



EPC

A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

COMMITTEE REPORT

National Leadership Team
Report to the 39th General Assembly



Dean Weaver
Chairman

Summary of Work, 2018-2019:

1. Began work on an Executive Transition Plan for the Office of the General Assembly.
2. Continued to monitor giving the EPC Per Member Asking.
3. Continued to oversee the mission and vision of the EPC.
4. Evaluated and recommended the expansion of the NLT to the 39th General Assembly.
5. Brought forward *Rules for Assembly* amendments that could not be addressed by the 38th General Assembly in 2018.

Recommendations to the 2019 General Assembly:

1. **Recommendation 39-01:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve the formation of the Stated Clerk Search Committee, to be appointed by the Moderator.
2. **Recommendation 39-03:**
That the 39th General Assembly adopt its proposal to amend *Rules for Assembly* 15-1 in order to amend or suspend only by 2/3 vote of the Commissioners.
3. **Recommendation 39-04:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve amending *Rules for Assembly* by adding two Standing Committees: 1) Church Planting and 2) Church Revitalization.



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4. **Recommendation 39-05:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve the deletion of the Church Planting and Revitalization Permanent Committee from *Rules for Assembly*.
5. **Recommendation 39-07:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve an amendment to *Rules for Assembly* that would increase the size of the NLT from 13 to 16 members.
6. **Recommendation 39-10:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve an amendment to *Book of Government* 9-5 that would make explicit that the office of “co-pastor” is not constitutional.
7. **Recommendation 39-19:**
That the 39th General Assembly adopt the FY 2020 Administration Budget.
8. **Recommendation 39-20:**
That the 39th General Assembly adopt the FY 2020 Special Projects.
9. **Recommendation 39-21:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve the Moderator to appoint an ad interim committee composed of five REs or TEs from diverse, strongly-supporting churches across multiple presbyteries to address how to improve our churches’ long-term culture of giving to the EPC.
10. **Recommendation 39-22:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve an amendment to *Rules for Assembly* that would revise and update the functions of the National Leadership Team.
11. **Recommendation 39-25:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve Third Millennium Ministries as an “approved agency.”
12. **Recommendation 39-26:**
That the 39th General Assembly approve its recommendation to refer the matter of the Michigan chapter of Bethany Christian Services (BCS) to the Permanent Committee on Theology to review in light of the EPC Position Papers on Abortion and Human Sexuality.
13. **Recommendation 39-33:**
That the 39th General Assembly adopt the Minutes of the 38th General Assembly.
14. **Recommendation 39-35:**
That the 39th General Assembly refer to the Permanent Committee on Theology for study how the EPC can be more sensitive to the needs of the disabled.



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Work of the Committee in 2018-2019:

Executive Transitions

This General Assembly marks the beginning of a leadership transition in the Office of the General Assembly. Chief Operating Officer Phil Van Valkenburg will depart June 30, 2019. Director of World Outreach Phil Linton and Stated Clerk Jeff Jeremiah are scheduled to retire June 30, 2021. Aware of these impending departures, the NLT at its August 2018 meeting began addressing how to produce the best possible transition for each position.

Chief Operating Officer

The NLT decided that as of July 1, 2019, the COO position will not be filled. Factors contributing to this decision include: 1) the outstanding staff reports the COO hired, 2) the major projects the COO implemented from 2013-2019 have been completed, and 3) budget considerations. A six-month trial of this staffing arrangement will take place. The Stated Clerk will conduct an evaluation in December 2019, and make a report with recommendations to the NLT at its January 2020 meeting.

Director of World Outreach

Anticipating a search for the Director's successor in 2020-2021, the NLT concluded that 2019-2020 presented an excellent opportunity for a review and evaluation of EPC World Outreach. The NLT appointed a "World Outreach Evaluation Team," which includes TE Betsy Rumer (Presbytery of the Alleghenies), RE Brad Gill (Presbytery of the Midwest), RE Johnny Long (Presbytery of the West), TE Kevin Cauley (Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic), and RE Alan Johnson (Presbytery of the West). RE Rob Liddon (Presbytery of the Central South) of the NLT will lead this Team.

