

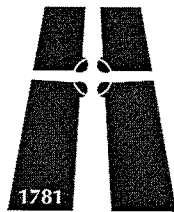


2017 Stated Meeting

of the

Presbytery of Redstone
Presbyterian Church (USA)

January 21, 2017



Westminster Presbyterian Church
Greensburg, PA

*Communicate the Word...Carry on the Work...Change the World
Together*

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1120 HARVEY AVENUE
GREENSBURG PA 15601

PHONE: 724-837-3540

FAX: 724-853-9122

Directions to Westminster Presbyterian Church from Greensburg

Follow Route 819 North (Harvey Avenue). The church is 2.5 miles from Sheetz shortly after the entrance to the St. Emma Retreat Center. The church entrance is on the left, marked by a church sign.

From Route 30 - (Ligonier, Latrobe, etc.)

Follow Route 30 West into the Greensburg business district. Turn right onto Route 819 North (Arch Avenue). After railroad tunnel bear to the right and make immediate left turn onto Route 819 (Harvey Avenue). The church is 2.5 miles from Sheetz shortly after the entrance to the St. Emma Retreat Center. The entrance is on the left, marked by a church sign.

From the south (New Stanton, etc.)

Follow Route 119 North into Greensburg to Pittsburgh Street. Turn right onto Pittsburgh Street. Follow 119 North/819 signs through Greensburg. After railroad tunnel bear to the left and immediate left turn onto Route 819 (Harvey Avenue). The church is 2.5 miles from Sheetz shortly after the entrance to the St. Emma Retreat Center. The entrance is on the left, marked by a church sign.

From the west (Pittsburgh, Monroeville, etc.)

Follow Route 22 East to traffic light at intersection of Route 819. (BP Station will be on your left.) Turn right onto Route 819 South. Go 4.9 miles to the church. Westminster Presbyterian Church is on the right down in a little valley. (If you come to the entrance of the St. Emma Retreat Center, you've gone too far).

From the east, (Johnstown, Altoona, New Alexandria, etc.)

Follow Route 22 West to the traffic light at intersection of Route 819. (BP Station will be on your right.) Turn left onto Route 819 South. Go 4.9 miles to the church. Westminster Presbyterian Church is on the right down in a little valley. (If you come to the entrance of the St. Emma Retreat Center, you've gone too far).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESBYTERY MEETING

There will be people in the parking lot as you enter directing you where to park. As you enter the church you will be in the Social Room where refreshments prior to the meeting will be located. Registration and the Pine Springs Camp staff will be in the back of the Sanctuary which is where the meeting will also be held. A prayer room (the Library - just off of the Social Room) is available. There are handicapped accessible restrooms available. There will be signs designating the various rooms. WI-FI is available in the sanctuary for use at this meeting. The password will be given during the meeting.

Notes for the January 21, 2017 Presbytery Meeting!

- Presbyters are reminded to get "Prayer Requests" to the Clerk as soon as possible as they will be lifted up during the prayers in the Worship Service.

Presbytery of Redstone Gathering
Westminster Presbyterian Church
January 21, 2017
"Soli Deo Gloria!"

12:00 p.m.	<i>Registration and fellowship</i>	
1:00 p.m.	<u>Presbytery Gathering Convenes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of the Roll • Installation of new Moderator/Vice Moderator • Seating of Corresponding Members • Arrangements 	<i>Sanctuary</i> Rev. Pete Goetschius Rev. Pete Goetschius Rev. Cliff Foster Rev. Donna Havrisko
	<u>Stated Clerk</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence Log – page 5 • 2017 Stated meeting schedule – page 8 • Seating of ruling elder members of Council and commissioned ruling elders for term of service. • Consent Agenda – page 9 <u>Treasurer</u>	Rev. Skip Noftzger Rev. Cliff Foster John Dickson
	<u>Witness to God's Grace in Worship</u> (including necrology recognition, testimonies, prayers, proclamation of the Word, and Lord's Supper)...	Rev. Skip Noftzger Rev. Donna Havrisko
	<u>Announcements Loop</u>	
	<u>Action Agenda</u> <u>Operations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporation meeting – page 19 • Council – page 19 -- BOO Amendment—Directory of Worship --Child/Youth/Vulnerable adult Protection Policy 	Glenn Hart Rev. Pete Goetschius
	<u>Empowering Mission Partnerships</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pine Springs Camp – page 15 to 18 • Mission Network <u>Engaging Congregations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee on Ministry - 21 <u>Equipping Leadership</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPM – page 22 • Confirmation retreat-2017 <u>Enabling Ministry Networks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addictions ministry network • Healing and Prayer ministry network 	Greg Davis Rev. Sylvia Carlson Rev. Martin Ankrum Rev. Caroline Vickery Rev. Pete Goetschius Rev. Carole Isley Corey
	<u>New Business</u>	
	<u>Benediction</u> <u>Adjournment</u>	Rev. Donna Havrisko

The next stated meeting of the Presbytery of Redstone will take place on March, 2017 6:00 p.m. at the Ft. Burd Presbyterian Church, Brownsville.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT:

1. During the period since the last regularly stated Presbytery meeting, all correspondence that was received was responded to and/or appropriately routed for review and response to the appropriate entity of Presbytery.

CORRESPONDENCE LOG

Date Received	Received From	Content	Action
January 11, 2017 - fax	Westmont Presbyterian Church, Johnstown	List of Session Members	To FILE
January 9, 2017 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Johnstown	List of Session Members	To FILE
January 9, 2017 - mail	West Hempfield Presbyterian Church, Irwin	List of Session Members	To FILE
January 10, 2017 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Murrysville	List of Session Members	To FILE
January 5, 2017 - email	Sewickley United Presbyterian Church, West Newton	2017 Terms of Call for CRE Glenn Hart	To COM and FILE
January 5, 2017 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Windber	List of Session Members and Manse Inspection Report	To FILE
January 5, 2017 - mail	Marion Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon	List of Session Members and Manse Inspection Report	To FILE
January 4, 2017 - email	Maplewood Presbyterian Church, Greensburg	List of Session Members	To FILE
January 3, 2017 - email	Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon	Manse Inspection Report	To FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	United Presbyterian Church, New Kensington	List of Session Members and Manse Inspection Report	To FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	Third Presbyterian Church, Uniontown	List of Session Members	To FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	Sewickley Presbyterian Church, West Newton	Manse Inspection Report, List of Session Members	To FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	Sewickley Presbyterian Church, West Newton	2017 Terms of Call for CRE Eric Glisan and Waiver of Rotation Request for Session Member Amanda Albright	To COM and FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	Bolivar United Presbyterian Church	2017 Terms of Call for CRE James Sunseri	To COM and FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	Bethel Presbyterian Church, New Florence	2017 Terms of Call for CRE James Sunseri	To COM and FILE
December 31, 2016 - mail	Trinity Presbyterian Church, New Florence	Contract Extension for Rev. Carole Isley Corey	To COM and FILE
December 19, 2016 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon	2017 Terms of Call for the Rev. Suzanne Currie	To COM and FILE
December 19, 2016 - mail	Washington Presbytery	Letter confirming September 23, 2017 as joint meeting of Presbyteries at PSC	To Council and FILE
December 19, 2016 - email	Cresson Presbyterian Church	2017 Terms of Call for the Rev. David McCabe	To COM and FILE
December 14, 2016 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Windber	Letter advising of vote to abolish the position of Installed Pastor	To COM and FILE

December 13, 2016 - email	Rev. Susan Blank	Annual Report Other Ministers on the Roll of Presbytery for 2016	To COM and FILE
December 2, 2016 - mail	Rev. Ross Bash	Annual Report Other Ministers on the Roll of Presbytery for 2016	To COM and FILE
November 29, 2016 - email	First Presbyterian Church, Jeannette	2017 Terms of Call for the Rev. Robert Fuehrer	To COM and FILE
November 28, 2016 - mail	Maplewood Presbyterian Church, Greensburg	2017 Terms of Call for the Rev. Stephen LaSor and Manse Inspection Report	To COM and FILE
November 23, 2016 - mail	Rev. Susan Speakman	Annual Report Other Ministers on the Roll of Presbytery for 2016	To COM and FILE
November 21, 2016 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Johnstown	2017 Terms of Call for the Rev. Alice Tondora	To COM and FILE
November 21, 2016 - mail	Rev. Bruce Cadenhead	Annual Report Other Ministers on the Roll of Presbytery for 2016	To COM and FILE
November 17, 2016 - hand delivered	Rev. Skip Noftzger	Annual Report Other Ministers on the Roll of Presbytery for 2016	To COM and FILE
November 7, 2016 - mail	First Presbyterian Church, Fairchance	Waiver of Rotation Request for Session Member Kathleen Hockenberry	To COM and FILE

2. The task forces, networks, and ad hoc committees in existence as of December 31, 2016 were as follows:
 - a. Committees of Council
 1. Finance and Property
 2. Communications
 3. Mission
 4. Staff Support
 - b. Committees of the Committee on Ministry
 1. AP/CRE Committee
 2. Examinations
 3. Search and Call
 4. Care of Congregations
 5. Care of Church Professionals
 - c. Discernment Teams
 1. Vandergrift
 - d. Networks
 1. Healing Prayers Ministry Network
 2. Voices for Justice
 3. Youth Ministry
 4. Geographical Districts
 5. Women Clergy
 6. PEPSI
 7. Presbyterian Women
 8. Addictions Ministry

3. Pursuant to Book of Order D-5.0206b, the Stated Clerk shall report annually the roster of those members of the Permanent Judicial Commission whose terms have expired within the past six years. They are as follows:

Permanent Judicial Commission Roster (Terms expired within the last 6 years)
 2015 – Elder Vince Appleman, Elder Richard Currie, Rev. Douglas Stevens
 2013 – Rev. Sylvia Carlson, Elder Robert Lightcap, Rev. John Sharp
 2011 – Rev. Marnie Abraham Russell, Rev. Clark Kerr, Elder Marge Montanari

4. It was **MSP** that the following Presbytery Officers be recognized as members of the Presbytery, with voice and vote, for their term of service:

Ruling Elder Leonard Morgan – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Belinda Lambie – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Jack Battenhouse – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Dan Foster – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Lynn Mance – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Susan Nesti – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Cheryl Rhea – Presbytery Council
 Ruling Elder Josh Scully – Vice-Moderator

5. It was **MSP** that the following Commissioned Ruling Elders be recognized as members with voice and vote as long as they are serving in that capacity:

Ruling Elder Eric Glisan, Sewickley, West Newton
 Ruling Elder Glenn Hart, Harmony, Belle Vernon; Sewickley United, West Newton

Ruling Elder David McElroy, East Liberty, Vanderbilt
 Ruling Elder Len Morgan, Calvin, Scottdale
 Ruling Elder David O'Hara, Revloc
 Ruling Elder Robert Prinkey, Marion, Belle Vernon; Tyrone, Dawson
 Ruling Elder David Stewart, First, Masontown
 Ruling Elder James Sunseri, Bethel, New Florence; United, Bolivar
 Ruling Elder Denise Toderro, Bethany, Johnstown
 Ruling Elder Richard Watson, Leisenring
 Ruling Elder William Wiegand, New Salem

6. It was **MSP** that the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and a representative from Pine Springs Camp, Presbyterian Women, and Redstone Highlands be given the privilege of the floor and recognized with voice and vote as long as they are serving in that capacity.

7. The stated meetings for 2017 have been scheduled as follows:

January 21, 2017; 1:00 p.m.; Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensburg
 March 21, 2017; 6:00 p.m.; Ft. Burd Presbyterian Church, Brownsville
 May 16, 2017; 6:00 p.m.; First Presbyterian Church, Irwin
 September 23, 2017; 10:00 a.m.; Pine Springs Camp, (joint celebration with Washington Presbytery)
 November 18, 2017; 9:00 a.m.; Delmont Presbyterian Church, Delmont

8. The Stated Clerk provided the 2016 Necrology Report of Ruling and Teaching Elders. See Appendix A.

9. Equalization

On December 31, 2015, 84 Teaching Elders were on the rolls of the Presbytery, 16 of who are living outside the bounds of the Presbytery. There were 71 churches entitled to be represented by 78 ruling elder commissioners. There are also 11 ruling elders commissioned to particular service and 7 ruling elder presbyters by virtue of office. As of December 31, 2016, 88 Teaching Elders were on the rolls of the Presbytery, 18 of who are living outside the bounds of the Presbytery. There were 70 churches entitled to be represented by 93 ruling elder commissioners. There are also 12 ruling elders commissioned to particular service and 6 ruling elder presbyters by virtue of office.

Based upon the "goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders," the "principles of participation" and the need to communicate the plan for the determining commissioners, the Presbytery has adopted a plan [Book of Order; G-3.0301; Manual; 1.1003] designating the number of commissioners based upon church membership (table below) and designating other ruling elders by virtue of office to be given the privilege of voice and vote at all Presbytery meetings [Manual; 1.1009]. Therefore, there is not an imbalance that requires an equalization adjustment.

Equalization Plan - Church List/# of commissioners

Adah, Palmer Community - 1	Fayette City, Little Redstone - 1	Murrysville, Union - 1
Apollo, Poke Run - 1	Greensburg, First - 3	New Alexandria, Community - 1
Avonmore, First - 1	Greensburg, Maplewood - 1	New Alexandria, Congruity - 1
Belle Vernon, First - 1	Greensburg, Westminster - 1	New Florence, Bethel - 1
Belle Vernon, Harmony - 1	Irwin, First - 4	New Florence, Trinity - 1
Belle Vernon, Marion - 1	Irwin, West Hempfield - 1	New Kensington, United - 1
Belle Vernon, Rehoboth - 1	Jeannette, First - 1	New Salem - 1
Bolivar, United - 1	Johnstown, Bethany - 1	North Huntingdon, New Hope - 1
Boswell, Covenant - 1	Johnstown, First - 1	Patton - 1
Brownsville, Calvin - 1	Johnstown, Second - 1	Revloc - 1

Brownsville, Ft. Burd - 1	Johnstown, Westmont - 3	Scottdale, Calvin - 1
Brownsville, Hopewell - 1	Lake Lynn, Springhill Furnace - 1	Smithfield, Grace Chapel - 1
Colver - 1	Latrobe - 2	Smock, Pleasant View - 1
Cresson - 1	Latrobe, United - 1	Trafford, Level Green - 2
Dawson, Tyrone - 1	Leisenring - 1	Uniontown, Tent - 1
Delmont - 1	Ligonier, Pleasant Grove - 1	Uniontown, Third - 2
Derry - 1	Lower Burrell, Grace Community - 2	Uniontown, Trinity United - 1
Dunbar, First - 1	Lower Burrell, Puckety - 2	Vanderbilt, East Liberty - 1
Dunbar, Laurel Hill - 1	Masontown, First - 1	Vandergrift - 1
Ebensburg - 1	McClellandtown - 1	West Newton, Sewickley - 1
Fairchance - 1	Merrittstown, Dunlap's Creek - 1	West Newton, Sewickley United - 1
Farmington, Mt. Washington - 1	Mt. Pleasant, Reunion - 1	West Newton, United - 1
Fayette City, First - 1	Murrysville, First - 1	Windber, First - 1
	Murrysville, Newlonsburg - 2	

8. The Stated Clerk provided the current Rolls of the Presbytery and Continuing Members. See Appendix B.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Stated Clerk for Constitutional and Judicial Matters of the Presbytery, Rev. Cliff Foster, presents the following Consent Agenda.

