) thus recognizes the moral mandate for humanity to shift to a sustainable energy plan in a way that is both just and compassionate. This mandate propels us to action as a denomination: to divest from the fossil fuel industry even as we reduce our use of fossil fuels and shrink our carbon footprint.

2. Call upon the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation to
   a. immediately stop any new investment in fossil fuel companies and instruct asset managers in their work for the denomination to do the same;
   b. ensure that within five years none of its directly held or commingled assets includes holdings of either equities or corporate bonds in fossil fuel companies as determined by the Carbon Tracker list1; and
   c. incorporate, into already existing financial reports, regular updates detailing progress made towards full divestment. These reports will be made available to the public.

3. Call upon the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) to inform those fossil fuel companies of the passage and implementation of this resolution.

Rationale

Purpose

The realities of climate change require prophetic and strategic action by people of faith seeking to be faithful to the everlasting covenant God has made with us, with every living creature, and with all future generations. If fossil fuel companies simply fulfill their business model, the earth will become irreversibly inhospitable to life as we know it. This overture urges the PC(USA) to divest from fossil fuel companies as part of a worldwide movement. Over the past three or more decades, many bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the General Assembly on numerous occasions, have recognized our moral obligation to be faithful stewards of God’s creation as well as acknowledging, in one way or another, that harming creation is a sin. This overture seeks to inspire and accelerate an unswerving commitment—as the 202nd General Assembly (1990) affirmed in the Statement on Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice—to “insisting on sustainability—the ongoing capacity of natural and social systems to thrive together—which requires human beings to practice wise, humble, responsible stewardship, after the model of servanthood that we have in Jesus” (Minutes, 1990, Part I, p. 647). The 217th General Assembly (2006) resolved that “the urgency, injustice and seriousness of this issue calls us as Christians to act NOW and act boldly to lead the way in reducing our energy usage” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 896) and that we should “make a bold witness by aspiring to live carbon neutral lives” (Ibid). Eight years later, the urgency has increased dramatically and the PC(USA) must act boldly by divesting from fossil fuels.

Biblical and Theological Rationale

The actions this resolution recommends are rooted in an expression of several of the most foundational theological and biblical principles of our Presbyterian identity. In Genesis 9, God makes a covenant not only with Noah, but with all of humanity; a covenant not only with all of humanity, but with every living creature; a covenant not only with all creatures alive today, but with all future generations. It is now clear that the past few generations of humans have burned so much of the earth’s energy reserves that we are on the verge of irreversibly rendering the entire earth inhospitable for life as it has existed for all of recorded history. By any measure, this is a violation of covenant with future generations and the rest of creation—an action that works against God’s covenant to never again destroy creation.
In Matthew 25: 31–46 Jesus calls us to care for the “least of these.” Climate change is creating a reality where there are more people than ever who are hungry, thirsty, and homeless. It is thus poised to create the most massive human rights violation the world has ever seen. Furthermore it creates more suffering, directly at odds with caring for the least of these and loving our neighbor in response to Jesus’ commandments to us in Scripture. If we are called to love one another, then it is morally and theologically wrong to profit from the destruction of creation.

Because we are a covenant people and affirm Jesus’ call in Scripture to love our neighbors as ourselves, we recognize our obligation as people of faith to take into account how our decisions and activities affect all of creation now and into the future.

**Background Information**

The leaders of 167 countries, including the United States, have agreed that any warming of the planet above a 2°C (3.6°F) rise would be unsafe, and we have already (as of 2012) raised the temperature 0.8°C, causing far more damage, in the forms of extreme weather events, drought, flood, and sea level rise, than most scientists had expected. Computer models show that even if we stopped increasing CO₂ levels now, the temperature would continue to rise another 0.8°C, bringing the planet over three-quarters of the way to the 2°C limit. Scientists estimate that humans can pour roughly 565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and still have some reasonable hope of staying below 2°C.

The proven coal, oil, and gas reserves of the fossil-fuel companies—and the countries (e.g. Venezuela or Kuwait) which act like fossil-fuel companies—equals about 2,795 gigatons of CO₂, or five times the amount we can release and still maintain a 2°C limit to planetary warming. The sole objective of fossil fuel companies is to make money for their shareholders by providing energy to the nations of the world using the resources the companies currently own or have rights to tap—and if they simply continue to carry out their business plan to fulfill this objective, they will raise the temperature of the earth far beyond what scientists have estimated can safely sustain plant, animal, and human life as they have been for thousands of years.

As a result of fossil fuel use, the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere has now been measured at over 400 parts per million (ppm), 50 ppm over what many scientists say is the safe upper limit, and a 43 percent increase in the last 250 years. Almost half (44 percent) of this 43 percent increase has occurred in the past 25 years alone, and the amount of CO₂ added to the atmosphere in the past decade is over three times the average addition per decade in the period 1950–80. These numbers are the most concrete evidence we have that climate change is happening at an accelerating rate.

**Why Divestment?**

This overture is part of a worldwide movement focused on keeping as much of the earth’s carbon reserves as possible in the ground. As part of that campaign, this resolution proposes the PC(USA) divest from fossil fuel companies. The Carbon Tracker Initiative, a team of London financial analysts and environmentalists, estimates that proven coal, oil, and gas reserves of the fossil fuel companies, and the countries that act like fossil fuel companies, equals about 2,795 gigatons of CO₂, or five times the amount we can release to maintain 2 degrees of warming.

From 1983–1989, the General Assembly passed many resolutions committing the corporate expressions of the PC(USA) to divest from companies doing business with South Africa as an expression of protest against apartheid in South Africa. Their action began as a prophetic witness, but once thousands of institutions and individuals joined together to divest from companies doing business in South Africa, apartheid came to an end, in part, because of pressure from divestment.

Following that path, what begins as a prophetic act of divestment from fossil fuel companies will:

1. Drive public awareness of the massive damage being done by the fossil fuel industry as it generates huge short-term profits by moving carbon from the rocks of the earth into Earth’s atmosphere;
2. Build public recognition of the urgent need to drastically and rapidly reduce humanity’s dependence on fossil fuels, ending the “business as usual” approach that continues and even accelerates extracting, marketing, and burning fossil fuel;
3. Lead to inspiring an urgent, accelerated, and popular commitment to leave untapped 80 percent of the known carbon reserves, while developing renewable energy resources capable of meeting humanity’s needs—thus making possible that all life as we have known it might continue for future generations on God’s good earth;
4. Call the denomination to reinvest a portion of the divested funds in initiatives to reduce the energy use and carbon footprint of PC(USA) churches and in investments in companies primarily focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy;
5. No longer allow the PC(USA) to profit from the destruction of creation and the suffering of humanity caused by climate change from burning fossil fuels.

**Endnotes**

Our Presbyterian faith calls us to be good stewards of the Earth (Gen. 2:15; Lev. 25:24) and to work for the well-being of people who are poor and vulnerable (Lev. 25:39–41; Deut. 15:7–11; Isa. 58:6–10; Mt. 25:34–36). Today, climate change is perhaps the most widespread threat to these core commitments of our faith. Scientists agree that human-caused climate change has already increased the frequency and intensity of heat waves, heavy precipitation in coastal areas, and drought in some inland regions since 1950. Future climate change will negatively impact agriculture and food security, water stress, public health, and vulnerability to disasters around the world. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from the burning of fossil fuels are responsible for approximately 60 percent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, making fossil fuel use the single largest contributor to climate change.

These realities of climate change require prophetic, strategic, and swift action by people of faith seeking to be faithful to the everlasting covenant God has made with us, with every living creature, and with all future generations (Genesis 9). If fossil fuel companies simply fulfill their business model, the earth will become irreversibly inhospitable to life as we know it. However, there is hope of limiting climate change if humanity can rapidly limit GHG emissions.

The purpose of this overture is to urge the PC(USA) divest from fossil fuel companies as part of a worldwide movement to mitigate climate change to the extent possible. It furthermore urges the PC(USA) to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy, thus helping to build a clean energy economy that provides environmental benefits while creating good-paying, safe jobs. In so doing, the PC(USA) would lessen the burdens on poor communities that are already suffering the negative effects of climate change and fossil fuel extraction on their health and livelihoods, on young people and future generations that will need to adapt to climate change, and on the ecosystems that sustain all of life, which God calls “very good” (Genesis 1:31) and has entrusted to our care.

Many bodies of the PC(USA), including the General Assembly, have recognized our moral obligation to be faithful stewards of God’s creation. This overture seeks to inspire and accelerate the commitment to “insisting on sustainability” affirmed by the 202nd General Assembly (1991) in the Statement on Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice. It furthermore supports the 217th General Assembly (2006)’s resolutions that “the urgency, injustice and seriousness of this issue [climate change] calls us as Christians to act NOW and act boldly to lead the way in reducing our energy usage” (Minutes, 2006, Part I, p. 896) and that we should “make a bold witness by aspiring to live carbon neutral lives” (Ibid).

Eight years later, the urgency has increased and the PC(USA) must act boldly by divesting from fossil fuels. Such courageous action will build public awareness and political will to regulate GHG emissions and fossil fuel use, while supporting development of energy efficiency initiatives and renewable energy industries and infrastructure. This, in turn, will make it more feasible for our congregations, and society as a whole, to reduce our energy use and transition to reliance on renewable energy.

Biblical and Theological Rationale

The actions this resolution recommends are rooted in an expression of several of the most foundational theological and biblical principles of our Presbyterian identity. Our stories of beginnings affirm that humanity is called to serve and keep (Gen. 2:15) the garden of Earth that God has given us, acting in ways that respect its holiness and ensure its continued capacity to support life. In Genesis 9, God makes a covenant not only with Noah, but with all of humanity, with every living creature, and with all future generations. This covenant finds expression in God’s ongoing activity to provide abundantly for the needs of all people and all creation (Ps. 65:9–13, 104:10–17; Mk. 6:30–44, 8:1–9). By burning fossil fuels, humans have increased atmospheric CO₂ to levels that threaten to make the climate inhospitable to life. By any measure, this is a violation of covenant with future generations and the rest of creation, and an action that works against God’s will that all people and all creatures may flourish.

In addition to calling us to responsible stewardship of the Earth, our faith also calls us to work for the well-being of people who are vulnerable (Lev. 25:39–41; Deut. 15:7–11; Isa. 58:6–10; Mt. 25:31–36). In Matthew 25:31–46, Jesus calls us to care for the “least of these.” Climate change is creating a reality where there are more people than ever who are hungry, thirsty, and homeless—for example, by negatively impacting smallholder farming systems and increasing coastal flooding. In this context, loving our neighbor compels us to work to mitigate climate change by rapidly reducing GHG emissions, thus minimizing the impact of climate change on agriculture, water supplies, public health, and displacement due to flooding. Be-
cause we are a covenant people and affirm Jesus’ call to love our neighbors as ourselves, we recognize our obligation as people of faith to take into account how our decisions and activities affect all of creation now and into the future.

**Background Information**

The leaders of 167 countries, including the United States, have agreed that any warming of the planet above a 2°C (3.6°F) rise would be unsafe. As of 2012, we have already raised the temperature 0.85°C since 1880, causing far more damage, in the forms of extreme weather events, drought, flood, and sea level rise, than most scientists had expected. Largely as a result of fossil fuel use, the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere has now been measured at over 400 parts per million (ppm), the highest concentrations recorded in ice cores during the past 800,000 years, and 50 ppm over what many scientists say is the safe upper limit. Scientists agree that the increased atmospheric concentration of CO₂ (along with increases in methane and nitrous oxide), as a result of human activities, is the dominant cause of the observed warming of the climate system.

Computer models show that even if we stopped increasing CO₂ levels now, the temperature would continue to rise another 0.8°C, bringing the planet over three-quarters of the way to the 2°C limit. Scientists estimate that humans can pour roughly 565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and still have some reasonable hope of staying below a 2°C global average temperature rise. The Carbon Tracker Initiative, a team of London financial analysts and environmentalists, estimates that proven coal, oil, and gas reserves of fossil fuel companies and fossil fuel-rich nations equals about 2,795 gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and still have some reasonable hope of staying below a 2°C rise would be unsafe. As of 2012, we have already raised the temperature 0.85°C since 1880, causing far more damage, in the forms of extreme weather events, drought, flood, and sea level rise, than most scientists had expected. Largely as a result of fossil fuel use, the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere has now been measured at over 400 parts per million (ppm), the highest concentrations recorded in ice cores during the past 800,000 years, and 50 ppm over what many scientists say is the safe upper limit. Scientists agree that the increased atmospheric concentration of CO₂ (along with increases in methane and nitrous oxide), as a result of human activities, is the dominant cause of the observed warming of the climate system.

Computer models show that even if we stopped increasing CO₂ levels now, the temperature would continue to rise another 0.8°C, bringing the planet over three-quarters of the way to the 2°C limit. Scientists estimate that humans can pour roughly 565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and still have some reasonable hope of staying below a 2°C global average temperature rise. The Carbon Tracker Initiative, a team of London financial analysts and environmentalists, estimates that proven coal, oil, and gas reserves of fossil fuel companies and fossil fuel-rich nations equals about 2,795 gigatons of CO₂, or five times the amount we can release and still maintain a 2°C limit to planetary warming. In this context, responding to God’s call “to serve and keep” (Genesis 2:15) the Earth requires that we join with other people of faith and conscience in the growing movement to prevent the extraction and burning of these fossil fuel reserves.

**Why Divestment?**

This overture is part of a worldwide movement focused on keeping as much of the earth’s carbon reserves as possible in the ground. From 1983–1992, the General Assembly took multiple actions to condemn apartheid and to selectively divest from companies doing business with South Africa as an expression of protest against apartheid in South Africa. This action began as a prophetic witness, but once thousands of institutions and individuals joined together to divest from companies doing business in South Africa, apartheid came to an end, in part, because of pressure from divestment.

Following that path, what begins as a prophetic act of divestment from fossil fuel companies will:

a. **Drive public awareness** of the massive damage being done by the fossil fuel industry as CO₂ emissions change the climate, and the urgent need to drastically reduce humanity’s dependence on fossil fuels;

b. **Inspire a popular commitment to leave untapped 80 percent of the known carbon reserves, while developing renewable energy resources** capable of meeting humanity’s needs—thus making possible that all life as we have known it might continue for future generations on God’s good earth;

c. **Build political will** to realize these goals through policy action to regulate GHG emissions; reduce the extraction, marketing, and burning of fossil fuel; and support the development of energy efficiency and renewable energy industries;

d. **Call the denomination to reinvest a portion of the divested funds in initiatives to reduce the energy use and carbon footprint of PCUSA churches and in investments in companies primarily focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy**;

e. No longer allow the PC(USA) to profit from the destruction of creation and the suffering of humanity caused by climate change from burning fossil fuels.

**Financial Implications of Divestment**

The moral imperatives—to be good stewards of the Earth and prevent climate change that threatens the well-being of the most vulnerable people—are the most important reasons for divestment. However, studies show that for most institutions, divesting from fossil fuel companies is likely to have a negligible impact on investment returns, and may reduce overall risk by protecting against losses from “stranded assets”—fossil fuel reserves that currently contribute to the value of fossil fuel companies, but cannot be extracted, sold, and burned if we are to stay beneath the internationally recognized limit of a 2°C rise in global average temperature over pre-industrial levels. A study by HSBC estimated that fossil-fuel companies may lose 40–60 percent of their value due to decreases in demand for energy and policy action to curtail GHG emissions. In Germany, a large energy company recently experienced massive losses due to competition from renewable solar and wind power.

Therefore, while the moral imperative to protect our global climate would justify some financial sacrifice, divestment from fossil fuels is not likely to endanger the PC(USA)’s financial well-being, and may even bring financial benefits by anticipating the necessary changes in energy policy and the energy industry to realize a sustainable future for life on Earth.

**Endnotes**

1. Portions of this document were written in collaboration with and permission from the Reverend Dr. Jim Antal, UCC climate activist and minister and president, Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ.


5. The IPCC estimates that future rise in the global average temperature could be limited to ~1° C above 1986–2005 temperatures, based on a “peak-and-decline” scenario in which global GHG emissions peak in 2020 and decline sharply thereafter. However, this would require bold policy action to limit GHG emissions in general and fossil fuel use in particular. See: IPCC, 2013, p. 21.


10. IPCC, 2013, p. 3.


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**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

In concurrence with the spirit and ultimate aim of this overture and sharing its grave concern for accelerated climate change, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises the following amendments: [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Boston overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to do the following:

1. Express its profound concern about the destructive effects of climate change on all God’s creation. Climate change has had a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and in the least developed countries, the elderly and children, and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases. The 221st General Assembly (2014) thus recognizes the moral mandate for humanity to shift to a sustainable energy plan in a way that is both just and compassionate. [To this end, the church shall work to shift its energy investments increasingly into renewable sources as it undertakes parallel actions to reduce its nonrenewable energy consumption and that of its members.] [This mandate propels us to action as a denomination: to divest from the fossil fuel industry even as we reduce our use of fossil fuels and shrink our carbon footprint.]

2. Direct the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) to develop a plan to address the call to fossil fuel-related divestment in a manner consistent with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s environmental and investment responsibility policies and practices, including The Divestment Strategy: Principles and Criteria (1984), and to bring recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016), recognizing the need for integrity by the church as we participate in all aspects of an urgent and massive economic and social transformation for the sake of the whole of creation.]

3. Call upon the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation to

4. [a. immediately stop any new investment in fossil fuel companies and instruct asset managers in their work for the denomination to do the same;]

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“[b] [a] [ensure that within five years none of its directly held or commingled assets includes holdings of either] [initiate and assess the performance of virtual and actual investment vehicles with significant funds that would exclude both] equities or corporate bonds in [the 200 leading] fossil fuel companies [energy reserves] as determined by the Carbon Tracker list [in conjunction with the MRTI processes of corporate engagement and their own theologically-informed standards of trustee responsibility]; [and]

“[c.] [b.] incorporate, into [already existing] [MRTI and appropriate] financial reports, regular [public] updates [detailing progress made towards full divestment. These reports will be made available to the public] on the progress of national and international investment in and production of solar, hydro, geothermal, and other renewable and non-fossil fuel energy and gains made in conservation, as well as reports on the performance of the investment vehicles proposed in 3.a. [-] ; and

“[c. work with the Presbyterian Mission Agency in developing a strategic plan to invest more consistently with the values of the General Assembly, including sustainability, peacemaking, and greater sharing of profits and productivity gains within the economy.]

“[3. Call upon the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) to inform those fossil fuel companies of the passage and implementation of this resolution.]

“[4. Urge Presbyterian individuals, mid councils, and congregations holding financial investment portfolios to consider immediate fossil fuel divestment as well as corporate engagement to the extent of their capacities, and to work with MRTI and the investment agencies as feasible in considering the range of alternative investment vehicles.]

“[5. Direct the Office of Public Witness to promote a federal carbon tax as an important national policy accompaniment to the strategy of corporate engagement and the best way to internalize the true social and environmental costs of fossil fuel exploitation into the price of energy. This policy advocacy should also include concern for those who are already living in poverty and should urge that any national carbon reduction policy include provisions to mitigate the worst impacts of rising fuel, transportation, and fuel prices on the poorest people.]

The energy and movement behind this overture is significant and important. Likewise, the concerns expressed in this overture are essential to the life of the Christian community. As the Rationale rightly points out, environmental concerns and resistance to climate change/disruption, in particular, have been an integral part of the church’s witness on the goodness of Creation for more than thirty years. Climate disruption is already showing true and devastating impacts on communities all over the globe, including in the U.S, as we note below. Thus, action is essential on U.S. carbon emissions and on the economic models by which we exploit fossil fuel.

A true vision of environmental stewardship for the church must include the proposed shift to renewable energy, so that no entity affiliated with the PC(USA) should profit from the desecration and exploitation of God’s Creation. The simplicity and immediacy of the overture, however, emphasizes the value of integrity (or even purity) over effectiveness to a high degree. The amendments above would require some immediate divestment and tracking of its portfolio impacts, and recognize that a five-year time period would allow for some re-balancing of short- and long-term holdings. Yet the responses by all major university endowments so far is instructive: without a plan to shift out of a major sector in the investment universe, portfolio managers see a popular gesture that does not address the ways that energy policy reflects competition among nation states and their parastatal enterprises, and not simply the great power of private energy companies and the virtually infinite regress of other firms based on fossil fuels.

The proposal above directs the urgency of the proponents to a necessary conversation between social ethics and investment planners. It may even prompt the investing agencies, the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Foundation, to contribute financial as well as technical resources to MRTI as they face the moral force of the call for fossil fuel reserves not to be exploited. At the same time, the call for the carbon tax above recognizes the power of the market that, in Germany for example, is helping drive the shift to a country 44 percent reliant on renewables. Divestment does address a dysfunction in public policy in the United States, but it needs a public policy partner to affect the everyday choices we make, lest we continue to buy from the companies we have divested from.

Divestment is an important and powerful social witness tool whose integrity and effectiveness is tied to a well-developed and respectful process of corporate engagement. In order to preserve the effectiveness of this tool (as we have seen in the context of other divestment conversations that have attracted significant outside attention), it is essential that we engage in the normal and established process, even if on an accelerated basis. The MRTI process has been affirmed and developed by General Assemblies since the churches’ first public interest proxy voting 1971. The most extensive treatment of divestment is the 1984 study and policy. While the proponents know the church’s environmental and energy policies, they do not mention “The Divestment Strategy: Principles and Criteria,” and its supporting study, “The Divestment Strategy: Ethical and Institutional Context” (both 1984). Without understanding the way this policy grew out of the years of corporate engagement with energy, banking, and military corporations supporting apartheid, it is hard to understand the church’s move to “selective, phased divestment” of securities in key companies. True, many activists did push for total divestment, but the pressure was
focused by a prolonged campaign against particular targets. The language initially adopted by the General Assembly in dealing with investments profiting from the occupation of Palestine was also that of “selective, phased” divestment.

Corporate engagement is also an important tool at all levels of the church, not just at the national Board of Pensions level. Mid councils and local churches also hold significant investments and endowments. Therefore, this movement to ethical corporate engagement should also extend to these entities. To the extent that their holdings are far less complex than those of the Foundation and Board of Pensions, however, congregations may want to make the full shift to divest of securities in the 200 leading fossil fuel reserve-holding companies.

The advantage of a corporate engagement strategy is that it does not require an act of the U.S. Congress, which is currently bogged down in partisan gridlock. Nevertheless, the best strategy for comprehensively addressing U.S. carbon pollution is a national, economy-wide strategy. The 220th General Assembly (2012) urged a strong and proactive Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to exercise its authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate carbon pollution. The 218th General Assembly (2008) approved “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming,” which urged an economy-wide strategy to “internalize the social and environmental costs related to greenhouse gas emissions in the prices of fossil fuels.” A carbon tax is considered to be one of the most effective ways to achieve this goal and to change behavior and energy consumption in the U.S. In addition, a carbon tax system is not vulnerable to market speculation in the way that other economy-wide market-based solutions.

Nevertheless, the move to reduce carbon pollution and the U.S. contribution to global climate change will increase the cost of important necessities, not only fuel, but also transportation, fuel, and other goods. Any national solution to climate pollution must dedicate a significant portion of revenue generated to alleviating hardship for low-income people, as well as to other priorities like mass transit infrastructure, renewable energy development, and climate change mitigation and international adaptation for the poorest countries in the world. Market measures alone, in other words, will not ensure provision for the poor. Nor will corporate social responsibility, although some advance in corporate standards are due to both voluntary initiatives among companies and their responses to shareholder pressure.

The proponents are correct, finally, in suggesting that slow and incremental will not win the race against climate catastrophe. Intensification of the church’s response is needed, and in the direction they recommend. Yet abruptness is not a virtue, and the partnership MRTI embodies has been a very important forum where action can be planned and agreed upon. At the largest scale, the economy needs to be reordered for less throughput of all kinds; it needs to be changed for the greener, root and branch. Let MRTI plant the investment seeds on fertile ground if possible, working with the Restoring Creation network and all God-loving and carbon-fearing Presbyterians.

Two major scientific confirmations of climate change:

From Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2013 Report:

http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/wg1/#.UnewMXYo4cA

Previous assessments have already shown through multiple lines of evidence that the climate is changing across our planet, largely as a result of human activities. The most compelling evidence of climate change derives from observations of the atmosphere, land, oceans, and cryosphere. Unequivocal evidence from in situ observations and ice core records shows that the atmospheric concentrations of important greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxides have increased over the last few centuries. (1–2)


Without global action, the UNDP estimates that the number of people living in extreme poverty could increase by up to 3 billion by 2050 with untold numbers of children dying due to climate change, deforestation, air and water pollution, natural disasters, droughts and floods, rising sea levels, extreme weather, melting ice caps creating “feedback loops,” etc.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 15-01.

In the past, the General Assembly has approved divestments from companies whose practice and impacts are against God’s will and word. Unfortunately, those who live in poverty in the U.S.A. and around the globe are the most impacted by climate change effects, burning of fossil fuels, coal pollution, nonsustainable energy plans, air pollution, shrinking water supplies, damaged watersheds, ocean acidification, and careless human actions. It is time for us to understand that our policies and practices in the U.S. affect the rest of the planet.

The disproportionate impact on those living in poverty in the least-developed countries directly increase immigration rates in developed countries because the quality of their living conditions decrease in their home country. The racial ethnic population in the U.S. is affected by these harmful practices because many of these individuals are poor and vulnerable and are people who live and work in places that are impacted by chemical harms. This section of the population does not have the financial resources or equal access to the system to change their current deplorable conditions. Environmental racism is a real issue.
This situation requires a just and compassionate response from the PC(USA). It is necessary to take actions that are consistent with what we preach and believe, loving each other as ourselves.

As Christians following Jesus’ example, it is our duty to educate our members on responsible stewardship of the earth that God has entrusted us to do. Our church is called to advocate and to protect vulnerable populations.

Our denomination should invest in companies that promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, that provide environmental benefits to the planet that offer good-paying, safe job conditions for its workers, safer chemicals, and industrial processes.

Non-ethical behavior is to profit from the destruction of creation and the suffering of the most vulnerable people.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-01

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-01—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 15-01.

Please see ACWC’s rationale for Item 15-05:

The ACWC is painfully aware of the ways in which the exploitation of nature has been supported by philosophies and ideologies that have also informed discrimination against and the abuse of women. Therefore we support overtures that advocate for public policies intended to change the course of climate change and the recommendation to divest from fossil fuels.

BOP COMMENT ON ITEM 15-01

Comment on Item 15-01—From the Board of Pensions.

The Board of Pensions respectfully requests that the General Assembly refer the overtures concerning divestment of certain fossil fuel companies (Item 15-01 from the Presbytery of Boston and Item 15-05 from the Presbytery of Palisades) to the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (“MRTI”) for action and discernment in accordance with its longstanding and detailed procedures to engage with individual corporations to advance their actions in support of important social policy issues.

General Assemblies have expressed the importance to all life on earth of a healthy and clean environment since at least the 116th General Assembly (1971)\(^1\). This General Assembly also cautioned “against confusing symptoms of the environmental crisis with its causes, and against dependence on slogans, over-simplified solutions, or merely cosmetic approaches” (Minutes, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, p. 584).

The 202nd General Assembly (1990)\(^2\) reaffirmed this focus and adopted Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility and the Environment that specifically includes attention to climate change. This paper includes a call for engagement with corporations, noting that, “by encouraging corporations to adopt environmentally responsible practices through dialogues, shareholder resolutions, and, in extreme cases, divestment, the church can assist governmental units as they seek to clean up the environment and press for social justice” (Minutes, 1990, Part I, p. 672).

Both elected and staff members of the Board of Pensions are members of and participate in the meetings and deliberations of MRTI.

Both elected and staff members of the Board of Pensions strongly agree that climate change threatens all living things and reduction and elimination of factors contributing to climate change are of critical importance to us all.

We strongly support the processes adopted and used by MRTI over the past four decades and believe that using our investment holdings for direct engagement with individual corporations and other entities is a positive, active, and better way to express our views and to take affirmative actions in support of our views. Short-circuiting our well-established deliberative process and jumping ahead to immediate divestment may be seductive, but as a first step it would be an over-simplified solution. Divestment of securities should remain a remedial tool for MRTI as a part of its very responsible and historic processes.

FOUNDATION COMMENT ON ITEM 15-01

Comment on Item 15-01—From the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

The Presbyterian Foundation agrees that climate change poses a profound threat to all of God’s creation, and that efforts to mitigate climate change are of great importance. To that end, the Foundation staff and elected leadership have worked with the Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) for more than forty years to leverage our investments for corporate engagement with companies in the fuel and energy sector. MRTI’s processes have employed active engagement with companies that have invited many of them into meaningful and ultimately fruitful conversations leading to incremental

\(^1\) Minutes, UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 574–83
\(^2\) Minutes, 1990, Part I, pp. 646–90
or in some cases immediate change. Where such conversations have not succeeded, MRTI has recommended phased-selective divestment to the General Assembly, acknowledging the Foundation’s fiduciary duty to ensure that its constituents are not financially harmed in that process.

