

Bills and Overtures Committee Report – January 17, 2009

INTRODUCTION

The Bills and Overtures Committee of the presbytery consists of Minister and Elder Commissioners elected to serve at the most recent General Assembly. Elected by the presbytery to serve as Commissioners to the 218th General Assembly (2008) were Elder Commissioners Melinda Benallie (Kayenta), Chuck Jarrell (Horizon) and Bill Noyes (Pinnacle) and Minister Commissioners Renato Alvarez (Director to the Ministry to the Rural Poor), Michael Hartwell (Crosswinds) and David Hicks (Memorial). In addition, Kyle Harding (First, Mesa) was elected Youth Advisory Delegate.

It has been past practice for the Bills and Overtures Committee to provide a written report on the proposed amendments to the PC(USA) Constitution which often, but not always, has included recommendation to the presbytery for either an affirmative or negative vote. Our report, which does provide recommendations, should be considered along with the 48-page booklet published by the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly titled:

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
and
PROPOSED ECUMENICAL STATEMENTS

APPROVED BY THE 218TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2008) AND RECOMMENDED TO THE
PRESBYTERIES FOR THEIR AFFIRMATIVE OR NEGATIVE VOTES

This booklet was distributed at the September 12-13, 2008 and November 8, 2008 Stated Presbytery Meetings and is available on the PCUSA Website at:

<http://www.pcusa.org/generalassembly/amend/proposed-amendments-2008.pdf>

We commend for your study and reflection our report, and the proposed amendments booklet containing the actual wording of each proposed amendment and ecumenical statement. Most of the Pro and Con Arguments are those that were offered during the Assembly Committee consideration; and we wish to acknowledge the helpful work of the Association of Stated Clerks in their analysis, and the *Presbyterian Outlook* in its October 12, 2008 article on the amendments in their reporting of those Pro and Con arguments.

Time has been allocated on the Agenda for the January 17, 2009 meeting for a question-and-answer period regarding our report. Voting on the Proposed Amendments and Ecumenical Statements will take place at the March 20-21, 2009 Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS AND ECUMENICAL STATEMENTS FOLLOW

**Amendment 08-A
Vows of membership
On amending G-5.0200**

This amendment would require that all new members of a particular church make a public profession of faith before the congregation. This amendment contains the remnant of the original overture which would have required specific wording for four membership questions and answers to those questions. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised against the overture and noted that the *Directory for Worship* W-4.2003 provides the basis for similar questions, though not the specific wording of the originally proposed questions nor a specific response to those questions.

In recognition of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution's advice by a vote of 50-2-0, the Assembly Committee on Church Polity approved an alternative action to the original overture that lifts up the language of the *Directory for Worship* W-4.2003 a, b, and c in which confirmands, and others, who are joining by certificate of transfer or reaffirmation of faith reaffirm the vows taken at Baptism. The General Assembly approved by voice vote.

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- The *Book of Order* needs to be explicit about requirements of membership. Membership is in a congregation, but reflects entrance into the larger church.
- This expands and standardizes the core questions and vows as entry to membership.
- Keeps questions from becoming too narrow and legalistic.
- No one should be admitted into membership of the Church without a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- This prohibits flexibility of sessions as governing bodies as they consider new members.
- These vows are included in general in the *Book of Order* already.
- This requirement is too legalistic, and such a matter should be left to each session under guidance of the Spirit.

The Bills and Overtures Committee recommends a Negative Vote as the *Directory for Worship* in W-4.2003 of the *Book of Order* already provides the basis for the reaffirmation of faith, making the change to the *Book of Order* unnecessary.

Amendment 08-B Ordained officers On amending G-6.0106b, G-14.0240, and G-14.0450

This amendment would delete the current paragraph G-6.0106b, which contains the fidelity and chastity requirements for officers, and replace it with a different “standard of obedience” [language used by the ACC in its analysis of the proposed change]. The Presbytery of Boston originated this overture which also proposed an authoritative interpretation (AI) that was approved by the 2008 Assembly and eliminated the previous definitive guidance/authoritative interpretation prohibiting the ordination of practicing homosexuals. An Authoritative Interpretation does not require ratification by presbyteries. The presbytery vote will be only on the proposed amendment.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) offered a long history of the authoritative interpretations, judicial cases, and amendments relevant to all the actions proposed to the 218th General Assembly (2008) regarding homosexuality. This section relevant to the Boston overture advised that the Assembly could “submit to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote an amendment to repeal G-6.0106b (or replace it with a different standard), and either withdraw or leave in place” the authoritative interpretation dating from 1978-79/1985.

The Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry recommended approval of the overture by a vote of 41/11/0, with this comment: “Presbyteries are strongly encouraged to consider this overture using a process of listening and discernment.” The Assembly approved the recommendation by of a vote of 380/325/3 (54 percent to 46 percent).

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- Approval of this amendment would eliminate the language of G-6.0106b, including the last sentence regarding the Confessions.
- It would remove this paragraph that singles out sexual sins in complete disregard of all others.
- It would allow sessions and presbyteries to examine and approve persons for office based on their whole lives, and not only their sexual practices.
- The new language is more constitutional, and still holds candidates for ordination to the high standards of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the ordination vows, the Scriptures and the Confessions.
- Our Church has held that the supreme guide in the interpretation of the Scriptures is not ecclesiastical authority, but the Spirit of God, speaking to the Christian believer.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- Eliminating the fidelity and chastity wording opens the church to the appearance of loose living.
- In a culture that promotes sex as recreation, the church needs to be counter-cultural and stand up for Christian values. This is the primary place where the church takes a stand.
- With the re-approval of the authoritative interpretation of G-6.0108 by the 218th General Assembly (2008) there is no need to remove this paragraph to allow sessions and presbyteries to consider ordaining practicing homosexuals on a case-by-case basis.
- The current G-6.0106b needs to stand. The new wording is not specific, and the phrase in the last sentence establishing “the candidate’s sincere efforts to adhere” to the standards is weak.
- Removing the fidelity and chastity language would surely lead to a major split in the PC(USA).

The Bills and Overtures Committee approved recommending a Negative Vote by a vote of 4/2/0 (for-against-abstain).

On all of the following Proposed Amendments and the four Ecumenical Statements the Bills and Overtures Committee recommends an Affirmative Vote:

Amendment 08-C **Replacing the word “sympathy” with the word “compassion”** **On amending G-6.0202b and G-6.0401**

This amendment would replace the word “sympathy” with the word “compassion” in two places, regarding the role of deacons. This overture originated with the Presbytery of Albany, which asked that the new word be “empathy”. The ACC advised against the change, saying neither increased clarity nor precision of meaning is gained by the substitution, preferring the original term. The ACC further said that if the Assembly wished to change the word, “compassion” would be better than “empathy”. The Assembly Committee on Church Polity chose to follow the ACC approach and voted 54/3/0 for it. The Assembly approved by a voice vote.

