

COMMON FAITH COMMON MISSION



CONTENTS

For the Leader _____	2
Session One	
Common Faith, Common Mission: An Overview	
Discovering Our Foundations _____	3
Worksheet A – <i>The Book of Confessions</i> _____	5
Worksheet B – <i>The Book of Order</i> _____	6
Session Two	
Our Common Faith: <i>The Book of Confessions</i> _____	7
Worksheet C – Confessional Documents _____	9
Session Three	
Our Common Mission: <i>The Book of Order</i>	
Chapters 1–4 _____	10
Worksheet D – Historic Principles _____	12
Session Four	
Living Out Our Common Faith and Common Mission _____	13
Case Study #1 _____	15
Case Study #2 _____	16
Case Study #3 _____	17
Case Study #4 _____	18
Case Study #5 _____	19
Case Study #6 _____	20

For the Leader

The four sessions in this leader guide are designed to give older youth and adults an opportunity to become familiar or reacquainted with the two books that make up the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, which are *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*. These documents are both historical and very current, since they help us to define who we are called to be as Presbyterians and how we function together as this part of God's church. The sessions are meant to give a hands-on introduction to our polity, or government, providing the foundations of how we govern ourselves as Presbyterians and how we relate to the world.

Part I, *The Book of Confessions* is made up of the eleven creeds, catechisms, confessions, and statements of faith that came with Presbyterian reunion in 1983. These doctrinal standards are part of our historical tradition, but they also reflect our church's openness over the centuries to hearing a new and fresh word from God.

Part II, the *Book of Order* defines how we Presbyterians in today's world are to worship together, govern ourselves, and exercise discipline. This document is amended by actions of the General Assembly and the subsequent votes of the presbyteries. Thus, through our *Constitution*, "the church affirms... 'The church reformed, always

reforming,' according to the Word of God and the call of the Spirit" (G-2.0200).

These sessions are designed so that you, the leader, act more as a facilitator than a lecturer. You do not need to be an expert on the *Constitution* to lead these sessions. However, it is always beneficial for you to have studied the material and the process outlined here before leading your group. The participants will discover their own answers by working through the questions provided.

The sessions are designed to be completed in about one hour's time; however, ninety minutes will allow for a more thorough opportunity for sharing what the group learns. Since for many participants this may be the first time they have seen *The Book of Confessions* or *Book of Order*, enough time needs to be allocated to allow folks to read through the assigned material. Your task will be to encourage them to move to answering the questions in the small groups. Please allow at least fifteen minutes for group sharing at the end, since this is where all the small group learnings will be consolidated.

Thank you for your part in assisting others to learn more about our Presbyterian *Constitution*. We would very much like to have your feedback after you have led these sessions. Please contact us at OGA_Comm@ctr.pcusa.org.

OGA_Comm@ctr.pcusa.org

COMMON FAITH, COMMON MISSION: AN OVERVIEW
DISCOVERING OUR FOUNDATIONS

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session is designed to provide participants with a hands-on overview of both parts of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): The Book of Confessions (Part I)* and the *Book of Order (Part II)*.

Resources Needed

- ◆ copies of *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order* for each participant
- ◆ newsprint and markers
- ◆ pens or pencils
- ◆ a Bible
- ◆ a copy of Worksheet A on *The Book of Confessions* for each participant
- ◆ a copy of Worksheet B on the *Book of Order* for each participant
- ◆ (optional) a copy of the closing hymn for each participant

Introduction

During this session, participants will be getting familiar with the organization and content of the two books that make up the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Together, they help us to define who we are as Presbyterians and how we function together as this part of God's church. It may become obvious right away that they are not like many of the books with which we are familiar. For example, instead of having page numbers, each paragraph in the *Book of Order* has its own number.

The Session Plan

1. Begin the session with the following prayer or one of your own:

Creator God, through Jesus Christ you have called the church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission to the world, for its building up, and for its service to you. We give you thanks that Christ is our hope, and that, bound to Christ's authority, we are free to live in the lively, joyous reality of your grace. Be present with us as we delve further into the gift of our *Constitution*, so that our mission in your name will be strengthened; in Jesus' name. Amen. (Adapted from *Book of Order*, G-1.0100.)

