

SYNOD OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND HAWAII
COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY
Regular Meeting
Audio-Visual Conference via Zoom.com
Saturday, October 10, 2020

CONVENE The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Commission of Assembly Chair Joshua Yee.

ROLL Those present, absent (A), excused (E) and those attending via the internet or telephone (T) are indicated below:

LR-Los Ranchos, PA-Pacific, RS-Riverside, SB-Santa Barbara, SD-San Diego, SF-San Fernando, SG-San Gabriel; TE- Teaching Elder, RE-Ruling Elder; SMOD-Synod Moderator, SVMOD-Synod Vice Moderator, CoAC-CoA Chair/President, SC/SE-Stated Clerk/Synod Executive

Synod Officers

T TE Joshua Yee – CoAC – PA
T RE Pat Niles – SMOD – LR
T TE Suzanne Malloy – SVMOD – SB
T TE Mark Hong – SC/SE – LR
T RE Bill Hughes – Treasurer – SB

Commissioner Members

T RE Sue Currie – LR
T RE Frances Lin – SD
T TE N'Yisrela Watts-Afriyie – SG
T RE Melodee Kistner

Diversity Members

T RE Yvonne Harmon – SG
T RE Hagar Benitez – LR
T TE David Won – PA +

Presbytery Executives/Designees

T RE Sandy Thoits – SB *
T TE Juan Sarmiento – SF
T TE Michael Mudgett – SD
E TE Linda Culbertson – PA
T TE Lee Ireland – RS
T TE Wendy Tajima – SG +
T TE Forrest Claassen – LR

Ecclesiastical Chairs

T RE Martha Kadue – PA (P&R)
TE Wendy Tajima – SG +
(CoRN)
TE David Won – PA + (CoRN)

Also Present

T RE Fried Wilson – Synod Staff
T Joanne Yi-Bortfeld – Synod Staff
* designee
+ serving in dual capacities

Opening Prayer TE Joshua Yee opened the meeting with prayer. Since there were several new faces present, he invited each person to introduce themselves to the group.

REPORT OF THE
STATED CLERK Stated Clerk Mark Hong presented a written report.

Quorum The Stated Clerk reported that a quorum was present, and the Chair declared that a quorum was present: a quorum being that 10 of the 19 members are present, 5 presbyteries are represented, and there are four ruling elders and four teaching elders present.

Agenda It was VOTED to approve the agenda as presented.

DRAFT

Approval of Minutes It was VOTED approve the Commission of Assembly meeting minutes of June 6, 2020 as written.

For Information Synod Minutes

Mark Hong received a notice from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, dated on July 28, that the Synod minutes for 2018 and 2019 have been approved by the 224th General Assembly with no exceptions or comments.

Synod Permanent Judicial Commission

The SPJC has had no cases thus far and there is no case forecasted.

Corporate Officers for 2020

President/Commission of Assembly Chair	TE Joshua Lee
Stated Clerk and Corporate Secretary	TE Mark Hong
Treasurer	RE Bill Hughes
Moderator	RE Pat Niles
Vice-Moderator	TE Suzanne Malloy

Dates for 2020 Meetings

Commission of Assembly: December TBD (if needed)

Synod Assembly: December 5

The CoA agreed that if a meeting were needed, it would be held on December 12.

REPORT OF THE
SYNOD EXECUTIVE

Mark Hong presented a written report that is presented here

First of all, I welcome back Rev. Juan Sarmiento as he begins his service as the Executive Presbyter for San Fernando. I look forward to working with him along with other Presbytery leaders.

As Fried Wilson's service to the Synod is nearing an end, the Personnel Committee has been diligently working to find his successor. The committee has decided on the candidate and will make the recommendation later in this meeting.

The work of the Synod is ongoing, although most are accomplished from our homes. I along with the staff have been coming into the office as needed, but most of my work is done via Zoom and other means at home. I believe I have gone through hundreds of Zoom meetings since the Pandemic started with the folks in the Synod bounds as well as with the folks beyond.

I am a part of an executive group that is preparing for the gathering of Mid Council Leaders (both Presbyters and Stated Clerks), which will take place at the beginning of 2021. I am currently serving as the treasurer for the Association of Stated Clerks, which is a two-year service.

I would like to thank Michael Mudgett for leading the folks from San Diego to send in their appreciation for the Synod fund. I have received numerous cards and emails sharing their deep sense of gratitude to the Synod, reaffirming our sense of a connected church. We have completed distributing \$150,000 to each of our seven Presbyteries.

The PCCCI's effort to sell Rancho La Scherpa to Hope Refuge is almost at the finishing line. Hope Refuge is working to finalize the escrow at the end of the year.

The board's effort to manage the current situation at Zephyr Point continues. During its recent board meeting held on September 27-29, it voted to create a Special Task Force (2 Synod Execs and 3 others) to study financial outlook as well as reviewing its article to clarify the Synods' ownership of Zephyr Point.

PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE
REPORT

CoA Chair TE Joshua Yee asked RE Pat Niles to moderate the meeting so he could present the Personnel Committee Report. An edited version of the report is provided below.