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- “Compassion” is the choice of the Form of Government Task Force for the proposed new streamlined *Book of Order* and has the support of the ACC, if the more Biblical “sympathy” is not to be used.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- “Sympathy, empathy, compassion” are splitting hairs. Besides, the original “sympathy” has more Biblical and traditional support.

Amendment 08-D **General Assembly Mission Council Name Change** **On amending throughout the *Book of Order***

This amendment would change the name of the General Assembly Council to the General Assembly Mission Council in the *Book of Order*, Organization for Mission and the GAC Manual of Operations. This amendment originated with the General Assembly Council (GAC). The ACC advised that there was no constitutional impediment to the change. The Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets approved the change by a vote of 57/1/3 and the Assembly approved by a voice vote.

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- The new name change clearly identifies the role of the GAC as the coordinator of the mission work of the General Assembly, supporting the new missional emphasis of the church.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- None expressed.

Amendment 08-E
Non-geographic Presbyteries
On Amending G-11.0102 and G-12.0102k

This amendment would allow a congregation to join a non-geographic presbytery in another synod under certain circumstances. It also places new limitations on non-geographic presbyteries. They are to be formed only on the basis of language and each should carry an end date. This amendment originated with the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) in response to a referral from the 217th General Assembly (2006), regarding Korean American Presbyterians. The ACC advised that the original wording presented constitutional issues. The Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures addressed these issues and modified the wording accordingly. The Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) suggested two limitations. The Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns (ACWC) urged that language-specific presbyteries fulfill the *Book of Order* requirement to ordain women. The Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures approved the amended wording 44/0/1, and the Assembly approved the committee's recommendation by voice vote.

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- The amendment offers a compromise that supports the expansion of non-geographic presbyteries while limiting their long-term use. It makes easier for immigrants to be a part of the PC(USA) while moving toward the General Assembly's vision for a united, multicultural Church.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- While not necessarily arguing against voting for this proposed amendment, it reiterates the cautions expressed by the OGA, ACREC and ACWS that we should move toward unity, not separate denominations; we should see this as a temporary step, not permanent; and we should support the constitutional requirement for the ordination of women.

Amendment 08-F
Membership of Certified Christian Educators
On Amending G-11.0407 and G-14.0730

This amendment would make it permissive not required, for a presbytery to grant the privilege of the floor with voice only (or with voice and vote for an elder) to a Certified Christian Educator who is not a minister of Word and Sacrament. Currently it is required. Also, it would specify that Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators may have voice and vote for those who are elders, at presbytery meetings only while actively engaged in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery. The amendment originated with the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Santa Fe who requested clarification from the ACC. The ACC recommended the amendment in answer to the questions, and advised that the amendment was warranted. The Assembly Committee on Church Polity recommended approval by a vote of 58/0/0 and the Assembly approved by consensus. [Note: Amendment 08-I is similar and each must be voted on separately.]

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- The amendment is needed to allow the presbytery to determine whom it will enroll and clarifies that enrollment is contingent upon active engagement in educational ministry under jurisdiction of the presbytery.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- Changing from mandatory to permissive practices has the potential to create greater inconsistency in an already inconsistent system regarding the treatment of members who are living out their vocation as Christians in educational ministry.

Amendment 08-G
Synod Membership on Permanent Committees
On amending G-13.0107, G-13.0108, and G-13.0202a

This amendment would strike a provision that allowed each synod to nominate a member to each of the permanent committees of the General Assembly, coordinated by the GA Nominating Committee. It would replace it with a provision that the General Assembly Committee on Representation advise the GA Nominating Committee of the need for nominations in particular categories needing increased representation. The Committee on Representation would have a member from each synod. The GA Council would have at least one member from each synod.

This amendment originated from the General Assembly Assistant Stated Clerk and the Manager for General Assembly Nominations, and was worded by the ACC. The ACC expressed concern about the size of these committees resulting from the 2006 revision of G-13.0107. It also questioned whether size should be defined by mission rather than by formalities. The GAC, GA Nominating Committee, and Committee on the Office of the General Assembly weighed in. The Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination and Budgets approved the alternate recommendation by a vote of 58/0/0 and the Assembly approved by consensus.

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

Maintaining the priority of inclusiveness and diversity requires a complex balancing of factors when nominating persons to serve on General Assembly committees. This is best handled by the GA Nominating Committee and the GA Committee on Representation.

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- The amendment places power and control in the hands of the GA Nominating Committee, though the Assembly has final votes.
- The current provision (G-13.0107) allows synods to have a share in the power, placing it closer to the broad base of the church.

Amendment 08-H
Five Ordination Examinations
On Amending G-14.0431

This proposed amendment came as a result of the Self-Study of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. The amendment increases the flexibility of the presbyteries' Committees on Preparation for Ministry in determining when such examinations are appropriately taken.

Arguments Supporting an Affirmative Vote

- Committees should do what is needed to be done to define the examinations as recommended by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations

Arguments Supporting a Negative Vote

- None expressed

Amendment 08-I
Certified Christian Educators
On Amending G-14.0730

This amendment came as a response from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to a question about the possible conflict between G-14.0730b and G-11.0407, from the Associate for Certification and Christian Vocation. The question was whether the reference in G-14.0730 to certified Christian educators applied to Certified Associate Christian Educators as well. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution noted that if the 218th General Assembly wished to limit the language in G-14.0730 to Certified Christian Educators only, it may accomplish that purpose by amending G-14.0730c to capitalize the words “certified” and “educators”, which is what this amendment does.

Arguments in Support of an Affirmative Vote

- This restricts the right of the floor at Presbytery meetings to Certified Christian Educators.
- It also clarifies that other important privileges extend to Certified Associate Christian Educators as well.

Arguments in Support of a Negative Vote

- Certified Associate Christian Educators should have the same floor privileges as Certified Christian Educators

Amendment 08-J
Alternative Forms of Resolution
On Amending D-2.0103 and D-10.0202h

These amendments came from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution in response to two of the questions asked by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of National Capital: “What is the meaning of ‘all parties’ in D-2.0103 and D-10.0202h?” and “Do *The Rules of Discipline* give the accuser in a disciplinary proceeding veto power over an A[llternate] F[orm of] R[esolution]?”. These amendments clarify that the use of the term “parties” in *The Rules of Discipline* is specifically and intentionally limited to those persons representing the governing body (i.e., the investigating committee or prosecuting committee) and the accused. No veto power over an AFR is accorded to an accuser.

