



**Minutes of the Annual Synod Assembly and Retreat
October 27-28, 2023
Maumee Bay Lodge and Conference Center**

October 27, 2023

ROLL AND QUORUM: Moderator, Elder Adrienne Adams (Detroit), called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. in prayer. A quorum was present. Elder Adams welcomed guests, visitors, and corresponding members.

APPROVAL OF THE DOCKET: A motion prevailed to approve the docket.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA AND CLERK'S REPORT: A motion prevailed to approve the Consent Agenda and the Clerk's Report, which included the following items:

**Synod of the Covenant
Annual Assembly Meeting
Consent Agenda and Clerk's Report
October 27-28, 2023**

1. **To seat** as corresponding members executive presbyters, general presbyters, presbytery leaders, and stated clerks in attendance at this meeting.
2. **To seat** as corresponding members guest teaching elders and ruling elders from congregations within the Synod of the Covenant in attendance at this meeting.
3. **To approve** the Minutes of the Assembly of the Synod of the Covenant of May 2, 2023. (Online only)
4. **To approve** the Minutes of the Special Assembly of the Synod of the Covenant of June 15, 2023. (Online only)
5. **To approve** the Celebration of the Lord's Supper at the Annual Assembly and Meeting of the Corporation.
6. **To approve** the following as a Standing Rule: to limit speeches during debate to three minutes.
7. To approve the following dates, times, and places for Assemblies of the Synod of the Covenant in 2024.
 - a. Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom
 - b. Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom

c. Thursday, October 24 – Saturday, October 26 – Annual Assembly, location TBD.

8. **To receive** the following report regarding actions taken by the Finance Committee since the last Assembly of the Synod of the Covenant:

Finance Committee Approved
Motions 04/26/2023 – 09/27/2023

Note: Motions to approve minutes and motions to adjourn are not included.

April 26, 2023

1. Investment Subcommittee Investment Policies and Procedures Update:

The Statement of Investment Objectives, Policies, and Guidelines was provided to the Finance Committee. After discussion the following motion was made:

That the Finance Committee accept this draft as a working document of the Finance Committee, give it to the consultants for review and input, and this document and any revisions to it prompted by the consultants be used for the basis on which the Investment Subcommittee and consultants develop the request for proposals to be issued to potential investment managers.

The motion unanimously prevailed.

August 30, 2023

2. Investment policy – Draft #4 for Fall Assembly:

After discussion of the Investment policy a motion was made to include three changes under **Article II. Definition of Assets to Invest**, and one change under **Article III. Additional Unrestricted Investment Assets**, the motion was unanimously prevailed. The revisions are as follows:

Article II. Definition of Assets to Invest

A. Restricted investments are defined as those funds commonly called:

1. Ohio Campus ministry restricted funds (Donor restricted).
2. Michigan Campus Ministry restricted funds (Board restricted).

Donor-restricted investments are governed by the covenants as originally described by the donors and/or the Finance Committee based on the wishes of said donors. Board-restricted investments are governed by the actions of the trustees of the Synod of the Covenant.

The revisions reflect adding (Donor-restricted and (board-restricted under A, and clarification of C.

Article III. Additional Unrestricted Investment Assets.

C. The Investment Sub Committee of the Finance Committee (here forward “Investment SubCommittee”) is also encouraged to invest no more than the higher of \$500,000 or 10% of portfolio value directly into the Presbyterian Investment Loan Program (PILP).

This reflects removing “for the general benefit of the member churches of the Presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod of the Covenant” at end of this policy statement. The Investment Policy will be reviewed for approval by the Leadership Team in September 2023, and reviewed for approval at the Fall Assembly in October 2023.

3. Insurance recommendations for Fall Assembly:

After the Finance Committee reviewed the 1/1/2023 to 1/1/2024 General Insurance and Worker’s Compensation policies, the following motion was made and unanimously prevailed:

The Finance Committee has reviewed the 2023 General Insurance policy and the 2023 Worker’s Compensation policy and determined the coverages are adequate.

