

## **SEVENTH SEDERUNT**

### **ASSEMBLY CONSTITUTED**

At Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, on Tuesday, June sixth, two thousand and seventeen at seven o'clock in the evening, the Assembly met pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator constituted the Assembly with prayer.

#### **COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS** (cont'd from p. XXX)

The Assembly called for the report of the Committee on Business which was presented by M.R. McLennan, convener. M.R. McLennan moved, duly seconded, that the agenda for the seventh sederunt be approved as presented. Adopted.

(cont'd on p. XXX)

#### **COMMITTEE ON THE ROLL AND LEAVE TO WITHDRAW** (cont'd from p. XXX)

The Assembly called for the report of the Committee on the Roll and Leave to Withdraw which was presented by D.R. Clarke, convener.

##### **Report as a Whole**

D.R. Clarke moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

#### **CLERKS OF ASSEMBLY** (cont'd from p. XXX)

##### **Recommendation No. 2**

Recommendation No. 2 was referred back to the Clerks of Assembly during the second sederunt (p. XXX). Prepared to clarify the language in the report, the Clerks of Assembly placed Recommendation No. 2 before the Assembly again.

**Recommendation No. 2** was adopted.

**Recommendation No. 3** (p. XXX) was moved by J.M. Zondag, duly seconded.

##### **Amendment**

J.P. Wyminga moved, duly seconded, that all words after "annually" be struck and replaced with "which shall normally be used within the given year." Defeated.

**Recommendation No. 3** was adopted.

**Recommendation No. 4** (p. XXX) was moved by J.M. Zondag, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 5** (p. XXX) was moved by J.M. Zondag, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 6** (p. XXX) was moved by J.M. Zondag, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 11** (p. XXX) was moved by J.M. Zondag, duly seconded.

##### **Amendment**

D.P. Konrad moved, duly seconded, that sections 374 and 374.1 not be included in the motion to refer to sessions, presbyteries and synods but rather to be retained in its current form. Defeated.

**Recommendation No. 11** was adopted.

##### **Report as a Whole**

B.J. Fotheringham moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

#### **COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STANDING COMMITTEES** (cont'd from p. XXX)

The second report of the Committee to Nominating Standing Committees was presented by E.M.I. McLean, convener.

**Recommendation No. 1** (p. XXX) was moved by G.K. Walford, duly seconded, that the above be the membership of the standing committees of the General Assembly, with the addition of the name of Brent B. Ellis to fill the one-year vacancy on the Assembly Council in the category of the church-at-large members. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 2** (p. XXX) was moved by G.K. Walford, duly seconded. Adopted.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEES – 2017–2018

### ASSEMBLY COUNCIL

#### 9 Church-at-Large Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Dr. Robert H. Smith, Toronto, ON (convener)
2013–2018 (II)	<b>Mr. Brent B. Ellis, Hamilton, ON (filling a vacancy for 1 year)</b>
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. David W. Sutherland, Bible Hill, NS
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Mark R. McLennan, Woodstock, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. John Barrett, Charlottetown, PE
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. A.R. Neal Mathers, Newmarket, ON
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Ms. Barb Sargent, Chatham, ON</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. John Wilson, Sault Ste. Marie, ON</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Germaine Lovelace, Kenora, ON</b>

#### 12 Presbytery Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name and Presbytery
2016–2018 (I)	Ms. Gayle Rodger, Corunna, ON (Lambton-West Middlesex)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Donald P.J. McCallum, Listowel, ON (Huron-Perth)
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Gina Farnell, Quebec, QC (Quebec)
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Harold Hunt, Thunder Bay, ON (Superior)
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. Gordon A. Kouwenberg, Sooke, BC (Vancouver Island)
2016–2019 (I)	Dr. M. Wilma Welsh, Kitchener, ON (Waterloo-Wellington)
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. John-Peter C. Smit, Toronto, ON, (West Toronto)
2016–2019 (I)	Mr. David Jennings, North Vancouver, BC (Westminster)
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Rev. Hugh Donnelly, Toronto, ON (Pickering) **</b>
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Rev. Capt. Daniel H. Forget, Trois-Rivieres, QC (Kingston) **</b>
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Ms. Carol Stymiest, Miramichi, NB (New Brunswick) **</b>
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Ms. Cheryl Weeks, Montague, NS (Halifax &amp; Lunenburg) **</b>

