

Unification Commission
September 17, 2023
3:00 p.m. Eastern / 2:00 p.m. Central / Noon Pacific

DRAFT AGENDA

3:00 p.m.	Call to Order	Felipe Martínez Cristi Scott Ligon
	Opening Prayer	Carson Brown
	Land Acknowledgement	Bill Teng
	Approve the agenda	Felipe Martínez Cristi Scott Ligon
	Approve the August 20, 2023, meeting minutes	
	Read Covenant	Felipe Martínez Cristi Scott Ligon
	Co-Moderators Report	Felipe Martínez Cristi Scott Ligon
3:15 p.m.	Report from Work Groups:	
	a. Consultations – Summary of listening sessions to date	Dee Cooper
	b. Financial	Scott Lumsden
	c. Governance	Debra Avery
	b. Common Mission	Bill Teng
3:45	Plans for October meeting – meeting plan and plenaries	
4:00	Working Backwards from July 1, 2025 – First reading	Kathy Lueckert
4:15	Closed session	
5:00 p.m.	Closing Prayer and adjournment	

Papers For Information:

- 226th General Assembly (2024) Docket
- Stated Clerk Position Description
- GANC Language for Nominations

Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency

Minutes **Draft v2**

Online

August 20, 2023

Gathering

The Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“the Unification Commission”) held their ninth 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.

Roll

The roll was formed:

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

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, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of San Diego; At-Large

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

Ex-Officio:

Ruth Faith Santana-Grace, Co-Moderator, 225th General Assembly (2022)

Shavon Starling-Louis, Co-Moderator, 225th General Assembly (2022)

Staff and Support:

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

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

Donald Reasoner, interpreter

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

Alejandra Sherman, Executive Assistant to the President, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation

Unification Commission, **v2 Draft** Minutes, August 20, 2023, Page 2 of 5

Guests:

Bronwen Boswell, Acting Stated Clerk, Office of the General Assembly
valerie izumi, Assistant Stated Clerk and Manager for General Assembly Nominations,
Office of the General Assembly [Recorder's Note: name represented with lower case]

Excused:

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

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 3:00 p.m. ET. Ruth Faith Santana Grace led the opening prayer.

Land
Acknowledgment

José Rosa-Rivera led the land acknowledgment, which was informed by the Synod of Boriquen (Puerto Rico). The land acknowledgment recognized the origins of the peoples of Puerto Rico, including the Native American Taino, West Eurasia, and Africa. The acknowledgement concluded with the Lord's Prayer in Taino. Upon request of Cristi Scott Ligon, the prayer was entered into the minutes (Attachment 1).

Agenda

By common consent, the Unification Commission adopted the agenda. Materials, including the agenda and minutes, were available to the public via EQUIP, a learning management system administered by the Office of the General Assembly.

Minutes

Upon motion and second, and without objection, the Minutes of the July 22, 2023, meeting were approved.

Covenant

Cristi Scott Ligon, as co-moderator, read the covenant as a reminder of what the Unification Commission had adopted.

Co-Moderator
Report

Cristi Scott Ligon prefaced the co-moderator report noting the brevity. Since the July 22, 2023, meeting, the recent work including attending consultations, and preparing for the October 2023 in-person meeting of the Unification Commission.

Executive Session

Cristi Scott Ligon noted the approved agenda has an executive session at the start of the meeting, instead of the standard placement at the end of the meeting, to accommodate the schedule of the guests. The process for the executive (closed) session would be to keep the public-facing stream (and recording) going, while the Commission met in executive (closed) session. Cristi Scott Ligon noted the Commission would return to the livestream (and recording) to report any action taken.

Upon motion, second, and an opportunity for discussion, the Unification Commission entered executive session to address personnel and property matters. Staff and Guests were invited to participate in the executive session. (Recorder's Note: Directors and Ex-Officio members have privilege to participate in the executive session, and do not need an express invitation.)

Rising from
Executive Session

The Unification Commission voted to rise from executive session at 4:10 p.m.

Unification Commission, v2 Draft Minutes, August 20, 2023, Page 3 of 5

Cristi Scott Ligon reported during executive session the Unification Commission authorized a small group to provide feedback to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, and the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee. valerie izumi was excused from the meeting.

