

Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency
Minutes
Online
August 16, 2024

Gathering

The Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“the Unification Commission”) held their twenty first meeting online using Zoom, an online audio and web conferencing platform. The public was able to watch in real-time (and view a recording) via Vimeo, a video sharing platform, on the website of the Office of the General Assembly. Materials, including the agenda and minutes, were available to the public via EQUIP, a learning management system administered by the Officer of the General Assembly. This was a called meeting of the Unification Commission.

Roll

The roll was formed at 5:40 p.m. on Friday, August 16, 2024:

Commissioners (as appointed by the Co-Moderators of the 225th General Assembly (2022); criteria and demographics included for the record):

Felipe N. Martínez, Co-Moderator, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Ohio Valley;
Commissioner, 225th General Assembly (2022)

Cristi Scott Ligon, Co-Moderator, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee;
Commissioner, 225th General Assembly (2022)

Debra Avery, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Great Rivers; Moving Forward
Implementation Special Committee

Carson Brown, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of Peace River; Young Adult Advisory
Delegate, 225th General Assembly (2022)

Dee Cooper, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Denver; Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

Dave Davis, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of the Coastlands; Committee on the Office of
the General Assembly

Frances Lin, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Riverside; At-Large [Ordained Aug. 11, 2023]

Scott Lumsden, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Seattle; Per Capita and Financial
Sustainability Special Committee

Emily Martin, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of North Central California; Young Adult
Advisory Delegate, 225th General Assembly (2022)

José Rosa-Rivera, Ruling Elder, Presbiterio de San Juan; Per Capita and Financial
Sustainability Special Committee

Bill Teng, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Peace River; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),
A Corporation Board

Kris Thompson, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of National Capital; At-Large

Staff:

Barry Creech, Deputy Executive Director for Administration, Presbyterian Mission Agency

Kathleen Henrion, communications specialist

Aimara Liste, interpreter

Kathy Lueckert, President, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

Kerry Rice, Deputy Stated Clerk, Office of the General Assembly

Guests:

Raymond Bonwell, recorder

Mike Ferguson, editor, PC(USA) News

Opening Prayer
and Devotion

Cristi Scott Ligon, co-moderator of the Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“Unification Commission”), called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. on August 16, 2024, with an opening prayer.

It was noted there were issues with the simultaneous live stream, and that the meeting was being recorded to follow the procedure to be posted on Vimeo. [Recorder’s Note: Raymond Bonwell, recorder, and Mike Ferguson, editor, PC(USA) News, were admitted to the meeting as guests.]

Land
Acknowledgment

Cristi Scott Ligon continued with the land acknowledgement from Grace Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa, Ala. The First People’s Acknowledgment was read.

Agenda

The abbreviated agenda was approved as presented. [Recorder’s Note: minutes were typically approved only at stated meetings, and not at called meetings like today.]

Covenant

Cristi Scott Ligon, as co-moderator, read the covenant as a reminder of how the Unification Commission had agreed to engage this responsibility of this commission.

Key Unifying
Principles

Cristi Scott Ligon continued by reminding the Unification Commission of their key unifying principles: Relational; Streamlined; Nimble; Justice Focused; and, Vision Driven.

Dissolution of
COGA and PMAB

Cristi Scott Ligon brought forth the following motion:

In accordance with its mandate from the 225th General Assembly (2022), the Unification Commission shall dissolve the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB), and assume all governance functions for both bodies on December 31, 2024, with gratitude for the decades of service both bodies have given to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Upon second, the motion was discussed. The Governance Work Group shared it was anticipated to make recommendations to the September and October 2024 stated meetings of the Unification Commission, to include how advocacy and advisory groups and other boards were knitted together through the COGA and PMAB structures. The timing of today’s actions was informed by upcoming meetings of COGA and PMAB, to provide an opportunity to celebrate the work that has been done.

Upon recognition, Dave Davis, commissioner and representative of COGA (and current moderator), noted the proactive communication from Cristi Scott Ligon and Felipe Martínez regarding this decision, and spoke in favor of the motion. This gratitude and support was echoed by Dee Cooper, commissioner and representative of PMAB.

There was no further discussion. The Unification Commission passed the motion as presented, and without objection.

Comments for the
Good of the Body,
Closing Prayer,
and Adjournment

There were no further comments from commissioners or staff. The next stated meeting remained September 14, 2024, online. Without objection and by common consent, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m. with a closing prayer, which included thanksgiving for the good work of COGA and PMAB.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Raymond Bonwell
Recorder