#### 7 Members (serving initial 3 year term)

Years	Name and Presbytery/Synod
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Colleen Walker, Englehart, ON (Temiskaming)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Thomas J. Kay, Leamington, ON (Southwestern Ontario)
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Vic Falk, Brandon, MB (Manitoba Northwestern Ontario)
2016–2018 (I)	The Rev. Jay Song, Weyburn, SK (Saskatchewan)
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Robert J. Murray, Pinawa, MB (Winnipeg)
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Sandra Cameron Evans, Calgary, AB (Alberta and the Northwest)
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Christopher Clarke, Duncan, BC (British Columbia)

#### Ex-officio – voting – 4 members

President of Atlantic Mission Society or designate  
 President of Women's Missionary Society or designate  
 Convener of Life and Mission Agency Committee  
 Moderator, General Assembly

#### Ex-officio – non-voting – 4 members

Principal Clerk, General Assembly  
 General Secretary, Life and Mission Agency  
 Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer  
 One of the Heads of the Colleges

### CHURCH DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

#### 15 Members and 6 Corresponding Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Bradley Childs, Vancouver, BC
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Matthew E. Ruttan, Barrie, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Mark Chiang, Spruce Grove, AB
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. Robert N. Faris, Toronto, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Dr. Alexandra Johnston, Toronto, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. Cynthia J. Chenard, Dartmouth, NS
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries, Montreal, QC
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Paul D. Johnston, Markham, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Jeffrey Murray, Sackville, NB
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. M. Helen Smith, Toronto, ON

2015–2020 (II)	<b>Rev. Jinsook Khang, Concord, ON **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand, Abbotsford, BC (convener)</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Tysdal, Briercrest, SK</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Ms. Lisa Baker, Kenora, ON</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Dwight E. Nelson, Bayfield, ON</b>
2012–2018 (II) cm	Rev. Dr. John C. Carr, Edmonton, AB
2012–2018 (II) cm	Rev. Dr. Mark Godin, Cambridge, ON
2017–2019 (I) cm	<b>Mr. Ross Bassingthwaite, Kelowna, BC (filling a term for 2 years)</b>
2016–2019 (I) cm	Rev. Karla Wubbenhorst, Guelph, ON
2017–2020 (I) cm	<b>Rev. Dr. Nicholas Athanasiadis, Toronto, ON</b>
2017–2020 (I) cm	<b>Rev. Dr. Kevin Livingston, Toronto, ON</b>

“cm” = corresponding member

#### Ex-officio – 3 members

Representative, Presbyterian College  
 Representative, Knox College  
 Representative, St. Andrew's Hall/VST

### ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

#### 6 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2014–2018 (II)	<b>Rev. Mark Tremblay, Calgary, AB (filling a term for 1 year) **</b>
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Diane R. Hayman, Westville, NS
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Amanda Currie, Saskatoon, SK (convener)
2016–2019 (I)	Dr. Richard Allen, Toronto, ON
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Susan Mattinson, Thunder Bay, ON</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Matthew Sams, Thornhill, ON</b>

#### Ex-officio – 2 members

Principal Clerk, General Assembly, or designate  
 General Secretary of Life and Mission Agency, or designate

#### By Correspondence – 6 members

Representative to Canadian Council of Churches  
 Delegate representative to last Council of Caribbean and North America Area Council of World Communion of Reformed Churches  
 Delegate representative to last General Council of World Communion of Reformed Churches  
 Delegate representative to last Assembly of World Council of Churches  
 Representative from Women's Missionary Society

### HISTORY COMMITTEE

#### 6 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Ms. Marilyn Repchuck, Hamilton, ON (convener)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. John Vaudry, Pembroke, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod, Brighton, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. Timothy F. Archibald, New Minas, NS
2016–2020 (II)	<b>Mr. Scott MacDonald, Stratford, PE **</b>
2012–2018 (II)	<b>Dr. Kenneth Munro, Edmonton, AB **</b>

#### By Correspondence – 9 members

2016–2019 (I) Mr. Al Clarkson, Toronto, ON  
 8 synod conveners

#### Ex-officio – 6 members

Professor of History, Knox College  
 Professor of History, The Presbyterian College  
 Professor of History, Vancouver School of Theology  
 Archivist/Records Administrator  
 Assistant Archivist  
 Curator of National Presbyterian Museum

### INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

#### 6 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2014–2018 (II)	<b>Mr. Jacques Dalton, Ottawa, ON (filling a term for 1 year) **</b>
2015–2018 (I)	<b>Rev. Erin Chong-Sun Ko, Toronto, ON (filling a term for 1 year)</b>
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dale Henry, Mississauga, ON (convener)
2015–2019 (I)	Mr. Farid Ayoub, Chelsea, QC

2017–2020 (I) **Mr. Boghos Barbouri, Toronto, ON**  
 2017–2020 (I) **Mr. W. Wayne Barchard, Elmsdale, NS**