Unification
Timeline

Cristi Scott Ligon welcomed Kathy Lueckert, President, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, to address the timeline, a topic previously at the June 2023 meeting, with a target of January 1, 2026, for unification. It was noted January 1, 2026, was in the middle of the planning process for the 227th General Assembly (2026). A timeline for a unification date of July 1, 2025, was discussed. [Recorder’s Note: The Organization for Mission is the manual of administrative operations for the General Assembly, as part of the General Assembly Manual and amended by the 225th General Assembly (2022), and is publicly available on the denominational website at pcusa.org.]

Date [Theme]	Objectives
2023 [Design]	Key Unified 2025 Budget Priorities; Consultations; Governance Exploration; Financial Analysis.
2024 [Design]	Interim report to 226th GA (2024); 2025 Budget; Develop Governance Model, including committee structures; Culture Analysis; Supporting systems work.
2025 [Design]	2026 Budget; Develop interim governance framework; Begin work on new Organization for Mission; Supporting systems work; Staffing Design.
2025 [Implement]	Unify PMA/OGA on July 1, 2025; 2027 Budget; Implement interim governance framework; Finalize new Organization for Mission.
2026 [Align]	Unified budget and staffing rationale for new agency; Final Organization for Mission for approval by 227th GA (2026); 227th GA (2026) elects new governing body.

Consultations were discussed, and all consultations directed by the General Assembly should be completed by the first quarter 2024. It was noted additional rounds of consultations might be engaged, should there be an appropriate time to schedule. The Common Mission, the Finance, and the Governance Work Groups were asked to provide feedback on the timeline within the week. Governance noted their report, as part of the agenda for this meeting, would include favorable observations on this proposed timeline.

After further discussion, and a motion and second, the Unification Commission voted to adopt the amended timeline, including a target date of July 1, 2025, for unification.

Governance: Work
Group Update

Upon recognition, Debra Avery, facilitator, provided an update for the Governance Work Group (also comprised of Carson Brown, and José Rosa-Rivera). The focus of the ongoing meetings has pivoted toward providing a timeline of a draft of governance

Unification Commission, **v2 Draft** Minutes, August 20, 2023, Page 4 of 5

document. At this moment, the Governance Work Group has no questions for the Commission.

The timeline was discussed as provided in a document entitled Governance Workgroup Deliverables and Timeline (Attachment 2). It was reiterated the focus was on the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly – other agencies would need to determine and react to how the impact of the unified agency would impact the mission of the other agencies. In Attachment 2, “MEG” is an acronym for Merged Entity Governance, the new entity representing the unified Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

There was a discussion of the intersection of the Governance Work Group timeline, with the just approved Commission timeline, and the conversations with the Consultations Work Group.

Finance: Work
Group Update

Upon recognition, Scott Lumsden, facilitator, provided an update for the Finance Work Group (also comprised of Dave Davis and Kris Thompson). The Finance Work Group continues to follow the timeline previously approved. The key unified budget priorities are still on target for early September. The Finance Work Group will share outcomes of the budget conversations and a proposed timeline at the October meeting of the Commission.

A broader question about culture was raised. It was noted the Moving Forward Implementation Commission discussed culture in their report, which is part of the minutes of the General Assembly. It was shared that staff had already begun internally working and addressing the culture, and affirmed how culture is created internally.

General
Information
(including Future
Meetings and Staff
Updates)

Cristi Scott Ligon provided a status update on previous actions of the Commission. The small group to work with a consultant will be comprised of Dee Cooper, Felipe Martínez, and one additional commissioner to be identified. The surveys have been distributed to the mid-council leaders, to inform the conversations at the Polity, Benefits, and Mid-Council Conference as part of the Commission’s October meeting.

Commissioners were thanked for their participation in conversations, both those conducted and those scheduled to be held, and for their service as facilitators and scribe.

The Commission’s budget report was included in the documents distributed prior to the meeting for information.

It was noted the Commission’s planned meeting immediately after the 226th GA (2024) might want to be rescheduled. Some participants of the Commission will have been in residence at GA for two weeks, and another meeting may present challenges to be fully present and engaged. It was agreed the timing of this meeting would be addressed at a future meeting.

