

APPROVED BY STEWARDSHIP MINISTRIES FOR RECOMMENDATION TO PRESBYTERY –
February 6, 2008

Policy for Overtures to Presbytery of Hudson River

Overtures to General Assembly or Synod may be presented to Presbytery of Hudson River by individuals (elders or Ministers of Word and Sacrament within Hudson River Presbytery), Sessions, Presbytery or other council or committee. When being considered by the Presbytery the following steps will be followed:

Overtures shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk at least 30 days before stated Presbytery meetings. The Presbytery Faith and Order Committee shall meet between submission of an overture and the next Presbytery meeting. The Faith and Order Committee will provide the opportunity for the initiator of the overture to present the overture to the committee. If Faith and Order cannot meet in this time frame, a recommendation will be postponed to the next stated Presbytery meeting. Faith and Order will come to Presbytery with a recommendation to forward the overture or not forward the overture or to take no action. The members of Faith and Order will consider biblical and theological rationale for all overtures. The following steps will be taken as the overture moves through Presbytery meetings:

- 1) there will be a first reading (with questions for clarification)
- 2) at the subsequent Presbytery meeting there will be a second reading (for debate and vote)
- 3) there will be opportunities for dialogue/discernment between the two Presbytery meetings if the overture is controversial
- 4) the Faith and Order Committee will determine ahead of time whether or not an overture vote shall be made by written ballot;

Controversial Issue Policy

If a motion is entered as New Business (before the stated deadline and with enough copies for distribution) appears to be controversial to the Moderator, the Moderator (in consultation with the Moderator-Elect, the stated Clerk and the General Presbytery) may deem it controversial and state that consideration will be postponed to the next stated meeting of Presbytery to allow time for education and discussion. This ruling of the Moderator may only be overturned by a 2/3rds vote of Presbyters present at the time of the vote.. If a member of Presbytery moves that an item of New Business be considered controversial – a similar 2/3rds vote of Presbyters present at the time of the vote will be required for consent.

If potential docket issues other than overtures or items of New Business appear to be controversial, the Moderator (in consultation with the Moderator-Elect, the Stated Clerk and the General Presbyter) may decide to use a first reading/second reading process – with educational/dialogue opportunities in between the two meetings.

The intent of this policy is to provide adequate time for discussion and prayer as Presbyters prepare to consider serious issues. It also serves to protect minority voices.