

SYNOD OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND HAWAII
COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY
Regular Meeting
Audio-Visual Conference via Zoom.com
Saturday, June 3, 2023

CONVENE The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commission of Assembly Chair RE Janine Tanahuvia and opened with prayer.

ROLL Those present (P), absent (A), or excused (E) are indicated below. All in attendance were by video conference:

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

P RE Chair-CoA – Janine Tanahuvia (SF)
E TE SMOD – John Moser (SD)
P RE SVMOD –Yvonne Harmon (SG)
P RE Synod Treasurer - Susan Skoglund (RS)
P SC/SE – Mark Hong (LR)

Commissioner Members

P RE Sue Currie – LR
E RE Frances Lin – SD +
P TE N'Yisrela Watts-Afriyie – SG

BIPOC Representatives

P Jpetul J'ernantes (SD)
E Joseph Shin (LR)

P-Present A-Absent E-Excused

Presbytery Executives/Designees

E TE Jason Micheli – SB
P TE Juan Sarmiento – SF
E TE– Sean Chow – SD
P TE Linda Culbertson – PA
P TE Lee Ireland – RS
P TE Wendy Tajima – SG +
P TE Tom Cramer/RE Pat Niles* – LR

Ecclesiastical Chairs

P TE David Won PA - CoRN
P RE Sandy Thoits SB – Polity & Records

Also Present

P TE Heidi Worthen Gamble–Synod Staff
P Joanne Yi-Bortfeld–Synod Staff
P TE Narcissis Tucker Bishop–Synod Staff

P RE Monica Colonnier--Chair of Special and Restricted Funds Cmte

* designee

+ serving in dual capacities

OPENING PRAYER	RE Chair-CoA Janine Tanahuvia opened the meeting with prayer.																										
QUORUM	TE SC/SE Mark Hong 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.																										
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	It was VOTED to APPROVE the Commission of Assembly meeting minutes of March 4, 2023.																										
SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS	There were no Corresponding Members to receive for this meeting.																										
CORPORATE OFFICERS	<div>Corporate Officers for 2023</div> <table><tr><td>President and Commission of Assembly</td><td>RE Janine Tanahuvia</td></tr><tr><td>Chair Vice President and Moderator</td><td>TE John Moser</td></tr><tr><td>Vice Moderator</td><td>RE Yvonne Harmon</td></tr><tr><td>Stated Clerk and Corporate Secretary</td><td>TE Mark Hong</td></tr><tr><td>Treasurer</td><td>RE Susan Skoglund</td></tr></table> <div>Dates for 2023 CoA Meetings: October 7 and December 9 (if necessary)</div> <div>Permanent Judicial Commission Roster</div> <p>The Stated Clerk is required by the Book of Order at D-5.0206b reports the names of the following members of the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission whose terms have expired in the last six years.</p> <table><tr><th>Class of 2021</th><th>Class of 2019</th><th>Class of 2017</th></tr><tr><td>TE Winston Presnall</td><td>TE Shelby Larson</td><td>TE Marie Castellano</td></tr><tr><td>TE Robert Wendel</td><td>RE Peter Lee</td><td>TE Mickie Choi</td></tr><tr><td>RE Janice Takeda</td><td>RE Izar Martinez</td><td>TE Peter Hintzoglou</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>RE Pat Niles</td><td></td></tr></table>		President and Commission of Assembly	RE Janine Tanahuvia	Chair Vice President and Moderator	TE John Moser	Vice Moderator	RE Yvonne Harmon	Stated Clerk and Corporate Secretary	TE Mark Hong	Treasurer	RE Susan Skoglund	Class of 2021	Class of 2019	Class of 2017	TE Winston Presnall	TE Shelby Larson	TE Marie Castellano	TE Robert Wendel	RE Peter Lee	TE Mickie Choi	RE Janice Takeda	RE Izar Martinez	TE Peter Hintzoglou		RE Pat Niles	
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REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK	<p>The PJC decided to move forward with the case from First Presbyterian Church of Upland in Riverside Presbytery. Date to be determined.</p> <p>The Memorial Service for Kay Gustafson will take place at 11am on Saturday June 10, 2023 at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach. Kay's attorney services were utilized by all of the presbyteries in the Synod for decades and we are all trying to find someone like Kay.</p> <p>We are currently named as defendants in three sexual misconduct cases. Bob Brockman and his firm, BQB LLC, have been retained to represent us. He worked on the case when the Synod went to court for Rancho La Sherpa. Thanks to Sue Currie for being the case carrier for the Synod to manage the details of this case.</p>																										

REPORT OF
THE SYNOD
TREASURER

RE Susan Skoglund said that there is not too much to report because we only have first quarter statements for 2023 and that is not enough information to do any significant analysis or draw conclusions from. There were however no losses of investments in the first quarter. There were gains of \$95,000 from the Presbyterian Foundation and \$400,000 from New Covenant and other investment funds. Because our expenses are lower there were no withdrawals needed from the Wilshire Property Funds; July is now anticipated drawdown date. We changed the storage facility so there were a few increased costs to the budget for moving records to the new facility in Redondo Beach from its prior location in Arleta, and there is a slight increase in bank fees because we are now making payments by ACH transfer.