Arguments in Support of an Affirmative Vote

- This is a helpful clarification of a sometimes difficult procedure.
- Makes clear that the accuser does not have veto power over an AFR.

Arguments in Support of a Negative Vote

- None expressed

Ecumenical Statements

All four of the following Ecumenical Statements originated with the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER). All were approved by the Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations (ACEIR) with no negative votes, though there were a few abstentions. The Assembly approved each with a voice vote.

The Bills and Overtures Committee recommends an Affirmative Vote on all four of the Proposed Ecumenical Statements:

0 8-K Ecumenical Statement with the Roman Catholic Church
On Ratifying a Common Agreement on Baptism

This statement affirms what is already the PC (USA)’s practice of recognizing Baptism, and is part of the continued dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. If agreed on by both denominations, both denominations would fully accept each other’s Baptism.

08-L Ecumenical Statement with the Episcopal Church
On Adopting an Agreement

This agreement acknowledges that the Episcopal and the Presbyterian Church (USA) belong to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church and recognizes each other’s rites of Baptism and Holy Communion. It encourages congregations of both denominations to invite each other’s members to share the Lord’s Supper. Even though this agreement does make provisions for temporary or occasional service of ministers of both denominations in congregations of the other denomination with proper ecclesiastical approval, it is not a covenant of full participation. It also encourages further conversation for a more formal covenant. It must also be approved by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2009.

**08-M Ecumenical Statement with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America
On Adopting a Covenant Agreement**

This is an agreement with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (KPCA) that forms a foundation for working together. Important points are that ordination is for both women and men, and that the churches will develop a process for the orderly exchange of ministers and congregations. Presbyterian missionaries planted the seeds for the Presbyterian Church in Korea, but as Koreans immigrated to America, language, culture, and other differences prevented their integration into existing congregations. This will enable the sister churches to begin bridging the gap.

**08-N Ecumenical Statement with the Moravian Church
On Adopting a Covenant Partnership Agreement**

This statement would create a covenant partnership with the Moravian Church. The Moravian Church, and the four Reformed bodies, which entered into the Formula of Agreement in 1998 see no obstacles, present or past, to covenant partnership. All five churches have histories of cooperative and ecumenical commitments. The General Synods of the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church will meet in 2010 to vote on this proposal; the agreement cannot be effective until after they have met and ratified it. Assuming approval at each step, a Process of Orderly Exchange [similar to that of the Formula of Agreement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ] will be jointly developed, detailing how the process will work.

Administrative Commission Report
John Calvin Presbyterian Church, Apache Junction
January 17, 2009

C-4

Background

The Administrative Commission was formed at the direction of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon at a specially called meeting on Feb. 21, 2008. We were given the responsibility to assume the original jurisdiction of the session at John Calvin Church and to act as the Session of the church until such time as we felt the session was prepared to carry out its own business and mission. Our purpose was laid out in a 6-point charge to complete that mission as soon as possible. Our tasks were the following:

1. To serve as an instrument of the presbytery for promoting the peace and harmony of the John Calvin Presbyterian congregation and session, especially in the matters outlined in the Report of the Oct. 6, 2007 Investigating Committee which vindicated the installed pastor “from rumors or gossip that may have injured him”
2. To mediate differences and reconcile persons, to the end that difficulties may be corrected if possible, that the welfare of John Calvin Presbyterian Church may be strengthened and that the unity of the body of Christ may be manifest
3. To work with the installed pastor in his continuing ministry to the congregation
4. To work with and include the currently serving session elders as of the date of the assumption of original jurisdiction of the session in all aspects of the mission, government and spiritual oversight of the congregation
5. To work with and include the currently serving session elders in working through all of the areas highlighted in the Report of the Oct. 6, 2007 Investigating Committee
6. To assist the congregation and “currently serving elders” in determining the future ministry direction for John Calvin Presbyterian church and its most effective witness to the broader community.

Steps Toward the Goals

1. Shortly after the Commission was formed and we began our work, the pastor, Justin Schlesinger-Devlin announced that he would be leaving the church to take a new call in Indiana. His last Sunday in the pulpit was May 18. So, our first few months were spent dealing with that change, helping the session and other members deal with the loss of the pastor, and prepare the way for an interim pastor. Much of this time was spent listening to members, reviewing information that had come to us through the Investigative Commission, helping the session and members begin to sort out all of the feelings that had built up during the recent months. Numerous interviews, group meetings and consultations were held to listen and absorb the impact of what had happened to this church.
2. In June, we were fortunate to secure the services of the Rev. Doug Baer as the interim pastor. He had just finished another interim, so he began work on July 7. We are blessed that Doug comes with much skill in conflict management, collaboration, pastoral care, leadership training, and worship skills that are much needed in this church. He has led seminars at the church on Presbyterian beliefs/sacraments and will be leading a Bible study on Philippians and Galatians this winter. At the same time, members of the commission were serving as leaders and resource persons to the various committees of session and doing the session business, with the John Calvin session walking by our side. Each meeting of the session has included training, specifically using the “Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement”. We have walked them through the manual for this conflict

management guide and assisted them in learning some of the skills needed to be more effective leaders. While we know that they have not “mastered” the skills, they are much better listeners, they have new leadership skills and gifts to help them in dealing with conflict in the church, and they have skills in discipline as well.

3. One of our goals was to bring the differing parties in the conflict together to help them understand each other and to learn to live with each other in a more unifying manner to build the body of Christ. With the Commission’s leadership and collaborative style shown by the interim pastor, session members and congregation members are learning how to talk about their differences, how to be sure that they are talking about the same issues, and are learning how to respect each other’s differences. Only a few people have left the church, some due to relocations to other parts of the country, and a few due to the conflict itself. However, the church has been growing, has been rebuilding its program and mission and is working to build a new future together.
4. New Church officers have been training and are ready to begin their work again. One of the things we learned was that many of the current officers had received little or no training in preparation for taking office. The interim pastor has worked with all the officers to train them and help them fully understand their responsibilities as leaders. He will continue to provide training and support as the new officers lead the church in 2009 and beyond.