To this end, the Foundation joins the Board of Pensions in voicing our strong support for the MRTI process regarding this issue. We further advise that the assembly urge MRTI to make this a priority initiative, and to bring a comprehensive report of its actions and results to the next General Assembly.

$Item 15-02

[The assembly approved Item 15-02 with amendment. See pp. 56, 57.]

**On Affirming the Importance of Sustainable Development and the Precautionary Principle—From the Presbytery of Southern New England.**

The Presbytery of Southern New England overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to affirm the vital importance of sustainable development [through faithful stewardship of natural resources] and the Precautionary Principle. [It is] [Such methods of preventing irreversible ecological impacts are part of] the basis for [a] responsible, moral, and [scientifically-informed human flourishing] [ethical means of working and being. It affirms] [affirming] the sacred in societal and creation care, [and] protecting the earth for future generations. Additionally, [we ask that the PC(USA)] [the General Assembly directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to] commission a study group [of three to five persons] to

1. review [this] [the precautionary or prevention] principle [in relation to emerging biotechnical developments and existing Presbyterian social witness policy on environmental ethics,] and

2. prepare a study paper [and resources for social media, with appropriate recommendations to the 222nd General Assembly (2016),] for use by congregations throughout the denomination, enabling congregations to advocate for reform.


Endnote

1. The Precautionary Principle is defined as “the precept that an action should not be taken if the consequences are uncertain and potentially dangerous” (World English Dictionary. It is the theory that an action should be taken when a problem or threat occurs, not after harm has been inflicted” (UN Conference on the Environment, 1988). It is derived from a German word meaning “forecaring.”

Rationale

The Word of the Lord:

Psalm 96:10–13: “Say among the nations, ‘The Lord is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity.’ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.”

Matthew 22:37b: “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

The Precautionary Principle:

The United National Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) report defines the Precautionary Principle as follows:

When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. Morally unacceptable harm refers to harm to humans or the environment that is

- threatening to human life or health, or
- serious and effectively irreversible, or
- inequitable to present or future generations, or

COMEST states that the “Precautionary Principle is often seen as an integral principle of sustainable development, that is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the abilities of future generations to meet their needs. By safeguarding against serious and, particularly, irreversible harm to the natural resource base that might jeopardize the ca-
pacity of future generations to provide for their own needs, it builds on ethical notions of intra- and inter-generational equity” (http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001395/139578e.pdf, p. 8).

“When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof. The process of applying the precautionary principle must be open, informed and democratic and must include potentially affected parties. It must also involve an examination of the full range of alternatives, including no action” (Wingspread Statement on the Precautionary Principle, Jan. 26, 1998, http://www.sehn.org/wing.html).

If introduced into American law, the precautionary principle would fundamentally shift the burden of proof of the safety of products and processes for the public. The presumptions that flow from the scientific uncertainty surrounding so many new technologies would no longer automatically operate in industry’s favor. Scientific uncertainty would no longer argue for freedom of action but for precaution and alternatives.


In response to our being entrusted with the care of God’s creation, we are called to be stewards. Let us:

- Pray for wisdom, strength, and discernment for all people.
- Become informed about disruptors and threats to human and environmental health and well-being.
- Become proactive in our homes, and in the world, crying out against organizations who pollute and disrupt the balance in our beautiful Creation.
- Urge, individually and collectively, the acceptance of the Precautionary Principle in our nation’s legislation as it is already accepted in the European Union. Issues regarding health and safety of products must be dealt with BEFORE the product comes to the marketplace. Let us embrace the “forecaring” principle and advocate care for our health, the health of the Earth, and the health of future generations.
- Network to let corporations and governments know that they must take a lead to affirm the vital importance of sustainable development and precautionary principle as the basis for a responsible, moral, and ethical means of working and being that affirms the sacred in societal and creation care and to protect earth for future generations.

**Threats to Human and Environmental Health and Well-Being: Genetically Engineered Crops, Environmental Toxins, and Nanotechnology**

*Genetically engineered (GE) crops* are crops that are altered with inserted genetic material to produce a desired trait. Food and Water Watch, a well-respected, nonprofit public interest organization, has researched GE foods extensively.

A booklet entitled “Genetically Engineered Food: An Overview” by Food and Water Watch, 2012, states, “The U.S. experiment with GE food has been a failure. Impacts on the environment, food system and public health are not fully documented but are clearly not worth it. It is time for a new approach to biotechnology in the food system.”

“GE crops can take a toll on agriculture and surrounding wildlife. … The environmental effects of GE crops include intensified agrochemical use and pollution, increased weed and insect resistance to herbicides crops, and gene flow between GE and non-GE crops.”

Once GE products are on the market, no labeling is required. This means that U.S. consumers blindly eat and drink GE ingredients every day and are not given the knowledge or choice to do otherwise. Several studies point to the health risks of GE crops and their associated agrochemicals, but proponents of the technology promote it as an environmentally responsible, profitable way for farmers to feed a growing global population. Yet the only ones experiencing any benefits from CE crops are the few, massive corporations that are controlling the food system at every step and seeing large profit margins.

New technologies—like genetic engineering—create uncertainties and risk that should be carefully evaluated rather than being rapidly pushed onto the market. The existing regulatory framework for GE foods simply does not measure up. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency, and Food & Drug Administration have failed to protect the environment, the food system, or public health from GE foods.”

Food and Water Watch recommends that there be a moratorium on new U.S. approvals of genetically engineered plants and animals and that the U.S. should institute the precautionary principle for GE foods.
“Currently in the United States, most GE foods, donor organisms and host organisms are generally considered safe for consumption and the environment until proven otherwise. The United States should enact policy that would more rigorously evaluate the potentially harmful effects of GE crops before their commercialization to ensure the safety of the public” (Food and Water Watch, ibid).

Toxic Chemicals threaten Human and Environmental Health. Presbyterians for Earth Care, in a letter to membership on May 16, 2013, stated, “tens of thousands of chemicals remain in everyday products, such as cleaners, food containers, furniture and even children’s products without being tested for safety. Under current law, the EPA can call for safety testing only after evidence surfaces demonstrating a chemical is dangerous. As a result, the EPA has only been able to require testing for roughly 200 of more than 84,000 chemicals currently registered in the United States.”

As people of faith, we are called to care about God’s creation. These chemicals may be harmful to the earth, and to humans, we do not know. What we do know is that the CDC has found more than 212 industrial chemicals in American’s bodies, and that babies are born with chemicals already present in their bodies. Paul says the body is a temple of the holy spirit. American’s bodies are temples of chemicals” (PEC, May 16, 2013).

Greenfaith, an interfaith coalition for the environment, with whom PC(USA) Environmental Ministries has an affiliation, has written an “Interfaith Statement for Chemical Policy Reform,” which was formulated with two other faith-based organizations—the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. and the Union for Reform Judaism.

This statement notes, “While all people are at risk, some are more vulnerable. Communities of color and low-income communities suffer disproportionately from pollution caused by current and past industrial activity, waste disposal, heavily-traveled transportation routes, and consumer products containing toxic chemicals. Researchers also warn that toxic chemicals negatively impact children, expectant mothers, and workers.”

“Chemical workers suffer from exposures because of the lack of public data on chemicals they use, unsafe workplaces, and lax enforcement of regulations. As religious leaders and people of faith and conscience from diverse traditions, we affirm that reforming current chemical policies is vital to protecting people and life on God’s Earth.”

Government policy on chemicals can and should protect people and all life on earth. Chemical legislation should:

1. Protect people and all life on earth.
   - Remove the most dangerous chemicals, such as chemicals that persist, bioaccumulate, or are acutely toxic (PBTs), from use except when no safe alternative is available.
   - Hold companies accountable for demonstrating that chemicals are safe.

2. Protect vulnerable populations.
   - Reduce the disproportionate burden of chemical exposure placed on workers, low-income people, people of color, indigenous communities, pregnant women, and children, and other vulnerable groups.
   - Expand government biomonitoring, particularly in at-risk communities, to measure people’s toxic exposure.
   - Invest in research to understand and protect children’s health from chemical harm.
   - Provide chemical health and safety information to workers and the public.

3. Promote a sustainable, healthy economy.
   - Fund “green” chemistry and engineering research to create safer chemicals and industrial processes.
   - Promote a “green” economy that will allow all life to flourish and bring green jobs to low-income communities and communities of color.

Nanotechnology is the science of manipulating matter on an atomic and molecular scale. In the rush to incorporate nanoparticles into products already being marketed to the public, comparatively little money has been devoted to researching the health and environmental consequences of nanotechnology, according to the National Alliance for Public Health, April 24, 2013 (ANH-USA.org).

We don’t know enough yet about nanotechnology. Chemicals like PCBs and pesticides like DDT were once assumed to be safe—their danger was not fully understood until long after human health and environmental damage already occurred. To avoid similar disasters in the future, the health and environmental effects of nanotechnology should be thoroughly studied before more products are allowed onto the market, especially into food and food packaging. And a lot depends on the defini-
tion of nanoparticles’ size, and whether they can be considered new to nature. Canada amended its national organic rules to ban nanotechnology in food production as a “Prohibited Substance or Method.”

Recommendations from Food and Water Watch are the following:

- The scientific community has clearly established that the safety of nanomaterials cannot be assumed by studying their larger counterparts. The FDA should regulate nanotech products as the new chemical substances that they are, and require at least the same level of testing required for new food additives.

- If they are approved, nanoparticles should be clearly labeled so consumers are aware that the products they are using contain these controversial ingredients.

- Federal agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration should also be required to track any incidents, including adverse or allergic reactions, once nanotech products are on the market.

Concurrence to Item 15-02 from the Presbyteries of Heartland and Western North Carolina.

Concurrence to Item 15-02 from the Presbytery of Yukon (with Additional Rationale)

The Word of the Lord

Genesis 2:15; Genesis 3:23: “The Lord God took the [human] and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. … The LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.”

God intends for human beings to care for the land where God has placed us. The Hebrew term, “le’abdah,” which the Common English Bible translates as “to farm,” goes deeper in its Hebrew meaning. Specifically, “le’abdah” bears the connotation of service rather than exploitation or any definition of dominion that does not mean “caring for (something) in the service of God.” According to this passage, Adam is to be a “servant” of the fertile land, helping it to be productive.

See also Psalm 96:10–13 and Matthew 22:37b.

The Precautionary Principle and Sustainable Development

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history in being proactive in ecological concerns. Although many more examples could be cited, two particularly relevant examples include [let us indeed reaffirm] the 202nd General Assembly (1990) policy statement on “Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice” and the 1996 “Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Development” from the 208th General Assembly (1996) as we uphold our long denominational history of seeking environmental justice.

Threats to Human and Environmental Health and Well-Being: Genetically Engineered Crops, Environmental Toxins, and Nanotechnology.

Toxic chemicals threaten human and environmental health. The Presbytery of Yukon notes that toxic chemicals, both deposited by specific human agents and accumulated from general pollution through wind and sea currents, have put many Alaskans at risk. Further, Presbyterians for Earth Care, in a letter to membership on May 16, 2013, stated, “tens of thousands of chemicals remain in everyday products, such as cleaners, food containers, furniture and even children’s products without being tested for safety. Under current law, the EPA can call for safety testing only after evidence surfaces demonstrating a chemical is dangerous. As a result, the EPA has only been able to require testing for roughly 200 of more than 84,000 chemicals currently registered in the United States.”

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP).

The Advisory Committee advises that this overture be approved as amended below. [Text to be deleted is shown with brackets and with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of Southern New England overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to affirm the vital importance of sustainable development and the Precautionary Principle. [It is] [Such methods of preventing irreversible ecological impacts are part of] the basis for a responsible, moral, and [scientifically-informed human flourishing.] [ethically-informed means of working and being.] [It affirms] [affirming] the sacred in societal and creation care, [and] protecting the earth for future generations. Additionally, [we ask that the PC(USA)] [the General Assembly directs the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy to] commission a study group [of three to five persons] to
This overture provides the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with an invitation to examine the practical impacts of several new areas of technological development, and to do so with a scientific community that is increasingly attuned to the accelerating systemic dynamics of climate change. In light of financial constraints, the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy suggests a smaller than customary study team, which would include dedicated volunteer members with expertise in the public health aspects of genetically modified organisms, nanotechnology, and chemical toxicology, the concerns named in the overture’s rationale. The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy would also name one or more Christian social ethicists to work with the technical experts on the important matters identified in the overture.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy consists of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) elected by the General Assembly to help the church address matters of Christian conscience in an informed and Reformed way. The bases of Presbyterian social witness policy (or ethical teaching) are found in Scripture and the confessions. The Brief Statement of Faith includes the clear environmental concern: “Ignoring God’s commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care” (Book of Confessions, section 10.3).

The usual practice of General Assemblies has been to authorize limited expenditures of “per capita” funds to study and bring back reports and other resources to enrich the ongoing conversation and internal culture of the denomination, as well as its public witness on matters of social concern. The connection between studies and recommendations for action goes back to the earliest Presbyterian principles, which include the affirmation that “truth is in order to goodness” (Book of Order, F-3.0104), so that we seek not only to understand God’s truth but to fulfill God’s will in each new context. In this case, commissioners may consider the value of delegating one part of the church to examine this particular area of concern with an eye to helping the church use its corporate voice in a timely way.

Although the proponents quote primarily from advocacy organizations, the concerns they identify are shared widely in the environmental science community. A recent article in environmental science identifies four key elements of the “precautionary principle”: “taking preventive action in the face of uncertainty; shifting the burden of proof to the proponents of an activity; exploring a wide range of alternatives to possibly harmful actions; and increasing public participation in decision making” (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1240435/pdf/ehp0109-000871.pdf). These are in fact not new concepts for Presbyterian General Assemblies, and the overture proponents rightly name significant ecological reports that guide our church’s environmental ministries that include these elements within the categories of eco-justice and sustainability.

The “precautionary principle,” called the “prevention principle” in the Earth Charter and other places, has perhaps been given most emphasis in the Protestant community by Scandinavian and German Lutheran ethicists, as may be appropriate given its larger role in European governmental policy-making. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), a full communion partner of the PCUSA, has used the precautionary principle most in its statement on genetics (http://www.elca.org/en/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics).

Some parts of the scientific and technological communities are also using either “strong” or “weak” versions of the precautionary principle. The Center for Responsible Nanotechnology website notes that it “has identified several sources of risk from molecular manufacturing, including arms races, grey goo, societal upheaval, independent development, and programs of nanotechnology prohibition that would require violation of human rights” (http://www.crnano.org/precautionary.htm).

If the assembly were to approve the study recommended, it would not necessarily be endorsing the organizations and conclusions indicated in the overture rationale. Those quotations indicate the seriousness of the issues involved. The precautionary principle is in fact one means for affirming the priority of “the integrity of creation.” It shifts the burden of proof more onto those who could de-stabilize or irreversibly disrupt natural patterns, but it does not in itself tell us when reasonable people would agree that the burden of proof has been met, and this may vary based on the biological systems involved. Any study for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) would need to listen as well to strong opponents of the precautionary principle, such as the sometime presidential advisor, Cass R. Sunstein, who sometimes term it, “the paralyzing principle” (http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/regulation/2002/12/v25n4-9.pdf).

Yet the magnitude of climate change and the significance of new technologies, in the view of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, would give the study considerable value. In the words of the scientific article cited above:

Frustration with policy concerning toxic chemicals has also stimulated interest in the precautionary principle. The risk assessment process is perceived by a growing segment of the population as antagonistic to strong environmental protection and as excessively complex and full of hidden assumptions that have the effect of disenfranchising all but the experts from the decision-making process. Current U.S. environmental policy often seems to be more reactionary than precautionary, requiring a high degree of certainty of harm before preventive action is taken, and emphasizing the management of risks rather than their prevention. The precautionary principle, by calling for preventive action even when there is uncertainty, by placing

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Ethicist Celia Deane-Drummond suggests “that the precautionary principle is a secularised version of the tradition of practical wisdom or prudence” (http://chesterrep.openrepository.com/cdr/bitstream/10034/14688/6/deane-drummond-dialog05.pdf.txt). It is this kind of Christian grounding that the church would seek to bring to the study in the hope that we can contribute to the healing of this “planet entrusted to our care.”

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 15-02.

It is vital for our congregations to be instructed and educated in relation to sustainable development. In this way our members will be able to advocate for reforms according to God’s call to care for his/her creation.

In the past, the General Assembly has approved divestments from companies whose practice and impacts are against God’s will and word. Unfortunately, those who live in poverty in the U.S.A. and around the globe are the most impacted by climate change effects, burning of fossil fuels, coal pollution, nonsustainable energy plans, air pollution, shrinking water supplies, damaged watersheds, ocean acidification, and careless human actions. It is time for us to understand that our policies and practices in the U.S. affect the rest of the planet.

The disproportionate impact on those living in poverty in the least-developed countries directly increase immigration rates in developed countries because the quality of their living conditions decrease in their home country. The racial ethnic population in the U.S. is affected by these harmful practices because many of these individuals are poor and vulnerable and are people who live and work in places that are impacted by chemical harms. This section of the population does not have the financial resources or equal access to the system to change their current deplorable conditions. Environmental racism is a real issue.

This situation requires a just and compassionate response from the PC(USA). It is necessary to take actions that are consistent with what we preach and believe, loving each other as ourselves.

As Christians following Jesus’ example, it is our duty to educate our members on responsible stewardship of the earth that God has entrusted us to do. Our church is called to advocate and to protect vulnerable populations.

Our denomination should invest in companies that promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, that provide environmental benefits to the planet that offer good-paying, safe job conditions for its workers, safer chemicals, and industrial processes.

Non-ethical behavior is to profit from the destruction of creation and the suffering of the most vulnerable people.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-02

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-02—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 15-02.

Please see ACWC’s rationale for Item 15-05:

The ACWC is painfully aware of the ways in which the exploitation of nature has been supported by philosophies and ideologies that have also informed discrimination against and the abuse of women. Therefore we support overtures that advocate for public policies intended to change the course of climate change and the recommendation to divest from fossil fuels.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 15-02

Comment on Item 15-02—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of the General Assembly and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly requests that commissioners and advisory delegates carefully consider any items of business that would raise the per capita rate. The COGA made a commitment to bring no increase to the per capita rate to the 221st General Assembly (2014) by making significant reductions in the per capita budgets, which included reductions in staff. We would ask that other means be found within existing committee structures to accomplish the same task.

PMA COMMENT ON ITEM 15-02

Comment on Item 15-02—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

This overture also asks that the General Assembly commission a study to review this principle and prepare a paper for use by congregations. If the assembly affirms this recommendation, it should be referred to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy for implementation.

There would be financial implications for the commissioning of a study group and paper.

Item 15-03

[The assembly approved Item 15-03 with amendment. See pp. 16, 57–58.]


The Presbytery of Seattle overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to [affirm the decision of] [state concerns related to the ongoing and expanding extraction and export of fossil fuels, particularly coal, from the U.S. for use in Asia, and approve the following measures for public health and climate stewardship:]

1. Urges civil authorities to conduct [promptly] a full, programmatic review and assessment of the impact of expanded coal export projects in Washington and Oregon on human health and the well-being of communities along the Northwest rail lines. [This should include full Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the studies should be conducted at multiple locations along the proposed expansion route so as to assess the impact on vulnerable communities.]

2. Commends the Washington State Department of Environmental Quality (WA DEQ) for its decision to conduct a full EIS along the route within its jurisdiction and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this approval to WA DEQ.

3. Recognizes that regional issues of extraction, pollution, transportation, and export have interstate, national, and global implications, both for environmental justice concerns and for global climate disruption/change. Such impacts range from coal dust pollution, diesel particulates, potential for derailments, negative impacts on real estate, and public health and safety concerns, to global climate change, sea level rise, acidification of oceans, severe weather events, and the ethical dilemma of profiting from the export of coal and other fossil fuels for use in countries whose environmental and pollution restrictions are less stringent.

4. Affirms that civil authorities are called upon to require full disclosure and consideration of the combined effect of all coal export projects taken together on the poorest and most vulnerable communities, locally and globally. The General Assembly further affirms that the evaluation of coal export involves moral choices, in which key considerations are caring for the creation that God has made and with careful stewardship and justice for those who depend on a stable climate and water supply for survival.

5. Directs the Stated Clerk to write to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the EPA, and the governors and congressional delegation of Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho, urging comprehensive Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) along proposed routes for expanded export of fossil fuels, including analysis from the National Transportation Safety Board and other bodies as necessary.

6. Commends the presbyteries of Seattle, Cascades, and North Puget Sound for their environmental awareness and advocacy, and encourages other Presbyterians and councils of the church to consider the impact of resource extraction, transportation, and use in their regions and to work with state and national ecumenical bodies and the Office of Public Witness of the Presbyterian Mission Agency in addressing concerns.

Rationale

Civil authorities are called upon to require full disclosure and consideration of the combined effect of all coal export projects taken together on the poorest and most vulnerable communities, locally and globally. The Presbytery of Seattle further affirms that the evaluation of coal export involves moral choices, in which key considerations are caring for the creation which God has made and with careful stewardship and justice for those who depend on a stable climate and water supply for survival.

Congregations throughout the Presbytery of Seattle share a deep commitment to values of justice and stewardship toward the most vulnerable including children, the unborn, the elderly, and those suffering from poor health because of environmental hazards, including air pollution, shrinking water supplies, and climate disruption.

The burning of coal is harmful to public health and is the leading cause of emissions of mercury, which is a neurotoxin, and greenhouse gasses, which disrupt climate, damage watersheds, and cause ocean acidification.
The transport of more than 105 million tons of coal a year from the Powder River Basin in Montana and Wyoming through Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington to be burned in Asia would entail a significant number of trains on a 1,500-mile route and would affect many communities in the Synod of the Rocky Mountains and the Synod of Alaska-Northwest, including our own Presbytery of Seattle. Because these trains and barges must be uncovered, up to 500 pounds of coal dust per car, per trip, escape along the train track. Dramatically increased numbers of coal cars on these lines present health risks from additional coal dust and diesel exhaust, will clog traffic in local communities, stress the shipment of domestic products by rail, delay emergency vehicles, and require taxpayer support of all at-grade crossings and bridges.

Many communities along the proposed routes have opposed the significantly expanded shipment of coal, or asked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a comprehensive review of the projects to include the impact on human health and on the global climate. Faith leaders have asked authorities to review the harmful effects on God’s creation of the whole lifecycle of coal for export, from mining to transport to burning.

As people of faith, we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. In the United States, coal-fired power has steadily declined in the last decade because of a shift to natural gas, increased conservation and renewable energy, as well as stronger anti-pollution rules. Local communities, including many faith voices, have prevented new coal-fired power plants from being built and set strict limits on air pollution from existing plants. Knowingly enabling pollution of the air that our global neighbors breathe is morally unacceptable. Additionally, air pollution in China contributes to pollution in our presbytery and across our synod, including mercury in local waters, melting glaciers, and disruptive weather patterns.

Further reliance on coal slows the transition to better stewardship of God’s creation through clean and renewable energy, conservation, and energy efficiency. Climate change is a serious threat to generational justice. Faith community leaders have the moral responsibility to ask civil authorities to consider all effect of the mining, transport, and burning of coal on all of God’s children.

Concurrence to Item15-03 from the Presbyteries of Cascades and North Puget Sound.

**ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-03**

*Advice and Counsel on Item 15-03—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.*

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that Item 15-03 be approved with the following amendments:

“The Presbytery of Seattle overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to [state concerns related to the ongoing and expanding extraction and export of fossil fuels, particularly coal, from the U.S. for use in Asia, and approve the following measures for public health and climate stewardship:]

“[1. Urges] [affirm the decision of] civil authorities to conduct a full, programmatic review and assessment of the impact of expanded coal export projects in Washington and Oregon on human health and the well-being of communities along the Northwest rail lines. [This should include full Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the studies should be conducted at multiple locations along the proposed expansion route so as to assess the impact on vulnerable communities.]

“[2. Commends the Washington state Department of Environmental Quality (WA DEQ) for its decision to conduct a full EIS along the route within its jurisdiction and directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this approbation to WA DEQ.]

“[3. Recognizes that regional issues of extraction, pollution, transportation, and export have interstate, national, and global implications, both for environmental justice concerns and for global climate disruption/change. Such impacts range from coal dust pollution, diesel particulates, potential for derailments, negative impacts on real estate, and public health and safety concerns, to global climate change, sea level rise, acidification of oceans, severe weather events, and the ethical dilemma of profiting from the export of coal and other fossil fuels for use in countries whose environmental and pollution restrictions are less stringent.]

“[4. Affirms that civil authorities are called upon to require full disclosure and consideration of the combined effect of all coal export projects taken together on the poorest and most vulnerable communities, locally and globally. The General Assembly further affirms that the evaluation of coal export involves moral choices, in which key considerations are caring for the creation that God has made and with careful stewardship and justice for those who depend on a stable climate and water supply for survival.]*

“[5. Directs the Stated Clerk to write to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the EPA, and the governors and congressional delegation of Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho, urging comprehensive Environmental Impact Statements
(EIS) along proposed routes for expanded export of fossil fuels, including analysis from the National Transportation Safety Board and other bodies as necessary.

“[6. Commends the presbyteries of Seattle, Cascades, and North Puget Sound for their environmental awareness and advocacy, and encourages other Presbyterians and councils of the church to consider the impact of resource extraction, transportation, and use in their regions and to work with state and national ecumenical bodies and the Office of Public Witness of the Presbyterian Mission Agency in addressing concerns.]”

The original overture explains the dangers of expanding coal train routes in the Pacific Northwest. Indeed, some language (noted with *) from the original overture’s Rationale is included in these proposed amendments. This is a serious concern with regional, interstate, and global implications, and the Pacific Northwest is not the only region affected by these issues. The Gulf Coast and the East Coast are also sites of proposed expanded coal export routes. Current studies proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers are inadequate to assess the true environmental impact of these expanded routes, especially in communities along the way that will see none of the benefits of increased economic activity, but will bear significant risk of pollution, contamination, and threat to public safety. Oil trains carry a somewhat different set of dangers, underlined by the massive fires that followed derailments in Lac-Megantic, Quebec (July 6, 2013) and Casselton, North Dakota (December 30, 2013). (see: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/07/fires-burning-quebec-runaway-train-crash and http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_24821236/weather-shift-near-nd-derailment-worries-officials)

Washington State has announced a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the expansion the coal export routes within its jurisdiction, but this route has interstate implications. The interstate nature of the proposed expansion requires the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct complete EIS reports along the proposed route, not just at the points of origin and terminus. Such a study will need the support of the governors and congressional delegations from the affected states. The original overture, in listing the synods affected by the proposed expanded coal train routes in the Pacific Northwest, accidentally left out the Synod of the Pacific.

The proposed resolution is in accord with prior General Assembly social witness policy, particularly the 2008 report (study and recommendations), “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming,” which uses eco-justice norms of sustainability, participation, sufficiency, and solidarity to develop guidelines for evaluating the major energy options (http://www.pcusa.org/resource/power-change-us-energy-policy-global-warming/). While General Assemblies have addressed environmental concerns since the 1960s, comprehensive policies were adopted in 1972 (Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal) and 1990 (Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice). Copies of Energy in God’s World: Our Future, Our Choice (Church & Society, March/April 2004) are also available, presenting a range of action strategies.

And while proposed expansions of coal trains and other fossil fuel exports may seem to be regional issues, they have very serious implications for the global community through the resulting combustion of fossil fuels in jurisdictions that have much less stringent pollution and emissions standards. If the assembly wished to expand the concerns of this overture, it could address the major issues raised by the proposed transportation of oil from shale and tar sands through a recommendation such as the following:

“[7. Consistent with the above concerns, supports the disapproval of major pipelines and transshipment facilities that jeopardize regional ecologies and facilitate the exploitation of highly polluting fossil fuel sources while delaying the transition to more renewable resources.]”

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 15-03.

In the past, the General Assembly has approved divestments from companies whose practice and impacts are against God’s will and word. Unfortunately, those who live in poverty in the U.S.A. and around the globe are the most impacted by climate change effects, burning of fossil fuels, coal pollution, nonsustainable energy plans, air pollution, shrinking water supplies, damaged watersheds, ocean acidification, and careless human actions. It is time for us to understand that our policies and practices in the U.S. affect the rest of the planet.

The disproportionate impact on those living in poverty in the least-developed countries directly increase immigration rates in developed countries because the quality of their living conditions decrease in their home country. The racial ethnic population in the U.S. is affected by these harmful practices because many of these individuals are poor and vulnerable and are people who live and work in places that are impacted by chemical harms. This section of the population does not have the financial resources or equal access to the system to change their current deplorable conditions. Environmental racism is a real issue.
This situation requires a just and compassionate response from the PC(USA). It is necessary to take actions that are consistent with what we preach and believe, loving each other as ourselves.

As Christians following Jesus’ example, it is our duty to educate our members on responsible stewardship of the earth that God has entrusted us to do. Our church is called to advocate and to protect vulnerable populations.

Our denomination should invest in companies that promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, that provide environmental benefits to the planet that offer good-paying, safe job conditions for its workers, safer chemicals, and industrial processes. Non-ethical behavior is to profit from the destruction of creation and the suffering of the most vulnerable people.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-03

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-03—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises that the 221st General Assembly (2014) approve Item 15-03.