Because the Finance Committee has the responsibility to review and report annually to the Assembly on the state of Synod coverage and any recommendations, Elder Ted Fines (Mackinac), who has a good understanding of non-profit insurance, volunteered to be the Synod insurance contact for the Finance Committee. Accordingly, Elder Frank Walburg (Scioto) stated he would put Elder Fines in contact with John Bouhall, who is the Synod insurance agent. Elder Fines will review the General Insurance and Workers Compensation policies with Mr. Bouhall.

September 27, 2023

4. Update on Investment Policy for Fall Assembly Presentation:

The Investment policy had been reviewed by the Leadership Team on 09/14/2023 with no proposed revisions. During the Finance Committee update there were concerns about language and intent under Article VIII: Draws C. Unrestricted Funds. After much discussion on the appropriate use for the funds, and the amount of money the Synod spends, a motion was made “To present this document (the Investment policy) as a first-read in the Consent Agenda, and not send it back to the Investment subcommittee at this time.” The motion unanimously prevailed.

9. **To receive** as a first-read the draft of the Synod of the Covenant Investment Policy. Questions or comments should be directed to Elder Frank Walburg, Moderator of the Finance Committee. (Synod Papers CA-3 online only)

10. **To receive** the following Report of the Governance Committee:

Operation for the Synod of the Covenant. The Committee is working specifically on committee descriptions for the Human Resources Committee and the Leadership Committee. There are no actions to report to the Synod at this time.

Respectfully Submitted, Andy Thorburn

11. **To receive** the Report of the Stated Clerk for today as follows:

**Report of the Stated Clerk
Fran Lane-Lawrence
October 27, 2023**

1. As regards the judicial process of the Presbytery of Detroit for which the Synod of the Covenant assumed original jurisdiction on January 31, 2023, the Investigating Committee reported on October 19, 2023, that they will not file charges.
2. Members of the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission whose terms have expired in the last six years are:

Class of 2014:

Rev. Rebecca Tollefson (Scioto Valley)

Class of 2016:

Rev. Doyll Anderson, Jr. (Detroit)

Rev. Barbara Esterly (Maumee Valley)

Rev. Inkyu Park (Eastminster)

Class of 2022:

Elder Lori Schmidt (Maumee Valley)

Elder Stephanie Lewis (Detroit)

3. Report of the Administrative Commission for the Presbytery of Detroit

Synod of the Covenant
Report of the Administrative Commission to the Presbytery of Detroit
October 27, 2023

Context

June 15, 2023, The Synod of the Covenant Assembly meeting on that date approved two recommendations brought by the Administrative Commission. The recommendations were that:

1. The Synod of the Covenant grant original jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Detroit to the Synod of the Covenant because it has determined that the Presbytery of Detroit is unwilling or unable to wisely manage its affairs.
2. That all costs associated with the AC's work shall be borne by the Presbytery of Detroit.

June 16, 2023, The AC sent a letter to the Presbytery of Detroit (PoD) for distribution to all members of the presbytery, staff members, all clerks of session, and anyone on the presbytery's distribution list. The communication informed recipients of the decision of the Synod, provided additional rationale for the decision, and indicated that the AC would assume sole jurisdiction in some areas while handing back responsibilities to some areas in the presbytery that are functioning well.

Activity Overview

What appears below is not necessarily chronological but rather a condensation of major events and information related to the work of the AC.