**Ex-officio – 7 members**

Five persons appointed by Life and Mission Agency  
 Representative of Atlantic Mission Society  
 Representative of Women’s Missionary Society

**LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE****12 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Ms. Nancy Harvey, Summerside, PE
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Vivian Ketchum, Winnipeg, MB
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Douglas U. Schonberg, Niagara Falls, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Dr. Jo Szostak, Regina, SK
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. Thomas Billard, Brampton, ON (convener)
2013–2019 (II)	Ms. Judy Dodds, Ottawa, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Jeffrey R. Lackie, Thorborn, NS
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Cindy Stephenson, Calgary, AB
2015–2020 (II)	<b>Mr. R. Aubrey Hawton, Oro-Medonte, ON **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Sampson Afoakwah, Montreal West, QC</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Ms. Marion Lade, Comox, BC</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Allyson Macleod, Sutton West, ON</b>

**Assembly Council Appointments – 3 members**

Three members of the Assembly Council

**Ex-officio – 4 members**

Appointee of the Women’s Missionary Society  
 Appointee of the Atlantic Mission Society  
 Appointee of the Presbyterian World Service and Development

**MACLEAN ESTATE COMMITTEE****12 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2013–2018 (II)	Rev. Kathy A. Fraser, Kincardine, ON
2012–2018 (II)	Ms. Gwen MacRobbie, Guelph, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Moira Forbes, Burlington, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. David Phillips, Uxbridge, ON, (convener)
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. James D. Allan, Burlington, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. James Jackson, Simcoe, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Heather Paton, Dorchester, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Kristine E. O’Brien, Oakville, ON
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Ms. Anne F. Church, Dundas, ON **</b>
2013–2019 (II)	<b>Rev. Gordon Timbers, Orillia, ON **</b>
2015–2020 (II)	<b>Ms. Ann Wilson, Guelph, ON **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Dr. Herb Gale, Guelph, ON</b>

**COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STANDING COMMITTEES****9 Members (named by synods and based upon a 3 year rotation)**

Year	Name and Synod
2015–2018	Rev. Christopher Jorna, Duck Lake, SK (Saskatchewan)
2015–2018	Ms. Sandi Churchill, Calgary, AB (convener) (Alberta and the Northwest)
2015–2018	Rev. Elizabeth McLagan, Langley, BC (British Columbia)
2016–2019	Mr. Bill McGowan, Toronto, ON (Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda)
2016–2019	Rev. R. Ian Shaw, Simcoe, ON (Southwestern Ontario)
2016–2019	Ms. Carole Bilyk, Winnipeg, MB (Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario)
2017–2020	<b>Mr. Stephen MacKay, Fredericton, NB</b> (The Atlantic Provinces)
2017–2020	<b>Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, St. Lambert, QC</b> (Quebec and Eastern Ontario)
2017–2020	<b>Rev. Jonathon Dennis, Tottenham, ON</b> (Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda)

**PENSION AND BENEFITS BOARD**

**9 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Katharine Michie, Prince George, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Ingrid Chingcuanco, Toronto, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Patricia A. Main, Toronto, ON
2012–2019 (I)	<b>The Rev. In Kee Kim, Toronto, ON (filling a term for 2 years)</b>
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. Lawrence Mawhinney, Lunenburg, NS
2016–2019 (I)	Mr. John Bonnell, Halifax, NS
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Rev. J. Cameron Bigelow, Orillia, ON (convener) **</b>
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Ms. Ann R. Hysert, Merrickville, ON **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Corrie Stewart, North River Bridge, NS</b>

**Ex-officio – 2 members**

Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer  
Convener of Trustee Board, or alternate

**TRUSTEE BOARD****15 Members (no less than 7 and no more than 15, of whom 3 are ex officio; 6 year term)**

Years	Name
2012–2018	Ms. Diane Cameron, New Glasgow, NS
2013–2019	Mr. Timothy Herron, Thornhill, ON (convener)
2014–2020	Mr. Richard Anderson, Eckville, AB
2015–2017	Rev. J. Cameron Bigelow, Orillia, ON, (convener of Pension and Benefits Board)
2015–2021	Rev. Dr. Victor Gavino, Montreal, QC
2015–2021	Mr. Bruce Templeton, Outer Cove, NL
2016–2022	Mr. Peter McDougall, St. Lambert, QC
2016–2022	Mr. Abel Pandey, Thornhill, ON
2016–2022	Ms. Kathleen Boose, Georgetown, ON
2016–2022	Mr. Rick Johnston, Toronto, ON
2017–2023	<b>Dr. Margaret Ogilvie, Ottawa, ON</b>