Bronwen Boswell expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the meeting.

Shavon Starling-Louis expressed appreciation for the work of the Commission.

Unification Commission, **v2 Draft** Minutes, August 20, 2023, Page 5 of 5

Cristi Scott Ligon expressed appreciation for staff, including the translator.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2022 via Zoom.

There were no further questions or comments from commissioners or staff.

Closing Prayer

Cristi Scott Ligon entertained a motion to adjourn. After a motion and second and without objection, with a closing prayer from Shavon Starling-Louis, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Raymond Bonwell
Recorder

**Commission for the Unification
of the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency**

COMMISSION COVENANT

- To pray for one another
- To speak and listen with respect
- To inhale and exhale, to remember to breathe
- To have a posture of open mindedness, ready to listen, not quick to make decisions but seek understanding first
- To offer grace as we share collective witness
- To address things authentically, transparently and directly
- To make tough decisions
- To not be bound by our assumptions
- To be open to the Spirit's new options we haven't even considered
- To stay trusting in God
- To know when to speak and act, and know when to be quiet and wait for decisions to come in their time
- To be sensitive to the mindset of staff from OGA and PMA, to pray for them, to be a calming force
- To be consistent in how we communicate officially and unofficially
- To not take ourselves too seriously
- To support and care for one another

Adopted on December 17, 2022

Listening Sessions

**Themes from
April through August 2023**

**Susan Barnett, PhD
Research Services, ASG
September 2023**

Structure

Listening Sessions

This is an analysis of the listening sessions* that have been conducted from April 19 through August 28, 2023, by members of the Unification Commission as part of their fact-finding efforts as they move toward the unification of the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency in 2026.

SILOS

Each listening session was conducted with a siloed group. The individuals who participated shared from a position, the perspective of their silo. What they shared is:

- the value of their silo,
- what they want for their silo in the new organization, and
- how important, expanded, prominent their silo should be in the new agency.

AGENCIES

A second observation is these individuals came into the sessions as members of an agency: the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency **AND** they left as members of the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Nothing in the comments suggested that they saw themselves as part of something different and new.

In less than three years unification is to occur. As each siloed staff left the consultation, they went back to *their agency*. They had not begun their process of unification. The question is when does it begin? Naming the new agency is one way to begin unification. It will assist in pointing staff toward the same goal.

*Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation were included but they will not be a primary focus of the report.

New Agency Name

Purpose Statement

Structure

- Flexible, yet strategic
- Do not simply mesh the two agencies, make thoughtful innovative change
- Create thematic work groups
- Eliminate redundancies
- Eliminate ministries/programs that are no longer relevant
- Do not keep functions that do not support the new agency's purpose
- Create clearly identifiable work groups, easy to navigate for those in &/or outside of the agency
- Avoid pitfalls of previous unified agency
- Determine the balance of domestic and international work

Polity

- Reduce bureaucracy for appointments

Culture

- Diverse, vibrant
- Create something new, do not maintain the status quo
- Be supportive of People of Color
- Increase communication among staff, between agencies, and aligned entities
- Promote purposeful, bidirectional communication
- Be supportive of staff as some are fearful of this change
- Accept that some staff will not be retained

Basics

- Be responsive to the needs of congregations and partnering agencies

Finances

- Do not increase the costs for congregations rather create savings for them
- Be efficient, reduce duplication
- Plan for funding that is adequate to accomplish the objectives of the new agency's & the GA's goals
- Competitive salaries to attract skilled staff and retain qualified staff

Governance

- Seek new leadership models
- Reduce bureaucracy

Research Services helps the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) make data-informed decisions using surveys, focus groups and interviews, demographic analysis, and program evaluations.

We are social scientists with backgrounds in sociology, public policy, and economics. We serve congregations, presbyteries and synods, PC(USA) national agencies, and other PC(USA)-related organizations. Research Services is a ministry of the Administrative Services Group.

If you have any questions or would like a copy of this report, contact us at 502-569-5077 or research@pcusa.org.



