

**ITEM H.110
FOR ACTION**

<i>FOR PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE USE ONLY</i>			
A. Finance		E. Corporate Property, Legal, Finance	J. Board Nominating & Governance Subcommittee
B. Justice		F. PC(USA), A Corporation	P. Plenary
C. Leadership		G. Audit	
D. Worshipping Communities	X	H. Executive Committee	

Subject: “The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing the Church’s Urban Vision” – From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

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 Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries of 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 multi-class 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. To equip new ministries and worshipping communities, direct:

- a. Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries to organize on-going 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.

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee forward the following comment on Recommendations 3 and 4 a. of “The Gospel from Detroit: Renewing the Church’s Urban Vision,” from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board with a recommendation to approve the comment and forward to the 221st General Assembly (2014).

Comment:

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 4a would require additional funding from the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Recommendation #4b 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 Transformations 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 over 15 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 4a 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.