



# The Synod of the Covenant

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

## Synod Assembly Strategy – Commissioner Retreat

**Theme:** Developing a Ministry Theme, Foci, and Directions for the Synod of the Covenant for 2022 and beyond

**October 8** – 3:00 to 4:30 The THEME and MINISTRY FOCI of the synod

(link: <https://synodofthecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/G-1-21.10.7-9-The-Why-of-the-Synod-Part-1.pdf>)

15 minutes **Introduction of the Theme and Foci Draft**

15 minutes **Conversation in breakout groups**

*Facilitated by Executive/General/Associate Presbyteries and Stated Clerks*

- Review the Ministry Theme and Foci draft in groups (about 10-15 minutes)
  - o What does it SAY...
    - About the essential or unique missions of the Synod
    - About what builds the mission of the whole church
  - o What does it MEAN...
    - What would be different about the Synod if this were its vision?
    - What would be the same?

10 minutes Sharing of General Impressions

25 minutes **Conversation in Breakout Groups**

*Facilitated by Executive/General/Associate Presbyteries and Stated Clerks*

- Evaluate the Ministry Theme and Foci draft in groups (25-30 minutes)
  - o What EXCITES you about this statement?
  - o What are the OPPORTUNITIES it presents?
  - o What are the CHALLENGES to implementing it?
  - o What is MISSING? What would you SUBSTITUTE (if anything)?

25 minutes **Revision of Draft** and formation of a **Motion to adopt**

**October 9** – 9:00 to 10:30 The MINISTRY DIRECTIONS of the synod

(link: <https://synodofthecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/G-2-2021.09.7-9-The-Why-of-Synod-Part-II.pdf>)

10 minutes – **Introduction of the Ministry Directions Draft** –

- Address the content and the need to be open to the Spirit regarding change, especially of programs in which people are personally invested
- Emphasize the bullet points are possibilities, not plans



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## 20 minutes – **Conversation in Breakout Groups on Ministry Foci #1 and #2**

*Facilitated by Executive/General/Associate Presbyteries and Stated Clerks*

*Each group should appoint a scribe to present their thoughts to the larger group and email to [heather@synodofthecovenant.org](mailto:heather@synodofthecovenant.org).*

- CONSIDER the possible directions (bullet points) for each focus
- BRAINSTORM how each focus might be addressed and implemented in the Synod
- SUGGEST new possibilities for implementation in 2022 or beyond

## 15 minutes – **Sharing impressions and suggestions on Ministry Foci #1 and #2**

- Begin process of refining the bullet points for further consideration.

## 20 minutes – **Conversation in Breakout Groups on Ministry Foci #3 and #4**

*Facilitated by Executive/General/Associate Presbyteries and Stated Clerks*

*Each group should appoint a scribe to present their thoughts to the larger group and email to [heather@synodofthecovenant.org](mailto:heather@synodofthecovenant.org).*

- CONSIDER the possible directions (bullet points) for each focus
- BRAINSTORM how each focus might be addressed and implemented in the Synod
- SUGGEST new possibilities for implementation in 2022 or beyond

## 15 minutes – **Sharing impressions and suggestions on Ministry Foci #3 and #4**

- Begin process of refining the bullet points for further consideration.

## 10 minutes – **Breakout group conversations:**

*Facilitated by Executive/General/Associate Presbyteries and Stated Clerks*

- What does this mean for commissioners, their presbyteries, and their congregations?
- Pray together in your small groups as the Synod moves forward in new directions. Participants may want to pray for the following
  - o Discernment for moving forward
  - o Gratitude for God's provision of the resources
  - o Impact on presbyteries and churches and lives throughout the Synod
  - o Their own contributions in the future