REPORT OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
REPRESENTATION
AND
NOMINATION
(CoRN)

TE David Won reported that CoRN is working on the slate of nominations for 2024.

Motion from the committee:

To review the current committee structures to recommend a more efficient way of operation. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

The rationale from the committee is that it is hard to get committee members for the slate and to get quorums for the meetings. It's time for CoA to review the numbers of each committee or commission and evaluate whether or not it's efficient.

There was much discussion. TE Linda Culbertson shared that presbyteries are downsizing their numbers too and that we need to find ways to simplify our work.

SC/SE Mark Hong recommended the CoA create a task force to study and implement this.

It was moved and seconded to create a task force to study a new Synod structure and to review the structure of the Synod and its committees, appointed by Madam Chair of CoA. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

REPORT OF
THE
PARTNERING
GRANTS
COMMITTEE

TE Paul Knopf, chair, gave the report. Since the last CoA meeting, the Partnering Grants Committee met once to review partnering grant proposals and make the following recommendations to the Commission of Assembly:

Motion from the committee:

To approve funding the partnering grant request from Santa Barbara Presbytery (Stonebridge Community Church) at \$25,000. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

Note: The application asks for \$50,000, however there is only \$25,000 in the Santa Barbara Partnering Grants account. This depletes the Santa Barbara account.

Motion from the committee:

To approve funding the partnering grant requests from Riverside Presbytery at \$178,866.33 as follows:

Beaumont-\$12,000, El Buen Pastor-\$20,000, Hemet-\$10,000, Ridgecrest-\$20,226, San Bernardino-\$20,525. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

Note: TE Lee Ireland abstained from the vote. This depletes the Riverside account.

REPORT OF
THE
PARTNERING
GRANTS
COMMITTEE
(CONT'D)

Motion from the committee:

Disburse remaining partnering grant funds allocated to each presbytery to that presbytery for use in accordance with the guidelines of the partnering grant program with annual reporting to the CoA required and dismiss the Synod Partnering Grants Committee with thanks. Motion was NOT APPROVED.

Background and discussion: A subcommittee of the Partnering Grants committee began working to update the Synod Partnering Grant Protocols. It appeared to the sub-committee that these funds were already approved for each presbytery and the Partnering Grants Committee created an extra layer of bureaucracy. The sub-committee recommended the funds be disbursed, the committee concurred. In order to advance our connectionalism, the use of these funds should be reported back to the Commission of Assembly, but without the intermediate Partnering Grant Committee.

Much discussion ensued. TE N'Yisrela Watts-Afriye said that she has been on this committee for a long time and that the committee has worked diligently on trying to award funds appropriately. TE Wendy Tajima pointed out there's a \$3.8 million restricted fund with the Synod called the Church Development Fund which determines its \$600-700,000 in disbursements (dividends) from the investment fund with specific guidelines. Was there a plan for who would be managing and stewarding the remaining \$3.8 million for development?

TE Paul reported that he and the committee did not know there was an unallocated principal of \$3.8 million on that fund.

RE Sue Currie was concerned with the funds getting used for the purposes intended, which would be the administration of the presbytery. For example, salaries for presbytery leaders would not qualify. What plan was there in place for how to describe to the presbyteries what these funds are available for?

TE Linda shared this was the old Church Development Fund set up decades ago. Initially when the Partnership Grant came up in Synod Council, it was agreed to take a portion of the dividend from that to create the Partnership Grants Committee. That is the history. It is important that the Synod engage with presbyteries in the development of our congregations around these grants. We don't need to let go of the Synod's role of engaging with presbyteries.

TE Wendy said that the Synod needs to do due diligence to make sure these funds are used in accordance with the guidelines of how these funds are to be used. The Synod is the trustee of these assets and we would need to ensure there is someone doing the initial vetting of the funds' guidelines.

After the vote, TE Paul said that the Partnering Grants committee would resume its work and submit an updated protocol to present for the next CoA with how the funds are adjudicated as well as have an application form and make recommendation to the next CoA.

REPORT FROM
THE SPECIAL
AND
RESTRICTED
FUNDS
COMMITTEE

TE Monica Colonnier gave the report. The committee received a letter from the National Black Presbyterian Caucus-Southern California asking for funds for 4 members to attend a conference 6/14-27, 2023 in Charleston, South Carolina.

