

Report D.001
Worshiping Communities Committee
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
April 24, 2014

The Worshiping Communities Committee met on Thursday, April 24, 2014, at the Brown Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky and forwards the following to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board:

I. For Consent: No Items

II. For Action:

1. That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve and forward to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the comment on Overture 025, On Amending G-2.0401 to allow Presbyteries to Elect and Ordain Persons as Commissioned Ruling Elders – From the Presbytery of San Diego. (Attachment #1, [D.103](#))
2. That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve and forward to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the comment on Overture 011, On Amending W-4.9000 Concerning the Church's Role in Legal Marriage and Services of Christian Covenant – From the Lehigh Presbytery. (Attachment #2, [D.104](#))
3. That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve and forward to the 221st General Assembly (2014) the comment on Overture 069, On Celebrating the 500th Birthday of John Knox – From the Presbytery of Eastern Korean. (Attachment #3, [D.105](#))
4. That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following outstanding New Church Development(s) as the 2014 Sam & Helen R. Walton Award Recipient(s) which was selected and recommended by the Mission Development Resources Committee at its March 10, 2014, meeting to receive a one-time award of up to \$50,000:
 - New Faith Presbyterian Church NCD, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Synod of South Atlantic
 - Community Fellowship Presbyterian Church NCD, Mission Presbytery, Synod of the Sun ([D.102](#))

III. For Information:

- A. The February 6, 2014, minutes were approved as presented ([D.101](#)).
- B. The election of the liaison to the Mission Development Resource Committee (MDRC) was tabled until the September 2014 meeting of the Worshiping Communities Committee.
- C. The committee heard an update report from Philip Lotspeich, Coordinator for Church Growth, on the 1001 New Worshiping Communities ([D.200](#))
- D. Philip Lotspeich updated the committee on the work of the New Beginnings program ([D.201](#))

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- E. Debra Hepler, Executive Director of Ghost Ranch Education and Retreat Center, gave an overview of Ghost Ranch's history and updated the committee on their 2014-2019 Strategic plan ([D.202](#))
- F. Sterling Morse, Coordinator of Congregational Support and Cross Cultural Ministries, gave a report on General Assembly events related to the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW. ([C.203](#))
- G. Ray Jones, Coordinator for Evangelism, updated the committee on the hiring process for the Associate for Collegiate Ministries position.
- H. Pete Peery, President of Montreat Conference Center, updated the committee on the history and the work of Montreat.
- I. Upcoming Conferences – The committee heard verbal reports with updates on the following conferences:
- Evangelism and Church Growth Conference – “Go Disciple Live,” August 11-14, 2014, in St. Pete Beach, Florida.
 - National Multicultural Church Conference - “Journeying and Awakening into God’s Diverse World,” July 31-August 3, 2014, in Fort Worth, Texas.
 - Pan Asian English Ministry Pastor’s Conference – June 11-12. 2014, Detroit, Michigan.

ITEM D.103
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		H. Executive Committee	

Subject: **Comment to the 221st GA (2014) - Overture 025 “On Amending G-2.0401 to allow Presbyteries to Elect and Ordain Persons as Commissioned Ruling Elders —From the Presbytery of San Diego”**

Recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 025, “On Amending G-2.0401 to allow Presbyteries to Elect and Ordain Persons as Commissioned Ruling Elders —From the Presbytery of San Diego”

Comment:

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 10-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% 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 10 years. 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 D.104
 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. Worshiping Communities		H. Executive Committee	

Subject: **Comment to the 221st GA (2014) – Overture 11 “On Amending W-4.9000 Concerning the Church’s Role in Legal Marriage and Services of Christian Covenant”**

Recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 11, “On Amending W-4.9000 Concerning the Church’s Role in Legal Marriage and Services of Christian Covenant–From the Presbytery of Lehigh” to the 221st GA (2014).

Comment:

Overture 11 from Lehigh Presbytery 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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B. Justice		F. PC(USA), A Corporation	P. Plenary
C. Leadership		G. Audit	
D. Worshipping Communities		H. Executive Committee	

Subject: **Comment to the 221st GA (2014) - Overture 069 “On Celebrating the 500th Birthday of John Knox – From the Presbytery of Eastern Korean”**

Recommendation:

That the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board approve the following comment on Overture 069, “On Celebrating the 500th Birthday of John Knox – From the Presbytery of Eastern Korean” to the 221st GA (2014).

Comment:

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.