Since June 16, 2023, the AC has

- 1) Authorized Chip Hardwick to secure all the files and documents (electronic and paper) of the PoD.
- 2) Authorized the PoD COM to meet and report its actions to the AC.
- 3) Consulted with the Synod's law firm.
- 4) Requested reports from various entities as to current status and plans for the entity.
- 5) Authorized search process for three-year position as Stated Clerk for PoD. Interviewed two candidates for the position. Elected the Rev. Dr. Melissa Allison to this position. She began her work on September 01, 2023.
- 6) Approved a position description for Acting Executive Presbyter (AEP) for the PoD. Contacted then currently serving PoD employees to inform them of this initiative and to offer to answer any questions that might arise.
- 7) Advertised for the AEP position and engaged in discussion with seven responders. The AC interviewed four candidates. The AC is currently in negotiation with one of the candidates to fill this position.
- 8) Received the resignation of Sarah Leight as PoD Business Manager effective August 3, 2023. The AC worked closely with the PoD Trustees to reconfigure this position by outsourcing some of the work and reassigning some duties to others. Authorized the Trustees to hire Dawn Eiben for up to 19 hours per week.
- 9) Requested the Nomination Committee to continue its work in finding suitable nominees to serve as PoD Moderator and Vice- Moderator for 2024.
- 10) Authorized the PoD Response Team to act when called upon under its current mandate and to report any actions to the AC within 30 days.
- 11) Actions Related to Committee on Ministry and/or Committee on Preparation
 - a. The AC approved the installation of the Rev. Louis Nyiri as Pastor/Head of Staff at the First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham.
 - b. The AC approved the request regarding Tommy Langejans, who has been examined but who wishes to be ordained in his home church within the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. Tommy is to participate in the Resident Ministry Program at the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor. The Moderator will communicate this request Lake Michigan to ordain on behalf of the PoD.
 - c. Authorized the COM to examine Allison Muenzer
 - d. Authorized the COM to conduct various installations.
 - e. Approved documents changing the Committee on Ministry to the Commission on Ministry with delineation of functions and authority.
 - f. Approved the proposed PoD "Family Medical Leave Policy" for the Presbytery subject to editorial revisions noted by the AC.
 - g. Approved 2024 Terms of Call

- i. To increase the 2024 Minimum Terms of Call Effective Salary by 3%.
 - ii. Professional Expense (\$1,550), Study Allowance (\$1,050) to remain the same.
 - iii. To change the Medical Reimbursement formula by removing 1% of Effective Salary and establishing a flat rate of \$525.
- 12) Adopted a motion to set aside any provisions in the PoD bylaws regarding the provision of notice to the extent that these are in conflict with the AC's exercise of original jurisdiction.
- 13) Elected Corporate Officers to serve the PoD. Those elected were Alice McCollum, President of the Corporation; Mike Gaubatz, Treasurer of the Corporation; Melissa Lynn Allison, Secretary of the Corporation.
- 14) Approved a Memo of Understanding (MOU) entitled "Updated MOU for GARISSA NENDENI AREA MADOGO CHURCH BOREHOLE 7-6-23.
- 15) Received a final report of the Administrative Commission for the Milford Presbyterian Church and approved its dissolution.
- 16) Worked extensively with the PoD Trustees and the Session of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Detroit in addressing Westminster's request for a loan from the Presbytery of Detroit.
- 17) Report from the Committee on Nominations. Motion approved to elect the following:
 - COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
 - Class 23- Co-Chair Elder Wendy Beck Kirk in the Hills Church
 - MISSION INTERPRETATION
 - Class-23 Chair Elder Susan Dystra Fort Gratiot, Lakeshore Church
 - Information to the Administrative Commission regarding resignations:

Julie Delezenne	TE	Planning & Vision
Julie Delezenne	TE	Presbytery Response Team
Melissa Allison	TE	Committee on Ministry
Jim Hooper	RE	Committee on Nominating
- 18) Westminster AC
 - a. Received communications from multiple individuals regarding the actions of the Westminster AC in relation to actions taken with respect to Camp Director
 - b. The SoC AC instructed the Westminster AC to take no additional action until after it had consulted with the SoC AC.
 - c. The SoC AC received a complete report from the Westminster AC along with appendices.
- 19) Initiated process to identify outside consultant(s) to assist with reviewing the PoD's

anti-racism work.

20) The PoD Associate Presbyter, Charon Barconey, has been temporarily out of the office. The AC is working with her pursuant to PoD policy.

Observations of the AC

The AC previously asserted that "...the disorder within the Presbytery of Detroit is pervasive, intertwined, and appears to affect virtually every aspect of the PoD. The disorder affects the body in multiple ways". This continues to be the case.

