

**General Synod Council serving as the Committee of Reference
Reformed Church in America
Minutes of June 8, 2023 Meeting
Central College, Pella, Iowa**

Welcome and Prayer

Rev. Philip Assink, moderator of the GSC, called the meeting of the General Synod Council (GSC) serving as the Committee of Reference (Committee) to order on June 8, 2023, at 12:17 p.m. followed by devotions and prayer.

Members Present

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

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|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Pedro Agudelo | Bradley Kautz |
| Eddy Alemán, ex-officio | Michael Meyer-Veen |
| Philip Assink | Sheila Moses |
| Carole Barber | Judith Nelson |
| Calvin Brouwer | Albert Plat |
| Michelle Chahine | Neale Roller |
| Linda Cline | Jidong Shan |
| Susan Davis | Kimberly Van Es |
| Bruce Deckinga | Leigh Van Kempen |
| Brian Engel | Harris Van Oort |
| Dwayne Jackson | Patricia Varga |
| Randy Karcher | Maudelin Willock |

Members Absent

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

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|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Devonna Cousins | Eric Nichols |
| Yong Bok Kim | Kjersten Sullivan (ELCA) |

Staff

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

Elizabeth Brand, *Director of General Synod Operations*
Christina Tazelaar, *Chief Communications Officer*
Jillisa Teitsma, *Chief Financial Officer*
Angela Worthley, *Recorder*

General Synod

Elizabeth Brand addressed the Committee regarding the 2023 General Synod schedule.

GSC 23-44

Motion made, supported, and adopted:

To approve the 2023 General Synod schedule as presented.

It was reported that a change needed to be made to the membership of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance that was approved at the April 24, 2023 GSC meeting, due to last minute changes in the delegate roster.

GSC 23-45

Motion made, supported, and adopted:

To approve the change to the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance membership as follows (additions are underlined; deletions are stricken):

Moderator: Steven De Vries (minister, Classis of Zeeland)

Vice Moderator: Betsy Westman (minister, Classis of Montgomery)

Ministers

Brandon Beebe (Classis of Southwest Michigan)

~~Susan Converse (Classis of Nassau Suffolk)~~

~~Ted Godwin-Stremler (Classis of Central Plains)~~

Susan Klimstra (Classis of Pleasant Prairie)

Debbie Pierce (Classis of Passaic Valley)

Elders

Tina Marie Bottini (Classis of Albany)

Claudia Flores (Classis of the Americas)

Joel Harmelink (Classis of Wisconsin)

Joaquin Salazar (Classis of the Southwest)

Elizabeth Brand addressed the Committee regarding its role and responsibilities at General Synod, especially in regards to the presentation and referral of new business (*BCO* Chapter 3, Part II, Article 2, Section 8).

It was reported that the Committee has been asked to approve the partial absence of four voting delegates. The *BCO* states that delegates are expected to attend all meetings of the General Synod session unless excused by the Committee of Reference (Chapter 3, Part I, Article 1, Section 2).

GSC 23-46 Motion made, supported, and adopted:

To excuse the following 2023 General Synod partial absences:

Elba Arias Lopez (elder, Classis of Orange): Saturday
Rolfi Elivo Lopez (minister, Classis of Orange): Saturday
Heather Stoesz (elder, Classis of Minnesota): Thursday
Gildo Vieira (elder, Classis of Ontario): Saturday through Tuesday

Commission Review Reports

It was reported that the GSC's members page, in the section for today's meeting, includes a report of the 2022-2023 annual review of the Commission on Christian Discipleship and Education (CCDE). Members were asked to read it and be prepared to respond at the next meeting on June 13.

Charitable Gift Annuity Program

Jillisa Teitsma brought a request forward regarding the GSC's charitable gift annuity (CGA) program that has been in the wind-down phase since 2012, meaning that the GSC has not issued new CGA's since that time. The GSC currently holds a New Jersey Charitable Annuity Special Permit in the State of New Jersey that is subject to New Jersey regulations and annual filing requirements. The Barnabas Foundation has offered to take over the management and the related responsibilities for the GSC's New Jersey annuities which will alleviate the GSC from having to do annual reporting for this small group of annuities. Therefore, staff requests that the GSC adopt a resolution to surrender the special permit in the state of New Jersey.

GSC 23-47 Motion made, supported, and adopted:

To adopt the resolution captioned "GSC RESOLUTION RE: SURRENDER OF NEW JERSEY CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY SPECIAL PERMIT" found in Schedule GSC 23-47.

Check-ins

The moderator asked all attendees to introduce themselves in turn by stating their roll at the meeting and something about themselves.

GSC 23-48 Motion made, supported, and adopted to adjourn the June 8, 2023 meeting of the Committee at 1:17 p.m. following prayer by Dwayne Jackson.

Angela Worthley, Recorder

Schedule GSC 23-47

**GSC RESOLUTION RE: SURRENDER OF NEW JERSEY CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
SPECIAL PERMIT**

WHEREAS, the commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance has issued to General Synod Council of the Reformed Church in America, a New York not-for-profit corporation (“GSC”) a special permit (“CGA Permit”) to enter into charitable annuity agreements; and

WHEREAS, the GSC wishes to surrender the CGA Permit; and

WHEREAS, the GSC recognizes that if at any time after its surrender of the CGA permit it wishes to issue any charitable gift annuity in the State of New Jersey it must, as a condition of doing so, obtain another special permit to do so from the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance; and

WHEREAS, the GSC further recognizes that its surrender of the CGA Permit has no effect on the terms or conditions of any charitable gift annuity that heretofore has been issued by the GSC.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

That the GSC hereby surrenders the CGA Permit to the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance; and further

That the GSC hereby acknowledges that if at any time after its surrender of the CGA Permit it wishes to issue any charitable gift annuity in the State of New Jersey it must, as a condition of doing so, obtain another special permit to do so from the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance; and further

That the GSC hereby agrees that it will honor any charitable gift annuity that is presented to the GSC that was issued when the CGA Permit was in effect; and further

That the GSC authorizes its General Secretary (Eddy Alemán) and its Treasurer (Jillisa Teitsma), acting alone or together, to take any and all actions (including the negotiation, execution, and delivery of any documents or agreements) that are necessary or appropriate to implement any of the foregoing; and further

That any individual to whom a copy of these resolutions shall be delivered may rely upon them until such time as written notice of any change, amendment, or cancellation thereof shall have been received by such individual.