Please see ACWC’s rationale for Item 15-05:

The ACWC is painfully aware of the ways in which the exploitation of nature has been supported by philosophies and ideologies that have also informed discrimination against and the abuse of women. Therefore we support overtures that advocate for public policies intended to change the course of climate change and the recommendation to divest from fossil fuels.

Item 15-04

[The assembly approved Item 15-04 with amendment. See pp. 16, 58.]

On Recognizing the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative to Affirm and Promote the Civil and Human Rights of Immigrants in Our Communities—From the Presbytery of Central Florida.

The Presbytery of Central Florida overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to recognize the formation of the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative as a campaign to mobilize congregations, mid councils, and Presbyterian-related organizations to affirm and promote the civil and human rights of immigrants in our communities. The Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative reaffirms that the body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is formed by indigenous peoples and immigrants in various stages of our immigrant journeys and, as a body, is called to the struggle of new immigrants seeking justice under a broken immigration system.

The action of the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative is to:

• Connect a community of Presbyterians engaged in direct action for just immigration reform.

• Deepen awareness of the injustice of current immigration policy by sharing with one another and the broader church the lived experience of Presbyterians and community partners organizing for just immigration reform at the grassroots level.

• Empower Presbyterians to work to change policies and practices that infringe on the human and civil rights of immigrants in our communities, including immigrant detention, streamlined deportation, and the executing of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) by local law enforcement.

• We ask the 221st General Assembly (2014) of PC(USA) to instruct the Office of the General Assembly to immediately fill the vacancy of the position of coordinator of immigration issues in the Office of Immigration Issues. This position will help facilitate the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative. This staff person should be multilingual, have theological and legal training, community organizing experience, and a passion for justice for all the people of God but especially those who find themselves marginalized and discriminated against by unjust immigration policies.

Rationale

Strangers No More

Leviticus 19:33–34: “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”

Matthew 25:35–36; 40b: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in
prison and you visited me.’ … ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Ephesians 2:19: “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God.”

Embracing the movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst, this action is based in the power and possibilities inherent in bringing together witness and action for a just immigration policy.

This overture represents a call to action to the entire church that is grounded in decades of commitment to create safe and nurturing communities that reflect our deepest values as a people of faith. It is a call to action catalyzed by prophetic voices within the Presbyterian church: young adult leaders, new immigrant worshipping communities, and leaders whose legacies span many years of bold witness.

Concurrence to Item 15-04 from the Presbytery of Nevada.

Concurrence to Item 15-04 from the Presbytery of Palisades (with Additional Rationale).

According to international law, governments may not enforce laws that deny any person (including undocumented immigrants) their fundamental human rights. Some state and local governments have created their own laws relating to immigrants, that deny the right to housing, and that criminalize the harboring, hiring or renting to non-citizens.1

Among the violations of human rights that have been experienced by immigrants, and children of immigrants who are United States citizens, include, but are not limited to, the following: racial profiling, denial of access to education and essential health care services, discrimination, and the creating of barriers to justice when persons are victims of crimes such as human trafficking, domestic violence or bias.2

Other examples of human rights that are violated at detention centers include, but are not limited to, the following: over-reliance upon incarceration, mistreatment by guards, denial of access to legal services providers, inadequate medical care, misuse of solitary confinement, discrimination against sexual minorities, unnecessary and arbitrary detention of individuals, inhumane and inappropriate facilities (where, in some cases, detainees are held in cells without any access to the outdoors), sexual harassment and assault against transgender individuals detained, denial of adequate visitation practices, and detention of families in an inappropriate setting for children.3

Endnotes

ACSWP ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-04—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises approval of this overture.

The rationale provided by the sponsors of this overture makes the biblical case for “hospitality to the stranger” by citing several scriptural passages. It also appropriately summons the support of international law for condemnation of profiling, denial of access to education and health care, human trafficking, conditions of incarceration, and other evils of the current system. The 196th General Assembly (1984) voted “firm support and encouragement for individuals and churches who, from the base of their Christian convictions or for humanitarian reasons, have risked imprisonment in order to save the lives of refugees from Central America by helping them to avoid being sent back to the countries they have fled.” Another source of support is “Transformation of Churches and Society Through Encounters with New Neighbors,” a study and reflection guide approved by the 211th General Assembly (1999). It presents sections entitled “Historical Perspective: Immigrants,” “Theological and Ethical Principles for Policy,” and “Policy Principles.” Among the ethical principles is: “Love of neighbor requires Christians to seek justice for refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants.” The guide further states concerning one form of nonviolent direct action: “The provision of sanctuary for asylum seekers may be an appropriate moral response for churches even though the United States government regards the witness as illegal.”

The last General Assembly [Pittsburgh, 220th general Assembly (2012)] zeroed in on current injustices and the need for comprehensive immigration reform. Immigration overtures (eleven in all) constituted the entire agenda of one of the commit-
Our Communities. This overture represents a call to action to the entire church from a grassroots level. For many years, the PC(USA) has been committed to creating safe and nurturing communities that reflect our deepest values as a people of faith.

Recognizing the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative to Affirm and Promote the Civil and Human Rights of Immigrants in
against by unjust immigration laws

A passion for justice for all the people of God, but especially those who find themselves marginalized and discriminated

A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church to Making Just Immigration a Reality; 12-10—
Regarding Safe Communities for Everyone; and 12-11—On the Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and
Communities of Faith.) Recognition of the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative and support of nonviolent direct action
as advocated by Item 15-04 is an appropriate extension of the commitment to social justice for immigrants that is evident in
these actions of the last General Assembly.

The General Assembly has encouraged Presbyterian engagement in the democratic process to create laws that order society
justly. In cases where unjust application or bad law causes injustice, however, Presbyterians may feel called to protest and
seek redress for victims of injustice as guided by God, who alone is “Lord of the conscience.” In supporting this overture, the
General Assembly would not be endorsing particular actions of protest or civil disobedience, nor would it taking financial
responsibility for litigation and fees of individuals or groups apart from specific authorizations. The General Assembly
would, however, be endorsing the humanitarian and civic imperative to improve the path to citizenship and to prevent further
injustices in the application of current law. Certainly, on the matter of immigration reform affecting more than 11 million
persons, it cannot be argued that conventional politics are operating effectively.

ACREC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 15-04.

Presbyterians have engaged in advocacy regarding U.S. immigration policy and reform since at least 1953. In that year, the
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA) General Assembly (GA) called for a comprehensive review of the nation’s
immigration policies, and the next year, the GA called for legislation to provide for the needs of migrant workers. Presbyteri-
ans have continued to call for immigration justice, most recently in 2006 (Call to Presbyterians to Work and Pray for a Just
and Compassionate U.S. Immigration Policy), in 2008 (A Resolution to Study Immigration Detention in the United States; A
Resolution to Expand the Church’s Ministry with and Advocacy Against Human Trafficking; a Resolution on Preventing the
Trafficking of Women, Internationally and Nationally; A Resolution on Local Enforcement of National Immigration Laws
That Adversely Affect Local Congregations), and in 2010 (A Call to Stand with Immigrant Presbyterians in Their Hour of
Need). (See 12-09, A Resolution to Recognize the Commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Making Just Immigra-
tion a Reality—From the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns; Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 55, 50, 1155.)

We have to move from just preaching about justice for immigrants to concrete actions that endorse a just immigration re-
form in a broken immigration system where civil and human rights of immigrants are violated daily in the U.S.A. With this
campaign our denomination will be able to offer safe sanctuary for immigrant communities around us. At the same time, we
will be able to empower our members to be witnesses of Christ’s message: the good news of the redemption of the oppressed.

It is necessary to create awareness of the broken immigration system beyond immigrant worshiping communities. We
have to extend it to all of our local churches and at all levels. Raising consciousness among U.S. citizens about problems and
discrimination that immigrants are facing will help sensitize other brothers and sisters who have not been involved and re-
main indifferent in the face of unfair and discriminatory treatment against immigrants in this country.

In order to accomplish what this overture asks for, ACREC would respectfully ask the General Assembly of the
PC(USA) to instruct the Office of the General Assembly to fill the vacancy of the position of coordinator of immigration is-
This position will staff the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative. This staff person should be bilingual (Spanish and English), have theological and legal training, community organizing experience, and a passion for justice for all the people of God, but especially those who find themselves marginalized and discriminated against by unjust immigration laws.

ACWC ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON ITEM 15-04

Advice and Counsel on Item 15-04—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns advises the 221st General Assembly (2014) to approve Item 15-04.

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns concurs with the Presbytery of Central Florida’s overture, “On Recogn-
izing the Presbyterian Immigrant Defense Initiative to Affirm and Promote the Civil and Human Rights of Immigrants in
Our Communities.” This overture represents a call to action to the entire church from a grassroots level. For many years, the
PC(USA) has been committed to creating safe and nurturing communities that reflect our deepest values as a people of faith.
These communities include our immigrant communities who are often times adversely affected by corrupt and defective immigration policies, laws, and attitudes that violate basic human and civil rights. Immigrant women, in particular, also face unique human rights issues including denial of access to education and women’s health-care services, and barriers to justice for victims of crimes like human trafficking and domestic violence. Although ACWC supports this overture, we also were left asking how this initiative will take form and what financial implications will be involved.

OGA COMMENT ON ITEM 15-04

Comment on Item 15-04—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA).

The Office of Immigration Issues within the Office of the General Assembly serves the church by providing reliable advice and counsel to presbyteries and pastors with immigration problems and resources to educate and connect Presbyterians advocating for immigration reform.

Commissioners of the 221st General Assembly (2014) are invited to consider Item 15-04 as consistent with previous General Assembly policy.

Item 15-04 calls for the recognition of a movement that connects Presbyterians engaged in immigration reform. This is in agreement with the 220th General Assembly (2012) resolution, On the Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith (Minutes, 2012, Part I, pp. 55, 60, 1159), which directs Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agencies to coordinate with “interested presbyteries to create political will towards immigration reform.”

Further, Item 15-04 calls for recognition of a movement thereby empowering Presbyterians to change policies including “detention, streamlined deportation” and the execution of “ICE [policy] by local law enforcement.” This is consistent with 220th General Assembly (2014) resolutions, On Advocating for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (Ibid, pp. 55, 57–58, 1142) and On the Plight of Immigrant People in Our Neighborhoods and Communities of Faith (Ibid, pp. 55, 60, 1159). Both call for more humane immigration enforcement and an end to Operation Streamline, 287(g) agreements, Secured Communities and the Criminal Alien Program.
SECTION THREE

SUPPLEMENT:

Roll of the General Assembly,
Standing Rules,
Moderators and Clerks,
Members of Entities Elected by the General Assembly
ROLL OF COMMISSIONERS AND ADVISORY DELEGATES

ABINGDON
Teaching Elder Tony Palubicki
Ruling Elder Alice Freeman
YAAD Ethan Kester

ALBANY
Teaching Elder Jim Reisner
Ruling Elder Carol Aldrich
YAAD Kyle Coombs

ARKANSAS
Teaching Elder Camille LeBron Powell
Ruling Elder Mary Beth Lysobey
Teaching Elder Anne Russ
Ruling Elder Ed Wilkinson
YAAD Judy Hernandez Ramos

ATLANTIC KOREAN
Teaching Elder Josh Kim
Ruling Elder Don Kim
YAAD Hannah Kim

BALTIMORE
Teaching Elder Jack Carlson
Ruling Elder James Schroll
Teaching Elder Renee Mackey
Ruling Elder Vivian Smith
YAAD Emma Warman

BEAVER-BUTLER
Teaching Elder Allison Bauer
Ruling Elder Eva-Maria Barr
Teaching Elder Maurice Smith
Ruling Elder Mark Plumb
YAAD Joshua McElhaney

BLACKHAWK
Teaching Elder Leon Aalberts
Ruling Elder Shirley VanDeWege
Teaching Elder Stephen Shullanberger
Ruling Elder Karen Williams
YAAD Rachael Wentworth

BOISE
Teaching Elder Daryl Wilson
Ruling Elder Karen Allredge
YAAD Jonathan Toth

BOSTON
Teaching Elder Jennifer Wegter-McNelly
Ruling Elder Mark Nelson
YAAD Angela Wantate

CARLISLE
Teaching Elder Kent Carter
Ruling Elder Marel Raub
Teaching Elder Louis Nyiri
Ruling Elder Pat Henry
YAAD Garitt McCartney

THE CASCADES
Teaching Elder Steve Parker
Ruling Elder Kay Baker
Teaching Elder Jeff Sievert
Ruling Elder John Brinegar
Teaching Elder Linda Stewart-Kalen
Ruling Elder Greg Anable
YAAD Hannah Graunke

CAYUGA-SYRACUSE
Teaching Elder Tracie Martin
Ruling Elder Jill Fandrich
YAAD Rebecca Wind

CENTRAL FLORIDA
Teaching Elder Frank Allen
Ruling Elder Cindy Britt
Teaching Elder Linda Jaberg
Ruling Elder John Vick
Teaching Elder Laura Walters Basket
Ruling Elder Laurie Farquharson
YAAD Nate Gittner

CENTRAL NEBRASKA
Teaching Elder Stephen Price-Gibson
Ruling Elder Eunice Alexander
YAAD Logan Ellis

CENTRAL WASHINGTON
Teaching Elder Kristine Bottino
Ruling Elder Samuel Dechter
YAAD Lauren Roberts

CHARLESTON-ATLANTIC
Teaching Elder Earl Bland
Ruling Elder Karen Cookson
Teaching Elder Carmen Goetschius
Ruling Elder Jesse Dove
Teaching Elder Alonza Washington
Ruling Elder Mary Robinson
YAAD Hanna Crosby

CHARLOTTE
Teaching Elder Matthew Baker
Ruling Elder Shirley Anderson
Teaching Elder Veronica Cannon
Ruling Elder D. Lynn Burris
Teaching Elder Chris Carrasco
Ruling Elder Brenda Foster
Teaching Elder Robert Austell
Ruling Elder Deloris Harris
Teaching Elder Dwight Williams
Ruling Elder Nancy Wilson
YAAD Carolyn Meyers

CHEROKEE
Teaching Elder Julie Ferguson
Ruling Elder Judith Bullard
YAAD Matthew Kern

CHICAGO
Teaching Elder Jefferson Caldeira
Ruling Elder James Acquaah
Teaching Elder Anne Fisher
Ruling Elder Jim Lifton
Teaching Elder Beth Freese Dammers
Ruling Elder Karen Maurer
Teaching Elder Jennifer Burns Lewis
Ruling Elder Julio Pena
Teaching Elder John Vest
Ruling Elder Joseph Morrow
YAAD Ellie Van Der Griend

CIMARRON
Teaching Elder Judye Pistole
Ruling Elder R. Todd Singleterry
Teaching Elder Dan Sandifer-Stech
Ruling Elder Donna Frank
Teaching Elder Louisa Umphres
Ruling Elder John Martin
YAAD Emily Faas

COASTAL CAROLINA
Teaching Elder Sommer Bower
Ruling Elder Sue McCaffray
Teaching Elder Deck Guess
Ruling Elder Ellen Newbold
Teaching Elder Clarence Page
Ruling Elder Al Searles
Teaching Elder Paul Shields
Ruling Elder Earnestine Wall
YAAD Evan Lamb

DAKOTA
Teaching Elder Fern Cloud
Ruling Elder Kay Bursheim
Teaching Elder Bill Norton
Ruling Elder Dick Kampa
YAAD Alina Kanaski

DENVER
Teaching Elder John Bell
Ruling Elder Jean Demmler
Teaching Elder Loie Troxler
Ruling Elder Sarah Savage
YAAD Caleb Chincoya

DES MOINES
Teaching Elder Ann Johnson
Ruling Elder Ted Coppock
YAAD Holly Albers

DETROIT
Teaching Elder Beth Delaney
Ruling Elder Mary Ann Brantley
Teaching Elder Raphael Francis
Ruling Elder Katherine Nyberg
Teaching Elder Chris Thomas
Ruling Elder Christine Sackett
Teaching Elder Paul Thwaite
Ruling Elder Sung Yang
YAAD Michael Barconey
THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

DONEGAL
Teaching Elder Emily Chudy
Ruling Elder Nan Best
Teaching Elder David Willerup
Ruling Elder Anne Cowburn
Teaching Elder Kris Poontajak
Ruling Elder Kenneth Smith
YAAD Kinsey Edgar-Smith

EAST IOWA
Teaching Elder Jennifer Jennings
Ruling Elder Lara Marsh
Teaching Elder Scott Nesbitt
Ruling Elder John Thedens
YAAD Geoffrey Dyck

EAST TENNESSEE
Teaching Elder Wendy Neff
Ruling Elder Brenda Hooper
Teaching Elder Miki Vanderbilt
Ruling Elder John Thedens
YAAD Geoffrey Dyck

EASTERN KOREAN
Teaching Elder David Choi
Ruling Elder Hu-Nam Nam
YAAD Rebecca Mun

EASTERN OKLAHOMA
Teaching Elder Jim Miller
Ruling Elder Russ Cook
Teaching Elder Teri Summers Minette
Ruling Elder Kriss Harris
YAAD Hannah Pitts

EASTERN OREGON
Teaching Elder Steven Toth
Ruling Elder Evan Hansen
YAAD Madison Lindsey

EASTERN VIRGINIA
Teaching Elder Albert Butzer
Ruling Elder Bill Espich
Teaching Elder Helen Byrd
Ruling Elder Jack Pennington
Teaching Elder Veronica Thomas
Ruling Elder Alice Taylor
YAAD Taylor McLean

EASTMINISTER
Teaching Elder Peter Del Nagro
Ruling Elder Della McPherson
Teaching Elder Janet Lowery
Ruling Elder David Williams
YAAD Raelyn Crump

ELIZABETH
Teaching Elder Ryan Landino
Ruling Elder Phyllis Black
Teaching Elder Ken Macari
Ruling Elder Susie Krivenko
YAAD Sarai Mendez

FLINT RIVER
Teaching Elder Jones Doughton
Ruling Elder Dan Ponder
YAAD Sam Shields

FOOTHILLS
Teaching Elder Andy Casto-Waters
Ruling Elder Mary Boggs
Teaching Elder Beverly Kelly
Ruling Elder Bill Fuller
Teaching Elder Steve Rhodes
Ruling Elder Lyn Norton
YAAD Anna Catherine Caldwell

GENESEE VALLEY
Teaching Elder Dave Pepper
Ruling Elder Susan Orr
Teaching Elder John Wilkinson
Ruling Elder Joan Wolfarth
YAAD Emily Stevens

GENEVA
Teaching Elder Jim Kerr
Ruling Elder Kris Alling
YAAD Benjamin Falter

GIDDINGS-LOVEJOY
Teaching Elder John Higgins
Ruling Elder Bev Stobie
Teaching Elder Kim Skilling
Ruling Elder Jay Sumbervile
Teaching Elder Patty Stone
Ruling Elder Dale Vandiver
YAAD Tacoma Monroe

GLACIER
Teaching Elder Jon Draskovic
Ruling Elder Mary Di Biase

GRACE
Teaching Elder Charles Bruner
Teaching Elder Patrick McCoy
Ruling Elder Carole Cook
Teaching Elder Wendy Fenn
Teaching Elder David Ivie
Ruling Elder Margaret Garver-Hamilton
Teaching Elder Paul Kim
Ruling Elder Kenneth A Johnson
Teaching Elder Leslie King
Ruling Elder Dan Klein
Teaching Elder Robin Lyn Valdez
Ruling Elder Tom Sartor
Teaching Elder Shane Webb
Ruling Elder Ann Treleven
YAAD Mary Henderson

GRAND CANYON
Teaching Elder Ron Hawkins
Ruling Elder Kathryn Owens
Teaching Elder Martha Sadonegi
Ruling Elder Gloria Young
YAAD Kaylinn Crowl

GREAT RIVERS
Teaching Elder Dick Johnson
Ruling Elder Michael Gizzi
Teaching Elder Kathy Stoner Lasala
Ruling Elder Sue Sawers
Teaching Elder Benjamin Keller
Ruling Elder Mike Fritz
YAAD Stormy Luna

GREATER ATLANTA
Teaching Elder Karen Allamon
Ruling Elder Gwen Garrison
Teaching Elder Byong Han
Ruling Elder Phil Hamilton
Teaching Elder Lyndsay Slocum
Ruling Elder Mary Martin
Teaching Elder Gray Norworthy
Ruling Elder Joanne Nurss
Teaching Elder Jhiyun Oh
Ruling Elder Mardee Rightmyer
Teaching Elder Rob Sparks
Ruling Elder Ken Whitehurst
YAAD Elizabeth Shevlin

HANMI
Teaching Elder David Won
Ruling Elder Danny Cho

HEARTLAND
Teaching Elder Jason Carle
Ruling Elder Maggie Blankers
Teaching Elder Pat Jackson
Ruling Elder Don Frankland
Teaching Elder Sandra Stogsdill
Ruling Elder Nancy Smith
YAAD Caroline Barnett

HOLSTON
Teaching Elder John Shuck
Ruling Elder Scott Wise
YAAD Tyler Logan

HOMESTEAD
Teaching Elder Greg Bolt
Ruling Elder Pam Carrier
Teaching Elder Jennifer Strickland
Ruling Elder Cheryl Rennick
YAAD Erik Hall

HUDSON RIVER
Teaching Elder Tami Seidel
Ruling Elder Leslie Mardenborough
Teaching Elder Dale Southorn
Ruling Elder Stephen Valastro
YAAD Erica Restaino

HUNTINGDON
Teaching Elder Doug Friant
Ruling Elder Kate Stillman
YAAD Lauren Elliott

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221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
INDIAN NATIONS
Teaching Elder Greg Amen
Ruling Elder Harry Wright
Teaching Elder Jan Burns-Hintze
Ruling Elder John Marshall
YAAD Mia Winfree

THE INLAND NORTHWEST
Teaching Elder Bill Ward
Ruling Elder Joe Bruce

THE JAMES
Teaching Elder Stephen Hodges
Ruling Elder Bill Brownfield
Teaching Elder Clay Macaulay
Ruling Elder Diane Easley
Teaching Elder Chris Mooney
Ruling Elder Gene Rosen
Teaching Elder Mary Janie Winter
Ruling Elder Phyllis Smith
YAAD Paige Stewart

JOHN CALVIN
Teaching Elder Dave Burgess
Ruling Elder Phyllis Winzenried
YAAD Kayla Beasley

THE JOHN KNOX
Teaching Elder Gary Catterson
Ruling Elder Carol Philipps
Teaching Elder Jessica Scholten
Ruling Elder Bev Ruston
YAAD Haley Jenson

KENDALL
Teaching Elder Laura Baarda
Ruling Elder Steve Atkinson
YAAD Michelle Goff

KISKIMINETAS
Teaching Elder David Hanna
Ruling Elder Tamalyn Goble
Teaching Elder Terri Swails
Ruling Elder David Larimer
YAAD Alissa Mazzocchi

LACKAWANNA
Teaching Elder Carol Fleming
Ruling Elder Nathanael Brague
YAAD Megan Fleming

LAKE ERIE
Teaching Elder Barry Cressman
Ruling Elder Carl Hohmann
Teaching Elder Sue Nageotte
Ruling Elder Lynda Karger
YAAD Brittany Kaltenbaugh

LAKE HURON
Teaching Elder Valerie Fargo
Ruling Elder Andrea Drapp
Teaching Elder Todd Smith
Ruling Elder Chris Wolf
YAAD Erica Clark

LAKE MICHIGAN
Teaching Elder Rob Carlson
Ruling Elder Dan Stenberg
Teaching Elder Laurie Hartzell
Ruling Elder Jack Fetch
YAAD Casey Carbone

LEHIGH
Teaching Elder Steve Shussett
Ruling Elder Chris Dudley
Teaching Elder Barbara Lucia
Ruling Elder Larry Keith
YAAD Christopher Palmer

LONG ISLAND
Teaching Elder Eddie Jusino
Ruling Elder Mary Jane Winter
Teaching Elder Anne Stewart Miller
Ruling Elder Maria Studer
YAAD Anderson Seecharan

LOS RANCHOS
Teaching Elder Dave Rohde
Ruling Elder Judy Anderson
Teaching Elder Tom Dykhuizen
Ruling Elder John Holcomb
Teaching Elder Geoff Pfaff
Ruling Elder Harriet Hughes
YAAD Bryce McAteer

MACKINAC
Teaching Elder Judy Arnold
Ruling Elder Don Mead
YAAD Will Myers

MAUMEE VALLEY
Teaching Elder Mary Jane Saunders
Ruling Elder Debra Davies
Teaching Elder Ken Wessler
Ruling Elder Gene McEvoy
YAAD Juliann Pond

MIAMI VALLEY
Teaching Elder Ben Beres
Ruling Elder Donna Courtney
Teaching Elder Karen Cassedy
Ruling Elder Carol Hess
YAAD Shelby Oda

MID-KENTUCKY
Teaching Elder Brenson Bishop
Ruling Elder Rob Morse
Teaching Elder Judy Hockenberry
Ruling Elder Carol Pye
YAAD Will Owens

MID-SOUTH
Teaching Elder Bo Scarborough
Ruling Elder Linda Scholl
YAAD Kathelene White

MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Teaching Elder Paul Casner
Ruling Elder Rick Robinson
Teaching Elder Jeff Ritchie
Ruling Elder Melinda Sanders
Teaching Elder Rich Zeigler
Ruling Elder Nancy Truett

MIDWEST HANMI
Teaching Elder Sun Jin Park
Ruling Elder Bob Song

MILWAUKEE
Teaching Elder Bruce Jones
Ruling Elder Judy Jaggard
Teaching Elder Catherine Neal
Ruling Elder Larry Nunley
YAAD Candase Franklin

MINNESOTA VALLEYS
Teaching Elder Karen Crawford
Ruling Elder Peter Mann
Teaching Elder Mark Ford
Ruling Elder Nancy Skoog
YAAD Mindy Vande Brake

MISSION
Teaching Elder Kelly Allen
Ruling Elder Kris Bair
Teaching Elder Drew Harrison
Ruling Elder Don Davis Jr
Teaching Elder Kyle Walker
Ruling Elder Judy Ferguson
Teaching Elder Laura Walters
Ruling Elder Bruce Goodlock
YAAD Alex Shultz

MISSISSIPPI
Teaching Elder Mark Flynn
Ruling Elder Carolyn McLaran
YAAD Rachel Remsburg

MISSOURI RIVER VALLEY
Teaching Elder Matt Nieman
Ruling Elder Keith Allen
Teaching Elder Barbara Todd
Ruling Elder Gwen Mason

MISSOURI UNION
Teaching Elder Kathie Jackson
Ruling Elder Bob Duncan
YAAD Fern Stevemer

MONMOUTH
Teaching Elder Barbara Kalehoff Hicks
Ruling Elder Jim McGuire
Teaching Elder Doug Chase
Ruling Elder Bev Marsh
YAAD Peter Stelljes
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<td>Teaching Elder Neal Neuenschwander</td>
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<td>YAAD Catharine Weiss</td>
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THE ROLL OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PINNES
Teaching Elder Kathy Muder
Ruling Elder Anne Nance
YAAD Ben Nance

PITTSBURGH
Teaching Elder Carolyn Cranston
Ruling Elder Deacon Dressing
Teaching Elder Janet Edwards
Ruling Elder Elsie Knappenberger
Teaching Elder Johnnie Monroe
Ruling Elder Louise Schoppe
Teaching Elder Paul Roberts
Ruling Elder Ann Strong
Teaching Elder David Thornton
Ruling Elder Louise Williams
YAAD Faith Bailey

PLAINS AND PEAKS
Teaching Elder Scott Phillips
Ruling Elder Sharon Cely
YAAD Caroline Elvig

PROSPECT HILL
Teaching Elder Kevin Freese
Ruling Elder Lorna Peters
Teaching Elder Mary Katherine Robinson
Ruling Elder Mickey Johnson
Teaching Elder Tom Sherer
Ruling Elder Iris Rose
YAAD Angela Williams

PUEBLO
Teaching Elder Dave Markwalder
Ruling Elder Chris Nelson
YAAD Rebekah Huff

REDSTONE
Teaching Elder Alice Tondora
Ruling Elder Jeff Ruff
Teaching Elder Barry Young
Ruling Elder Neil Zampella
YAAD Rachel Wilson

THE REDWOODS
Teaching Elder Cornelia Cyss Crocker
Ruling Elder Sharon Latour
YAAD Natalee Fisher

RIVERSIDE
Teaching Elder Christine Dickerson
Ruling Elder Melodee Kistner
YAAD John Black

SACRAMENTO
Teaching Elder Peggy Cross
Ruling Elder Julie Edwards
Teaching Elder Ed Fedor
Ruling Elder Anna Niemann
YAAD Francisco Ruiz

ST ANDREW
Teaching Elder Buren Blankenship
Ruling Elder Martha Burnett
YAAD Patrick Lane

ST AUGUSTINE
Teaching Elder Andy Gans
Ruling Elder Bob Schlegel Jr.
Teaching Elder Kathryn McLean
Ruling Elder Stephen Crowley
Teaching Elder Eddie Soto
Ruling Elder Elizabeth Mitchell
YAAD Molly Smathers

