

DECISIONS AFFECTING ALL PRESBYTERIES – 2021

1. The General Assembly instructs the Presbyteries and Fellowships to
 - a. give attention to planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in line with the strategic plan of the UPCSA; and
 - b. submit their plans to the office of the General Secretary by the *end of February 2022*.
2. The General Assembly encourages Presbyteries to pursue the means of building cohesion and stability in the UPCSA.
3. The General Assembly
 - a. adopts the report on patriarchy and unequal gender relations in the UPCSA;
 - b. concedes the urgent need for equal representation in all church councils;
 - c. Instructs the ABC to work with the Gender Desk before the General Assembly/Executive Commission in ensuring equal representation; and
 - d. instructs the Clerk of Assembly to send the report down to congregations for information and action.
4. The General Assembly:
 - a. publicly confesses that the practice of patriarchy which promotes unequal relations based on dominance and submission is wrong;
 - b. publicly commits to re-interpret biblical, cultural, and societal gender relations based on reciprocity and mutual partnership.
 - c. Appoints a team of 3 people to draft a statement which should be read before the end of the Assembly; and
 - d. Instructs the General Secretary to communicate the statement widely.
5. The General Assembly encourages the Women's Consultation and its Resource Team, in liaison with the Gender Desk and Youth Desk, to continue monitoring leadership in the UPCSA to keep track of progress in establishing a more representative missional leadership and building reciprocal gender relations in mutual partnership.
6. The General Assembly
 - a. instructs the Clerk of Assembly to circulate the questionnaire on women's experiences of ministry to all our presbyteries by 15th October 2021 for distribution to the congregations within their boundaries; and
 - b. sets a date of 15 May 2022 for responses to reach the Women's Consultation and its Resource Team.
7. The General Assembly
 - a. notes the development of a resource for Bible study by women in the church on women of the Bible; and
 - b. instructs all presbyteries and congregations to avail themselves of this resource in its draft form and to promote its use by their women, providing feedback for improvements to the Women's Consultation and its Resource Team.
8. The General Assembly
 - a. encourages the Women's Consultation and its Resource Team, in consultation with the Gender Desk, to complete the Bible study resource for use in small groups comprising both men and women by February 2022; and
 - b. encourages men to study the role of women in the Bible and to share what they learnt from this experience.
9. The General Assembly encourages the Women's Consultation and its Resource Team, in conjunction with the Gender Desk
 - a. to complete the resource on missional leadership strategies to equip and empower women and men in church leadership; and
 - b. to make this available to women by end of October 2021.
10. The General Assembly instructs all councils in the church to read this report and develop a system to achieve equal representation in church leadership, reciprocity, and mutual partnership with immediate effect.
11. The General Assembly agrees to amend the ministerial call/appointment processes, such that Presbyteries review each advertisement, for calling or appointing congregations, before it is posted to make sure that the wording is inclusive and does not prejudice any one group of people.
12. The General Assembly