2. Next, read (or ask a volunteer to read) 1 Cor. 14:37–40. Share with the group that one way Presbyterians do things “decently and in order” is through the use of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Explain to the participants that they will have an opportunity to share with and learn from each other as they rediscover the gift of the *Constitution* for the church's life today.

3. Invite the group to take a few moments to answer the following question: “When you say you are Presbyterian, what are you saying?” Record answers on newsprint. (Note: Save the answers on newsprint to use in session four.)
4. Next, invite participants to gather in smaller groups of twos or threes. Provide each small group with copies of *The Book of Confessions*, the *Book of Order*, and Worksheets A and B. Ask them to spend the next several minutes answering the questions on the worksheets, designed to familiarize them with the organization of these two books. Share with them that there are, most likely, more questions to answer than time will permit.
5. After everyone has finished the worksheets, bring the participants back together into one group. Spend the remainder of the session having the participants share with each other the highlights of their work in small groups, making sure to cover each of the areas on the worksheets.
6. Close the session with prayer or the singing/reciting of a hymn (suggestion: *The Presbyterian Hymnal* #430, “Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!”).

Optional activities for an extended session:

Option A:

Choose the appropriate category below that best fits your group:

- ◆ for officer training: G-10.0100 of the *Book of Order*
- ◆ for church members: G-7.0100 and G-7.0300 of the *Book of Order*
- ◆ for a presbytery gathering: G-11.0103 of the *Book of Order*



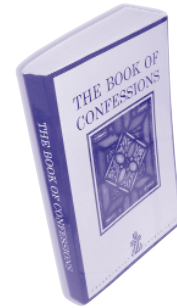
Ask the participants to read the appropriate section above. Invite them to share with each other how they see the section operating in their congregation or governing body.

Option B (for any group):

Take enough time to read A Brief Statement of Faith in its entirety. Note the use of language. Consider how it compares and contrasts with other confessional documents of the church.

SESSION ONE

WORKSHEET A
THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS



Take a few minutes to work through the following questions together. Record your answers in the spaces provided.

1. How many documents are in the book? _____
How many creeds? _____ confessions? _____
catechisms? _____

2. How are the creeds and confessions ordered in the book? That is, are they in order by length? Age? Importance? How do you know?

3. Which creed or confession is the most ecumenical? (Hint: Look at the introductions to the documents.)

4. Take a look at the Apostles' Creed, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Confession of 1967. What do these documents have to say about the Lord's Supper?

5. Why was the Theological Declaration of Barmen written?

6. Which creeds or confessions have something to say about the Ten Commandments? Which one deals with the commandments in detail? (Hint: Check the index.)

7. Find "church" in the index. What do you notice?

8. Look over the Heidelberg Catechism and the Shorter and Larger Catechisms. What do you notice about their form? Which one would you choose to use with children?

9. Why are there endnotes/appendices for the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Shorter and Larger Catechisms, and A Brief Statement of Faith?

10. Spend some time looking at the banner art in the back of the book. What is most striking to you?

11. Which confession was written after the reunion of two branches of the Presbyterian church?

COMMON
FAITH
COMMON
MISSION

SESSION ONE

WORKSHEET B
THE BOOK OF ORDER



Take a few minutes to work through the following questions together. Record your answers in the spaces provided.

1. To discover how the book is organized, read the Preface and the Explanation of the Reference Number System. What do bold words in the text (other than section titles) signify?

2. What are the three main sections of the book?

3. Which chapter has as its subject the church's confessions?

4. What does G-5.0103 deal with?

5. If you were looking for a listing of business that is appropriate for a congregational meeting, where would you look?

6. Which chapter details the responsibilities of the presbytery?

7. If you have a question about baptism, where would you look? (Hint: check the index). For example, do Presbyterians allow baptism by immersion?

8. How does W-5.6000 manifest itself in your congregation? In your own life?

9. Read D-1.0000. How does this section inform Presbyterians in times of serious disagreement?

10. What subjects are covered in the appendices?

11. Look at pages E-1 through E-3. What does the triangle suggest in connection with the seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

SESSION OVERVIEW

In this session, participants will become more familiar with *The Book of Confessions* by comparing four confessional documents in the book, noting general similarities and differences among them.