From Executive Committee

1. Following the review of the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk and Associate Stated Clerk, it is **recommended** that the minutes of the Presbytery meeting of the November 17, 2015 be approved.

From the Council

- Council **recommends** that the Financial Reports presented to the Council be received and filed for audit. See Appendix C.

From the Committee on Ministry

- The Committee **recommends** that Presbytery grant the request of the Fairchance, First Presbyterian Church for a waiver of rotation for Ruling Elder Kathleen Hockenberry and Deacons Nan Chess, Amy Lewis and Marcy Flecker.
- The Committee **recommends** that Presbytery grant the request of the Sewickley Presbyterian Church for a waiver of rotation for Ruling Elder Amanda Albright.

From the Committee on Preparation for Ministry

From the Nominating Committee

From the Committee on Representation

From the Discernment Teams

- It is **recommended** that the written report of the Discernment Team for the Vandergrift Presbyterian Church discernment process (p. 25) be received and filed.

MINISTRY AND MISSION REPORTS

Executive Presbyter

**Rev. Richard "Skip" Noftzger
Executive Presbyter Report**

Communicate the Word, Carry on the Work, Change the World.....Together!

VISION	2016 Annual Report	
<p>Congregation-centered (ENGAGE)</p>	<p>Visible presence within the Presbytery engaging with congregations--- Church Visits---</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this past year, I visited fifty-two different worship or special services of congregations within Redstone Presbytery. Additionally, I was afforded the opportunity to preach on the occasion of twenty four of those services. • Worked and consulted with sessions through nine separate shared gatherings as well as individual conversations. These engagements range from pastoral transition to mediating conflict to normal updates and strategizing on ministry. • Participated in special services honoring teaching elders through Presbytery installation services of three teaching elders serving congregations. Also participated in the remembrance of past teaching elders through memorial services. • Liaison and primary communicator on General Assembly---daily updates(blog, facebook, twitter, pictures, video) offered reporting and interpretation in order that our own congregations might have firsthand account of these proceedings from someone they know. • Organized and consulted with two discernment teams (Pine Run, Vandergrift). In the case of Pine Run, coordinated the process, resolution of issues and conducted congregational forums. With Vandergrift, worked with team, the session and the pastor in initial meetings. • Initiated conversations with churches currently using pulpit supply about possible pastoral options. Arranged for the COM moderator possible nominees for all congregations in need of a moderator. • Served as moderator for either session or congregation meetings on at least seven different occasions. 	
<p>Leadership developed (EQUIP)</p>	<p>Developing and equipping leadership within the Presbytery---</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated the identification and contracting with several interim pastor candidates and positions. • Participated in retirement celebrations for two teaching elders as they concluded their ministries in some of our Redstone congregations. • Oriented and coordinated with six different Pastoral Nominating 	

	<p>Committees in both utilizing the system and conducting appropriate pastoral searches. Participated through active consultation as they walked through the filtering and selection as part of the discernment process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated the development of the Inter-Presbytery Leadership Formation program between the three presbyteries. Continue to provide administrative guidance and have offered presentations on the program in various venues within the Synod. Consequently, additional presbyteries may be joining the program with the 2017 fall semester. • Individual consultations with numerous pastors throughout the year concerning ministry strategy, mission development, leadership practices and organizational issues. With newer pastors, serving as resource person to process their experiences in ministry so far. • Served as the instructor for the New Testament course as the initial formal course instruction in the IPLF program. Facilitated other workshops for training for ruling elders. • Resource for candidates outside of Redstone who are considering positions that are open within the Presbytery • Worked alongside the Nominating committee in identifying possible ruling and teaching elders for consideration for positions of leadership within the Presbytery. • Resourced the General Assembly Commissioners from Redstone who participated in the biennial gathering of the General Assembly. Assisted in their preparation and processing the events and actions of the GA both in committee and in plenary. • Initiated and led a couple book studies for pastors, including <u>The Pastor as Public Theologian</u> and <u>You Are What You Love</u>. Also, provided and used the book <u>Canoeing the Mountains</u> within circles of Presbytery leadership as a stimulus in thinking and reflecting upon who we might be as a presbytery.
<p>Collaboration- Districts/Network (ENABLE)</p>	<p>Joined and initiated contact both within and outside Redstone---</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated ecumenically as the Presbytery representative both in the Pittsburgh and Johnstown regions through joint worship services and organizational planning. • Assist and consult with the various networks meeting together within the presbytery, including addictions, healing and prayer ministry, prayer groups, youth ministry, pastor gatherings and regional congregational events. • Served as the EP liaison to the Synod Governing Commission. Coordinated the development and implementation of the COM/CPM training event for presbyteries sponsored by the Synod of the Trinity. • Supported networks of regional pastor gatherings within the geographic

	<p>districts of the presbytery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involved in the Christian Associates as an important expression of Christian unity across the region of western Pennsylvania. Led workshops at regional gatherings of the Presbytery and the Synod..... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tackling the tough issues -COM and the Small Church -Preparing, training and enriching ruling elders (IPLF) -Lectionary worship and resources Initiated retiree luncheon with the Board of Pensions consultant in order to receive an update on their benefits and the plans. Put in motion the consideration of a joint presbytery meeting and celebration based upon the ministry and mission of Pine Springs Camp and scheduled for September, 2017. 	
<p>Partnership in Mission promoted (EMPOWER)</p>	<p>Promoted and provided leadership in our partnerships in mission---</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in the New Wilmington Mission Conference and in the meeting of the Sudan/South Sudan presentation and partnership. Assisted in the coordination and hosting of the visiting delegation from the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church. Specifically, hosted a pastor's luncheon for Rev. Deng and Elder Daniel to share experiences and details of the situation with the Church in South Sudan. Accompanied and visitors (pastor's luncheon, PSC) Initiated contact with Shenango Presbytery to begin conversations about joint participation in a 2017-8 mission and interpretation trip with our partnership in the South Sudan. Served as ex-officio board member for Pine Springs Camp including participating in training and worship for summer staff. Worked with the Executive Director of PSC in identifying lead gifts in the capital campaign as well as developing strategies for participation by congregations within Redstone. Assisted in fund raising for Pine Springs Camp through participation and speaking at the annual PSC Friends dinner. Designated by Council and working with PSC staff and consultants in reviewing and obtaining the appropriate easements and permissions relative to the construction of the new multipurpose facility. PDA (grant funds) WV and promotion of particular relief efforts and distribution of funds through Presbytery office 	
<p>Operational Support</p>	<p>Initiated practices and policies for both greater efficiency and effectiveness---</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed lease agreements and services in order to make further changes based upon cost savings and better service. As a result, we changed the 	

copier and service agreement.

- Supervised the close financial management of the budget of the Presbytery in order to retain a balanced budget(11,854) and managed the effective cash flow of operations(no premature withdrawals from investments).
- Worked with budget committee on the preparation of 2017 budget in order to both pursue presbytery priorities and to “live within our means.”
- Coordinated the final publication of presbytery minutes in preparation for their review within the synod...Coordinated session minutes reviews within the presbytery.
- Ensuring updating of congregational statistics and updating our numbers for purposes of per capita assessment with both Synod and General Assembly(saving 3-5,000/year)
- Necessary policies (manual revision, child protection, background clearances)
- Prepared multiple alternative scenarios for both Staff Support and Finance and Stewardship regarding the Board of Pensions program for presbytery employees. Presented to them jointly for consideration in order to provide fairly, but also look for means to save resources within the Presbytery.
- Provided support for teaching elders, clerks and treasurers negotiating the changes within the benefits plans of the Board of Pensions. Consistently communicated about upcoming enrollment deadlines in order to ensure minimal disruption.
- Worked with a task force to develop protocols for streamlining consideration, but retaining openness of access of presbyters in the review and support of GA overtures and concurrences.
- Developed the initial draft and worked task forces in the review and revision of the Child protection policy and the existing Presbytery manual.

VALUES	Servant Leadership	Flourishing Community	Witness to the World	Generous and effective Stewardship
<i>Soli Deo Gloria</i>				

Treasurer Report – Based upon Financial Report – Appendix C – pp. 28-30

INCOME & EXPENSE STATEMENTS

This report represents the unaudited periods ending both November & December 2016, which are the 11th & 12th month reporting periods associated with the operating budget.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW/INCOME

For the month of November, Commitments fell a bit short of the targeted benchmark of \$33,000 per month of income and \$27,615 was recorded. Decembers Commitments exceeded target expectations by +\$13,830 and \$46,830 was received. Both months fell below Year-To-Date (YTD) percentage targets (November: Target 92% - Actual 78% / December: Target 100% - Actual 89%). Both months however, exceeded last year's totals for both reporting periods.

Subtotal Total Income for these periods recorded different outcomes, with November below the targeted percentage amount and December exceeding expectations at 102%.

Total Income in November for the current period (monthly) fell slightly short of its target of \$35,292 per month (\$423,500 Annual Budgeted Amount) and recorded \$34,173. Annually for this period on a percentage basis, the financial goal would be a target of 92%. Income received was 84% of budget target or -8% short. For year-end (December), monthly funds recorded well exceeded the targeted amount by +\$25,259. YTD 99% of budgeted funds were received or \$418,079 was recorded.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW / EXPENSES

Expenses for the month of November trended below expectations for the most part. There were a few outliers where expenses were above a 92% threshold. Such categories noted were Triennium Committee Expenses, Audit, Telephone, Postage and Committee on Ministry. Novembers Expenses in both categories of Current and YTD exceeded Income (-\$8,890 / -\$10,796).

Expenses for the month of December / Year End followed the same trend in regard to outlier expense categories exceeding budget. However, overall expenses were well managed and were held at targeted expectations or were below budget. Decembers Income in both categories of Current and YTD exceeded Expenses (+\$22,650 / +\$11,854).

INVESTMENTS & ASSETS

At the time of preparation of this report only Novembers Ameriprise Statement was available for reporting purposes. This report indicates at month end there was a positive change in value of \$4,505 with an ending value totaling \$274,089. As in the past with timing of when reports are received, asset totals are carried forward from First Commonwealth, PILP, New Covenant and Pine Springs. Therefore, at the end of November it is assumed investments / assets total \$601,636.

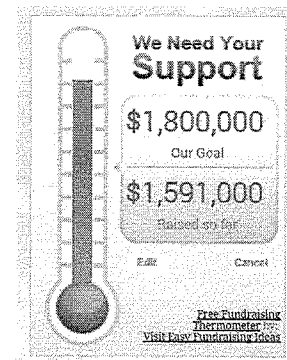
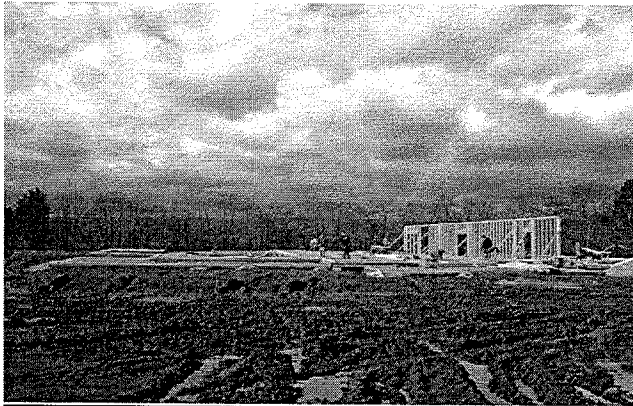
Respectfully Submitted,

John R. Dickson IV
Treasurer

Pine Springs Camp

Construction Update

- The walls are going up as of January 12, 2017!



Giving Update

	Sept. 2016	Nov. 2016	Jan. 2017
Board/Staff Donations	\$73,898	\$73,898	\$75,848
Individuals	\$1,148,974	\$1,166,926	\$1,245,026
Churches	\$204,941	\$241,946	\$245,146
Other	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Total	\$1,452,813	\$1,507,770	\$1,591,000
Donations Received to Date	\$1,020,798	\$1,072,222	\$1,283,039
Balance/Pledges	\$432,015	\$435,549	\$307,992
Remaining to Reach Goal of \$1,800,000	\$347,187	\$292,230	\$208,980

Breakdown by Group

	Nov. 2016	Jan. 2017
Number of Individuals/w Board	117	134
Number of Church Groups	33	38
Churches in Redstone Presbytery	16 Groups 13 Churches	21 Groups 18 Churches
Churches in Washington Presbytery	9 Groups 7 Churches	10 Groups 8 Churches
Number of Foundations	1	1

List of Churches (and groups) Giving to Date

St. Paul's Presbyterian
Irwin Presbyterian Church
Grace Presbyterian Church
Westmont Presbyterian
Church of the Covenant
Covenant Presbyterian Ligonier
Latrobe Presbyterian Youth
Canonsburg United Presbyterian
Canonsburg United Presbyterian
Irwin Presbyterian Church-Deacons
Latrobe Presbyterian Church
Group of Individuals from Grace Community
Upper Buffalo Presbyterian
Rehoboth
Christ Memorial Presbyterian Church
New Hope Presbyterian Church
Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church Wash.
Pine Run Presbyterian Church
Emmanuel UPC
First PC Waynesburg ECO
Avonmore Presbyterian Church
Thomas Presbyterian Church VBS
Thomas Presbyterian Church
Middle Presbyterian Church
Laboratory Presbyterian Church
Union Presbyterian Church
McClellandtown Presxbyterian Church
Maplewood
Reunion PC, Mt. Pleasant
McDonald Presbyterian Church
First PC, Johnstown
Puckety PC
Trinity New Florence
Community UPC Women
New Alexandria Women's Assoc.
Ebensburg PC
Hickory United EPC
New Kensington UPC

2016 Summer Camp Brochures and Church Packets (Each Church should pick up a packet at the Presbytery meeting!)

1. 2017 Summer Camp Brochures are completed and will be mailed to camp families before the Presbytery Meeting.
2. Pine Springs Camp Church Packets will be available for each church to pick up at the upcoming Presbytery Meeting. In the packet will be a number of Summer Camp Brochures, Posters, Bulletin Inserts, and Information concerning our PSC Skating Events and upcoming retreat and event information. **Please make sure that someone from your church picks up the packet!**

Recruiting Campers

We are currently setting up church visits and as you know we want to be in as many churches as possible to talk about the amazing ministry of Pine Springs Camp and the opportunities for youth, families and adults that are available. We will call contact some churches but please take the opportunity to talk either Greg or Mike at a Presbytery meeting to schedule a time when we can come to your church or call the camp office and talk to either Greg or Mike to schedule a visit.