SALEM
Teaching Elder Sid Batts
Ruling Elder Shirley Harris
Teaching Elder Mark Brainerd
Ruling Elder Bob Hill
Teaching Elder David Ealy Jr
Ruling Elder Carolyn Mock
Teaching Elder Dana Fruits
Ruling Elder Fred Terry
YAAD Zakiya Smyre

SAN DIEGO
Teaching Elder Michael McClanahan
Ruling Elder Frances Lin
Teaching Elder Deb Mitchell
Ruling Elder Jack Shelver

SAN FERNANDO
Teaching Elder Ken Gardner
Ruling Elder Carol Kasperson
YAAD Jillian Kauffman

SAN FRANCISCO
Teaching Elder Daniel Beteta
Ruling Elder Betty Delaney
Teaching Elder Bruce Der-McLeod
Ruling Elder Susan Jeffries
Teaching Elder Grace Kaori Suzuki
Ruling Elder Bob Kraut
YAAD Logan Hollarsmith

SAN GABRIEL
Teaching Elder Martha Campbell
Ruling Elder Noelia Marti Colon
Teaching Elder Margarita R Reyes
Ruling Elder Sonnie Swenston-Forbes
YAAD Emma Randles

SAN JOAQUIN
Teaching Elder Chris Neufeld-Erdman
Ruling Elder Terry Holland
YAAD Rebekah Kossman

SAN JOSE
Teaching Elder Bryan Franzen
Ruling Elder Don Choi
Teaching Elder David McCreath
Ruling Elder Marcia Ludwig
YAAD Willa Van Camp

PRESBITERIO DE SAN JUAN
Teaching Elder Adolfo Santana-Cordero
Ruling Elder Raul Santiago-Rivera
YAAD Stephanie Negron-Fernandez

SANTA BARBARA
Teaching Elder Jeffrey Bridgeman
Ruling Elder Joan Johnson
YAAD Laura Paul

SANTA FE
Teaching Elder Karen Hill
Ruling Elder David Kirby
YAAD Jackson Gurley

SAVANNAH
Teaching Elder Trip McKinnon
Ruling Elder Molly McCarthy
YAAD Rachel Miles

SCIOTO VALLEY
Teaching Elder Troy Braswell
Ruling Elder Deb Bergmann
Teaching Elder Charles Smith
Ruling Elder Christine Burns
Teaching Elder Rebecca Tolleson
Ruling Elder Mark Stansbery
YAAD Shanice Akoto

SEATTLE
Teaching Elder Karen Breckenridge
Ruling Elder Shelley Dahl
Teaching Elder Adrienne Schlosser-Hall
Ruling Elder Keith Heino
Teaching Elder Mark Zimmerly
Ruling Elder Steve Henry
YAAD Anna Bintinger

SHENANDOAH
Teaching Elder Skip Hastings
Ruling Elder Ellen Blose
Teaching Elder Barb Johnson
Ruling Elder Blake Shockey
YAAD Rebekah Witt

SHENANGO
Teaching Elder Jim Latta
Ruling Elder Frank Stratiff
Teaching Elder Chris Weichman
Ruling Elder Tom Wilson
YAAD Matt Pherson

SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY
Teaching Elder Jeff Hayes
Ruling Elder Brenda Toomey
Teaching Elder Elizabeth O'Neill
Ruling Elder Wynelle Pardue
YAAD Hannah Tucker

SIERRA BLANCA
Teaching Elder Harold Armstrong
Ruling Elder Phillip Million
YAAD Parker Temple
SOUTH ALABAMA
Teaching Elder David Mauldin
Ruling Elder Bligh Jones
YAAD Abby Legge

SOUTH DAKOTA
Teaching Elder Jeff Kintner
Ruling Elder Holly Butrum
Teaching Elder Patti Snyder
Ruling Elder Amelie Welman
YAAD Paige Mansell

SOUTHEASTERN ILLINOIS
Teaching Elder Kerry Bean
Ruling Elder Lynn Neal
Teaching Elder Chris Williams
Ruling Elder Granger Odum
YAAD Brett Eisenhauer

SOUTHERN KANSAS
Teaching Elder H. Dick Reynolds
Ruling Elder Kay Hull
YAAD Jared Kite

SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
Teaching Elder Eileen Epperson
Ruling Elder Dick Hasbany
Teaching Elder Anne Marie Meyerhoffer
Ruling Elder Emmy Kmet
YAAD Rachel Smiley

PRESBITERIO DEL SUROESTE
Ruling Elder Milton D. Lopez Aponte
YAAD Keila Candelario

STOCKTON
Teaching Elder Clover Bailey
Ruling Elder Robert Opie
YAAD Emmett Kennedy II

SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY
Teaching Elder Lynn Shepard
Ruling Elder Sarah Eckert
Teaching Elder Nicole Abdnour
Ruling Elder Adam Balic
Teaching Elder Joy Laughridge
Ruling Elders Ella Banton
Teaching Elder Carl vom Eigen
Ruling Elder Bill Trautwein
YAAD Ivy Hussung

TRANSYLVANIA
Teaching Elder Beth Garrod-Logsdon
Ruling Elder Mary Weber
Teaching Elder Jerry Utt, II
Ruling Elder Beau Weston
YAAD Amanda VanDyke

TRES RIOS
Teaching Elder John Nelsen
Ruling Elder Dennis Haralson
YAAD Emily Gulick

TRINITY
Teaching Elder Larry Bates
Ruling Elder Shirley Greene
Teaching Elder Martha Ebel
Ruling Elder Monroe Swearingen
Teaching Elder Ben Sloan
Ruling Elder Bill Walker
YAAD Brooklynn Smith

TROPICAL FLORIDA
Teaching Elder CeCe Armstrong
Ruling Elder Windy Johnston
Teaching Elder Doug Hood, Jr.
Ruling Elder Jesus R Sanchez Reyes
YAAD Kayla Marchel

TWIN CITIES AREA
Teaching Elder Stephanie Anthony
Ruling Elder Jean Emmons
Teaching Elder Denise Dunbar-Perkins
Ruling Elders Ben Masters
Teaching Elder Daniel Vigilante
Ruling Elder Burt Nygren
YAAD Kim North

UPPER OHIO VALLEY
Teaching Elder Matthew Camlin
Ruling Elder Walter Jancura
Teaching Elder Monica Hall
Ruling Elder Dick Wunder
YAAD Eleanor Cawthon

UTICA
Teaching Elder Ed Townsend
Ruling Elder Harry Young
YAAD Allison Roach

WABASH VALLEY
Teaching Elder Thomas Albaum
Ruling Elder Judy Friend
Teaching Elder Bill McLean II
Ruling Elder Jill Kitowski

WASHINGTON
Teaching Elder Stuart Broberg
Ruling Elder Pamela Daetwyler
Teaching Elder Charlie Huff
Ruling Elder Richard Hultman
YAAD Dan Kephart

WEST JERSEY
Teaching Elder Sean Chow
Ruling Elder David R Watts
Teaching Elder Mouris Yousef
Ruling Elder Alice Wooden-Kelly
YAAD Kelly Munyan

WEST VIRGINIA
Teaching Elder Amy Parker
Ruling Elder Jim Musgrave
Teaching Elder Robin Ray
Ruling Elder Jim Rowe
YAAD Elly Maddy

WESTERN COLORADO
Teaching Elder Alan Gibson
Ruling Elder Pat Crooks

WESTERN KENTUCKY
Teaching Elder Stewart Drake
Ruling Elder Ralph Young
YAAD Meghan McGuirk

WESTERN NEW YORK
Teaching Elder Leslie Latham
Ruling Elder Bill Gray
Teaching Elder Drew Ludwig
Ruling Elder Mary Beth Karr
YAAD Isabella Fagiani

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
Teaching Elder Terry Hanna
Ruling Elder Jay Crane
Teaching Elder Bobbi White
Ruling Elder Helen Hall
Teaching Elder Samuel Warner
Ruling Elder Heath Rada
YAAD David Smith

THE WESTERN RESERVE
Teaching Elder Stephen Blonder Adams
Ruling Elder Eric Muller-Girard
Teaching Elder Lynn Thompson Bryant
Ruling Elder Susan Vleek
YAAD Keon Abner

WHITewater VALLEY
Teaching Elder Cheryl Montgomery
Ruling Elder Lisa Crismore
Teaching Elder Mark Morningstar
Ruling Elder Ginny Sheets
Teaching Elder Galen Schwarz
Ruling Elder Steve Wright
YAAD Emma Moore

WINNEBAGO
Teaching Elder Margaret Zedan
Ruling Elder Gina Struensee
YAAD Jacob Sowatzke

WYOMING
Teaching Elder Lynn Williamson
Ruling Elder Bruce Heimbuck
YAAD Jesse Melius

YELLOWSTONE
Teaching Elder Douglas Johnson
Ruling Elder Jim Tarr
YAAD Martha Krebill

YUKON
Teaching Elder Ian MacInnes-Green
Ruling Elder Jan Burger
YAAD Aqsiataaq Ahsoak
OTHER ADVISORY DELEGATES

Theological Student Advisory Delegates

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<tr>
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Missionary Advisory Delegates

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<td>David Guthrie</td>
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CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, Staff

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Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

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<tr>
<td>Margaret Elliott</td>
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<td>Jim Wilson</td>
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<td>Aimee Moiso</td>
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Advisory Committee on the Constitution

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<td>Susan Borden Evans</td>
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<td>Therese Howell</td>
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<td>Julie MacLemore Wells</td>
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Other Permanent and Special Committees

Aimee Moiso Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Warner Durnell GA Nominating Committee
Deborah Fair GA Committee on Representation
Brad Copeland Permanent Judicial Commission
Paul Watermulder Presbyterian Historical Society
Ariel Mink Mid Council Commission
Byron Wade Mid Council Commission
Lee Tan Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies
Deborah Block Review Committee on BOP
Donna Misterly Review Committee on the FDN
Jeffrey Bullock Special Committee on the Funding of Theological Institutions
Mati Moros Spec. Com. on the Confession of Belhar
Paul Huh National Racial Ethnic Ministries Special Task Force
Diana Barber Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process

Theological Institution Presidents

Ted Wardlaw Austin Theological Seminary
Deb Mullen Columbia Theological Seminary
Jeffrey Bullock Dubuque Theological Seminary
Paul Roberts Johnson C. Smith Seminary
Michael Jinkins Louisville Theological Seminary
Frank Yamada McCormick Theological Seminary
Bill Carl Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Craig Barnes Princeton Theological Seminary
Jim McDonald San Francisco Theological Seminary
Brian Blount Union Presbyterian Seminary
Katharine Henderson Auburn Seminary

PMA and Other Corporations

Barry Creech Presbyterian Mission Agency
Linda Valentine Presbyterian Mission Agency
Martha Clark Presbyterian Mission Agency
Marilyn Gamm Presbyterian Mission Agency
Chad Herring Presbyterian Mission Agency
Mihee Kim-Kort Presbyterian Mission Agency
Cathy Pickarski Presbyterian Mission Agency
Noelle Royer Presbyterian Mission Agency
Matt Schramm Presbyterian Mission Agency
Joyce Smith Presbyterian Mission Agency
Kathy Francis Presbyterian Mission Agency
Earline Williams Presbyterian Mission Agency
Terri Bate Presbyterian Mission Agency
Roger Dermody Presbyterian Mission Agency
Christine Darden Adv. Comm. on Soc. Witness Policy
Darcy Metcalfe Mudd Adv. Comm. for Women’s Concerns
Kathy Wolf Reed Comm. on Theological Education
Rob Maggs Board of Pensions
Frank Spencer Board of Pensions
John Hamm Board of Pensions
Tom Paisley Board of Pensions
Tom Taylor Presbyterian Foundation
David Davis Presbyterian Foundation
Jay Hudson Presb Investment & Loan Program
Steve Bacon Presb Investment & Loan Program
Marc Lewis Presbyterian Publishing Corporation
John Buchanan Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

Former Moderators

Fahed Abu-Akel Bruce Reyes-Chow
Patricia Brown Syngman Rhee
John Buchanan Jack Rogers
David Dobler Rick Ufford-Chase
Neal Presa Herb Valentine

Synod Executives

Ruben Ortiz-Rodriguez Boriquen En Puerto Rico
Raafat Zaki The Covenant
David Crittenden Lakes And Prairies
Carol McDonald Lincoln Trails
Terry Newland Living Waters
Landon Whitsitt Mid-America
Warren Lesane Mid-Atlantic
Harold M. Delhagen The Northeast
Jane Odell The Pacific
David Ezekiel The Rocky Mountains
Doska Ross S California And Hawaii
Daniel Saperstein The Sun
Valerie Young The Sun
Bruce Stevens The Trinity

Assembly Assistants

Tony Aja Don Lincoln
Chip Andrus Kathy Lueckert
Phil Barrett Don Lueckert
Vilmarie Cintron-Olivieri Jeff Moles
Jim Collie Jose Olagues
Terry Epling Paulina Reyes
Glen Alberto Guenther Conrad Rocha
Kevin Hay Kathy Runyeon
Robert Hay, Jr. Steve Smith
Ken Hockenberry Jae Sohn
Christopher Hooker C. James Sohn
Steve Kuh Tamara Williams
Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks Nathan Young
Keishla Lanzot Sharon Youngs
Chris Lieberman

Committee Assistants

Emily Anderson Bridgett Green
Diana Barber Howard Jackson
Mary Gene Boteler Kathy Walker McCloud
Freda Dye J. Oscar McCloud
Judy Fletcher Rick Nutt
Marci Glass Kevin Porter
Jose Gonzalez-Colon James Tse
Arlene W Gordon

Student Assistants

Maggie Alsup Yung Me Morris
David Altshuler Katelyn Nutter
Joe Amponsah Chad Pittman
Bethany Benz Perzavia Praylow
David Clifford Alissa Rashid
Kyle Cristofalo Joshua Stanley
Elizabeth Eason Patrick Kiptum
David Fuentes Amir Tawadrous
Anne Fyffe
Mid Council Staff and Stated Clerks

Syn SC Nancy Talbot The Northeast
Syn SC Wayne A. Yost The Trinity
Syn SC Dean Strong Alaska-Northwest
Syn SC Antonio Roldan-Rodriguez Puerto Rico
Syn SC David Bartley The Covenant
Syn SC Douglas Tracy Lincoln Trails

Pby SC John DiYorio Abingdon
Pby Exec Shannan Vance-Ocampo Albany
Pby SC Dan Rogers Albany
Pby Exec Bill Galbraith Arkansas
Pby SC Cathy Ulrich Arkansas
Pby Exec/SC Nam Hong Cho Atlantic Korean
Pby Exec Craig Palmer Baltimore
Pby SC Catherine Blacka Baltimore
Pby Exec Alan Adams Beaver-Butler
Pby Exec/SC John Rickard Blackhawk
Pby Exec Edward Dunn Boise
Pby SC Ruth Hicks Boise
Pby SC T. J. DeMarco Boston
Pby Exec Mark England-Krieger Carlisle
Pby SC Jim Speedy Carlisle
Pby Exec Dawn Champoux The Cascades
Pby Exec Aleida Jernigan The Cascades
Pby SC Cathy Quackenbush The Cascades
Pby Exec Donnie Woods Charleston-Atlantic
Pby Exec Betty Meadows Charlotte
Pby Exec/SC Rebecca Blackwell Cherokee
Pby Exec Bob Reynolds Chicago
Pby SC Barbara Bundick Chicago
Pby Exec B Gordon Edwards Cimarron
Pby SC Deborah Meinke Cimarron
Pby Exec James DiEgidio Cincinnati
Pby SC Janis Adams Cincinnati
Pby Staff Laura Lupton Coastal Carolina
Pby Exec Tom Sheffield Denver
Pby SC Anne Bond Denver
Pby Exec Al Timm Detroit
Pby SC Ed Koster Detroit
Pby Exec Erin Cox-Holmes Donegal
Pby SC Bill Netting Donegal
Pby Exec Rebecca Blair East Iowa
Pby Exec Judd Shaw East Tennessee
Pby Exec Moongil Cho Eastern Korean
Pby Exec Greg Coulter Eastern Oklahoma
Pby Exec/SC Bonnie J. Smith Eastern Oklahoma
Pby Exec Linda Toth Eastern Oregon
Pby SC Pete Wells Eastern Oregon
Pby Exec Liza Hendricks Eastern Virginia
Pby SC John Tamm Eastern Virginia
Pby Exec Dan Schomer Eastminster
Pby SC Dale Riley Eastminster
Pby Exec Cheryl Galan Elizabeth
Pby SC Paul Rack Elizabeth
Pby Exec Paul Luthman Flint River
Pby SC Jerry Watts Flint River
Pby Staff Pam McVety Florida
Pby Exec/SC Gordon Raynal Foothills
Pby Exec Amy Williams Fowler Genesee Valley
Pby SC Val Fowler Genesee Valley
Pby Exec Joelle Davis Geneva
Pby Exec/SC Marsha Anson Glacier
Pby Exec Jan DeVries Grace
Pby SC Gerry Tyer Grace
Pby Staff Brad Munroe Grand Canyon
Pby SC Robert Schulz Grand Canyon
Pby Exec/SC Daniel De Beer Great Rivers
Pby Exec Penny Hill Great Rivers
Pby SC Donna Wells Greater Atlanta
Observer Sung Joo Hanmi
Pby Exec Charles Spencer Heartland
Pby SC Sally Hinchman Heartland
Pby Exec/SC Rich Fifield Homestead
Pby Exec Richard Wyatt Homestead
Pby SC Raymond Meester Hudson River
Pby Exec Susan Andrews Hudson River
Pby SC Susan De George Huntington
Pby Exec Joy Kaufmann The Inland
Pby Exec/SC Sheryl Kinder-Pyle The Inland
Northwest
Pby SC Larry Veith The Inland
Northwest
Pby Exec/SC Carson Rhyne The James
Pby Exec Susan Rosenbaum John Calvin
Pby Exec/SC Melana Scruggs John Calvin
Pby SC Alyson Janke The John Knox
Pby Exec Mary Marks King Kiskiminetas
Pby Exec Gary Lyon Kiskiminetas
Pby Exec Colleen McFarland Kiskiminetas
Pby SC Marilyn Tully Kiskiminetas
Pby Exec Barbara Smith Lackawanna
Pby Exec David Oyler Lake Erie
Pby SC Doug Megill Lake Erie
Pby Exec Jim Browne Lake Huron
Pby SC Ted McCulloch Lake Huron
Pby Exec John Best Lake Michigan
Pby SC Fran Lane-Lawrence Lake Michigan
Observer Betsy Simpson Long Island
Pby Exec Steve Yamaguchi Los Ranchos
Pby SC Forrest Claassen Los Ranchos
Pby Exec Susan Meier Maumee Valley
Pby Exec Dennis Piermont Miami Valley
Pby SC Doris Arnett Whitaker Miami Valley
Pby Exec Peggy Hinds Mid-Kentucky
Pby Exec Eun Sung Cho Midwest Hanmi
Pby Exec Craig Howard Milwaukee
Pby Exec Rick Carus Minnesota Valleys
Pby SC Pamela Prouty Minnesota Valleys
Pby Exec Ruben Armendariz Mission
Pby SC Karen Stocks Mission
Pby Exec Sara Dingman-Lavigne Missouri Rvr Valley
Pby SC Robert Keefer Missouri Rvr Valley
Pby Exec Joan Erickson Missouri Union
Pby SC Phil Olson Missouri Union
Pby SC Carl Wilton Monmouth
Pby Exec Wendy Bailey New Brunswick
Pby SC D Paul La Montagne New Brunswick
Pby Exec Debbie Rundlett Muskingum Valley
Pby Exec Wilson Gunn National Capital
Pby SC Sara Coe National Capital
Pby SC Joan Jeffers Nevada
Pby Exec Jim Moseley New Castle
Pby SC Reid Beveridge New Castle
Pby Exec Mike Cole New Covenant
Pby SC Lynn Hargrove New Covenant
Pby Exec Bruce Ford New Harmony

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<th>Name</th>
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The Roll of the General Assembly

1046 221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
Standing Rules of the General Assembly
[AS AMENDED BY THE 221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014).]

Introduction

Values Present at General Assembly

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. … If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor. 12:4–7 and 26–27)

The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love and witness. (G-3.0501)

With glad and grateful hearts, we affirm these core values in our worship, work, and witness together in gatherings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

• That the common life of the whole church, as evidenced in our meetings, will reflect the mind of Christ, demonstrating consolation, spiritual sharing, compassion and sympathy, and doing nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regarding others as better than ourselves. We will be in full accord and strive to model the faithful, obedient, humble, and self-emptying witness of Jesus Christ.

• That our engagement with one another in the ministry of the gathered church will reflect the transforming love of God, enabling us to discern God’s will together. We will use our gifts on behalf of one another and the world, giving glory to God. We will love genuinely and hold fast to all that is good. We will rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer. We will live in harmony with one another and overcome evil with good.

• These values will enable us
  ◦ to engage with one another in love, humility, grace, and servant discipleship, as the council of the whole church;
  ◦ to encourage and increase collaboration within and among all councils of the church;
  ◦ to participate in discussion, deliberation, and discernment in ways that are fair and honest and open;
  ◦ to focus each meeting of the General Assembly to encourage the full and prayerful participation of those seeking the mind of Christ for the whole church.

We acknowledge these core characteristics of gatherings of the General Assembly:

• Affirming the Presbyterian distinctives that God is sovereign and God alone is Lord of the conscience;
• Encountering and learning from Presbyterians and many others from across the United States and around the world;
• Gathering again with old friends in the family reunion that is General Assembly;
• Creating and expanding generative relationships with fellow Christians;
• Learning from individuals who are quite different from one another;
• Witnessing with joy and thanksgiving the emergence of new leaders for the church;
Introduction

- Experiencing an intentional, faithful process for discernment and decision making;
- Experiencing God’s presence through worship, devotions, hallway prayers, and Christ-centered conversations;
- Hoping and yearning together that our mutual witness will point to the reign of God;
- Demonstrating the church is not focused on any one cause or individual;
- Growing in our understanding of Christ and the church;
- Meeting sisters and brothers in Christ who represent a particular perspective and who listen and share with care and respect;
- Making decisions through contemplation, prayer, and heartfelt sharing;
- Continuing a history and heritage together since 1789.

We demonstrate and sustain our core values through these central commitments.

- *Reflect the Body and Seek the Mind of Christ*
  In all things, the General Assembly reflects the body of Christ and seeks the mind of Christ through worship, prayer, discernment, and action.

- *A Broad Context for Christ’s Broad World*
  The General Assembly provides a helpful, faithful context for understanding the beauty and diversity of the body of Christ in the world.

- *Expansive and Spiritual Deliberation*
  The General Assembly embraces an easily understood and accessible process that creates opportunities for questions, prayer, and God’s unexpected movement, rather than hurrying to yes/no votes.

- *Order and Flexibility*
  The General Assembly deliberates with fairness, attention to process, order, and the encouragement of minority voices, while creating space for decision making grounded in discernment and dialogue and for the emergence of new leadership.

- *Reunion and Affirmation*
  The General Assembly encourages the best of our Presbyterian tradition and friendships new and old.

- *Faithful Stewardship*
  The General Assembly demonstrates faithful stewardship of human and financial resources.
Sources of Business for the Meeting

1. Papers in General
   a. Papers to Be Considered
   b. Received Less Than 60 Days Prior to General Assembly

2. Reports of Entities, Commissions, and Committees
   a. Reports Deadline
   b. Budget Consultation
   c. Appropriate Background Information
   d. Report Length
   e. Report with Recommendations

3. Overtures
   a. Definition
   b. Writing Overtures
   c. Submitting Overtures
   d. Distributing Overtures
   e. Overture Advocate

4. Entity and Synod Minutes
   a. Submit for Review
   b. Review Process

5. Presbytery Reports

6. Commissioners’ Resolutions
   a. Who May Propose
   b. Deadline
   c. Existing General Assembly Policy
   d. May Not Amend Book of Order
   e. Already Before Assembly
   f. Same Issues as Previous Assembly
   g. Referral
   h. Referral Declined

7. Communications and Resource Material
   a. Provide Comment or Advice
   b. Forty-five Day Deadline
   c. Resource Materials
   d. Advice and Counsel Memoranda

8. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report
   a. Report
   b. Presented Directly to General Assembly

1. Papers in General
   a. The General Assembly shall consider only those papers delivered to the Stated Clerk in compliance with Standing Rule A. Ordinarily, such papers shall have been forwarded to the Stated Clerk postmarked, or electronically delivered, no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly.

   b. All papers intended for consideration by the General Assembly that are forwarded to the Stated Clerk and postmarked less than sixty days, but no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be reviewed by the Stated Clerk, who shall determine whether or not to refer them to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The Stated Clerk shall report to the committee regarding those papers not referred.

2. Reports of Entities, Commissions, and Committees
   a. All reports from entities, commissions, and committees of the General Assembly shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk on or before 120 days prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall publish these reports (print or electronic) and
A.2.a.–A.3.b.(4)
distribute them so that they shall reach the commissioners thirty days before the convening of the General Assembly.

**Budget Consultation**

b. An entity, commission, or committee submitting a report with a recommendation that affects the work or budget of another entity(ies) shall submit evidence that a consultation has been held with the affected entity(ies).

**Appropriate Background Information**

c. Committees, agencies, or corporations presenting reports shall provide the appropriate background information necessary to interpret or understand the recommendations or responses to referrals to the members of the General Assembly committees to which the business is referred. Any and all documents or publications referred to in these reports that require approval by the assembly for publication and distribution to the church, including but not limited to curriculum, study papers/guides, position papers, and program resources, shall be made available to commissioners at the time the reports are published.

**Report Length**

d. All reports shall be limited to ten thousand words except the report of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the length of which shall be determined by the Stated Clerk and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. A request for an exception to the length of a report shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no later than forty-five days prior to the deadline for the submission of the report and shall include the anticipated length of the report. The Stated Clerk may assess a fee of the entity or committee whose report exceeds ten thousand words for the costs incurred in printing and distributing the excess pages. Payment of the fee shall be submitted to the treasurer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation. If the Stated Clerk and the representatives of any body are unable to agree, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall determine the length of the report.

**Reports with Recommendations**

e. All reports that bring recommendations shall use the following form:

The [name of agency, commission, or committee] requests the [# of the assembly] General Assembly [year] of the PC(USA) to [state the specific action or actions the General Assembly is being asked to take].

To this shall be appended a rationale, stating the reasons for submitting the requests and/or the report of the entity, commission, or committee.

### 3. Overtures

**Definition**

a. Overtures are items of business that have been approved by a presbytery (with concurrence of another presbytery) or a synod and shall request the General Assembly to take a particular action, or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution. (See *Book of Order*, G-3.0302d.)

**Writing Overtures**

b. The stated clerk of a presbytery or synod considering an overture to the General Assembly shall:

1. Examine the most recently published *Minutes of the General Assembly* to determine if a similar overture has already been passed.

2. Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether the desired action has been voted by any previous General Assembly.

3. Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether a similar overture has already been proposed in order that the presbytery or synod may concur with the existing overture.

4. Draft the overture in the following form:
“The Presbytery of ________________ overtures the [# of the assembly] General Assembly [(year)] of the PC(USA) to [state the specific action the General Assembly is asked to take].”

To this shall be appended a rationale, stating the reasons for submitting the overture.

c. Submitting Overtures

(1) Overtures proposing an amendment to the Constitution or requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the Book of Order (see Book of Order, G-6.04a and G-6.02) must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than 120 days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, and shall be promptly referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (see Book of Order, G-6.02 and G-6.04).

(2) All overtures that have financial implications for current or future years’ budgets must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk postmarked no later than sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly. Overtures with financial implications not received within the designated time limit shall not be considered, but shall be returned to the originating council.

(3) All other overtures intended for consideration by the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly.

(4) Overtures not received within the designated time limits shall not be considered, but shall be returned to the originating council for reconsideration.

(5) Presbyteries or synods submitting overtures with a recommendation(s) that affects the work or budget of a General Assembly entity(ies) shall submit evidence that the affected entity(ies) has (have) been consulted. If such evidence is not submitted, the Stated Clerk shall recommend that the overture be received and referred to a future session of the General Assembly so that consultation may take place.

(6) In the event that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly receives an overture similar to one already proposed (excluding the rationale), she or he shall inquire of the presbytery or synod in question whether it would be willing to concur with that existing overture or desires to withdraw the overture. A presbytery or synod concurring with an overture may submit additional rationale for its action, provided that it does not duplicate the rationale provided by the overtures. The concurrence and any additional rationale will be printed with the original overture in the Reports to the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture shall be received up to 45 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly. Concurrences to any overture with constitutional implications shall be received up to 120 days prior to the convening of the next session of the General Assembly.

d. Overtures that do not propose constitutional amendment or interpretation, and that are postmarked at least sixty days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be published (print or electronic) in the reports distributed by the Stated Clerk. Overtures received in the same manner, postmarked no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, shall be distributed to the commissioners before the convening of the General Assembly.

e. Overture Advocate

Each presbytery or synod that submits an overture shall notify the Stated Clerk of the name of an overture advocate who shall be available to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to any assembly committee to which the overture may be referred. Each council who submits an overture or concurrence may appoint only one overture advocate. (See Standing Rules A.3.c.(6) and E.2.)