The lack of operational consistency, the practice of blind copying of communications to those who are not directly involved, and the use of various forms of social media to disseminate both real and perceived slights or biases in attempts to gain sympathy and/or support continue to plague the Presbytery. Appeals to past hurts or perceived injustices are sometimes provided as justification for continued contentiousness rather than as an incentive for resolution.

AC Gratitude and Request:

We thank you for and continue to solicit your prayers for discernment and wisdom,

Jesse MacMillan, Moderator Alice
McCollum
Jeanne Gay Robert
Sullivan Jim Wilson
Cal Bremer, Clerk

THIS ENDS THE CONSENT AGENDA AND REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK

WORSHIP:

Rev. Sandy Seaton-Todd (Western Reserve) and Rev. Deb Uchtman (Cincinnati) led the assembly in a time of worship.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: Working for Racial Justice in the Synod of the Covenant:

Rev. Lindsey Anderson, Organizer for Communities of Color, and Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Stated Clerk, presented information about the history of the Synod of the Covenant relative to their commitment to the full participation of racial-ethnic members as part of their identity as a Synod, and ways they have deviated from and forgotten that commitment. Rev. Anderson invited commissioners to engage in conversation about best practices for engaging in conversation about race, agreement on the framework and non-negotiables as the work is engaged, internalization of the values that the Synod has named, and what it looks like to actively engage in the work of anti-racism together.

RECESS: The meeting recessed at 12:00 p.m. for lunch and time for commissioners to reflect and retreat. Moderator Adrienne Adams offered a blessing for the food and prayer for reflection and retreat time.

The meeting was reconvened at 3:00 p.m. in prayer by Moderator, Adrienne Adams.

REPORT OF THE ORGANIZER FOR COMMUNITIES OF COLOR: Rev. Lindsey Anderson presented her final report. Most of her time was spent in one-to-one meetings with leaders of color, members of presbyteries, presbytery leaders, and representatives of congregations.

Statistical Data Collected is as follows:

Synod Statistical Report 2022 (Self-Reporting)

86,437 members of the Synod of the Covenant

4,683 members of color in the Synod of the Covenant

Within the bounds of the Synod, there are 37 ministries of Color:

9 Korean Congregations

1 Korean Campus Ministry

12 African American Congregations

13 Multicultural Congregations

1 Ghanaian Congregation

1 Chinese Fellowship

Of those congregations, 50% have an installed pastor, 20% have leadership vacancies, and 50% are served by White leaders.

Of those who serve the congregations, 18 are installed, nine serve as stated supply, and two are commissioned ruling elders, with seven vacancies. Installed leadership includes 9 Koreans, 8 White, and 1 African. Stated Supply leadership includes 2 White, 4 African American, 2 Asian, and 1 African. The two commissioned ruling elders are African American.

As a result of the work done, Rev. Anderson offered two recommendations to the Synod.

1. Representation- the first and most immediate recommendation is to restore representation of Communities of Color, not because of quotas but because the absence of voice made our body poorer. 6 representation members should be added, and of those, 2 should serve on the Leadership Committee.
2. The Synod should hire a full-time Associate Executive for Racial Justice: ADD THE THREE AREAS.

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE: Rev. Deb Uchtman (Cincinnati) presented the following report on behalf of the Leadership Committee.

**Synod of the Covenant
Report of the Leadership Committee
October 27, 2023**

The Leadership Committee has been listening deeply to members throughout the Synod of the Covenant while at the same time recollecting, through stories and official documents, the DNA of the Synod that makes us unique within the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. You have heard that as part of the foundation upon which the Synod of the Covenant was created, there was an intentional focus on matters related to racial justice. As the Synod was being created, we stated that “Racial, ethnic participation in all areas of the Synod’s activity and decision-making is not only encouraged, but essential, for the Synod to reflect the diversity of God’s call to mission and ministry.

Somewhere along the way, we lost connection with that part of our DNA, and as we looked away incrementally, opportunities for racial-ethnic participation in synod activities and decision-making began to disappear. We no longer reflect the diversity of God’s call to mission and ministry in the way we once did. Before it is lost forever, we want to reclaim that part of our history.