Resources Needed

- ◆ a copy of *The Book of Confessions* for each participant
- ◆ newsprint and markers
- ◆ pens or pencils
- ◆ a copy of Worksheet C for each participant

Introduction

This will be a chance for participants to interact with some of the creeds and confessions of the Presbyterian Church. In *The Book of Confessions* “the church declares to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, what it resolves to do” (G-2.0100a). This session provides an overview of Part I of the *Constitution* and encourages participants to consider what elements might go into their own creed or confession of faith.

The Session Plan

- ◆ Begin the session with the following prayer or one of your own:

Gracious and almighty God, we acknowledge that you are “God alone, to whom alone we must cleave, whom alone we must serve, whom alone we must worship, and in whom alone we put our trust” (The Scots Confession, 3.01). Help us to be keenly aware of your presence as we explore the roots of our heritage as Presbyterians. May our common faith in you lead us to be more faithful followers of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.
- ◆ Divide participants into at least four smaller groups of no more than five individuals in each group. Make sure that each participant has a copy of *The Book of Confessions* and a copy of worksheet C.

Ask every small group to read the introductions to and texts of these three documents:

 - The Nicene Creed
 - The Apostles’ Creed
 - A Brief Statement of Faith

Ask each small group to choose **one** additional document from the following list to scan briefly (be sure also to read over the introductory page that accompanies the chosen one). **Make sure that each small group chooses a different document.** (Note: If the group is large enough, consider using all of the remaining eight documents in the book.)

The Heidelberg Catechism
The Westminster Confession of Faith
The Theological Declaration of Barmen
The Confession of 1967

Have each group answer the questions on Worksheet C as they work through the material.

3. When the small groups have finished their work, ask each small group to share its findings with the entire group. Write down on newsprint a compilation of their work.

4. After each small group has reported, ask the participants to review the compilation and to discuss the following questions:

- What topics are common in all of the confessional documents that were studied by the small groups? (*There are only five common topics in all eleven confessions—God, Christ, Holy Spirit/Ghost, the church, and sin.*) Write the common topics on newsprint.
- What significance do you find in these common topics?

5. If enough time remains, ask the participants to ponder the following. If time is running short, ask them to think about the following in the coming days:

- What topics or elements do you think you would include in your own creed, confession, or statement of faith? What would influence your decision?

6. Close by asking the participants to read together all or shorter sections (such as 10.4 or both 10.1 and 10.5) of A Brief Statement of Faith.



W O R K S H E E T
CONFSSIONAL DOCUMENTS



Questions for small groups:

1. What similarities do you note among the four confessional documents?

2. What differences do you find among the four?

3. What do you identify as the essential components in every document?

4. Which document has a particular appeal to you? Why?

Question for personal contemplation:

- What topics or elements do you think you would include in your own creed, confession, or statement of faith? What would influence your decision?

SESSION THREE

OUR COMMON MISSION: **THE BOOK OF ORDER** Chapters 1–4

SESSION OVERVIEW

In small groups, participants will compare different sections of the first four chapters of the *Book of Order*, discovering how the historic foundational principles contained in these chapters are integral components of the church's life today.

Resources Needed

- ◆ a copy of the *Book of Order* for each participant
- ◆ newsprint and markers
- ◆ pens or pencils
- ◆ a copy of Worksheet D for each participant

Introduction

This is an invitation to return to the basics, to reflect together on core Presbyterian values and how our *Constitution* can be our guide to doing mission. This will provide a brief overview of the foundational chapters of the *Book of Order* in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Session Plan

- ◆ Begin the session with the following prayer or one of your own:

O God, we give you thanks for the church, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone. Through Christ the church finds its faith and life, as well as its unity and mission. As we study and discern what it means to be part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), may our words turn into action, so that others will know the joyous reality of your abundant grace; in Jesus' name. Amen. (Adapted from G-1.0100c, d.)

2. Divide participants into at least four small groups with no more than five individuals in each group. Make sure that each participant has a copy of the *Book of Order* and a copy of worksheet D.

3. Share with the participants that they will be looking at both of the following sections of the *Book of Order*:

G-1.0100 The Head of the Church
G-1.0200 The Great Ends of the Church

In addition, assign to each small group one of the sections from the following list:

G-1.0300 The Historic Principles of Church Order
G-1.0400 The Historic Principles of Church Government
G-3.0300 The Church's Calling
G-4.0301a-i Principles of Presbyterian Government

Have participants introduce themselves to their small groups by answering the following question: What one word describes you as a Presbyterian? Then have each group discuss the questions on the worksheet as they work through the material as assigned above.