4. Entity and Synod Minutes

a. Entities and synods required to submit minutes for review by the General Assembly shall submit such minutes on a calendar year basis so as to present minutes of all meetings for
the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31) preceding the year in which is held the session of the General Assembly to which such minutes are submitted. The minutes shall contain the attestation that they have been approved by the entity or synod submitting them in the manner regularly in use within that body.

Review Process

b. Minutes of General Assembly entities will be reviewed in accordance with the “Guidelines for Preparation of Minutes of Agencies” as printed in the Manual of the General Assembly. Minutes of the synods will be reviewed in accordance with “Guidelines for Reviewing Synod Records” as printed in the Manual of the General Assembly.

5. Presbytery Reports

Each presbytery shall act upon all papers sent to the presbytery to be voted upon in ample time to permit the stated clerk of the presbytery to mail the results to the Stated Clerk so that they are received no later than two weeks before the convening of the General Assembly. The response of the presbytery shall be mailed to the Stated Clerk by certified mail.

6. Commissioners’ Resolutions

Who May Propose

a. An item of new business, in the form of a commissioners’ resolution, must be signed by commissioners representing at least one other presbytery. Such resolutions must be delivered in writing to the Stated Clerk or the Stated Clerk’s designee. No commissioner may sign more than two such resolutions.

Deadline

b. The Stated Clerk shall determine and announce at the first meeting at which business is conducted the deadline for receipt of commissioners’ resolutions. The deadline shall not be earlier than twenty-four hours after the assembly has convened.

Existing GA Policies

c. In the preparation of a resolution, commissioners are urged to be aware of existing General Assembly policies relevant to their proposal and, where appropriate, to make reference to these policies.

May Not Amend Book of Order

May Not Amend Book of Order

d. Commissioners’ resolutions shall not contain business that requires an amendment to or interpretation of the Constitution (see Book of Order, G-6.04a).

Already Before Assembly

e. The Stated Clerk shall not transmit as new business any resolution that deals with matters of business already before the General Assembly, nor transmit any resolution whose purpose can be achieved by the regular process of amendment and debate.

Same Issues as Previous Assembly

f. Should the commissioners’ resolution deal with substantially the same issue considered by one of the two previous sessions of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall recommend that the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures take one of the following actions on the commissioners’ resolution: “refer to a subsequent assembly,” “decline for consideration,” or “take no action.”

Referral

g. If the proposed resolution does deal with new business, the Stated Clerk shall transmit it to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures with a recommendation for its referral.

Referral Declined

h. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures may decline to refer proposed items of new business if it decides that the matters proposed are already before the assembly or that the purpose of the proposals can be reached by the process of amendment and debate. Proposed items of business not referred, whether declined by the Stated Clerk or the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, shall be identified in the first report of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures distributed to commissioners after the period docketed for committee meetings, with a brief description of the content and a statement of the reasons for declining the proposed business. Twenty-five percent of commissioners present and voting is required to overturn action of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to decline, take no action, or refer a commissioners’ resolution to a subsequent assembly. If a commissioners’ resolution affects a substantial change in an existing social witness policy, the Stated Clerk should recommend to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures that it be referred to the next General Assembly.
7. Communications and Resource Material

a. Communications and resource material provide comment or advice on business already under consideration by the assembly and shall neither contain nor constitute business to be considered by the assembly. Communications may be directed to the General Assembly

(1) by entities of the General Assembly that desire to comment on a single item of business coming before the General Assembly from any source other than their own entity, but which do not introduce new business,

(2) by organizations in which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds membership, and

(3) by other denominations in correspondence with the General Assembly.

b. All communications intended for consideration by the General Assembly shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly.

c. Resource material (except for previously published books), including advice and counsel memoranda from advocacy and advisory committees, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk, postmarked no later than forty-five days before the convening of the assembly meeting, who shall then publish (print or electronic) and distribute the material to all commissioners prior to the assembly.

d. Advice and counsel memoranda are resources prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, and the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns for the purpose of providing information about existing policy, current work on specific topics, recent developments, and other factors useful to commissioners as they consider issues before the assembly.

8. Advisory Committee on the Constitution Report

a. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report to the General Assembly its findings along with its recommendations on all questions requiring an interpretation by the General Assembly of the Book of Order, including proposals for constitutional change. The General Assembly shall vote on the recommendations, and may amend or decline to approve them (Book of Order, G-6.02). The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall report any editorial changes made to the Book of Order since its last report to the General Assembly.

b. The report of the committee shall be presented directly to the General Assembly. The General Assembly may take action on the recommendations immediately, or it may refer them to an assembly committee for consideration by that committee and report to the General Assembly for action later during the same session of the General Assembly.
Commissioners, Delegates, and Other Participants at the Meeting

1. Commissioners
   a. Election
   b. List Delivered by 180 Day Deadline
   c. Able to Attend
   d. Entitlements, Expenses
   e. Newly Created Presbytery’s Commissioners
   f. Alternates

2. Advisory Delegates
   a. Definition
   b. Categories
   c. Voting Privileges
   d. Young Adult Advisory Delegates
   e. Theological Student Advisory Delegates
   f. Missionary Advisory Delegates
   g. Ecumenical Advisory Delegates

3. Corresponding Members
   a. Definition
   b. Entitled to Speak, Not Vote

4. Advisory Committee on the Constitution

5. Other Participants
   a. Special Guests
   b. Ecumenical Representatives
   c. Resource Persons
   d. Presbytery Staff
   e. Ecumenical Visitors
   f. Interfaith Representatives

6. List of Participants

   1. Commissioners
      a. Each presbytery shall elect commissioners to the General Assembly in accordance with Book of Order, G-3.0501. The number of commissioners attending General Assembly will be based on the number of active members, including resident clergy members of presbytery. The figures for active members will be taken from the information recorded in Minutes of the General Assembly, Part II, Statistics of the year in which per capita apportionment is assessed for the year in which General Assembly meets.

      b. Presbyteries shall elect commissioners in sufficient time to permit the list of commissioners to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are commissioned.

      c. Teaching elders and ruling elders considered for election as commissioners must be able to be in attendance for the duration of the General Assembly.

      d. Commissioners shall be entitled to speak under the rules, and to vote and present motions in meetings of the General Assembly and of assembly committees to which they are assigned. Commissioners shall be reimbursed for approved expenses.

      e. In the case of a newly created presbytery, the presbytery shall be entitled to elect commissioners to the General Assembly if the qualifying enrollment of teaching elders and congregations in that presbytery shall have been completed by December 31 of the year preceding the assembly meeting (see Book of Order, G-3.0501).
Alternates

f. Presbyteries may elect alternates in number up to, but not exceeding, the number of commissioners to which the presbytery may be entitled. Such alternates shall be seated with other visitors to the assembly.

2. Advisory Delegates

Definition

a. Advisory delegates are persons who are active members in one of the constituent churches or councils of the General Assembly (or, in the case of ecumenical advisory delegates, of a denomination of Christians designated by the General Assembly) who are selected to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in an advisory role so that the assembly may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints.

Categories

b. There shall be four categories of advisory delegates: youth, theological student; missionary, and ecumenical. When the ratio of advisory delegates to commissioners exceeds one to three, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be authorized to make changes to the Standing Rules to create a ratio of less than one to three. The expenses of each advisory delegate shall be paid by the General Assembly (see Standing Rule I.3.) on the same basis as the expenses of commissioners (see Standing Rule B.2.f.(2) below for exception).

Voting Privileges

c. Advisory delegates shall be assigned to assembly committees as voting members and shall have the privilege of the floor of the General Assembly without vote. Only voting members shall have the privilege of proposing or seconding a motion. When certain issues come before a plenary session of the General Assembly, the advisory delegates may be polled prior to the vote of commissioners to determine their advice.

Young Adult Advisory Delegates

d. Young Adult Advisory Delegates

(1) Each presbytery shall appoint an active member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who shall be between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three years on the date the General Assembly convenes, to be a young adult advisory delegate.

(2) Presbyteries shall elect young adult advisory delegates in sufficient time to permit the list of advisory delegates to be delivered to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected.

e. Theological Student Advisory Delegate

There shall be a delegation of theological student advisory delegates each year: two from each of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); one from each of the theological institutions in a covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and one each from three selected other theological seminaries. The selection process for these delegates is as follows:

(1) Each theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate three students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. Two of these students shall be designated by the institution as delegates and the other student shall be designated as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery, or a student nominated by the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the names of the two students to be delegates to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

(2) Each theological institution in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall nominate two students who, at the time of the General Assembly, will have at least one year of study remaining in their degree program. One of these students shall be designated by the institution as the delegate and the other student as the alternate. Such a student must be either an inquirer or a candidate in preparation for ministry under care of a presbytery. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The
presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

(3) All non-Presbyterian theological schools represented by corresponding members on the Committee on Theological Education and one additional non-Presbyterian theological seminary shall be asked to nominate one theological student advisory delegate and one alternate. The additional non-Presbyterian seminary shall be chosen on a rotating basis, descending alphabetically, from those that have at least twelve Presbyterian enrollees (either inquirers or candidates under the care of a presbytery) as of October 1 in the year preceding the assembly. These nominations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly 180 days prior to the convening of the session of the General Assembly to which they are elected, who shall transmit the name of the delegate to the presbytery of jurisdiction for election. The presbyteries shall then certify the election to the Stated Clerk when completed.

(4) Nominated students shall have at least one more year of study following the assembly remaining in their degree program. The Stated Clerk shall forward the name of the nominated students to the presbyteries of jurisdiction for election and confirmation.

Missionary Advisory Delegates

a. There shall be eight missionary advisory delegates who shall be chosen by the Worldwide Ministries Division from persons who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and mission personnel assigned by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in another country in which this church is engaged in mission. To the degree possible, the selection shall provide a global geographical representation with no two delegates representing the same country or geographical area and rotating the geographical representation. The Worldwide Ministries Division shall notify the Stated Clerk at the time these persons are named.

b. The expenses to the General Assembly of each missionary advisory delegate shall include transportation only from the point of entry or domicile of the delegate in the United States and return.

Ecumenical Advisory Delegates

d. There shall be up to fifteen ecumenical advisory delegates. Ten of these delegates shall be from churches outside of the United States. No more than five shall be from member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Ecumenical advisory delegates shall be selected by the highest ecclesiastical authorities of their churches, in response to the invitation of a previous General Assembly. The assembly shall extend such invitations at the recommendation of the Presbyterian Mission Agency upon nomination by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

3. Corresponding Members

a. The following persons shall be corresponding members: Moderators of earlier General Assemblies; the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other members of the staff of the Office of the General Assembly as designated by the Stated Clerk; the members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly; the members of the PMA Executive Committee and staff of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and of the divisions and related entities designated by the council; all members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution; the executives of synods; one person designated by each entity reporting directly to the General Assembly, including permanent, special, and advisory committees (additional persons may be designated by such bodies if authorized by the Moderator of the preceding General Assembly in consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly); and the presidents (or their designee) of the theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and seminaries related by covenant agreement.

b. Corresponding members shall be entitled to speak, under the rules, in meetings of the General Assembly and of assembly committees on matters related to the work of the body represented, but they may neither vote nor present motions.
4. Advisory Committee on the Constitution

During the General Assembly, three or more members of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution [this committee] shall be present at the session of the General Assembly to advise the General Assembly and its Moderator on constitutional matters.

5. Other Participants

Special Guests

a. The assembly, out of honor, courtesy, recognition, and the need for information and resource material, may recognize other persons as guests or observers. As such, they may be invited by the General Assembly to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing enlightenment or information germane to the decision-making process. An assembly committee may extend a similar invitation at its own meeting.

Ecumenical Representatives

b. Ecumenical representatives are individuals sent at the initiative of another church to be the official representative of that church. The Stated Clerk may announce to member churches of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches the date and place of the next meeting of the General Assembly. When officially certified through appropriate ecclesiastical channels at least forty-five days prior to the convening of the General Assembly, these persons shall be welcomed as guests of the General Assembly and introduced to the council through the report of the assembly committee addressing ecumenism. The assembly may assume the expense and housing of such guests on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.

Resource Persons

c. The assembly may welcome persons invited by the Presbyterian Mission Agency or another entity of the General Assembly for the purpose of establishing or affirming particular ecumenical, mission, or program relationships, or assisting the entity in the presentation of particular items of business. Any expense reimbursement shall be the responsibility of the inviting entity.

Presbytery Staff

d. The presbytery’s executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery’s stated clerk shall be supplied with all reports and materials related to the General Assembly, but shall not be entitled to speak in plenary meetings or in meetings of assembly committees unless called upon by a moderator to provide information.

Ecumenical Visitors

e. Ecumenical visitors are individuals attending a session of the General Assembly at their own initiative. These persons are welcomed to the assembly as unofficial visitors. The assembly shall assume no expenses for these ecumenical visitors.

Interfaith Representatives

f. Interfaith Representatives—Three observers of other faiths or religious traditions, who shall be representatives chosen by recognized religious bodies of non-Christian religious traditions and/or faith communities shall be present at the assembly at the invitation of the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations. The interfaith representatives shall be present with the church in its deliberations, and to speak to the assembly for the purpose of conveying greetings or messages, or bringing information germane to the decision-making process. The assembly may assume the expense of housing and on the same basis as the expense of commissioners, but shall not reimburse any travel expenses to the assembly site.

6. List of Participants

Upon request, the Stated Clerk shall make available the list of participants registered for a session of the General Assembly to entities of the General Assembly, councils of the denomination, educational institutions, teaching elders, ruling elders, and independent organizations composed primarily of members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A fee will be charged for lists or mailing labels to cover the costs incurred for printing, postage, and handling.
Formation of Committees and Referral of Business

1. Assembly Committee Structure
   a. Number and Designation of Assembly
   b. Committee Assistants
   c. Assembly Committee Moderator and Vice Moderator
   d. Assembly Committee on Business Referral
   e. Orientation

2. Assigning Commissioners to Assembly Committees
   a. Committee Assignments
   b. Notification of Assignment
   c. Assignment List Provided
   d. Random Selection Process

3. Referring Business
   a. Recommendation for Referral of Business
   b. General Assembly Action on Referrals
   c. How Business Is Referred
   d. Referral Considered by One Committee
   e. Referring Overtures to Committees

4. Tentative Docket

1. Assembly Committee Structure
   a. The Stated Clerk shall propose the number and designation of assembly committees to the General Assembly, which shall include a Committee on Mid Councils. The Stated Clerk shall present the proposed committee structure to the General Assembly for consideration and ratification at the first assembly meeting at which business is transacted. In making these proposals, the Stated Clerk shall consult with the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities, and may consult with other persons.

   b. The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly for appointment the names of persons to serve as committee assistants for the duration of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly before recommending persons to serve as committee assistants. Persons proposed shall not be commissioners to the General Assembly or staff members of entities of the General Assembly or any person who is a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency or any person who is a member of any other entity of the General Assembly. A committee assistant shall be appointed to provide staff services to each assembly committee. The appointments shall be made in accordance with Book of Order, F-1.0401.

   c. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall appoint a moderator and a vice moderator to each committee. The moderator positions are filled by commissioners to the upcoming General Assembly or may be from an assembly within the last six years. All vice moderator positions shall be filled by commissioners to the upcoming General Assembly. Final appointment shall be made only after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, and then also with representatives of the General Assembly Committee on Representation regarding the inclusivity mandated in the Book of Order, F-1.0403 and G-3.0103. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees, including any committees dealing with finance and budgets, shall be ruling elders. The moderators of at least one-half of the assembly committees should be women. The moderators of at least two-thirds of the assembly committees shall be current commissioners. No more than one person from any one presbytery may be appointed to serve as a moderator. All synods shall be equitably represented.
d. The moderators and vice moderators of the assembly committees, as a group, shall function as the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. The moderator and vice moderator of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall function as the moderator and vice moderator of this committee as well. This committee shall report to the assembly for its action at the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.

e. The Stated Clerk shall conduct an orientation for moderators, vice moderators, and committee assistants of assembly committees no less than three weeks prior to the convening of the General Assembly. The orientation shall include information regarding business likely to be referred to each committee; suggested procedures for dealing with business referred to committees, especially the use of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*; utilization of available resources, both persons and materials; and preparation and presentation of assembly committee reports. The Stated Clerk, following consultation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, may invite persons designated by the council as General Assembly resource coordinators to participate in the orientation. During this orientation, the Assembly Committee on Business Referral shall meet and carry out the duties given it by these rules. The Assembly Committee on Business Referral shall also meet, if necessary, just prior to the convening of the assembly and its function shall end at the convening of the assembly.

### 2. Assigning Commissioners to Assembly Committees

a. Forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner and advisory delegate to one of the assembly committees by the random selection process described in this standing rule.

b. No later than thirty days before the convening of the assembly, commissioners shall receive the number and designation of committees. At the same time that the number and designation of committees is communicated, the Stated Clerk shall notify each person of the assignment, the time of their first meeting, and the necessity to confirm appropriate housing and travel arrangements.

c. The Stated Clerk shall provide a list of the assignments to those who need it to facilitate the work of the General Assembly.

d. Commissioners and advisory delegates shall be assigned to assembly committees by random selection as follows:

1. The Stated Clerk shall divide the presbyteries into six regional districts. Each district shall be composed of one or more presbyteries so arranged that, insofar as possible, the presbyteries in the district have contiguous boundaries and the numbers of commissioners in the several districts are approximately equal. Within each district the presbyteries shall be arranged alphabetically. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be listed alphabetically in two parallel lists: the first containing the names of the teaching elders; the second, the ruling elders. In those cases where the presbytery has not designated commissioners, the position shall be listed as vacant so that the name may be inserted later when the Stated Clerk is notified. The names of moderators and vice moderators of assembly committees shall be removed from the list and the names below them shall be moved up to fill the vacated positions. The teaching elder commissioners and vacant positions for teaching elder commissioners shall be numbered in sequence. The list of ruling elder commissioners in each district shall be rotated downward so that no ruling elder commissioner is opposite a teaching elder commissioner from the same presbytery. Separate lists of groups identified in *Book of Order*, F-1.0403, shall be prepared, insofar as it may be practical, to assure the most equitable distribution of such commissioners to the various committees in accordance with *Book of Order*, F-1.0403.

2. The Stated Clerk shall list the young adult advisory delegates in one list arranged in the alphabetical order of the presbyteries that designated the delegates. In any case where the presbytery has not designated a young adult advisory delegate, the position shall be listed as vacant so that the name may be inserted later when the Stated Clerk is notified.
(3) The Moderator shall pick by lot a number from one to ten. This number shall identify the number of the name in the first column of names in each district in which the assignment will begin. It will also identify the number of the young adult advisory delegates in which assignment will begin.

(4) The Moderator shall then pick by lot a second number equal from one to the number equaling the total number of committees. This number shall identify the assembly committee in the order in which the committees are arranged in the standing rules to which the first assignment of members shall be made.

(5) The assignment of members of the assembly committees shall then proceed in sequence. When initial assignments have been made to all committees in sequence so that the committees with the fewest number of commissioners are full, additional assignment shall be made to the other committees in the same manner, until all commissioners and young adult advisory delegates have been assigned to committees.

(6) The Stated Clerk shall assign missionary advisory delegates and ecumenical advisory delegates to assembly committees in consultation with those delegates. Ordinarily not more than two persons in each of these categories shall be assigned to any one assembly committee.

(7) Theological student advisory delegates will be assigned to committees at the same time and in the same way as are commissioners to ensure their full participation and attendance.

(8) Names of commissioners and advisory delegates received after these assignments have been made shall be inserted in the appropriate position in the original list and assigned to the committee to which that position was assigned.

3. Referring Business

   a. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a recommendation for the referral of all items of business coming before the General Assembly.

   b. After making any necessary changes, this committee shall present the prepared referrals to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral so that it may recommend referrals to the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business. Ordinarily, this committee shall recommend referrals to the General Assembly for its action. When the General Assembly is not scheduled to meet in time to act on its recommendation, the committee may refer business. Such referrals shall be reported to the General Assembly at its next business meeting.

   c. Items of business to be considered by the General Assembly shall be referred in one of the following ways:

      (1) for consideration by an assembly committee and recommendation for action by the General Assembly;

      (2) for consideration and action by an assembly committee with a report of the action to the General Assembly;

      (3) for consideration by the General Assembly through its inclusion in a consent agenda when the committee has approved a motion by 75 percent or more;

      (4) for consideration by the General Assembly in a plenary business session.

   d. Each item of business referred to a committee shall ordinarily be considered by only one assembly committee, but in no case should there be more than one committee making a recommendation on an item of business. Business of a related nature shall be assigned to a single committee insofar as possible.
e. The Stated Clerk shall present such items of business to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with a recommendation for their referral. In the event that the presbytery or synod disagrees with the referral recommendation, this procedure shall be followed: The presbytery or synod shall be entitled to submit a written statement regarding the background and intent of the overture at the time the overture is initially being considered for referral by the Assembly Committee on Business Referral. If, after that committee makes its recommendation, the presbytery or synod still disagrees with the referral recommendation, the presbytery or synod shall notify the Stated Clerk, in writing, of its disagreement. The overture advocate will then be entitled to speak to the background and intent of the overture at a special meeting of the Assembly Committee on Business Referral that shall be held no more than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the convening of the assembly.

4. Tentative Docket

a. The Stated Clerk shall submit to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a tentative docket. After making any necessary adjustments, this committee shall present a proposed docket to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral so that it may recommend the docket to the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business.

b. The reports and recommendations of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly regarding the initial docket of the General Assembly and referrals of business shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, along with any items of business not included in them (see Standing Rules I.4.b.(3) and I.4.b.(4)). Review of the minutes of the synods pursuant to G-3.0502c and of statement(s) of compliance with decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission by councils, reported by the Stated Clerk pursuant to IV.B.2.d. of the Organization for Mission, shall be assigned to the same assembly committee. Following the convening of the assembly, such matters shall be directed to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.
## Beginning of the General Assembly Meeting

### 1. Registration and Seating

#### a. Registration of Commissioners and Delegates

The Stated Clerk shall enroll commissioners and delegates on the opening day of the General Assembly and at such other times as may be necessary. The Stated Clerk shall determine any question that may arise regarding registration of commissioners and delegates. Any complaints regarding such decision shall be received by the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures.

#### b. Commissioners with Disabilities

A commissioner certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be entitled to designate a person to function as an assistant without vote during all proceedings of the General Assembly, including executive sessions and committee meetings, in order that the commissioner may fully participate in those proceedings. The expenses of the assistant shall be paid for by the General Assembly on the same basis as expenses of commissioners. The Stated Clerk shall also enroll assistants to commissioners who have been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance.

#### c. Assigned Seats

The Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner, advisory delegate, and corresponding member to a seat in advance of the meeting. They shall occupy the assigned seats during each meeting of the General Assembly at which business may be transacted. An assistant to commissioner who has been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be assigned a seat adjacent to the commissioner.

#### d. Alternates

When a principal commissioner is replaced by an alternate prior to or during the course of an assembly session, whether for the remainder of the session or for a period of time during the session, the alternate shall assume that assembly committee position and seat assignment.

#### e. Ecumenical Representatives

Ecumenical representatives shall be seated on the floor of the assembly in a section clearly designated for such guests.

#### f. Presbytery Staff Seating

The presbytery’s executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery’s stated clerk shall be provided assigned seating in proximity to the area that corresponding members are seated.

### 2. Quorum

### 3. Committee Moderators and Overture Advocates Meeting

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**Registration of Commissioners and Delegates**

- a. The Stated Clerk shall enroll commissioners and delegates on the opening day of the General Assembly and at such other times as may be necessary. The Stated Clerk shall determine any question that may arise regarding registration of commissioners and delegates. Any complaints regarding such decision shall be received by the Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures.

**Commissioners with Disabilities**

- b. A commissioner certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be entitled to designate a person to function as an assistant without vote during all proceedings of the General Assembly, including executive sessions and committee meetings, in order that the commissioner may fully participate in those proceedings. The expenses of the assistant shall be paid for by the General Assembly on the same basis as expenses of commissioners. The Stated Clerk shall also enroll assistants to commissioners who have been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance.

**Assigned Seats**

- c. The Stated Clerk shall assign each commissioner, advisory delegate, and corresponding member to a seat in advance of the meeting. They shall occupy the assigned seats during each meeting of the General Assembly at which business may be transacted. An assistant to commissioner who has been certified by his or her presbytery as having a disability warranting assistance shall be assigned a seat adjacent to the commissioner.

**Alternates**

- d. When a principal commissioner is replaced by an alternate prior to or during the course of an assembly session, whether for the remainder of the session or for a period of time during the session, the alternate shall assume that assembly committee position and seat assignment.

**Ecumenical Representatives**

- e. Ecumenical representatives shall be seated on the floor of the assembly in a section clearly designated for such guests.

**Presbytery Staff Seating**

- f. The presbytery’s executive staff person (or designee) and the presbytery’s stated clerk shall be provided assigned seating in proximity to the area that corresponding members are seated.
g. The only persons who shall be permitted access to the commissioner and advisory delegate seating area during plenary sessions are commissioners, advisory delegates, assistants enrolled by the Stated Clerk to assist commissioners having a disability warranting assistance, the Stated Clerk, Associate and Assistant Stated Clerks, and other staff and assembly assistants who are assigned responsibilities that require access to this area, including assisting at the floor microphones, delivery of official messages to commissioner and advisory delegates, and locating commissioners who are needed on the platform. The Stated Clerk will provide special credentials for the particular staff and assembly assistants who are authorized to enter the commissioner/advisory delegate seating area. Registered presbytery staff may have access to the seating area to contact their commissioners and advisory delegates during breaks in business.

2. Quorum

At the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business, the Stated Clerk shall recommend to the General Assembly that the roll call of commissioners be established by registration. Alternately, the Stated Clerk may call the roll of commissioners and advisory delegates by calling the names of absentees as they appear on the roll. After any needed corrections have been made, the Stated Clerk shall announce whether or not a quorum is present (see Book of Order, G-3.0503). When commissioners and advisory delegates subsequently register, they shall be seated by the General Assembly. A commissioner who has not registered may not be seated and may not vote.

3. Committee Moderators and Overture Advocates Meeting

The Office of the General Assembly shall, on the first business day of the assembly, before committees meet to consider business, organize a forum where assembly committee moderators shall meet with overture advocates to discuss procedures for participation in committee discussion of business related to the overture that they are advocating.
Committee Meetings

1. Committee Leadership and Support
   a. Moderator and Vice Moderator
   b. Recorder
   c. Committee Assistant

2. Procedures for Assembly Committee Meetings
   a. Open Meetings
   b. Time of Worship and Prayer
   c. Parliamentary Procedures
   d. Use and Preparation of Resources
   e. Reports of Special Committees
   f. Privilege to Speak
   g. Overture Advocates/Signer of Commissioners’ Resolution
   h. Responsibilities of Overture Advocate

3. New Business
   a. Consider Only Matters Referred
   b. Proposing Amendment to Constitution
   c. Constitutional Matters
   d. Approval Requirement
   e. Presentation of
   f. Referral to Advisory Committee on the Constitution

4. Organizational Meeting

5. Public Hearings
   a. Schedule
   b. Time Limits for Presentations
   c. Hearing Form

6. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures
   a. Responsible for Referral of Business
   b. Coordination Between Committees
   c. Distribution of Materials
   d. Requests to Schedule Event

7. Reports of Assembly Committees
   a. Writing the Report
   b. Content
   c. Fiscal Implications
   d. Identify Entity
   e. PMA to Determine Entity
   f. Votes Recorded
   g. Confer with Entity Affected by Action
   h. Minority Report

1. Committee Leadership and Support
   a. The moderator presides over the committee’s deliberations. The moderator may request the vice moderator or others to preside and to assist in the work of the committee.

   b. Each committee shall have available to assist in its work a recorder appointed by the Stated Clerk. The recorder shall be appointed from a pool of individuals who will already be attending the General Assembly, including staff members, local volunteers, and others. The recorder shall keep an accurate record of the actions of the committee with the votes on each indicating the number of committee members voting in the affirmative, or negative, or those abstaining; and shall assist in drafting the committee report.

   c. Each committee shall have available to assist in its work a committee assistant. The committee assistant may address the committee offering suggestions regarding procedure, but shall not participate in its deliberations on any issue before the committee as an advocate of one position or view regarding its action. The committee assistant shall assist the committee in securing desired resources.
2. Procedures for Assembly Committee Meetings

Open Meetings

a. Meetings of assembly committees shall be open to the public (as space permits) provided, however, that the committee may go into executive session at any time in accordance with the Open Meeting Policy printed in the Manual of the General Assembly. Ordinarily, the committee assistant will be expected to remain with the committee in executive session.

Time of Worship and Prayer

b. Each meeting of the committee shall include a time of worship and opportunity for prayer.