Since the Administrative Commission returned original jurisdiction, the Synod of the Covenant has been working faithfully to determine who God wants us to be. Two years ago now, in October of 2021, we committed to being that Synod that will “try anything to equip leaders who are attending to God’s creative future” and embraced as one of the Ministry Foci Eradicating Structural Racism and Modeling Inclusion. We have since reaffirmed that commitment.

When the Executive/General Presbyters met, they asked that synod ministries focus on three areas: racial justice, boundaries training, and CRE support – in that order.

As a result of our discernment, the Leadership Committee will be making two motions. One is related to intentionally assuring Communities of Color within the Synod of the Covenant are given opportunities to participate in Synod ministries and to ensure decision-making as those ministries are formed and engaged.

The second motion concerns the synod resourcing of communities of color. It asks the Assembly to approve a full-time staff position. The Leadership Committee considered a part-time position, but assuring racial justice within the Synod is too important and too broad for a part-time staff person.

The Leadership Team is also sensitive to finance concerns and the Synod's preservation for future generations. There are times when the pain of those we continue to harm is so loud, and God’s call to a just way of being is so clear that we choose God as a way of preservation. In Luke 12:13-21, the fool saved for a future that never was to be. For all these reasons, on behalf of the Leadership Committee, I make the following motion:

Representation Motion

That the Assembly direct the Leadership Committee, in consultation with the Governance Committee, to research and prepare an amendment to the Synod of the Covenant bylaws for a first read at the January 2024 Synod Assembly and consideration at the May 2024 Synod Assembly. The research and preparation are to include consideration of the following:

Increasing the number of Synod Commissioners by six. The composition of those six will be designated as follows: two Commissioners of African descent, two commissioners of Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent, and 2 Commissioners from marginalized communities within the bounds of the Synod (member of another racialized identity, immigrants, those whose first language is not English). Two of these commissioners will serve on the Leadership Team, and the other four will be appointed to the other standing committees.

A motion prevailed to approve the recommendation as presented.

Motion for the addition of a Full Time Associate Executive for Racial Justice

To approve and allocate funds for a full-time position to serve as an Associate Executive for Racial Justice. The Associate Executive would report to the Synod through the Head of Staff and would be responsible for supporting the Synod’s work for Racial Justice. Further, the Steering Committee for the Organizer for Synod Communities of Color will create the position description in consultation with the Human Resources Committee and the Stated Clerk. The position description will be presented to the Assembly for approval at the January 30, 2024 Assembly. (The position would not be filled until the position description is approved.)

After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** to approve the recommendation as presented.

RECESS: The Assembly recessed for dinner at 5:00 p.m. Rev. Hardwick offered a blessing for the meal.

The Assembly resumed and was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD EXECUTIVE: The Rev. Dr. Charles B. Hardwick, Synod Executive, shared that the Synod had been awarded a grant from the Lily Foundation for 1.25 million dollars to fund the Cultivating the Gift of Preaching program. The grant would enable the presbytery to train 150 preachers around the Synod with monthly cohort meetings, spiritual direction, and training videos to support their training. Rev. Hardwick will work with the Human Resources Committee to create a position description.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: Elder Lora Manon (Maumee Valley) presented the report on behalf of the Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee nominated the following slate of commissioners to be elected to their respective positions.

A motion prevailed to elect the following officers.

Moderator of the Synod of the Covenant for 2024
Sandy Seaton-Todd (TE, Western Reserve, Class of 2025)

Vice-Moderator of the Synod of the Covenant for 2024
Andy Thorburn (RE, Lake Michigan, Class of 2026)

Moderator of SOC Leadership Committee for 2024
Adrienne Adams (RE, Detroit, Class of 2024)

A motion prevailed to elect the following commissioners as the moderators of standing committees as follows:

Finance Committee
Frank Walburg (RE, Muskingum Valley, Class of 2025)

Governance Committee
Jon Carlisle (TE, Scioto Valley, Class of 2024)

Human Resources Committee
Mary Jane Knapp (TE, Muskingum Valley, Class of 2026)

