

**Stated Clerk Report for the Presbytery Meeting
June 16, 2023**

Presbyters, this Stated Clerk is quite long due to the length of the omnibus motion. Please take time to read it all. The Omnibus Motion includes an attachment of the 15 recommendations for concurrence or non-concurrence with 15 General Assembly overtures. If there is anything that you would like to discuss on the floor of Presbytery, please ask to pull that item before we vote on the omnibus motion. This process is not in any way meant to stifle conversation on issues important to you.

Protocol Review

The Clerk anticipates some people will attend this meeting via Zoom and some will attend in person at Lewistown 1st Presbyterian Church. While on the Zoom meeting, please adhere to the following protocol:

- 1. Please keep your microphone muted until called upon or recognized to speak. This helps eliminate feedback, minimize background noise, and helps us to move through our time together more easily.*
- 2. Please rename your Zoom participant identification to include “RE” or “MWS” if applicable, your first and last name, the entity you represent, your position (i.e., member, commissioner, guest) and town. For example: RE Caroline Fleming, YP Stated Clerk, Miles City. (In ZOOM, click on the 3 dots on your picture screen and you can rename yourself and include the information above.)*
- 3. When you have the floor, please say your name and the entity you represent each time you speak.*
- 4. When voting, if not using a voice vote of “Yes” or “No,” please use the “raise hand” feature found toward the bottom of the screen if participating via Zoom and raise your hand if attending in person. We will count these votes then ask phone-only participants to unmute their phones and vote verbally.*

Omnibus motion.

The Stated Clerk moves the following:

- 1.** That the agenda for this meeting posted on yellowstonepcusa.org be approved.
- 2.** That the roll for this meeting be established in two ways:
 - a. By email to caroline@yellowstonepcusa.org if you are attending via Zoom or
 - b. By registration form provided at the meeting if you are attending in person.
- 3.** That all requests for excused absences received by the Stated Clerk be approved.
- 4.** That any Corresponding members present at the meeting be seated.
- 5.** That the Presbytery grant the Moderator authority to give privilege of the floor to persons, other than Members or Commissioners, for the purpose of reporting to this meeting.

6. That the Moderator and the Stated Clerk be empowered to suggest and adjust the agenda during the meeting, as may be necessary.
7. That the draft minutes of the Presbytery meeting of March 3-4, 2023 be approved as published on the presbytery website.
8. That the draft minutes of the Special Presbytery meeting of May 23, 2023 be approved as published on the presbytery website.
9. That the minutes of this meeting shall report that there has been no call for a meeting of the Presbytery's PJC this year to date and that the following former members are still eligible to serve if needed: MWS Dan Krebill, RE Lloyd Mandeville, RE Sharla Helland, RE Gary Slagel, MWS Jody McDevitt and MWS Lanny Rounds.

10. That the recommendations on overtures reviewed and approved by the Pastoral Ministry Team and by the Leadership Cabinet be approved as recommended to Presbytery and listed here:

		Recommendation
a.	22-A - F-1.0302c The Calling of the Church	Concur
b.	22-B - F-1.0404 Openness to the Guidance of the Holy Spirit	Concur
c.	22-M - G-3.0104 General Principles of Councils	Concur
d.	22-O - G-3.0106 General Principles of Councils	Concur
e.	22-P - G-3.0106 General Principles (Admin of Mission)	Non-Concurrence
f.	22-R - G-3.0401 Synod (Composition & Responsibilities)	Concur
g.	22-T - W-3.0205 Gathering (Confession & Forgiveness)	Non-Concurrence
h.	22-U - W-3.0409 Sacrament (Theology of Lord's Supper)	Non-Concurrence
i.	22-W - W-4.0403 Ordination, Installation & Commissioning	Concur
j.	22-X - W-5.0104 Worship & Personal Life	Concur
k.	22-Y - W-5.0104 Worship & Personal Life	Concur
l.	22-Z - W-5.0201 (1) Worship & the Church's Ministry Within the Community of Faith	Concur
m.	22-Z - W-5.0301 (2) Worship & the Church's Mission in the World	Concur
n.	22-AA - W-5.0204 Pastoral Care	Concur
o.	22-BB -W-5.0204 Pastoral Care	Concur

Complete texts of reviews of these overtures are attached to this report as "Attachment A."