Parliamentary Procedure
c. Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised except when in contradiction to the Constitution of the PC(USA). Prior to a vote, methods of deliberation shall be consistent with the principles of Presbyterian government. (F-3.02 and G-3.0305)

d. Use and Preparation of Resource Material:
   (1) Each committee determines the use to be made of the resource material or resource persons available to assembly committees. Each assembly committee determines whether or not to permit the distribution of particular materials to the committee members.
   (2) Resource material (except for previously published books or interpretive brochures), including advice and counsel memoranda, that provides background or advice on items of new business, including commissioners’ resolutions, shall be prepared as necessary by entities of the General Assembly and shall not exceed 1,000 words on each item of business referred. This material shall be submitted to the assembly committee leadership team prior to presentation to the assembly committee to which the business has been referred. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consider any request that is made to distribute this resource material to the full assembly.

e. When business has been referred by a previous assembly to a special task force, committee, or commission created for that purpose, the assembly committee receiving that report shall set aside no less than ½ hour (30 minutes) to hear a presentation by the special task force (or committee or commission) giving background on their report. Each committee shall determine if additional time is required for presentation.

Privilege to Speak

f. During the deliberations of the committee, in contrast to public hearings, only the following persons, having been recognized by the moderator, may speak:
   (1) Members of the committee;
   (2) Committee assistant;
   (3) Persons with special expertise, including elected members or staff members of General Assembly entities;
   (4) Members of special committees, task forces, commissions created by previous assemblies (see E.2.d and K.1.f), overture advocates, and signers of commissioners’ resolutions;
   (5) Persons invited by the committee through a majority vote of the committee; and
   (6) Representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, who may speak to overtures, commissioners’ resolutions, or other business on which the Advisory Committee on the Constitution has presented advice or recommendations, or matters that propose amendments to the Constitution, or that affect compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution.
   (7) In the event that business being considered by an assembly committee has been referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for advice, representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall be entitled to speak.
(8) The committee moderator provides that the total time allotted to persons, other than members of the committee, who speak for or against a recommendation be equal so far as possible except as outlined in E.2.d.

g. Overture advocates and one signer of each commissioners’ resolution shall be responsible for being available at the time selected by any assembly committee considering the matter. The overture advocate or one of the signers of a commissioners’ resolution shall be entitled to speak, as an individual (or in cooperation with other overture advocates in a pre-arranged presentation), to the background and intent of the overture or resolution immediately after the motion is made and seconded, placing the overture or resolution on the floor of the committee or subcommittee.

3. New Business

a. Each assembly committee shall consider only matters referred to it by the General Assembly. No assembly committee may initiate new business except as it relates to the business of the particular assembly committee.

b. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the Constitution or requiring an interpretation of the Constitution by the General Assembly (Book of Order, G-6.04b and G-6.02) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

c. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter so referred and report its findings and recommendations, which may include proposals for constitutional change, to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The assembly committee shall vote on the recommendations and may amend or decline to approve them. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee.

d. Recommendations and reports to the assembly regarding such new business must be approved in assembly committees by three-fourths of the committee members voting on the matter.

e. New business, other than that described in this standing rule, must be presented in accordance with Standing Rule A.8.

f. New business initiated in an assembly committee proposing an amendment to the Constitution (Book of Order, G-6.04) or requiring an interpretation of the Constitution by the General Assembly (Book of Order, G-6.02) shall be referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. Any other new business initiated in an assembly committee that touches upon constitutional matters shall be communicated in writing to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Stated Clerk. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution shall consider each matter referred and report its findings and recommendations (which may include proposals for constitutional change) to the assembly committee and the Stated Clerk. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution on these matters shall be transmitted to the General Assembly with the report of the assembly committee.
4. Organizational Meeting

a. Ordinarily, the initial meeting of each assembly committee is an organizational meeting in private session for up to one hour for the purpose of developing intragroup dynamics and determining procedural matters, such as approval of the committee’s agenda and consideration of the style in which the committee plans to operate.

b. During this executive session, business items before the committee shall not be discussed or acted upon.

5. Public Hearings

Schedule

a. Each committee, with the exception of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, shall schedule at its convenience one or more public hearings on matters before it.

Time Limits for Presentations

b. The committee may limit the time for the presentation by any person during a public hearing, including an elected member or staff member of an entity of the General Assembly. If the time allotted for the public hearing is not sufficient to accommodate all the persons wishing to speak, a method shall be approved by the assembly committee that ensures that an equal number of persons on each side of an issue have an opportunity to speak. Any person denied the right to speak at the hearing may appeal to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures on the basis that the method employed in selecting speakers was not fair.

Hearing Form

c. Any person who wishes to be heard in a public hearing shall sign up on a hearing form, posted in a public place in the building in which the assembly is being held, no later than the close of business on the second day of the General Assembly or one hour after the subsequent referral of business to the committee by the General Assembly. The location of hearing forms shall be announced during the first session of the assembly. In the event that an issue is expected to be controversial, those wishing to speak shall be asked to indicate whether they wish to speak for or against the recommendation.

6. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures

Responsible for Referral of Business

a. This committee shall neither retain any items of business for its own consideration, nor suppress any matter that comes before it. However, business that substantially duplicates matters already before the assembly may be declined by this committee and reported to the assembly with a statement of the committee’s action.

Coordination Between Committees

b. This committee shall keep itself informed of the subjects being considered by the other assembly committees, and, when any subject is taken up by more than one committee, this committee shall advise the moderators of those committees regarding ways to avoid redundant or inconsistent recommendations.

Distribution of Materials

c. This committee shall determine whether or not particular materials may be distributed to the commissioners and delegates to the General Assembly, and specify the time and manner of distribution of any authorized by it. Particular materials distributed in assembly committees shall not be distributed to the full assembly without the approval of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, including the time and manner of distribution.

Requests to Schedule Event

d. The committee shall review requests from entities of the General Assembly, councils, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate, to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.
7. Reports of Assembly Committees

Writing the Report

a. The moderator, vice moderator, committee assistant, and recorder, together with such other persons as the moderator may designate, shall draft the report of the committee following the sample form provided by the Stated Clerk.

Content

b. The reports of assembly committees shall contain only (1) the recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly, and, where necessary, a brief statement of the committee’s reasons for such recommendations, and (2) the actions taken by the committee on items referred to the committee for action. Material necessary to identify the item of business and brief explanations may be included in the report. Extensive background information and detail contained in other documents in the hands of the commissioners shall not be included.

Fiscal Implications
c. Each assembly committee shall include with each recommendation or action in its report statements advising the General Assembly whether or not the recommendation or action has fiscal implications affecting any budget under consideration by the assembly.

Identify Entity
d. Recommendation for assembly action, or action taken by the committee, shall identify the entity that is directed to carry out and report back to the General Assembly regarding the matter dealt with by the recommendation or action.

PMA to Determine Entity
e. When the entity to which an assembly action is directed is a part of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, such as a division or related entity, the Stated Clerk shall automatically amend the language so that the action is directed to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The Presbyterian Mission Agency shall determine which entity shall carry out the responsibility and report to the assembly on the matter.

Votes Recorded
f. The votes recorded in the assembly committee on each recommendation or action shall be included in the report for the information of the commissioners, but shall be omitted from the Journal of the General Assembly.

Confer with Entity Affected by Action
g. If the report of an assembly committee proposes or records an action affecting the interests of an entity of the General Assembly or of a council other than the General Assembly, it shall be the responsibility of that assembly committee to confer with the representative(s) designated by the entity or council concerned before proposing such action to the General Assembly or taking such an action.

Minority Report
h. Minority Report

(1) A minority of the members of an assembly committee, or an individual member of an assembly committee, may submit in writing views that differ from those in the committee report. If the moderator of the committee shall affirm in writing that the positions expressed as recommendations for action by the assembly in a written minority report were presented to the whole committee during its consideration of the matter, the Stated Clerk shall reproduce the minority report and distribute it with the report of the committee.

(2) A minority report must be appropriate for consideration as a substitute motion (see Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 2011, p. 527).
General Assembly Plenary Meeting

1. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures Reports
   a. Report at Beginning of Each Meeting
   b. Limits on Debate/Changes in Docket
   c. Review Minutes
   d. Requests for Communicating with Assembly
   e. Referral of Protests

2. Reports of Assembly Committees
   a. Distribution
   b. Adequate Docket Time
   c. Committee Moderators
   d. Financial Implication

3. Minority Reports
   a. Must Stand as Full and Complete Substitute
   b. Reasons Supporting Committee’s Recommendation

4. Committee Reports on the Budget
   a. Per Capita Budget
   b. Amended Per Capita Budget

5. Plenary Meeting Procedures
   a. Debate
   b. Voting Methods
   c. Mindful of Effort Required to Fulfill Recommendations
   d. Constitutional Questions
   e. Electronic Devices
   f. Emergency Messages
   g. Confidentiality

6. General Assembly Nominating Committee
   a. Presentation of Nominations
   b. May Decline to Submit Nomination
   c. Nominating from the Floor

7. Docket Time for Special Greetings
   a. Head of Communion
   b. Assignment of Docket Time

8. Announcements and Nonofficial Printed Materials
   a. Approval for Announcements
   b. Nonofficial Printed Material

9. Distributing Study Documents
   a. Distribution
   b. Responsible Entity Identified

10. Forming Social Policy

11. Peaceful Demonstrations
   a. Where Allowed
   b. Prohibited in Building

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1. Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures Reports

   a. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall report at the beginning of each meeting, recommending any necessary changes in order of business and any referrals it may have considered since its last report.

   b. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures may, at any time, recommend limits on debates or changes in the docket to facilitate the handling of business. The reports of the committee shall take precedence over any other business, including orders of the day.
F.1.c. This committee shall review the minutes of the General Assembly daily, report to the General Assembly any suggested corrections, and recommend approval of the minutes. The minutes shall be posted on the church’s website and two printed copies of the minutes shall be posted in different places during the following day for examination by commissioners. The minutes of the meetings of the General Assembly during the last two days of its session shall be submitted for review and approval within ten days after the adjournment of the General Assembly to a subcommittee of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

d. Requests for the privilege of communicating with the General Assembly shall be referred to this committee, which shall confer with persons making such requests about the time and the manner in which their concerns may be brought to the attention of the General Assembly. The Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall recommend to the General Assembly a response regarding any possible presentation to the assembly. At the time any such recommendation is acted upon, any commissioner may request that an opposing view be heard, and the assembly shall consider and act upon the matter.

e. Protests expressing disagreement with an action or failure to act on the part of the General Assembly shall be referred to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures, which shall decide whether or not the protest is decorous and respectful. Should the committee decide the protest is decorous and respectful, the protest shall be entered in the Minutes. The committee may prepare an answer to be printed with any protest so entered (see Book of Order, G-3.0105b).

2. Reports of Assembly Committees

a. Electronic copies of the written reports of assembly committees shall ordinarily be distributed to commissioners no later than the close of the meeting prior to the one at which they are to be considered. When necessary the Stated Clerk shall arrange for the reproduction and distribution of reports.

b. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, shall docket adequate time for the reports of committees, including ample time for debate and action. If a report requires more time than docketed, the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall consult with the committee for additional time to complete consideration of the report.

c. Committee moderators should move the approval of recommendations with minimum comment, and material in the commissioners’ provided resources shall not be read.

d. The financial effect of each recommendation on budgets previously approved or under consideration shall be clearly presented at the time that the recommendation is considered by the assembly.

3. Minority Reports

a. In order to be considered by the assembly, a minority report shall not only set aside the majority report but also be able to stand as a full and complete substitution for the majority report recommendations. A minority report shall be moved as a substitute only after the majority report has first been moved. When this happens, the assembly shall first consider (and may amend) the majority report. When consideration of the majority report is completed, the assembly may then consider (and may amend) the minority report. Further efforts to perfect each report shall be held to a minimum in order that the assembly can concentrate instead on the issue of whether to make the proposed substitution.

b. The moderator of the committee, or another member of the committee, shall present reasons supporting the committee’s recommendation. They may be presented before any minority report is moved or presented during the narrative report of the committee, or presented during debate on the question of whether or not the substitution shall become the main motion. (See also Standing Rule E.7.h.)
4. Committee Reports on the Budget

a. At the first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business following the meetings of assembly committees, the assembly shall hear a report on the per capita budget from the committee that has reviewed that budget.

b. On the final day of the assembly, an amended per capita budget that incorporates the financial implications of actions taken by the assembly shall be presented to the assembly for approval.

5. Plenary Meeting Procedures

a. In debate on any pending matter, no commissioner or delegate shall be allowed to speak more than two minutes until all other commissioners or delegates who desire to speak on the pending matter have been heard.

b. (1) The General Assembly shall ordinarily decide questions by electronic voting. The Moderator may also call for unanimous consent by voice vote or show of hands. All decisions made by assembly standing committees by a three-quarters (supermajority) vote shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda to be considered as the first order of plenary business following committee meetings. Any actions requesting constitutional change must be considered in plenary.

(2) In addition to all consent items from assembly committees, the following items shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda:

(a) All unchallenged nominations from the General Assembly Nominating Committee.

(b) Unanimous recommendations from assembly agencies and entities for confirmations of those offices that, according to the Manual of the General Assembly, require General Assembly confirmation.

(3) In all cases, the right of any commissioner to remove any item from the plenary consent agenda or to call for one of the other forms of voting shall be preserved.”

c. In view of the relative ease in which studies and programs may be approved, commissioners and other assembly committee members are cautioned to be mindful of the effort required of staff and elected members to carry out the General Assembly’s instructions.

d. When the General Assembly is in plenary session, questions that touch upon constitutional matters, including rulings on questions of order involving constitutional matters requested by the Moderator, shall be handled by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. These questions shall be referred in writing by the Moderator to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, which shall consider each matter referred and make recommendations directly to the General Assembly through the Moderator.

e. Commissioners are expected to be present when meetings are in session both physically and mentally. The use of electronic devices for purposes other than those directly related to the current topic is therefore discouraged when meetings are in session. Commissioners are also expected to adhere to the General Assembly Social Media Policy.

f. Emergency messages will be relayed to a commissioner or advisory delegate during plenary meetings by way of a written message delivered by one of the Stated Clerk’s designated staff or assembly assistants.

g. Any person permitted to remain during any executive session is expected to agree to be bound by the confidentiality required of commissioners.
6. General Assembly Nominating Committee

a. Unless the General Assembly shall have made some other provision, the nominating committee shall present to each session of the General Assembly a nominee for election to each vacancy on the entities of the General Assembly that shall exist because of a scheduled end of term, resignation, death, incapacity to act, change of residence, or any other reason.

b. The General Assembly Nominating Committee may decline to submit a nomination(s) to a particular vacancy(s) when requested to do so by the affected entity because of an expected merger of entity or a transfer of duties between entities in order to reduce the number of persons serving on a particular entity(s).

c. Nominating from the Floor

(1) Nominations by commissioners shall be in order unless the vacancy is required to be filled upon nomination from some other source.

(2) When any nomination for service on a General Assembly committee, council, or board comes from the floor of the assembly, the commissioner making the nomination will provide the General Assembly Nominating Committee, no later than 48 hours after the convening of the General Assembly, with pertinent information about the person whose name is being presented, as well as the name of the particular person nominated by the nominating committee whose nomination is being challenged. Such information shall be provided on the “Nomination by Commissioner Form” provided for use at the assembly and available from the Stated Clerk. The availability of the pertinent information provided by the person challenging the nominating committee’s nominee shall be announced to the assembly at least twenty-four hours in advance of the nomination being made from the floor.

(3) In the event that there are nominations from the floor, the election shall proceed as follows:

(a) The General Assembly will deal with one challenged position at a time.

(b) The name of the General Assembly Nominating Committee’s nominee shall be placed in nomination by its moderator. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall call upon the commissioner who is placing a nomination from the floor to put that name in nomination.

(c) Once the names are placed in nomination, the order of speaking shall be first, the commissioner or a designee speaking on behalf of the floor nominee and second, the General Assembly Nominating Committee member or a designee speaking to its nominee. Both the commissioner (or designee) and the General Assembly Nominating Committee member (or designee) shall speak from the platform. Such speech shall not exceed three minutes in length. There shall be no other speeches seconding the nomination of any nominee.

(d) Without further discussion or debate, the General Assembly will move to vote.

7. Docket Time for Special Greetings

a. When the Head of Communion of a member church of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches, or the National Council of Churches is in attendance at a session of the General Assembly as an ecumenical advisory delegate or as an ecumenical representative, and proper notice is provided, the assembly shall provide up to three minutes of docket time to each such Head of Communion to present a greeting to the assembly.

b. The placing of this greeting on the docket will be assigned by the Stated Clerk.
8. Announcements and Nonofficial Printed Materials

a. Only announcements connected directly with the business of the General Assembly shall be read from the platform and all notices shall be submitted either to the Moderator or the Stated Clerk for approval. Telegrams and special letters shall be reported to the General Assembly only at times to be designated by the Moderator.

b. Ordinarily, printed materials that are not official business before the General Assembly may only be distributed at authorized booths in the General Assembly Exhibit Hall. Other distribution is permitted to be handed out twenty-five feet or more from entrances to the building in which the General Assembly meets.

9. Distributing Study Documents

a. Whenever the General Assembly itself shall require the distribution of a document for study (whether the proposal originates through the recommendation of an entity, the presentation of an overture or resolution, or arises during the conduct of the assembly’s business) with a request for a response (whether the response is sought from individuals, congregations, councils, organizations of any kind, or any combination of these), the study document shall be accompanied by resource materials, bibliography, and aids as set forth in the document “Forming Social Policy,” Section 5, printed in the Manual of the General Assembly. Along with a response instrument and the resource materials, bibliography, and aids, the document shall be distributed on a schedule that provides for the study guide and all accompanying material to be in the possession of the proposed respondents for a minimum of twelve months before the due date of the response.

b. The entity to be responsible for receiving the responses and reporting to the General Assembly the summary of the responses shall be identified in the material. The report on the responses to the study may be presented no earlier than to the General Assembly that convenes in the second year after the session of the General Assembly that approves the study.

10. Forming Social Policy

The entities of the General Assembly, including its committees, commissions, and special committees, shall be governed by the document, “Forming Social Policy” printed in the Manual of the General Assembly, when that entity is considering making a social witness policy.

11. Peaceful Demonstrations

a. Peaceful demonstrations shall be allowed twenty-five or more feet outside of the entrances to the building in which General Assembly meets.

b. Spontaneous or planned demonstrations by individuals or groups are prohibited inside the building where the General Assembly meets. The Moderator of the General Assembly shall declare all demonstrations that occur in plenary session out of order and, if demonstrators fail to immediately disband and desist, may recess the General Assembly to a fixed time and place. This rule does not prohibit the spontaneous or planned celebration of an action of the General Assembly or of any event in the life of the church.
General Assembly Meeting Worship

Services of Worship

a. Moderator of Preceding General Assembly Responsible for Planning
b. Ecumenical Worship
c. In Conformity with Directory for Worship

Services of Worship

a. The Moderator of the preceding General Assembly shall plan daily worship at the General Assembly, and a worship service including the celebration of the Lord’s Supper; and shall provide, in advance, suitable leadership for these periods of worship. The Lord’s Supper shall be celebrated at the first service of worship of the General Assembly session, and the Moderator shall preside on this occasion and preach a sermon or deliver an address. The Moderator shall seek advice to ensure inclusivity in the planning of appropriate daily worship periods. The Moderator shall assure adequate transmittal of information about the planning of worship periods to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

b. The Stated Clerk shall plan an ecumenical period of worship and provide, in advance, suitable leadership for this period of worship.

c. The various acts of worship planned for the session of the General Assembly shall be in conformity with the requirements of the Directory for Worship, and shall be developed and led according to the guidance of the document, “Presbyterians at Worship in Mass Assemblies.” In the preparation and conduct of all worship services, care shall be taken that all language, sight, hearing, accessibility, and other barriers be eliminated so that there can be full participation of all attendees. [Example: That printed orders of service also be printed in braille and that signing be available.]
Persons in Ordered Ministry and Elections

1. Moderator of the General Assembly
   a. Title/Functions
   (1) The Moderator of the General Assembly is an ecclesiastical person in ordered ministry, along with the Stated Clerk, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). The ministry of the Moderator is grounded in the ministry of baptized persons and in the particular ordained ministry of ruling elders and teaching elders.
   (2) The office of Moderator may be shared by Co-Moderators. In this case, the office of Vice Moderator will remain vacant until the next election of a Moderator.
   (3) The title of the Moderator is “The Moderator of the [number] General Assembly [(year)] of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”
   (4) The Moderator of the General Assembly is a commissioner of the General Assembly.
   (5) When the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church’s life and upholding the people of God through prayer.
   (6) The Moderator shall preside over the General Assembly that elects him or her, and over the meetings of the next General Assembly until a successor is elected. The Moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the council (Book of Order, G-3.0104).
   (7) The Moderator(s) and the Vice Moderator (when filled) shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.

   b. At the discretion of the candidate, he or she may choose to stand for election with a Co-Moderator or with a Vice Moderator candidate. When choosing to stand with another Moderator candidate, both candidates:
      (1) must fulfill all the requirements specified in these Standing Rules,
      (2) notify the Stated Clerk of their intention to stand for election together, and
      (3) will together determine how to fulfill the duties of the office.

   c. Election of the Moderator
      (1) Each person nominated to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly must be a commissioner to the General Assembly. Action by presbyteries to endorse candidates for
Moderator of the General Assembly shall not take place until after the adjournment of the immediately preceding assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall provide resourcing and orientation for Moderatorial candidates.

(2) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the assembly, the Moderatorial candidates will announce the name of a commissioner each has selected to offer to the assembly to elect as Vice Moderator, as appropriate.

(3) The following guidelines are intended to create an equal and open opportunity for moderatorial candidates. To this end, the following procedures shall be observed:

(a) Candidates shall covenant not to spend in excess of $2,000 in making their candidacy known to the church. This $2,000 includes out of pocket expenses as well as the estimated value of in-kind contributions, but does not include travel and meeting expenses.

(b) Each candidate shall submit to the Stated Clerk an itemized statement of expenses, including travel and meeting expenses related to his/her candidacy and in-kind contributions. This statement shall be submitted to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly prior to the convening of the General Assembly. This information shall be distributed to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the election of the Moderator. The statement of expenses of all candidates shall be kept on file in the Office of the General Assembly following the meeting of the General Assembly.

(c) The Office of the General Assembly shall not reimburse a candidate for campaign expenses, but shall assume expenses involved in printing and distributing material submitted for information packets as outlined in Standing Rule H.1.c.(3)(g).

(d) In order to encourage reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit in the selection of the Moderator, neither candidates or their advocates are allowed to communicate with commissioners and/or advisory delegates.

(e) Distribution of written campaign materials at General Assembly shall be limited to the public distribution area.

(f) Candidates are encouraged to meet and make themselves available for conversation with commissioners and advisory delegates within the scope of these procedures.

(g) Not less than fifteen days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish for commissioners and advisory delegates an electronic information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Moderator who is known to the Stated Clerk and who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate that includes a statement regarding the candidate’s sense of call to the ordered ministry,

(ii) A written presentation by the presbytery having jurisdiction over the candidate, if that council has endorsed the candidate,

(iii) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the Stated Clerk.

The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but all material including photographs submitted for each presentation shall be provided in electronic format as well as print. The material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no less than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution, and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Moderator, if elected.

(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected in the following manner:

(a) When the General Assembly is ready to elect its Moderator, each candidate shall be nominated by a commissioner to the assembly in the following manner: the commissioners making nominations shall be recognized at microphones on the assembly
floor. Upon recognition by the assembly Moderator, the nominator shall say one of the following statements:

(i) “Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _____ from the Presbytery of _______ and Ruling/Teaching Elder _______ from the Presbytery of ______.”

(ii) “Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _______ from the Presbytery of ______. And for Vice Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _____ from the Presbytery of ______.”

The nominator shall then return to his/her seat on the plenary floor. No seconds to nominations are required.

(b) After nominations are closed, each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the concerns that nominee feels to be the most important for the church. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot, the drawing conducted by the most recent Moderator attending the General Assembly

(c) At the conclusion of all the presentations by the nominees, they shall respond to questions from the floor. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who spoke first in the original presentation, and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they spoke earlier. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly.

(d) Where there is only one nomination for Moderator, the election may be by acclamation. Where there is more than one, the election may be by secret ballot in a format which is determined by the Stated Clerk and announced to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the convening of the assembly.

(5) The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Moderator and Vice Moderator, as appropriate, as the last item of business at the session in which the Moderator is elected. The families of the newly elected officers and all present previous Moderators shall be invited to the platform. The service shall use the order of service for “Installation of Governing Body Officers and Staff” from the Book of Occasional Services. The processional banner of the Moderator shall precede the newly elected Moderator into the assembly. The Moderator’s cross and stole shall be presented by the most recent serving Moderator. The newly elected Moderator invites a person to lead the prayer of installation. The most recent serving Moderator gives the charge, a hymn is sung by the assembly, and the newly elected Moderator gives the benediction.

Vice Moderator

d. Vice Moderator

(1) The Vice Moderator represents the assembly at the request of the Moderator. When the Vice Moderator serves in this capacity, all those duties incumbent on the Moderator shall be expected of him/her.

(2) Each proposed Vice-Moderator candidate shall include biographical information and a photograph in electronic format to be included with the Moderator candidate information.

(3) The Moderator may request the Vice Moderator to preside and to assist in the performance of other functions of the Moderator during and following the General Assembly.

Vacancy

e. Vacancy in the Office of the Moderator or Vice Moderator

(1) Should the office of the Moderator of the General Assembly become vacant, the Vice Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator. In such circumstance, all constitutional obligations and functions as prescribed by the Standing Rules of the General
Assembly and the *Book of Order* shall be incumbent upon the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly.

(2) Should the office of the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly also become vacant, the most recent living Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator as specified in the Constitution of the church.

2. Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

Title/Functions

a. Title and Functions of the Stated Clerk at the General Assembly

(1) The title of the Stated Clerk is “The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office.

(2) The Stated Clerk is accountable, through the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, to the General Assembly for the performance of the duties of the office, and shall present to each meeting of the General Assembly a report on the state of the church.

(3) The Stated Clerk is responsible for all matters related to the sessions of the General Assembly and all other matters relative to and arising from the General Assembly for which no other assignment has been made.

(4) The Stated Clerk shall also be responsible for guidance of the procedures for candidates seeking the office of Moderator, and for supervision of the election of each Moderator.

(5) In accordance with directives from previous General Assemblies and in consultations with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and other General Assembly agencies, the Stated Clerk is authorized to decide on matters pertaining to facilities and special events that must be established before the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

(6) The Stated Clerk shall receive all reports, communications, overtures, and any other materials appropriate for General Assembly consideration. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for presentation to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, a referral of such items of business coming before the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.3.e.).

(7) The Stated Clerk shall prepare for consideration of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a proposed docket for the General Assembly’s consideration of its business (Standing Rule C.4.a.). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall present the proposed docket to the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures so that it may recommend a docket to the commissioners at the first business session. The docket presented to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall provide a time early in the General Assembly for a report by the Stated Clerk on the state of the church, and for a report by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

(8) The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly the number of assembly committees and a name for each committee after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities (Standing Rule C.1.). The Stated Clerk shall present the committee structure to the General Assembly for ratification at the first business session. Each commissioner and advisory delegate shall be assigned by random selection to one assembly committee at least forty-five days before the opening date of the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.2.).

(9) The Stated Clerk shall provide opportunity for orienting the commissioners, advisory delegates, and others taking part in the session of the General Assembly. The use of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, sources of parliamentary advice, and the availability of resource persons and materials to facilitate their work should be part of the orientation.
The Stated Clerk shall be the parliamentarian for the meetings of the General Assembly, or arrange for the service of a professional parliamentarian.

The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the councils and agencies of the assembly, persons who presented business to the assembly, and others affected by the assembly’s actions, a report on actions of the General Assembly on matters pertaining to their concerns. The Stated Clerk shall transmit to the presbyteries all assembly actions on which the presbyteries are requested to take action.

As soon as practicable after the adjournment of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish the assembly’s proceedings and other documents as the assembly may direct in an appropriate format (i.e. print or electronic) to be determined by the Stated Clerk.

**Election**

b. Election of the Stated Clerk

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) requires the election of a Stated Clerk and the standing rules describe the procedures for the election. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be elected for a term of four years and is eligible for reelection to additional four-year terms. The Stated Clerk is accountable to the General Assembly for the performance of the assigned functions.

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be elected in the manner described in this standing rule. No member of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly or other persons involved in this procedure as a member of the search committee or as a person providing staff services to the committee may be considered for nomination as Stated Clerk. The incumbent Stated Clerk may not participate in any way in the election process described in this standing rule. In the year there is an election of a Stated Clerk, the Moderator shall appoint a temporary Stated Clerk during the period of the election at the General Assembly.