Nominations Committee
Lora Manon (RE, Maumee Valley, Class of 2025)

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: Andy Thorburn (Lake Michigan), on behalf of the Governance, recommended the following Committee Description for the Leadership Committee. A motion prevailed to approve the Committee Description as follows:

Synod of the Covenant Leadership Committee Description

Book of Order Reference (G-3.0106), (G-3.0401), (G-3.0403), (G-3.0405)

Purpose

To seek God's leading as it presents its purpose, mission, and core values to the Synod of the Covenant and communicates and facilitates the work of the other committees and ministry teams the Synod's work.

Responsibilities

- A. Assist, enable, support, and encourage the presbyteries and congregations in the Synod of the Covenant as they pursue the goals of Matthew 25: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.
- B. Seek God’s direction for the synod to establish theological directions through the process of visioning and discernment with attention to theological integrity
- C. Serve as liaisons to committees on which they serve in the Synod so that these groups are directly connected to the Leadership Committee. In the liaison role, the Leadership Committee members:
 - 1. Interpret the Synod focus to teams and committees.
 - 2. Remind teams and committees to set a direction that aligns with the synod’s priorities and vision.
 - 3. Inform teams and committees about Synod-wide issues that affect their work.
 - 4. Help form linkages with other teams or committees that will support their work.
 - 5. Advocate with the Leadership Committees for team or committee needs that require leadership support.
 - 6. Report back to the Leadership Committee concerning teams and committees.
 - 7. Oversee requests for synod meeting docket time.
 - 8. Serve as thinking partners with the team or committee moderator to the extent the moderator requests.
 - 9. Partner with the Synod Executive and other Synod Staff assigned to support teams and committees.
- D. Hold any planning retreats/events open to members of presbyteries to assist in leading the synod into the future.
- E. Approve the annual budget submitted by the Budget and Finance Committee for recommendation to the Assembly.
- F. Deal with or delegate Book of Order responsibilities assigned to a synod.
- G. Establish dates for stated meetings of the synod and approve requests for celebrating the sacrament of communion as related to synod activities.
- H. Provide for the thematic and worship elements of stated meetings of the synod, typically coordinated by the synod’s Vice Moderator
- I. Nominate members and the moderator of the Nominating Committee annually.
- J. Nominate a three-member advisory committee to work with the Stated Clerk to serve the synod in matters of representation and inclusion as required (F-1.0403 and G-3.0103). (Until a Committee on Representation is functional).

Organization

- A. Quorum
A quorum is a majority of those currently serving on the committee. Committee members are considered present if attending in person or joining the committee meeting remotely.

B. Composition

1. Moderator of the Synod, with voice and vote
2. Vice-Moderator of the Synod, with voice and vote
3. Immediate past-Synod moderator, who will also serve as the Moderator of the Leadership Committee, with voice and vote
4. The moderator from Budget and Finance, HR, Governance, and Nominating Committees for a one (1) year term not to exceed six years, with voice and vote
5. Committee on Representation Committee, with voice and vote
6. The Synod Executive/Head of Staff, with voice but no vote.
7. Stated Clerk, with voice but no vote.
8. The Leadership Committee may invite other staff to attend their meetings with voice but no vote.
9. The Leadership Committee may invite three other teaching elders or ruling elders for the purposes of representation, with voice and vote.

C. Meetings

At least six (6) times a year; special meetings may be convened at the call of the Moderator or any three (3) voting members with at least ten days' notice. Electronic conferencing may be used for meetings.

D. Staff Resource

Synod Executive/Head of Staff and Stated Clerk

E. Funding

Through the Synod budget

F. Miscellaneous

Reports to the Synod directly

RECESS: The Assembly recessed for the evening at 7:30 p.m. Adrienne Adams, Moderator, offered the closing prayer.

October 28, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM: The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. The moderator, Adrienne Adams, opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was present.