Stated Clerk

When Dr. Jeremiah was re-elected to a fifth three-year term in 2018, it was announced that this would be his final term. The NLT has prayerfully and repeatedly considered the best way to accomplish a good transition. It has decided that the goal is for the Stated Clerk's successor to be elected by the 40th General Assembly (2020), a year before the current Stated Clerk departs in 2021. While a twelve-month "overlap" of the two Stated Clerks is not considered necessary, this goal would provide much more planning flexibility. Following past EPC practice, the NLT also decided that every presbytery would be represented on the search committee. There are currently 14 presbyteries in the EPC. "Working back" from a June 2020 election of the next Stated Clerk, the NLT concluded that this search committee needed to commence its work as soon as possible after the 39th General Assembly (2019) acts on the NLT recommendation that the Assembly instruct the Moderator to appoint a Stated Clerk Search Committee (Recommendation 39-01).



Financial Development

Since 2016, the NLT has committed to encouraging all EPC churches to support Per Member Asking (PMA), the primary source of revenue that funds the General Assembly budget. As a point of reference, in 2016 giving to PMA hit an historic low of 61%. That is, giving was only 61% of the amount that would be given if every church gave 100% of its PMA.

By strongly promoting financial support, giving as a percentage of total PMA giving climbed in subsequent years:

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| 2015 | 61% |
| 2016 | 69% |
| 2017 | 73% |

At the 38th General Assembly in 2018, the Assembly approved a budget for FY 2019 (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019) based on PMA giving of \$2,550,000, a 3% increase in PMA (73% to 76%) over the previous year.

Through May 2019, giving to PMA was off by 4% (\$92,000) from the previous year. The current projected PMA for this year is \$2,418,000. The proposed FY 2020 budget that you will act on at Cherry Creek reflects these facts. The proposed budget can be viewed at www.epc.org/files/ga2019document-fy20192020budget. The Annual Ministry Report that summarizes past year results and tells how the new budget will be put to work can be viewed at www.epc.org/files/annualministryreport20192020.

Since 2017, the NLT has repeatedly wrestled with how to promote giving to the national level of our denomination. A number of proposals have been considered. In April, the NLT decided it needed input from our churches, focusing on those churches who have a record of strong support for Per Member Asking. It is for this reason that the NLT has recommended that the Assembly instruct the Moderator to appoint a small group to study the financial support challenge the EPC faces (Recommendation 39-20).

Oversight of the EPC Mission and Vision

The National Leadership Team is committed to knowing and promoting the mind of Christ for the 600+ churches that make up the EPC in the United States, the Bahamas, and Puerto Rico. After the devotional and opening prayer, at each face-to-face meeting the NLT immediately reviews and confirms the EPC statements of mission and vision.

Mission: We exist to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus as Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations.

Vision: To the glory of God, the EPC aspires to be a global movement of congregations embodying Jesus' love to our neighbors near and far, engaged together in God's mission through transformation, multiplication, and effective biblical leadership.



At its October and April meetings, the NLT focuses on the business of the EPC that it needs to address. The August and January meetings are more strategic. The NLT reviews and evaluates more closely the four features of the EPC mission statement and the four strategic initiatives (which the NLT renamed as “strategic priorities” in April 2019) of the EPC vision statement.

Strategic Priorities

The statement of vision includes our four strategic priorities: 1) transformation (church revitalization), multiplication (church planting), effective biblical leadership, and global movement (World Outreach and fraternal relations).

As part of its oversight responsibility, in the past year the NLT invited the leaders of each priority to address and take questions from the NLT: Tom Ricks (church planting), Ken Priddy (church revitalization), Phil Linton (global movement —World Outreach), Jeff Jeremiah (global movement—fraternal relations), and Jerry Iamurri (effective biblical leadership).

Proposed Expansion of the NLT

The predecessor of the NLT was the Committee on Administration. Since 1994, the Committee on Administration has consisted of 13 members: three classes of three (nine members), the three General Assembly Moderators (the Moderator-elect, Moderator, and NLT Chairman [past-Moderator]), and the Stated Clerk. This structure served the EPC well when it had eight presbyteries. The number of presbyteries began to grow in 2010 so that today there are 14. The NLT concluded that in order to increase presbytery representation, the NLT should expand by three members. If approved, this increase would be accomplished by expanding the three classes of three to three classes of four, which is the recommendation to the 39th General Assembly (Recommendation 39-07).

