

GENERAL SYNOD  
REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

2023 Journal of Actions  
**Meeting 5**  
**Friday evening - June 9, 2023**  
**H.S. Kuyper Fieldhouse**

CALL TO ORDER

The president called to order the fifth meeting of the General Synod at 7:02 p.m. on Friday, June 9, 2023. The president prayed for those who are experiencing medical concerns. Lisa Bontemps, regular delegate from the Classis of Greater Palisades, also offered prayer.

MISSIONARY VIDEO

Delegates viewed a brief video highlighting the work of Albino and Sandy Rodriguez, RCA missionaries. The Rev. Orlando Dubois Marrero, regular delegate from the Classis of the Americas, led the Synod in prayer for this mission work.

APOLOGY TO UPWARD BOUND

The president noted the desire of some to make amends with participants in the Upward Bound program, which is using the Central College campus concurrently with the 2023 General Synod.

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

To send a letter from the General Synod president on behalf of the entire synod body to Central's Upward Bound students, expressing this body's sincere apology for the harm that was caused by comments made by members of this body, and expressing the General Synod's encouragement and good wishes for their time in Upward Bound.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend the motion as follows (additions are underlined):

To send a letter from the General Synod president on behalf of the entire synod body to Central's Upward Bound students, expressing this body's sincere apology for the harm that was caused by comments made by members of this body, and expressing the General Synod's encouragement and good wishes for their time in Upward Bound; and further,

that the General Synod provide a scholarship of \$500 to each student who was offended by what occurred.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend the proposed amendment to the motion as follows (additions are double underlined, deletions are double stricken):

To send a letter from the General Synod president on behalf of the entire synod body to Central's Upward Bound students, expressing this body's sincere apology for the harm that was caused by comments made by members of this body, and expressing the General Synod's encouragement and good wishes for their time in Upward Bound; and further,

that the General Synod provide a scholarship of monies collected via a special offering to the Upward Bound program to use at its discretion~~of \$500 to each student who was offended by what occurred.~~

**VOTED:** To adopt the amendment to the amendment (yes 121; no 49).

**VOTED:** To adopt the amended amendment (yes 121; no 48).

**VOTED:** To adopt the motion as twice amended (yes 142; no 30). It read as follows.

To send a letter from the General Synod president on behalf of the entire synod body to Central's Upward Bound students, expressing this body's sincere apology for the harm that was caused by comments made by members of this body, and expressing the General Synod's encouragement and good wishes for their time in Upward Bound; and further,

that the General Synod provide a scholarship of monies collected via a special offering to the Upward Bound program to use at its discretion.

#### TABLE DISCUSSION – 'Music brings us together as community'

The president led the delegates through a guided exercise of sharing a song or hymn that is special and why it is meaningful. The president then led the Synod in singing the hymn "How Great Thou Art."

#### REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL ON GLOBAL MISSION

The president called to the platform the Rev. Dr. John Paul (JP) Sundararajan, director of Global Mission, to present its report (GS Workbook, pp. 111-116). Rev. Dr. Sundararajan addressed the Synod,

along with Global Mission staff members Rev. Derrick Jones and Rev. En Young Kim.

GM 23-1 was presented to the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt GM 23-1 (GS Workbook, p. 113) (yes 167; no 3).

Retiring missionaries Rev. F. Peter and Mrs. Patricia Ford addressed the Synod.

GM 23-2 was presented to the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt GM 23-2 (GS Workbook, p. 115) (voice vote).

Rev. Derrick Jones offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the life and work of all retiring RCA missionaries.

#### REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL ON THE CENTER FOR CHURCH MULTIPLICATION AND MINISTRY

The president called upon the Rev. Chad Farrand, director of the Center for Church Multiplication and Ministry, to present the Center's report (GS Workbook, pp. 103-110). Rev. Farrand addressed the Synod, along with the staff members from the Center, Ms. Ruth Langkamp, Rev. Elizabeth Testa, Rev. Dr. Andres Serrano, Mr. Jeremy Simpson, and Rev. Dr. Fredy Aviles.

The following local churches, which were newly organized between October 2022 and March 2023, were recognized:

- Iglesia Centro Protestante de Chile, Santiago, Chile
- Iglesia Christiana Semilla de Oracion, Samana, Dominican Republic
- Montreal Church Reformada, Miami, FL
- Sunrise Community Church, Austin, TX
- Vida de Reino Iglesia Reformada, Sarasota, FL

#### RECESS

The president declared the General Synod recessed at 8:58 p.m., following prayer by the Rev. Florence Dekker, corresponding Regional Synod Women delegate from the Regional Synod of Canada.