

**ITEM P.102  
ACTION ITEM**

<i>FOR GAMC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE USE ONLY</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> A. Evangelism	<input type="checkbox"/> D. Vocation	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. PC(USA), A Corporation
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Justice	<input type="checkbox"/> E. Stewardship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	H. Executive Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> C. Discipleship	<input type="checkbox"/> F. Audit	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x P. Plenary			

**Subject: GAMC Name Change**

**Recommendation:**

**The GAMC Executive Committee recommends that the GAMC, through appropriate revisions in the *Organization for Mission* and the *GAMC Manual of Operations*, request the approval of the 220th General Assembly (2012) for changing the name of the General Assembly Mission Council, as follows:**

<b>From :</b>	<b>To:</b>
<b>General Assembly Mission Council (organization)</b>	<b>Presbyterian Mission Agency</b>
<b>General Assembly Mission Council (elected)</b>	<b>Presbyterian Mission Agency Board</b>

**Rationale:**

At its July 2011 retreat, the GAMC Executive Committee considered several options for renaming the General Assembly Mission Council organization and elected body. Two options received the most support:

- Presbyterian Mission Agency & Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
- Presbyterian Mission & Presbyterian Mission Board

After much discussion, and consideration of input from mid-council partners, “Presbyterian Mission Agency” and “Presbyterian Mission Agency Board” were chosen for recommendation to the General Assembly Mission Council.

**Why change our name?**

The General Assembly Council (as it was originally known) has been encouraged to clarify its identity for over 7 years.

- In 2004, the Mission Work Plan called for the development of a communication strategy, due to low awareness by pastors and Presbyterians in the pews of the mission and ministry of the General Assembly Council.
- In 2007, the “General Assembly Task Force to Review the GAC” joined this effort, directing the Council to create an identity for the mission agency.
- In 2008, the Council’s effort from 2004, concluded with a similar call: create an identity for the mission agency. This call was answered with a first step, approved by the General Assembly, and a majority of presbyteries: changing the name of the “General Assembly Council” to the “General Assembly Mission Council.”
- In 2009, the Six Agency Review Task Force also called for a heightened identity for the mission agency.

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Each of these efforts have called on the GAMC to be more intentional about the way it communicates so that those who participate in its ministries have an awareness of where these ministries originate, how to obtain additional information, and how to support the expansion of these ministries for other audiences.

The adoption of the new *Form of Government* by the General Assembly and a majority of presbyteries provides additional impetus for the name change effort. The term “council” is changing in the life of the denomination. Under the new *Form of Government*, “councils” are the term for what was once referred to as “governing bodies.” Since the GAMC is not a governing body, the term “council” should no longer be part of the GAMC’s name.

Choosing a name

Building upon the work from 2007, the core identity for the GAMC is mission. Therefore it is not surprising to see “mission” central to most of the names that have been proposed:

- |                                    |  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| • Presbyterian Mission             | • General Assembly Mission             | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission              |
| • Presbyterian Mission Agency      | • General Assembly Mission Agency      | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Agency       |
| • Presbyterian Mission Partnership | • General Assembly Mission Partnership | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Partnership  |
| • Presbyterian Mission Partners    | • General Assembly Mission Partners    | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Partners     |
| • Presbyterian Mission & Ministry  | • General Assembly Mission & Ministry  | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission and Ministry |
| • Presbyterian Ministry & Mission  | • General Assembly Ministry & Mission  | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Ministry & Mission   |
| • Presbyterian Mission Connection  | • General Assembly Mission Connection  | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Connection   |
| • Presbyterian Mission Service     | • General Assembly Mission Service     | • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Service      |
| • Presbyterians in Mission         | • Presbyterians in Mission Partnership |   |

There has been discussion as to whether “mission” was a sufficient description for the work of the Council. Several individuals have suggested adding “ministries” to the name in order to indicate more fully the breadth of the Council’s work. After a healthy discussion, however, the consensus has returned each time to “mission” being at the core of the Council’s work, and a conclusion that the term is sufficient on its own to carry Council’s identity.

After resolving that “mission” stands alone at the core, most discussion has focused on whether to use “Presbyterian,” “General Assembly,” or “Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” at the beginning of the name.

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In 2007, when the Council sought input on changing its name, from General Assembly Council, to better reflect its identity, the feedback was varied. Council members narrowly chose GAMC for their name over Presbyterian Mission Board and Presbyterian Mission Council. However, among church sessions, names that included “Presbyterian” were much more highly valued.

<b>Name</b>	<b>GAC Votes (Total = 44)</b>	<b>Sample Church Session Votes (Total = 33, one of many)</b>
Presbyterian Mission Board	15	17
Presbyterian Mission Council	9	19
General Assembly Mission Council	18	3
Other	2	0

Most of the other General Assembly agencies also use “Presbyterian” in their name, and only the Office of the General Assembly, uses “General Assembly.”

