WORSHIP

A worship team led the Synod in worship. Participants were as follows: the Rev. Dr. John Chang, Arena Collin, the Rev. Jay Kim, Gezelle Kingdom-Grier, Savitri Devi Mark, Grandy Soleman Oley, Leonardy Poluan, Vidal Sequeira, Jidong Shan, Erica Simpson, Jeremy Simpson, Melani Amelia Situmorang, Imos Wu, and the Rev. Andrew Yamamoto.

The Word was preached by the Rev. Fransisca Rumokoy.

CALL TO ORDER

The president called to order the sixth meeting of the General Synod at 8:45 a.m. on Saturday, June 11, 2022.

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OVERTURES AND NEW BUSINESS

The president called upon the Rev. Cora Taitt, moderator of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, and the Rev. Corinne Ellis, vice moderator of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, to present the committee’s report (Report of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, parts 1 and 2). The Revs. Taitt and Ellis addressed the Synod.

In response to Overture 1 (GS Workbook pp.110-111), ONB 22-1 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To deny Overture 1.

Reasons:
1. While we understand the cultural concerns presented by the classis, it appears to the advisory committee that the prayer in question does address the Triune God revealed in Scripture.
2. As this is an isolated incident, it does not warrant action of the full General Synod.
3. The advisory committee suggests that the Classis of Rocky Mountains direct its concerns to the Commission on Christian Action.

VOTED: To adopt ONB 22-1 (yes 122; no 49).
In response to Overture 2 (GS Workbook p. 111), ONB 22-2 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To deny Overture 2.

Reasons:
1. While we understand the frustration of uncertainty and the urgency of this issue, we also recognize the complexity of the work and the time needed to fulfill the mandate given to the Restructuring Team in a God-honoring and positive way.
2. Since the membership of the Restructuring Team was finalized at the end of March 2022 and the reports will be due in March 2023 for the 2023 General Synod, it would not be realistic to require the team to complete this important work in a 12-month period.
3. There is an expectation that the Restructuring Team will be giving reports and requesting feedback, and this shortened time frame does not allow appropriate time for this process.
4. We strongly encourage the Restructuring Team to give updates after each meeting, to help congregations to see a path forward and have a snapshot of the future God has planned for the RCA.

**VOTED:** To adopt ONB 22-2 (yes 102; no 72).

A motion was made and supported from the floor. It reads as follows:

To make heartfelt request that the RCA Restructuring Team add to their existing timeline submitting a foundational report in time to be presented to the 2023 Annual Meeting for the purpose of lessening the sense of uncertainty and to build upon the vision going forward.

**VOTED:** To adopt the motion (yes 93; no 84).

In response to Overture 3 (GS Workbook p.112), ONB 22-3 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To deny Overture 3.

Reasons:
1. The first part of the overture has already been addressed by action of the GSC, as reported in the General Synod Council Serving as the Executive Committee of the General Synod, on page 44 of the workbook (in the section titled “Change to Publication Schedule of GSC Minutes”).
2. For the second part, there is an adequate mechanism in place for dealing with this in the *Book of Church Order (BCO)*; the General Synod votes on a case-by-case basis whether or not to accept an item of new business that is presented (*BCO*, Chapter 3, Part II, Article 2, Section 8 [2021 edition, p. 130]).

**VOTED:** To adopt ONB 22-3 (yes 157; no 15).

In response to Overture 4 (GS Workbook pp. 112), ONB 22-4 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To deny Overture 4.

**Reasons:**
1. General Synod 2021 voted to empower the executive committee to make these decisions through its adoption of CO 21-4 (*MGS 2021*, p. 240); that amendment was overwhelmingly approved by the classes and does not need to be revisited (in the workbook, see the report of the classis votes on proposed amendments to the *Book of Church Order* on p. 39 in the Report of the General Synod Council Serving as the Executive Committee of the General Synod).
2. Due to the fact that venue contracts for an event as large as General Synod need to be signed over a year in advance, the decision of the 2021 General Synod was practical and necessary.

**VOTED:** To adopt ONB 22-4 (yes 169; no 6).

In response to Overture 5 (GS Workbook pp. 112-113), ONB 22-5 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To instruct the Commission on Church Order, meeting electronically with representatives of classes with dual-affiliated consistories, to develop a plan that accounts for an equitable payment of assessments/covenant shares without placing an undue burden on either classes or the denomination, for report to the 2023 General Synod.

**Reason:**
1. After talking with representatives from both the Commission on Church Order and the Classis of New Brunswick, this committee affirms that both parties are willing and open to this discussion, and some of this process is already underway.

**VOTED:** To adopt ONB 22-5 (yes 165; no 11).
In response to Overture 6 (Supplemental Regional Synod Overtures Report), ONB 22-6 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To strongly encourage all churches within the RCA to find fresh ways to engage at least 10 percent of their active membership in either a local or global cross-cultural mission by 2024; and further,

To direct the general secretary to promote this throughout the denomination.

Reason:
1. This committee supports the reasons provided by the Regional Synod of the Great Lakes.

VOTED: To adopt ONB 22-6 (yes 142; no 30).

