

**THE PRESBYTERY OF SCIOTO VALLEY
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

Overbrook Presbyterian Church
4131 N High St, Columbus, OH 43214
April 9, 2018

**GOD CALLS US THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT TO CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER TO
PLANT,
GROW AND NURTURE VITAL, FAITHFUL COMMUNITIES OF CHRIST FOR SERVICE
AND MINISTRY. IN RESPONSE, WE BUILD PARTNERSHIPS,
COMMUNICATE WITH AND SUPPORT CONGREGATIONS, LEADERS, AND
INDIVIDUALS,
AND EMBODY CHRIST'S TRANSFORMING LOVE IN THE WORLD.**

CALLED MEETING

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) held a Special Called Meeting at Overbrook Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Ohio, on Monday, April 9, 2018, for the purpose of considering an Overture to the 223rd General Assembly #05-03 from the Presbytery of Cincinnati. (See attachment 1)

A. Convening the Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by moderator Rev. Charlsie Ramsey and opened with prayer.

B. Certification of the Call for the Meeting

The stated clerk, Rev. Sally Robinson, recognized that the call for the meeting, which came from the Presbytery Coordinating Team, a group of six Ministers of Word and Sacrament and four Ruling Elders, met Presbytery bylaw and Book of Order requirements.

C. Declaration of a Quorum and the Formation of the Roll

The stated clerk, Rev. Sally Robinson, recognized the presence of a quorum. ["The presbytery may set its own quorum, but it shall not be fewer than three teaching elders who are members of the presbytery and three ruling elder commissioners from three different congregations." (G-3.0304)] She moved that the roll be as established by the written sign-in sheets. The motion was approved. (see Attachment 2)

D. Seating of Corresponding Members

The Presbytery voted to seat Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman, Presbytery of Cincinnati and a Commissioner to the Synod of the Covenant, Rev. Aaron Meadows, Eastminster Presbytery and Vice-Moderator of the Synod of the Covenant.

E. Report of the Bills and Overtures Committee

Sally Robinson stated that the Bills and Overtures Committee attests that Overture 05-03, *On Appointing an Administrative Commission for the Synod of the Covenant*, has been received by the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The

Presbytery was shown the Overture in the Office of the General Assembly PC-Biz website.

It was moved by Rev. Leland Platt, Synod of the Covenant commissioner from Scioto Valley Presbytery, and seconded, that the Presbytery concur with the overture. Debate followed. During debate, Ruling Elder Ginny Shanda, a former commissioner to the Synod of the Covenant from Scioto Valley, was given voice by presbytery vote.

In a vote by counted ballots, the motion was approved and the Presbytery concurs with the overture, by a vote of 54-3.

F. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting was adjourned with prayer by the moderator at 2:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally O. Robinson
Stated Clerk

Attachment 1

ON APPOINTING AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE SYNOD OF THE COVENANT

The Presbytery of Cincinnati overtures the 223rd General Assembly (2018) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to establish an Administrative Commission to address disorder in the Synod of the Covenant, as provided in G-3.0109b (5) of the Book of Order and Standing Rule K.2. of the Manual of the he General Assembly. The Commission, which shall consist of not fewer than seven (7) persons appointed by the Moderator (or Co-Moderators), shall:

- I. Conduct Special Administrative Review (G-3.0108b; Standing Rule K.2.) for the purpose of inquiring into and settling the following allegations of disorder:
 - a. Failure to determine a satisfactory method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-I .0403 and G-3.0103 in proposed amendments to the by-laws of the Synod, or adequately to consult with the presbyteries and racial-ethnic caucuses of the Synod in the preparation of said by-laws;
 - b. Failure to adequately support the ministry and mission of its presbyteries as they seek to support the witness of congregations (G-3.0401);
 - c. Failure to adequately facilitate communication with and among its presbyteries (G-3.0401a);
 - d. Failure to adequately exercise pastoral care among its presbyteries in order that the synod may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments (G-3.0401 b);
 - e. Conflict between the Synod Executive and the Racial-Ethnic Caucuses of the Synod, and with the Cabinet on Ethnic Church Affairs of the Synod;
 - f. Loss of trust and mutuality between the Synod and its constituent presbyteries;
 - g. Loss of trust and mutuality between the Synod Executive and multiple presbyteries of the Synod;
 - h. Loss of trust and mutuality between the Synod Executive and the elected and/or administrative leadership of multiple presbyteries of the Synod.
2. In its exercise of Special Administrative Review, and in consultation with the Personnel Services Committee of the Synod, conduct a comprehensive performance review of the Synod Executive, including feedback from Commissioners, Synod Staff, Racial-Ethnic Caucuses, Presbyteries, Presbytery Executives, and others as it may determine helpful to its task; and to direct the Synod regarding the remediation of performance deficiencies, which may include recommendation to terminate employment if it deems the mission of the Synod imperatively demands it.
3. Have full authority to enforce the findings and recommendations of its Special Administrative Review, granting fair notice and an opportunity to be heard to all

parties. The process for termination of employment, if recommended, shall conform to the Personnel Policies of the Synod in effect at the time the request for Special Administrative Review was initially filed.

