

1 **OVERTURE 19** from Great Lakes Presbytery (to MNA)  
2 "Form Ohio Presbytery"  
3

4 **Whereas**, a presbytery confined to a smaller geographic region can lead to more efficient  
5 oversight, cooperation, and connection between particular congregations in the  
6 presbytery; and  
7

8 **Whereas**, fostering a sense of connectionalism and cooperation of churches, teaching elders,  
9 and ruling elders beyond the local congregation is a hallmark of historic  
10 Presbyterianism; and  
11

12 **Whereas**, a presbytery that has greater concentration within a specific geographic region  
13 may and should lead to a greater emphasis on church planting within that region; and  
14

15 **Whereas**, a presbytery that encompasses a smaller geographic region should permit shorter  
16 meetings and shorter driving distances for presbyters to such meetings; and  
17

18 **Whereas**, shorter distances and less weekday meetings should lead to greater participation  
19 in presbytery by ruling elders, thus allowing ruling elders to better fulfill their  
20 established calling to "govern the church well;" and  
21

22 **Whereas**, the Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries, as adopted by the 26<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
23 of the Presbyterian Church in America, attached hereto as Exhibit A (the "Guidelines"),  
24 include "regional cohesiveness," "member churches hav[ing] a potential for shared  
25 ministries," and "member churches hav[ing] a common commitment to the region;" and  
26

27 **Whereas**, the Guidelines recommend that "a presbytery should have a radius of 2½ hours  
28 maximum driving distance; and  
29

30 **Whereas**, the Great Lakes Presbytery (GLP) has the potential to divide into two or more  
31 presbyteries that would meet the Guidelines of having "a minimum of 10 churches"  
32 (#2), "a total communicant membership of at least 1000" (#3) and "at least 3 churches  
33 each having a membership of at least 125 communicant members (#6); and  
34

35 **Whereas**, the Presbytery of the Ascension approved an overture to the 37<sup>th</sup> General  
36 Assembly on April 25, 2009, to redraw the boundaries of the Presbytery of the  
37 Ascension to relinquish the Ohio counties currently within the boundaries of the  
38 Presbytery of the Ascension to a new Ohio Presbytery;  
39

40 **Now therefore be it resolved**, that GLP overture the 37<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to divide GLP  
41 and form Ohio Presbytery, effective January 1, 2010, to include all mission works  
42 and churches of Great Lakes Presbytery and the Presbytery of the Ascension located  
43 in "all of Ohio north and east of and including the counties of Mercer, Shelby, Logan,  
44 Union, Madison, Pickaway, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs, and south and west of but

1 not including the counties of Columbiana, Carroll, Tuscarawas, Guernsey, Noble and  
2 Monroe (see Exhibit B attached hereto for new GLP and Ohio Presbytery boundaries)”;  
3

4 **Further resolved**, that each mission work and church located in Lucas County, Ohio, shall  
5 be given until December 31, 2009, to determine whether it desires to stay with GLP,  
6 while still being able to plant churches in the Ohio counties of Lucas, Ottawa,  
7 Sandusky, Wood and Fulton.  
8

9 *Adopted by Great Lakes Presbytery at its stated meeting, May 2, 2009*

10 *Attested by /s/ TE Jan Gerard Dykshoorn, stated clerk*  
11  
12

### 13 EXHIBIT A

#### 14 **Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries**

15 *(M26GA, 26-44, p. 180)*  
16  
17

18 As presbyteries grow in the number of congregations and membership they include, there  
19 may come a time at which division of the presbytery may be helpful. Presbyteries should  
20 take care that they do not divide prematurely, causing one or more of the resulting  
21 presbyteries to lack the resources necessary for their future growth. On the other hand, a  
22 presbytery may become so large that it cannot give adequate attention to the needs of the  
23 churches and ministers within its membership, and may find even its efforts at church  
24 planting and other growth in ministry difficult.  
25

26 The 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1988) established guidelines for the division of presbyteries  
27 presented below unchanged. These guidelines are sufficient in addressing most options.  
28

29 Special care should be taken to ensure that the division of a presbytery is not made in haste  
30 or without adequate consideration of the needs of all parties involved. Therefore, at the very  
31 earliest stages of discussion of a possible division, those initiating the discussion: (a) should  
32 take care to ensure that all churches and teaching elders (including missionaries and other  
33 out of bounds members) who will possibly be affected are fully informed of the discussion  
34 as early as possible; (b) should communicate with the stated clerk of the presbytery, who in  
35 turn should communicate with the entire presbytery; (c) should be encouraged to contact  
36 General Assembly Mission to North America and the General Assembly Stated Clerk very  
37 early in the process as well, for any assistance they may be able to offer in making a smooth  
38 transition and in giving advice that may be helpful to the planning process; and (d) should  
39 target the first meeting of a presbytery in the summer or fall of the year so that they may be  
40 able to fully participate in the nominating process of General Assembly without undue delay.  
41