**Ex-officio – 3 members**

Principal Clerk, General Assembly  
Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer  
Convener of Assembly Council

**KNOX COLLEGE, GOVERNING BOARD****15 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Dr. P.A. (Sandy) McDonald, Dartmouth, NS
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Trevor Van Nest, Niagara Falls, ON (filling a term for 2 years)
2014–2018 (I)	Mr. Michael Nettleton, Toronto, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Laurie Spence Bannerman, London, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. Nancy Calvert-Koyzis, Hamilton, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. Peter McKinnon, Toronto, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. Glen R. Thompson, Mississauga, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Angie Song, Toronto, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Megan McLean, Mississauga, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. Dong Ha Kim, Brandon, MB
2011–2018 (II)	<b>Dr. Peter Ross, Toronto, ON, convener (for 1 year extension) **</b>
2013–2019 (II)	<b>Rev. Daniel Cho, Toronto, ON **</b>
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Ms. Joan Stellmach, Calgary, AB **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Ms. Carol Jackson, Toronto, ON</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Gail Johnson Murdock, Merigomish, NS</b>

**Ex-officio – 3 members**

Principal  
One Faculty member  
One member of Knox-Ewart Graduate Association

**THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, BOARD OF GOVERNORS****12 Members (three year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Denise Allen-MacCartney, Ottawa, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Jay Hewlin, Montreal, QC
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Lydia E. MacKinnon, Marion Bridge, NS
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Jill M. Turnbull, Portland, ON
2012–2018 (II)	Mr. Donald T. Walcot, Montreal, QC (convener)
2017–2019 (II)	<b>Rev. Charles McPherson, Stellarton, NS (filling a term for a 2 year term)</b>
2016–2019 (I)	Mr. Tom Park, Longueuil, QC
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Sharon Dworzak, Laval, QC

2014–2020 (II)	<b>Rev. Joel Coppieters, Montreal, QC **</b>
2014–2020 (II)	<b>Rev. Paul Wu, Montreal, QC **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Ms. Joan Vogelesan, Montreal, QC</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Mr. Clayton Bartlett, Albert Bridge, NS</b>

**Ex-officio – 5 members**

Principal  
Director of Pastoral Studies  
One other Faculty Member  
Student Representative  
Representative, Graduates Association

**ST. ANDREW'S HALL, BOARD**

**12 Members (three year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2012–2018 (II)	Ms. Caroline Bonesky, Westminster, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. Gerard Booy, Maple Ridge, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Karen Dylla, Richmond, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Steve Norris, Vancouver, BC
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. Rod Thompson, Abbotsford, BC (convener)
2013–2019 (II)	Ms. Joyce C. Huang, Vancouver, BC
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Glen C. Soderholm, Guelph, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Kerry J McIntyre, Ladysmith, BC
2015–2020 (II)	<b>Mr. Ian Rokeby, New Westminster, BC **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Ms. Paula (Polly) Long, North Vancouver, BC **</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Rev. Dr. Jean Morris, Calgary, AB</b>
2017–2020 (I)	<b>Mr. Stephen Roche, Thornhill, ON</b>

**Ex-officio – 3 members**

Representative from Vancouver School of Theology  
Principal, Vancouver School of Theology  
Dean, St. Andrew's Hall

**Report as a Whole**

G.K. Walford moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

**LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE (cont'd from p. XXX)**

**Justice Ministries (p. XXX)**

**Recommendation No. 5** (p. XXX) was moved by J.R. Lackie, duly seconded.

**Motion to Refer**

K.A. Wübbenhorst moved, duly seconded, that Recommendation No. 5 be referred back to the Life and Mission Agency to consult with the Committee on Church Doctrine. Defeated.

**Recommendation No. 5** was adopted.

**Recommendation No. 6** (p. XXX) was moved by J.R. Lackie, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 7** (p. XXX) was moved by J.R. Lackie, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 8** (p. XXX) was moved by J.R. Lackie, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Stewardship and Planned Giving (p. XXX)**

K. Plater led the Assembly in a celebration of people who have generously remembered the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, even in their passing, through bequests. The Assembly was invited to stand in order to remember and celebrate their lives and celebrate their faith, hope and generosity. The names of the donors were read aloud, and the Moderator offered prayer.

**Report as a Whole**

J.R. Lackie moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

**REPORT ON SEXUALITY OVERTURES (cont'd from p. XXX)**

**Motion to Defer**

Discussion on the motion to defer resumed.

### **Amendment**

R.A. St. Louis moved, duly seconded, that the recommendations to be deferred include only Recommendation Nos. 14 and 15. Defeated.

