

**Mission Council
Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy
February 13, 2010**

For Action:

The Mission Council recommends that presbytery approve the following overture:

On Expanding the Scope of the Review of Biennial Assemblies

The Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy overtures the 219th General Assembly (2010) to lead the church in considering the form and function of our General Assembly meetings by:

1. Expanding the action of the 214th General Assembly (2002) which charged the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to prepare an evaluation of biennial assemblies after the 219th General Assembly (item 02-01 of the 2002 Assembly), instructing this study committee to consider the whole of the General Assembly meeting in its form and function.
2. This review is to include, but is not limited to, matters of financial stewardship, the use of alternative forms of discernment, the number of commissioners and advisory delegates as well as the role of advisory delegates, the schedule for moderatorial elections, the environmental impact of assemblies, the frequency of meetings, and models for governance for future generations.
3. In appointing the members of the special task group or committee (outlined in the 2002 action), the Stated Clerk and Executive Director of the General Assembly Council shall pay particular attention to appointing a generous representation of members younger than 40.
4. The report of this study and any recommendations shall come to the 220th General Assembly (2012).

Rationale

The Committee on the General Assembly was charged by the 214th General Assembly (2002) to prepare an evaluation of biennial assemblies instructing the committee to consider the whole of the General Assembly meeting in its form and function. This group was asked to review the following:

“The assigned task shall be to ascertain the impact of biennial assemblies on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in terms of its ministry and mission; stewardship including per capita apportionment, mission dollars, and special offerings; communication including knowledge of the General Assembly and its work in the church, on governance of the church; the Form of Government and overtures sent to the General Assembly; use of judicial process and ways of dealing with conflictual issues, as well as addressing the theology of our Form of Government and how it has been impacted by biennial assemblies;] and bring a report to the 220th General Assembly (2012).” (Minutes of the 212th GA, Item 02-01)

Since the charge was given to COGA to review biennial General Assemblies the church has benefited from the work of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, which modeled decision making utilizing discernment and consensus and challenged the church to adopt new methods of decision making at all governing body levels. Sessions, presbyteries and synods across the church have experimented with different ways of making decisions. The General Assembly, as the most formal governing body, has been less adaptive and slower to respond to the growing enthusiasm for alternative methods of discernment in decision making. This is a conversation that needs to occur at the General Assembly level. The review of biennial assemblies provides an opportunity for it to occur within a larger conversation about the form and function of the General Assembly.

The expanded review should address the effectiveness of the current standing committee model and whether a different organizational model might better facilitate the use of discernment as a core value. It should consider the effectiveness of the current overture process and potential alternatives to it which could free the assembly to spend more time on larger, more strategic questions of vision and mission that will shape the future of the church. The review should address the number and role of commissioners and advisory delegates and how the General Assembly might engage the wisdom of middle governing body leaders (staff and officers). The review should assess the environmental impact of General Assembly meetings and whether there are ways to increase efficiency and reduce the overall environmental impact. Because this review will affect the General Assembly's function in the foreseeable future, the review team should intentionally include many members under the age of 40.

This proposed expansion of the review functions of the committee would allow the church to have more than just a tweaking of the existing biennial model; it would allow a vehicle to explore a new way of being the church when we meet in assembly.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY COUNCIL:

The Mission Council approved the following Nominating Process Overview:

NOMINATING PROCESS OVERVIEW

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE NOMINATING PROCESS?

The Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is committed to the ministry of the whole people of God. Through the nominations process, the church has the benefit of selecting, from the varied gifts and services of Presbyterians, the most qualified persons to serve on presbytery, Synod and General Assembly level entities.

WHO MAY BE CALLED TO SERVE?

If you believe that you are called by God to serve somewhere in the life of the presbytery you are invited to take the following steps:

1. Review the job descriptions of existing teams and committees and determine where your talents and interest can best be used. Seriously reflect on the skills and time required for the work of the entity you wish to serve.
2. Get an "Application for Nomination" from the presbytery office or from a nominating committee member.