**RESEARCH
SERVICES**

Plans for Consultation with Mid Council Leaders
St. Louis, Missouri

Wednesday, October 11, 2023		
9:00 a.m.	Plenary - participants seated at round tables	
	Cristi and Felipe explain the commission, its task, and the work of the commission so far.	10 minutes
	Cristi and Felipe give instructions for table discussion, clarify that the table discussion is only for mid council leaders. Newsprint on tables, ask for one person to be scribe. UC members and other staff/attendees please do not participate unless you are a mid-council leader.	
	Table Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your hopes for unification? • What are your concerns for unification? • One question (TBD) from mid-council survey results 	30 minutes
	Report Out	20 minutes
10:15 a.m.	Table notes to UC members	
4:45 p.m.	Focus Groups with Mid Council Leaders	
	Introduction and welcome from Cristi and Felipe	5 min
	Introduce Dr. Susan Barnett, Director of Research Services	
6:00 p.m.	Conclude	

UNIFICATION COMMISSION OCTOBER 10-14, 2024

MILLS STUDIO 2 – HYATT HOTEL, 4TH FLOOR

	Mon. Oct. 9	Tues. Oct. 10	Wed. Oct. 11	Thur. Oct. 12	Fri. Oct. 13	Sat. Oct. 14
AM		8:30 – 5:30 Registration 9 – 9:15 Welcome 9:15 – 10 Opening Worship 10 – 10:15 Break 10:15 – 11:45 Plenary Session 11:45 – 1:00 Lunch	8:30 – 5:30 Registration 9 – 9:15 Opening prayer/devotion 9:15 – 10:15 Plenary Session: Unification Commission 10:15 – 10:45 Break 10:45 – 11:45 Plenary Session 11:45 – 1:30 Lunch and Business Meeting Group Lunch	8-9 Breakfast – Group Breakfast UC Meeting room open 9-11 9-9:15 Opening prayer/devotion 9:15 – 11 Plenary Session 11 – 11:15 Break 11:15 – 12 Closing Worship w Communion Lunch – on your own	9 – 5 Unification Commission Meeting continues Group Lunch	9 – Unification Commission Meeting continues. Adjourns at 12 No group meals
PM	6:00 Registration Open 7:00 Welcome Reception	1 – 2 Plenary Session 2-2:15 Break 2:15 – 3:15 Plenary Session 3:15 – 3:30 Break 3:30 – 4:30 Workshops 4:45 – 6 – Listening Session: Standing Rules 7:30 (tentative)– for those arriving on Tuesday. Prep Session for Wednesday Meals on your own	1:30 – 2 Break 2 – 3 Workshops 2:00 Meet with Research Services Staff 3 – 3:30 Break 3:30 – 4:30 Workshops 4:45 – 6 – Listening Session – Focus Group: Unification Commission Group dinner	1– 5 Unification Commission Convenes Group dinner	Dinner – on your own	

“Backwards” Planning for Unification by July 1, 2025

ASG gathered a group of staff from ASG, PMA, and OGA to begin “backwards planning” for a unification date of July 1, 2025. There are a number of behind the scenes system and process changes that must be undertaken to be ready for that date. The Commission will need to make key decisions by certain dates in the next 21 months (or whatever the unification date is). The attached documents are the initial readout from the staff about decisions and activities. This is a first reading and more discussion will be docketed for the Commission’s October meeting.

Some notes:

Financial - Implementing a financial structure to reflect unification will require at least 4 months. Probably best to plan on 6 months, so January 1, 2025. Implication: the Commission has made high level decisions about the structure of the unified agency during the fall of 2024.

Human Resources - The attachment shows a potential process for unifying a program that has some overlap in both OGA and PMA. There is a decision making process of 3 – 6 months, and then another 6 – 12 months implementation period—so some decisions needed by the Commission in 2024. What hasn’t happened yet in this example is overlaying the separation timeline on top of this particular example.