**Motion to Defer**, was adopted as follows.

That Recommendation Nos. 11–15 be deferred to a future General Assembly, until such time as the Committee on Church Doctrine's final report on this matter has been received and that the General Assembly, in its wisdom, has made a decision regarding The Presbyterian Church in Canada's doctrine concerning same-sex relationships.

### **Dissent**

The following commissioners asked that their dissent regarding to the motion to defer be recorded:

J. Brewer, D. Bulloch, J.S. Campbell, M.H. Coombes, H.J. Currie, J. Dekker, J.D. Donkervoort, C. Dunn-Delane, E. Duncan, P. Dutcher-Walls, B.J. Fotheringham, M.W. Gedcke, L.E. Gilkes, T. Hamilton, K.A. Hincke, H.D.R. Horst, R. Houtby, W.G. Ingram, A. Johnston, L.T. Kavanagh, D.P. Konrad, J.R. Lackie, M. Leach-Duck, C.L. Lingard, C.M. Madsen, J.M. Masterton, M.R. McLennan, M.A. McNalty, C.R. McNeil, M.J. Morris, B.L. Pittock, T.R. Purvis, M.R. Reddick, M. Sams, T.A. Smit, J.G. Smith, C. Stewart, F. Szatmari, M.A. Tremblay, N.M. VanVeldhuizen, C.N. White, R. Zapp.

### **Dissent with Reasons**

The following commissioners asked that their dissent regarding the motion to defer be recorded with reasons given as follows:

E.B. Ashfield: I am saddened by the continued delay of any movement towards inclusive practice and thought for those people who identify as LGBTQI persons. I believe that fear of the other is causing the clouding of our ability to be compassionate and caring to all God's children in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

H. Athanasiadis: The Life and Mission Agency Committee and the Committee on Church Doctrine did considerable work to prepare Recommendation Nos. 11–15. We have had decades to ponder the implications.

P.M. Brown: To defer is to delay, put off to refuse to honour the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. Conversation to defer seems to come from a place that is not rooted in the spirit of unity within the body of Christ – a unity that does not require homogeneity but rather love for the other and the courage to agree to disagree as we work together for a resolution. The motion to defer signals a reluctance to be guided by our Reform heritage's understanding of the continuing guidance of the Holy Spirit. The similarity between the process of deferring this issue and the numerous motions to defer the issue of the emancipation of Blacks under the British system of slavery are glaring and scary. My people's freedom from enslavement was freedom delayed for no good reason other than the special interest of white planters and the racialized attitudes that failed to allow them to see the other as human.

S.T. Brown: Given that the denomination is polarized on the topic of human sexuality and that some congregations feel that to take no action is significantly detrimental to congregational health while others feel the opposite, the Life and Mission Agency endeavoured a compromise. A combination of further dissent and temporary measures endeavoured to allow all theologies more time to discern God's call while showing some movement on the topic. The course of action chosen not only casts aside much hard work by the Life and Mission Agency Committee but challenges the unity attempted in this report.

M.G. Emig Carr: I dissent from the motion to defer Recommendation Nos. 11–15 of the Life and Mission Agency Committee as I believe these recommendations allow the voices of many people to be heard in addition to the two reports already referred. Additionally, I believe the three recommendations regarding blessing of same-sex civil marriages are pastoral and allow clergy to bless these relationships the same way we bless other aspects of life in our congregations and communities. Blessing of these relationships is a way for churches to welcome and affirm these relationships and allow for greater inclusion in the life of the church. "Jesus answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbour as yourself.'" (Luke 10:27)

A.J. Cluney: I trusted the work of the committees of Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency and I am disappointed that the church is not able to move forward in discerning the spirit of the church and response to the human sexuality recommendations.

D.G. Eerkes: I heard two voices in this choice – to defer Recommendation Nos. 11–15 or to pass them for congregations to “bless same-sex...” or to study and report. Two choices and either way some group of people are hurt. 1) The voices crying for more time (with the reminder of our call to unity in the church) and 2) The voices of those already greatly harmed and living in the hurt and pain of this rejection by the church (LGBTQ, sisters, brothers, daughters, sons) who need our compassion/response. This carries with it our commitment to repent of our homophobia. These voices are more of our whimper, as I heard it, but they scream at me for an immediate response. Therefore, no matter what, someone is hurt. I dissent because I had to choose and so I did choose to hear the whimper of those in pain for so long and to try to direct actions that way. I note the YAR’s were strongly opposed to these recommendations being deferred. They live and know the realities of this situation in their generation. At least the dissents were observed and noted by this group who can believe that the church does care about this group in pain and we will, eventually, I sincerely hope, be able to repent and practise hospitality and love to all God’s people. We continue to reform as we are called to do, and that is painful and divisive but we are called to act.

