STATEMENT REGARDING INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Approved by Winnebago Presbytery April 8, 1986

Presbytery affirms the importance and value of inclusive language and commits itself to the use of such language in all forms of communication, both written and oral.

Presbytery shall use inclusive language in all meetings, reports, and communications. This includes, but is not limited to, the stated meetings of Presbytery, Council, Committees, Task Forces, Worship Services and Program Presentation.

In implementing this policy, Presbytery values the following:

A. **Language About God**: God is ultimately indescribable. All words about God are symbols pointing to part of the totality of God's nature. Use a variety of metaphors and similes for God, such as Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, God of Grace, or God is like a loving parent. Use terms that will expand rather than limit the nature of the human experience of God's action in our lives.

B. **Language about Persons--The People of God:** While terms such as "man" and "mankind" were once understood and accepted generically as well as reference to human males, increasingly this is not the case. For generic terms such as man, brotherhood, mankind, etc., substitute such terms as humanity, humankind, human beings, persons, people, folk, everyone, family, children. Additionally, avoid the use of masculine pronouns when referring to men and women together.

C. **The Use of Scripture:** Scripture, in the original Hebrew and Greek, is more inclusive than most English translations. When preparing for scripture to be read in unison, it is appropriate to rephrase and reprint the passage to eliminate exclusive language, except when scriptural language in its original text is gender specific.

D. **Use of Hymns and Worship Aids:** For the worship services of this presbytery and its committees, choose hymns and other aids that display sensitivity to various biblical metaphors and images, or print revised words that are inclusive, but still aesthetically and liturgically appropriate.

E. **Printed Communication and Common Language:** In all our verbal communication, be sensitive to and aware of the need to use inclusive language in all of our meetings, including the stated meetings of the Presbytery. For all printed matter that is written by the Presbytery for its work, use inclusive language. (See A. Language About God; and B. Language About Persons).