Amendment to the *Book of Government*

Since 1985, when the Fifth General Assembly approved the Permanent Judicial Commission’s ruling that the office of “Co-Pastor” is “non-existent,” it has been the official position of the EPC that this office is prohibited. However, this position is not explicitly declared in the *Book of Government*. A number of EPC churches that came from another denomination in the past ten years were familiar with or had used the “co-pastor” model in their past. Some of these churches have questioned the “constitutionality” of the prohibition of co-pastor. The NLT recommended amendment to the *Book of Government* makes explicit constitutionally the position of the EPC since 1985 (Recommendation 39-11).

Rules for Assembly

Rules for Assembly is the “organizing document” of the EPC. It includes what is to happen at each meeting of the General Assembly, as well as the EPC committee structure and work of the General Assembly between annual meetings. Because the 2/3 majority of enrolled



commissioners could not be met at the 38th General Assembly in 2018, a number of proposed amendments to *Rules for Assembly* were not addressed. By NLT action, these 2018 amendments have been presented to the 39th General Assembly, along with proposed 2019 amendments (Recommendations 39-03, 39-04, 39-05, 39-07, and 39-21).

Recommendations to the 2019 General Assembly:

Recommendation 39-01:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly (2019) **APPROVE** an ad interim committee be appointed by the Moderator to conduct the search for the next Stated Clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. This committee will include members from all presbyteries of the EPC. The goal is to elect the next Stated Clerk at the 40th General Assembly (2020).

Rationale:

In order to accomplish the smoothest transition between Stated Clerks, the NLT has determined that the best way forward is for the Stated Clerk’s successor to be elected by the 40th General Assembly (2020). This is a year before the current Stated Clerk departs in 2021. While a twelve month “overlap” of the two Stated Clerks is not considered necessary, this goal would provide much more planning flexibility. Following past EPC practice, the NLT also decided that every presbytery would be represented on the search committee. There are currently 14 presbyteries in the EPC. “Working back” from a June 2020 election of the next Stated Clerk, the NLT concluded that this search committee needed to commence its work as soon as possible after the 39th General Assembly (2019) acts on the NLT recommendation.

Recommendation 39-03:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **ADOPT** its proposal to amend *Rules for Assembly* 15-1 in order to amend or suspend *Rules* by a 2/3 vote of the Commissioners present.

| Current Rules for Assembly 15-1 | Proposed Rules for Assembly 15-1 (proposed amendment is a deletion) |
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| <p>XV. Amendment or Suspension of Rules</p> <p>15-1 The Rules of the General Assembly may be amended or suspended only by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total enrollment of the Commissioners. A motion to amend is</p> | <p>XV. Amendment or Suspension of Rules</p> <p>15-1 The Rules of the General Assembly may be amended or suspended only by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total enrollment of the Commissioners. A motion to amend is</p> |



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| debatable. A motion to suspend is not debatable. | debatable. A motion to suspend is not debatable. |
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Rationale:

The current requirement of amending or suspending *Rules for Assembly* by a 2/3 vote of total commissioners enrolled at the Assembly has become problematic and has hindered the work of the General Assembly at its annual meeting and in its work between meetings. In order to amend *Rules* at the 2017 General Assembly, commissioners were sent out of the sanctuary to find and bring in commissioners to get to the *Rules*-required “2/3 of enrolled commissioners” voting. At the 2018 General Assembly, a 2/3 vote of enrolled commissioners was not possible, though it was the first item of business on Friday morning after the Moderator’s Service of Communion and Prayer. The result is that amendments to *Rules* in 2018 were moved forward to this year. The proposed amendment makes it easier, requiring a 2/3 vote of Commissioners present.