HUMAN RESOURCES: Rev. Mary Jane Knapp (Muskingum Valley) presented the report on behalf of the Committee. **A motion prevailed** to approve the following Position Description for the CRE Coordinator:

Position Description: Commissioned Ruling Elder/Commissioned Pastor Coordinator

Purpose

Commissioned Ruling Elders/Commissioned Pastors (CREs) have a critical leadership role within the Synod of the Covenant, a role which will only become more important. The purpose of the CRE Coordinator is to work with and among the Synod's presbyteries to identify (encourage ruling elders into this expanded ministry), train (build skills), and support (spiritually nurture) CREs to live out their call to serve churches. The Coordinator will encourage cooperation and joint ministry between presbyteries. Because different presbyteries are at different stages in their support for and development of CREs, the CRE

Coordinator will also work with each presbytery on their specific needs.

Responsibilities

1. Establish and maintain regular contact with presbytery staff leaders to understand each presbytery's unique situation with respect to CREs, and how the CRE Coordinator can support them.
2. Facilitate conversation about minimum standards for training across presbyteries and support presbytery leaders' work to formalize these standards.
3. Initiate, learn from, and work alongside the CRE Steering Team, composed of knowledgeable constituents (CREs, presbytery leaders, etc.).
4. Develop synod-wide programming to train and support CREs, such as cohort groups, periodic continuing education/equipping events, mentoring, etc. Supervise any provider contractor called for these purposes.
5. Advocate for the critical role of CREs throughout the Synod.
6. Report on ministry activity to each stated meeting of the Synod Assembly.
7. Other duties as required to reach the expected outcomes (below).

Expected Outcomes

- Increased numbers of CREs serving congregations fruitfully throughout the Synod.
- More creative and thorough training and support opportunities for CREs, with participation of critical mass.
- Strong relationships with presbytery leaders and steering team.

Relationships

The CRE Coordinator reports to the Synod Executive, learns from/works alongside the CRE Steering Team, and regularly interacts with presbytery leaders and CREs.

Meetings

The Coordinator will attend Synod Assemblies, steering team meetings, and periodic staff meetings (and is welcome to all staff meetings as the Coordinator desires).

Resources

The Synod provides an office phone number and any software necessary for the work.

Qualifications, Skills, and Experiences

- Commissioned Ruling Elder (preferred) or Teaching/Ruling Elder within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- Membership within the Synod of the Covenant is strongly preferred.
- Excellent initiative and networking, organizational, verbal & written communication skills.
- Commitment to Anti-Racism.
- Background check.

Compensation

This ten-hour/week position includes the employer portion of FICA and a modest travel budget.

Evaluation

The coordinator's performance will be formally evaluated annually, and there will be regular conversations about strengths and opportunities to improve.

A motion prevailed to approve the Synod of the Covenant Personnel Policy. (Online only)

A motion prevailed to approve the Terms of Call for 2024 for the Rev. Charles B. Hardwick as follows:

Salary and Housing: \$119,316

- Salary \$79,316
- Housing \$40,000

SECA: 7.65%, or \$ 9,127.67

Full Board of Pensions: 39%, or \$ 46,533

Medical Reimbursement: \$ 1,200

Telephone Reimbursement: \$ 1,440

Continuing Education: \$ 3,000

Professional Expenses: \$ 1,000

Vacation 21 days

Continuing Education: 10 days

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Elder Frank Walburg (Scioto Valley) presented the 2024 Proposed Budget for the Synod of the Covenant. After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** to approve the 2024 Proposed Budget. The Treasurer's Report included the Year-to-Date Expenses and Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2023. (Online only)

CLOSING WORSHIP

Rev. Sandy Seaton-Todd (Western Reserve) led the Assembly in a time of worship. During the meeting, Rev. Seaton-Todd (Western Reserve) was installed as the moderator of the Synod of the Covenant; her term begins January 1, 2024. The Assembly celebrated the Lord's Supper during worship.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned in prayer at 12:30 p.m. by Rev. Sandy Seaton-Todd (Western Reserve).

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence
Stated Clerk

THIS ENDS THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL SYNOD ASSEMBLY OF OCTOBER 27-28, 2023

The Next Synod Assembly is on January 30, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom.