



The Synod of the Covenant Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

9/25/20 Synod of the Covenant (SOC) Assembly Highlights

On 9/25/20 the General Assembly Administrative Commission (GAAC) welcomed nine corresponding members and staff from throughout the SOC to its September Assembly.

Here are some of the highlights:

- GAAC Members, Rev Adel Malek and Rev. Sue Krummel led our midday prayers, using Ephesians 4:14-16 to remind us to **prioritize love over truth**, so that in love we can discover truth.
- **Some additional steps toward Racial Equity have been taken.** As the Racial Equity Caucuses begin to take shape once more, they will re-establish their purposes and goals, with the SOC providing polity guidance to them. Staff from the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) will work with the GAAC, Staff, and Future Commissioners using the Intercultural Development Inventory.
- Outgoing SOC Stated Clerk Rich Rojas and the Manager of Judicial Processes for the OGA, Flor Velez Diaz, led a conversation about **Synod Membership**. Because only ruling/teaching elders can have voice/vote as commissioners, Racial Equity Caucus representatives will need to be ordained and elected as additional commissioners by their home presbyteries. An outstanding issue is the status of Young Adult Commissioners in the SOC's future, since few 18-25-year-olds have been ordained.
- **Grants update:** As of 9/20/20, 61 higher education scholarship, 10 COVID emergency grant for higher education, 1 Racial-Ethnic Grant and 2 New Covenant Grant applications have been received. Recipients of higher education scholarships will be announced in October and grants in November.
- The SOC is working diligently to attain **financial clarity**. Auditors DeMarco and Associates are finalizing and auditing the 2019 books currently, and administrative details with Huntington, Chase, and Fifth-Third banks are being clarified.
- The GAAC continued to discuss the process of **returning jurisdiction** to the SOC. They explored a draft sequencing of what activities and ministries might return to the SOC's jurisdiction.
- **The staff team of the Synod is now complete!** The GAAC elected Ruling Elder Sharon Moore of the St. Johns Presbyterian Church in Detroit Presbytery to serve as Stated Clerk. Sharon is a passionate social justice advocate with more than 20 years of legal and litigation experience, and her term of service continues for the duration of the GAAC's support of the SOC. Office Manager Heather Johnston, a recent graduate of San Francisco Theological Seminary and former executive assistant, completes the team, along with Interim Executive Chip Hardwick.



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- **Other Administrative Matters:** The former office in Maumee, OH, will be closed on 10/14/20, and the new office in Bloomfield Hills, MI, will open soon afterwards. The non-operational Mobile Health Fair van was sold to a car-removal business. The GAAC requested more information about the Coalition for Appalachian Ministry before endorsing a representative to their board.
- **The next Synod assembly** will be an orientation for future commissioners from each presbytery. It will be held via Zoom on Saturday, 10/31/20, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm eastern.

For more information, you can find all meeting documents at

<https://synodofthecovenant.org/assembly-papers/>. Please contact Interim Executive Chip Hardwick with any questions or for more detail: synod.covenant@gmail.com or 309-530-4578.