Some decisions/questions for the Commission:

- Clarifying the extent and meaning of unification on July 1, 2025. The high level timeline assumes that July 1, 2025, is the date of a unified budget, a unified agency at least at the director level, and an interim governance structure to shepherd more specific unification activities from July 2025 – June 2026 General Assembly.
- What is the appropriate level of structural decisions for the Commission? What can the Commission reasonably decide? Perhaps a reasonable level of decision is the executive level and then the director level and let the executive/directors implement the more detailed programmatic and staff decisions.
- What type of consultants may be needed? What about the idea of a “Unification Director?”

Backwards Planning for Unification – Finance and Budget 2025

Organizational Structure & Priorities

Prior to the creation of a unified budget and the establishment of the mechanisms to oversee it, a high-level organizational structure that aligns with identified ministry priorities should be established. A comprehensive understanding of the foundational ministries that will support the new structure should also be in place.

Timeline

Assuming that a framework is in place regarding priorities and structure it is feasible to undertake the following administrative tasks, which calls for collaborative efforts across the entire organization, within a 120-day (four-month) timeframe:

- Identify funding sources to support both new priorities and foundational ministry activities.
- Establish a new unified budget and fiscal year.
- Create a new chart of accounts and corresponding reporting structure.
- Configure accounting software and update accounting procedures.

Unification will likely necessitate the creation of two budgets within a fiscal year; one to continue operations in the existing framework and one post-unification.

Fiscal Year

The formation of a new fiscal year should align with the commencement of the unified organization.

Prior to establishing a new fiscal year, PC(USA) should assess essential programmatic ministry cycles, the seasonal patterns of income and expenses, and the potential impact of the chosen fiscal year on financial operations like General Assembly, audits, budgeting, and financial reporting. The ASG finance and accounting office is considering forming a team to offer a fiscal year recommendation to the Finance Workgroup

Reporting

Defining the intended reporting outcomes is a critical component of the initial design phase for a new accounting structure. *What are the anticipated reporting requirements? Should budget reporting align with organizational priorities, structure, or a blend of both?*

PC(USA) currently utilizes the following financial expense reporting structures:

Functional Categories:

- Cost of Sales
- Salaries and Benefits
- Travel
- Meetings
- Administration
- Depreciation
- Programs
- Resource Development
- Grants

Organizational Structure:

1. Entity: OGA, PMA, ASG, etc.
2. Office: MCM, EDO, MES, etc.

Comparability

It's important to highlight that modifications to PC(USA)'s chart of accounts and fiscal year will temporarily remove the capability for comparative analysis across fiscal periods.

3 – 6 Months Decision-Making Phase

Define “Program X” (a body of work currently in both Agencies).

What does “unify Program X” mean?

What is the vision for the unified body of work?

Assess the total body of work.

What is the current work and who is doing it?

Identify the anticipated date Program X work will be unified.

This body of work would be where a consultant would be most valuable. Would need time to onboard before work begins. A 90-day onboarding is recommended.

Determine where Program X will be housed structurally:

Does it stay in either OGA or PMA until full unification?

Does it move to ASG temporarily or permanently?

Commission empowers the Executive of that organization/ department to implement the full unified process of Program X.

Another option would be a role such as a “Unification Director” shepherd and manage the unification. This person would have authority to make decisions and implement changes.

6 – 12 Months Implementation

If existing departments exist that do Program X work, combine both departments and current work in to one new department.

If stand alone departments don't exist in PMA and/or OGA, determine where and who is doing the work. Uncouple Program X work from positions that do other work.

Determine if work and employee move or just the work.

Create and implement selection process to determine the director of the unified department.

Look internally only? Look externally only? Do both at the same time? Develop director job description.

Once director is named, determine any staffing implications. Retention needs? Separation packages? Other impact?

Ongoing work to assess programmatic needs and needed shifts

Key Considerations

1. Timing ... 21 months to full unification.
2. Minimum 6 months will be needed for director-level and above recruitment and hiring processes.
3. Consultant selection and onboarding should begin very soon.
4. Cost analysis for various retention, reduction scenarios should be completed Q1 2024.



Proposed Docket for the 226th General Assembly (2024)

Online Committees. Plenary in Salt Lake City, Utah.

All times listed are Mountain Time (MT).

