



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI    PRESBYTERY OF DETROIT    PRESBYTERY OF EASTMINSTER

PRESBYTERY OF LAKE HURON    PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN    PRESBYTERY OF MACKINAC    PRESBYTERY OF MAUMEE VALLEY

PRESBYTERY OF MIAMI VALLEY    PRESBYTERY OF MUSKINGUM VALLEY    PRESBYTERY OF SCIOTO VALLEY    PRESBYTERY OF THE WESTERN RESERVE

July 16, 2019

Patrice Hatley, Brady Radford, and members of the Administrative Commission,

Grace and Peace be with you as well.

We thank each of you for your willingness to serve on this Administrative Commission as you share your time, wisdom and experience with this Synod and its Presbyteries. We write this letter with in a spirit of *welcome*, while seeking *clarity* and extending an *invitation*.

We *welcome* you to the Synod of the Covenant. While our office is located in Maumee, Ohio, roughly the geographical center of the Synod, if we can serve you in any way during your time in Columbus, Ohio, please let us know. We pray that you have safe travel, and that your time in Columbus at the end of July is fruitful. What follows should be understood in this context of Christ-like welcome.

In this correspondence we seek *clarity* in a number of areas. We seek a better understanding of the process the Administrative Commission will use for its work. Outside of hearing who was appointed to this Commission, your letter dated June 26, 2019 is the first correspondence we have received from the Commission. Given that this Administrative Commission is formed for Special Administrative Review - the framework within which each task in section 2 is understood in the alternative resolution put forth by Committee 5 and passed by the 223rd General Assembly, we think we understand the meaning of a number of phrases in your letter, but find it prudent to seek clarification.

The first phrase in your letter indicates that the listening sessions on July 29-31 are only a *part* of your "review process." Would you be willing to share with us a general plan for the rest of the "review process?" This will help us better understand where the Moderator's Committee of the Synod and the Stated Clerk of the Synod fit within the timeline of the process. Additionally, what time do the listening sessions begin and end on each day? What is the address for the listening sessions?

To date, the Synod has been given a total of six (6) minutes to formally refute the claims of disorder made against it in a public setting. Additionally, if this is the only chance to share our perspective, we feel the Synod will be placed in an unjust position. We are responding to claims already made, and, depending on the parameters set around the listening sessions by the Commission, additional claims that may be made. While we are familiar with the claims made in an Overture's rationale, we feel it would be unfair to expect us to be prepared to respond to potential claims yet to be made during the listening sessions. Would the commission share with



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us a comprehensive list of alleged delinquencies and/or irregularities that make up the “claims of disorder” made against us?

Your letter, also, notes the possibility of closed sessions “in the event subjects relate to personnel or rules of discipline.” Committee 5 of the 223rd General Assembly intentionally excluded matters of personnel in its alternative resolution passed by the Assembly when it rejected both Overture 05-03 from the Presbytery of Cincinnati and Overture 05-06 from the Synod of the Covenant. The Leadership of Committee 5 even excluded discussion of personnel matters during the committee’s deliberations due to concerns raised by the Synod prior to General Assembly. Those concerns are highlighted in correspondence written in the weeks prior to the 223rd General Assembly. We will share all correspondence sent from the Synod and received by the Synod from General Assembly leadership prior to the 223rd General Assembly with the Commission via email later this week. We have similar concerns at this time.

We *invite* you to meet with the Moderator’s Committee of the Synod. We would love to host you at the Synod Office, get to know each of you, and to share a meal and pray together. Please feel free to coordinate schedules directly with us or through our Stated Clerk.

It is our hope that those who believe the Synod has been irregular or delinquent in its work feel safe to openly share their concerns. We trust that we will have a fair opportunity to pastorally respond to those concerns during the review of our records. We pray the result of this process will lead the Synod and its Presbyteries to move forward in truth, healing, and reconciliation in the bond of peace.

In Christ,

Aaron Meadows, Synod Moderator

Patricia Megregian, Synod Vice Moderator