The General Assembly that meets prior to the end of the term of a Stated Clerk shall elect a Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(a) The slate of nominees for the nomination committee shall consist of the following: three members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (nominated by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, one of whom shall serve as moderator of the committee), one member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (nominated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board), and five at-large members nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee in the following categories: one mid council stated clerk and four persons (two ruling elders and two teaching elders) from among commissioners who have attended an assembly in the past six years. The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall present to the assembly for election the slate of nominees for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. The slate presented shall reflect the denomination’s commitment to inclusiveness.

(b) Nominations from the floor for the nomination committee shall be in order following the distribution of the printed list of proposed nominees by the General Assembly Nominating Committee and a declaration by the Moderator that the names are in nomination. Names placed in nomination from the floor shall be in opposition to a particular name of an at-large member placed in nomination by the General Assembly Nominating Committee, and must be in the same category (H.2.b.(3)(a)). More than one person may be placed in nomination from the floor in opposition to an at-large nominee.

(c) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be responsible for providing the nomination committee with an up-to-date position description.

(d) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly will ensure that an adequate budget for the nomination process is provided in the Office of the General Assembly and shall designate staff services for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.
(e) The nomination committee shall begin its work no later than 300 days before the start of the assembly that will elect the Stated Clerk.

(f) The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall be responsible for conducting the end-of-term evaluation of the Stated Clerk.

(g) The nominating committee shall announce that persons seeking the position of Stated Clerk shall file a completed application form and a resume or personal information form (PIF) with the committee 180 days before the opening of the General Assembly.

If the incumbent wants to be considered, he or she will notify the committee in writing and submit a current resume or PIF 180 days before the opening of the General Assembly. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall provide a copy of the end-of-term evaluation to the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee.

(h) Additional written material may be requested by the committee. No one may be nominated to serve as Stated Clerk who has not provided an application to the committee.

(i) The committee shall review and evaluate all applications to determine the constitutional eligibility of the candidates. Any candidate who is determined to not be eligible will be notified in writing within forty-five days of receipt of their resume or PIF.

(j) The committee shall interview all eligible candidates using the same methodology and select one as the committee’s recommendation. All members of the committee shall ordinarily participate in the interview. The committee shall declare its nominee no later than sixty days before the opening of the General Assembly.

(k) Any of the applicants for the position of Stated Clerk, including the incumbent Stated Clerk if not the nominee of the committee, who wish to be placed in nomination against the nominee of the committee shall declare their intention to the committee no later than forty-five days before the opening of the General Assembly.

(l) At the convening of the General Assembly, the Office of the General Assembly shall distribute to commissioners and advisory delegates an information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Stated Clerk who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate, including a statement regarding the candidate’s sense of call to the ordered ministry,

(ii) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the committee based upon issues that will be before the church as presented in business to be considered by the General Assembly.

(iii) The material submitted shall be typewritten on paper 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size. The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but the copy submitted for each presentation shall be provided in one color on one side of one sheet. The material shall be submitted to the Office of the General Assembly no less than thirty days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Stated Clerk, if elected.

(m) The candidates may not distribute any other materials, print or electronic, including flyers, buttons, tokens or other objects that would denote a campaign for the office of Stated Clerk.

(n) Other organizations supporting the candidacy of a particular candidate may not distribute materials electronically, through the mail, or at the General Assembly with the knowledge, support, or permission of that candidate. Should a candidate discover that an organization is advocating or campaigning for him or her, it is expected that the candidate will request that organization to cease its activities. The same expectation will be true of organizations that are critical of a particular candidate for Stated Clerk.
(o) Each candidate will be provided a place to meet and talk with commissioners and advisory delegates two days before the election. Only information provided by the Office of the General Assembly may be distributed in those rooms. Other materials, apart from that packet, are not permitted. Each candidate for Stated Clerk will be allowed to post the times when he/she will be available for conversation in that room.

(p) Any questions concerning interpretation of the election process outlined in H.2.b. shall be determined by the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee.

(4) The General Assembly, by majority vote, shall elect the Stated Clerk in the following manner:

(a) Within forty-eight hours of the convening of the assembly, the Stated Clerk Review/Nomination Committee shall place in nomination a single nominee.

(b) The Moderator shall then invite other nominations from those who have completed the nomination process. Only one speech, made by a commissioner or a member of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee not to exceed five minutes in length, shall be made to nominate each nominee. There shall be no speech seconding any nomination. Each person nominated from the floor shall reaffirm a willingness to serve as Stated Clerk, if elected.

(c) In the event there are no other nominations, the election shall proceed immediately as follows:

(i) The nominee for Stated Clerk shall be given an opportunity to address the assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the nominee’s views regarding the functions and work of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

(ii) The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. Time allocated shall not exceed fifteen minutes. The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the nominee for Stated Clerk. The time allocated should not exceed fifteen minutes, after which the voting shall take place.

(d) In the event there are other nominations, the election shall proceed as follows:

(i) The election of the Stated Clerk shall take place as the first order of business on the next to last day of the assembly’s session.

(ii) Each nominee shall be given an opportunity to address the assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the nominee’s views regarding the functions and work of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. The nominees shall speak in the same order as the presentation of nominating speeches.

(iii) The Moderator shall inquire of commissioners whether there are questions to be asked of the nominees for Stated Clerk. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who was nominated first and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they were nominated. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly, after which the voting shall take place.

(5) Should there be a vacancy in the office of the Stated Clerk, the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall propose to the assembly, if the assembly is in session, members for the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee, or shall propose to the Moderator for appointment, if the assembly is not in session, to a Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. This committee shall be composed of members as outlined in Standing Rule H.2.b. and begin the process of a search for a candidate for Stated Clerk. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall designate an acting Stated Clerk until such time as a Stated Clerk is elected.

(6) The Stated Clerk Nomination Committee shall be dismissed at the adjournment of the session of the General Assembly at which the committee presents a nominee for Stated Clerk.
(7) A new Stated Clerk shall normally assume office thirty days after the adjournment of the assembly. A longer period of transition between Stated Clerks may be negotiated by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, but shall not exceed ninety days.

**Acting Stated Clerk**

- c. Acting Stated Clerk

In case of the incapacity, resignation, or death of the Stated Clerk, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall designate an Acting Stated Clerk until such time as the Stated Clerk is able to resume the duties or the General Assembly elects a new Stated Clerk. The person so designated may be one of the Associate Stated Clerks or another person eligible for election as Stated Clerk.

**Associate Stated Clerks**

- d. Associate Stated Clerks

The General Assembly may elect one or more Associate Stated Clerks as the General Assembly shall determine. The Stated Clerk shall nominate persons to fill each such office after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. The term of office shall be four years, subject to reelection at the pleasure of the General Assembly.
General Assembly Arrangements

1. Date and Place of Meeting
   a. Determining Date and Place
   b. Presbytery Invitations
   c. Criteria
   d. Rotating the Place of the Meeting

2. Meeting Arrangements
   a. Arrangements and Housing
   b. Assembly Assistants
   c. Simultaneous Interpretation
   d. Sponsorship of Events

3. Reimbursing Commissioner Expenses
   a. Reimbursement/Per Diem
   b. Reimbursement for Alternate Commissioner

4. Assembly Meeting Work Group
   a. Membership
   b. Responsibilities

1. Date and Place of Meeting
   a. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall meet on the date and at the place fixed by the preceding General Assembly for a period, which shall be known as a session of the General Assembly, preferably between May 15 and July 31, subject to the possibility of change (see Standing Rule 1.4.b.(10) and Book of Order, G-3.0503, for exceptions). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall recommend to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any necessary changes in dates and places of meetings previously set. Should action regarding date or place of meeting become necessary at a time when the General Assembly is not in session, this committee is empowered to fix a new date or place of meeting.

   b. The host body for any session of the General Assembly shall be a presbytery(s) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Any presbytery that desires to invite the General Assembly to meet within its bounds shall forward an invitation to the Stated Clerk no later than May 1 of the year that is seven years prior to the earliest effective date of the invitation.

   c. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall determine the criteria that render a place an eligible site for a meeting of the General Assembly, including the requirement that all meeting arrangements shall be made to facilitate full participation by persons with disabilities. These criteria may be obtained from the Office of the General Assembly.

   d. In order to distribute the benefits experienced from hosting a General Assembly meeting throughout the church, the place of meeting shall be rotated among the following four areas (unless prevented by financial or other practical considerations):

      - Area A: Synod of Alaska/Northwest, Synod of the Pacific, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii, Synod of the Rocky Mountains, Synod of the Southwest;
      - Area B: Synod of the Sun, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Synod of Mid-America;
      - Area C: Synod of Living Waters, Synod of Lincoln Trails, Synod of the Covenant;
      - Area D: Synod of South Atlantic, Synod of Puerto Rico, Synod of the Northeast, Synod of the Trinity, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.
2. Meeting Arrangements

Arrangements and Housing

a. The Stated Clerk shall oversee all arrangements for the meeting and housing of the General Assembly, including: the assignment of time and place for all special events and public meetings connected with or scheduled at the time of the General Assembly; the assignment of time and place for exhibits at the General Assembly; and the assignment of commissioners, advisory delegates, and others to hotels and other accommodations.

Assembly Assistants

b. The Stated Clerk shall appoint persons to serve as assembly assistants for the duration of the General Assembly. Persons appointed shall not be commissioners to the General Assembly or staff members of entities of the General Assembly. Assembly assistants shall be assigned to particular tasks to facilitate the work of the General Assembly. The appointments shall be made in accordance with Book of Order, F-1.0403.

Simultaneous Interpretation

c. The Stated Clerk shall arrange for the simultaneous interpretation of proceedings into Spanish and Korean languages for any participant during plenary meetings of the General Assembly. This service shall also be provided during assembly committee meetings, services of worship, and other events during the assembly for commissioners, advisory delegates, ecumenical guests, and, when possible, for other participants.

Sponsorship of Event

d. An event scheduled before, during, or immediately following a session of the General Assembly and extending an invitation to any or all participants of the assembly shall clearly identify the sponsor or sponsoring organization(s) in any invitations, announcements, or other publicity about the event.

3. Reimbursing Commissioner Expenses

Reimbursement/Per Diem

a. The approved reimbursement for the travel expenses, food, lodging, and other approved expenses of commissioners at the sessions of the General Assembly shall be paid by the treasurer or the treasurer’s designee. The treasurer shall have the authority to deposit funds for such purposes in a bank or trust company where the General Assembly is to be in session. Commissioners shall be reimbursed by means of individual checks upon receipt of a voucher on a form provided by the treasurer. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly the amount of any per diem. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall set the per diem, and the Stated Clerk shall publish such per diem in the materials (print or electronic) provided to the commissioners. The treasurer shall determine the manner in which such checks shall be distributed and shall announce the place or places where such checks may be cashed.

Reimbursement for Alternate Commissioner

b. The Office of the General Assembly shall reimburse an alternate commissioner for cost of meals (as specified in the per diem expenses for the particular session of the assembly to which the person is commissioned) during the period in which the alternate is actually seated as a commissioner. The total of the payments to the two persons shall not be larger than payment to a single commissioner attending the full assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall reimburse either the original commissioner or the alternate who replaced the original commissioner for the costs of transportation and other approved expenses, but not both. It shall be the responsibility of the two individuals, with the assistance of the presbytery that elected them, to determine an appropriate division of the costs, whether reimbursement was in cash or a prepaid ticket was provided. Both persons shall be listed in the Journal as commissioners, with an indication of the period during which they served.

4. Assembly Meeting Work Group

Membership

a. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall establish a work group on assembly arrangements to be composed of designated members from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The moderator of the Committee on Local Arrangements, and the moderator and vice moderator of the
Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures (when selected) shall be nonvoting members of the committee at all meetings in which matters will be considered that affect their particular work. This work group shall be assigned responsibilities (1) through (10) in this Standing Rule I.4.b.

**Responsibilities**

b. Responsibilities

1. Review the evaluation of each General Assembly session secured by the Stated Clerk.

2. Outline the programs for future General Assemblies sufficiently in advance to ensure an orderly progression of themes and emphases and to ensure the appointment of significant speakers and other program participants.

3. Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk’s proposed docket for the next session of the General Assembly.

4. Review and present to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral a recommendation regarding the Stated Clerk’s proposed referral of each item of business to an appropriate assembly committee.

5. Assist the Moderator regarding the appointment of a commissioner to be the moderator of each assembly committee and a commissioner to serve as vice moderator of each assembly committee.

6. Consult with the Moderator regarding the planning of all worship at the General Assembly.

7. Coordinate the programmatic aspects of each General Assembly session, ensuring that adequate time is provided for the business that must be transacted.

8. Review requests from entities of the General Assembly, councils, other entities related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in any way, or coalitions in which this denomination or any of its entities participate to schedule meetings, briefings, hearings, or other events of any kind during those hours when the General Assembly or its committees are in session.

9. Prepare a report, including recommendations on the docket and the referral of assembly business, to be printed and distributed with other materials provided to commissioners.

10. Review and present to the General Assembly for its action the date and place of meeting six years hence and any changes in dates and places of meetings previously set.
Special Meetings of the General Assembly

1. Method of Calling
   a. Petition’s Subject Matter
   b. Resolution Form
   c. Not Called for Discussion Only
   d. Resolved in 1 or 2 Days
   e. Full Text on Each Page of Petition
   f. Consult with Assembly Committee on Bills & Overtures
   g. 120-day Requirement

2. Signatures
   a. Verification of PC(USA) Membership
   b. Verification of Signature
   c. Removal Request
   d. Failure to Reply
   e. Verification Process Report

3. Date and Location
   a. Report of Decision to Call Meeting
   b. COGA Sets Date and Place
   c. Expense Plan
   d. Letter of Notification

1. Method of Calling

The *Book of Order* permits the calling of special meetings of the General Assembly (G-3.0503). The method of calling a special meeting is the required number of commissioners submitting a petition with the full text of the resolution to the Moderator of the General Assembly.

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<tr>
<th>Petition’s Subject Matter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. A special meeting may be called providing the petition’s subject matter falls within the General Assembly’s responsibilities. (G-3.0501).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. The urgent matter shall be brought in the form of a resolution or resolutions, stating the specific action proposed to be taken by the commissioners at the special meeting and shall include the reasons for proposing the decision to be made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Called for Discussion Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. A special meeting may not be called for the purpose of discussion only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolved in 1 or 2 Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d. The matters should be able to be resolved in a session of one or two days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Text on Each Page of Petition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e. The full text of the resolution shall appear on each page of the signed petitions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consult with Assembly Committee on Bills &amp; Overtures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f. The Moderator may consult with the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures to determine any questions concerning whether the resolution meets the criteria for a called meeting or concerning the specific actions in the proposed resolution. This may take place by conference call.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>120-day Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g. Resolutions requiring or proposing constitutional interpretation are subject to the 120-day requirement in G-6.02. The 120-day requirement begins upon receipt of the petition by the Moderator. The Moderator may consult with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) to determine any questions concerning whether the resolution requires a constitutional interpretation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Signatures

The *Book of Order* establishes the minimum number of signatures to require a called meeting. The Moderator, upon receipt of the petition, shall ask the Stated Clerk to complete the following within thirty days:

- **Verification of PC(USA) Membership**
  - a. Send each presbytery stated clerk or clerk of session a letter verifying the current Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) membership of the individual signatory to the petition.

- **Verification of Signature**
  - b. Send each signatory to the petition a letter of verification asking the commissioner to verify the signature on the petition and if the commissioner concurs with the purpose of the request as stated in the resolution.

- **Removal Request**
  - c. During the verification process, a commissioner may request removal of his or her name from the petition by notifying the Stated Clerk.

- **Failure to Reply**
  - d. After all reasonable efforts to establish contact have been made, the name of a commissioner failing to reply to the letter of verification shall be removed from the petition.

- **Verification Process Report**
  - e. The Stated Clerk shall report to the Moderator the results of the verification process.

3. Date and Location

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly has the responsibility to fix the date and place of a meeting of the General Assembly when the General Assembly is not in session.

- **Report of Decision to Call Meeting**
  - a. Upon receiving certification from the Stated Clerk that the petition has met the requirements of the *Book of Order* and the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, the Moderator shall report to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) the decision to call the meeting.

- **COGA Sets Date and Place Expense Plan**
  - b. The COGA shall set the date and place of a called meeting.
  - c. The COGA shall submit to the called meeting a plan to pay for its expenses. This plan shall be considered to be part of the business of the special meeting.

- **Letter of Notification**
  - d. The letter of notification of the called meeting will be mailed to the commissioners no later than sixty days before the start of the meeting.
Commissions, Special Committees, and Special Administrative Review

1. Commissions and Special Committees
   a. Purpose
   b. Considerations for Creating
   c. Appointed by Moderator
   d. Length of Existence and Reports
   e. Review
   f. Representation at General Assembly and Funding
   g. Coordination

2. Special Administrative Review of Synods
   a. Three Ways to Review
   b. Written Request for Review

1. Commissions and Special Committees

Purpose

a. The General Assembly may establish special committees and commissions to carry out decisions of the assembly or make recommendations to the assembly on matters that cannot be undertaken or accomplished by an existing entity. *(Book of Order, G-3.0109)*

Considerations for Creating

b. In considering the creation of a special committee or commission the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall hear from relevant agencies as well as from the assembly committee considering the proposal. Financial implications of special committees or commissions shall accompany any recommendation to the assembly.

Appointed by Moderator

c. The Moderator of the General Assembly appoints members of special committees or commissions, unless otherwise designated, in collaboration with the General Assembly Nominating Committee and the General Assembly Committee on Representation. The Moderator is authorized to fill any vacancies that may occur. No person appointed may serve on more than one committee or commission unless otherwise designated by the assembly.

Length of Existence and Reports

d. Special committees or commissions shall normally complete their work within two years. Requests for an extension of work shall be referred to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. An extension shall require a two-thirds vote of the assembly.

Review

e. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall review the work of each special committee or commission.

Representation at General Assembly and Funding

f. When the report of the special committee or commission is presented, its moderator shall serve as a corresponding member of the assembly and may be accompanied by one other member of the committee or commission. The expenses of these authorized representatives shall be reimbursed through the committee or commission’s budget.

In the event of a minority report, a designated member of the minority shall also be invited to attend the assembly. The expenses of this member shall be reimbursed through the committee or commission’s budget.

Other members of special committees or commissions may be reimbursed for attendance at the assembly only if they are required to be involved in hearings or for other official purposes.
g. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff services and other assistance to special committees and commissions. The work of the special committees and commissions shall be funded through the per capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly.

2. Special Administrative Review of Synods

a. The General Assembly has authority to undertake special administrative review of synods (*Book of Order*, G-3.0502c). There are three ways the General Assembly could be requested to consider such review:

1. by an overture from a presbytery or synod (G-3.0302d; G-3.0402; Standing Rule A.3.);
2. by request from one of the General Assembly entities (Standing Rule A.2.); or
3. by a commissioners’ resolution (Standing Rule A.6.). If such overture, request, or resolution is acted on favorably by the General Assembly, the General Assembly could undertake Special Administrative Review (G-3.0108b) through commission or special committee as provided for in Standing Rule K.1. and G-3.0109.

b. Special administrative review of an alleged synod irregularity or delinquency may occur when a written request for such review is received by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly from another synod or a presbytery within the synod of the alleged irregularity or delinquency. If the request relates to an alleged delinquency, the request can only be filed with the Stated Clerk after the failure or refusal of the synod to cure the alleged delinquency at its next meeting, having been requested to do so in writing prior to the meeting. When the request for special administrative review is received, the Stated Clerk shall convene a meeting of the Moderator of the General Assembly, the moderator of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the moderator of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. If the request is in order and all the moderators agree that for the good of the church the special administrative review needs to be undertaken before the next meeting of the General Assembly (when the request could be considered by the whole General Assembly), the Moderator of the General Assembly shall appoint a special committee (Standing Rule K.1.) to conduct a special administrative review in accordance with G-3.0108b and report its findings and recommendations to the next General Assembly.
Amendment or Suspension of the Standing Rules

1. Recommending Amendments to the Standing Rules

2. Amending the Standing Rules

3. Suspending the Standing Rules

Recommending Amendments to the Standing Rules

1. In consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall recommend to the next session of the General Assembly any changes in the Standing Rules of the General Assembly deemed necessary. The Stated Clerk shall consult with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly before proposing to the General Assembly any amendment to the standing rules.

Amending the Standing Rules

2. The Standing Rules of the General Assembly may be amended by a majority vote of the commissioners present and voting. A motion to amend the rules is debatable.

Suspending the Standing Rules

3. A motion to suspend the standing rules is not debatable and shall require a two-thirds vote of the total enrollment of the commissioners.
### A—Succession of Moderators

**Presbyterian Church in the United States of America**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 1. (Old School Branch) 1838–1869

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>*John Michael Krebs, D.D.</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>*Alexander T. McGill, DD, L&amp;D</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Baltimore, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>*Aaron W. Leland, D.D.</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>*Edward P. Humphrey, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>*John Chase Lord, D.D.</td>
<td>Buffalo City</td>
<td>Charleston, S.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>*Henry Augustus Boardman, D.D.</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>*Nathan Lewis Rice, D.D.</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Nashville, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>*Francis McFarland, D.D.</td>
<td>Lexington</td>
<td>New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>*William L. Breckenridge, D.D.</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
<td>Indianapolis, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>*John Williams Yorrona, D.D.</td>
<td>Northumberland</td>
<td>Rochester, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>*Charles C. Beatty, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Steubenville</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>*James Wood, D.D.</td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Newark, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>*Robert Livingstone Stanton, D.D.</td>
<td>Chillicothe</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>*Phineas Densmore Gurley, D.D.</td>
<td>Potomac</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>*M.W. Jacobus, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. (New School Branch)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>*Albert Barnes</td>
<td>Philadelphia, 4th</td>
<td>Utica, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>*Ducau Howe Allen, D.D.</td>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>*William Carpenter Wiser, D.D.</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>*Laurens P. Hickok, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Troy</td>
<td>New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>*Samuel W. Fisher, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>*Robert Wilson Patterson, D.D.</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Wilmington, Del.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>*Jonathan Bailey Condit, D.D.</td>
<td>Cayuga</td>
<td>Syracuse, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>*George Duffield, D.D.</td>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>*Thomas Brainerd, D.D.</td>
<td>Philadelphia, 4th</td>
<td>Dayton, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>*James Boylan Shaw, D.D.</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>Brooklyn, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Deceased

Increase level

- **Ruling Elder**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>*Samuel Miles Hopkins, D.D.</td>
<td>Cayuga</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>*Henry Addison Nelson, D.D.</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Rochester, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>*Philemon Halsted Fowler, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Utica</td>
<td>New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS 1870–1958**

1874 *Samuel J. Wilson, D.D., LL.D. | Pittsburgh | St. Louis, Mo. |
1875 *Edward D. Morris, D.D. | Cincinnati | Cleveland, Ohio |
1876 *Henry Jackson Van Dyke, D.D. | Brooklyn | Brooklyn, N.Y. |
1877 *James Eells, D.D., LL.D. | San Francisco | Chicago, Ill. |
1879 *Henry Harris Jessup, D.D. | Lackawanna | Saratoga, N.Y. |
1881 *Henry Darling, D.D., LL.D. | Albany | Buffalo, N.Y. |
1883 *Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D. | New York | Saratoga, N.Y. |
1884 *George P. Hays, D.D., LL.D. | Denver | Saratoga, N.Y. |
1885 *Elijah R. Craven, D.D., LL.D. | Newark | Cincinnati, Ohio |
1886 *David C. Marquis, D.D., LL.D. | St. Louis | Minneapolis, Minn. |
1889 *William Chas. Roberts, D.D., LL.D. | Chicago | New York, N.Y. |
1890 *William Eves Moore, D.D., LL.D. | Columbus | Saratoga, N.Y. |
1892 *William C. Young, D.D. | Transylvania | Portland, Ore. |
1893 *Wills Greer Craig, D.D., LL.D. | Iowa | Washington, D.C. |
1894 *S.A. Mutchmore, D.D., LL.D. | Philadelphia | Saratoga, N.Y. |
1896 *John Lindsay Withrow, D.D., LL.D. | Chicago | Saratoga, N.Y. |
1906 *Hunter Corbet, D.D., LL.D. | Des Moines, Iowa | Shantung |
1907 *William H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D. | Philadelphia | Columbus, Ohio |
1908 *Baxter P. Fullerton, D.D., LL.D. | St. Louis | Kans. City, Mo. |
1909 *James M. Barkley, D.D., LL.D. | Detroit | Denver, Colo. |
1912 *Mark A. Mathews, D.D., LL.D. | Seattle | Louisville, Ky. |
1913 *John Timothy Stone, D.D., LL.D. | Chicago | Atlanta, Ga. |
1918 *Frank Smith, D.D. | Columbus, Ohio | Dallas, Ohio |
1919 *John Willis Haeberle, D.D., LL.D. | Los Angeles | St. Louis, Mo. |
1922 *Calvin C. Hayes, D.D., LL.D. | Blaineville | Des Moines, Iowa |
1923 *Charles F. Wishart, D.D., LL.D. | Wooster | Indianapolis, Ind. |
1925 *Charles R. Eshman, D.D., LL.D. | New Brunswick | Columbus, Ohio |

**CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1829–1906**

1829 *Thomas Calhoun | Lebanon | Princeton, Ky. |
1830 *James B. Porter | Elk | Princeton, Ky. |
1832 *Samuel King | Barnett | Nashville, Tenn. |
1833 *Thomas Calhoun | Lebanon | Nashville, Tenn. |
1835 *Samuel King | Lexington | Princeton, Ky. |
1836 *Reuben Burrow | Forked Deer | Nashville, Tenn. |
1838 *Hiram A. Hunter | Indiana | Lebanon, Tenn. |
1840 *William P. M. Bird, D.D. | Richland | Owensboro, Ky. |
1841 *Robert A. Bird, D.D. | Union | Owensboro, Ky. |
1844 *M.H. Bone, D.D. | Tennessee | Lebanon, Ohio |
1845 *Hiram A. Hunter, D.D. | Ohio | Lebanon, Ohio |

* Deceased
† Rating Elder
MODERATORS AND CLERKS

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA
1858–1958

CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES
1869–1920

*William Hughes  
Racine, Wis.  
Columbus, Ohio

William Roberts  
Scranton, Pa.  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

William Roberts  
Scranton, Pa.  
New York, N.Y.

Howell Powell  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Racine, Wis.

William Roberts  
Scranton, Pa.  
Hyde Park, Pa.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>James P. Sankey, D.D.</td>
<td>Caledonia</td>
<td>Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>J.A. Thompson, I.H.D.D.D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>College Springs</td>
<td>Des Moines, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>James P. Cowan, D.D.</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Tarkio, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Wm. C. Williamson, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Keokuk</td>
<td>Washington, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>D.A. McClennan, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Xenia</td>
<td>Knoxville, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Hugh H. Bell, D.D.</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>Seattle, Wash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>W.B. Smiley, D.D.</td>
<td>Charters</td>
<td>Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>J. Kelly Gillen, D.D.</td>
<td>The Sudan</td>
<td>Cambridge, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>W.R. Sawhill, D.D.</td>
<td>Puget Sound</td>
<td>Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Charles H. Robinson, D.D.</td>
<td>Wheeling</td>
<td>Richmond, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Wm. Spalding, D.D.</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>T.C. Atchison, D.D.</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Des Moines, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>J.K. Knox Montgomery, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Miskiming</td>
<td>Youngstown, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>E.C. McCown, D.D.</td>
<td>Monongahela</td>
<td>Akron, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Homer B. Henderson, D.D.</td>
<td>Butler</td>
<td>Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>R.L. Lanning, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td>Beaver Valley</td>
<td>Indianapolis, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Thomas C. Pollock, D.D.</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>James H. Grier, D.D.</td>
<td>Monongahela</td>
<td>New Concord, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Samuel A. King</td>
<td>Conemaugh</td>
<td>Sharon, Pa.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES**

1861–1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Benj. M. Palmer</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>J.L. Kirkpatrick</td>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>Montgomery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>James A. Lyon</td>
<td>Tombeckee</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>John S. Wilson</td>
<td>Flint River</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>George Howe</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>Macon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Andrew Hart Kerr</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Thos. Verner Moore</td>
<td>East Hanover</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>John N. Waddell</td>
<td>Chickasaw</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>Stuart Robinson</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
<td>Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Robert L. Dunby</td>
<td>West Hanover</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>William S. Plumer</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Huntsville, Ala.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Thomas R. Welch</td>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Henry Martyn Smith</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Little Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>John L. Girardeau</td>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>Columbus, Miss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Moses D. Hoage</td>
<td>East Hanover</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Benjamin M. Smith</td>
<td>West Hanover</td>
<td>Savannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>C.A. Stillman</td>
<td>Tuscaloosa</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>T.E. Peck</td>
<td>Roanoke</td>
<td>Knoxville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>Joseph R. Wilson</td>
<td>Wilmington</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>T.A. Hoyt</td>
<td>Nashvile</td>
<td>Charleston, S.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Robert P. Farris</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Staunton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>R.K. Smoot</td>
<td>Central Texas</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>T. Pryor</td>
<td>East Hanover</td>
<td>Lexington, Ky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>T.D. Witherspoon</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
<td>Vicksburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>H.R. Raymond</td>
<td>Tuscaloosa</td>
<td>Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>J.H. Breyson</td>
<td>N. Alabama</td>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>G.B. Strickler</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>J.J. Bullock</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>H.G. Hill</td>
<td>Fayetteville</td>
<td>Chattanooga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>James Park</td>
<td>Knoxville</td>
<td>Asheville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Hampden C. DuBose</td>
<td>Pee Dee</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Samuel A. King</td>
<td>Central Texas</td>
<td>Hot Springs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>J.W. Lapsley</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>Philip Milledoler, D.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1802</td>
<td>Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>George Duffield, D.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

1837–

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Benjamin M. Weir</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Minn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Isabel Wood Rogers</td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>Biloxi, Miss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Kenneth H. Hall</td>
<td>Beaver-Butler</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Price H. Gwynn III</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, Utah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Herbert D. Valentine</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>Baltimore, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>David Lee Dobler</td>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>Orlando, Fla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Mary Carpenter</td>
<td>Tres Rios</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Patricia G. Brown</td>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>Syracuse, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Douglas W. Oldenburg</td>
<td>Greater Atlanta</td>
<td>Charlotte, N.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Freda Gardner</td>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>Fort Worth, Tex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Syngman Rhee</td>
<td>Ad. Kor. Amer.</td>
<td>Long Beach, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Jack Rogers</td>
<td>San Gabriel</td>
<td>Louisville, Ky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Fahed Abu-Akel</td>
<td>Greater Atlanta</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Rick Ufford-Chase</td>
<td>De Christo</td>
<td>Richmond, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Joan S. Gray</td>
<td>Greater Atlanta</td>
<td>Birmingham, Ala.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Bruce Reyes-Chow</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>San Jose, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Cynthia Bolbach</td>
<td>National Capital</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Minn.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B—SUCCESSION OF STATED CLERKS

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 1789–1837**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>George Duffield, D.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>Philip Milledoler, D.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Deceased
‡ Ruling Elder
MODERATORS AND CLERKS

A.D. NAME
1806  *Nathaniel Irwin
1807  *Jacob Jones Janeway, D.D.
1817  *William Neill, D.D.
1825  *Ezra Stiles Ely, D.D.
1836  *John McDowell, D.D.

