

1 **OVERTURE 1** from Heartland Presbytery (to OC)
2 "Steps Toward Racial Reconciliation"
3

4 **Whereas**, the 30th General Assembly adopted a statement on racial reconciliation that
5 confessed its covenantal, generational, and heinous sins connected with unbiblical
6 forms of servitude¹; and
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8 **Whereas**, the 32nd General Assembly adopted a paper titled "The Gospel and Race" that
9 was produced under the oversight of our Mission to North America committee²; and
10

11 **Whereas**, the 144th General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical
12 Synod, adopted a statement on "Racial Questions"³; and
13

14 **Whereas**, the facts of history, especially during the period of the 1950s through the 1970s,
15 confirm generational sins among some of our courts, churches, officers, and
16 members, such as: 1) lack of concern regarding societal and ecclesiastical racial
17 injustice and 2) opposition to the visible unity of all believers in Christ⁴; and
18

19 **Whereas**, in seeking to confess and repent of our own sins, we acknowledge that the
20 iniquity of our fathers may continue in the midst of some of our churches, and as
21 they do, they negatively affect our denomination as a whole (Lev. 26:40-45, Ezra
22 9:6-16, Neh. 9:1-38, Dan. 9:1-27); and
23

24 **Whereas**, the PCA has been hindered in its goal to be obedient to the Great Commission
25 because our Presbyteries and individual congregations have not sufficiently
26 addressed these sins that continue to affect our churches and witness today; and
27

28 **Whereas**, we wholly lean on the grace of God for forgiveness, reconciliation, and
29 repentance (Eph. 2:1-16, 2 Ti. 2:24-26, 2 Cor. 5:18-21);
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31 **Therefore be it resolved**, that, before our Lord, the 44th General Assembly of the
32 Presbyterian Church in America exhorts all its members, especially its officers, to
33 examine themselves in the light of Scripture to determine if there be any unconfessed
34 and unrepentant sins of partiality, favoritism, or prejudice among them (Gn. 1:26-27,
35 Eph. 2:14-22, Jas. 2:1-4), specifically:
36

- 37 1. Barring people from participating in and/or failing to encourage them to attend
38 upon the worship of God and membership in Christ's Church based upon their
39 ethnicity;

¹ M30GA, pp. 261-270, www.pcahistory.org/pca/race.html

² M32GA, pp. 124-25; 427-57, www.pcahistory.org/pca/racism.pdf

³ *Minutes of the 144th General Synod of the RPCES*, pp. 51-54.
www.pcahistory.org/findingaids/rpces/docsynod/385.html

⁴ Sean Michael Lucas, *For a Continuing Church: The Roots of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Phillipsburg: P&R, forthcoming November 2015).

- 1 2. Tolerating in our Presbyteries and local churches members of groups organized
- 2 for the segregation, exclusion, and/or harm of people based on their ethnicity;
- 3 3. Speaking and/or preaching in favor of prejudice and segregation that leads to the
- 4 disunity of God's people;
- 5 4. Actively working to oppose the betterment of those of a different ethnicity than
- 6 ourselves;
- 7 5. Looking down upon people based upon their ethnicity;
- 8 6. Actively, passively and/or inadvertently being unloving and inconsiderate of all
- 9 people in all our thoughts, words, and actions;
- 10 7. Harboring sinful anger, bitterness, and a vengeful spirit towards people based
- 11 upon their ethnicity or past sins; and
- 12

13 **Be it further resolved**, that if any such sins be discovered, either past or present, that these
14 sins be admitted, confessed, forgiveness sought before God and from those brothers
15 and sisters so sinned against, as far as possible, and repentance, reconciliation, and
16 reformation be manifested according to God's Word (Mt. 3:8, *WCF* 15); and

17
18 **Be it further resolved**, that all members of the PCA are encouraged to call all people
19 without distinction to faith in the Gospel and repentance, and to invite them into our
20 local churches because our God Himself shows no partiality (Acts 10:34,
21 Rom. 2:11); and

22
23 **Be it further resolved**, that all congregations of the PCA work together to strengthen the
24 unity of our denomination, as a part of the one Church, the singular bride of Christ,
25 founded not on culture, ethnicity, or class, but one in Christ, fulfilling the mission
26 and work of all He commanded us (Mt. 28:18-20, Gal. 3:28, Eph. 4:1-16); and

27
28 **Be it further resolved**, that the Stated Clerk disseminate this resolution to all Presbyteries
29 and Sessions in the PCA for the reconciliation and health of Christ's Church; and

30
31 **Be it further resolved**, that Presbyteries and Sessions be greatly encouraged to examine
32 their own history on these issues and to spread this resolution to all its members for
33 the purpose that all would examine their hearts with more specificity and appropriate
34 Biblical action be taken where applicable.

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36 *Adopted by Heartland Presbytery at its stated meeting, August 8, 2015*

37 *Attested by TE Tim Rackley, stated clerk*