Recommendation 39-04:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly amend *Rules for Assembly* to divide the current Church Planting and Revitalization Committee standing committee into two committees: 1) Church Planting and 2) Church Revitalization.

| Current IX. Standing Committees 9-1C. | Proposed IX. Standing Committees 9-1C. and D. (proposed amendment in <i>bold italics</i>) |
|--|--|
| C. Church Planting and Revitalization – concerning evangelism, church planting, and church revitalization. | <p><i>C. Church Planting – concerning evangelism and church planting.</i></p> <p><i>D. Church Revitalization – concerning church revitalization</i></p> <p>(subsequent standing committees would be re-lettered)</p> |

Rationale: Church planting and church revitalization are two important and separate strategic priorities of the EPC. It is appropriate that the Church Planting Team report to a standing committee focused on church planting and that the Church Revitalization GO Center report to a standing committee focused on church revitalization.

Recommendation 39-05:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **ADOPT** the deletion of the Permanent Church Planting and Revitalization Committee in *Rules for Assembly*. (In 2018, this recommendation was presented by the Permanent Church Planting and Revitalization Committee to the 38th General Assembly for action. Due to the lack of commissioners present for the vote, it could not be considered.

| Current Rules for Assembly X.10-1C. | Proposed Rules for Assembly X.10-1A (proposed amendment is a deletion) |
|---|--|
| <p>C. Committee on Church Planting and Revitalization.</p> <p>1. Membership to be three. Chairman is to be elected by committee.</p> <p>2. Duties:</p> <p>a. To coordinate, encourage and provide resources for church planting, evangelism, and church development efforts of presbyteries and churches.</p> <p>b. To coordinate, encourage, develop and provide resources for church revitalization efforts of presbyteries and churches.</p> | <p>C. Committee on Church Planting and Revitalization.</p> <p>1. Membership to be three. Chairman is to be elected by committee.</p> <p>2. Duties:</p> <p>a. To coordinate, encourage and provide resources for church planting, evangelism, and church development efforts of presbyteries and churches.</p> <p>b. To coordinate, encourage, develop provide resources for church revitalization efforts of presbyteries and churches.</p> |

Rationale:

Since 2009, the Church Planting and Revitalization Committee (CP&R)—known then as the National Outreach Committee—fulfilled these duties primarily by supporting and resourcing the church development ministry of our presbyteries. This ministry is led by the chairs of our presbytery Church Development Committees (CDC). The National Outreach Committee (NOC) hosted the presbytery CDC chairs twice a year in the Office of the General Assembly. At these meetings, successes and struggles in church planting and church revitalization were shared, as well as best practices and other lessons learned. The role of the NOC in these meetings was to listen, encourage, and explore how the NOC could help, given the limited funds at its disposal.

Responding to a request by those chairs for help with church planting in 2012, the NOC was instrumental in launching the Church Planting Team, led by Tom Ricks. Responding to a request for help with church revitalization in 2013, the CP&R launched the Church Revitalization Task Force (now known as the GO Center), led by Ken Priddy.

The NOC served the church development efforts of our presbyteries by launching these teams. It also was the platform from which the Church Planting Team and Church Revitalization Task Force (GO Center) grew in its impact in their respective areas in the EPC. One result of this “team approach” has been the creation of networks that have

improved the effectiveness of our presbyteries in their church planting and church revitalization work. With seven percent of our churches church plants, we are a church planting movement. More than 200 churches have been exposed to church revitalization seminars, with more than 70 pursuing church revitalization.

The 37th General Assembly (2017) signaled its support for the ongoing work of this team approach to church planting and church revitalization by inserting these ministries into its annual budget. With the success of these teams and their tie to the Office of the General Assembly through the EPC budget, the Church Planting and Revitalization Committee believes a permanent committee to oversee these network ministries is superfluous and no longer necessary.

If approved by the 39th General Assembly (2019), this section of *Rules for Assembly* would be deleted. Reference to this committee in other sections of *Rules* would also be deleted (i.e., *Rules* 10-1.A.3.a.1, where the committee is listed as one of those for which the National Leadership Team has administrative oversight).

