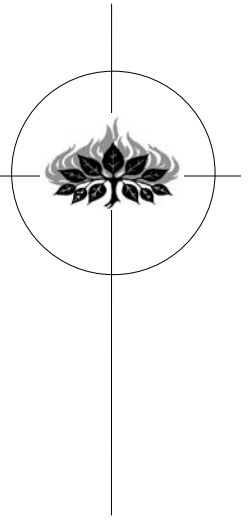


The Presbyterian Church in Canada L'Église presbytérienne au Canada



MODERATOR OF THE 142ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Douglas H. Rollwage, B.Th., M.T.S. M.Div.

July 29, 2016

TO: Clerks of Presbytery
FROM: Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk
RE: Actions of the 2016 General Assembly for attention of presbyteries

Dear clerks of presbytery,

Please find below, the General Assembly referrals for your attention and action. The remits from the Assembly are included in a separate package to you. Once again this year, the Assembly Office will send the session referrals directly to clerks of session. This will save you the task of reproducing and distributing these referrals through your presbytery. I am, however, including a copy of the session referrals letter in your material for your information. Electronic copies of the referrals letters (and the documents noted for study and report) are available online at presbyterian.ca/referrals.

1. STUDY AND REPORT

1.1 Presbyterian Polity: Its Distinctives and Directions for the 21st Century

Committee on Church Doctrine, Rec. No. 1 A&P 2016, p. 258, (adopted, p. 26)

That the document “Presbyterian Polity: Its Distinctives and Directions for the 21st Century” be commended to the courts and, in particular, to the clerks of those courts for study and response to the Committee on Church Doctrine through the Assembly Office by August 31, 2017.

“Presbyterian Polity: Its Distinctives and Directions for the 21st Century” can be found on the website and at pages 251–58 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

1.2 Understanding and Interpreting the Bible

Committee on Church Doctrine, Rec. No. 7 (A&P 2016, p. 278 adopted, p. 39)

That the document “Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” be commended to congregations, presbyteries and other groups in The Presbyterian Church in Canada for their use.

“Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” can be found on the website and at pages 265–78 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

1.3 Understanding and Interpreting the Bible

Committee on Church Doctrine, Rec. No. 8 (A&P 2016, p. 278, adopted, p. 39)

That sessions, presbyteries and other interested groups using the document “Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” report comments to the Committee on Church Doctrine through the Assembly Office by January 31, 2017, and that the results of these comments be reported to a future General Assembly.

2. EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION

2.1 Committee to Advise with the Moderator, Rec. No. 3

(A&P 2016, p. 201, adopted, p. 12)
That the thanks of the Assembly be extended to the congregations, individuals, presbyteries, organizations, and international and ecumenical partners who warmly welcomed and graciously offered hospitality to the Rev. Karen R. Horst.

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Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Stephen Kendall, The Rev. Donald Muir, The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp

2.2 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 14 (A&P 2016, p. 427, adopted, p. 26)
That individuals, congregations and presbyteries be commended for their involvement in refugee sponsorship and for their support for refugees who remain overseas and who require humanitarian assistance.

2.3 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 15 (A&P 2016, p. 427, adopted, p. 26)
That individuals, congregations and presbyteries be commended for their prayers, generosity of spirit and resources to support the life-saving work of PWS&D in emergency assistance, in particular for the generous responses to the Nepal earthquake relief and to the Syria crisis, and life-transforming work in development programs responding to communities suffering from hunger, disease, disaster, conflict and injustice around the world.

3. INFORMATION/ACTION

3.1 Minimum Stipend and Allowance Schedule for 2017

The Minimum Stipend and Allowance Schedule is found on pages 234–35 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

3.2 Strategic Plan

Assembly Council, Rec. No. 9 (A&P 2016, p. 220, adopted, p. 25)

That the Strategic Plan be approved for guiding the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The Strategic Plan can be found on the website and at pages 219–20 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

3.3 Strategic Plan

Assembly Council, Rec. No. 12 (A&P 2016, p. 220, adopted, p. 25)

That presbyteries and congregations be encouraged to implement the Strategic Plan within their locales providing feedback as needed, and be prepared to share their experiences with the Assembly Council in three years.

3.4 Committee on Church Doctrine, Rec. No. 2 (A&P 2016, p. 264 adopted, p. 26)

That The Presbyterian Church in Canada seek the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in light of the Reign of God, in a response to the overtures named above and, in particular, the prayer of Overture No. 16, 2015 re encouraging dialogue on marriage and sexuality.

3.5 Committee on Church Doctrine, Rec. No. 3 (A&P 2016, p. 264, as amended and adopted, p. 28)

That all courts of the church be required to deal with all people with tender pastoral care.

3.6 Process for a Congregation Leaving the Denomination

Clerks of Assembly, Rec. No. 2 (A&P 2016, p. 283, adopted, p. 23)

That the above be the response to Overture No. 37, 2015 and Overture Nos. 4, 5 and 7, 2016 re request for process for a congregation leaving the denomination.

