

ITEM C.104
FOR ACTION

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

Subject: Comment to the 222nd GA (2016) – on Overture 050 (Business Item 11-05) On the Admission of, and Apology for, Harms Done to the LGBTQ/Q Members of the (PC) USA, Family and Friends – From the Presbytery of Santa Fe

Recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 050 (Business Item 11-05) On the Admission of, and Apology for, Harms Done to the LGBTQ/Q Members of the (PC) USA, Family and Friends – From the Presbytery of Santa Fe

Comment:

Overture 50 asks the General Assembly to admit to and apologize for harm done to the LGBTQ/Q Members of the PC (USA), Family and Friends. Over the last several years the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has sought to fashion a careful path amidst our strong disagreements with regard to faithful sexual relationship, where our disagreements have focused on ordination standards and marriage. The Assembly may find helpful the “Pain and Penitence” section of the Final Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Purity, and Unity that focuses on mutual repentance. The final paragraph of that section reads:

Though we know that by stereotyping and demeaning one another we have hurt not only our opponents, but also ourselves and the whole church, we cannot claim that we have recognized all the ways we have damaged the church and hurt one another. Nor can we claim that we have amended our lives adequately to signal full repentance for the harm we have done. What we can report is that as we became more deeply acquainted with one another’s thinking and life situations, we were chastened and humbled by the recognition that insofar as the body of Christ in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) is broken, we have all played a part in betraying and denying our Savior and in inflicting the damage from which the church, as His body, is suffering today. The recognition that the travail of the church is our fault as much as it is others’ sobered and saddened our task force but also brought us closer together.

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/peace-unity-purity-final-report-revised-english.pdf, lines 340-349)

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Subsequently the General Assembly recognized as fully legitimate the affirmation that faithful sexual relationships find their place only in the marriage of a woman and a man and the affirmation that faithful sexual relationships can include same gender marriages.

The denomination has therefore declined to label only one view of these matters “faithful.” This approach is evident in the decision to adopt Amendment 10-A on ordination and the recent adoption of Amendment 14-F on Marriage, both now included in the Book of Order. This approach to our understanding of church amid disagreement on these issues is explored in the paper “Our Challenging Way: Faithfulness, Sex, Ordination, and Marriage” (<http://bit.ly/1TIVcCB>) from the Office of Theology & Worship. In addition, commissioners may find helpful “Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreement,” a document written to help Presbyterians deal with difficult conversations in healthy and productive ways:

http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/peacemaking/pdf/guidelines.pdf

Link to Overture - <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/6332>