Over the last couple of months, CoA Personnel Committee convened via Zoom on the following dates: June, 10; July 9, 18; August 1; September 5, 11, 19, to complete the following tasks: finalize the revised job description for Business Manager as we prepare for finding a replacement for Fried Wilson, who will be retiring at the end of 2020; discuss salary range for Business Manager; determine interview and hiring process of Business Manager; interview and hire a new Business Manager; hold annual reviews for current Synod staff (Mark Hong: Stated Clerk and Synod Executive; and Joanne Bortfeld: Bookkeeper); and discuss salaries for FY21.

Personnel Committee sent out a survey to the Presbytery Executives and the Stated Clerks of the Presbyteries without an Executive as a part of Mark Hong's annual review. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and supportive of him being in this role.

On September 19, we held annual reviews via Zoom with both Joanne and Mark. Both are pleased with their work this past year, especially

amidst the pandemic and needing to be creative and flexible during this time.

On September 25, the Personnel Committee met in person at the Synod office and held 2nd level interviews with our top two candidates for the Business Manager position. After extensive interviews with both candidates, the committee voted unanimously to offer the position to Paula Mann the position of Business Manager on September 28 via email. Paula's first day will begin on November 1, 2020 and will include training time with Fried over the next two months.

On September 25, the Personnel Committee made a recommendation (3 votes for and 1 vote against) to give a 2% COLA (cost of living adjustment) to our current staff members (Stated Clerk and Synod Executive, Bookkeeper, and REPL coordinator) excluding the position of Business Manager since this will be a new person in the role as of November 1.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Joshua Yee, Chair, Commission of Synod Assembly

The committee report recommended and the Commission approved a cost of living raise for the staff of 2%. This will appear in the proposed 2021 budget that will be discussed later in the meeting.

Joshua then resumed the chair as moderator.

REPORT OF THE
SYNOD
TREASURER

Treasurer RE Bill Hughes first presented the financial review for 2019 that was sent to the members with the other materials for this meeting. He reviewed the purpose of a financial review and the reviewer's findings.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to receive the 2019 Financial Review.

This document is made a part of these minutes as Attachment 1.

He then presented the financial report for the period ending September 30, 2020. Expenses are significantly below budget since groups across the denomination have not been meeting in person and the Synod Executive has not been traveling as much as had originally been forecasted. The financial report is included in Attachment 2.

The final presentation was the proposed 2021 budget. This budget was created based upon the assumption was that travel and expenses would be in line with those originally projected for 2020. However, it is not know at this time if the Covid-19 shut down will last

past January 2021. The budget also includes the change in staffing for 2021 and a 2% cost of living increase for the staff.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to recommend that the Synod Assembly approve the proposed 2021 budget.

The proposed budget is included as Attachment 3.

REPORT FROM THE
COMMITTEE ON
REPRESENTATION
AND NOMINATIONS

CoRN Co-chair TE Wendy Tajima presented a written report from the committee which included two action items, one recommendation, and one item for information.

Action Item #1

Per the Standing Rules of the Commission of Assembly, the CoA is responsible for electing members of the following committees, and in consultation with the members of the committee, appointing the chair. The Personnel Committee is comprised of Synod officers so is exempt from CoA election. The Committee on Representation nominates the following to be elected to these committees, effective January 1, 2021.

Partnering Grants

Class of 2023:

RE Jeannine Ford (LR)
TE Paul Knopf (RS)
TE Jeya So (SD)

Appoint TE Ken Baker (SF), Class of 2021, Chair

Restricted and Special Funds

Class of 2022:

1. TE Grace Park (PA)
2. TE Sam Roberts (RS)

Class of 2023:

1. RE Sallie Cuaresma (PA), 2nd term
2. RE Monica Colonnier (LR)
3. RE Wilson Kayange (RS)

RE Jane Atkins Vasquez (SG), Class of 2022, continues as Chair

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

Class of 2023:

1. RE Kathleen Julian (LR)
2. TE Ann Hayman (PA)

TE Darrel Meyers (SF), Class of 2021, continues as Chair

Racial-Ethnic Pastoral Leadership

Class of 2023:

1. RE Hagar Benitez (LR), 2nd term

RE Hagar Benitez (LR), Class of 2023, continues as Chair

Finance

Class of 2022:

1. CRE Bonnie Boe (SB)
2. RE Paul Nibarger (PA), 2nd term
3. TE Cheryl Raine (RS)

Class of 2023:

1. RE Maurice Caskey (SD), 2nd term
2. RE Moon-Ja Chung (PA)
3. TE Wendy Tajima (SG)

Appoint TE Wendy Tajima (SG), Class of 2023, Chair.

The moderator asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Hearing none the nominations were closed and discussion followed. It was VOTED to elect those nominated.

Action Item #2

To Allow additional nominees to be presented for election by the Synod Assembly in December.