- Board of Pensions
- Office of the General Assembly
- Presbyterian Foundation
- Presbyterian Investment and Loan
- Presbyterian Publishing

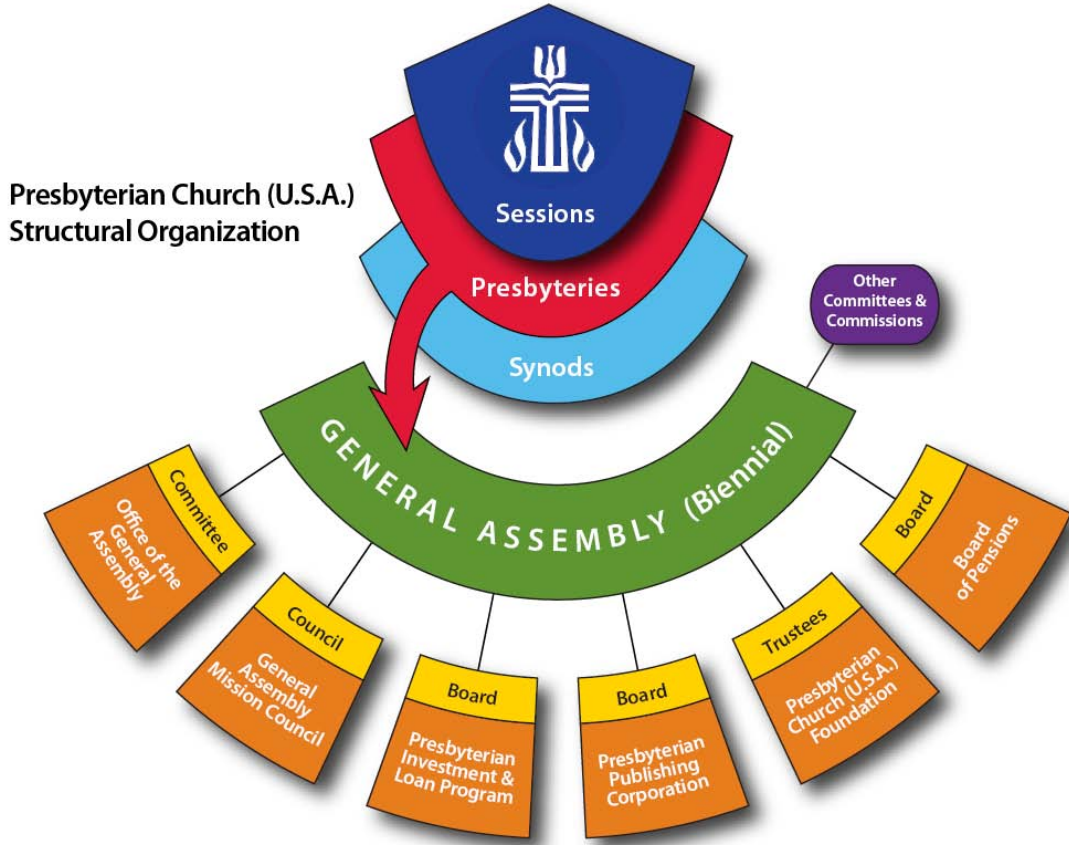
Therefore, “Presbyterian” was chosen as the first part of the recommended name because it is the simplest and most descriptive term for describing the mission work that we do, and it is consistent with usage by other agencies, and “Presbyterians in the pew.”

The last piece of conversation has focused on whether “Presbyterian Mission” was sufficient or whether another term should be added at the end of the name. Some have felt that “Presbyterian Mission” was too strong or exclusive for a name for one of the church’s agencies, since Presbyterian mission could rightly be said to be accomplished in each congregation, presbytery, and synod, and not just at the General Assembly level. Others have responded there should be no timidity in claiming a strong identity for the church’s mission agency, after all, the General Assembly has given other agencies similar names without making exclusive claims.

In this conversation, the GAMC Executive Committee has sought to give special attention to the voices of Mid-Council (formerly known as Middle Governing Body) staff. Mid-Council staff voiced a preference for another term to be added to the name, so that it did not appear that the GAMC was claiming to be the only “Presbyterian Mission” organization in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Several options were explored (see the list above). In many casual discussions, if the current name (GAMC) isn’t used, the conversational term tends to be “the mission agency.” For individuals who have been confused about what the GAMC is, “the mission agency” seems to make sense. Therefore, as a means of being sensitive to the concerns of Mid Council staff and also using language that is already natural for many Presbyterians, the organizational name proposed by the GAMC Executive Committee is “Presbyterian Mission Agency.”

#### Organizational and Governance Identity

The name “General Assembly Mission Council” has also been confusing in that it presently represents both the staff organization and the governance body. Other General Assembly agencies have resolved this problem by defining their elected members as a committee, board, or trustees.



In order to eliminate confusion between the staff organization and the elected governance body, the GAMC recommends that the elected body be called the “Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.”

#### Timeline

The General Assembly is responsible for naming its agencies. The agencies are named in the General Assembly’s defining structural document, *Organization for Mission*. The process of recommending a name change to the General Assembly has several steps. The basic decision on naming will be made at the September 2011 GAMC meeting, with a request that the Procedures Sub-committee make the appropriate detailed recommendations in the *Organization for Mission* and the GAMC Manual of Operations for approval in February 2012.

The 220th General Assembly (2012) would receive these detailed recommendations for consideration in July. A new name would not be in effect until the General Assembly adopts a recommendation; therefore implementation of the name change would not occur until after the 2012 General Assembly.