Don't forget to ask other youth who may not be involved in your church! Please remember that we have scholarships for any camper with a demonstrated need. We want as many people to capture the PSC Experience of encountering Jesus in a vital way! Also we are always willing to come to after school programs plan a special evening for families if so desired.

Recruiting Events

PSC JUMPS- This year we are offering something new for families, friends and youth groups. Flight Trampoline Park in Bridgeville will be the site of our Washington County event. Pine Springs has rented the entire facility and on Sunday, March 5 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Come and bring those familiar with Pine Springs but also more importantly this is a great way to let others know about our Summer Camp Program. Cost is \$10.00 per person (includes \$3.00 sock charge) which is a huge discount. Be looking for more details.

PSC SKATES- We will continue to offer this event which will be help at Center Ice in Delmont, PA. A date has not been set yet so be looking for more details.

Upcoming Events

- Senior High Retreat-January 20-22, 2017
- Middle School Retreat-February 24-26, 2017
- Women in the Woods-March 31-April 2, 2017
- Confirmation Retreat-April 7-8, 2016
- Retreat for College Students- April 28-30, 2016
- PSC JUMPS-March 5, 2017
- PSC SKATES- TBA
- Redd Up Camp Day (Work Day)-May 13, 2017
- 16th Annual Scholarship Golf Outing-Monday, May 22, 2016

Retreat for College Students

In an effort to continue to minister and disciple our college age students who either have been campers or served on staff we are hosting a retreat for those who have graduated from high school and are either attending college or fall within the 19-24 age range. The retreat will focus on developing a Christian Worldview as they navigate through the "millennial" years. We are excited about this opportunity. Please be looking for more details about the new retreat. This is sponsored in part from a Young Adult Ministry Grant received from the Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA

2016 Friend's Dinner

A Special Thank You is extended to all the churches and individuals who supported our annual Friend's Dinner. It was held Sunday, November 22, at the Willow Room in Belle Vernon. It was an incredible evening and reminder of the true blessing of Pine Springs Camp. The highlight of the dinner is always hearing from campers, staff, parents and pastors how the Lord issues the ministry to transform hearts. We were able to raise over \$20,000 for the ministry of and our annual budget. We are grateful to God and to the support of the churches and individuals within the Presbytery.

Pray for...

Our 2017 Campers and the recruiting process, Summer Staff recruiting, Capital Campaign progress, and that PSC continues the pursuit of being a place where all campers know that they are loved unconditionally by God!...Thank you.

ACTION AGENDA

Presbytery Council

[Links to complete copies of the Minutes of Council can be found online at www.redstone.org under the "Presbytery Council Meeting Dates" tab.]

Action Items

- The Council recommends interruption of the meeting for the purpose of convening the meeting of the corporation of the Presbytery of Redstone.
- The following slate of persons are nominated to serve as the Officers of the Corporation for 2017:
President - Pete Goetschius
Secretary - Rev. Skip Noftzger
Treasurer - Mr. John R. Dickson, IV
- In addition to the officers of the corporation, it is moved that the following persons be added to those authorized to sign checks for the Corporation.
Gerald Cumer, Assistant Treasurer
Bobbie Martin, Bookkeeper
- The Council presents the amendment to the Book of Order of the revised "Directory of Worship"--16-H (Appendix D).
- The Council recommends the approval of the Child/Youth/Vulnerable Person Protection Policy of the Presbytery of Redstone (Appendix E).

Information Items

- The Stated Clerk noted that the TUPNK has withdrawn their request to host the September, 2017 Presbytery meeting. With the offer of PSC, an option to receive their offer and invite Washington Presbytery for a joint celebration of our shared ministry and mission at the Camp. It was MSP to invite Washington Presbytery based upon a proposed date of 9/9, 9/16 or 9/23.
- The 2017 Council Meeting dates would be the following:
 - January 17, 2017
 - February 28, 2017
 - April 25, 2017
 - May 30, 2017
 - June 27, 2017
 - August 22, 2017
 - October 24, 2017
 - November 28, 2017All meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Presbytery Center.
- Skip Noftzger, Executive Presbyter, thanked the members of the Council for their efforts during this past year. Leadership of the Presbytery requires the engagement and involvement of a wide variety of people. As a token of our thanksgiving, members of Council enjoyed some snacks and those members who have completed their terms of service were presented with a certificate acknowledging their work and contributions. Those members completing their terms are:

- It was **MSP** to approve four weeks (28 hours) of vacation for Bobbie Martin who fulfills that role. Skip announced that starting in January her schedule would consist of Monday morning (4 hours), Tuesday through Thursday (8 hours each day). On Monday afternoon and Friday morning, she will be employed at Westminster Presbyterian Church as their financial secretary.
- A copy of the upcoming schedule (next six months) of the “Redstone Stories” bulletin inserts was distributed. Members were encouraged to regularly check the Presbytery Facebook page which has items appearing within it submitted by Niki and Skip.
- Using the map of Sudan, Donna gave a brief overview of the geography and some of the history of this conflict. The PCUSA call to prayer for South Sudan was distributed. This request was distributed throughout the denomination after violence broke out in the Yei region of South Sudan.
- On behalf of Don Gobbel, Skip Noftzger presented short updates on both the status of the West Leisenring property and the ongoing completion of the liabilities related to the sale of the Presbyterian Home of Greater Johnstown.
- A report on the most recent meetings and activities of the Addictions ministry network, including consideration of the distinctive roles that churches might assume. Representatives from Resurrection Power and Washington County shared their experiences. The network requested time on the January Presbytery agenda. It was **MSP** to grant time during that meeting.
- All reports from the Treasurer, Executive Presbyter, Stated Clerk, ED of Pine Springs Camp and Subcommittees and Networks were received and filed.
- After commenting on just a few of the differences in the proposed Directory of Worship, it was agreed that the members had not had opportunity to sufficiently review in order to make a recommendation. It was proposed and agreed by consent to postpone discussion and recommendation of the new version of the Directory of Worship until the January Council meeting. At that time, a decision will be made to support or not with a recommendation.
- It was **MSP** to approve the January Presbytery gathering agenda as presented with the inclusion of time for the Addictions ministry network. It was noted that along with the corporation meeting, this was the annual gathering for celebration with the EP preaching rather than giving a report. The worship will also include a necrology report.

Committee on Ministry

Action Items

- The Committee recommends that the Presbytery approve the abolition of the position of installed pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Windber, PA and to notify the appropriate agencies.
- The Committee on Ministry recommends that the Rev. John Michael be designated as “Honorably Retired” member of the Presbytery of Redstone.
- The Committee on Ministry recommends that the Rev. Michael Shepard be designated as an “Honorably Retired” member of the Presbytery of Redstone.

Information Items

- The Stated Clerk gave an update to the committee on the following matters:
 - a. Correspondence log related to COM.
 - b. Published the following dates for possible Minutes review for Clerks of Session.
These included the Ruling Elder workshop on Polity
January 28, 2017---Enrichment Day
March 11, 2017---Polity Workshop
March 21, 2017---Pre-Presbytery
April 19, 2017---Open date – Presbytery office

Search and Call -

- MSP the approval of the MIF submitted from the West Hempfield Presbyterian Church PNC.
- MSP the approval of permission for the Trinity, New Florence session to work with their liaison and the EP in pursuit of alternative pastoral leadership options (eg. Designated or Covenant pastor options).

Examination - No action items.

Care of Church Professionals -

- MSP the approval of a recommendation to the Presbytery to grant Rev. John Michael Honorably Retired status. John Michael served previously in this presbytery at the Hopewell Presbyterian Church and as a mission co-worker in Slovakia before returning to this area where he has been a member at large of Redstone.
- MSP to approve the sabbatical request from Rev. Donna Havrisko for May, 2017.

Care of Congregations -

- MSP the waiver request from First Presbyterian Church, Fairchance for Kathleen Hockenberry (Elder) and Nan Chess, Amy Lewis, Marcy Flecker (Deacons).
- MSP the waiver request from the Sewickley Presbyterian Church for Amanda Albright (Elder).
- MSP the request from the First Presbyterian Church, Windber to abolish the position of installed pastor.
- MSP to include information sheet on congregations and turnaround in the Presbytery packets.

Moderator appointments

1. Rev. James Gear appointed as moderator for Mt. Washington, Farmington effective January 1, 2017.
2. Rev. Michael Shepard appointed as moderator for Laurel Hill, Dunbar effective January 1, 2017.
3. Rev. Gary Close appointed as moderator for First Presbyterian Church, Dunbar effective January 1, 2017.
4. Rev. James Gear appointed as moderator for First Presbyterian Church, Fairchance effective January 1, 2017.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Action Items

- A report from Taylor Barner, candidate under care of Redstone Presbytery who will speak concerning his care process and his upcoming call to be Associate Pastor in Burlington, North Carolina.

Information Items

- The Committee on Preparation for Ministry reports that candidate Taylor Barner will be receiving a call as Associate Pastor from the First Presbyterian Church, Burlington, North Carolina congregation upon completion of his examination before the Presbytery (2/21/17)
- The Committee on Preparation for Ministry lists the following as the current roll of inquirers and candidates for the Presbytery of Redstone.
 - Richard Watson—candidacy date--5/2016; current CRE, Leisenring; member of the Calvin enrolled student in the Dubuque Theological Seminary program
 - David Deutsch---inquirer date---3/2016; member of Level Green Presbyterian Church; current "middler" student at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- The Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the AP/CRE subcommittee lists the following as being currently enrolled in the Inter-Presbytery Leadership Formation program (educational preparation for possible commissioning).
 - Richard Zoltak, New Hope Presbyterian Church, North Huntingdon
 - Joshua Scully, Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church, Dunbar
 - Seth Myers, First Presbyterian Church, Dunbar

Nominating Committee

NONE	Action Items
Information Items	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There remain a couple openings for positions on standing committees of the Presbytery. Additionally, there are always opportunities on various subcommittees, task forces and networks. Please submit names of Teaching and Ruling Elders to the Nominating Committee through either Curtis Paul or Skip Noftzger.	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

>>**End of Year Statistical Reports** need to be submitted to the General Assembly no later than February 12, 2017. This is done online at <http://oga.pcusa.org/stats>. The reports that are due to Presbytery have a March 1, 2017 due date. All of these reports can be done online if desired and can be accessed on the home page of the presbytery website at www.redstone.org.

>> **SAVE THE DATE!!** The **2017 District 4 Enrichment Day** will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2017 at the Westmont Presbyterian Church in Johnstown. More information is available by [clicking here](#).

>>**National Day of Remembrance** - Sunday, January 29, 2017 at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1120 Harvey Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Community members lost to addiction will be honored with a candlelight vigil, prayers, sharing of photos and support to family members. Light refreshments will be served. To submit a photo of a loved one for the slideshow, please send photo, name, date of birth and angelversary to kdilascio@sphs.org by January 27, 2017.

>>**Training and Enrichment Workshops for Ruling Elders** (and others who might benefit) - March 11, 2017 from 9:00 to 4:00 at the Maplewood Presbyterian Church in Greensburg. Topics covered will be Presbyterian Polity and Spiritual Formation. Clerks of Session are encouraged to attend the Presbyterian Polity workshop from 9:00 to NOON. (If session minutes are brought along they will be reviewed while you are attending the workshop.)

If you are planning to be there for lunch the cost is \$7.00. Please RSVP to the Presbytery office at 724.837.6737 or secretary@redstonepresbytery.comcastbiz.net.

>>**SAVE THE DATE!!** The **2017 Confirmation Retreat** will take place on Friday, April 7 and Saturday, April 8, 2017 at Pine Springs Camp. Information was sent to Youth Leaders of our churches in December. For questions or registration contact the Presbytery office at 724.837.6737 or secretary@redstonepresbytery.comcastbiz.net.

>>*There has been a change in date for the September 2017 meeting of Presbytery. This will be a joint celebration with Washington Presbytery and will be held at Pine Springs Camp on Saturday, September 23, 2017 from 10:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m.*

Discernment Team Reports:

Vandergrift Presbyterian Church Team Report

The Vandergrift Presbyterian Church discernment team remains in place pending further action by the Vandergrift Presbyterian Church session. After having the discernment team for the Vandergrift Presbyterian Church meet with the session of the church on October 24, 2016, there have been no further discussions. The team waits to hear from the session whether they desire to move forward with discernment, including congregational forums and other opportunities to communicate directly with the congregational members.

2016 Necrology List

Apollo, Poke Run – Elders Donald E. Bowman, Leonard C. Hartman, and Robert W. Bierer
Belle Vernon, Marion – Elder Charles Holet
Belle Vernon, Rehoboth – Elder Leroy Thomas
Greensburg, First – Elders Grace Patricia Salathe, Albert Essey, and Sarah J. Lamont
Greensburg, Maplewood – Elder George Roth
Irwin, First – Elders Michael Stepanik, Robert McDade, Ralph Waltemire, and Barbara Stratton
Johnstown, Bethany – Elders Patrick Minahan, Janet Miller, and Telford Manners
Johnstown, First – Elder Kermint Inman
Johnstown, Westmont – Elder Dean Lloyd
Latrobe – Elders Carolyn Curtis, Floyd (Hode) Eiseman, and Virginia Wandrisco
Ligonier, Pleasant Grove – Elders Cindy Angelo and Dean Ankney
Lower Burrell, Grace Community – Elders Frank Gigler, Jr., Robert Squire, Jane Walzer, Russell
Wolosyn, and Walter Zellely
McClellandtown – Elder Geraldine Burkholder
Mt. Pleasant, Reunion – Elders Marjorie George and Donna Rae Connors
New Alexandria, Congruity – Elders Daniel Kifer, Doyle Martz, and William R. Lutz
New Kensington, United – Elder William J. McNeil
New Salem – Elder Alieen Clay
North Huntingdon, New Hope – Elder Howard Wampler
Uniontown, Third – Elders Larry George and James Keefer
West Newton, United – Elder Joseph Martini, Jr.