Recommendations

1. **That the Session of John Calvin Presbyterian Church be reconstituted as the governing body of that church, effective January 17, 2009. Also, that as soon as possible, the session and other new officers be ordained and installed.**
2. **That since John Calvin Presbyterian Church no longer has an installed pastor, the Committee on Ministry work diligently and closely with the session to begin doing a complete mission study to determine the church’s future ministry and eventually work toward the formation of a Pastor Nominating Committee.**
3. **That the Administrative Commission remain in place at John Calvin Presbyterian Church in an advisory capacity. The purpose would be to attend session meetings (with at least two commission members at each session meeting), to observe the operations and interpersonal dynamics of the church, its committees and organizations so that further assessment can be made of their full ability to move forward alone.**

Report
Special Administrative Review Committee to Ganado Presbyterian Church
January 17, 2009

At its November 8, 2008 Stated Meeting the Presbytery of Grand Canyon took the following action:

Approved in accordance with Form of Government G-9.0408 a Special Administrative Review Committee, made up of five (5) members, to Ganado Presbyterian Church for the following reasons:

1. The session is reported to have taken an irregular action in approving the appointment of Volunteers in Mission who may not have the proper credentials and may have been removed from their responsibilities at a United Methodist Church Native American Mission;
2. There may be a pattern of actions on the part of the Clerk of Session in which he exceeds his authority;
3. The session, through its clerk, has stated that the Presbytery of Grand Canyon has not been helpful to them in seeking pastoral leadership since the retirement of their previous pastor Paul Stone.

In undertaking this Special Administrative Review the Committee is to determine (a) whether the session is properly exercising its responsibilities and (b) whether the presbytery has been helpful in assisting the session in securing appropriate pastoral leadership and (c) whether:

"The proceedings have been correctly recorded; (G-9.0409a.(1))
 The proceedings have been regular and in accordance with the Constitution; (G-9.0409a.(2))
 The proceedings have been prudent and equitable; (G-9.0409a.(3))
 The proceedings have been faithful to the mission of the whole church; (G-9.0409a.(4))
 The lawful injunctions of a higher governing body have been obeyed. (G-9.0409a.(5))"

Notwithstanding the above determinations and findings, this committee is empowered with wide discretion as to its manner of inquiry into and approach to carrying out its work. In completing its work, the Committee shall comply with all of the applicable provisions of the Form of Government with respect to the work of Special Administrative Review. This Special Administrative Review Committee is to report its findings and recommendations to the January 19, 2009 Stated Presbytery Meeting, may provide interim reports with findings and recommendations to the Session and Presbytery Council and may call for a Special Presbytery Meeting if it deems necessary.

The Presbytery authorizes the Moderator of the Presbytery to appoint the Members of the Committee.

On November 19, 2008 Moderator Rev. Art Campbell confirmed the appointment of the following to serve on the committee: Elder Roger Davis (CLP- Fort Defiance), Rev. Norma McCabe (Kayenta and First, Tuba City), Elder Jean Montgomery (Desert Palms), Elder Bill Noyes (Pinnacle) and Rev. Fran Park (HR).

On November 20, 2008 Dick Coffelt, Stated Clerk, sent background material to each member of the committee. Among the background papers were the following:

Paper P-4 Proposed Review Committee; Advisory Opinion Note 01 concerning Special Administrative Review; October 22, 2008 memo to Hank Haskie from Chuck Proudfoot, Session Moderator regarding an improperly called session meeting; October 27, 2008 series of emails concerning Benson and Lori Ndolo becoming VIMs; Email letter of October 29, 2008 from the Stated Clerk to Benson and Lori Ndolo; Email October 30-31 from Hank Haskie to Ken Moe asking that Ken convene and moderate a Special Session Meeting; Notice of and Agenda for Special Meeting of November 2, 2008 moderated by Chuck Proudfoot and attended by the Stated Clerk; Correspondence from the Four Corners Native American Ministry of the United Methodists Church concerning relieving the Ndolos of their

responsibilities along with the 8-page appeal of the decision by the Ndolos; Benson and Lori Ndolo undated letter to the Clerk of Session including a VIM application and information concerning Benson's qualifications; Email exchange between the Benson / Lori and Rev. Paul West, United Methodist; Series of emails from those supporting the Ndolos; Additional documentation requested and provided concerning Visa status; Mission Study of Ganado PC dated January 18, 2004; Memo from David Chin, COM and PNC liaison regarding delays in PNC work and Hank Haskie; Ganado PC Church Information Form; Email of November 17, 2008 to two session members and Chuck Proudfoot requesting a special session meeting to consider a Mr. Myers visiting from California as a VIM (this meeting did not take place).

The Stated Clerk made arrangements for committee member Norma McCabe (also a COM Member) to pick up the Ganado Session Records from the church secretary and bring them to the November 25, 2008 COM meeting. The records had previously been reviewed by Roger Davis and were subsequently provided members Bill Noyes and Fran Park for review and safe-keeping. A report on the review of these records follows later in this report.

Following opportunity for the committee members to review the background papers described above, as well as three of the committee members having reviewed the session records, a Convening Conference Call meeting was held on December 9, 2008. All five members of the committee as well as Ken Moe, Executive Presbyter, and Dick Coffelt, Stated Clerk, participated in the call. The conference call was convened by Dick Coffelt for the purpose of orienting the committee to its work. In addition, Ken Moe provided the committee with the information he received as a result of his discussions with the United Methodist Bishop concerning the release of Benson and Lori Ndolo from their work at the Four Corners United Methodist Ministry. Following orientation and the sharing of background information, upon urging by other committee members, Bill Noyes agreed to serve as Committee Moderator and Fran Park agreed to serve as Committee Clerk.

Following opportunity for discussion, the Committee agreed unanimously that the qualifications that Benson and Lori Ndolo possess are not sufficient, nor acceptable for them to serve in any leadership or volunteer capacity at the Ganado Presbyterian Church or with any Presbyterian Church on the Navajo Reservation. In order to confirm this decision, the Committee wrote the following letter to the Ganado Session:

The following letter, in addition to being sent to the Session Moderator through the US Postal Service, was also sent to the following email addresses: Proudfoot – cpcstudy@localnet.com and the Ganado Session - Ganado_pc@citlink.net

December 10, 2008

The Rev. Chuck Proudfoot, Moderator
Ganado Presbyterian Church, Ganado, Arizona
% Community Presbyterian Church
800 W. Main Street
Payson, AZ 65441

Dear Rev. Proudfoot and Members of the Ganado Session,

As a result of the action of the November 8, 2008 Presbytery meeting a Ganado Special Administrative Review Committee was approved. Presbytery Moderator, Rev. Art. Campbell, appointed the following members to serve: Elders Roger Davis (CLP-Fort Defiance) Jean Montgomery (Desert Palms), Bill Noyes (Pinnacle) and Revs. Norma McCabe and Fran Park.

