

USING INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

In 1989 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adopted a new “Directory for Worship” as part of our *Book of Order*. In it, we acknowledge the importance of language in worship (W-1.2005) and go on to say:

W-1.2006

- a. Since the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a family of peoples, united in Jesus Christ, appropriate language for its worship should display the rich variety of these peoples. To the extent that forms, actions, languages, or settings of worship exclude the expression of diverse cultures represented in the church or deny emerging needs and identities of believers, that worship is not faithful to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- b. The church shall strive in its worship to use language about God which is intentionally as diverse and varied as the Bible and our theological traditions. The church is committed to using language in such a way that all members of the community of faith may recognize themselves to be included, addressed, and equally cherished before God. Seeking to bear witness to the whole world, the church struggles to use language which is faithful to biblical truth and which neither purposely nor inadvertently excludes people because of gender, color, or other circumstance in life.

Affirming the above, the Presbytery of Cincinnati adopted the following Resolution at our meeting on October 10, 1989.

WHEREAS the words we use reflect what we believe and indicate our assumptions about ourselves, others, and God; and

WHEREAS exclusive language has the effect of excluding or stereotyping others, including God; and

WHEREAS inclusive language avoids such limitations; and

WHEREAS the General Assembly has recognized and reaffirmed the use of inclusive language and is currently developing a new hymnal and new service format which will use inclusive language*; and

WHEREAS the pamphlet *Well Chosen Words* published by the Office of Women of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is available to assist persons seeking to make their language more inclusive; and

WHEREAS language about persons shall reflect the dignity and worth of all people, and language about God should show the diversity of available language about God, consistent with the Reformed tradition, as reflected in the Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the “Directory for Worship”;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT it is the policy of the Presbytery of Cincinnati to seek to employ inclusive language in worship, reports, correspondence, and open discussion.

* *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990) and *Book of Common Worship* (1993)