4. Refer to judicial process any irregularities or offenses it may discover in the conduct of its review that cannot be remedied through administrative review.

RATIONALE

The Synod of the Covenant is experiencing serious conflict and dysfunction. At its August 2017 Synod Assembly, amendments to the Synod By-Laws were introduced which would have the effect of disempowering and marginalizing the racial-ethnic caucuses of the Synod from the decision-making processes of the Synod. These by-laws were constructed and presented with little, if any, consultation with the persons directly affected, and with no consultation with the presbyteries of the Synod. The given rationale was that "When a synod meets, it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries" (G-3.0401), disregarding the Synod's obligation stated in the very same paragraph, "[to] determine a plan for the election of commissioners to the synod, *as well as the method to fulfill the principles and participation and representation found in F-I. 0403 and G-3.0103; both plans shall be subject to approval by a majority of the presbyteries in the synod*" (emphasis added). The proposed bylaws have never been distributed to the presbyteries, nor are they available on the Synod website. The process seems set up to exclude the very voices synods are charged to protect. The proposed by-laws remove racial-ethnic voices from the council commissioned to make decisions for the body between Assemblies, on which persons elected by the Synod (as opposed to the presbyteries) may legally serve (see Request 90-1, Minutes, 1990, Part I, p. 254).

The process for the proposed amendments to the by-laws reinforces perceptions that they are a response to ongoing conflict between the Synod Executive and the racial-ethnic caucuses of the Synod which comprise the Cabinet for Ethnic Church Affairs (CECA). In defending the proposed by-laws at the August 2017 meeting, the Synod Executive allegedly accused those registering objections as being "greedy for power."

In addition, the qualities of trust and mutuality in the relationships between the presbyteries and the Synod, and presbytery leaders and the Synod Executive, have strained to the point of breaking. The Presbytery of Mackinac was recently blindsided by a request for a called meeting of the Synod to appoint an administrative commission to take original jurisdiction of the presbytery without any prior consultation or inquiry. Only threatened ecclesiastical suits alleging a violation of due process prompted the presentation of a substitute motion limiting the Commission's powers to inquiry only. No rationale, other than the receipt of four anonymous letters — the contents of which were withheld — were presented for the motion in the call.

Several presbyteries, including Maumee Valley, Scioto Valley, and Detroit have withdrawn some or all of their participation in the life of the Synod. Serious conflicts exist between several presbytery executives and the Synod Executive. Recently all five female presbytery executives refused to participate in an executive forum because of conflicts or concerns involving the synod executive.

There are serious, chronic problems in the dissemination of information from the synod to presbyteries and their leaders. Some presbytery executives have been told directly that they are not permitted at Synod Assemblies. Information regarding the timing and location of upcoming Assemblies, as well as agendas and supporting documents, are neither sent to the executives nor posted on the synod website.

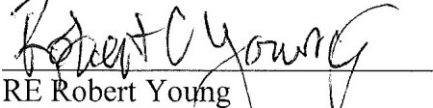
At the November 2017 meeting of the Synod, the Personnel Services Committee indicated they had conducted a job performance review of the Synod Executive and a pay raise was being recommended to the Synod on the basis of that review. Email correspondence documentation indicates that the Personnel Services Committee did not meet in 2017, in direct contrast to their report filed in November 2017.

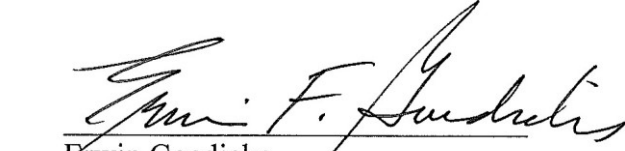
In November 2017, a question was publicly posed to the Chair of the Personnel Services Committee during a Synod meeting, inquiring if that committee would be willing to meet with the presbytery executives of the Synod of the Covenant. A direct response was deferred. The question was presented on additional occasions in email communication subsequent to the November 2017 Synod meeting, and the response from a Synod officer indicated it was inappropriate to make such a request. In addition, in December 2017, a Presbytery Executive requested a meeting between Presbytery Executives and the Synod Executive, and that direct invitation was refused by the Synod Executive.