The Committee has reviewed, studied and deliberated regarding one issue that needs to be corrected immediately by the Ganado Session related to the status of Benson and Lori Ndolo:

- 1) The initial decision to select Benson and Lori Ndolo as volunteers in mission by three session members, including the Clerk of Session, on behalf of the entire session, was without proper authority.
- 2) The session members acting on behalf of the session failed in their due diligence responsibilities to perform required background and reference checking before asking someone to serve in a leadership capacity.
- 3) While Mr. and Mrs. Ndolo subsequently provided information regarding their qualifications and experience, the Special Administrative Review Committee has determined that the qualifications they do possess are not sufficient nor acceptable to serve in any leadership or volunteer capacity at the Ganado Presbyterian Church or with any Presbyterian Church on the Navajo Reservation.

Therefore the Committee has determined that Benson and Lori Ndolo are not authorized to occupy the Ganado manse and the Committee is recommending that they leave the Ganado manse no later than December 31, 2008.

If such steps are not taken by the Ganado Session the Special Administrative Review Committee will ask that a special meeting of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon be called to act on this report and proceed with recommending to the presbytery that it exercise its responsibility under Form of Government G-11.0103(s) to assume original jurisdiction of the session and appoint an administrative commission with the full power of the existing session. Such power would include clarifying all related issues and taking appropriate action to have Benson and Lori Ndolo vacate the church property.

As Moderator of the Session, you are asked to call a special meeting of the Ganado Session and to inform them of these actions and recommendations of the Ganado Special Administrative Review Committee so that they may take immediate action to carry them out. The Rev. Norma McCabe, a member of the Special Administrative Review Committee, has agreed to attend this meeting to convey any further information in English as well as Navajo, therefore please coordinate the calling of this meeting with Rev. McCabe.

The Special Review Committee expects this specially called meeting of the Ganado Session to be held as soon as possible and a report to the Presbytery to be given immediately upon its conclusion.

The Special Review Committee will be engaging in further assistance to the Ganado Session, following the implementation of these recommendations, in regard to enabling the Ganado Church to receive the proper training and leadership to allow them to fulfill their historic ministry with the Navajo people.

Very sincerely,

William E. Noyes, Moderator, Ganado Special
Administrative Review Committee

While the Session Moderator has made several attempts to call for a Special Meeting, the Session as of December 31, 2008 has failed to act on the above request. A courtesy copy of the above letter was provided to Benson and Lori Ndolo. On December 27, 2008 Benson and Lori authored a lengthy report on their work at Ganado including inviting youth from the Four Corners United Methodist Ministry to Ganado and indicating that Benson has preached at several Ganado worship services and talked of other work they planned to do. The Session Moderator, Chuck Proudfoot, a recipient among many others to their emailed report, wrote a letter to

them indicating that they obviously had exceeded the authority and responsibilities approved by the Session at the special meeting and told them to cease work at Ganado and prepare to vacate church property by January 1, 2009. Benson and Lori have subsequently sent a letter in reply taking exception and pleading their case that they are qualified to serve.

With respect to the review of Session Records the books and records of the Ganado Presbyterian Church, consist of 3 documents, 2 church registers and one minutes book. The book has minutes from February 11, 1993 thru March 5, 2008. Three members of the committee (Elder/CLP Roger Davis, Rev. Fran Park, and Elder Bill Noyes) have reviewed the records in accordance with our charge from the Presbytery as members of the Committee. Our review has been limited as the records are incomplete. Our findings are as follows:

1. No new members have been posted since November 8, 1998, however Baptisms have been posted thru May 6, 2007: marriages have been posted thru June 30, 2007 and July 19, ????, as no year is recorded: and deaths have been posted thru July 17, 2008

Note: While no new members have been posted since 1998 a review of the number of members as reported in Part IIA Statistics for each General Assembly of the PCUSA reflect Ganado Presbyterian Church's membership as follows:

For the Period 12/31/98 – 12/31/02	73 Members
For the Period 12/31/03 – 12/31/05	76 Members
For period ending 12/31/06	21 Members
For period ending 12/31/07	20 Members

2. The last minutes in the minutes book are dated Wednesday March 5, 2008 and list 11 elders by name, the Clerk of Session and a Moderator. Rev. Chuck Proudfoot is shown as moderator in the opening prayer and Hank Haskie signed the minutes as Clerk of Session.
3. We were able to identify that 10 of the elders were members but were unable to identify that one individual was on the membership rolls. In addition we were unable to find any record of Hank Haskie being received as a member, or being elected an Elder to serve on the Ganado Session or as its Clerk of Session. The only mention of Mr. Haskie serving in that capacity is in 2001 where he was appointed temporary clerk until the next congregational meeting, however we were not able to find any record of the congregational meeting. Mr. Haskie has signed the minutes on many occasions since that date as Clerk of Session.
4. At a Session Meeting on March 5, 2001 the Session Voted to not hold an election of new elders until a new pastor had been called, therefore new elders have not been elected since that meeting.
5. It should be noted that the Rev. Paul Stone served as Pastor to the Ganado Presbyterian Church from May 31, 1983 until his Honorable Retirement effective November 1, 2003

The Special Administrative Review committee is continuing its efforts to work with the Session Moderator, in order that the Session has an opportunity to act on their own, on our request of them rather than have intervention by the presbytery. We will report on these efforts during our report at the January 17, 2009 Presbytery Meeting. In the meantime the Committee is aware of a candidate to be a Commissioned Lay Pastor, who was recently approved by the Presbytery's combined CLP/COM committee, who is willing and anxious to serve the Ganado Presbyterian Church. Our Committee will be holding at least one more meeting prior to January 17, 2009. On our agenda will be discussion, based upon all we know at this point in time, whether or not to recommend that the Presbytery assume original jurisdiction of the Ganado Presbyterian Church Session in accordance with Form of Government provision G-11.0103(s).

AGENDA
PRESBYTERY OF GRAND CANYON CORPORATION
ANNUAL MEETING
January 17, 2009

Call to Order With Prayer Elder Barbara Walker

Election of Officers Elder Barbara Walker

Nominees

President Rev. Art Campbell

Vice President Elder Glyndon Morris

Treasurer Elder Shirley Randolph

Secretary Elder Richard Coffelt

Executive Secretary Rev. Kenneth Moe

Report on Status of Full Audit Rev. Kenneth Moe

Adjournment with Prayer Rev. Art Campbell

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Summary of the Plenary Session at the November 8, 2008 Presbytery Meeting:

How can the Church be relevant at times like this?