Recommendation 39-07:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **APPROVE** an amendment to *Rules for Assembly* that would increase the size of the NLT from 13 to 16 members.

| Current <i>Rules for Assembly</i> X.10-1A | Proposed <i>Rules for Assembly</i> X.10-1A (proposed amendment in <i>bold italics</i>) |
|--|---|
| <p>10-1 The ministries of the Assembly shall be conducted primarily through permanent committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission, to wit:</p> <p>A. National Leadership Team</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chaired by the immediate past Moderator. 2. Committee Membership: Moderator, Moderator-elect, Stated Clerk, immediate past Moderator, and nine elected members. | <p>10-1 The ministries of the Assembly shall be conducted primarily through permanent committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission, to wit:</p> <p>A. National Leadership Team</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chaired by the immediate past Moderator. 2. Committee Membership: Moderator, Moderator-elect, Stated Clerk, immediate past Moderator, and nine twelve elected members. |

Rationale:

Since 1994, the Committee on Administration (the predecessor to the NLT) has consisted of 13 members: three classes of three (nine members), the three General Assembly Moderators (currently, the Moderator-elect, Moderator and NLT Chairman [past-



Moderator]] and the Stated Clerk. This structure served the EPC well as long as there were eight presbyteries. The number of presbyteries began to grow in 2010 so that today there are 14. The NLT makes this recommendation to increase presbytery representation. If approved, this increase will be accomplished by expanding the three classes of three to three classes of four.

Recommendation 39-10:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **APPROVE** an amendment to *Book of Government* 9-5A.1 making explicit that the office of “co-pastor” is not constitutional.

| <p style="text-align: center;">Current G. 9-5A.1</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Proposed G. 9-5A.1 (proposed amendment is in <i>bold italics</i>)</p> |
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| <p>Within the office of Teaching Elder there are a variety of callings that require ordination. God distributes to each gifts according to the common needs of the Church. These include:</p> <p>A. Pastor</p> <p>1. Titles</p> <p>A Teaching Elder may be called by a congregation to be a Pastor or Associate Pastor. Sessions may call a Teaching Elder as Assistant Pastor, Transitional Pastor, or invite a Teaching Elder as Stated Supply Pastor, or Occasional Supply Pastor. Presbytery must approve all such positions. These are the only recognized callings for Teaching Elders in a congregational setting.</p> | <p>Within the office of Teaching Elder there are a variety of callings that require ordination. God distributes to each gifts according to the common needs of the Church. These include:</p> <p>A. Pastor</p> <p>1. Titles</p> <p>A Teaching Elder may be called by a congregation to be a Pastor or Associate Pastor. Sessions may call a Teaching Elder as Assistant Pastor, Transitional Pastor, or invite a Teaching Elder as Stated Supply Pastor, or Occasional Supply Pastor. Presbytery must approve all such positions. These are the only recognized callings for Teaching Elders in a congregational setting. <i>The office of the “co-pastor” is not a constitutionally recognized calling in a local church. Except as otherwise provided in the Book of Government, the Pastor of the church shall be the Moderator of Session.</i></p> |

Rationale:

The Fifth General Assembly (1985) “sustained the Permanent Judicial Commission’s opinion regarding the office of co-pastor as being non-existent. Relationships between

Teaching Elders and EPC congregations sanctioned by the *Book of Government* are those of Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Assistant Pastor” (**Minutes, 5-40**). The position of the EPC since this 1985 action has remained unchanged.

The reason for the proposed amendment to the *Book of Government* is that churches that have come to the EPC recently have questioned the constitutionality of the prohibition. It has been argued that its “not explicit in the *Book of Government* that co-pastor is prohibited.” This amendment would explicitly declare in the *Book of Government* the position of the EPC since 1985.

Recommendation 39-19:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **ADOPT** the FY 2020 Administration budget. The proposed Administration Budget is available at www.epc.org/files/ga2019document-fy20192020budget

Recommendation 39-20:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **ADOPT** the FY 2020 Special Projects. The Special Projects are available at www.epc.org/files/ga2019document-fy20192020specialprojects

Recommendation 39-21:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly (2019) **APPROVE** an ad interim committee be appointed by the Moderator to address how to improve the long-term culture of giving to the EPC. This committee will be composed of up to five Ruling Elders or Teaching Elders from diverse, strongly-supporting churches across multiple presbyteries. It will also evaluate the current Per Member Asking (PMA) funding formula and provide a report to the 40th General Assembly in 2020.