1839–1869

1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838  *John McDowell, D.D.
1840  *Wm. Morrison Engels, D.D.
1846  *Willis Lord, D.D., LL.D.
1850  *John Leyburn, D.D.
1862  *Alex T. McGill, D.D., LL.D.

2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH)

1838  *Erskine Mason, D.D.
1846  *Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.

(REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS)

1870–1958

1870  *Edwin Francis Hatfield, D.D.
1883  *T.C. Blake, D.D.
1896  *J.M. Hubbert, D.D.

CLERKS

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1829–1906

1829  *F.R. Cossitt
1834  *James Smith
1841  *C.G. McPherson
1850  *Milton Bird
1872 ‡*John Frizzell
1883  *T.C. Blake, D.D.
1896  *J.M. Hubbert, D.D.

CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES

1869–1920

1869  *M.A. Ellis
1870  *J.P. Morgan
1871 ‡*T.L. Hughes
1873  *M.A. Ellis
1875  *M.A. Ellis
1877  *T.C. Davis
1880  *James Jarrett
1883  *H.P. Howell
1886  *W. Machno Jones

A.D. NAME
1889  *John R. Jones
1892  *Edward Roberts
1895  *John Hammond
1898  *David Edwards
1901  *Joshua T. Evans
1904  *J.R. Johns
1907  *W.E. Evans
1910  *John E. Jones
1913  *W.O. Williams
1916  *R.E. Williams
1919  *J.O. Parry
1920  *J.O. Parry

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

1858–1958

1858  *Samuel Wilson, D.D.
1859  *James Prestley, D.D.
1863  *Jos. T. Cooper, D.D., LL.D.
1875  *Wm. J. Reid, D.D., LL.D.
1903  *David F. McGill, D.D., LL.D.
1931  *O.H. Milligan, D.D., LL.D.
1954  *Samuel W. Shane, D.D.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1958–1983

1966 ‡William P. Thompson, J.D., J.C.D., LL.D.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

1861–1983

1861  *John N. Waddel
1865  *Joseph R. Wilson
1898  *William A. Alexander
1910  *Thos. H. Law
1922  *J.D. Leslie
1935  *E.C. Scott (Acting 1935:36)
1959  *James A. Millard Jr., Th.D.
1973  *James E. Andrews

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

1983–

1983  ‡*William P. Thompson (Interim Co-Stated Clerk)
       *James E. Andrews (Interim Co-Stated Clerk)
1984  *James E. Andrews
1988  *James E. Andrews
1992  *James E. Andrews
1996  Clifton Kirkpatrick
2000  Clifton Kirkpatrick
2004  Clifton Kirkpatrick
2008  Gradye Parsons
2012  Gradye Parsons
*  Deceased
‡  Ruling Elder
### C—Succession of Associate Stated Clerks

**The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America**

1958–1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>‡Otto K. Finkbeiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Robert F. Stevenson, D.D.</td>
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**Presbyterian Church in the United States**

1861–1983

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>‡*Donald A. Speck</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Flynn V. Long Jr.</td>
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</table>

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

1983–

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>‡Otto K. Finkbeiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Flynn V. Long Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Robert F. Stevenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Margrethe B.J. Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>William B. Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>‡Catherine McCorquodale Phillippe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>*C. Fred Jenkins</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>J. Scott Schaefer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Eugene G. Turner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>‡Frederick J. Heusser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Janet M. De Vries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>‡Loyda Puig Aja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Kerry Clements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Gradye Parsons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Mark Tammen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Gary Torrens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Robina Winbush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Jill Hudson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Marcia Myers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Thomas Hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Andrew Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sue Davis Krummel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Joyce Lieberman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Kerry Rice</td>
</tr>
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### D—Succession of Assistant Stated Clerks

**Presbyterian Church in the United States of America**

1907–1921, 1953–1958

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>‡*James M. Hubbert, D.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>‡*Henry Barraclough, L.L.D.</td>
</tr>
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**United Presbyterian Church of North America**

1868–1913, 1952–1958

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>*A.G. Wallace, D.D., L.L.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Office discontinued</td>
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**Presbyterian Church in the United States**

1907–1921, 1953–1958

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>‡*James M. Hubbert, D.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>‡*Henry Barraclough, L.L.D.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

1983–

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Ms. Lucille S. Hicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>‡Ms. Catherine McCorquodale Phillippe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>‡Ms. Mildred L. Wager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Mrs. Juanita H. Granady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Paul M. Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Ms. Maggie Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Ms. Deborah Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Kerry Clements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Zane Buxton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Dennis Cobb</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Jerry Houchens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Carlos Malavé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>‡Joan Richardson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>‡Margery Sly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>‡Valerie Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>‡C. Laurie Griffith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>‡Doska Ross Radebaugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Lesley A. Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>‡Chris Nicholas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Julia Thorne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Sharon Youngs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>‡Kerry Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Evelyn Hwang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>‡Jewel McRae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Joyce Lieberman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>‡Martha Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Molly Casteel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Kay Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Kris Valerius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>SanDawna G. Ashley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Timothy Cargal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Melissa G. Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Toya Richards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Teresa Waggener</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MODERATORS AND CLERKS

E—SUCCESSION OF PERMANENT CLERKS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 1789–1837

1802 *Nathaniel Irwin
1807 *John Ewing Latta
1825 *John McDowell, D.D.
1837 *John Michael Krebs, D.D.

1. (OLD SCHOOL BRANCH) 1838–1869

A.D. Name
1838 *John Michael Krebs, D.D.
1845 *Robert Davidson, D.D.
1850 *Alex T. McGill, D.D., LL.D.
1862 *Wm. Edward Schenck, D.D.

2. (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH) 1838–1869

1838 *Eliphalet W. Gilbert, D.D.
1854 *Henry Darling, D.D., LL.D.
1864 *J. Glentworth Butler, D.D.

REUNITED OLD AND NEW SCHOOLS 1870–1921

1870 *Cyrus Dickson, D.D.
1882 *Wm. H. Roberts, D.D., LL.D.
1884 *Wm. Eves Moore, D.D., LL.D.
1900 *Wm. Brown Noble, D.D., LL.D.
1916 *Edward Leroy Warren, D.D.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES 1861–1983

1861 *Joseph R. Wilson
1866 *William Brown
1885 *Robert P. Farris
1905 *Thomas H. Law
1910 *J.D. Leslie

F—SUCCESSION OF RECORDING CLERKS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1951 ‡*Henry Barraclough, L.L.D.
   (Elected for this one General Assembly)

* Deceased
‡ Ruling Elder
## Persons Serving on General Assembly Entities
### As of July 31, 2014

### KEY:

#### Racial Ethnic Identification
- **A-**Asian American
- **B-**African American/African/Black
- **H-** Hispanic/Latina/Latino
- **M-**Middle Eastern
- **N-**Native American
- **O-**Other
- **W-**Caucasian

#### Gender and Ordination and Other Designations
- **FL-**Female Church Member
- **FC-**Female Minister (Ecumenical)
- **FR-**Female Ruling Elder
- **FT-**Female Teaching Elder
- **ML-**Male Church Member
- **MC-**Male Minister (Ecumenical)
- **MR-**Male Ruling Elder
- **MT-**Male Teaching Elder
- **D-**Disability

Combination of letter codes indicates multiracial categories

### Advisory Committee on the Constitution
**Class of 2016**
- Therese Howell, WFR, 46-55, Middle Tennessee, LW
- Julie MacLemore, WFR, 56-65, New Covenant, SUN
- Steven W. Plank, WMT, 56-65, Cayuga-Syracuse, NE

**Class of 2018**
- Fred Denson, BMR, 65+, Genesee Valley, NE
- Daryl Fisher-Ogden, WFT, 56-65, Santa Barbara, SCH
- Daniel Williams, WMT, 46-55, Central Florida, SA

**Class of 2020**
- Alyson Janke, WFR, 56-65, John Knox, LAK
- Moon Lee, AMR, 66-75, Eastern Korean, NE
- Michael E. Williams, WMR, 56-65, San Diego, SCH

### Advisory Committee on Litigation
**Class of 2016**
- William Reid Dalton, WMT, 46-55, Salem, MAT
- Timothy T. Read, WMT, 36-45, Greater Atlanta, SA

**Class of 2018**
- Matthew R. Hall, WML, 36-45, St. Andrews, LW
- Beth Law, BFR, 46-55, National Capital, MAT

**Class of 2020**
- Robin W. Hadfield, WFR, 56-65, Homestead, LAK
- Barry McDonald, WML, 46-55, San Fernando, SCH

### Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy
**Class of 2016**
- Christine M. Darden, BFR, 56-65, Eastern Virginia, MAT
- Rachel Eggebeen, WFL, 26-35, de Cristo, SW
- Marsha Fowler, WFT, 56-65, San Gabriel, SCH
- Kevin Johnson, BMT, 56-65, Detroit, COV
- Mary Jorgenson, WFR, 46-55, Heartland, MAM
- Charles Eric Mount, WMT, 65+, Transylvania, LW

**Class of 2018**
- Linda Mary Eastwood, WFT, 56-65, Western Reserve, COV
- Kathryn Poethig, WFL, 46-55, New York City, NE
- Raymond R. Roberts, WMT, 46-55, Elizabeth, NE
- Noelle Royer, WFR, 26-35, Seattle, ANW
- Steven B Webb, WMR, 66-75, National Capital, MAT

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**Class of 2016**
- Debbi Battiste-Kleinman, NFR, 46-55, New Covenant, SUN
- David Esterline, WMT, 56-65, Blackhawk, LIN
- Mark S. Jones, Sr., BMR, 56-65, Pacific, SCH
- Lilia Maria Ramirea-Jimenez, HFT, 36-45, Palisades, NE
- Samson C. Tso, AMT, 36-45, New York City, NE
- Raafat Labib Zaki, MMT, 46-55, Grace, SUN

**Class of 2018**
- Nahida Halaby Gordon, W/MFR, 66-75, Muskingum Valley, COV
- Joo H. Kim, AMT, 36-45, Twin Cities Area, LAK
- Gwendolyn D. Magby, BFT (D), 56-65, Tropical Florida, SA
- Ricardo Moreno, HMR, 36-45, San Gabriel, SCH

Native American Consulting Committee Pending
Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns

**Class of 2016**
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- Mary M. Fulkerson WFT 56-65 New Hope MAT
- Darcy Metcalfe WFT 26-35 Wabash Valley LIN
- Jacob Parsons-Wells WML 26-35 Mid-Kentucky LW
- Susan Wiggins WFR 56-65 Arkansas SUN

**Class of 2018**
- Kerri Allen WFT 36-45 Chicago LIN
- Joann Haejong Lee AFT 26-35 Twin Cities Area LAK
- Joyce Rarumangakay Rompas AFR 56-65 National Capital MAT
- Zoe Van Dyke WFL 25- Twin Cities Area LAK
- Floretta L. Watkins BFT 46-55 Charlotte MAT

Audit Committee

**Class of 2016**
- Ellen Pearre Cason WFR 56-65 New York City NE
- Richard Allen Turpen WMR 56-65 Sheppards & Lapsley LW
- Molly Baskin WFR 56-65 Chicago LIN
- Thomas O. Fleming WFR 56-65 Pacific SCH

Board of Pensions

**Class of 2016**
- Tony De La Rosa HMR 46-55 New York City NE
- Fairfax Doak WMR 46-55 Mission SUN
- Amy Williams Fowler WFT 56-65 Genesee Valley NE
- Arlene W. Gordon BFT 66-75 Tropical Florida SA
- Bob Gorsky WFL 46-55 Chicago LIN
- Judith A. Harris WFL 46-55 Lehigh TRI
- John Hougen WMT 46-55 East Iowa LAK
- Linda Jacobsen WFR 46-55 Philadelphia TRI
- Frank James BMR (D) 56-65 Sheppards and Lapsley LW
- Bettina Kilburn WFT 46-55 Greater Atlanta SA
- Joseph M. Kinard BML 46-55 Middle Tennessee LW
- Mark Lu AML 36-45 Los Ranchos SCH
- Linda Patrick WFL 56-65 Middle Tennessee LW

**Class of 2018**
- Philip D. Amoa BML 26-35 Philadelphia TRI
- Wendy S. Bailey WFT 46-55 New Brunswick NE
- Fredric Joseph Bold, Jr. WML 26-35 Greater Atlanta SA
- Jesse Butler BMR 66-75 Heartland MAM
- Richard R. Clark WMR 46-55 Milwaukee LAK
- Lindsey DeGarmo WMT 56-65 Baltimore MAT
- Bradley Fowler WMR 56-65 Seattle ANW
- John Hamm WMR 56-65 Grace SUN
- John A. Huffman WMT 66-75 Los Ranchos SCH
- Jacqueline Jenkins WFR 46-55 Newark NE
- Peter Kalan WML 46-55 Denver ROC
- Claude C. Lilly WML 66-75 Trinity SA
- Angelica Michail AFR 56-65 San Gabriel SCH
- John D. Mitchell WML 46-55 Grace SUN
- Roger L. Myers WML 56-65 Detroit COV
- Paul Vikner WML 66-75 Lehigh TRI

Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

**Class of 2016**
- Margaret Elliott WFR 46-55 Salem MAT
- Barbara J. Gaddis WFT 56-65 North Central Iowa LAK
- Leah Johnson WFR 56-65 Donegal TRI
- Eileen W. Lindner WFT 46-55 Palsides NE
- Heath Rada WMR 56-65 Western North Carolina MAT
- Virginia Rainey WFR 56-65 Huntingdon TRI
- Vincent A. Thomas BMR 46-55 Twin Cities Area LAK
- James Wilson WMR 46-55 Scioto Valley COV

**Class of 2018**
- Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo HMT 46-55 Mission SUN
- Wilson Kennedy WMN 25- Pines SUN
- Nigel Leon Lovell-Martin BMT 46-55 Tropical Florida SA
- Kathleen Matsushima WFT 66-75 Chicago LIN
Carol McDonald  WFT  56-65  Wabash Valley  LIN
Marcia Mount Shoop  WFT  36-45  New Hope  MAT
Alejandra Spir-Haddad  OFR  46-55  Ohio Valley  LIN

Committee on Theological Education

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Class of 2016</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mindy Douglas Adams</td>
<td>WFT</td>
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<td>Tropical Florida  SA</td>
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<td>Garnett E. Foster</td>
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<td>Chicago  LIN</td>
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<td>Jose Irizarry</td>
<td>HMT</td>
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<td>San Juan  BPR</td>
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<td>Max Sherman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Bancroft</td>
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<td>Matthew Miles</td>
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<td>Tres Rios  SUN</td>
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<td>Mary Elva Smith</td>
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<td>Saundra Tracy</td>
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<td>56-65</td>
<td>Ohio Valley  LIN</td>
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<td>Tom M. Trinidad</td>
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Educator Certification Committee

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<td>Hugh Anderson</td>
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<td>Cascades  PAC</td>
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<td>Susan Sharp Campbell</td>
<td>WFT</td>
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<td>West Virginia  TRI</td>
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<td>Sung Hee Chang</td>
<td>AFL</td>
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<td>Kathy L. Dawson</td>
<td>WFT</td>
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<td>Greater Atlanta  SA</td>
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<td>Mary Marcotte</td>
<td>WFR</td>
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<td>New Covenant  SUN</td>
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<td>Craig Foster</td>
<td>WMT</td>
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<td>Foothills  SA</td>
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<td>Donald Griggs</td>
<td>WMT</td>
<td>66-75</td>
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<td>Jonathan H. Reinink</td>
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Finance Committee

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<td>Raul Felipe Santiago-Rivera</td>
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<td>Wendy S. Tajima*</td>
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<td>Pacific  SCH</td>
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<td>Kathy Trot</td>
<td>WFR</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>Sacramento  PAC</td>
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<td>Alice Ridgill*</td>
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<td>Trinity  SA</td>
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<td>Chad Herring*</td>
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<td>Glen Snider*</td>
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<td>deCristo  SW</td>
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<td>Jeffrey C. Joe*</td>
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<td>Marvin Brangan*</td>
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<td>Eastern Virginia  MAT</td>
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<td>Melinda Lawrence Sanders*</td>
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<td>Middle Tennessee  LW</td>
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<td>Molly Baskin*</td>
<td>WFR</td>
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<td>Thomas O. Fleming*</td>
<td>WMR</td>
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<td>Pacific  SCH</td>
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*Pending approval of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations

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<th>Class of 2016</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Randall C. Bailey</td>
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<td>Progressive National Baptist  PNBC</td>
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<td>Sherri Hausser</td>
<td>WFT</td>
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<td>Philadelphia  TRI</td>
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<td>Kathryn Jones</td>
<td>WFR</td>
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<td>Aimee Moiso</td>
<td>WFT</td>
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<td>San Jose  PAC</td>
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<td>Rodney Petersen</td>
<td>WMT</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>Boston  NE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y. Dianna Wright</td>
<td>BFR</td>
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<td>Salem  MAT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amantha L. Barbee</td>
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<td>Charlotte  MAT</td>
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<td>Heidi Hadsell de Nascimento</td>
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<td>Chicago  LIN</td>
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<td>Gun Ho Lee</td>
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<td>Robert C. Reynolds</td>
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<td>66-75</td>
<td>Chicago  LIN</td>
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<td>Jeremiah Rosario</td>
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<td>New York City  NE</td>
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<td>Anne Weirich</td>
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<td>56-65</td>
<td>Muskingum Valley  COV</td>
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General Assembly Committee on Representation

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<td>Myung Han</td>
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<td>Mid-Kentucky  LW</td>
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<td>Thomas G. Kirkpatrick</td>
<td>WMT</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>Olympia  ANW</td>
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<td>Josephine C. Mueller</td>
<td>AFR</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>Riverside  SCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tressie Muldrow</td>
<td>BFR</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>National Capital  MAT</td>
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MEMBERS OF ENTITIES ELECTED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Class of 2018

- Ruben Ortiz-Rodriguez, HMT 46-55, del Suroeste, BPR
- Hector M. Rivera-Velez, HMT 46-55, Mission, SUN
- Issa Sayar, MMR 65+, Greater Atlanta, SA
- Wanda Tanner-McNeill, BFR 46-55, Philadelphia, TRI

- Clover T. Bailey, OFT (D) 56-65, Stockton, PAC
- Maribeth Culpepper, W/NFR (D) 56-65, Santa Fe, SW
- Michael Hauser, WMR 46-55, Southern Kansas, MAM
- Chris Hopp, WML 26-35, Homestead, LAK
- Larissa Kwong Abazia, AFT 26-35, New York City, NE
- Marvella C. Lambright, BFR 56-65, Miami Valley, COV
- Martha Ross-Mockaitis, WFT (D) 46-55, Chicago, LIN

General Assembly Nominating Committee

Class of 2016

- Tully M. Fletcher, WMT 26-35, Grand Canyon, SW
- Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks, N/HFL 26-35, Utah, ROC
- Judith North, WFR 66-75, Winnebago, LAK
- Bob Riggs, WMR 46-55, Heartland, MAM
- Victor Aloyo, Jr., HMT 46-55, Elizabeth, NE

Class of 2018

- Bertram G. Johnson, BMT 36-45, Seattle, ANW
- Juanita D. Holley, B/NFR 56-65, Chicago, LIN
- Yena Hwang, AFT 36-45, National Capital, MAT
- Judy Lussie, AFR (D) 66-75, San Francisco, PAC
- Danny C. Murphy, Sr., BMT 56-65, Trinity, SA
- John M. Willingham, WMT 46-55, Philadelphia, TRI

Class of 2020

- Lindsey Anderson, B/W/NFT 36-35, Detroit, COV
- Eva O. Carter, BFR 66-75, Sheppards & Lapsley, LW
- Ana Victoria Eleutice Figueroa, HFR 56-65, Suroeste, BPR
- Mary Paik, AFT 56-65, Pacific, SCH
- Gene Wilson, NMT (D) 75+, Eastern Oklahoma, SUN

General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission

Class of 2016

- Barbara Bundick, WFT 46-55, Chicago, LIN
- A. Bates Butler, WMR 56-65, de Cristo, SW
- Jay Lewis, WMT 56-65, Pittsburgh, TRI
- Jeana Lungwitz, WFR 36-45, Mission, SUN
- Patrick Notley, WMT 46-55, Southern New England, NE

Class of 2018

- Terry Epling, WMT 46-55, Giddings-Lovejoy, MAM
- Helen R. Heffington, WFT 46-55, Peace River, SA
- Julia Henderson, WFR 46-55, Denver, ROC
- Robin Roberts, WMR 46-55, Mississippi, LW
- Sarah Thornburg, WFR 36-45, Western North Carolina, MAT

Class of 2020

- Maurice Caskey, WMR 66-75, San Diego, SCH
- Deborah Little Cohn, WFR 56-65, John Knox, LAK
- Ruth Goldthwaite, WFT 46-55, Boise, PAC
- Mary A. McClure, WFT 66-75, Mackinac, COV
- Kevin L. Nollette, WMT 56-65, Seattle, ANW
- Flor N. Velez-Diaz, HFR 26-35, Noroeste, BPR

Mission Development Resources Committee

Class of 2016

- Robert D. Bidwell, WMT 56-65, Maumee Valley, COV
- Joan Fong, AFR 46-55, San Francisco, PAC
- Martin W. Lifer, WMT 46-55, Charleston-Atlantic, SA
- Frances Lin, AFR 36-45, San Diego, SCH
- Steven Shusseit, WMT 36-45, Lehigh, TRI
- Donald A. Wingate, WMR 56-65, Central Florida, SA

Class of 2018

- Robert H. Baker, WMR (D) 66-75, Western Reserve, COV
- Maryann Farnsworth, WFT 46-55, Heartland, MAM
- Enid Flores, HFR 46-55, San Juan, BPR
- David Grachek, WMT 56-65, Twin Cities Area, LAK

Mission Development Resources Committee

Class of 2016

- Robert D. Bidwell, WMT 56-65, Maumee Valley, COV
- Joan Fong, AFR 46-55, San Francisco, PAC
- Martin W. Lifer, WMT 46-55, Charleston-Atlantic, SA
- Frances Lin, AFR 36-45, San Diego, SCH
- Steven Shusseit, WMT 36-45, Lehigh, TRI
- Donald A. Wingate, WMR 56-65, Central Florida, SA

Class of 2018

- Robert H. Baker, WMR (D) 66-75, Western Reserve, COV
- Maryann Farnsworth, WFT 46-55, Heartland, MAM
- Enid Flores, HFR 46-55, San Juan, BPR
- David Grachek, WMT 56-65, Twin Cities Area, LAK

1108 221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)
David Hicks  WMT  56-65  Grand Canyon  SW  
Calik "Tito" Rivera  HMR  56-65  Kendall  PAC  
Marie Zupka-Ludder  WFR  56-65  Long Island  NE  

Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee  
Class of 2016  
Sharon Davision  BFR  56-65  New York City  NE  
Elizabeth Dunning  WFR  56-65  Utah  ROC  
John Hougen  WMT  46-55  East Iowa  LAK  
Joseph M. Kinard  BML  46-55  Middle Tennessee  LW  
Susan Osininach  WFR  65+  Palo Duro  SUN  
Richard H. White  WMR  66-75  New Brunswick  NE  

Class of 2018  
Roger J. Gench  WMT  56-65  National Capital  MAT  
William H. Levering  WMT  56-65  Albany  NE  
George Philips  AMR  56-65  Giddings-Lovejoy  MAM  

Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates  
Class of 2016  
Janis Alling Adams  WFR  46-55  Cincinnati  COV  
Margaret Aymer Oget  BFT  36-45  Greater Atlanta  SA  
Timothy Beach-Verhey  WMT  36-45  Coastal Carolina  MAT  
Margaret Cowan  WFR  56-65  East Tennessee  LW  
Sylvia Karcher  WFT  65+  Riverside  SCH  
Steven Ranney  WMT  46-55  Giddings-Lovejoy  MAM  

Class of 2018  
Clayton F. Allard  WMT  36-45  Grace  SUN  
Trent Hancock  WMT  36-45  Pittsburgh  TRI  
Paul Junggap Huh  AMT  46-55  Greater Atlanta  SA  
Sam Y. Kim  AMT  46-55  Atlantic Korean  MAT  
Sandra Luciano-Andujar  HFT  56-65  Central Florida  SA  
Pamela Szurek  WFT  46-55  Long Island  NE  

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation  
Class of 2016  
David A. Davis  WMT  36-45  New Brunswick  NE  
Enid Flores  HFL  36-45  San Juan  BPR  
Karen Gray  WFL  46-55  Kiskiminetas  TRI  
Stephen Kelly  WMR  56-65  Transylvania  LW  
Paul E. Lee  AMR  36-45  Chicago  LIN  
Eustacia Marshall  BFT  26-35  Charlotte  MAT  
Michelle Minter  BFR  46-55  New Brunswick  NE  
José R. Muñoz  HML  46-55  San Juan  BPR  
D. Scott Weimer  WMT  46-55  Greater Atlanta  SA  
Louise Westfall  WFT  46-55  Denver  ROC  

Class of 2018  
Harry Bartel  WMR  66-75  Grace  SUN  
Steven Bass  WMR  56-65  Seattle  ANW  
Elizabeth Dunning  WFR  56-65  Utah  ROC  
Marilee K. Hopkins  WFL  56-65  Chicago  LIN  
John M. Nelsen  WMT  56-65  Tres Rios  SUN  
Robert Olcott  WML  56-65  National Capital  MAT  
Terry Allison Rappuhn  WFR  56-65  Middle Tennessee  LW  
Ruth F. Santana-Grace  HFT  56-65  Philadelphia  TRI  
David Zimmerman  WMR  46-55  San Francisco  PAC  

Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People  
Class of 2016  
Jonas Georges  OMT  56-65  Tropical Florida  SA  
Cynthia Hayes  BFL  46-55  Non-Presbyterian  NP  
Oscar L. Heyward  BMR  56-65  New York City  NE  
Bernadette Hightower-Hughes  BFL  46-55  Non-Presbyterian  NP  
Selma Jackson  BFR  56-65  New York City  NE  
Laura Krauss  WFT  46-55  Pacific  SCH  
Lawrence Low  AMT  65+  Seattle  ANW  
Joe Nelson  NFR  65+  Palo Duro  SUN  
Rebecca Reyes  HFT  56-65  New Hope  MAT  

MEMBERS OF ENTITIES ELECTED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
221ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2014)  
1109
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<tr>
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<td>New Covenant</td>
<td>SUN</td>
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<td>John Etheredge</td>
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<td>New Hope</td>
<td>MAT</td>
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<td>Jimeka Holloway</td>
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<td>LW</td>
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<td>AMT</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
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### Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel

#### Class of 2016

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<td>Karen Stocks</td>
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<td>46-55</td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>SUN</td>
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<td>Donna C. Weddle</td>
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<td>Don Yancey</td>
<td>WMT</td>
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<td>St. Andrew</td>
<td>LW</td>
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#### Class of 2018

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<tr>
<td>Andrew Hart</td>
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### Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program Advisory Committee

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