- What is helping some people in our congregation is to have the conversation; for people to be able to talk about the impact on their families of what is happening right now. When people get laid off they feel a tremendous sense of shame. They feel torn up and tossed out. For those of us who might not be personally experiencing that it is important to actively understand if you aren't in that blender, that your neighbors are. We recently had a wonderful elder who had to choose between paying for healthcare or a meal.
- I think we need to become more aware of what's happening around us. We need to open up to other congregations within our presbytery; and even if we are feeling that we cannot give monetarily, then we still can take time to open up and call people and to be partners with another congregation. We can offer leadership assistance, if needed. In our area we have two very small churches in Yuma. We need to be open and express our love in ways that maybe we haven't thought of doing before, because we've been so self-centered and concerned with our budgets. We need to be more giving of our time and we need to be opening ourselves up to all the need around us. We have so many people coming back from the war and we need to be giving to the families that really need so much help at this time.
- We have worked with other churches in our area. We are trying to pool our resources and support each other. There is great need out there. Some are manipulating the system. We are working to take care of the needs of people and we have a lot of folks in our area who are transitory. We've talked about having a seminar for the community to encourage people to reach out to each other. It could be a time of offering encouragement, affirmation and helpful instruction on being frugal and recycling and reusing things. How many of you use a paper towel once and throw it away? ...We have people in our community that don't know how to shop or use coupons. They need to be learning how to make meals out of whatever is on sale. Young families today don't know how to do that. They haven't learned how to save money. There are so many ideas for saving money. A seminar could provide a forum for pooling ideas and resources.
- We have a food program and utility program at our church. We have noticed in the last few months that many people are coming for the first time to use those programs. They are embarrassed about coming and asking for help. Our own members and visitors are losing their jobs. The local churches can assist them with providing emotional and financial support. We have members who are facing foreclosure on their homes. The Church can be relevant by being there to help those who are hurting. Through our presbytery we can have resources made available to try to help church members and visitors. Some churches may be able to help more than others and they can reach out to the smaller churches.
- We should petition our government leaders to really set priorities in protecting homeowners. The AEC can play a role in this in petitioning the mayors and the governor.
- We are planning on moving into a new building on Christmas Eve. It has a big mortgage. It's not clear how we will pay for things like utilities and the cost of the building. This is

a difficult time to be moving into a new building and taking on all those expenses. I am still scared. I wanted to share something from yesterday. A church member came into my office, and I asked, "How are you doing?" He said, "Not well, it's going to be a tough time financially, so I had better give to the church while I've got the money."

- We are dealing with so many different layers right now. I want to encourage us to use the resources that already exist in the community. There are so many resources for emergency needs. We know about food banks and shelters. But now, we're getting another level of need. People are experiencing job loss. Some of these people are not literally living at the edge at this moment. They are highly professional people who are out of work. The colleges and universities have job skill set training and development resources. We have members in our church who have never been without a job, or turned down in an interview. They are going through an experience of shame for being in this situation and fear that they won't find another job or be able to pay their bills. There are counselors at the colleges that are available to the community for free.
- We need to get down on our knees and start praying for nation, economy and world. We can be relevant by being encouragers and enablers. We can encourage those in need to get the training and support they need and we can enable them to grow and develop new skills and find ways to begin again. Sometimes those who are out of work can volunteer and through their volunteer work they might be able to work themselves into a new job.
- The question is, "How should we reorganize ourselves?" Relationships are relevant and that's what we're about. We should come up with an organizational design for our presbytery that is much more relational in resourcing the congregations. Develop some way to inform our churches for the different ways our various churches are doing ministry and how one congregation can support another. We can't all do it all. What resources are out there through our community, our churches and our denomination? I'm not sure what kind of structure that would look like. I have retired workers who could help with training other workers. We're worried about the investments but not the pay check. We may have resources that you can use. Again, it's about building and strengthening relationships throughout the presbytery.
- On September 2nd, Interfaith Worker Justice opened the first worker rights center. On that first day we received 100 calls. Now we have 100 active cases of on the job law violations, wage theft, etc. People are not being paid for work already done, or they are not being paid overtime or severance checks. We make sure all this is documented. Sometimes the subcontractors get paid but they don't pay their crews. People are living in their cars. Some of the people who are stealing wages are church people. Somehow we have got to communicate values to our members. The least among us are the ones who need the most advocacy and protection. The church can stand for justice and educate others on values. As bad as it is for the middle class it's worse for the poor.
- I was invited to participate at the retreat for Betania, in Prescott. We discussed stewardship. We need to share at a different level, how to manage money when we're in this crisis. Not just to pledge but to also manage our money. We need to strengthen the denominational network, the bonds of connectionalism. In the West Valley, the demand is greater than the resources. We are hearing that some food banks may need to close their doors. We need to build ecumenical networks and partner to serve those in need.

- What we're discussing today has been going on for years. I think it's about time we talked together like we are doing now. I was born during the great depression, I didn't know I was poor; or that my family was poor. We always had something to eat. Now people are afraid they're money is going to be gone. I almost didn't come yesterday. I've got a little old furnace in the manse that just got tired and refused to start. This old man knows how that furnace feels. I was able to get it going again. But we need help up there. Africa is not the only place that needs money. North of I-40 we have no economy and we are asked to be self-sustaining as a church. We tried when we had 150 members. It didn't work. Without the help of churches like Kingman, or Valley Presbyterian, we can't survive. We need help. Until we come together as a presbytery, with thoughts like this, nothing will change. Until we forget that mindset of "Do you mean we have to help those Indians again?" we will still struggle.
- In this time I want remind us that we have to have a sense of optimism, a sense that we as Americans need to have and a sense that we as Christians are called to have. There is always someone worse off than we are; we have to remind ourselves of that.
- I find myself reflecting on each individual who has spoken today. I find that the situations are all the same. The people crying out for our help whether they are south of our borders or north of I-40, or half a world away, or right next door - the response from a Christian community can be the same in each of these instances if we know who we are. We share in common faith. We can help if we know who our neighbor is and what resources they can provide. The response from our community should be immediate. It should be sacrificial. It should be revolutionary. I have been pondering different ways to do that – searching for a call, and listening to loving friends. I don't have answers but I'm listening.
- Thanks for this opportunity to reflect. Most of you know I ran for public office. I didn't win. But, I spent a lot of time going door-to-door. In one block there were eight houses where no one was living inside. Each one represented a different story. The question is how to help people in crisis move on from fear. This is an opportunity for each of us to live our faith and share our gifts. I encourage each of you to get in touch with your community. This is a chance to form relationships with schools, libraries, community centers, ecumenical communities. We can each make a difference in the lives of those in need.
- We shouldn't forget about the small ticket items. Something as simple as new white socks can make a difference. Our church recently had a request to bring in packages of new white socks to be delivered to food banks and other areas. I had a conversation the other day with a son who had lost his job. His mom was greatly concerned and didn't know how to help relieve the stress. I suggested to her that he might think of one day each week volunteering to the community. In reaching out to others and seeing what others are going through can help us to keep things in perspective and to grow.
- I'm concerned about the decline in numbers in our denomination. Many of our churches are people of the older generation. We need to gather our strength as a presbytery and seek to reach the immigrating generations. We need to reach out to those in their 20s and 30s. We need to put a lot of effort and money in strengthening our relationships with younger generations.

