

1 **OVERTURE 3** from Northern New England Presbytery (to AC, CCB)

2 “Amend *RAO* 10-3 to Promote the Exercise of Godly Prudence in Planning and  
3 Leading Times of Corporate Prayer and Worship at General Assembly”  
4

5 **Whereas** *BCO* 47-5 states: “Public worship must be performed in spirit and in truth.  
6 Externalism and hypocrisy stand condemned. The forms of public worship have  
7 value only when they serve to express the inner reverence of the worshipper and his  
8 sincere devotion to the true and living God.”;  
9

10 **Whereas** times of corporate worship and prayer at General Assembly should give  
11 expression to the unity of our church by providing an opportunity for all in  
12 attendance to call upon the Lord in sincerity and good conscience;  
13

14 **Whereas** the following sentences were used in a corporate confession of sin at the official  
15 pre-Assembly prayer gathering at the 46<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2018):  
16

17 We grieve the disunity of your church. We grieve that many women in our  
18 congregations feel unvalued and unwanted, unheard and uncared for. We  
19 grieve that we have acted as though being male was more valuable than being  
20 female, that we have communicated that only men were wanted in service and  
21 care, that only male voices could be and should be heard, that only men were  
22 valued. We grieve not loving our mothers and sisters in Christ well.

23 We grieve that the poor, the blue collar, the working class, and the middle  
24 class find our churches uninviting and unwelcoming. We grieve that we have  
25 played favorites, seeking to reach the wealthy and powerful with the Gospel  
26 while avoiding those who could not advance our influence. We grieve that our  
27 status symbols — cars, clothes, vacations, schools — have kept people away  
28 from the very place where we declare that he who was rich became poor for  
29 our sakes so that we might be rich in him.

30 We grieve that black and brown people have found our churches to be  
31 overwhelming and unsympathetic places, more loyal to “whiteness” than to  
32 the red blood of Jesus shed on the Cross. We grieve that our loyalties to  
33 politicians who play on racial fears have been stronger than our loyalties to  
34 our black and brown brothers and sisters in Christ. We grieve that we have  
35 wittingly and unwittingly erected once again the very wall of hostility that  
36 Christ’s cross had torn down. We grieve that those who have spoken the  
37 Gospel truth on our racial unity-in-diversity have been shouted down as  
38 “cultural Marxists” or “social justice warriors” rather than celebrated as  
39 servants of the Gospel.  
40

41 **Whereas** many PCA officers and members do not think that they are guilty of the specific  
42 sins mentioned in the above sentences, nor do they agree with some of the  
43 assumptions that seem to be implied in these sentences, and therefore they would not  
44 be able to pray these things in sincerity and good conscience;

1 **Whereas** other controversial practices and ideas have been included in times of corporate  
2 worship and prayer at previous General Assemblies;

3  
4 **Therefore be it resolved**, that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America  
5 amend *RAO* 10-3 by adding the following sentence (additions are underlined):

6  
7 10-3. Worship services shall be included as approved by the Assembly. The  
8 Administrative Committee must approve any non-PCA speaker. Those  
9 involved in the organization and leadership of times of corporate worship and  
10 prayer at General Assembly are to exercise godly prudence as they strive to  
11 ensure that all that is said and done at these gatherings gives expression to the  
12 unity of our church by providing an opportunity for all in attendance to call  
13 upon the Lord in sincerity and good conscience.

14  
15 The newly amended section would then read as follows:

16  
17 10-3. Worship services shall be included as approved by the Assembly. The  
18 Administrative Committee must approve any non-PCA speaker. Those  
19 involved in the organization and leadership of times of corporate worship and  
20 prayer at General Assembly are to exercise godly prudence as they strive to  
21 ensure that all that is said and done at these gatherings gives expression to the  
22 unity of our church by providing an opportunity for all in attendance to call  
23 upon the Lord in sincerity and good conscience.

24  
25 *Adopted by the Northern New England Presbytery at its stated meeting, September 29, 2018*

26 *Attested by TE Per Almquist, stated clerk*