

GENERAL SYNOD
REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

2023 Journal of Actions
Meeting 10
Monday morning - June 12, 2023
H.S. Kuyper Fieldhouse

WORSHIP

The worship team, identified in the Journal of Actions for Meeting 1, led the Synod in worship along with representatives from the Native American Indigenous Ministries – Harry Anthony Nauni, Edwin Rivera, Brenda Soliz, and Mefaunwy Whitehorse.

The president called to order the tenth meeting of the General Synod at 8:53 a.m. on Monday, June 12, 2023.

TABLE DISCUSSION – ‘WOMEN IN THE BIBLE’

The president led the delegates through a guided exercise of selecting some women in the Bible who stand out and why.

ECUMENICAL GREETINGS

The president called upon representatives of ecumenical partners who were present at the meeting to bring greetings. The Rev. Mark Pettis, ecumenical delegate from the United Church of Christ, the Rev. Dr. Lisa Vander Wal, ecumenical delegate from the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Rev. Thomas Wolthuis, ecumenical delegate from the Christian Reformed Church in North America, Dr. Monica Schaap Pierce, ecumenical delegate from Christian Churches Together, Y. Dianna Wright, ecumenical delegate from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Rev. Dr. Carmelo Santos, ecumenical delegate from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, each addressed the Synod. Additionally, the delegates viewed a video report from Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie from the National Council of Churches.

ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT OF GENERAL SYNOD

The president called upon the general secretary to review the process for electing the vice president of General Synod (GS Workbook, pp. 32-34). The delegates cast the first ballot for General Synod vice president.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN UNITY

The president called upon Kitt Jackson, corresponding delegate from the Commission on Christian Unity, to present its report (GS Workbook pp. 168-180). Ms. Jackson addressed the Synod.

A motion was made and support from the floor:

That the General Synod, meeting in Stated Session June 8 – 13, 2023, directs the GSC, with the Commission on Christian Unity and the lead RCA ecumenical officers, to invite the leadership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA (UOC-USA) to meet with them, to hear about the Ukrainian Orthodox experiences of the war in Ukraine, to consider further ways of supporting and partnering with the UOC-USA in war relief, and to offer the RCA's expressions of solidarity and support, with our prayers of intercession and prayers for peace in an in-person setting.

VOTED: To adopt the motion (yes 162; no 10).

MISSIONARY VIDEO

The General Synod viewed a brief video presentation highlighting the work of RCA missionary Hannah Kummer. The Rev. Tim TenClay, Seminarian Seminar Leader, led the Synod in prayer for this mission work.

ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT OF GENERAL SYNOD, CONTINUED

The president announced the results of the initial ballots cast for General Synod vice-president. No one received at least two-thirds of the votes cast. Persons receiving at least ten votes on the first ballot were:

- The Rev. Miriam Barnes, regular delegate from the Classis of Zeeland
- The Rev. Dr. Carlos Rivera, regular delegate from the Classis of Brooklyn
- The Rev. Joshua Scheid, regular delegate from the Classis of Nassau-Suffolk
- The Rev. Troy Van Beek, regular delegate from the Classis of East Sioux

COMMISSION ON RACE AND ETHNICITY

The president called upon the Rev. Riana Shaw Robinson, corresponding delegate from the Commission on Race and Ethnicity, to present its report (GS Workbook pp. 218-221). Rev. Shaw Robinson addressed the Synod.

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

The president called upon the Rev. Debra Rensink, moderator of the Commission for Women, to present its report (GS Workbook, pp.242-244). Rev. Rensink addressed the Synod.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN ACTION

The president called upon Cameron Van Kooten Laughead, moderator of the Commission on Christian Action, and the Rev. Becky Town,

moderator of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, to present the commission's report (GS Workbook, pp. 155-163) and advisory committee's advice). Mr. Van Kooten Laughead addressed the Synod.

CA 23-1 was presented to the house (GS Workbook, p. 156-157).

The president called upon Rev. Town to provide the advice of the Advisory Committee. The advice of the Advisory Committee was to amend CA 23-1 as follows (Report of the Advisory Committee on Overtures and New Business, p.3) (additions are underlined, deletions are stricken).

To instruct the General Synod Council to send a letter through classis clerks, urging our congregations and members ~~business-owners~~ to treat those in their employ as employees rather than independent contractors and urging their participation unemployment insurance (U.S.) or employment insurance (Canada) to benefit employees; and further,

To instruct the General Synod Council to send a similar letter to RCA institutions and affiliated institutions with this same request.

VOTED: To adopt the amendment to CA 23-1 (yes 149; no 24).

CA 23-1 as amended was before the house. It reads as follows:

To instruct the General Synod Council to send a letter through classis clerks, urging our congregations and members to treat those in their employ as employees rather than independent contractors and urging their participation unemployment insurance (U.S.) or employment insurance (Canada) to benefit employees; and further,

To instruct the General Synod Council to send a similar letter to RCA institutions and affiliated institutions with this same request.

VOTED: To adopt CA 23-1 as amended (yes 134; no 36).

RECESS

The president declared the General Synod recessed at 11:31 a.m., following a closing prayer by Alissa Hugen, seminarian seminar participant.