Adopted by the Leadership Cabinet on 2/16/15

**Biblical and theological basis for cultural competency**

The call to live as a beloved community is rooted Biblically. Scripture consistently portrays God as recognizing the value and worth of human beings, affirming the inherent dignity of human beings, and calling human beings to recognize and honor the image of God in one another. When we go astray, God seeks to bring us back. God sends Jesus Christ to break down cultural barriers, affirm God’s love for all people, forgive our sin, reconcile us o God and one another, and invites us to new and abundant life.

*“God created humankind in God’s image, in the image of God, God created them; male and female God created them.” (Genesis 1:27)*

*“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (John 13:34)*

In our creeds and confessions and form of government, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms its intention to embrace the wondrous diversity God create.

*…God overcomes the barriers between sisters and brothers and breaks down every form of discrimination based on racial or ethnic difference, real or imaginary. The church is called to bring all people to receive and uphold one another as persons in all relationships of life: in employment, housing, education, leisure, marriage, family, church, and the exercise of political rights. (Confession of 1967, Inclusive Language Text)*

*In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. (A Brief Statement of Faith)*

*The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down. (F-1.0301, Book of Order: The Church Is the Body of Christ)*

*Baptism unites the people of God with each other and with the church of every time and place. Barriers of race, gender, status, and age are to be transcended. Barriers of nationality, history, and practice are to be overcome. (W-2.3005, Book of Order: Union with Christ and One Another)*

*The Gospel leads members to extend the fellowship of Christ to all persons. Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of Christ himself and causes a scandal to the Gospel. (G-1.0302, Book or Order: Welcome and Openness)*

At times the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and its predecessors have responded to the call to live as the beloved community well; too often we fall well short of our intentions. We have taken steps and we know many more remain to be taken.

One aspect of our efforts will be to make use of the concept of cultural competency. Cultural competency provides a vision and resources for our ongoing efforts in response to God’s call in the face of racism, sexism, ageism, and other ways in which we divide the human family and demean one another. By God’s grace, may the vision and resources aid us as we seek to move forward in our response to God’s call to love one another as the Presbyterian Mission Agency.