

**CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE AND DISCERNMENT**  
**Ordination Standards and Presbytery Membership**

**C-6**

Rev. Vicky Curtiss in her article *Discernment and Decision-Making* outlines the process of communal discernment and the steps to include establishing a common starting point, gathering and sharing information, exploring options, choosing direction and resting with the decision.

The presbytery began, at its March 2007 meeting, to respond to the Overture from the Session of Kingman Presbyterian Church by engaging in a process of Mutual Invitation. The Mutual Invitation process can be helpful in addressing differences in the perception of personal power among participants and ensures that each person has an opportunity to participate; rather than the “whoever-wants-to-talk-can-talk” way with some participants dominating the discussion.

Ordination standards and presbytery Membership are at the heart of the overture before the presbytery. One of the steps in the discernment and decision-making process as outlined above is “exploring options”. Currently as the presbytery seeks to determine the appropriate response to the overture it has only before it the wording of the overture itself. The Presbytery Council at its May 3, 2007 meeting considered recommendations from the Ad Hoc Discernment Team for the June meeting, including the invitation to invite the Rev. Victoria Curtiss to present a workshop on Communal Discernment. In light of continued misunderstanding and confusion, regarding the adoption by the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of a new Authoritative Interpretation of G-6.0108b when it approved an amended version of Recommendation #5 of the Report of Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church, the Council also requested (at its May 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting) that the Stated Clerk provide clarifying advice to the presbytery on these matters.

Having considered the recommendations of the Discernment Team for the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, its request for the Stated Clerk to provide clarifying information, the feedback from the Mutual Invitation Small Groups and the desirability of alternatives for consideration the Council APPROVED the presentation of the following MOTION during the Council Report at the June 9, 2007 meeting for consideration of the presbytery:

MOTION: In response to the Overture from the Session of Kingman Presbyterian Church and as the Presbytery continues discernment and dialogue on how best to respond in the matter of Ordination Standards and Presbytery Membership the Presbytery requests that the Committee on Ministry do the following for consideration of the Presbytery and report back at the September 14-15, 2007 Meeting:

1. Provide a summary of what takes place now and what our policies/practices are on the examination of both Candidates for Ministry and those already ordained who are transferring to the presbytery; and
2. Recommend changes to our policies, guidelines, practices, and processes designed to assist the presbytery in its obligation to gain a broader vision of each candidate’s or minister’s faith and manner of life and the presbytery’s responsibility to conduct such examinations reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully and deliberately.