3. Prayerfully consider the skills, qualifications, and time commitment expected for the work of the entity you wish to serve.
4. State on your application the entities where you would like to serve and fill in the form completely.
5. Complete the “Application for Nomination” and send it to the presbytery office.

CAN I SUGGEST SOMEONE ELSE TO SERVE?

- Reflect seriously on the person's qualifications and time availability.
- Obtain the person's permission and request an “Application for Nomination”
- Submit the form to the Presbytery office.

WHAT IS THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE?

The membership of the Nominating Committee shall be broadly representative of the member churches of the Presbytery. There shall be twelve (12) members on the Committee who shall be ministers and elders; one-third (1/3) ministers, one-third (1/2) laywomen, and one-third (1/2) laymen in three (3) classes each serving for a three (3) year term. Members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected by the presbytery upon the recommendation of the Presbytery Mission Council. The Moderator of Mission Council, with Council approval, shall name the chairperson.

WHO OFTEN DO THEY MEET?

The Committee shall ordinarily meet four (4) times a year prior to a meeting of Mission Council, and additionally as needed to fulfill its responsibilities.

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION AND AUTHORITY OF THE COMMITTEE?

The function and authority of the Nominating Committee shall be as follows, consistent with *Book of Order*, G-9.0105 and G-9.0800:

- a. present to presbytery at the last stated meeting of the calendar year nominations as needed for office;
- b. receive for consideration from sessions, presbytery entities, and other sources, suggestions of persons to be nominated for the various offices to be filled;
- c. present to the presbytery, as needed, nominees for election to presbytery committees and teams;
- d. present to presbytery, at the earliest possible meeting, nominees for filling vacancies or the election of additional officers or members;
- e. present to presbytery nominations for commissioners to the Synod;
- f. present to presbytery nominations for commissioners to the General Assembly; e.g. seek persons from this presbytery and recommend to appropriate Synod and General Assembly bodies their nominations to the various organizations of these governing bodies.
- g. Nominations in addition to those presented to the presbytery by the Nominating Committee may be made from the floor.

WHAT IS THE NOMINATION PROCESS?**Initiation of the Process**

1. When the form is received at the presbytery office a copy of the Nomination Form is sent to all committee members. The Committee on Representation also receives a copy of the form for their review.
2. The Committee on Representation (COR) is notified of entity vacancies. After the Nominating Committee takes action on persons eligible for re-nomination, the COR is informed of re-nomination decisions and /may provide additional appropriate advice prior to the person being approached for election.
3. As each vacancy is considered by the Nominating Committee a liaison from the Nominating Committee will give a report regarding specific skills needed based on a review of the work with the team or committee moderator. One helpful form of input to the liaison will be the suggestions of the current committee moderator about who they believe would be an asset to the work of the team or committee.
4. Once names are gathered each proposed nominee's qualifications are thoroughly discussed, and by elimination vote, a nominee is selected to fill each vacancy.
5. The COR is informed of the full slate of nominees before the report is submitted, through the Mission Council to the presbytery for election.

At the Presbytery Meeting

6. The Nominating Committee report, with process explanations, is made to the presbytery.
7. Nominations may be made from the floor to replace a specifically named nominee or vacancy. This is done according to Robert's Rules of Order and is guided by the Moderator of the Presbytery and Stated Clerk.

After the Stated Meeting:

- The Stated Clerk sends a welcome letter to all persons elected by the presbytery.
- The Stated Clerk sends a letter of appreciation to all persons who have completed service.
- Nominating Committee members are provided with a list of all persons whose names are in the active file.
- Impacted teams and committees will receive notice of those who were elected by the Administrative Assistant for Constitutional Services (Judy Pickett) upon election.
- The Presbytery receives word through the updating of the directory.

FOR INFORMATION

The following persons have been selected by their respective Ministry Teams to serve as Moderator for 2010

Congregational Development – Rev. Linda Maconochie

Dismantling Racism and Privilege – Elder Thom Hood

Justice and Compassion – Rev. Alex Hendrickson

Leadership in Ministry – Rev. Christian Boyd

Resourcing and Equipping – Rev. Julie March