Roll 1 – Engaged in a Validated**Ministry (G-3.0104)****A – Those serving within congregations of the church (G-2.0503a)**

Martin Ankrum
 Larry Armstrong *
 Nicole Atkinson
 Brenda Barnes
 Laura Blank
 Katy Yates Brungraber
 Derek Campbell
 Anthony Catullo *
 Carole Isley Corey *
 Suzanne Currie
 Ron Durika
 Grafton Eliason
 Cliff Foster
 Ken Foust
 Robert Fuehrer
 Neal Galley
 James Gear
 Peter Goetschius
 Donald Graff
 Donna Havrisko
 George Hickok
 Clark Kerr
 Wendy Keys
 William King
 Steve Lasor
 John Manon
 David McCabe
 F. Lee McDermott
 Aleda Menchyk
 Craig Miller
 Colleen Molinaro
 Alan Olson
 Kirk Orr
 Curtis Paul
 Marnie Abraham Russell
 Margaret Shannon
 Marnie Silbert
 John Simpson *
 James Stobaugh
 Alice Tondora
 Caroline Vickery
 Ron Wakeman
 Sue Washburn

B - Those in other service to this church

Susan Blank – *Chaplain, Presbyterian Senior Care, Oakmont, Pittsburgh Presbytery*
 Lisa Dormire - *Vice President, Fund Development, Presbyterian Senior Care, Greensburg*
 Richard “Skip” Noftzger – *Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk*
 Rebecca Siddle – *Redstone Highlands, Murrysville Campus*

C - Those serving beyond the jurisdiction of this church
None**Roll 2 - Members at Large (G-2.0503b)**

Ross Bash
 Lori Bass-Riley
 Bruce Cadenhead - *Disabled*
 Cynthia Cadenhead
 Peter Keith (OA)
 Rebecca Maiman
 John Michael – *Medical Leave (OA)*
 Colin Yuckman (OA)
 Meredith Yuckman (OA)

Roll 3 – Honorably Retired (G-2.0503c)

Larry Armstrong*
 Clifford Buell
 Robert Cahn
 Sylvia Carlson
 Terry Carnahan (OA)
 Anthony Catullo*
 Daniel Chow (OA)
 Gary Close
 Keith Conover (OA)
 Carole Isley Corey *
 Eugene Degitz
 Jim Farrer
 James Giesey (OA)
 James Hepler (OA)
 Donna Hess
 Dr. Douglas Holben

Alex Jalso
 Richard Klein (OA)
 Kent Lighthall
 Carlisle Lloyd
 Dennis Macaleer (OA)
 Charles MacPherson
 Gail Mason (OA)
 Bruce Maxwell
 John McClure
 John Morrow
 Rod Murray
 John Pressler
 John Roof
 John Sharp
 William Sharp (OA)
 Michael Shepard
 Donald Sherrill
 John Simpson *
 Susan Speakman
 Doug Stevens
 Robert Upton (OA)
 Robert VanWyk (OA)

Roll 4 – Certified Christian Educators and Associates (G-3.0104)

Cheryl Croushore – *Smock, Pleasant View*
 Cheryl Rhea – *Trafford, Level Green*

* Listed twice due to their also serving in some Temporary Supply capacity or other service to the church.

(OA) living outside the area

Presbytery of Redstone
Income and Expense Statement
 GENERAL FUND 01, December 2016

	Current Period	Year to Date	Annual Budget	Annual Budget YTD Prior Year Percentage	
INCOME					
CONTRIBUTION INCOME					
UNRESTRICTED	\$46,830.38	\$354,400.01	\$396,000.00	89.49%	\$365,018.35
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	6,740.88	47,850.97	0.00	0.00%	43,036.86
Subtotal Contribution Income	53,571.26	402,250.98	396,000.00	101.58%	408,055.21
INVESTMENT INCOME					
INTEREST INCOME	6,187.59	6,187.59	17,500.00	35.36%	24,481.84
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	613.24	4,798.07	5,000.00	95.96%	5,139.27
RELEASE FROM RESTRICTIONS	178.60	4,841.92	5,000.00	96.84%	2,738.65
TEMP RESTRICTED RELEASE	-6,828.08	-42,390.22	0.00	0.00%	-43,951.05
Subtotal Release From Restrictions	-6,828.08	-42,390.22	0.00	0.00%	-43,951.05
RELEASED FROM RESTRICTION	6,828.08	42,390.22	0.00	0.00%	43,951.05
TOTAL INCOME	60,550.69	418,078.56	423,500.00	98.72%	440,414.97
EXPENSES					
MISSION PARTNERSHIPS					
COMMITTEE EXPENSES	\$9,511.33	\$89,143.27	\$88,500.00	100.73%	\$88,728.07
COUNCIL					
COUNCIL - AC/LT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	56.00
Subtotal Council	818.20	11,855.01	14,280.00	83.02%	4,196.03
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY					
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION	0.00	1,663.27	500.00	332.65%	420.00
Subtotal Committee Expenses	100.82	884.82	500.00	176.96%	547.46
Subtotal Committee Expenses	919.02	14,403.10	15,280.00	94.26%	5,163.49
OPERATIONS					
PRESBYTERY STAFF	3,165.80	33,312.52	40,014.00	83.25%	34,166.74
EXECUTIVE STAFF					
EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER	8,919.87	98,788.42	101,413.50	97.41%	99,576.06
STATED CLERK	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00%	12,970.99
Subtotal Executive Staff	8,919.87	98,788.42	102,413.50	96.46%	112,547.05
SUPPORT STAFF					
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	4,246.64	50,959.68	50,960.12	100.00%	49,779.96
ASSISTANT CLERKS	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.00%	500.00
Subtotal Support Staff	4,246.64	52,959.68	52,960.12	100.00%	50,279.96
EMPLOYER PAID FICA TAXES					
Subtotal Presbytery Staff	762.32	8,138.04	7,570.75	107.49%	8,729.76
Subtotal Presbytery Staff	13,928.83	159,886.14	162,944.37	98.12%	171,556.77
APPORTIONMENTS	9,009.43	108,113.35	116,345.00	92.92%	109,791.44
TOTAL EXPENSES	36,534.41	404,858.38	423,083.37	95.69%	409,406.51
TRANSFER ACCOUNTS					
TRANSFER TO OTHER FUNDS	-\$1,366.45	-\$1,366.45	\$0.00	0.00%	-\$3,808.00
TOTAL TRANSFERS	-1,366.45	-1,366.45	0.00	0.00%	-3,808.00
EXCESS INCOME/EXPENSES	\$22,649.83	\$11,853.73	\$416.63	2,845.15%	\$27,200.46

Redstone Presbytery
Commitment to Larger Church
December 31, 2016

	2016 PLEDGE	TOTAL PAID	% Payup as of 12/31/2016	Unpaid Pledge Balance
Adah, Palmer	400.00	400.00	100%	-
Apollo, Pine Run		4,000.00		(4,000.00)
Apollo, Poke Run	3,500.00	3,125.00	89%	375.00
Avonmore	3,500.00	2,324.00	66%	1,176.00
Belle Vernon, First	7,000.00	7,000.00	100%	-
Belle Vernon, Harmony	1,440.00	1,440.00	100%	-
Belle Vernon, Marion	1,700.00	1,700.00	100%	-
Belle Vernon, Rehoboth	6,000.00	6,000.00	100%	-
Bolivar	1,500.00	2,250.00	150%	(750.00)
Boswell	500.00	500.00	100%	-
Brownsville, Calvin		1,112.50		(1,112.50)
Brownsville, Ft. Burd		2,956.80		(2,956.80)
Brownsville, Hopewell				-
Colver	350.00	397.00	113%	(47.00)
Cresson	2,600.00	2,600.00	100%	-
Dawson, Tyrone		10.00		(10.00)
Delmont	4,000.00	4,500.00	113%	(500.00)
Derry		1,500.00		(1,500.00)
Dunbar, First	2,800.00	2,800.00	100%	-
Dunbar, Laurel Hill	2,000.00	2,000.00	100%	-
Ebensburg	800.00	953.00	119%	(153.00)
Fairchance		2,500.00		(2,500.00)
Farmington		1,800.00		(1,800.00)
Fayette City, First	400.00	400.00	100%	-
Fayette City, Little Redstone	2,000.00	1,500.00	75%	500.00
Greensburg, First	30,000.00	30,000.00	100%	-
Greensburg, Maplewood	4,000.00	4,000.00	100%	-
Greensburg, Westminster	6,000.00	6,000.00	100%	-
Irwin, First	25,000.00	27,084.00	108%	(2,084.00)
Irwin, W. Hempfield	5,000.00	5,000.00	100%	-
Jeannette	7,296.00	7,300.00	100%	(4.00)
Johnstown, Bethany	2,050.00	2,150.00	105%	(100.00)
Johnstown, First	7,000.00	7,000.00	100%	-
Johnstown, Second	3,000.00	2,750.00	92%	250.00
Johnstown, Westmont	22,000.00	18,333.30	83%	3,666.70
Lake Lynn	4,008.00	4,008.00	100%	-
Latrobe, Main St.	26,500.00	26,500.00	100%	-
Latrobe, Spring St.		4,800.00		(4,800.00)

Redstone Presbytery
Commitment to Larger Church
December 31, 2016

	2016 PLEDGE	TOTAL PAID	% Payup as of 12/31/2016	Unpaid Pledge Balance	
Leisenring		350.00		(350.00)	
Ligonier, Pleasant Grove	930.00	930.00	100%	-	**
Lower Burrell, Grace	15,720.00	15,720.00	100%	-	
Lower Burrell, Puckety	12,000.00	12,000.00	100%	-	
Masontown	1,000.00	1,000.00	100%	-	
McClellandtown	4,500.00	4,500.00	100%	-	
Merrittstown, Dunlap's Ck.	300.00	300.00	100%	-	**
Mt. Pleasant, Reunion	2,150.00	1,875.00	87%	275.00	
Murrysville, First	8,400.00	8,000.00	95%	400.00	
Murrysville, Newlonsburg	22,912.00	23,387.00	102%	(475.00)	
Murrysville, Union		1,050.00		(1,050.00)	
N. Alexandria, Community	4,000.00	4,000.00	100%	-	
N. Alexandria, Congruity	7,800.00	7,800.00	100%	-	
New Florence, Bethel	2,400.00	2,400.00	100%	-	
New Florence, Trinity		2,400.00		(2,400.00)	
New Kensington	9,000.00	9,000.00	100%	-	**
New Salem	3,000.00	3,240.00	108%	(240.00)	
N. Huntingdon, New Hope	4,256.00	4,256.00	100%	-	
Patton	3,990.00	3,990.00	100%	-	
Revloc	1,500.00	1,500.00	100%	-	
Scottdale	750.00	410.41	55%	339.59	
Smithfield, Grace Chapel	1,200.00	1,200.00	100%	-	
Smock, Pleasant View	12,540.00	12,547.50	100%	(7.50)	
Trafford, Level Green	2,167.00	2,167.00	100%	-	
Uniontown, Tent	342.00	342.00	100%	-	**
Uniontown, Third	12,350.00	12,352.00	100%	(2.00)	
Uniontown, Trinity	9,000.00	9,932.50	110%	(932.50)	
Vanderbilt, E. Liberty	2,580.00	2,795.00	108%	(215.00)	
Vandergrift		1,917.00		(1,917.00)	
West Newton, Sewickley		476.00		(476.00)	
W. Newton, Sewickley UP	500.00	500.00	100%	-	
West Newton, United		615.00		(615.00)	
Windber	2,400.00	2,400.00	100%	-	
Totals	330,031.00	354,046.01		(24,015.01)	

** Some or all of this amount was paid in 2015

The Directory for Worship: A Study Guide for the Proposed Revision

This study guide is designed to facilitate understanding and discussion of the proposed revision to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Directory for Worship, as approved by the 222nd General Assembly (2016). Sessions, presbyteries, and other groups are encouraged to use and adapt these materials as needed.

Dear friends in Christ,

What is the Directory for Worship and why does it matter to us as Presbyterians? The Directory for Worship is the middle section of the *Book of Order*, Part II of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Some might assume that the directory is only of interest to pastors, or only useful for settling arguments about what is or isn't allowed in Presbyterian worship. In fact, this part of our *Book of Order* helps us to see how God makes all time, space, and matter holy; how living, praying, and believing are interrelated; how worship is connected with evangelism, peacemaking, and the environment; how all of Christian life can be experienced as prayer and praise. In this sense, the Directory for Worship pushes us “**from the sanctuary to the street**,” expanding our understanding of the worship and service of God.

In keeping with the General Assembly action that inspired this revision, the proposed document is **shorter, streamlined**, and—we believe—**better organized, more accessible, and user friendly**. It is roughly two-thirds the length of the current Directory for Worship (about 9,000 words shorter), and is now organized into a preface and five chapters instead of the current seven.

More importantly, the proposed revision emphasizes **classic Reformed convictions** while encouraging **diverse cultural expressions** and **contemporary approaches to worship**. It begins and ends by giving glory to God, focuses on the crucified and risen Christ, and highlights the work of the Holy Spirit, insisting on the centrality of Scripture, the unity of Word and Sacrament, and the theological themes of grace and gratitude.

The most recent text of the proposed revision to the Directory for Worship is available at pcusa.org/dfw, along with other resources for study, including Word files in English, Korean, and Spanish; a chart illustrating the reorganization of the proposed revision (also found as an appendix to this document); a thirty-minute webinar on the Directory for Worship; information on the principles and processes for revision; and links to educational resources, historical documents, and news stories.

This **six-session study guide**—which contains a set of questions for reflection or discussion for the directory's preface and each of its five chapters—is designed not only to illuminate your understanding of the proposed revision, but also to stimulate conversation about the ongoing reform of worship in your own ministry context.

As the PC(USA) considers this proposed revision for inclusion in the *Book of Order*, we pray that, by the grace of God, it will help us to forge new connections between what we believe and how we live—between our adoration in the sanctuary and our action in society. It is our hope that this study guide—and the document it introduces—will help you to rediscover the heart of Reformed faith, life, and worship in a way that is clear, direct, and engaging.

