

1 **OVERTURE 3** from Heritage Presbytery (to MTW)  
2 "Amend MTW Manual"  
3

4 **Whereas** Mission to the World (MTW) is a committee of the General Assembly [BCO 14-1.12]  
5 and the ecclesiastical mission arm of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), and  
6 not an independent parachurch organization; and  
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8 **Whereas** MTW is accountable to the PCA's General Assembly; and  
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10 **Whereas** on September 27, 2018, the Committee on Mission To the World (CMTW) approved  
11 a "Statement on Valuing Women in MTW"; and  
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13 **Whereas** MTW subsequently proposed guidelines ("Guidelines"), dated January 9, 2019, to  
14 implement the "Statement on Valuing Women in MTW" that were distributed to MTW  
15 missionaries; and  
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17 **Whereas** the "Guidelines" opened leadership positions with authority over MTW church  
18 planting and church development ministry to unordained men and women; and  
19

20 **Whereas** the "Guidelines" affirmed "there has been no MTW policy regarding women serving  
21 in these leadership roles..."; and  
22

23 **Whereas** a Committee of Concerned MTW Missionaries has authored an extensive position  
24 paper raising their "serious concern" about the "Guidelines" "officially opening line  
25 authority leadership over MTW church planting and church development ministry to  
26 women and men who are not elders"; and  
27

28 **Whereas** Heritage Presbytery and other presbyteries of the PCA are charged to provide  
29 spiritual oversight for ordained elders who come from within our bounds, but who  
30 serve under MTW [BCO 8-3 and 13-2.];  
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32 **Therefore be it resolved** that Heritage Presbytery hereby overture the 48th General Assembly  
33 of the PCA to direct CMTW to amend the MTW Policy Manual to include the  
34 following statement:  
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36 MTW leaders in line authority over church planting or church  
37 development ministry should be ordained elders. In extraordinary cases  
38 where this policy is not followed, the appointment of an unordained man  
39 who exhibits the qualities of an elder is permissible, but must be  
40 approved annually by a three-quarters vote of CMTW, and there shall  
41 be a record of the reasons for such an appointment included in CMTW's  
42 minutes that are submitted to the General Assembly.  
43

44 **Be it further resolved** that this statement be considered a "material change" to the MTW  
45 Policy Manual, and that any change or removal of this statement must be approved by

46 CMTW and submitted to the General Assembly through the usual process of reports  
47 of the Permanent Committees and Agencies in accordance with *RAO* 4-21.j and *RAO*  
48 14-11.d, f, g, h.  
49

50 **Rationale:**

51 CMTW’s “Statement on Valuing Women” affirms “supporting and equipping our sisters in  
52 Christ as they exercise their gifts and abilities throughout MTW’s global ministry...” This is  
53 a commendable statement. However, MTW needs a clear statement in its Policy Manual to  
54 ensure that non-elders serving with MTW are not placed in ecclesiastical positions of authority  
55 over elders, churches, or church plants. Such appointment would be unwarranted by Scripture,  
56 and may create an untenable crisis of conscience for both men and women serving with MTW  
57 in church planting or church development ministry.  
58

59 After hearing the objections of the Committee of Concerned MTW Missionaries, PCA  
60 churches, and PCA elders, MTW subsequently revised the “Guidelines” to no longer leave  
61 open positions of leadership in line authority over church planting or church development  
62 ministry to women. This demonstrates the validity of the objections and the responsiveness of  
63 MTW. However, without a mandate that the MTW Policy Manual include a clear and  
64 unambiguous statement that ensures leaders in line authority over church planting and church  
65 development ministry be ordained elders, the revised “Guidelines” could still be revised again,  
66 at any time, to permit non-elders to serve in these leadership positions without the approval  
67 of the General Assembly.  
68

69 MTW is the ecclesiastical missions arm of the PCA, and our Lord has provided for the  
70 authority of the Church to be exercised by ordained elders [Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:12].  
71 While service and advice should be sought from unordained men and women, they should not  
72 be the voice of authority in the Church.  
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74 *Adopted by Heritage Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 25, 2020*

75 *Attested by RE Conrad W Judy Jr., stated clerk*