The preamble to this recommendation can be found on the website and at pages 281–83 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

3.7 Public Prayer

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee, Rec. No. 1 (A&P 2016, p. 297, adopted, p. 41)

That the prayer of the Commissioner's Overture be answered by the above response.

The report can be found on the website and at pages 292–97 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

3.8 Committee on History, Rec. No. 3 (A&P 2016, p. 303, adopted, p. 19)

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church actively promote the "Solus Christus" event to take place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on October 29, 2016, and encourage their members to either attend this event or to join via internet.

- 3.9 Committee on History, Rec. No. 4** (A&P 2016, p. 303, adopted, p. 19)
That the General Assembly and the courts of the church promote the “Soli Deo Gloria” event in celebration of the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation to take place at Knox College in Toronto on Saturday, October 28, 2017, and encourage their members to attend.
- 3.10 Committee on History, Rec. No. 5** (A&P 2016, p. 304 as amended and adopted p. 19)
That the congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be encouraged to contribute to the National Presbyterian Museum and that presbyteries be encouraged to assess their congregations \$50 to this end.
- 3.11 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 5** (A&P 2016 p. 381, adopted, p. 20)
That congregations and presbyteries be encouraged to study the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 3.12 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 6** (A&P 2016 p. 381, adopted, p. 20)
That sessions and presbyteries consider ways to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action in their communities.
- 3.13 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 9** (A&P 2016, p. 381, as reworded and adopted, p. 20)
That sessions, presbyteries and all church groups are encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which they are gathering at each meeting.
- 3.14 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 16** (A&P 2016 p. 427, adopted, p. 26)
That individuals, congregations and presbyteries take note that PWS&D continues to be a separate fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; as such all are encouraged to meet their *Presbyterians Sharing* allocation and to consider making separate contributions in support of the development, relief and refugee work of the church.
- 3.15 Life and Mission Agency Committee, Rec. No. 18** (A&P 2016 p. 434, adopted, p. 20)
That all congregations develop an intentional plan to work towards meeting and exceeding the 10% *Presbyterians Sharing* Allocation in 2016.
- 3.16 Presbyterian Record, Inc., Rec. No. 2** (A&P 2016 p. 461, adopted, p. 24)
That the ministry of the *Presbyterian Record* be commended to the courts of the church with the request that those courts discuss the financial situation of the *Record* and seek ways to assist the *Record* financially in the coming year.

4. LEGISLATION (BARRIER, INTERIM, OR DECLARATORY ACTS)

- 4.1** Please note that Remits A and B 2015, found at (A&P 2016, p. 461–62) were adopted and the relevant sections of the Book of forms have been amended accordingly as follows:

32. Every book enjoined to be kept by any court is ordered to be reviewed and attested yearly by the next higher court, save that a presbytery if it is desired may call for the session records once every two years for attestation, and in the case of a presbytery where its synod has been dissolved, another presbytery is empowered to attest its records according to the dissolution plan approved by General Assembly at the time of dissolution. (see section 259.2, Appendix K, Declaratory Act: A&P 1991, p. 254, 37)

259.2 The General Assembly may dissolve any synod upon its request provided it is satisfied with the synod’s plan to apportion the various responsibilities and assets among the presbyteries within its bounds. The plan for dissolution shall be approved by the General Assembly and included in the Acts and Proceedings. (see Appendix K)

- 4.2 Clerks of Assembly, Rec. No. 6** (A&P 2016, p. 286, adopted, p. 40)
That Book of Forms section 12.1 be deleted.

Section 12.1 was deleted from the Book of Forms

- 4.3 Clerks of Assembly, Rec. No. 9** (A&P 2016, p. 289, adopted, p. 16)
That Book of Forms section 312 be amended to read as follows:

312. The Clerks of Assembly shall be responsible for producing the minutes of the General Assembly and making them available to the church.

This amended legislation has the effect of allowing for more flexibility in the distribution of electronic versions of the minutes of Assembly.

4.4 Book of Forms Appendix G

A revised Book of Forms Appendix G (Archives and Records Management) was approved (A&P 2016, p. 209, adopted p. 25) and will be included in the 2016 edition of the Book of Forms

The revised Book of Forms Appendix G may be found on the website and at pages 207–209 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

4.5 Book of Forms Appendix K

A new Book of Forms Appendix K (A&P 2016, p. 290) was added to outline the process for considering and achieving the dissolution of a synod.

The revised Book of Forms Appendix K may be found on the website and at page 290 of the 2016 Acts and Proceedings.

5. DECLARATORY ACT

The following Declaratory Act was adopted (Clerks of Assembly, Rec. No. 5 p. 285, p. 16) and will be added to Book of Forms section 198.1:

Ordained minister of churches that are members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches are permitted to preside at the Lord's Table at the discretion of the moderator or interim moderator of the relevant session. (A&P 2015, p. 255)