N.A. Ellis: I lament the deferral of Recommendation Nos. 11–15. That we did not have the courage to move forward in faith on these recommendations. That we did not take the opportunity to fully debate Recommendation No. 11. That we lost the opportunity to hear the voice of the Assembly on Recommendation No. 11 and perhaps find the voice of unity that we, as The Presbyterian Church in Canada, might move forward on.

T. Hicks: The series of recommendations as originally presented thoughtfully and sensitively sought to lead the church through a complex matter. The motion to defer prevents that process from proceeding and further delays a dialogue and decision that needs eventually to be made. One of the pastoral intents of the original recommendations was to provide those could not, according to conscience, participate in blessings of a civil same-sex marriage. By this motion to defer I am prevented from being able by reason of conscience to participate in and to lead a blessing of a same-sex marriage.

R.A. St. Louis: There was insufficient time allowed to discuss Recommendation Nos. 11, 12 and 13 as they were referred during a discussion of Recommendation No. 14. There was no opportunity for a motion to divide to be made before the Moderator called for the vote.

G.R. Thompson: I believe that to defer these motions delays important movement in our church. I believe that we must delegate these sexual identity decisions to presbyteries since our central believe is in God and Jesus Christ. This is our shared belief by all aspects of our church. Our federal government does not deal with all matters but does delegate to provinces and municipalities.

#### **Additional Motion**

J.R Lackie moved, duly seconded, that the biblical reflection presented in the report of the Life and Mission Agency Committee concerning the responses to the various overtures on human sexuality be sent to sessions, presbyteries, synods and colleges for study, reflection and report by January 31, 2018. Adopted.

#### **Dissent**

The following commissioners asked that their dissent regarding the additional motion be recorded:

J. Dekker, D.P. Konrad.

#### **Dissent with Reasons**

The following commission asked that his dissent be recorded with the following reason:

E.H. Renaud: I record my dissent as I believe this motion negates the motion to defer the Life and Mission Agency Committee Recommendation Nos. 11–15.

**Recommendation No. 7** (p. XXX) was moved by J. Khang, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 8** (p. XXX) was moved by J. Khang, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 9** (p. XXX) was moved by J. Khang, duly seconded. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 16** was withdrawn due to the deferral of Recommendation Nos. 11– 15.

#### **Additional Motion**

K.A. Wübbenhorst moved, duly seconded, that the Assembly Council provide for translation of the documents sent down under Recommendation Nos. 4 and 5 (“The Historical Argument Concerning Sexuality” [p. XXX] and “What



the Bible Teaches on Covenanted Monogamous Same-Sex Relationships” [p. XXX] of the joint report and the “Biblical Reflection” (p. XXX) into Korean, to be ready for distribution to the Clerks of Eastern and Western Han-Ca Presbyteries by August 31, 2017. Adopted.

**Report as a Whole**

J. Khang moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to Adjourn**

J.A. Vissers moved, duly seconded that the sederunt be adjourned. Adopted.

**ADDITIONAL MOTION**

**Additional Motion**

Prior to the Moderator declaring the court adjourned, H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the Assembly continue in order to hear the report of the Special Committee. Adopted.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

**RE OVERTURE NOS. 2, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 2017  
AND PETITION NOS. 1, 2, 3, 2017**

The Assembly called for the report of the Special Committee, which was presented by H.D.R. Horst.

**Receive and Consider**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the report be received and considered. Adopted.

**Preamble**

The remit given to the Special Committee was to review the overtures and petitions, with a view to identifying and summarizing common concerns and to suggest a comprehensive approach for further study, and to report back to the Assembly.

Who has brought the overtures and petitions?

Session, Chapel Place, Markham, Ontario  
Session, St. Andrew’s, Trenton, Ontario  
Session, Cheyne, Stoney Creek, Ontario  
Session, Coquitlam, British Columbia  
Session, Bethel, Riverview, New Brunswick  
Session, St. Andrew’s, Moncton, New Brunswick  
Presbytery, Grey-Bruce-Maitland, Ontario  
Session, Valleyview, Calgary, Alberta  
Presbytery, Algoma-North Bay, Ontario  
Session, St. James, Truro, Nova Scotia

Session, Geneva, Chesley, Ontario  
Session, St. Andrew’s, Chatworth, Ontario  
Session, St. Andrew’s, Southampton, Ontario  
Session, Keswick, Ontario  
Session, Chinese, Markham, Ontario  
Session, Kortright, Guelph, Ontario  
Session, Mississauga Chinese, Brampton, Ontario  
Presbytery, Western Han-Ca  
Session, Knox, Thedford, Ontario, with approval of the Presbytery, Lambton-West Middlesex  
Presbytery, Eastern Han-Ca