The complete book of Overtures are on the presbytery's website at www.yellowstonepcusa.org and at www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/bk_of_amends_2022_final_1122023.pdf

End of Motion.

The above motion will be made at the opening of the June 16, 2023 meeting and will be posted on the presbytery website for review before the meeting begins.

Stated Clerk Activity:

1. Worked with the team planning this presbytery meeting.
2. Attended the Synod's minutes review in Denver.

3. Have kept up with and answered emails almost daily.
4. Updated the Presbytery Directory for 2023 as new information was received.
5. Attended a 2-day meeting in Glendive sponsored by the ECLA and attended by members of UMC, UCC, ELCA and PC (USA) to discuss the future of ministry in eastern Montana.
6. Maintained contact with Mark Parker, the attorney who has been incredibly generous with his time concerning the sale of the McAllister church property. We have finally concluded the sale and proceeds have been received.
7. Have reviewed G.A. overtures presbytery had left to vote on. Recommendations for 15 are included in the omnibus motion. I did ask our PJC to review and make a recommendation concerning the new Rules of Discipline, but that did not get done, so there is not recommendation concerning that, nor concerning the overtures related to the old Rules of Discipline. Any actions Presbytery chooses to take concerning the new Rules of Discipline would be fine, but it has already passed and will become part of the Book of Order July 1.
8. Attended the following webinars:
 - Rural Church Technology
 - New CLC system
 - BOO New Requirements for All Councils
9. Have attended all meetings of the Leadership Cabinet and Pastoral Ministry Team and have recorded minutes as required.

Caroline Fleming
Stated Clerk, Yellowstone Presbytery

*****PLEASE NOTE: throughout these proposed amendments:
All deleted text is in strikethrough. All added text is in *italics*.**

Proposed:

22-A — F-1.0302c THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH

F-1.0302c THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH (**POL-16** 1a)

Shall F-1.0302c in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be amended as follows?

“F-1.0302 The Marks of the Church ...

c. The Catholicity of the Church ...

. Because the church is catholic, it strives everywhere to testify to Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women, and children~~ *all people* of all times, places, races, nations, ages, *abilities, genders*, conditions, and stations in life.”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: The witness of scripture and the constitution testifies to the full inclusion of all people, including differently abled persons, in the faith and governance of the church. Because the omission of any type of person from a list of people could be regarded as exclusionary rather than inclusive, changing F-1.0302 to read “all people” clearly state that no one is to be left out. And though more is added to the subsequent list to include “abilities, genders,” the addition is consistent with the inclusiveness we try to display in our church polity. These small changes reflect the value and importance that we put on the use of consistent inclusive language throughout our policies.

22-B — F-1.0404 OPENNESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

F-1.0404 OPENNESS (**POL-16** 1b)

Shall F-1.0404 in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be amended as follows?

(Deleted text is in strikethrough; added text is in *italics*.)

“F-1.0404 Openness ...

...a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of ~~women and men~~ *all people* of all ages, races, ethnicities, *abilities, genders*, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity.”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: The witness of scripture and the constitution testifies to the full inclusion of all people, including differently abled persons, in the faith and governance of the church. Because the omission of any type of person from a list of people could be regarded as exclusionary rather than inclusive, changing F-1.0302 to read “all people” clearly state that no one is to be left out. And though more is added to the subsequent list to include “abilities, genders,” the addition is consistent with the inclusiveness we try to display in our church polity. These small changes reflect the value and importance that we put on the use of consistent inclusive language throughout our policies.

22-M - G-3.0104 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

G-3.0104 OFFICERS

Shall G-3.0104 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?
(Added text is in *italics*.)