Due to the severity of the issues involved, we believe time is of the essence in conducting this review.

Adopted by the Presbytery of Cincinnati at its stated meeting held in at Madeira Silverwood Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, on Saturday, February 24, 2018.

Attest:


RE Robert Young
Moderator


Erwin Goedicke
Stated Clerk

Attachment 2

Athens, First PC	Rob Martin	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Bremen, Bethel PC	Larry Hoffmann	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Bremen, Bethel PC	Judy Turner	Commissioner
Cincinnati, Bethel Murdoch	Deborah Uchtman	Minister of Word and Sacrament/Corresponding Mem.
Circleville PC	Joel Esala	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Broad Street PC	Betty Lou Stull	Commissioner
Columbus, Covenant PC	Tracy Keenan	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Covenant PC	Susan Imel	Commission for Nurture and Outreach
Columbus, Covenant PC	Katie Kinnison	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Glenn Echo PC	Lee Platt	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Grace Community PC	Mathias Akih	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Highlands PC	Kathy Isern	Commissioner
Columbus, Indianola PC	Skip Jackson	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Indianola PC	Edwin Kinschner	Commissioner
Columbus, Indianola PC	Susan Warrenner Smith	Minister of Word and Sacrament HR
Columbus, Overbrook	Mary Gause	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Overbrook PC	Bill Gause	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Overbrook PC	Jan Williams	Commissioner
Columbus, Overbrook PC	Kristina Johnston	Commissioner
Columbus, Ramseyer PC	Justice Ofosuhene	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, St. Andrew PC	Ginny Shanda	Visitor
Columbus, St. Andrew PC	Fred Vaughan	Commissioner
Columbus, St. Andrew PC	Roger Au	Minister of Word and Sacrament HR/Transitional
Columbus, Westminster PC	Doug Browne	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Columbus, Westminster PC	Jim Benney	Commissioner
Delaware, First PC	Carol Evans	Commissioner
Delaware, Old Stone PC	Don Hilkerbaumer	Minister of Word and Sacrament HR/Transitional
Delaware, West Berlin PC	Robert Gustafson	Commissioned Ruling Elder
Dublin PC	Karen Zent	Commissioner
Dublin PC	Jennifer Eastman	
Dublin PC	Hinkle	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Gahanna, Mifflin PC	Marquell Segelken	Commission for Church Professionals
Grandview Heights, Boulevard	Preston Shealy	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Hilliard PC	Bob Armstrong	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Logan, First PC	Richard Wallar	Commissioner
Logan, First PC	Liz Wagner	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Marysville, First PC	Jeff Schooley	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Marysville, First PC	Dick Mickley	Commissioned Ruling Elder
Marysville, First PC	MaryAnn Edwards	Commissioner
Newark, Hanover PC	Sarah Juist	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Newark, Second PC	Todd Tracy	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Ohio Council of Churches	Rebecca Tollefson	Minister of Word and Sacrament

Ostrander PC Pataskala, Outville PC	Tom Martin L. Kae Merold	Minister of Word and Sacrament Commissioned Ruling Elder
Pickerington, Prince of Peace PC Pickerington, Prince of Peace PC Presbytery of Scioto Valley	Mark Johnson Desiree Youngblood Sally Robinson	Commissioner Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament HR/Stated Clerk
Registered Excuses		
Sunbury, Condit PC Synod of Covenant/Eastminster Presbytery	Annie Melick Aaron Meadows	Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament/Corresponding Mem.
Washington CH, First PC Washington CH, First PC Westerville, First PC Westerville, First PC	James Gray Marshall Dick Glass Janet Withers Mark Gauen	Minister of Word and Sacrament Coordinating Team Chair Commissioner Minister of Word and Sacrament
Wortington PC Wortington PC Wortington PC Wortington PC	Julia Wharff Piermont Betsy Rice Kathy Mead Tom Rice	Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament Commissioner Minister of Word and Sacrament
	Ginny Browne James Browne Bill Leety Myong Sun Kim Debbie Lewicki Cynthia Burse Charlotte O'Neil Charlsie Ramsey Michael Woods	Visitor Visitor - Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament HR Minister of Word and Sacrament -MAL Minister of Word and Sacrament HR Minister of Word and Sacrament - MAL Minister of Word and Sacrament - Validated Ministry Minister of Word and Sacrament HR/Presbytery Moderator Minister of Word and Sacrament - Validated Ministry
Registered Excuses		
Columbus, Broad Street PC Columbus, Broad Street PC Columbus, Korean PC Plain City PC London, First	Amy Miracle Ann Palmerton Joon Won Lee Alice Phillips Marsha Sternad	Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament Minister of Word and Sacrament Commissioned Ruling Elder