

**16-F. The Ministry of Members
On Amending G-1.0304 (Item 09-11)**

A.14

The 222nd General Assembly (2016) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-1.0304 be amended as follows? [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-1.0304 The Ministry of Members

“Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is a joy and a privilege. It is also a commitment to participate in Christ’s mission. A faithful member bears witness to God’s love and grace and promises to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ’s Church. Such involvement includes:

- “proclaiming the good news in word and deed,**
- “taking part in the common life and worship of a congregation,**
- “lifting one another up in prayer, mutual concern, and active support,**
- “studying Scripture and the issues of Christian faith and life,**
- “supporting the ministry of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents,**
- “demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church,**
- “responding to God’s activity in the world through service to others,**
- “living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life,**
- “working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment,**
- “caring for God’s creation,**
- “participating in the governing responsibilities of the church, and**
- “reviewing and evaluating regularly the integrity of one’s membership, and considering ways in which one’s participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful.”**

Background and Rationale

This proposed amendment originated as an overture from the Presbytery of New Castle. The Presbyteries of Boston, Cascades, Heartland, Homestead, Inland Northwest, Lake Michigan, Monmouth, Northern New England, and Seattle concurred with the overture. New Castle Presbytery offered the following rationale:

Although a “green church movement” has long remained at the grassroots level in the U.S., the PC(USA) leads with a robust environmental ministry and “Earth Care Congregation” program. We recognize the importance of earth care issues and action, and we have an opportunity to add the concern to to an important section of our constitutional documents.

Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ and in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a joy and a privilege. It is also a commitment to participate in Christ’s mission. A faithful member bears witness to God’s love and grace and promises to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ’s Church. Caring for God’s Creation is a critical act of faith in today’s world and should be included in G-1.0304, “The Ministry of Members,” of the *Book of Order*.

Advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 222nd General Assembly (2016) that Item 09-11 presents the following matters the General Assembly should consider:

There are several points already in G-1.0304 that encourage church members to live out faithful stewardship of God's creation. The responsibility for caring for God's creation already is included in our confessional documents, as noted in the rationale, and this should be instructive for all church members.

The *Book of Order* is a constitutional document, not a manual of operations. Although there is no impediment to approving this overture, there is no compelling reason to add this to the *Book of Order*.

The Assembly Committee on Immigration and Environmental Issues (09) voted to approve Item 09-11 43/11. The 222nd General Assembly (2016) approved the committee's recommendation 429/120.

For the full report of Item 06-15 <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/569/business>