42 (Following are Guidelines taken from the *MI6GA* 1988, p.143, 16-63, III, 16-17)

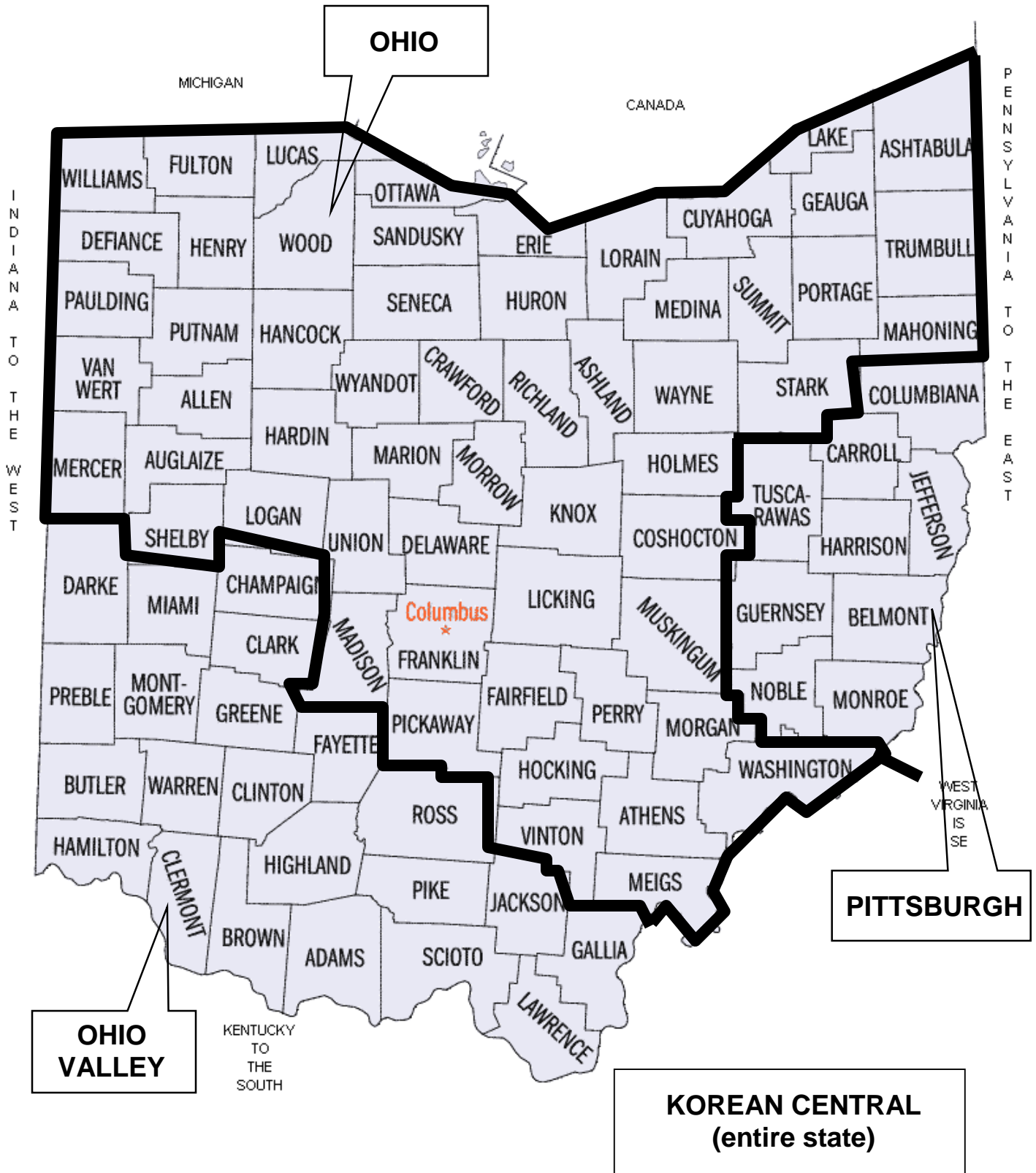
43 (1) A presbytery should have a radius of 2-½ hours maximum driving distance.

44 (2) A presbytery should have a minimum of 10 churches.