- Every morning I drive by a 4 ½ acre lot that Don Swanson tells me is about to be paid for. That lot is empty and nothing is planned for it. Now is the time to build churches and to look at how the valley needs Presbyterians. We are a quiet invisible people.
- During this tough economic time it is important to encourage people to volunteer. I've known many people who began volunteering someplace and later got a job there. This could be true today. Health services will be one of the businesses that will grow.
- Before we build on that vacant lot that was just mentioned, why don't Presbyterians get down there and start a garden. We can feed those in need.
- I can tell you one simple thing we need to do. Learn to speak Spanish.
- As a denomination we are not doing enough to reach Hispanics. It is important to note that not all Hispanics are poor and not all Hispanics speak only Spanish!
- Yesterday was Billy Graham's 90th birthday. When I think about Billy I think about where he has gone - all over the world - to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If the Church is ever to be relevant, it must first be relevant in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- I just retired from the Bank of Arizona. I was a retention specialist. I always felt that the first thing we needed to do as parents and grandparents is to teach our children to budget. We need to teach them how to balance a checkbook and not to use payday loans. God will provide for your needs and wants. I've seen the housing market. I've had to take away people's credit. People need to learn to live within their means. God will provide.
- To be relevant, the Church needs to preach and teach the word of God. I was praying last night and the phrase that stood out to me was "Feed my sheep."
- As one of the few people who falls in that 20-30 age range I'd like to ask the pastors here who are preaching tomorrow, how many of you are preaching on these issues we're talking about? The Bible is full of resources for this.
- We do not know all the resources that are possible to help people among our churches. But in our church we are helping as we can. We have one person who settles low income people into low income housing. She has an agreement with a local thrift store to provide furnishings. We have another ministry called "The Master's Hands." We make layettes by the dozen and send them to places that need them. We collect clothing to donate and we send school clothes to children in need.
- On February 8th our home was wiped out. It's hard for me to talk about it. The church came, my pastor came. I was gone. When I got home the fire trucks were there. There were 30 homes. Everybody helped us and brought us meals. Our granddaughter was in the house but she got out okay. One day I was looking at the reports of the tornado and people being helped through this. I was thinking how awful to go through that and then a week later I lost my house. There were 9 months of trying to reconstruct it. We were lucky to be able to live next door while a neighbor was away.
- I'm finding myself in a community that has every resource I could ever want in my life. But I don't know who to ask? I don't know what people offer. Who do I ask?

- Although this is a scary time this is also an opportunity for the Church. People seek out churches in times of crisis. This is a chance for us to reach out and show the love of Christ. We can be a resource for those in need and we can, as a community, provide a safe place to help others deal with their problems and find answers. We can help people deal with fear. We can be a welcoming community so that they may know that they are not alone, we can encourage them and help them to find new life.
- In the Indian community we are in the times you are discussing today - everyday. The word “family” is very important to us. I don’t know what “family” means to all of you. Families are very important in our communities. They reach out and find you if you need help. Even though we’re all facing the same problems, I know that some churches are doing better than others. When something like this happens we all have telephones to call and offer our assistance. The Lord is always there. Have faith and trust in him.
- Art thanked the presbyters for their thoughts invited that any additional comments be sent to the presbytery office.

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Summary of the Plenary Session at the November 8, 2008 Stated Presbytery Meeting On Listening and Discernment

The Agenda Planning Committee of the Presbytery Council recommended that there be time set aside during a plenary session of the November 8, 2008 Stated Meeting for listening and discernment on Proposed Amendment 08-B Ordained Officers. As a result, 45 minutes were allocated during the afternoon for presbyters who wished to do so to respond to the following two-part questions. Responses were to be directed to the Moderator and there was to be no debate about anyone's comments. This was an opportunity to mutually share responses to the plenary listening/discernment questions.

Plenary Listening/Discernment Questions:

As you read the current text of G-6.0106b and as you read the proposed text of G-6.0106b,

1. What would be changed in the life of a local congregation, and what would be changed in the life of the presbytery if the proposed text were to be adopted?
2. What would be unchanged in the life of a local congregation, and what would be unchanged in the life of the presbytery if the proposed text were to be adopted?

Current "G-6.0106 b.

Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

Proposed G-6.0106 b.

Those who are called to ordained service in the church, by their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003), pledge themselves to live lives obedient to Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, striving to follow where he leads through the witness of the Scriptures, and to understand the Scriptures through the instruction of the Confessions. In so doing, they declare their fidelity to the standards of the Church. Each governing body charged with examination for ordination and/or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.0450) establishes the candidate's sincere efforts to adhere to these standards."

The time of sharing began at 3:07 PM.

- What would be changed is that there would be a sense that there's a disconnect between faith as they understand it and there would probably be some movement in our church to seek some non-geographic presbytery. In this presbytery we might become more Pentecostal – and by that I mean we might have a tendency toward heresy – the change would mean that we are to separate Scripture from Jesus Christ and put Scripture in a subordinate position. This would be a break

On Listening and Discernment

from our historic understanding of Reformed Theology and the Confessions and our call for church officers to live lives in obedience to Scripture.