By way of background, it is perhaps helpful to also note that Overture No. 6, 2017, from the Session of Innerkip, Ontario, with the approval of the Presbytery of Paris, and referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries), is also before the Assembly; and

that to last year’s General Assembly (2016) were brought overtures touching upon similar concerns from:

Session, Cote des Neiges, Montreal, Quebec  
Session, Chinese, Vancouver, British Columbia  
Session, First Hungarian, Vancouver, British Columbia; and

that to the previous General Assembly (2015) was brought one overture on a similar theme from:

Session, Grace Church, Orleans, Ontario.

In total, therefore, over a three-year period, 21 sessions and four presbyteries have raised issues touching on either the general theme of gracious dismissal or the unity of the church. Significant concern has been expressed by at least four distinct ethnic minority communities who are part of the blessed mosaic of language and culture within The

Presbyterian Church in Canada. One session whose congregation has maintained its building for almost as long as The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been a unified denomination is also among those raising concern.

### **Summary of Concerns Raised**

As one overture noted “there is currently no provision within the policies and processes of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, whereby a congregation dissenting from a majority decision can peaceably withdraw.” Several overtures found the previous responses to requests for “gracious dismissal”, which declined to search for new ways in which this might be accomplished, to be inadequate. A key concern was that departing congregations would lose access to property which they had considered their own.

Many of the considerations articulated in the overtures and petitions gather around several key themes:

1. Heritage (Scripture and History)
2. Ways and Means
3. Harm to Ministry
4. Peace and Timing
5. Unity

#### 1. The Theme of Heritage

Scripture and our own experience as Presbyterians in Canada provide examples of Christians working both together and separately within our heritage. In particular, the “scars of 1925 and its aftermath” ought to encourage us to seek “more amicable terms” of separation (in the event that some congregations wish to leave the denomination). The irony of our denomination, which was founded by non-concurring congregations allowed to retain their buildings, refusing to grant similar grace to departing congregations in our own context, was noted.

#### 2. The Theme of Ways and Means

We could call on the experience of other denominations, notably the Presbyterian Church (USA), in looking for the regulatory framework that would make “gracious dismissal” possible. Some other Canadian denominations “have successfully sought and obtained...changes in federal and provincial legislation” to enable such a separation. The need for further study of history and law, as well as to consider our collective responsibility for pension assets and liabilities, was noted – as was a prior example (Lachine) within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

#### 3. The Theme of Harm to Our Ministry and Congregations

Our preoccupation with the issue of human sexuality diverts “time and energy” from “the church’s mission to preach the gospel, nurture and equip disciples and act as witnesses to the world”: the “larger part” of all of our resources should be directed toward fulfilling the great commission, rather than “expended or squandered” on trying to “reconcile sharply divergent understandings”. Indeed, whatever course The Presbyterian Church in Canada takes, focus and resources will be redirected from “congregational vitality and renewal” – recently named by the General Assembly as priorities. Also, the very uncertainty around the issue of sexuality impedes congregations’ capacity to proceed with major purchases, renovations, or constructions whose purpose is to spread the gospel. The issue “has raised fears and concerns in the hearts of many members”. The example of “hurt people on many sides” in denominations that have undergone similar struggles, damage and division within the congregations seems possible.

In addition, a change in our policies regarding human sexuality “tarnishes” the credibility of some congregations within their wider communities, particularly within some distinctive ethnic communities and congregations, and discredits their witness. The divisiveness of our discussion of these issues in itself is a “poor witness” to the world.

#### 4. The Theme of Peace and Timing

Gracious dismissal might be more peaceably negotiated before rather than after significant decisions about human sexuality are made. As with marriage, it may be that a gracious separation is better than bitter continuance within the “covenant community which is the church”.

#### 5. The Theme of Unity

Graciousness and love – rather than litigation and lack of charity – should mark any separation within our church. Two of the petitioners (the Presbyteries of Eastern Han-Ca and Western Han-Ca) spoke of the painful conflict between their “passionate love for The Presbyterian Church in Canada” and “their deeper love for the one holy catholic apostolic church”, crying out for “guidance as to how we can remain as one body in the denomination”.

### **Observations by the Special Committee**

If by “gracious dismissal” we understand provision for congregations to leave The Presbyterian Church in Canada with title to their property and other material assets, we understand that both the Clerks of Assembly and the General Assembly itself have affirmed that such is not presently possible under both ecclesiastical and civil law.