4. After 20–30 minutes, ask each small group to share its findings with the entire group. Write down on newsprint a compilation of their work. Are there still key concepts that seem to be missing? Why might that be? How does this list give us insight into the mission of the church?

5. Close by asking the participants to read aloud in unison the Great Ends of the Church (G-1.0200).



WORKSHEET D
HISTORIC PRINCIPLES



Questions for small groups:

1. What are the key concepts in these sections that describe us as Presbyterians?

2. How do you see these key concepts being integrated into the life of your congregation(s)?

3. What, if any, key concepts do you think are missing from this list?

4. How does this list give us insight into the mission of the church?

LIVING OUT OUR COMMON FAITH
AND COMMON MISSION

SESSION
OVERVIEW

In small groups, participants will use their learnings from the prior three sessions to help inform their work in this session. In particular, they will discuss case studies of congregations that are dealing with everyday realities of the church in the 21st century.

Resources Needed

- ◆ copies of *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order* for each participant
- ◆ newsprint and markers
- ◆ pens or pencils
- ◆ copies of all of the case studies for each participant
- ◆ the newsprint page(s) from Session One that contain the answers to the question, “When you say you are Presbyterian, what are you saying?”
- ◆ (optional) a copy of the closing hymn for each participant

Introduction

In the previous three sessions, we examined in some depth the material in both parts of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, namely, *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*. But what does it actually look like to use this material as a guide when dealing with real situations in the church’s life today? Throughout the long history of American Presbyterianism, the church has found it necessary from time to time to amend the *Constitution* so that it was relevant to the particular times in which Presbyterians were called to work and witness for the gospel. As you ponder the case studies in this session, consider how the *Constitution* is helpful to your discussions—as well as where it seems to be inadequate or silent, given the circumstances.

The Session Plan

- ◆ Begin the session with the following prayer or one of your own:

Source of Life, from the beginning you created women, men, and children for community and called your people into covenant. Even today, the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, orders, and empowers the new community of the covenant. To each member is given gifts by the Spirit for the building up of the body of Christ. Move your Spirit among us now, O God, so that we may see with new eyes and live with renewed commitment our common faith and mission in you; in Jesus’ name. Amen.

(Adapted from *Book of Order*, W-1.1005.)

2. If the group is large enough, divide the participants into smaller groups—one small group for each of the case studies you have chosen ahead of time (from the six provided at the end of this session) that are most appropriate for your group. Provide each small group with copies of *The Book of Confessions*, the *Book of Order*, and one case study (a different case study for each small group) to discuss. Ask the participants to read their case studies and answer the questions that accompany the studies, given what they have learned in the previous sessions. (Note: Plan to spend about one-third of the session time in small groups.)
3. Bring the participants back into one large group. Provide all participants with copies of all of the case studies being discussed. Ask each small group to share the highlights of their discussions.
4. Next, remind the participants of the following question that they answered in Session One: “When you say you are Presbyterian, what are you saying?” Invite the group to take a few moments to answer the question again. Record their answers on newsprint. After they have finished their answers, post the newsprint page(s) from Session One alongside the answers the group just provided. Ask the group to note the similarities—and especially any differences—between the two sets of answers.
5. Close the session with prayer or the singing/reciting of the hymn you used from Session One (suggestion: *The Presbyterian Hymnal* #430, “Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!”).

Optional activities for an extended session

This is a variation of activity #2. Divide the participants into small groups as described above. Decide on one case study from the six available for this session. Provide half of the small groups with copies of the case study, as well as copies of *The Book of Confessions* and the question, “How do the four confessions you studied in Session Two inform your approach to handling this situation?” Provide the other half of the small groups with copies of the case study, as well as copies of the *Book of Order* and the question, “How do the first four chapters of the *Book of Order* inform your approach to handling this situation?”

After the small groups have discussed the case study among themselves, bring the participants back into one large group. Invite them to share their findings with one another. Point out to the group where the conversation flows well and where there may be differences of opinion.



SESSION FOUR

C A S E S T U D Y # 1

First Presbyterian Church was organized 120 years ago, close to the downtown area of the city. The congregation still worships in the original sanctuary and has built several additional buildings on the site for education and administrative purposes.