“G-3.0104 Officers

The pastor of a congregation shall be the moderator of the session of that congregation. In congregations where there are co-pastors, they shall both be considered moderators and have provisions for designating who presides at a particular meeting. If it is impractical for the pastor to moderate, he or she shall invite another minister of the Word and Sacrament who is a member of the presbytery, or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, the presbytery shall make provision for a moderator. *It is appropriate for councils to adopt procedures that may allow for electronic session meetings.*”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: We in Yellowstone are already using and allowing for electronic meetings not only for presbytery but for sessions as well. We have for years allowed moderators to call in to session meetings. Our vast distances make this necessary on occasions. The last sentence simply clarifies that the practice is allowed and suggests councils may want to adopt procedures to allow for electronic session meetings.

22-O — G-3.0106 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION

“G-3.0106 Administration of Mission

Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions. Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s

new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church's witness to the mission of the triune God.

Councils higher than the session may provide examples of policies and procedures that may be gathered into advisory handbooks. These examples illumine practices required by the Constitution but left to councils for specific implementation. Such handbooks may also offer information that enhances or secures the ministry of the particular council.

Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council.

All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy. ***Each council's policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.***

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: Yellowstone Presbytery already has the policy on the books that requires boundary training every three years. It is appropriate for the denomination to mandate boundary training and child protection training for all members of councils as some still do not understand the breach of trust that is generated by such misconduct in spite of extensive opportunities for education on the issues.

22-P — G-3.0106 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (**POL-10**)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

("G-3.0106 Administration of Mission ...

... *"All councils shall adopt and implement ~~a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy~~ the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy."*

RECOMMENDATION: Non-Concurrence

RATIONALE: While training in cultural proficiency and against bias and antiracism are important, the constitution is not intended to serve as a manual of operations. Hence the creation of more policies that include lists of requirements or systems on how to implement requirements becomes cumbersome, particularly to our smaller churches. Presbyteries certainly can and should adopt anti-racism policies and offer training addressing systemic and structural racism without each church having to adopt its own policy and requirements on enforcing that policy.

22-R — G-3.0401 THE SYNOD

G-3.0401 COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MC-06)

Shall G-3.0401 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

“G-3.0401 Composition and Responsibilities

“The synod is the intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.

“When a synod meets, it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. Each presbytery shall elect at least one ruling elder and one minister of the Word and Sacrament to serve as commissioners to synod. A synod shall determine a plan for the election of commissioners to the synod, as well as the method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103; both plans shall be subject to approval by a majority of the presbyteries in the synod. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. *A synod may enroll, or provide by rule for the enrollment of, ministers of Word and Sacrament and ruling elders, in numbers as nearly equal as possible, during terms of elected service to the synod. Such enrollment may be used, among other purposes, for fulfilling the principles of participation and representation and may include representation from the synod’s racial ethnic active leadership.* Each person elected moderator or other officer shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed.”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: The proposed language will allow synods to adopt rules, subject to the approval of a majority of their presbyteries, to extend voting privileges to additional persons in the synod for the purpose of participation and representation while keeping with the principle of governance by ruling elders and teaching elders that is as nearly balanced as possible. It would also free synods to find ways to fulfill both the plan for election of commissioners and the plan for participation and representation of some who are not regularly represented.

22-T — W-3.0205 GATHERING

W-3.0205 CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Shall W-3.0205 in the Directory for Worship amended as follows?

“W-3.0205 Confession and Forgiveness ...

“... 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; *the sacrament of baptism*; and the sharing of peace as a sign of reconciliation in Christ.”

RECOMMENDATION: Non-Concurrence

RATIONALE: The additional language is unnecessary and may lead some to believe the sacrament of baptism should quickly follow our confession and forgiveness. It can, but it can also occur at other times during the service.

22-U — W-3.0409 SACRAMENT

W-3.0409 THEOLOGY OF THE LORD’S SUPPER (**TWE-05** 2)

Shall W-3.0409 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?

“W-3.0409 Theology of the Lord’s Supper ...

“... 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, *when appropriate*, to baptismal preparation and Baptism should be graciously extended.”

