



The Synod of the Covenant

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Assembly Minutes
Administrative Commission
August 27, 2021
11:00 a.m. EST

PRESENT:

Administrative Commission Members: Patrice Hatley, CO-Moderator (Tampa Bay), Brady Radford, Co-Moderator (Greater Atlanta), Elona Street-Stewart (Twin Cities), Adel Malek (Los Ranchos), Ben McConaughy (Seattle), Sue Krummel (Chicago), Michelle Johnson (Tropical Florida), Richard Rojas (San Juan)

GA Staff: Jihyun Oh, Manager of Mid-Councils, PCUSA

Guests: Adrienne Adams, Jasmine Smart, Kay Morrill, Susan Vlcek, Andy Thorburn, Dan Saperstein

Synod Staff: Charles B. Hardwick, Interim Synod Executive; Heather Johnston-Deeb, Office Manager/Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

The co-moderator, Patrice Hatley, called the meeting to order at 11:03. p.m. A quorum was present. **A motion prevailed** to appoint Heather Johnston-Deeb as Recording Clerk for this meeting.

WORSHIP

A time of worship and reflect was led by members of the Administrative Commission and Synod staff.

REPORT OF THE INTERIM SYNOD EXECUTIVE

The Rev. Charles B. Hardwick, interim Synod Executive provided the following:

- Highlights of the *Why of the Synod* Retreat – August 24-26, 2021
 - Executive Presbyters (EP)/General Presbyters(GP)/ Presbytery Leaders from presbyteries within the Synod of the Covenant gathered August 24-24, 2021 in Tiffin, OH. All but one EP were able to attend. There was a lot of energy and a great spirit of cooperation and joy during the gathering
 - Frustrations with the Office of General Assembly (OGA) were expressed. Frustrations include:
 - They do not feel like mid council leaders are being heard
 - A lack of trust in the OGA was expressed
 - There was fear of waning connectionism
 - Lack of vision and clarity from OGA office



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- The group is drafting a letter to articulate these concerns
 - Discussed leadership for congregations in transition
 - There was a desire to meet in person quarterly
 - Seven presbytery stated clerks joined the meeting on August 25-26.
 - The Rev. Dr. Laurie Ferguson led those assembled through the process of considering the “why” of Synod. Rev. Ferguson did an excellent job.
 - The EP/GPs and stated clerks summarized the work with “In our Synod, we will try anything to equip leaders who are tending to God’s evolving and creative future”.
 - A small group was designated to work on preparing a presentation and report for the Synod of the Covenant Assembly in October.
 - The Report of the Interim Synod Executive was received by members of the Administrative Commission with enthusiasm.
- Progress Report: AC Goals for Re-Establishing Jurisdiction (see document I-1)
 - **A motion prevailed** to approve the application for General Assembly restricted funds for Muskingum Valley: (see document J-1)
 - Ministry Update: (See Document K-1)
 - A motion prevailed to authorize the Rev. Dr. Charles B. Hardwick, Interim Synod Executive to endorse to necessary documents during Elder Sharon Moore’s (Detroit), Stated Clerk medical leave.
 - Rev. Hardwick reported that the Review of the 2020 Financial by De Marco and Associates will be completed and presented at the October Synod Assembly.

Administrative Commission Matters:

- Discussion of the October Synod Assembly Meeting - Virtual vs. In person
 - The Administrative Commission is under the authority of the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, PCUSA General Assembly Stated Clerk, who has extended a travel ban for all PCUSA General Assembly staff through the remainder of 2021. Therefore, General Assembly staff will not be able to attend an in-person assembly in October.
 - Elder Patrice Hatley, Co-Moderator, agreed to initiate a letter requesting an exception from the Office of the General Assembly requesting permission to hold the October Assembly/Retreat in person.



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- Treasurer Search:
 - Two elders from within the Synod have volunteered to serve as treasurer.
 - The Administrative Commission will wait until original jurisdiction is returned to Synod commissioners so that they may make the decision.
- Other Business:
 - Nominating Committee: Rev. Hardwick will identify candidates for election to the nominating committee for the October Synod Assembly.
 - There was **unanimous consent** by members of the Synod of the Covenant Administrative Commission to act if there is a Covenant that needs to be approved prior to the October Synod Assembly meeting.
- Motions Made and Approved:
 - Per Capita: **A motion prevailed**, that in solidarity with presbyteries and congregations facing financial challenges, the Synod of the Covenant will keep its per capita unchanged from 2021, so that the 2022 per capita will remain \$3.25 per member.
 - Temporary Stated Clerk: **A motion prevailed** to appoint the Rev. Wayne Yost (Synod of the Trinity) to serve as Temporary Associate Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant in the matter of the Complaint: North Kent vs the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, and in this matter only, for the duration of Elder Sharon Moore's (Detroit), stated clerk, medical leave. Rev. Yost will be compensated at the rate of \$30/hour plus any associated expenses, retroactive to August 9, 2021.
 - Commissioner Terms: The following **motion prevailed**: The Synod of the Covenant is grateful for each commissioner's unique contributions as we join the Spirit in rebuilding ourselves. Moving forward, it will be helpful for each presbytery's commissioners to have staggered terms. We are hoping that each presbytery will adjust the terms of their commissioners to those shown on Paper I-1 to reach this goal. We further hope that the presbyteries will elect new commissioners to the Synod who have gifts and interests in the emerging ministry/mission of the Synod.



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- 2022 Assembly Meeting dates: A motion prevailed that *That the Synod of the Covenant hold their 2022 assemblies as follows:*
 - Tuesday, February 1, 2022, at 4:30, by zoom
 - Tuesday May 3, 2022, at 4:30, by zoom
 - Friday-Saturday October 21-22 retreat and annual meeting, in person at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, MI

- **A motion prevailed** to authorize the Rev. Dr. Charles B. Hardwick to sign as the stated clerk until a new stated clerk is identified.

NEW BUSINESS:

As of July 20, 2021, the Synod of the Covenant Administrative Commission has been advised that although Rafeat Zaki's discrimination claim has been dismissed by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, the EEOC has not yet done so.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned with prayer at 1:03 p.m.