May you be richly blessed in your study.

Grace and peace,
Joyce Lieberman, Office of the General Assembly
Charles Wiley, Office of Theology and Worship

Background for the Study Guide

ABOUT THE DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP

The PC(USA) Directory for Worship has its origins in the 1645 Westminster Directory for Public Worship, written to address abuses of the *Book of Common Prayer* in the Church of England and to provide another model for ordering the church's worship. Presbyterians in the United States used variations on the Westminster Directory until the 1960s, when new Directories for Worship were drafted by the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1961) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (1963). After the reunion of these two denominations in 1983, their Directories for Worship were combined and revised; the resulting 1989 Directory for Worship is the one currently in use in the PC(USA).

The Directory for Worship is the part of our constitution that sets for the theology and practice of worship in this denomination. This document:

- describes the theology underlying our worship;
- establishes standards and norms for worship;
- outlines appropriate forms for worship;
- negotiates the relationship between freedom and form;
- suggests possibilities and invites development; and
- encourages the continuing reform of worship.

The Directory for Worship is something like a liturgical compass, giving us our bearings, orienting us to primary things, and always pointing to the glory of God. It doesn't spell out the texts of prayers or the details of a particular service, but may be effectively used in combination with published resources such as the Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship*. It also provides a standard for developing or evaluating other patterns of worship.

ABOUT THIS REVISION

At the direction of the 217th General Assembly (2006), a staff team from the Offices of Theology and Worship and the General Assembly—in consultation with a diverse group of pastors, scholars, and mid-council leaders—worked to draft a revision of the PC(USA) Directory for Worship that would be “authentically Reformed,” “culturally appropriate,” “more accessible and helpful,” and “shorter and better organized.” The 221st General Assembly (2014) sent the first draft of this revision to the church for a year-long period of study and comment. Further revisions were made in response to the feedback received during this period, and a new draft was prepared for presentation at the 222nd General Assembly (2016). After minor revisions, this draft was approved by the General Assembly. If a majority of presbyteries also approve, the proposed revision would replace the current Directory for Worship in the PC(USA) *Book of Order* in June of 2017.

The proposed revision seeks to preserve the spirit, strength, and essential content of our current Directory for Worship, but in a way that is more user-friendly, clear, and concise (around 9,000 words shorter). It emphasizes the classic Reformed theme of grace and gratitude, offers new sections on worship and culture and the work of the Holy Spirit, is responsive to changes in the church and diverse approaches to worship, and is designed to facilitate teaching and worship planning in the local congregation. The latest draft of the document follows the action of the 221st General Assembly (2014) on marriage (see W-4.06), and reflects the guidance of the 219th General Assembly (2010) on eucharistic hospitality towards persons who are not yet baptized (see W-3.0409).

Appendix: A Side-by-Side Comparison of Outlines and Guide to Reorganization

Current Directory for Worship

(parenthetical italics = location in revision)

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Proposed Revision

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16-H. Directory for Worship On Replacing the Current Directory for Worship (Item 14-04)

The 222nd General Assembly (2016) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall the Book of Order be amended by striking out the text of Chapters I through VII of the current Directory for Worship and inserting new text to read as follows? [Text to be inserted is shown below.]

Directory for Worship

“†” – In the Directory for Worship, the functions described as belonging to teaching elders may be, in particular circumstances, also performed by ruling elders.

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 a vision for Reformed worship, it suggests possibilities, invites development, and encourages ongoing reform. As the constitutional document ordering our worship, the Directory for Worship shall be authoritative for this church.

Direct references to Scripture, the *Book of Confessions*, and other sections of the *Book of Order* are provided in parentheses; other biblical, confessional, and ecumenical 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. God claims us as beloved children; we proclaim God's saving love. God redeems us from sin and death; we rejoice in the gift of new life. 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 Adam and Eve, to Noah and his family, to Abraham and Sarah, to Moses and Aaron, and to the house of David, God made everlasting 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, fully God" (B. Stat. 10.2), 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, interceding for the redemption of the world, returning in glory to judge and reign forever. Scripture is God's Word: the Old and New Testaments together testify to Jesus Christ. Proclamation is God's Word: we bear witness in word and deed to the good news of Christ our Savior.

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 is "the giver and renewer of life" (B. Stat. 10.4), who instills our faith and enables us to follow Jesus Christ. The Scriptures describe how the Spirit moved at the dawn of creation, anointed Christ in baptism, raised Jesus from the dead, 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 world.

The Holy Spirit manifests God's gracious action and empowers our grateful response. The 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, and proclaims the mystery of faith. 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, are united to Jesus Christ, and give glory to God.

W-1.0107: Worship and the Church

God's gifts of Word and Sacrament establish and equip the Church as the body of Christ in the world. The mission of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church flows from Baptism, is nourished at Lord's Supper, and serves to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all. In the same way, the Church's ministry emerges from the font, arises from the table, and takes its shape from the Word of the Lord. Therefore the worship of the triune God is the center of our common life and our primary way of witness to the faith, hope, and love we have in Jesus Christ.

To be a Christian is to worship Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. To be a member of Christ's body, the Church, is to share through Word and Sacrament in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

W-1.02: Time, Space, and Matter

W-1.0201: Creation and Redemption

Time, space, and matter are all created by God, redeemed by Christ, and made holy by the Spirit. Through Christian worship—at certain times, in particular places, and with material gifts—we participate in God's plan for the redemption of 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 psalms reflect the daily worship of the people of God, while the Torah teaches that one day in seven is to be set apart as holy to the Lord. The prophets anticipated God's judgment and triumph over evil on the day of 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, claiming God's victory over sin and death through the power of Jesus' resurrection.

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, traditionally 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 worship, the Church has developed ways of keeping time—many of them adapted from the feasts and fasts of Israel that Jesus kept. This pattern of the Christian year keeps us centered in Christ as we seek to proclaim the story of our faith, grow as Jesus' disciples, and serve Christ's mission. The year begins with a focus on Christ's incarnation, with the seasons of Advent and Christmas encompassing the Nativity and Epiphany of the Lord. After Epiphany we celebrate Jesus' Baptism and Transfiguration. At the heart of the Christian year is the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, with the seasons of Lent and Easter encompassing Ash Wednesday, the Great Three Days—Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil—the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord, and the Day of Pentecost. After Pentecost we commemorate Trinity Sunday, All Saints Day, and the Reign of Christ.

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, demonstrating that God cannot be confined to any one place.

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 Sacrament. Later the Church began to build special places to meet for worship. To this day, space for Christian worship is primarily established by the presence of the risen Lord and the communion of the Holy Spirit in the gathering of the people of God.

Space that is set apart for worship should encourage community, be accessible to all, and open us to reverence for God. It is not to be an escape from the world, but a place for encountering the God of all creation who gathers us in and sends us out. 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 symbols of Word and Sacrament conveys their relationship to one another and their centrality in Christian worship.

W-1.0204: Matter

Because God created the world and called it good, we use material gifts 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 objects for divine presence. 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 them 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. Through 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 gift 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 transcend our experience, understanding, and speech, such that we cannot reduce God to our ways of speaking. Yet we are compelled to speak of the glory, goodness, and grace 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, midwife, mother, 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 identify him with the Holy One of Israel.

In worship the church shall strive to use language about God that is intentionally as diverse and varied as the Bible and our theological traditions. Language that appropriately describes and addresses God is expansive, drawing from the full breadth and depth of terms and images for the triune God in the witness of Scripture. Language that authentically describes and addresses the people of God is inclusive, respecting the diversity of persons, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences that flow from God’s creative work. Such language allows for all members of the community of faith to recognize themselves as equally included, addressed, and cherished by God.

Since Pentecost, the Church of Jesus Christ has been a community of many nations and cultures, united by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore our churches worship in many languages. The words we use in worship are to be in the common language or languages of those who are gathered, so that all are able to receive the good news and respond with true expressions of their faith. Through the rich variety of human speech we bear witness to God’s saving love for all.

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 treasury 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 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 worship—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. All of these convey the gracious action of God and communicate our grateful response.

W-1.0304: Culture

God has poured out the Holy Spirit on all flesh; Scripture promises that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The book of Acts and the New Testament epistles record the challenges and controversies of an emerging Church that would be “no longer Jew or Greek” (Gal. 3:28), 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 contextual—emerging from a particular community and incorporating the words, images, symbols, and actions that best convey the good news of Jesus Christ in that gathering of God's people. It is also cross-cultural—reflecting the diversity of traditions and cultures within and beyond the community of faith. Christian worship is transcultural—proclaiming the universal message of God's grace in Jesus Christ and rooted in common elements of human life that transcend all cultures. It is also countercultural—asserting the scandal of the gospel and anticipating God's reign of righteousness, justice, and peace. Finally, faithful worship should be an intercultural event—fostering mutuality, dialogue, and equality among all people.

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 and with the Church throughout the world.

Chapter Two: The Ordering of Reformed Worship

W-2.01: Sources and Principles

W-2.0101: Sources of Order

Worship shall 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 are also to be guided by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), instructed by the wisdom of the Reformed tradition, attentive to the traditions of the universal Church, and sensitive to the culture and context of the worshipping community.

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 according to the Word of God. Fixed forms of worship are valuable in that they offer consistent patterns and practices that help to shape 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.

W-2.02: The Worshipping Assembly

W-2.0201: A Royal Priesthood

In Jesus Christ, the Church is called to be a royal priest hood, giving glory to God in worship and devoting itself to God's service 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, conscious, and active participation of the whole body of Christ, with heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Children and youth bring special gifts and grow in their faith through their regular participation in worship. Those who plan and lead worship should provide for their full participation in the Service for the Lord's Day.

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 is to be excluded.

W-2.0202: Prayerful Participation

Prayer is at the heart of worship. It 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 is to glorify God and contribute to the good of the people. Worshipers and worship leaders must avoid actions that only call attention to themselves and fail to serve the needs of the whole congregation.

W-2.03: Leadership in Worship and Ordered Ministries

W-2.0301: Gifts for Service

God pours out the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon each Christian in Baptism, and all are called to use these gifts for the glory of God. Therefore it is appropriate for any member of the church to pray, read Scripture, or assist in worship in other ways according to his or her gifts.

By their gifts and training, some 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 the leadership of other members or overshadow the primary participation of the worshipping assembly.

W-2.0302: Deacons

Deacons are called to lead the congregation in compassion, witness, and service, representing the ministry of the church in the world and the presence of the world in the church. While deacons have no particular responsibilities for the ordering of worship, the session should ensure that deacons (where present) have regular opportunities to lead in worship, and that their ministries of compassion, witness, and service are reflected in the public services of the church.

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. They should also cultivate an ability to teach the Word when called upon to do so. When appropriately prepared and commissioned by the presbytery, ruling elders may proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments in a particular congregation (G-2.1001).

In a particular congregation, ruling elders shall provide for the church's worship and encourage the people's participation. Specifically, when serving together on the session, ruling elders and teaching 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 teaching elder†; 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.

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 sermon, the prayers to be offered, the selection of music to be sung, printed worship aids or media presentations for a given service, and the use of drama, dance, and other art forms in a particular service of worship.

W-2.0305: Shared Responsibility and Accountability

In a particular congregation, the order of worship 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 teaching elder†, and in consultation with church musicians and educators.

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. The teaching elder† may confer with a committee in planning particular services of worship.

The session is responsible for educating the congregation about the church's worship, in order to facilitate their full and active participation. It is appropriate that the session provide for the regular study of this Directory for Worship, particularly in the training of ruling elders and deacons.

In fulfilling their responsibilities for worship, sessions are accountable to presbytery. It is appropriate that the presbyteries 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. It is appropriate that the presbyteries provide instruction in worship, making use of this Directory for Worship in the preparation of candidates for ordination, and in the ongoing nurture of teaching elders†.

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, the Sunday service in particular is a celebration of Christ's resurrection and an anticipation of the fullness of God's coming reign.

W-3.0102: The Pattern of Lord's Day Worship

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.

The pattern of Lord's Day worship may be applied to days and times other than Sunday morning. Saturday evening services such as the Easter Vigil appropriately follow the order of Lord's Day worship since, in the ancient Jewish and Christian reckoning of time, the new day begins at sunset. Services of daily prayer provide a pattern for worship at other times and on other days of the week.

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. This description of the Service for the Lord's Day is presented as one commendable model, but is not intended to exclude other ways of ordering worship. Other patterns may 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. A greeting in the name of Jesus Christ or the triune God establishes the context for worship as an encounter with the Holy One who calls all things into being.

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 has added 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: Prayer

A prayer may be offered, giving thanks and praise to God, expressing joy in the presence of Christ, and calling for the gifts of the Spirit to be poured out upon the gathered community.

This prayer may employ themes and images that are drawn from the biblical readings for the day or from the setting in the Christian year.

W-3.0205: Confession and Forgiveness

Having praised the holiness of God, we must also face the sinful state of the world and of our lives, confessing our unworthiness to enter into God's presence. Nevertheless we approach God with confidence, trusting in the mercy of Jesus Christ. This turn from communal praise to corporate confession, established on the promise of God's grace, is one of the hallmarks of the Reformed tradition.

A call to confession expresses God's initiative in calling for repentance and promising forgiveness in Christ. As members of Christ's body, we confess the reality of sin, captivity, and brokenness in personal and common life and ask 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 the Word and Sacrament, it is fitting for a teaching elder† to lead the call to confession and proclaim the good news of forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

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-03.03: Word

W-03.0301: 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, reading, hearing, preaching, and affirming the Word are central to Christian worship and essential to the Service of the Lord's Day.

A teaching elder† is responsible for the selection of Scriptures to be read in public worship. Selected readings are to be drawn from both Old and New Testaments, and over a period of time should reflect the broad content and full message of Scripture. Selections for readings should be guided by the rhythms of the Christian year, events in the world, and pastoral concerns in the local congregation. Lectionaries 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 are to be read in the common language(s) of the worshipping community. The congregation is to be informed of significant adaptations, paraphrases, or new translations.

The Word proclaimed shall 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 will 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.

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 is to be clear, audible, and attentive to the meaning of the text. Reading from the church's Bible 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 the proclamation of the Word, it is fitting for a deacon or ruling elder to read Scripture. The session will ensure that all readers are prepared for this important ministry.

The role of the congregation is to listen prayerfully, actively, and attentively to the Word that is read and proclaimed. Such listening requires expectation, concentration, and imagination. The congregation may 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. Scripture may also be presented through music.

W-3.0304: Musical Responses

Psalms, canticles, anthems, alleluias, songs of praise, or other musical responses may accompany the reading of the Word. A psalm may be sung in response to the first reading, giving the congregation an opportunity to reflect on and pray from that text.

W-3.0305: Proclamation

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 encounter Jesus Christ in God's Word, are equipped to follow him more faithfully, and are inspired to proclaim the gospel to others through our 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.

Other forms of proclamation include song, drama, dance, visual art, and testimony. Like the sermon, these are to illuminate the Scripture(s) read in worship and communicate the good news of the gospel. When these forms of proclamation are employed, worship leaders should connect them with the witness of the Scripture(s) to the Triune God.

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. 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 takes place, the Apostles' Creed is spoken in the context of the baptismal liturgy. The Nicene Creed, our earliest ecumenical confession of faith, is traditionally associated with the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

W-3.0307: Baptism and Baptismal Discipleship

The Sacrament of Baptism (W-3.0402–W-3.0408) and other services associated with the baptismal covenant ordinarily 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 Intercession

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. We affirm our participation in the prayer through our “amen” and other responses.

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; 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. The peace of Christ may follow, if not previously shared.

Because pastors are called to serve as good shepherds for God’s people, it is fitting for a teaching elder† to lead the prayers of intercession and supplication. Because deacons are responsible for ministries of compassion and ruling elders are charged with the nurture of the congregation, it is also fitting for a deacon or ruling elder to lead these prayers. Other persons with a gift for prayer may be invited to lead the intercessions.

W-3.0309: Offering and Lord’s Supper

The collection of tithes and offerings (W-3.0411) and the celebration of the Lord’s Supper (W-3.0409–W-3.0414) take place as a response to the Word. These actions are signs of our gratitude for the grace of God proclaimed in the gospel. If the Lord’s Supper is omitted, a prayer of thanksgiving and dedication follows the collection of the offering (W-3.0415).

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. They are gracious acts of God, by which Christ Jesus offers his life to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. They are also human acts of gratitude, by which we offer our lives to God in love and service. The 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 (also called Eucharist or Holy Communion) 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 is linked with 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 God washes us clean and makes us 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 that flows from God's throne.

Baptism enacts and seals what the Word proclaims: God's redeeming grace offered to all people. Baptism is at once God's gift of grace, God's means of grace, and God's call to respond to that grace. Through Baptism, Jesus Christ calls us to repentance, faithfulness, and discipleship. Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit 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 young 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.

Baptism marks the beginning of new life in Christ. The new way of life to which God calls us is one of deep commitment, disciplined discernment, and growth in faith. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, given with and through Baptism, equip and strengthen us for the challenges of Christian faith and life.

Baptism is ordinarily celebrated on the Lord's Day in the gathering of the people of God. The presence of the covenant community bears witness to the one body of Christ, into whom we are baptized. When circumstances call for the administration of Baptism apart from public worship, the congregation should be represented by one or more members.

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 triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

W-3.0403: Responsibility for Baptism

Baptism shall be authorized by the session and administered by a teaching elder†. The session's responsibilities for Baptism include: encouraging parent s (or those exercising parental responsibility) 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, 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 for baptismal life in the world. 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.

When a young child is presented for Baptism at least one parent (or person exercising parental responsibility) should be an active member of a Christian church, normally the congregation in which the baptism takes place. The session may consider a request to baptize a child whose parent is an active member of another church. If the session approves such a request, it should communicate 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.

A council may authorize a Baptism, to be administered by a teaching elder†, in certain situations beyond the congregational setting, such as hospitals, prisons, schools, military bases, or other ministry settings. In these cases, the teaching elder† is responsible for ensuring that the name of the newly baptized person is placed on the appropriate roll of a council (G-3.02, G-3.03).

W-3.0404: Presentation

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, 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 shall 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 church's worship and mission. Together with the congregation they profess their faith, using the Apostles' Creed, the 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† shall address each person by their Christian or given name and say: "[Name], 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 with the hand, by pouring, or through 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, if not previously shared.

The Church's way of welcome into the body of Christ involves the unrepeatable Sacrament of Baptism and the repeatable Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Christ bathes us with mercy, then feeds us with grace. Since this ancient pattern of initiation includes both Sacraments, the Lord's Supper appropriately follows Baptism; 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 the people of God. 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 shared bread and wine with his disciples. He spoke of the bread and wine as his body and blood, signs of the new covenant and told the disciples to remember him by keeping this feast. 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, when we share the bread and cup in Jesus' name, "we who are many are one body" (1 Cor. 10:17).

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 at once God's gift of grace, God's means of grace, and God's call to respond to that grace.

Through the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ nourishes us in righteousness, faithfulness, and discipleship. Through the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit renews the Church in its identity and sends the Church to mission in the world.

When we gather at the Lord's Supper the Spirit draws us into Christ's presence and unites with the Church in every time and place. We join with all the faithful in heaven and on earth in offering thanksgiving to the triune God. We reaffirm the promises of 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.

Worshippers 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 shall be celebrated as a regular part of the Service for the Lord's Day, preceded by the proclamation of the Word, in the gathering of the people of God. 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 shall be authorized by the session and administered by a teaching elder†. It is appropriate that a presbytery authorize and train ruling elders to administer the Lord's Supper in the event of the absence of pastors (G-3.0301b). 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. When the Lord's Supper takes place apart from public worship, the congregation shall be represented by one or more members.

A council may authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper in certain contexts beyond the congregational setting, such as hospitals, prisons, schools, military bases, or other ministry settings (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 shall 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 fitting 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† invites worshipers to the Lord's Supper using sentences of Scripture. At the table, facing the people, the teaching elder† shall lead the people in a 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 Jesus' institution 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 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

At the table, 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 shall make provision for the full participation of the congregation. The session will determine whether wine is used; a non-alcoholic option shall be provided and clearly identified.

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.

As soon as possible after the service (ordinarily on the same day), 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 shall 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 are to 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. This may be accomplished by consuming what remains or returning the elements to the earth.

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

Having encountered the risen Lord in Word and Sacrament, 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 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 fitting 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: Services Claiming and Completing Baptism

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, welcomed to the Lord's Supper, made a member of the Church, 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 a child, the session should equip and support the parent(s) (or those exercising parental responsibility) in this endeavor. When a person is baptized upon profession of faith, the session should provide ongoing opportunities for Christian formation and instruction.

W-4.0202: Welcoming to the Table

In cases where baptized children who have not yet begun to participate in the Lord's Supper express a desire to receive the Sacrament, 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 shall 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.

W-4.0204: New Members

New members are received by public profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or certificate of transfer. The session should provide opportunity for those seeking membership to explore the faith they will (re)affirm. After they are examined and received by the session, new members are presented in worship. As part of their public welcome, it is appropriate for those previously baptized 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 celebrate through the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant. People should be encouraged to share these decisive moments and stirrings of the Spirit with the 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 evangelism, compassion, justice and peace, and care of creation. These kinds of vocation are appropriately confirmed in the Service of 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 from the midst of congregations to fulfill particular functions, so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. 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†, and are now called anew to service in that ministry. In commissioning the church recognizes other forms of ministry in the church: ruling elders commissioned to limited pastoral service, certified Christian educators, and persons certified to other forms of service.

W-4.0402: Setting for the Service

Ordination, installation, and commissioning may take place during the Service of 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 may also include the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The ordination and/or installation of a teaching elder† shall take place at a time that enables substantial participation of the presbytery.

W-4.0403: Order of Worship

A service of ordination, installation, or commissioning focuses on Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church. Following the sermon, the moderator (or designee) of the appropriate council 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 (or designee) of asks them the constitutional questions (see W-4.0404). 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 lay 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. Because ordination only takes place once for each office, the laying on of hands is not repeated.) 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 may 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 to the congregation at the conclusion of the service.

W-4.0404: Constitutional Questions

The moderator of the council of those to be ordained, installed, or commissioned shall ask them to face the body of membership and to answer the following questions:

- a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
- c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
- d. Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- e. Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
- f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
- h. Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?
- i. (1) (For ruling elder) Will you be a faithful ruling elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
(2) (For deacon) Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people's help to the friendless and those in need, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
(3) (For teaching elder†) Will you be a faithful teaching elder†, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government

and discipline, serving in the councils of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

(4) (For ruling elder commissioned to particular pastoral service) Will you be a faithful ruling elder in this commission, serving the people by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith and caring for the people, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

(5) (For certified Christian educator) Will you be a faithful certified Christian educator, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

At the installation of ruling elders and/or deacons: Following the affirmative answers to the questions asked of the person(s) being installed, a ruling elder shall face the congregation along with the ruling elders- and/or deacons-elect and ask the congregation to answer the following questions:

a. Do we, the members of the church, accept [names] as ruling elders or deacons, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

b. Do we agree to pray for them, to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?

At the installation to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament: Following the affirmative answers to the questions asked of the person(s) being installed, a ruling elder shall face the congregation along with the (associate) pastor-elect and ask the congregation to answer the following questions:

a. Do we, the members of the church, accept [name] as our (associate) pastor, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to guide us in the way of Jesus Christ?

b. Do we agree to pray for [her/him], to encourage [her/him], to respect [her/his] decisions, and to follow as [she/he] guides us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?

c. Do we promise to pay [her/him] fairly and provide for [her/his] welfare as [she/he] works among us; to stand by [her/him] in trouble and share [her/his] joys? Will we listen to the Word [she/he] preaches, welcome [her/his] pastoral care, and honor [her/his] authority as [she/he] seeks to honor and obey Jesus Christ our Lord?

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

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 may 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 Service

It is appropriate to recognize the conclusion of a period of service, giving thanks for the gifts and calling 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, in the community, 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 includes prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for those concluding their ministries. Other significant honors or accomplishments may also be celebrated in worship, always 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. These occasions are to be observed in the spirit of 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. 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.

W-4.0602: Preparing for Marriage

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 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.

W-4.0603: Order of Worship

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-2.03). 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.

W-4.0604: 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 statements made shall reflect the fact that the couple is already married to one another according to the laws of the civil jurisdiction.

W-4.0605: Nothing Shall Compel

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.

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. We understand the Christian funeral to be the completion of Baptism. In the face of death, we 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: Policies for Funerals

The session may establish general policies concerning services on the occasion of death, providing for funerals that are simple, dignified, expressive of good stewardship, bear witness to resurrection hope, and convey the centrality of Christian community.

W-4.0703: Setting for the Service

The service of witness to the resurrection is most appropriately 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

When a member of the community dies, the body of the deceased will be buried, cremated, donated for medical use, or otherwise disposed of in a responsible and reverent manner. Ordinarily the family of the deceased, members of the community, and the pastor(s) of the church will accompany the body of the deceased to the place of disposition, engaging in prayer, blessings, and other acts of worship.

As a part of accompanying the body to the place of disposition, or at another time before or after this takes place, a more full service of worship may be held. 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 may 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; asking for faith and grace in this time of loss; and concluding with the Lord's Prayer (if not included in the eucharistic liturgy). 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, committing the body of the deceased to the place of disposition (unless this is performed at another time), and sending the people forth with God's blessing.

The casket or urn may be covered with a pall, a symbol of being clothed with Christ in Baptism. The service may begin at the baptismal font. If using a paschal candle is part of the practice of the congregation, it may be placed near the casket. Music directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. Flowers and other decorations 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 are to be conducted separately.

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 discipleship, household worship, and Christian vocation and service. 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: Prayer in Daily Life

We respond to God's grace through the gift of prayer. The Christian life is one of constant prayer, as the challenge of everyday discipleship requires daily disciplines of faith. Prayer is a way of opening ourselves to God, who desires communication and communion with us. Prayer may take a variety of forms, such as: 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. The Church's pattern of daily prayer (W-5.0202) may be adopted as an individual practice of faith. Prayer may also be expressed in action, through public witness and protest, deeds of compassion, and other forms of disciplined service.

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. Prayer is a practice to cultivate throughout one's life, and one that will bear much fruit.

W-5.0103: Other Practices of Discipleship

We respond to God's grace through other practices of discipleship: 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 commands us to remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. Sabbath is God's gift to us, a time for worship, rest, and renewal; keeping sabbath is a way of honoring the God who has created and redeemed us. Since the earliest days of the Church, Christians have observed God's 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 are encouraged to 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 and the help of the community of faith in deepening our understanding.

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 practice of Christian stewardship and self-offering. We are accountable to God for how we use our material goods, spiritual gifts, and time in God's service.

W-5.0104: Household Worship

We respond to God's grace in the context of personal relationships, particularly when Christians who live together 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. Congregations are encouraged to nurture and equip households and families for these practices.

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 may include recognitions of birthdays, baptismal days, and other significant anniversaries, and may 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 and others who care for them. 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. Household worship provides an excellent opportunity 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 at all times and in all places: in our work and play, in our thought and action, and in our private and public engagements. 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. Jesus' ministry and the church's worship are deeply connected; indeed, worship is ministry. 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 rhythm of daily prayer, the ministries of Christian education and pastoral care, the activities of councils of the church, and other gatherings of believers. 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: Services of Daily Prayer

God calls the Church to pray without ceasing in Jesus' name. Services of daily prayer offer us a way of joining Christ's ceaseless intercession for the Church and 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. Such services may occur in councils of the church, in the congregation, in small groups of believers, in households, or in private. 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-5.0203: 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 and certified Christian educators bring special skills and expertise in teaching to the church's ministries of nurture and formation. The session has a responsibility to identify, encourage, and equip others who have gifts for Christian education. The session also has a responsibility to support parents and others who seek to nurture the faith of children.

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-5.0204: 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.

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 includes 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 may involve leadership from ruling elders, deacons, and others with gifts for prayer. They may take place 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 include readings from Scripture that reveal the grace of God, and may involve elements of prayer, expressions of thanksgiving, and enactments of commitment.

W-5.0205: Councils of the Church

God calls the Church to seek the mind of Christ. Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seek Christ's mind together in councils, through meetings of the session, presbytery, synod, and general assembly. These councils worship regularly, in keeping with the teaching of Scripture, the witness of the Confessions, and the principles of this directory. Councils above the session make provision for the regular proclamation of the Word and celebration of the Lord's Supper. Meetings of councils open and close with prayer. Councils also provide other opportunities for praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, and supplication in the course of their discernment and deliberation.

W-5.0206: Other Gatherings

God calls the Church to gather as the body of Christ at other times and places to learn, pray, serve, 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 are 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 or in whose bounds it takes place.

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 is consistent with the Reformed understanding of the Sacrament.

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. Participants in interfaith events are to reflect

the Christian faith in their words and actions, while respecting the autonomy, integrity, and diversity of others' beliefs and practices.

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. Jesus' mission and the church's worship are deeply connected; indeed, worship is mission. 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.

Through its mission in 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.

In the Service for the Lord's Day, we hear the proclamation of the gospel and have the opportunity to respond in faith, committing and recommitting our lives to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, an invitation to prepare for Baptism and live out baptismal discipleship is to 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 is surrounded by prayer. Those who respond to Christ's invitation are to receive nurture and support from the community of faith, equipping them for Christian discipleship. If they have not been baptized, they 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 are 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. We are called to minister directly to people's immediate hurts and needs. We are 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 its power for the common good; dealing honestly in personal and public spheres; seeking dignity and freedom for all people; welcoming strangers in the land; promoting justice and fairness in the law; overcoming disparities between rich and poor; bearing witness against systems of violence and 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.

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)

Adopted by the Presbytery: *(Date adopted by the Presbytery of Redstone inserted here.)*

I. RATIONALE

The purpose and documentation of a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy strives to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for the following reasons:

- Children, youth and vulnerable adults are a gift from God and the Church has a divine mandate to provide for their safety and nurturing. In Matthew 19:14, Jesus says, "Let the little children come to me." As a Presbytery and in all activities, we should be a place of safety and nurture.
- Any type of abuse involving children or vulnerable adults has lasting and devastating effects on the life of the victim. The Church should be a place of hope and healing and not a place of harm.
- The larger Church suffers with the victim/survivor and his/her family whenever abuse and neglect occurs. If that abuse occurs within the Church, there is immeasurable spiritual, psychological, emotional and physical harm and there is a loss of integrity and credibility of God's call within the Church.
- Children and vulnerable adults are not only persons of care and service in the church, they are also recipients of the grace and love of God. Following Jesus's own teaching and example, the Church should bless these children of God in providing for them a safe, nurturing and thriving environment in which to grow in every way.
- "Any member of the church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian Educator employed by this church or its congregations, 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 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." G-4.0302

II. BACKGROUND and DEFINITIONS

The Law

Protecting children (persons under the age of 18) and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect is a shared responsibility. We are called by God to create a safe haven for all of the children, youth, and persons with disabilities in our care. The members of Redstone Presbytery are committed to doing what is not only required by law, but is our call as Christ's followers to reduce the risk to people in our care. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has adopted laws which place specific requirements upon church employees and volunteers who work with children. It is reflected in part in the Act titled Domestic Relations Code 23, HB 431. These laws impact: reporting, investigation, assessment, prosecution, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse, as it pertains to this Policy and PA State Law, means intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Fabricating, feigning, or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease

which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.

- Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- Causing the death of a child through any act or failure to act.

Child abuse also includes certain acts in which the act itself constitutes abuse without any resulting injury or condition. These recent (within two years from the date the report is made to ChildLine) acts include any of the following:

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing, or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
- Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
- Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
- Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
- Interfering with the breathing of a child.
- Causing a child to be present during the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
- Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the parent knows or reasonably should have known was required to register as a Tier II or III sexual offender or has been determined to be a sexually violent predator or sexually violent delinquent.

Mandated Reporters

In Redstone Presbytery, all pastors (Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders) and volunteers who work regularly with children in a Presbytery-related activity are considered mandated reporters, as per PA State Law, and are required to report any suspected child abuse.

Permissive Reporters

Permissive reporters are encouraged to report suspected child abuse. Anyone acting on behalf of the Presbytery who suspects a child is a victim of abuse should make a report to ChildLine. A permissive reporter does not have to know for sure that the child was abused. They are able to make a report when they suspect a child is a victim of abuse.

Volunteers

Any person designated with leadership responsibilities in a Presbytery-related activity that is not compensated for participation with the exception of allowable recorded expenses.

II. Requirements

Clearances

COM and Presbytery Event Coordinators are responsible for assuring proper clearances have been obtained prior to their employment or any event/activity that involves children, youth or vulnerable adults. 76 | Page

All TEs, CREs and Presbytery volunteers performing regularly supervisory services in churches where children under the age of 18 are present are required to obtain/submit clearances and then update all required clearance every three years. These include the following:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance;
- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check; and
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Background Check if a Teaching Elder. Commissioned Ruling Elder or the volunteer has lived out of the state of PA in the past ten years. If the volunteer has not lived out of the state of PA, an affidavit may be used as an alternative.

Process for Obtaining Clearances for TEs,

Persons currently in active service in Redstone Presbytery shall have required clearances on file in the Presbytery office. Based upon requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, these clearances include:

- PA Child Abuse History (www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis)
- PA State Police/Criminal History Record (<https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>)
- Federal Criminal History/FBI Fingerprinting (www.pa.cogentid.com/index.htm)

The Presbytery office is required to see the original certificate and can retain a copy of the certificate.

III. Reporting

Mandated reporters are required to make a report of suspected child abuse under any of the following circumstances:

- They come into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service.
- They are directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child, or are affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child.
- A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse or exploitation.

It is not required that the child come before the mandated reporter in order to make a report of suspected child abuse nor are they required to identify the person responsible for the child abuse to make a report of suspected child abuse.

Concerns related to the safety of children including, but not limited to inadequate housing, clothing and supervision, can be referred to ChildLine or the county children and youth agency for assessment as general protective service cases.

Mandated reporters must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313.

If an oral report was made to ChildLine, a report of suspected child abuse (CY 47) must also be completed and forwarded to the county children and youth agency within 48 hours after making the report. This form can be obtained at www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov or from the children and youth agency. If a report is made electronically, no CY-47 is required to be completed. The law requires that the mandated reporter identify themselves and where they can be reached. The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office. The penalties for a mandated reporter who willfully fails to report child abuse range from a misdemeanor of second degree to a felony of the second degree.

Mandated reporters may receive information from the Department regarding the final status of the report, whether it was unfounded, indicated or founded, and the services planned or provided to protect the child.

After making the report to ChildLine, mandated reporters acting on behalf of the Presbytery at a Presbytery related event shall immediately report the suspect abuse to the person in charge. Any Teaching Elder or Commissioning Elder receiving a report of suspected child abuse will also follow the Rules of Discipline in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) polity and the Redstone Sexual Misconduct policy.

Permissive reporters can make a report to ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313. There are no additional requirements for the permissive reporter after making a report to ChildLine. Permissive reporters are not required to give their name however, providing this information is helpful so that if clarification on the situation or additional information is needed, the children and youth caseworker can contact the reporter. The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office. Permissive reporters are not provided with any investigation processes or results.

IV. Background clearances and training

Clearances

All TEs and CREs currently in service within the Presbytery who fail to meet the established requirements may be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of COM following counsel with the individual. TEs and CREs desiring to enter into service after the adoption of this policy must complete all requirements prior to entering active service. Any suspected cases of abuse will follow the procedures outlined in the Rules of Discipline in the Book of Order and the Sexual Misconduct policy of Redstone Presbytery.

Volunteers will not be eligible for service if clearances and investigations are not complete prior to the scheduled event or if the clearances indicate there is a record of abuse. Volunteers with a criminal history not related to child abuse will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the event coordinator in collaboration with the Executive Presbyter or designee.

A record of all clearances will be kept in the Presbytery office in a designated location and will be made accessible only to those with supervisory or policy compliance responsibilities. Current laws in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania require that clearances must be updated every three years. The Presbytery Office will notify TEs and CREs a minimum of 6 months prior to their expiration so new clearances can be obtained.

Training

All TEs, CREs and Presbytery staff are required to attend an initial Mandated Reporter either through scheduled events or through online resources. The scheduled training within the Presbytery will be provided every three years. All mandated reporters within the Presbytery should either participate in that training or provide documentation (certificate) of the completion of online training. This training is approved in accordance with Act 126 of 2012 and Act 31 of 2104, for mandated and permissive reporters and can be found at www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu.

V. Events or Activities

The following practices should be in place and communicated as expectations to any event/activity volunteers prior to participation.

- ~~Two-adult rule: Two non-related adults must always be present in groups of children.~~ The only exception is if an emergency situation deems this not immediately possible. All volunteers must be a

minimum of four years older than the age group they lead or supervise. When possible, all youth volunteers under the age of eighteen (18) should be paired with an adult volunteer.

- Ratios: The adult to child ratio for all child-related events/activities is 2:10. There shall also be one adult of each gender when there is one or more minors of each gender in a group. Only in emergency situations may ratios and gender diversity be compromised.
- Privacy: Adult workers/volunteers should respect the privacy of the children to whom they provide care. Responsible use of digital devices and cell phones is required in all situations. For overnight events, no single adult may room or sleep with a single child (other than his or her own child).
- Environment: The Presbytery will strive to provide a physical environment that minimizes the risk of harm and supports the careful supervision and appropriate interactions with the leaders between children and youth. Physical surroundings and group size should allow adequate space and visibility for monitoring. All considerations need to be taken such as leaving doors open.
- Transportation: Event leadership shall not provide transportation for youth alone without written permission from the youth's parent.

VI. Policy Communication and Education

All TEs and CREs serving in the Presbytery will receive a copy of the Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy upon beginning their service. Any Presbytery event volunteer serving in leadership will receive a copy and attest to his/her understanding of this policy prior to being permitted any supervisory or leadership roles in programs for children, youth or vulnerable adults.

16/10/18

Surprising Numbers Which May Spark Hope and Turnaround in 2017

** Jim Farrer 814 629-5211

Compiled for Care of Congregations Sub-committee – Redstone Presbytery

Congregations and their leadership sometimes encounter seasons in their ministries when they feel “stuck.” Recent research has discovered some hopeful numbers and percentages which can help shape your congregation’s next chapter.

Denominations are declining

This is not a surprise, but Lifeway researcher Ed Stetzer reports that in 2013, of the 25 largest faith groups in the USA, the only two “orthodox Christian groups” which were growing in membership were the Assembly of God and the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee). In *Christianity Today* (11/11/14) Stetzer conjectured as to the reasons why these two were growing. One primary explanation seemed apparent. These Pentecostal denominations generally have fewer nominal Christians. Because their members have experienced a strong encounter with the living Christ and baptism in the Holy Spirit, they are more willing to share their faith and actively invite others to their congregations where they believe outsiders will find true renewal. Additionally, planting new congregations with similar DNA is imperative to their mission regionally and around the world.

Fields ripe for harvest

A 2014 Lifeway Research study of 15,000 adults found that “eighty-nine percent of younger unchurched adults are willing to listen to someone tell them what they believe about Christianity.” Sixty-seven percent said that a personal invitation from family would be “very” or “somewhat” effective in encouraging them to visit a church. Sixty-three percent would likely respond to an invitation from a friend or neighbor. Christmas, Easter and Mother’s Day are especially appealing to them for attendance.

Inviting or not

Scott Thumma of the Hartford Institute for Religion Research reported from the national Mega Churches Today study that “in the mega churches 87 percent of members have invited a least one person to services within the past year.” In a 1984 issue of the publication *Context*, University of Chicago church history professor Martin Marty revealed: “A study in the Episcopal church (USA) showed that the average Episcopalian invites someone to church once every ... 28 years.” In response other Episcopalians declared: “This is the 28th year. We’re on fire. Every other denomination doesn’t have a chance.” In another survey according to Thom Rainer only 21 percent of members of congregations had actually invited someone to church in the course of a year. However, only two percent of members had invited “an unchurched person.” Will having this information encourage your members to increase invitations to people in their networks?

Lots of elementary age children

The year 2007 equaled the year 1957 in the all time high number of births in the USA according to the National Center for Health Statistics. This indicates there are many nine and ten-year-olds in our communities. Congregations of all sizes can produce effective after school events and vacation Bible

schools lasting a full week or for only three hours. Bible schools during Christmas breaks and other holidays are also becoming popular. Scouting programs and church camps can rejoice in this news as well.

Living alone

According to the US Census Bureau, the number of one-person households has greatly increased from 7.7 percent in 1940 to 17 percent in 1970 to 27 percent in 2013. Even small rural or neighborhood congregations can bless their locale with events such as soup and salad luncheons which bring lonely people together. Several congregations report having no set fee, but leave a basket and find that costs are covered.

Median size at worship

Many congregations feel under a cloud of depression because they are not “what we once were” in terms of persons at worship. Four large studies by separate organizations in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2015 revealed that the median number at worship was 75, 75, 76, and 80 respectively. Over an almost 50-year period, pioneer church consultant Lyle E. Schaller reported a median of about 75 from the statistics of 18 denominations. Remember that median indicates that one-half of all Protestant congregations have more than 75 in worship in their weekend attendance and one-half have fewer than 75.

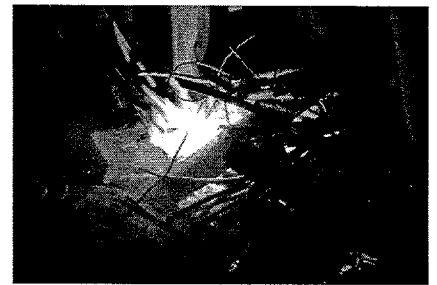
Only 40 in worship?

In *The Small Church is Different* (pg. 45) Schaller writes, “The normal size for a Protestant congregation on the North American continent is one that has fewer than 40 people at worship on a typical Sunday. To have more people means opposing the forces of nature and persistent and continuous effort.” In a subsequent book *Small Congregations, Big Potential* Schaller states: “The normal and natural size for a worshipping community in American Protestantism is 18 to 40 in worship.” (pg. 29)

Professor Carl F. H. Henry who helped start *Christianity Today* magazine once wrote: “St. Paul would have exclaimed, ‘All 40 of you are Christians? We’ll take the world!’”

** Jim Farrer, honorably retired, served Redstone Presbytery and our Synod in Congregational Development and Evangelism. Find Jim’s current and archived articles on church turnaround at churchcentral.com along with articles from experts from many denominations.

Confirmation Retreat 2017



April 7-8 2017, Friday-Saturday, at Graham Village Pine Springs Camp

Friday

6:30-7:00 Move in

7:00- 7:45 Gathering and Getting to know each other

7:50-8:50 Workshop One- The Bible-the story we find ourselves in

9:00-11:00, Campfire and Music—PSC staff)

11:15 Lights Out

Saturday

8:30 -9:00 Breakfast

9:00-10:00 Workshop Two- Baptism and Communion

10:15-12:15 Initiative Games

12:15-12:45 Lunch

1:00-2:00 Workshop Three- Being Presbyterian—Why?

