

1 **OVERTURE 14** from Evangel Presbytery (to MTW)
2 "Revise 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 is 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** the written policy manual of MTW states the urgency and priority of Planting and
11 Strengthening churches as the priority for MTW 2.1.2; and
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13 **Whereas** on September 27, 2018, the Committee on Mission To the World (CMTW)
14 approved a "Statement on Valuing Women in MTW"; and
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16 **Whereas** MTW subsequently proposed guidelines ("Guidelines"), dated January 9, 2019, to
17 implement the "Statement on Valuing Women in MTW" that were distributed to MTW
18 missionaries; and
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20 **Whereas** the "Guidelines" opened leadership positions with authority over MTW church
21 planting and church development ministry to unordained men and women; and
22

23 **Whereas** the "Guidelines" affirmed "there has been no MTW policy regarding women
24 serving in these leadership roles..."; and
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26 **Whereas** a Committee of Concerned MTW Missionaries has authored an extensive position
27 paper raising their "serious concern" about the "Guidelines" "officially opening line
28 authority leadership over MTW church planting and church development ministry to
29 women and men who are not elders"; and
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31 **Whereas** Evangel Presbytery and other presbyteries of the PCA are charged to provide
32 spiritual oversight for ordained elders who come from within our bounds, but who
33 serve under MTW [BCO 8-3 and 13-2];
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35 **Therefore be it resolved** that Evangel Presbytery hereby overture the 48th General Assembly
36 of the PCA to direct CMTW to amend the MTW Policy Manual to include the
37 following statement: "All MTW leaders in line authority over church planting or
38 church development ministry shall be ordained elders."
39

40 **Be it further resolved** that this statement be considered a "material change" to the MTW
41 Policy Manual, and that any change or removal of this statement must be approved by
42 CMTW and submitted to the General Assembly through the usual process of reports
43 of the Permanent Committees and Agencies in accordance with RAO 4-21.j and RAO
44 14-11.d, f, g, h.
45

1 **Rationale:** CMTW’s “Statement on Valuing Women” affirms “supporting and equipping our
2 sisters in Christ as they exercise their gifts and abilities throughout MTW’s global ministry...”
3 This is a commendable statement. However, MTW needs a clear statement in its Policy
4 Manual to ensure that non-elders serving with MTW are not placed in ecclesiastical positions
5 of authority over elders, churches, or church plants. Such appointment would be unwarranted
6 by Scripture, and may create an untenable crisis of conscience for both men and women
7 serving with MTW in church planting or church development ministry. After hearing the
8 objections of the Committee of Concerned MTW Missionaries, PCA churches, and PCA
9 elders, MTW subsequently revised the “Guidelines” to no longer leave open positions of
10 leadership in line authority over church planting or church development ministry to women.
11 This demonstrates the validity of the objections and the responsiveness of MTW. However,
12 without a mandate that the MTW Policy Manual include a clear and unambiguous statement
13 that ensures leaders in line authority over church planting and church development ministry
14 be ordained elders, the revised “Guidelines” could still be revised again, at any time, to permit
15 non-elders to serve in these leadership positions without the approval of the General
16 Assembly. MTW is the ecclesiastical missions arm of the PCA, and our Lord has provided
17 for the authority of the Church to be exercised by ordained elders [Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter
18 5:1-4]. While service and advice should be sought from unordained men and women, they
19 should not be the voice of authority in the Church.

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21 *Adopted by Evangel Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 12, 2020*

22 *Attested by /s/ TE Martin Wagner, stated clerk*