- What would change would be that we would be able to tell visitors and potential members that the PC(USA) does not discriminate against them, if they have the gifts for leadership and service in the church they can be ordained on the basis of their ability to follow Jesus Christ, striving to follow where he leads through the witness of the Scriptures. The presbytery would become a more inclusive body, able to live up to the commitment of inclusivity that is expressed in our *Book of Order*. The presbytery would reach out to those who are absent now. Earlier today someone spoke about the absence of young people coming to our churches. The 20 to 30 people I know want nothing to do with the Presbyterian Church.
- Nothing would change. The wording of the proposed amendment would not change their inability to answer the questions in the affirmative and nothing would change.
- Unfortunately, inclusivity is not the option. Either one group gets let in and one group gets let out. It's framed in justice and discrimination. If the proposed amendment passes, then it would not be too far afterwards that it would be more difficult to establish any real standards. In Reformed Theology we are to know the Savior by the Holy Spirit's witness to us through the Scriptures. The change would mean that instead of an ordination standard that places officers under the authority of Scripture, Scripture is just a witness to be "understood." The change places the emphasis on the candidate's "sincere efforts," so it's the sincerity of their efforts that matters. Since every candidate is sincere in their desire, this would make it almost impossible for someone not to be qualified. My fear is that the issue of homosexuality is the sole issue that is being considered in this proposed amendment and yet this addresses far more than that.
- There would be significant change in the local congregation. My mother is a member of Historic First Church, she says that if this passes, she will no longer be a member. She feels that it is worth leaving if she feels a violation of the Church's order is committed. I live in Ajo and have been a pastor at the smallest and proudest congregation in the town. We are the only congregation in Ajo in that period of time that has remained stable. There have been an 8 percent turnover in population. Other churches have been through major upheavals. Some have come to our church. We have had consistency in the teaching of the Gospels.

As for change in the Presbytery – where we're located, the next Presbyterian church is 70 miles away. We are trying to survive on our own and this change would undermine us.

- I believe that what would change would be the ability and the honor for all people that are gifted to say that they receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior,

On Listening and Discernment

understanding that for ordination they'd need to answer all the Constitutional questions, and to understand the Scriptures through the instruction of the Confessions. The new wording follows what we need to do.

- Nothing would change much at Memorial. We will no longer have to ask our 75-year-old members if they are living together. At the presbytery, nothing would change, CPM will still be required to bring forth candidates who are qualified for the ministry and who show their fidelity to Jesus Christ.
- Things have already changed. They changed with PUP. The members at Desert Hills have been examining our own hearts and what we believe and we are very much afraid that our beliefs may not be in line with the changes happening within the PC(USA).
- I find it hard to embrace an idea where every individual is not embraced. The proposed change reaches out to everyone, it's what we should do.
- The change is already happening. Never before have we seen so many people leaving church because of this one issue. Other Korean churches have made statements against what is being proposed. Our faith is not about honoring men. The Church is there to honor God. We wish to make the statement that making this change would be detrimental; it would compromise the Scriptures that we uphold. It is impacting our church tremendously at this point. Some church members have been waiting to see how this vote turns out.
- This proposal is a violent departure from New Testament Scripture. There would be a mass exodus from the Presbyterian denomination.
- One of the churches I previously served has since closed church because of lack of inclusiveness, which is the real issue behind this language. It is my belief that had this amendment passed years ago, and the debate about it occurred earlier, that that church might be still be alive.
- Speaking as a gay woman, what will happen at my church? I don't know. Few people there know who I am and what I am. I know there are people who welcome me and are happy I am there. I may be the only gay person there. Or at least, if there are others, they are afraid to say anything. There is so much pain out there. Good people are being hurt. It is time for this to pass. By the way, earlier today Roger Davis spoke of being born during the great depression. Well, Roger, I was born *before* the great depression!
- Could we take time for a moment of prayer? I think we need a time for silence and prayer.
- I've served 3 Morelight churches. That experience provides an inclusive kind of community that is alive and very much committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

On Listening and Discernment

The heterosexual members of those congregations were very accepting. I am a supporter of the inclusivity of the church, which I believe is Presbyterian. I don't know what will change.

- Homosexuality is a sin... The Scriptures are very clear on this. To approve this proposed amendment would be a departure from our historic Reformed and Confessional teaching and practice. We cannot accept the ordination of those who engage in sin without repentance.
- I am a member of Celebration of Life. When we joined this church we had never really thought about what it meant to be part of a Morelight church. It has been an amazing experience which has deepened our faith and touched us deeply. We are a part of a very caring community. If the proposed amendment were not to pass, I feel that it might break the spirit of our congregation.
- I want to change what I said before. I think there would be change if this amendment passes. And the change would be that it would alleviate us from being liars. We are all sinners.
- I served at a UCC church for a time and I have to say that during that time I felt that a huge weight had been lifted off of my shoulders because they have already dealt with this issue.
- The proposed change establishes no definite constitutional ordination requirement. It doesn't say what obedience to Jesus Christ is. It diminishes the role that is given to the historical witness of the Confessions. The word "fidelity" is used in both the current and proposed amendment. The current G-6-0106b requires fidelity in marriage. The proposed amendment states that answering the ordination questions in the affirmative means fidelity to the standards of the church. But it does not specify what standard or standards require fidelity. Although the initial focus is on the fact that the proposed amendment will provide opportunity for the ordination of homosexuals, there are so many other ramifications. The revised wording is full of vagueness and will create a great deal of confusion. No specific standard would exist. What are the standards of the church?
- We can continue to be the PC(USA) and be an inclusive church just the way it is. (He shared the story of his brother dying in the hospital and his being there to comfort him.) We are there to be supportive in the community and show Christ's love.
- I believe the future holds more of the same. Since 1973 I've heard this from both sides. There has been pain from both sides. You can look at Scripture and find support for both positions. It is not just an urge to inclusiveness. It is important to honor a sense of call. We can talk about the issues but how do you get past this? No matter what we decide, it won't go away.

Faith Church 36th Anniversary Weekend

Faith Presbyterian Church
16000 N. Del Webb Blvd.
Sun City, AZ 85351
623-974-3611
www.scfaith.org

Sunday, January 18th

Worship at 10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary

Sermon: *"Mission: Redrawing the World"*

Mark 3:31-35

Lecture and Discussion at 3:00 p.m. - Illingworth Hall

"Back to the Future: Presbyterian World Mission in the 21st Century"

Monday, January 19th

Lecture and Discussion at 10:00 a.m. - Illingworth Hall

"The Cutting Edge of Mission: Beyond Partnership"



The Rev. Hunter Farrell,
Director of World Mission
(P.C.U.S.A.).

The Rev. Hunter Farrell, director of the General Assembly Council's World Mission program area was a career missionary with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who has served in Africa and South America as well as on the national staff of the denomination.

"Hunter combines a first rate intellect with a compassion for people who are hurting. His career has been devoted to international mission and his commitment to Jesus Christ is borne out in his words, acts and in ways that are seen in few people."

—Rev. Tom Taylor, Deputy Executive Director for Mission PCUSA