The vice president assumed the chair.

In response to P-1 (Report of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, part 2), ONB 22-7 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To direct the Commission on Christian Action to explore the Alliance for Hope International as a possible partner to equip congregations and members of the Reformed Church in America to support the intervention and prevention of violence, for report to General Synod 2023.

Reasons:
1. It is important to find tangible ways to address and prevent violence.
2. This is an established organization with a proven track record. Through Transformed & Transforming, the RCA’s 15-year goal adopted by the General Synod in 2013, the RCA has committed to “working with all the partners that God provides” (MGS 2013, R-9, pp. 70-71).

VOTED: To adopt ONB 22-7 (yes 166; no 9).

In response to P-2 (Report of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, part 2), ONB 22-8 was presented to the house. It reads as follows:

To urge all classes and congregations that support RCA Global Mission through Partnership-in-Mission shares to maintain those partnerships, and, for congregations that have transferred or are transferring out of the RCA, to
consider staying engaged with their RCA mission partners even when they are no longer formally connected to the RCA to sustain this kingdom witness.

Reasons:
1. RCA Global Mission is doing kingdom ministry that reaches beyond the RCA.
2. General Synod 2021 affirmed the importance of Global Mission.
3. We added “classes” because the classis has direct access and communication with congregations during the process of transferring out of the denomination.

**VOTED:** To adopt ONB 22-8 (yes 167; no 9).

The president assumed the chair.

**REPORT OF THE COMMISION ON CHURCH ORDER**

The president called upon the Rev. Joshua Scheid, moderator of the Commission on Church Order, to present the commission’s report (GS Workbook pp 200-210). Rev. Scheid addressed the Synod.

CO 22-1 was presented to the house.

The president called upon the Rev. Jonathan Opgenorth, moderator of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance, to provide the advice of the advisory committee. The advice of the Advisory Committee was to vote in favor CO 22-1 (Report of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance Part 1, p. 1).

**VOTED:** To adopt CO 22-1 (GS Workbook pp. 204-205) (yes 168; no 1).

CO 22-2 was presented to the house.

The president called upon the Rev. Opgenorth to provide the advice of the advisory committee. The advice of the Advisory Committee was to vote in favor CO 22-2 (Report of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance Part 1, p. 2).

**VOTED:** To adopt CO 22-2 (GS Workbook p. 205) (yes 171; no 0).

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL BUSINESS**

The president called upon the Rev. Stephen Breen, corresponding delegate from Commission on Judicial Business, to present the commission’s report

JB 22-1 was presented to the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt JB 22-1 (Supplemental Report of the Commission on Judicial Business, p. 9) (yes 133; no 20).

**MISSIONARY VIDEO**

The General Synod viewed a brief video presentation highlighting Jennifer Lucking, RCA missionary. The Rev. Marjorie Vander Wagen, regular delegate from Classis of Chicago, led the Synod in prayer for this mission work.

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON NOMINATIONS**


N 22-1 was presented to the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt N 22-1 (Supplemental Report of the Commission on Nominations, p. 4) (yes 160; no 7).

N 22-2 was presented to the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt N 22-2 (Supplemental Report of the Commission on Nominations, p. 5) (yes 163; no 4).

N 22-3 was presented to the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt N 22-3 (Supplemental Report of the Commission on Nominations, pp. 5-6) (yes 164; no 4).

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HISTORY**

The president called upon the Rev. Dr. Daniel Meeter, corresponding delegate from the Commission on History, to present the commission’s report (GS Workbook pp. 211-218). The Rev. Dr. Meeter addressed the Synod.

H 22-1 was presented to the house.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to refer H 22-1 to the
Commission on Church Order, working with the Commission on History and any other relevant parties for report back to General Synod 2023.

**VOTED:** To refer H 22-1 to the Commission on Church Order, working with the Commission on History and any other relevant parties for report back to General Synod 2023 (yes 150; no 25).

H 22-2 was presented to the house.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend H 22-2 as follows (additions are underlined, deletions are stricken):

To authorize explore the establishment and incorporation of a Reformed Church Historic Trust as a 501(c)(3) organization to support and benefit the RCA Archives, and that the structure will be determined by the Commission on History in consultation with the RCA’s general counsel, the RCA’s chief financial officer, and others as needed, and reported to the 2023 General Synod.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to cease debate.

**VOTED:** To cease debate (yes 161; no 10)

**VOTED:** To amend H 22-2 (yes 105; no 72)

H 22-2 as amended was before the house as follows:

To explore the establishment and incorporation of a Reformed Church Historic Trust as a 501(c)(3) organization to support and benefit the RCA Archives, and that the structure will be determined by the Commission on History in consultation with the RCA’s general counsel, the RCA’s chief financial officer, and others as needed, and reported to the 2023 General Synod.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to cease debate.

**VOTED:** To cease debate (yes 160; no 12)

**VOTED:** To adopt H 22-2 as amended (yes 159; no 14).
RECESS

The president declared the General Synod recessed at 12:05 p.m., following prayer by the Rev. Kent McHeard, regular delegate from the Classis of Schenectady.