



# The Synod of the Covenant

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

## 12/4/20 Synod of the Covenant (SOC) Assembly Highlights

On 12/4/20 the General Assembly Administrative Commission (GAAC) welcomed thirteen corresponding members and staff from throughout the SOC to its December meeting (Assembly). Here are some of the highlights:

- GAAC Member Ben McConaughy and Office of General Assembly Liaison Flor Velez Diaz led our midday prayers, using Mary's song (Luke 1:46-55) to call us to watch for, and work for, God's coming peace and justice.
- 61 scholarship winners and thirteen New Covenant and Racial Ethnic grant winners were announced. Full listings can be found at [Grants and Scholarships - Synod of the Covenant](#).
- The SOC will have a surplus in 2020 due to the pause in our ministries instituted by the GAAC. In gratitude for the ministry of the presbyteries during the pandemic, the SOC will offer a financial gift equal to two-thirds of this surplus, at least \$8,000 for each presbytery.
- The 2021 budget was approved for \$535,000, including a block of funds dedicated to ministries which will be discerned at the March 2021 Assembly.
- The GAAC approved a plan for fiscal clarity from auditors DeMarco and Associates, including 1) a statement of financial position, statement of activities, and a statement of functional expenses for 2019, 2) an Agreed Upon Procedures engagement for fiscal year 2019 to review cash disbursements, credit card and related party transactions, 3) a Financial Statement Review for 2020, and 4) an analysis of the 2020 internal controls developed and implemented by current SOC staff.
- Because the denomination requires that all SOC commissioners be either Ruling or Teaching Elders (RE or TE), 1) the racial-equity caucuses' and Presbyterian Women's representatives to future SOC assemblies must be RE or TE, and 2) the position of Young Adult Commissioners has been removed due to the lack of RE/TEs between 18 and 25 years old. The Synod will look for other ways to learn from, engage, and support young adults.
- The Personnel Manual was changed so that half-time staff receive vacation and sick leave.



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- The GAAC was informed that a charge of discrimination filed by Rev. Raafat Zaki, former Executive, with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission was dismissed by the OCRC with a finding of no probable cause.
- Future commissioner meetings were set for January 7, 2021 (6:00 to 8:00 pm), March 11, 2021 (6:00 to 8:30 pm), and October 7-9, 2021 (retreat).

*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](mailto:synod.covenant@gmail.com) or 309-530-4578.*