

**General Synod Council  
Reformed Church in America  
Minutes of August 13, 2021 Meeting  
Zoom Video Meeting**

Welcome and Prayer

Ned Beadel, moderator of the General Synod Council (“GSC”), called the meeting to order on August 13, 2021, at 11:03 a.m. (eastern) followed by prayer.

Members Present

The following members of the GSC were present for all or part of the meeting:

Eddy Alemán, ex-officio	Michael Meyer-Veen
Philip Assink	Sheila Moses
Ned Beadel	James Nakakihara
Michelle Chahine	Eric Nichols
Devonna Cousins	Albert Plat
Susan Davis	Neale Roller
Bruce Deckinga	Glenn Spyksma
EJ de Waard	Lee Vande Voort
Jamie Dykstra	Kimberly Van Es
Hellen Harvey	Leigh Van Kempen
Robert Johnson	Harris Van Oort
Kathryn Lohre (ELCA)	Patricia Varga
Kent McHeard	Imos Wu

Members Absent

The following members of the GSC were unable to attend the meeting:

Pedro Agudelo	Eric Moreno
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Staff and Guests

The following staff members and guests were present for all or part of the meeting:

Terri Boven, *Recorder*  
Elizabeth Brand, *Director of General Synod Operations*  
Thomas Smith, *Regional Synod Observer from Council of Synod Executives*  
Jillisa Teitsma, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Angela Worthley, *Recorder*

## General Synod Assessment

Jillisa Teitsma addressed the GSC regarding the recommendation for the General Synod 2021 per member assessment for theological education. Two versions will be prepared as the amount to be voted on is dependent on the outcome of the vote concerning the Western Theological Seminary (WTS) bylaws change, which will occur before the vote on the theological education assessment. The version with the applicable rate will be placed before the General Synod to be voted on.

## GSC 21-29

Motion made, supported, and carried:

To propose to General Synod a theological education assessment of \$4.00 per confessing member for 2022 in the event that WTS bylaws changes are approved; or a \$6.12 per confessing member in the event that WTS bylaws changes are not approved.

## General Synod 2021

Elizabeth Brand addressed the GSC regarding the preliminary General Synod schedule.

Elizabeth Brand addressed the GSC regarding the COVID-19 safety protocols determined for General Synod after consultation with medical professionals. These will be available to delegates when they register.

Elizabeth Brand addressed the GSC regarding alternate delegates to the special advisory committees. Two of the delegates approved at the August 3, 2021 GSC meeting are unable to serve. The following revised membership was presented (additions are underlined, deletions are stricken):

### **Overtures and New Business**

Moderator: Chuck Swoboda (minister, Classis of Cascades)

Vice Moderator: Dwayne Jackson (minister, Classis of Greater Palisades)

### *Ministers*

Laura Dilley (Classis of North Grand Rapids)

Stacey Duensing (Classis of Orange)

Jon Garbison (Classis of Wisconsin)

Deb Rensink (Classis of West Sioux)

~~Suzanne Vogel (Classis of Central Iowa)~~

### *Elders*

Lynne Stenberg (Classis of Montgomery)

June Denny (Classis of Southwest)

Willie Si (Synod of Canada)

Mary Zwart (Classis of Southwest Michigan)

*General Synod Professor*

Chad Pierce

### **Church Order and Governance**

Moderator: Ben Lin (minister, Classis of New Brunswick)

Vice Moderator: Jan Van Wyk (elder, Synod of the Heartland)

#### *Ministers*

~~Doug Evenhouse (Classis of Illinois)~~

George Grevenstuk (Classis of Great Lakes City)

Gary Jarvis (Classis of Zeeland)

Megan Hodgkin (Classis of Schenectady)

Scott Stephan (Classis of Illinois)

Carole Barber (Classis of the Americas)

#### *Elders*

Mertella Munroe (Classis of Rockland-Westchester)

Lorena Serrano (Classis of the Americas)

Hugo Vasquez (Classis of Holland)

*General Synod Professor*

Tim Brown

### **GSC 21-30**

Motion made, supported, and carried:

To approve the changes to the special advisory committee for General Synod as presented.

Jillisa Teitsma addressed the GSC regarding the financial implications of recommendations that will come before the General Synod. One recommendation will require an increase in assessments, and this assessment amount will be included within that recommendation to General Synod. The other two will be funded from current budget areas, without an increase in assessments.

Philip Assink addressed the GSC regarding a request to make phone calls, prior to synod, to all RCA churches to create a prayer emphasis surrounding General Synod. The hope is to have all RCA churches feel connected and give them the opportunity to pray for the RCA before, during, and after General Synod. GSC members will make the bulk of the calls but others may be brought in to help. A script will be provided.

**GSC 21-31**

Motion made, supported, and carried to adjourn the August 13, 2021 meeting of GSC at 11:49 a.m. (eastern) following devotions by Sheila Moses.

Terri Boven, Recorder  
Angela Worthley, Recorder