Motion from the committee:

To recommend that the Commission of Assembly approve a request to distribute \$6,000 from Synod unrestricted funds and/or the unrestricted reserve, as determined by the Commission of Assembly, to the Southern California Chapter of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus to enable 4 of its members to participate in the national conference for the National Black Presbyterian Caucus in Charleston, South Carolina on June 14-17, 2023. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

MOTION FROM
STATED CLERK
AND SYNOD
EXECUTIVE TE
MARK HONG

SC/SE TE Mark pointed out an additional letter of request in the packet from the National Black Presbyterian Caucus-Southern California (NBPC/SC) to transfer \$10,236.77 from the BAC account to NBPC/SC, which would close out the account. The BAC fund is the Black Advisory Committee of the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii that changed its name to the National Black Presbyterian Caucus-Southern California Chapter in 2004-2005. BAC/NBPS/SC is one of several racial ethnic constituency groups of the Synod.

This account is not under the purview of the Special and Restricted Funds Committee but rather under the purview of the CoA.

It was moved and seconded to return \$10,236.77 in the BAC account at the Synod to NBPC/SC. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

Synod staff will research with the Foundation to determine if this is do-able. TE David Won pointed out that when the constituency groups were let go of between the years of 2005-2008 at the Synod there was a transfer of all monies. Many of the groups created their own non-profits and transferred all of the monies they could to to the non-profits that were created. What can be done to help these groups to receive their money?

Bookkeeper Joanne Bortfeld said the only other monies that are left is a small amount for the former Synod National American Committee (SNAC) and the BAC account.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY
2023

The CoA needs to decide whether or not the Synod Assembly will meet in person or by zoom for the Synod Assembly meeting December 2, 2023, since we are now able to meet in person. Much discussion ensued, especially around the challenges of hybrid meetings.

A motion was made for the Synod Assembly meeting to be held via zoom for its December 2, 2023 meeting. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion.

REPORT OF THE
SYNOD EXECUTIVE

SC/SE TE Mark Hong shared pictures of the Synod hosting several staff from the Presbyterian Missions Agency, including its President and Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Diane Givens-Moffett. The listening session was held on May 23 was attended by the staff and the Presbytery leaders. The visitors were also able to visit various missional sites on May 22 arranged by TE Heidi Worthen Gamble, while four were able to join Sunday worship at various locations by sharing their messages. Diane Givens-Moffett spoke during the Stated Meeting of the Pacific.

Some of you may be aware that a Commission has been created by the last General Assembly to unify the PMA and the OGA. Our very own RE Francis Lin is serving as a member of the Commission.

Many changes are taking place in our Louisville office. Our top elected officer of the denomination, J. Herbert Nelson, who has served as the Stated Clerk for the last seven years, is stepping down as of June 30, 2023. An Interim will be appointed until the General Assembly in 2024, which will elect his successor.

I was invited by the Board of Pension for a pre-consultation as it is trying to introduce different ways we provide benefits to the church workers. I attended a meeting in Philadelphia on April 12 at the BOP Center along with three former and current Co-Moderators for a round of constructive dialog. Many leaders from our region, including Susan Skoglund attended a meeting in Denver, which the BOP labeled as "A Season of Rebuilding".

Riverside Presbytery's EP Search Committee has concluded its work and will be presenting the candidate during its Stated Meeting on June 17.

The schedule for my planned Sabbatical has not been set yet. My desire to receive training in Korea during summer has proven to be a challenge and I am hoping to arrange something soon.

MEETING
ADJOURNMENT
AND CLOSING
PRAYER

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion. Meeting closed in prayer by TE Juan Sarmiento.

COA OFFICERS
EMAIL VOTE:
SYNOD
DONATION TO
RIVERSIDE
PRESBYTERY

On April 1, 2023 the Officers of the Synod moved that the Synod donate \$10,000 to the Presbytery of Riverside to aid in its effort with the relief work for the mountain congregations and their community that have been affected by the recent snow storms. The fund will come out of our Church Development Fund. **It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion by email.**

COA OFFICERS
EMAIL VOTE:
CHANGE
STORAGE
LOCATION

On May 13, 2023 the Officers of the Synod moved to relocate the storage of Synod records from the current location in Arleta to Redondo Beach. **It was VOTED to APPROVE the motion by email.**

Rationale: As we begin the arduous and perhaps lengthy process of 3 litigations, the attorneys may require us to provide past records relating to the cases. Currently, the location is far from where our Business Manager is located and relocating the storage will make the work much easier than to commute to the current location. The monthly cost of the new storage will be \$165, which is comparable to the current one and I understand the moving will cost us less than \$1,000. The move can take place quickly since we are on a month-to-month basis with the current storage.