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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

One of the great gifts of our Reformed heritage is the indivisibility of theology (what we believe about who God is, what God has done for us, and what God requires of us) from polity (how we order our lives together). This is reflected in our Constitution having two parts – the *Book of Confessions* (theology) and the *Book of Order* (polity).

One section of the *Book of Order*, the “Directory for Worship,” has been undergoing a makeover in recent years, and the final revision stands for our approval as a presbytery when we meet this time. It has already been passed by enough presbyteries that it will replace our current “Directory” this summer. But let us not ignore it simply because our vote won’t make a difference in the outcome. It is available together with a set of excellent study resources on our website at

http://www.pghpresbytery.org/news/proposed_constitutional_amendments.htm.

The “Directory for Worship” is itself a marriage of theology and liturgy. The Reformed tradition unites theology and worship in unique ways, so that thinking the faith, praying the faith, and living the faith are seamlessly integrated. It was my privilege for several years to serve our national offices as “Associate for Theology and Worship,” and I was often asked by people beyond our denomination why I had two assignments. It gave me opportunity to explain how theology and worship are inseparable in our church.

The revised “Directory” does not signal a shift in our theology, but it does provide better clarity and consistency for ordering worship than our former version offered. It is leaner by some 9,000 words, eliminating redundancy and adding clarity. Unlike the previous edition, the revised version conforms to the order of worship in the *Book of Common Worship*. The language is less specialized, and it is more easily engaged by churches of various ethnicities.

Perhaps the most controversial change is reframing the nature of the relationship between the sacraments. Whereas the “Directory” until now has stipulated that only those who have been baptized are invited to the Lord’s Table, in the revision the relationship is more mutual – either sacrament may lead someone to the other. While this is a change in official Presbyterian policy, it reflects current practice in many denominations, as well as several of our own congregations.

At this meeting we celebrate the ministry of our newest associate presbytery minister, Brian Wallace, who will be installed in the service of worship, with the Rev. Sarah Bird of Sewickley Presbyterian Church preaching. It will be a grand day of worship, theology, and polity all wrapped up together, in good Presbyterian fashion. You won’t want to miss it!

Yours in our Lord’s service,

Seeking to be Faithful Together

Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement

In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will . . .

Give them a hearing . . . listen before we answer.

Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, "Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" (John 7:50-51) If one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame. (Proverbs 18:13)

1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ:
 - we will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange;
 - we will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.
2. Learn about various positions on a topic of disagreement.
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.

Speak the truth in love.

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:15-16)

4. Study the Bible together to better understand what God's Word says to us in our disagreement.
5. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teaching.
6. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity;
 - we will not engage in name-calling or labeling of others prior to, during, or following the discussion.
7. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may fully understand our concerns.

Maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3)

8. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
9. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension;
 - we will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.
10. Follow these additional Guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:
 - urge persons of various points to speak and promise to listen seriously;
 - seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;
 - be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience;
 - abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with the Guidelines.
11. Include our disagreements in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.

STATED MEETING OF THE PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY
MAY 4, 2017
BEULAH UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH]
Teaching Elder Heather Schoenewolf, Moderator, Presiding

Pittsburgh Presbytery is a covenant community

† *formed by the triune God;*

† *called to share together in the ongoing life and ministry of Jesus Christ*

† *proclaiming and demonstrating the Gospel publicly in word and deed in the power of the Holy Spirit*

- A...THE CONVENING OF THE PRESBYTERY** **Order of the Day 1:00 p.m.**
1. Presbytery Constituted with Prayer
 2. Announcement of a Quorum and Completion of the Roll
- B...OUR GATHERING IN WORSHIP.** Rev. Sarah R. Bird will preach and Rev. Brian Wallace will be installed as Associate Minister of Pittsburgh Presbytery.
- C...MATTERS FROM THE MODERATOR** **Order of the Day 2:00 p.m.**
1. Moderator Opening Comments
 2. Greetings from Beulah United Presbyterian Church
 3. Introduction of Visitors
 4. Welcoming Pastors in New Positions within the Presbytery
- D...ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING** **Order of the Day 2:15 p.m.**
1. Adoption of the Docket
 2. Adoption of the Consent Agenda
 3. Announcement of Intention to introduce new business
- E...MATTERS FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** **Order of the Day 2:30 p.m.**
1. Report of the Chair
 2. Election of the Stated Clerk
- F MATTERS FROM THE STATED CLERK** **Order of the Day 3:00 p.m.**
1. Vote on Proposed Amendments to the Book of Order 16 G and H
 2. Report of the Stated Clerk
- G...MATTERS FROM THE BODY** **Order of the Day 3:30 p.m.**
1. Report of the Commission on Preparation
 2. Report of the General Minister
 3. Report of the Commission on Ministry
 4. Report of the Nominations Committee
 5. Report of the Peacemaking Ministry Team
 6. Report of the Great Commission Team
- H...NEW BUSINESS** **Order of the Day 4:45 p.m.**
1. Taking up new business
- I...THE DISPERSING OF PRESBYTERY** **Order of the Day 5:00 p.m.**
1. Committee on Leave of Absence and Report of the Roll Clerk
 2. Resolution of Thanks
 3. Ending with Prayer