It is affirmed in some of the overtures to this Assembly that the Clerks have stated that should the General Assembly give a mandate to explore changes which would facilitate a process for gracious dismissal that such could and would be undertaken.

It is clear to the Special Committee that significant consultation with and input from the Clerks of Assembly, the Assembly Council, the Committee on Church Doctrine, the Committee on Church History, the Pension and Benefits Board, and the Trustee Board would be required in seeking to formulate any policy concerning gracious dismissal, and effecting any such policy or practice would require consultation with presbyteries involved in congregational oversight.

In recent years, there have been significant changes in the doctrine and practice of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with respect to matters pertaining to human sexuality which have resulted in significant numbers of Presbyterian congregations being regrouped. This has been fraught with significant challenges for both the denominations and the congregations involved. To a lesser extent, there have also been some departures and changes for congregations of the Church of Scotland, which has also made some recent changes in what it professes and practices with respect to matters of human sexuality. There may be some insights to be gained from a more substantial study and review of recent and current developments in both the United States of America and Scotland among Presbyterian churches.

It is worth recalling that The Presbyterian Church in Canada was founded in 1875 as a union of all branches of the Presbyterian family in Canada after the Confederation of 1867, and that virtually all congregations within those branches joined. After the majority of congregations entered the United Church of Canada in 1925, most all “continuing Presbyterians” remained part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is estimated that at present there are approximately 865 congregations which are part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and approximately 45 Presbyterian congregations and missions affiliated with other Presbyterian denominations in Canada.

The Committee on Church Doctrine proposes to bring to the next General Assembly a substantial report on the unity of the church. This should inform and assist in the formulation of any policy on gracious dismissal.

The Assembly Council has a Commission on Assets and Dissolved and Amalgamated Congregations which should be consulted with respect to history and practice.

The Committee on Church History is well placed to aid in understanding the history of both union and disruption and consequential changes affecting congregations.

The Pension and Benefits Board has information and understanding to bring to bear on the present, ongoing and future liabilities shared by all congregations with respect to the obligations to provide pension and benefits for past and present ministers, other church employees, and surviving spouses and dependents, all of which would need to be taken into consideration with respect to any contemplated policy for gracious dismissal of congregations.

The Trustee Board has understanding of its fiduciary responsibilities under federal and provincial civil law and its experience and expertise would be vital in understanding any changes which would be required to effect any contemplated policy regarding gracious dismissal.

The wisdom of the Clerks of Assembly and of the church’s legal counsel would be required in the exploration and drafting of any policy on gracious dismissal, in order to ensure full and careful preparation of any changes in applicable civil or church law.

### **Epilogue**

The fervent prayer of the Special Committee is for the unity of Christ’s church going forward. There is a risk that defining a framework for gracious dismissal ahead of doctrinal decisions leading to a change in practice may result in a lessening of commitment to maintaining the organic unity of the denomination.

Is it possible within a general framework of Presbyterian polity for congregations of differing theological convictions to be linked together? Might we explore the possibility of non-geographic presbyteries or synods?

It is the observation of the special committee that the multiplicity of overtures clearly points to the existence of not only deep concerns over a doctrinal issue but also monumental implications for the unity of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We need to pursue issues of doctrine, and equally issues of living together within the broader family which is the church. A comprehensive approach for further study must hold these two commitments in dynamic relationship with each other.

**Recommendation No. 1**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the Assembly receive for information the summary of issues and concerns raised in the overtures and petitions enumerated above. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 2**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the report of the Special Committee together with the overtures and petitions be referred to the Clerks of Assembly in consultation with the Assembly Council, the Committee on Church Doctrine, the Committee on Church History, the Pension and Benefits Board, and the Trustee Board, for report to the next General Assembly. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 3**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the Assembly, by way of reflecting back what has been heard, send the summary of concerns to those who have sent up the overtures. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 4**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the concerns for the unity of the church raised in Petition Nos. 1 and 3, 2017 be referred to the Assembly Council in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency and the Committee on Church Doctrine. Adopted.

**Recommendation No. 5**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the concerns for assurance for title to property raised in Petition No. 2, 2017 be referred to the Clerks of the Assembly in consultation with the Trustee Board and the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation. Adopted.

**Report as a Whole**

H.D.R. Horst moved, duly seconded, that the report as a whole be adopted. Adopted.

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

J.T. Hurd presented the following notice of motion.

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved, that the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Church Doctrine be reconsidered.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Announcements having been made, the Moderator invited P. Nahumure to offer prayer in Kinyamulenge. The Moderator adjourned the Assembly to meet at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, on Wednesday, June seventh, two thousand and seventeen, at nine-thirty o'clock in the morning, of which public intimation was given.