2:00-2:20 Break

2:30-3:30 Workshop Four - Responding with the Stewardship of your whole life

3:35-4:15 Closing Worship

4:15-4:30 Clean up cabins and common areas, Head for home

Redstone Presbytery's purchase of a subscription to *The Parish Paper* INCLUDES:

1. Permission to provide copies to our staff and to the congregations within our jurisdiction in any of the following ways: e-mail, postal, newspaper, newsletter, meetings, training events, and our website.
2. Permission for each congregation within our jurisdiction to (a) photocopy or electronically distribute for local use as many copies as it needs, (b) post them on its website, and (c) quote sentences and paragraphs.

Congregations within Redstone Presbytery's jurisdiction to which we distribute *The Parish Paper* do NOT have permission (a) to delete the copyright ownership notice, (b) to re-write, paraphrase, delete, or change the wording of sentences and paragraphs, or (c) to give ANY THIRD PARTY—other than our staff and constituents—permission to photocopy or reprint (in any quantity, no matter how small, whether for free distribution or for sale).

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

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CONQUERING THE CUTBACK SYNDROME

“We simply have too many churches in this small town,” declared a respected lay leader, Tom McClain, in a long-range planning meeting. “And three are from the same denomination as our church! It makes perfect sense to merge our congregation with the West Main Street Church. And if our other two denominational churches merge, our community would then have two strong congregations. I think two healthy churches better represents our denomination than four struggling congregations.”

Although Tom’s conclusion seems logical, his approach reveals a textbook example of the cutback syndrome. Across the United States, church leaders use this common planning strategy to “fix” perceived problems and challenges. Other familiar examples in the syndrome include arguments to merge church school classes, reduce the number of worship services, or merge youth groups (typically the junior high or middle school group with the high school group). More than 1,300 congregations annually take the more extreme action of merging with another church. Finally, the ultimate cutback option involves closing the church doors permanently—a choice made by more than 3,500 churches annually.

What Is the Cutback Syndrome?

A syndrome that affects an organization involves a characteristic combination of opinions (thoughts), emotions (feelings), or behavior (actions). In church life, the cutback syndrome reflects the human temptation to over-simplify when complex problems arise. As feelings of fear around these problems codify, leaders and members want to find a way to make a situation easier to understand, and the primary thought is to solve it with simple solutions. Generally, this prompts leaders to make arguments that place a premium on efficiency and economy. The proposed actions take aim at eliminating what appears to be unnecessary, redundant, or inefficient organizational features or groups in the church.

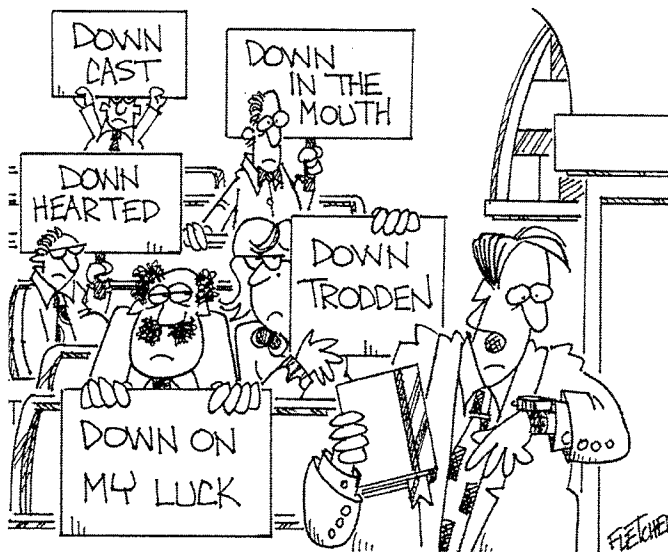
The tragic consequence of the syndrome is how it accelerates downward momentum rather than stabi-

lizing the church or reversing decline. Imagine what happens when you pull the plug on a sink full of water. As the water rushes down the drain, you can see a circular motion similar to a small tornado that gradually pulls any remaining water down with it. Some planners describe a project or effort on the brink of failure as “circling the drain.” Because cuts produce a downward force that creates even more momentum, the result is less positive impact and greater negative impact with each new cut.¹

What Creates the Cutback Syndrome?

Sources within the church and larger social trends push congregations into the syndrome. Six causes form the foundation:²

1. Members and leaders sense a gap between their perceived ideal and what appears to be a far less efficient reality in church life. The cultural ideal of “bigger is better” affects church models as well. Any congregation or group diminishing in size finds the ideal/reality discrepancy discouraging, which draws them into the syndrome. Another related dimension of the “bigger is better” ideal



PASTOR DOUG TENDED TO IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS.

is the idea of a community “monopoly” (reflected in Tom’s argument). Leaders believe reducing the number of choices strengthens the remaining options.

2. Whether it concerns ministry, programs, outreach, church growth, or problem-solving, leaders make false assumptions. They assume that the best approach will be logical, rational, functional, efficient, or economical. However, in congregations, most people think, feel, and act in terms of relationships. Personal histories—many formed over a long period—are intertwined with the histories of other members and are cemented at the place where their friendships formed: the church itself. Evaluating results by relationships leads to a different perspective and metric.

3. Many churches exhibit a strong orientation toward the past and feel the urge to recreate that past. Cutting back on redundancies and inefficiencies (particularly *new* positions in the church or *new* missions and programs) to recreate that past shows a clear misunderstanding of the true issues facing a congregation.

4. Most churches value unity and avoid conflict. Although this value is understandable, the dark side of unity is conformity. One way to simplify a complex situation is to create greater homogeneity in thought, feelings, and actions among members. Rarely do members hold this conformity belief consciously, but unconscious beliefs can go a long way in feeding the syndrome.

5. Another notion that creates the cutback syndrome is that a narrower focus means “easier to manage.” The thinking goes that if we can reduce the scope of the subject somehow, we can more easily deal with the problem.

6. When many members feel pessimistic about the church’s future, conditions are ripe for the syndrome to emerge. Pessimism spreads like a virus and infects all planning strategies.

Is There a Cure?

First, the congregation must be willing to identify the syndrome’s presence. Once this pattern is named and acknowledged, then leaders find it easier to combat the ways it has affected planning and decision-making.

Second, the congregation must recognize the necessity of change for future viability and growth. Looking toward the future with optimism means affirming change no matter how uncomfortable it seems. Affirming change requires openness to new potential alternatives that in the past were not out in the open or were unthinkable.

Third, a congregation must stop placing a premium on economy, simplicity, functionalism, efficiency, and

conformity. Instead, pursue alternatives that maximize choices for members and the community, which affirms the values of diversity and pluralism. Develop strategies that maximize ministry to and with people, rather than preserving real estate.

Fourth, a congregation must change their approach to planning. The focus should shift to possibilities rather than problems. Leaders can evaluate decisions and policies by asking: does our current model accomplish the church’s mission? Will our actions move us forward in mission? Is our ministry here worth the changes needed? Are we willing to finish the job no matter how long it takes?

As is the case with most syndromes, the presenting traits fall along a spectrum of mild to most severe. One factor—church stability—plays a key role. Is the church stable, experiencing gradual decline, or desperate? Intervention is possible, but fast action is required if the congregation is desperate. These signs indicate how quickly leaders need to act:

- has fewer than 50 worshipers;
- 25 or fewer giving households or people;
- fewer than one lay leader for every ten worshipers;
- the average membership tenure exceeds 10 years;
- the average age of a member vs. community residents’ average age exceeds 10 years; and
- the racial/ethnic or income status of members differs significantly from people in the community.³

Rapid response is needed if the congregation exhibits four or more of these signs.

The Silent Killer

“There are no hopeless situations; there are only people who have grown hopeless about them.”⁴

Many diseases—hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes—disguise their warning signs. The absence of symptoms or subtle symptoms means that, as time passes, the disease progresses and becomes a “silent killer.” What are the warning signs in church life that we ignore or do not see? For many congregations, a lack of hope is the silent killer. Do you agree with this assertion?

1. Gary L. McIntosh, *There’s Hope for Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012), 42.

2. Lyle Schaller, “The Cutback Syndrome,” *The Parish Paper*, Volume 8, Number 2 (1978).

3. McIntosh, 48-52.

4. Quote of Clare Booth Luce, McIntosh, 17.

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HOW DO CONGREGATIONS RESPOND TO INTERFAITH COUPLES?

Beth Parab is an Episcopal priest. Her husband, Sameer, is an observant Hindu. Their first date lasted eight hours, stretching from coffee to dinner to a walk on the beach. And very soon afterward, she had to start thinking seriously about whether interfaith marriage was a possibility for her.

As the world becomes more interconnected and more people's religious identities are in flux, couples who hold different beliefs are becoming common in the pews of almost every religious institution. And pastors and members need to adjust to those realities. "The issue now is for churches to acknowledge that there are interfaith couples in their midst," said Susan Katz Miller, author of *Being Both*.¹ "You want to be as welcoming as possible if you want families to stay." Miller has seen an institutional shift toward understanding that interfaith marriage is happening, with or without the participation of churches, and she asserts "it's not a problem to be overcome."

While Christian-Jewish may be most people's first association for "interfaith," as the population of "nones" grows, the most common pairing is actually a Christian and a nonbeliever—and the clash between belief and unbelief can be more difficult than the clash of belief in different things. However, people with different beliefs can be happily married if their values are closely aligned, said Dale McGowan, author of *In Faith and in Doubt*,² a book about marriage between believers and nonbelievers. The reverse is much harder; a conservative and a liberal from the same denomination are more likely to have problems, because theological questions tend to be less of an issue than everyday values.

Issues Interfaith Couples Face

While there are often struggles regarding faith traditions and practices faced within an interfaith marriage, the greater struggles come from outside the relationship.

Judgmental family members. Often, more than the couple or the congregation, extended family proves to be the sticking point. When Libby Yoskowitz of Huntington, NY, got engaged to a Jewish man, her conservative Presbyterian parents "definitely went through a process to get to the point where they were OK with it." Over time, Jack Yoskowitz has become more of a cultural than religious Jew. All three of their children were confirmed as teens, and none expressed interest in a bar or bat mitzvah. But the family celebrates all Jewish holidays, and Libby Yoskowitz said that the exposure has enriched her own faith. Particularly at Maundy Thursday and Passover services, she thinks about the common roots of Christianity and Judaism.

Unwelcoming congregations. McGowan, an atheist, used to go with his wife to her Baptist church until one Sunday when the pastor specifically attacked marriage to unbelievers; basically he felt that "[the pastor] was asking my wife to leave me." Similarly,



"I'M A NON-PARTICIPATING SPOUSE...
I WAS PROMISED OPEN CONVERSATIONS,
SIMPLE FRIENDSHIP, AND LEMON SQUARES."

Sameer Parab no longer attends church after a toxic experience—the congregation of his wife’s liberal Episcopal church refused to allow an interfaith group to rent a meeting room on Saturdays.

Fear of confusing the children. A common worry about exposing children to two faiths is that they will feel confused, but Miller discounts that. “To give them as much information as possible is a gift,” she said. In the extensive interviews she did for her book, adults never wished they’d had less information as children, but often spoke of wishing they’d had more.

How Faith Communities Can Respond

In shrinking mainline churches, interfaith families might easily be seen as a prize in a competition, or as a resource that might be lost. But Miller suggests that pastors talk to the other religious leaders in an interfaith couple’s life, with the goal of strengthening all relationships, within the family and outside.

Indeed, some churches are being proactive. Last year, St. Elisabeth’s Episcopal Church in Glencoe, IL, a Chicago suburb with a large Jewish population, ran a program for interfaith families in conjunction with a synagogue and learned that they needed a meeting space that was neither Christian nor Jewish, plus some kind of shared worship element. “I can’t guarantee that everyone’s going to be comfortable with me,” said pastor Daphne Cody, “I’ve had to come to peace with that.” Every week at Communion, Cody specifies that “all are welcome, regardless of religious background,” but even that receives varying responses. Some Jewish spouses feel they need permission to take it; some feel they need permission not to take it. Her congregation has added some elements, such as a psalm that they have learned to say in Hebrew. But “Jesus is the cornerstone of Christianity,” she said. “We want people to participate as they’re comfortable, but we’re not going to take Jesus out.”

If a pastor tells a nonreligious spouse that they’re always welcome at church, “it will almost always be heard as an attempt to proselytize,” McGowan said. Pastors need language that explicitly assures people that’s not the case. “You’ve got to be clear, or it will be assumed to be something else,” McGowan said. Some nonreligious people come with memories of bad experiences. That is particularly true of conservative churches, he said, where “for a lot of people, it’s a reminder of something they left.” Thomas Beaudoin,

an associate professor of theology at Fordham University, agreed that in a conservative congregation, interfaith relationships can produce more anxiety. Non-judgmental sharing of experiences, on both sides, is a path forward, but “you can’t get there cheaply.” He suggested that church members “try to tell the story of how you came to understand the center of your faith the way you do.” Beaudoin speculates that people who have loose affiliations to their faith are more likely to marry outside it—but as it is, churches are “having a hard enough time holding Christian-Christian couples.”

“You should always be open to conversation,” said Jeren Rowell, Kansas City district superintendent for the Church of the Nazarene. Many interfaith conversations, he said, find “quite a bit that would connect us, more than what would divide us.” In fact, in most Nazarene families, a child chooses to be baptized when he or she is ready, which can lead to constructive dialogue. The non-participating spouse, Rowell said, needs to reach “a place of comfort, that [the church] has the best interest of the child in mind.”

Welcoming a spouse from another tradition or no tradition succeeds “because we don’t make a big deal out of it,” Rowell said. “You begin at the point of just offering friendship.”

For Miller, who grew up in and married into an interfaith family, “it has inspired creativity, the idea of bridge-building and peace-making.” Even without the marriage factor, people do frequently change denominational identities and move from one faith or church to another. “Some people would say that every marriage is an interfaith marriage,” she said.

Embracing One Family of Different Faiths

How does our congregation respond to interfaith couples and families consistent with our theology and values as well as respect for people who hold different beliefs? What would true acceptance look like? What are the benefits or rewards for our congregation when we interact with other faith communities?

1. Susan Katz Miller, *Being Both: Embracing Two Religions in One Interfaith Family* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2013).

2. Dale McGowan, *In Faith and In Doubt: How Religious Believers and Nonbelievers Can Create Strong Marriages and Loving Families* (American Management Association, 2014; www.amacombooks.org).