Rationale:

The EPC has been blessed with giving to the EPC via Per Member Asking (PMA) growing at a healthy rate in recent years. However, giving by churches is approaching a historic high relative to the full PMA level, and has weakened in the current fiscal year. PMA giving has not kept pace with overall membership—which is now flat to down. A wide divergence is seen in church giving: thankfully, about half our churches give 90+% of their PMA, however one-third give \$0 or very little. EPC churches generally are in accord on biblical and missional matters, cohesive on connectional structures, and share much cultural harmony, but seem not to be united in sharing financially what is required to carry out the EPC mission and vision. A fundamental question facing the EPC as a movement of churches is: “What does it mean to be connected to the EPC?” e.g. Is it theological, ecclesial, collegial, branding, or collaborative? And should financial support of the EPC be purely voluntary, expected, or mandatory? Answers to these questions define the EPC giving culture.

Recommendation 39-22:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **APPROVE** an amendment to *Rules for Assembly* that would update the functions of the National Leadership Team. This amendment was proposed to but not acted upon by the 38th General Assembly (2018).

| Current Rules for Assembly X.10-1A | Proposed Rules for Assembly X.10-1A (proposed amendment is in <i>bold italics</i>) |
|---|--|
| <p>10-1 The ministries of the Assembly shall be conducted primarily through permanent committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission, to wit:</p> <p>A. National Leadership Team</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chaired by the immediate past Moderator. 2. Committee Membership: Moderator, Moderator-elect, Stated Clerk, immediate past Moderator, and nine elected members. 3. Functions in the following ways: | <p>10-1 The ministries of the Assembly shall be conducted primarily through permanent committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission, to wit:</p> <p>A. National Leadership Team</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chaired by the immediate past Moderator. 2. Committee Membership: Moderator, Moderator-elect, Stated Clerk, immediate past Moderator, and nine elected members. 3. Functions in the following ways <i>subject to General Assembly review, approval and the Book of Order</i>: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Mission, Vision and Strategy</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Primary responsibility to seek the mind of Christ for our denomination and to express this in a mission statement that states who God has called the EPC to be.</i> 2. <i>Development of vision and strategies that express what God is calling the EPC to do to carry out the mission statement.</i> 3. <i>Assess the execution of the mission, vision, and strategies on behalf of the General Assembly.</i> 4. <i>Encourage EPC Presbyteries and local churches to participate in</i> |



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| <p>a. Administrative oversight</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Oversight and coordination of Administration Committee with World Outreach, Christian Education and Communications, Ministerial Vocation, Church Planting & Revitalization, Women’s Ministries, and Student & College Ministries Committees.2) Responds to emergency and disaster situations3) Serve as Directors of the corporation <p>b. Denominational Development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) General Assembly planning2) Promotion/public relations3) Personnel administration (staff hiring, staff accountability)4) Budget development: receive projections from all committees and submit to General Assembly a proposed budget5) All legal and corporate matters6) Property and liability insurance <p>c. All other business of ecclesiastical matters not specifically assigned to any other committees.</p> | <p><i>implementing the mission, vision and strategies.</i></p> <p>b. Administrative oversight</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Oversight and coordination of National Leadership Team with World Outreach, Ministerial Vocation, Women’s Resource Council, and Next Generation Ministries Council.2) Responds to emergency and disaster situations3) Serve as Directors of the corporation for the purposes of compliance with the laws of the state in which the EPC is incorporated and in accord with EPC by-laws. <p>c. Denominational Development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) General Assembly planning2) Promotion/public relations3) Personnel administration (staff hiring, staff accountability)4) Budget development: receive projections from all committees and submit to General Assembly a proposed budget5) All legal and corporate matters6) Property and liability insurance <p>d. All other business of ecclesiastical matters not specifically assigned to any other committees.</p> <p>4. Explanatory Statement</p> <p><i>The National Leadership Team is not a court of the denomination, nor a commission of the General Assembly, but a committee of the denomination, with authority derived from the Book of</i></p> |
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| | <p><i>Order. The NLT is therefore responsible to the General Assembly and carries out its work under the authority of the General Assembly by proactively making recommendations to the General Assembly and exercising authority to carry out those recommendations as approved by the General Assembly.</i></p> |
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Rationale

With the dramatic growth the EPC since 2007, the development of the denomination as mission- and vision-driven, and the increasing complexity of leading the EPC in the 21st century, the work of the NLT has evolved significantly in the last five years. This proposed revision recognizes that development and, in the “Explanatory Statement” clarifies the relationship of the General Assembly and the NLT.