It was VOTED to Approve this motion.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that RE Frances Lin (San Diego) be nominated by the Commission of Assembly to the Committee on Representation and Nominations, Class of 2023. CoRN members are nominated by CoA and elected by the Synod, so if nominated, Elder Lin will be included on the slate for the December Synod Assembly.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to nominate RE Frances Lin to the Committee on Representation and Nominations for election by the Synod Assembly.

For information

The Committee has done an excellent job of organizing members of task forces into classes, and reviewing the needs of the Synod and possibilities for continuing and new leadership. A list of current members and the slate of nominees as currently confirmed was provided.

**PARTNERING
GRANTS WORK
GROUP**

RE Sue Curry, member of the work group reported for the chair TE Linda Culbertson who had provided the following written report.

The Partnering Grants Work Group met on Wednesday, October 7, 2020. Members present were Linda Culbertson, David Won, Sue Currie, and Ken Baker. Excused was N'Yisrela Watts-Afriyie.

For Action:

The Partnering Grants Work Group recommends that the Commission of the Assembly approve a matching grant of \$24,000 to San Gabriel Presbytery, out of its allocation of Congregational Partnering Grants, to match first-year funding in support of a new worshipping community in the Rowland Heights community.

It was VOTED to approve the matching Partnering Grant to San Gabriel Presbytery for its new worshipping community in Rowland Heights. The full application is included as Attachment 4

ASYLUM
HOSPITALITY
GRANT
APPLICATION

The Presbyteries of the Pacific, Riverside, and San Gabriel request a \$30,000 grant from the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii for support of the Southern California Immigrant Accompaniment Ministry, a coordinated, multi-faceted program of church support and training, direct service and hospitality, and interfaith advocacy as we live out the Gospel by caring for people seeking refuge in the United States. Specifically, we seek support for this growing network of presbyteries, churches and individuals, and partner service organizations who organize to provide support to people fleeing violence and persecution in their home countries as they await immigration court appearances in Southern California.

The full application is included as a part of these minutes in Attachment 4.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to approve this grant in the amount of \$30,000 with the funds to be taken from the Synod's Unrestricted Reserve Account. Further information will be provided as to how the funds are to be paid to the three presbyteries.

GRANT REQUEST
FROM POP FOOD
BANK MINISTRIES

This grant request came from a coalition of churches in the Presbytery of the Pacific with food ministries. This coalition has provided food for around 250,000 people from five presbyteries within the boundaries of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii since the beginning of the pandemic. These coalition churches have invested heavily in meeting the need of their community by reallocating staff resources, redirecting reserve funds, refocusing budget, and reimagining vision of being the presence of God's people in their community.

The coalition is asking for \$75,000 from the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii to purchase a truck. The coalition has secured \$75,000 from the Presbytery of the Pacific, \$25,000 from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and have raised about \$10,000

through various fundraising events to support these food ministries. They are also seeking grants from other non-profit foundations.

More details including a three-year budget can be found in their application which is included as a part of these minutes in Attachment 4.

After much discussion, **a motion was made, seconded and passed to refer this request to refer this grant request to the Restricted Funds Work Group for their review and empower the group to make the final decision.**

As a part of their review, they are to ascertain that it has the support of at least one presbytery.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

The Synod Assembly has been scheduled for December 5 at Monte Vista Presbyterian Church in Newbury Park (Santa Barbara Presbytery). Given the COVID-19 pandemic and shut-down, it is unlikely that the assembly can be physically held there. **A motion was made, seconded and passed to hold the assembly via Zoom.com.**

The Executive/Stated Clerk will work with the pastor of the church to determine the church's role in the assembly.

REQUEST FROM MONTE VISTA GROVE HOMES

The Board of Monte Vista Grove has requested that the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii approve the following change to its Bylaws (Article VI – Trustees) as a related Entity of the Synod and confirm the election of Trustees.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to approve the change in the MGVH Bylaws and to confirm the election of Trustees as detailed in their report that is included as a part of these minutes as Attachment 5.

FAREWELL

TE Michael Mudgett announced that he will be retiring from his position with the San Diego Presbytery at the end of this year. Commission members wished him well in his new endeavors.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no new business, RE Joshua Yee ask RE Pat Niles to close the meeting with prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Mark Hong, Stated Clerk

Fried R. Wilson, Journal Clerk

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT 1

FINANCIAL REVIEW

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2019

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT 2

FANANCIAL REPORT AS OF SEPTEMBER 31, 2020

ATTACHMENT 3

PROPOSED SYNOD BUDGETS FOR 2021

ATTACHMENT 4

GRANT APPLICATIONS

**SAN GABRIEL PRESBYTERY AND
KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ROWLAND HEIGHTS**

**ASYLUM HOSPITALITY GRANT
SAN GABRIEL, RIVERSIDE AND PACIFIC PRESBYTERIES**

**FOOD MINISTRY COALITION OF
PRESBYERY OF THE PACIFIC**

ATTACHMENT 5

**MONTE VISTA GROVE HOME
BYLAW CHANGES AND 2021 BOARD MEMBERS**

DRAFT