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
June 23	June 24	June 25	June 26	June 27	June 28	June 29 <i>Live Into Hope</i>
		8:00 am Brief Opening Plenary Online Committees	Online Committees	Online Committees		YAAD Training 6:00-8:00 pm Opening Reception Hosted by Presbytery of Utah <i>Meet (Co)Moderator Candidates</i> <i>Meet the Agencies</i>
June 30 <i>...and hear God's word</i>	July 1 <i>...of captive's freed</i>	July 2 <i>...the right to be</i>	July 3 <i>...the end of greed</i>	July 4 <i>...to faith, hope, joy, and peace</i>	July 5	July 6
Worship in area congregations 1:30 pm <i>Meet the Agencies</i> 2:30 pm Worship 3:00 pm Plenary 5:30 pm Dinner <i>Meet the Agencies</i> 8:00 pm Moderator Election	8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Plenary 12:00 pm Lunch 1:30 pm Plenary 5:30 pm Dinner 7:00 pm Plenary 9:00 pm Adjourn	8:30 am Ecumenical Worship 9:30 am Plenary 12:00 pm Lunch 1:30 pm Plenary 5:30 pm Dinner 7:00 pm Plenary 9:00 pm Adjourn	8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Plenary 12:00 pm Lunch 1:30 pm Plenary 5:30 pm Dinner 7:00 pm Plenary 9:00 pm Adjourn	8:30 am Worship 9:00 am Plenary 12:00 pm Closing Worship 1:00 pm Assembly Recesses	Deadlines 180 Day- Dec. 28, 2023 - Commissioner and Advisory Delegates Names Submitted 120 Day- Feb. 26, 2024 - All Reports from Committees/Agencies - Overtures with Constitutional Implications 60 Day- Apr. 26, 2024 - Overtures with Financial Implications 45 Day- May 11, 2024 - All Overtures and Concurrences	

POSITION DESCRIPTION
STATED CLERK
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Revised **September 2023**
Approved by COGA **September 13, 2023**

Position Title: The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian
Church Agency: The Office of the General Assembly
Status: Exempt/Grade 23
Last Revision Date: **September 2023**

Description and Purpose of the Position: The Stated Clerk is a Minister of the Word and Sacrament or a Ruling Elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who trusts in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and abides by the unique authority of Scripture and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) The position exists to carry out the responsibilities and functions outlined in the Book of Order, the General Assembly Organization for Mission of the General Assembly, and the Standing Rules of the Meetings of the General Assembly. The work of the Stated Clerk must be undertaken as a conscious act of discipleship to Jesus Christ.

As the Organization for Mission directs, “In partial fulfillment of [their] role as the continuing ecclesial officer and Head of Communion for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Stated Clerk will offer constitutional and spiritual leadership for the life and witness of the church and exercise pastoral authority over concerns of the church in times of crisis. The Stated Clerk is the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s chief ecumenical officer and its primary representative in national and international interchurch and interfaith organizations and speaks to and for the church in matters of faith and practice except as the General Assembly directs otherwise” (Organization for Mission IV.b.2.a).

As a new organizational structure emerges through the work of the Unification Commission, it is possible that there would need to be significant changes to the scope of the Stated Clerk’s work, especially as it relates to the likely need for engagement and management around the process and it may be initially necessary to review the job description of the Stated Clerk on an annual basis. The Stated Clerk shall work closely with the Unification Commission to bring the process of unification to completion.

The position is located in Louisville, Kentucky. Residency in the greater Louisville metropolitan area is required.

The position requires extensive and intentional relationship- and bridge-building, and will require both in-person travel and electronic communications, internationally and nationally.

Accountability: The Stated Clerk is accountable to the General Assembly (GA) through the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA). The relationship between COGA and the Stated Clerk “...demonstrate[s] the unity and interdependence of the church...” (G-3.0106). The Stated Clerk is the chief executive officer of the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and supervises the work of its staff. The Stated Clerk administers the OGA budget as

approved by COGA, and the per capita budget in collaboration with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and Administrative Services Group (ASG) as directed by the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk serves in the following capacities: member of COGA; member of Staff Expanded Leadership Team; ex officio member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB); ex officio member on the boards of the remaining four denominational agencies; and ex officio member of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation Board (A Corp. Board); The Stated Clerk will serve in other capacities as needed.