Recommendation 39-25:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **APPROVE** Third Millennium Ministries as an “approved agency.”

Rationale:

A number of EPC churches are supportive of this global mission work, which complements the ministry of EPC World Outreach’s International Theological Education Network (ITEN). Third Millennium President Richard Pratt was a plenary speaker at the 30th General Assembly (2010).

Recommendation 39–26:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly send the matter of the Michigan chapter of Bethany Christian Services (BCS) to the Permanent Committee on Theology to review in light of the EPC Position Papers on Abortion and Human Sexuality. The Permanent Committee on Theology will make a report with recommendation(s) to the 40th General Assembly (2020).

Rationale

In April, the Michigan chapter of Bethany Christian Services (BCS) acceded to the state government’s requirement and agreed to place children for adoption in the homes of same-sex couples (www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/2019/04/bethany-christian-services-reverses-same-sex-adoption-policy-following-legal-settlement.html). As an application of the EPC’s position on abortion, BCS has been an EPC “approved agency” since 1989. With two strongly held EPC positions in tension (if not in conflict)—Abortion and Human



Sexuality—it is appropriate for the Permanent Theology Committee to research this matter and make report with recommendation(s) to the 40th General Assembly.

Recommendation 39-33:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly **ADOPT** the Minutes of the 38th General Assembly (this 402-page document is available at www.epc.org/files/ga2018minutes).

Recommendation 39-35:

The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39th General Assembly refer to the Permanent Committee on Theology for study how the EPC can be more sensitive to the needs of the disabled. The Permanent Committee on Theology will make a report with recommendations(s) to the 40th General Assembly (2020).

Rationale

Two documents written by Leadership Institute speaker Michelle Munger call attention to the need and opportunity to ensure that disabled individuals are recognized and included in the life and ministry of the EPC. “Sacraments and the Disabled” encourages the EPC to look at how we view and minister to those who are disabled. “**Book of Order** notes for disability concerns” looks at places in our Constitution where we could intentionally be more inclusive of the disabled. These documents would serve as a starting point for study by the Permanent Committee on Theology.

<http://www.epc.org/files/ga2019document-sacramentsandthedisabled>

<http://www.epc.org/files/ga2019document-bookofordernotesondisabilityconcerns>



Committee Members

TE Dean Weaver (Chairman), Presbytery of the Alleghenies
RE Sabra Carman, Presbytery of the Midwest
RE Chris Danusiar, Presbytery of the Rivers and Lakes
TE Nancy Duff, Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
RE Phil Fanara, Presbytery of the East
RE Mike Gibson, Presbytery of the Great Plains
RE Rob Liddon, Presbytery of the Central South
RE Rosemary Lukens, Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest
RE Glenn Meyers, Presbytery of the Alleghenies
TE Luder Whitlock, Presbytery of Florida and the Caribbean
Moderator RE Tom Werner, Presbytery of Mid-America (ex officio)
Moderator-elect TE Case Thorp, Presbytery of Florida and the Caribbean (ex officio)
Stated Clerk TE Jeffrey Jeremiah, Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest (ex officio)

Committee Meeting Dates:

August 21-22, 2018—Allison Park, PA
October 16-17, 2018—Orlando, FL
November 13, 2018—via Email
December 20, 2018—via Email
January 22-23, 2019—Orlando, FL
February 8, 2019—via Email
March 25, 2019—via Email
April 9-10, 2019—Orlando, FL
May 1, 2019—via Email
May 17, 2019—via Email
May 20, 2019—via Email

Respectfully submitted,

Dean Weaver
Chairman

June 2019