Over the past few decades, the downtown section of the city surrounding the church has undergone tremendous change. First Church used to be a large, neighborhood congregation. Significantly smaller in numbers now, members of First Church come from all across the area to gather for worship and other activities. The majority of the activities are scheduled for Sundays because of the difficulty that members have in traveling back downtown during the week, especially on weeknights.

In recent years, the number of Asian immigrants in the neighborhood around First Church has been increasing steadily and is quickly becoming the dominant culture in the immediate area of the church. Two years ago, an Asian Presbyterian congregation, with the encouragement of the presbytery, began to meet at First Church. That new congregation has been growing steadily. The session of First Church now wants to find the best way to support the growth of BOTH congregations. In doing so, they are aware that they face a series of differing cultural understandings about such things as the role of the pastor, the place of women in leadership, worship patterns, and decision-making styles. The session seeks the best approach to uphold the “historic traditions” of First Church while still honoring and serving this changing population.

The session of First Church sees three options open to it. They are:

- Sell their current facility to the new Asian congregation and move First Church to another area, closer to where their membership resides.
- Continue to open the doors of First Church to the growing Asian congregation and seek ways that the two congregations can both coexist and find ways to share some worship and programmatic activities.
- Create one “new” church out of these two existing congregations, with representative leadership coming from both of the former congregations.

How do the broad concepts of our Presbyterian foundations inform the discussion of this issue?



SESSION FOUR

CASE STUDY #2

Trinity Presbyterian Church is a congregation located in a rapidly growing suburban area. Begun as a new church development in 1983, the congregation now boasts a membership of nearly 900. Activities are held in the church building and in the neighborhood every night of the week. Many young adults, both single and married, are among the regular visitors for worship on Sunday mornings.

Currently, the two Sunday morning worship services employ a blend of contemporary and traditional music. As the church has grown, however, tension over style and nature of the worship service has increased. The growing population of young adults is pushing for change, while many of the older adults feel that the current worship service is already stretching them too far. Last month the session held a congregational meeting to allow people to voice their concerns.

The following proposals received the largest support, although none of them was backed by an absolute majority of those present.

- Create a committee to raise \$100,000 to buy a new organ.
- Raise \$75,000 to add full multimedia capabilities to the sanctuary, including a new sound system, two projectors and large screens; add \$50,000 to the personnel budget to hire a staff person to design ways to use multimedia in worship services and run the equipment.
- Maintain the current schedule of two worship services, but restructure one as a traditional Reformed service of worship and one as a contemporary service.
- Add a third worship service on Saturday nights that would be designed to appeal to a postmodern audience, featuring such items as contemporary music, the use of multimedia, and a “laid back” preaching style that would encourage dialogue with the preacher during the service.

As the session meets today to discuss these options, funds are tight. Members of the mission committee have already voiced their concern that either proposal for spending more money on worship would take money away from mission commitments.

How do the broad concepts of our Presbyterian foundations inform the discussion of this issue?



SESSION FOUR

C A S E S T U D Y # 3

Old Stone Presbyterian Church is a congregation of about 250 people in a mid-sized city in the Midwest. The congregation has been involved with three different mission projects for as long as anyone can remember. The session sends money to support evangelism in the Limuru Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in East Africa, provides funds and volunteers at Thanksgiving and Christmas for a food kitchen, and hosts a birthday party once a month for the residents of a nearby convalescent hospital. Additionally, the youth group participates in Souper Bowl Sunday each January.

Now some newer members are saying that the church should become active in the local Habitat for Humanity project. Some folks are afraid the congregation's time and money resources cannot be stretched any farther. Others wonder if they will have much say in the Habitat group, since there are four other faith groups (Lutherans, Methodists, Catholics, and Muslims) supporting them already.

There has been some talk by members of the outreach committee that they don't want anyone telling them how to do their job (spend their money). The pastor is getting phone calls at home about people's concerns.

As the session considers its budget for the coming year, the following opinions are expressed:

- The church needs to respond to the crisis in our community, and our existing commitments do not reflect our current social reality.
- The church could solve its problem of local mission by reducing its contribution to the PC(USA).
- It is a matter of faithfulness for the congregation to continue to honor the commitments it has already made.
- A new mission project will energize newer members and encourage them to make greater contributions to the church.

