

# The Proposed Revision to the PC(USA) Directory for Worship

# What is the Directory for Worship?

- \* part of the PC(USA) *Book of Order*
- \* describes theology and practice of worship
- \* roots in the 1645 Westminster directory
- \* new directories written in the 1960s
- \* last major revision in 1989, after reunion

# Why is this document important?

- \* analogy of a compass: bearings and direction
- \* point to primary things: glory of God
- \* navigating relationship between form and freedom
- \* guidance in the ongoing reform of worship
- \* variety of styles and cultural expressions

# Why revise the Directory for Worship?

- \* current directory is twenty-seven years old
- \* overly long, organization is complicated
- \* theology, practice of worship in different sections
- \* need more flexibility for a changing church
- \* multicultural congregations, new communities
- \* sacramental renewal, ecumenical convergence

# How was this revision done?

- \* 217th GA (2006) called for draft of revision  
“authentically Reformed,” “culturally appropriate,” “more accessible and helpful,” “shorter and better organized”
- \* delay during revision of Form of Government
- \* first draft by Office of Theology and Worship,  
Office of the General Assembly in 2013

# How was this revision done? (continued)

- \* 2013: first consultation with pastors, scholars, leaders
- \* 221st GA (2014) recommended study, comment
- \* received affirmation, ideas for improvement  
approximately 250 comments, variety of people and groups
- \* 2015: second consultation prepared current draft
- \* approved by Mission Agency Board in 2016,  
sent to 222nd General Assembly (2016)
- \* approved by 2016 GA, sent to presbyteries

# What's new in this revision?

- \* this is a *revision*, not a completely new directory
- \* preserving the spirit and strength of our tradition ...
  - giving glory to God;
  - focus on Jesus Christ, crucified and risen;
  - centrality of Scripture;
  - unity of Word and Sacrament

# What's new in this revision? (continued)

- \* yet this *is* a significant revision ...
  - highlights the Reformed theme of grace and gratitude;
  - new sections: worship and culture, work of the Holy Spirit;
  - variety of worshiping communities, cultural contexts;
  - more accessible language, user-friendly organization;
  - simplified, streamlined structure: five chapters (vs. seven);
  - redundancies eliminated, roughly 9,000 words shorter (two-thirds the length of the current directory)

# What else is important to know?

- \* **The Covenant of Marriage**

reflects the action of the 221st GA (2014)

“Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives” (W-4.0601).

- \* **Baptism and the Lord’s Supper**

reflects the guidance of the 219th GA (2010)

“All who come to the table are offered the bread and cup, regardless of their age or understanding. If some of those who come have not yet been baptized, an invitation to baptismal preparation and Baptism should be graciously extended” (W-3.0409).

# If the revision is approved, what's next?

- \* presbyteries are now voting on the revision
- \* if a majority approve, the proposed revision would replace the current directory in the *Book of Order*
- \* online version will be updated to include
  - links to biblical, confessional sources
  - related documents and instructional videos
  - other educational materials on worship



Holy God,  
as in Jesus Christ  
you came to show us the way,  
the truth, and the life,  
guide our steps  
and direct our lives  
so that we may worship you  
in spirit and in truth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.