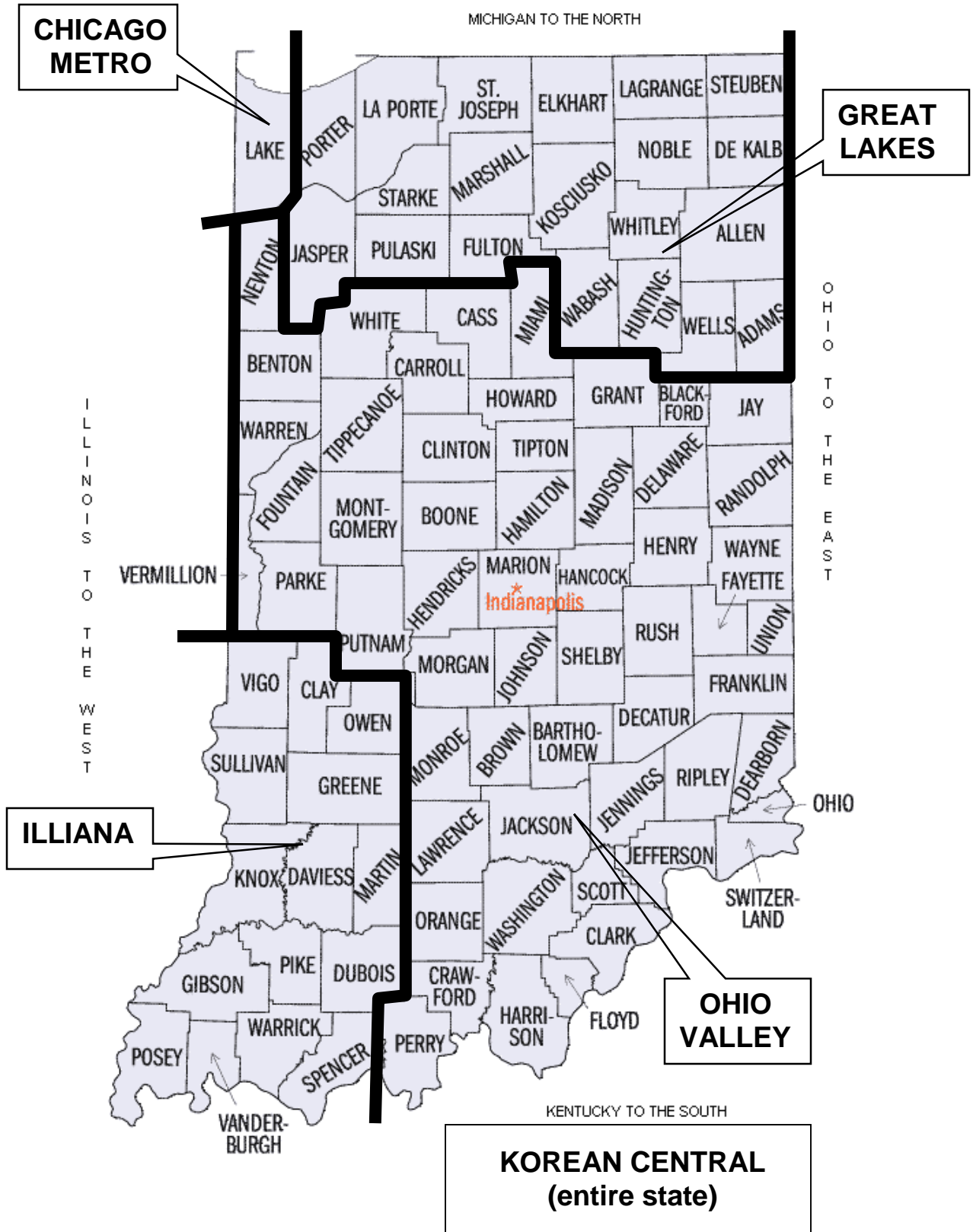
45 (3) A presbytery should have a total communicant membership of at least 1000.

- 1 (4) Presbytery boundaries should not partition metropolitan areas.  
2 (5) A presbytery should have regional cohesiveness.  
3 (6) A presbytery should have at least 3 churches each having a membership of at least 125  
4 communicant members.  
5 (7) Presbytery boundaries should be such that its member churches have a potential for  
6 shared ministries.  
7 (8) Presbytery boundaries should be such that its member churches have a common  
8 commitment to the region within the boundaries and sense their shared responsibility to  
9 cover the region with the Gospel.  
10 (9) When a presbytery reaches 30 churches, it should consider whether subdivision would  
11 lead to more effective ministry.  
12 Reasons:  
13 (i) It is often to the advantage of very large presbyteries to subdivide for more efficient  
14 oversight and closer cooperation.  
15 (ii) Additional presbyteries are urgently needed in most of the United States, other than  
16 the South, and in Canada in order to make the Presbyterian system of government  
17 operate efficiently. A presbytery in an area where the PCA is not particularly strong  
18 could be viable with as few as ten churches, and even with less. (The first  
19 presbytery in this land had but seven.)  
20 (10) A presbytery should limit its boundaries to that geographic area for which it is able to  
21 take meaningful responsibility for evangelism and church development.  
22 Reasons: *M12GA*, 12-67, III, 8  
23 (11) We acknowledge the existence of language presbyteries.  
24 (12) We recognize the “ideal nature of guidelines such as these and understand that several  
25 existing presbyteries do not presently meet all of them.”  
26  
27 Approved by the MNA Committee, Oct 97

**EXHIBIT B**  
**Post-Division Presbytery Boundaries - Ohio**



**EXHIBIT B (continued)**  
**Post-Division Presbytery Boundaries - Indiana**



**EXHIBIT B (continued)**  
**Post-Division Presbytery Boundaries - Michigan**