How do the broad concepts of our Presbyterian foundations inform the discussion of this issue?



SESSION FOUR

C A S E S T U D Y # 4

You are a member of the presbytery's committee on ministry. The pastor of Midtown Presbyterian Church desires to retire at the end of the year after faithfully serving the congregation for fifteen years. The church is one of the few racial ethnic congregations in your presbytery. Replacing a pastor in a racial ethnic congregation has always been difficult because of the lack of Presbyterian racial ethnic clergy that speaks the language of the congregation. The pastor actually wanted to retire five years ago, but has never left because he felt there was no one in the denomination that could replace him.

After hearing the pastor's latest request to retire, you are visiting with the session and discover the following issues around the table:

- The pastor has been mentoring a new successor for the last three years and feels that his successor is qualified to be the new pastor.
- Several elders feel that a full and complete search is necessary but the congregation cannot begin the search until the pastor leaves.
- A creative elder suggests that they change the pastor's status to co-pastor so that he can be around during the search up to the time that the church finds a new pastor.
- Word has spread that the church is planning to replace the pastor, and Personal Information Forms have been sent to the church but none of the candidates is a Presbyterian.

How do the broad concepts of our Presbyterian foundations inform the discussion of this issue?



SESSION FOUR

C A S E S T U D Y # 5

Iglesia de Cristo is a nondenominational Hispanic Fellowship that began in Santa Paula eight years ago. The congregation has grown to more than 250 members and recently purchased a church building. The pastor and a group of lay leaders of this fellowship have approached the Presbytery of Riverdale about the possibility of their congregation affiliating with the PC(USA). The congregation is in an area of the presbytery where the presence of a Hispanic congregation is strategically important. A joint task force of the presbytery's new church development committee and the committee on ministry has been formed to respond to this request and make a recommendation to the presbytery. The task force has met with Pastor Mendez and his church leaders. They are impressed with the vitality of the group and with their sincere interest in aligning themselves with a mainline Protestant denomination. The task force is now considering the appropriate course of action for the presbytery. There are two serious points of concern. The congregation wants to retain their current pastor, who has the equivalent of a M.Div. degree from a seminary in Mexico, but has little background or knowledge of the Presbyterian church. They have also asked to be "excluded" from the *Book of Order* provisions on property ownership, so that their recently purchased church building would remain solely the property of the congregation.

The task force is considering these options:

- Accept *Iglesia de Cristo* into the presbytery with the recommendation that exceptions be made for the new church in both the matters of the pastor's credentials and the ownership of the church building.
- Accept *Iglesia de Cristo* into the presbytery, but ONLY if the pastor agrees to regularize his credentials (in consultation with the committees on ministry and preparation for ministry) and the property follows regular PC(USA) standards.
- Deny membership of *Iglesia de Cristo* in the PC(USA) Riverdale Presbytery, since this was not a project initiated by the presbytery's committee on new church development, and both funds and energy for such work are limited.

How do the broad concepts of our Presbyterian foundations inform the discussion of this issue?



SESSION FOUR

C A S E S T U D Y # 6

The beloved pastor of Community Presbyterian Church retired six months ago, after serving the congregation for twenty-seven years. An interim minister is serving the church, and the presbytery's committee on ministry has appointed a liaison to work with the church during the time of transition.

There is starting to be a great deal of talk about what kind of minister the congregation needs. The presbytery has a policy that says each church looking for a new minister should attempt to have a woman and/or a person of color on their list of candidates for the position of pastor. One prominent member of the church has stated that he would never be able to listen to a woman preacher. Others think that someone of another race or background would feel unwelcome in this traditional all-white congregation.

Some in the congregation think this would be a good time to find someone who can preach with more fire and brimstone. Others think the new pastor should have more of a heart for mission than the last minister. One group wants a minister who is a good fund-raiser, since their budget has been increasing while giving has been going downhill. Older members are hoping that the new pastor will want to spend plenty of time visiting the sick and homebound, and can "do a good funeral." Some folks expect a pastor who will draw young people to the church.

The nominating committee will be meeting in a few weeks and will be oriented by the person representing the committee on ministry.

How do the broad concepts of our Presbyterian foundations inform the discussion of this issue?