RECOMMENDATION: Non-Concurrence

RATIONALE: The use of “should,” rather than the mandatory “shall,” already provides latitude for pastoral discretion in determining the appropriateness of an invitation to baptismal preparation.

**22-W — W-4.0403 ORDINATION, INSTALLATION, AND COMMISSIONING W-
4.0403 ORDER OF WORSHIP**

Shall W-4.0403 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows? (Added text is in *italics*.)

“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 lays on hands at the ordination of minister of the Word and Sacrament; its moderator may invite other ministers of the Word and Sacrament 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 ministers of the Word and Sacrament 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. *Signs and symbols of blessing may be conferred on the newly installed or commissioned person.* 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 minister of the Word and Sacrament, persons may be invited to charge the minister of the Word and Sacrament and congregation to faithfulness in ministry and mutuality in relationship. When a minister of the Word and Sacrament 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.”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: The proposed change allows for the laying on of hands but does not require it at installations. There may be occasions, including ecumenical situations or a candidate’s preference regarding physical contact, where laying on of hands does not feel appropriate or in keeping with the belief that love should be used to guide our actions.

22-X — W-5.0104 WORSHIP AND PERSONAL LIFE

W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP

Shall W-5.0104 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows? (Added text is in *italics*.)

“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. *Household worship is a central and important practice within the Reformed tradition, an important means of faith formation.* 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.”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: This amendment asserts and emphasizes the importance of household worship in faith formation and may help individuals and families understand that importance.

22-Y — W-5.0104 WORSHIP AND PERSONAL LIFE

W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP

“W-5.0104 Household Worship ...

“... *Prayers of thanks and blessing, and lament at the household table draw upon ancient Jewish practice and the examples of Jesus, his disciples, and the early*

Christian community. Mealttime prayers provide opportunities to give thanks to God's works of creation and redemption by which we are sustained for Christ's service. We respond with heartfelt thanks and praise in the sharing of our daily bread."

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

Rationale: This amendment stresses the significance of mealttime prayers in household worship and does not present any polity issues.

**22-Z — W-5.0201 **WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY OF FAITH****

W-5.0201 THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall W-5.0201 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows? (**Added text is in italics.**)

“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, *discipleship*, 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 *faithful discipleship and constant prayer (F-1.0301; F- 1.0302a; F-1.0303; F-1.0403)*”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: This amendment places an emphasis on communal discipleship within the church's practice of ministry within the community of faith and mission in the world.

**W-5.0301 **WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY OF FAITH****

2. Shall W-5.0301 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows? (**Added text is in italics.**)

“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 (*F-1.01; F-1.0303; F-1.0304*)”

RECOMMENDATION: Non-Concurrence

RATIONALE: This is an unnecessary amendment. Discipleship is addressed in the amendment to W-5.0201 above.

**22-AA — W-5.0204 WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY OF FAITH PASTORAL CARE**

Shall the third paragraph of W-5.0204 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?

“W-5.0204 Pastoral Care ...

“~~---~~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 ministers of the Word and Sacrament 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 *particular specialized pastoral care* 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.”

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: The term “particular specialized pastoral care ministries” doesn't limit what might be considered as such ministries. A list of types of ministry could be mis-construed as exhaustive and thus limiting.

**22-BB — W-5.0204 WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY OF FAITH W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE**

Shall the fourth paragraph of W-5.0204 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?

“W-5.0204 Pastoral 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, in *life and in death, in body, mind, or spirit*. A service of wholeness includes the proclamation of the Word, focusing on the promise of *peace and 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** *in its many forms* comes as a gift from God, not as a-product *an accomplishment* 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 minister of Word and Sacrament, 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."

RECOMMENDATION: Concur

RATIONALE: The amendment clarifies that healing happens in a variety of ways and wholeness is not necessarily synonymous with physical recovery. The deletion of the word "always" and insertion of "in its many forms" and b) deletion of "a product" and insertion of "not an accomplishment of human prayer" are helpful clarifications.