Report of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance

FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON CHURCH ORDER

CO 21-1 (New BCO formulary for transfer of minister of Word and sacrament to another denomination, workbook pp. 230-231)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CO 21-1.

CO 21-2 (Clarifying amendment to Formulary 9, workbook pp. 231-232)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CO 21-2.

CO 21-3 (BCO change outlining Committee on Emergencies, workbook pp. 235-237)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to amend CO 21-3 as follows (the committee’s amendment is highlighted; its deletions are double-struck and its additions are double-underlined):

CO 21-3 (amendment)

To approve the following amendment to the *The Bylaws of the General Synod* by adding a new Article 10 to Chapter 3, Part I (2019 edition, at p. 124) and re-numbering the subsequent articles, for submission to the next General Synod for final approval (additions are underlined):

Article 10. Committee on Emergencies

Sec. 1. Purpose

A Committee on Emergencies shall be convened whenever necessary in response to a disaster or crisis that would prevent the General Synod from meeting in its stated session or disrupt plans to hold a session at a particular venue, such as a fire, natural disaster, or another sudden calamity.

Sec. 2. Membership

The membership of the committee shall consist of the following:

a. The president, vice president, and the immediate past president of General Synod, *ex officio* and without vote.
b. The president of each classis, or if unable to attend, the classis may designate its vice president or stated clerk.

c. The general secretary of the General Synod, ex officio and without vote.

Sec. 3. Meetings

a. The committee shall be convened by the president of General Synod, in the event of an emergency as described in Section 1. In the event of a disaster that makes his or her participation impossible, the basis of succession for convening shall be: (a) president, (b) vice president, (c) immediate past president of General Synod.

b. Meetings may be held using electronic means as long as the meeting allows for simultaneous aural communication among all participating members.

c. The presence of two-thirds a majority of the classis representatives is required to constitute a quorum.

d. By a two-thirds vote of those present, this committee is empowered to postpone a session of the General Synod and schedule the time and place for the next session by a two-thirds majority vote of the classis representatives present and voting.

e. By the vote of three quarters of the entire committee membership, this committee may also take any of the following actions: set the amount of the General Synod assessment, act on recommendations offered by the Commission on Nominations, or other actions that may be required for the General Synod to function.

f.e. The convener shall make a report to the next session of the General Synod of all meetings held and actions taken under this emergency provision. At the next session of the General Synod, all decisions of this committee must be reviewed and ratified to continue to have effect.

Reasons:
1. As pertains to subsection c, two-thirds of classis representatives should be attainable through electronic means and safeguards fair representation.
2. Combining subsections d and e provides better clarity and simplifies the process, allowing actions to be taken during the meeting.
3. This amendment eliminates the need to go back to the classes for their votes.
The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to amend CO 21-4 as follows (the committee’s amendment is highlighted; its deletions are double-struck):

CO 21-4 (amendment)
To adopt the following amendment to the Book of Church Order Chapter 1, Part IV, Article 4, Section 1 (2019 edition, p. 69) for recommendation to the classes for approval (additions are underlined; deletions are stricken):

Article 4. Sessions and Meetings of General Synod

Sec. 1. The General Synod shall meet no less frequently than annually at such time and place as shall have been determined was either reported by the Executive Committee at its a previous stated session or determined by the Committee on Emergencies. All meetings of the General Synod shall begin and end with prayer.

Reason:
1. The addition “no less frequently than” seemed redundant.

CO 21-5 (Clarification on process for amending RCA constitution and General Synod bylaws, workbook p. 238)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CO 21-5.

CO 21-6 (Addition to Special Rules of Order of the General Synod regarding declarative resolutions on BCO amendments, workbook p. 238)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CO 21-6.

CO 21-7 (BCO change regarding discipline of a member of a local church, workbook p. 239)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CO 21-7.
FROM THE REPORT OF THE CHURCH GROWTH FUND

CGF 21-1 (Changes to bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to allow continuation of and new loans to former RCA churches, workbook pp. 183-186)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CGF 21-1.

CGF 21-2 (Change to CGF bylaws to adjust limit for unsecured loans, workbook p. 187)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of CGF 21-2.

FROM THE REPORT OF WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

TE 21-4 (Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation changes to change seminary to affiliated status with RCA, workbook pp. 334-343)

The advice of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance is to vote in favor of TE 21-4.