Duties and Responsibilities: In conjunction with the GA Organization for Mission (Section IV) and the Standing Rules of the Meetings of the General Assembly (Section H), the Stated Clerk shall:

1. Ecclesial:

- a) “Offer constitutional and spiritual leadership for the life and witness of the church and exercise pastoral authority over concerns of the church in times of crisis” (Organization for Mission IV.B.2A)
- b) Serve as the chief executive officer of the OGA
- c) Submit the OGA budget to COGA and GA
- d) Ensure the preservation of the records of the denomination
- e) Conduct general correspondence of the PC(USA)
- f) “Nurture the covenant community of the disciples of Christ” through the work of the GA and its agencies and councils (Book of Order G-3.0501c)

2. Administrative:

- a) Cultivate proactive communication within and among agencies
- b) Model healthy interpersonal relationships
- c) Nurture a collaborative and mutually supportive organizational and inter-agency culture
- d) Promote positive and generative staff morale
- e) Create and maintain effective administrative systems
- f) Be a “person of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and the love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord... [whose] life should be a demonstration of the Christian Gospel in the church and in the world” (Book of Order G-2.0104a)

3. Ecumenical:

- a) Represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as its chief ecumenical officer and as its primary representative in national and international interchurch and interfaith gatherings and organizations (Organization for Mission B.2.a)
- b) Serve as the permanent ecumenical representative of the General Assembly and as a member of each delegation representing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ecumenical or interchurch bodies (Organization for Mission B.2.h)
- c) Uphold and promote the church’s commitment to manifest more visibly the unity of the body of Christ, seeking opportunities for conversation, cooperation, and action with other ecclesiastical groups; likewise, encourage and engage in respectful dialogue and mutual relationships with entities and persons from other religious traditions, and with secular organizations of goodwill and common mission in accordance with the church’s commitment to ecumenical relationships (Book of Order G-5.0101-5.0103)

4. Constitutional:

- a) Uphold and interpret the Constitution for the church
- b) Ensure publication of the most current version of the Constitution

- c) Report decisions of the GA Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) to the church
- d) Serve as ex officio member of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) and the Advisory Committee on Litigation (ACL)

5. Logistical:

- a) Oversee all matters related to the convening of the GA
- b) Receive all reports and overtures and recommend referrals to the GA
- c) Prepare proposed docket, propose number of committees for each assembly
- d) Serve as chief parliamentarian for all meetings of the GA
- e) Ensure reporting of GA actions and the publication of GA proceedings
- f) Lead the Office of General Assembly through this time of transition in partnership with the Unification Commission

The Stated Clerk may choose to delegate any of these duties and responsibilities as the Clerk sees fit in order to effect the desired culture, morale and atmosphere.

Minimum Required Qualifications:

A commitment to Jesus Christ and a strong understanding of the Reformed tradition

Membership in good standing of a congregation or presbytery in the PC(USA)

Ordination as a Ruling Elder or Minister of Word and Sacrament

A bachelor's or equivalent degree in an appropriate field of study

Leadership and management experience of staff and volunteers

Experience in leading organizations through times of transition

Ability to reside in the greater Louisville metropolitan area

Ability to travel internationally and nationally

Desired Qualifications:

10 years of cumulative experience in all Councils of the PC(USA)

Executive level leadership experience

Ecumenical and/or interreligious experience

Experience with parliamentary process and procedures

Transitional ministry education or change management training

An advanced degree in an appropriate field of study

FOR INFORMATION

Subject: Language for Upcoming General Assembly Nominations Cycle

Commission Co-moderator, Cristi Scott Ligon, submitted the following language to the General Assembly Nominating Committee (GANC), on behalf of the Unification Commission, to use in the upcoming General Assembly nominations cycle:

Here is a copy of the final language:

Committees and other processes staffed by PMA and OGA and which fall under the current *Organization for Mission* may take a different form as unification proceeds. Since it is likely that significant parts of the structure will be impacted, applicants for open positions should be notified that it is possible that classes ending in 2028 and 2030 may not be completed and/or their roles may be significantly modified. The Unification Commission is ready to support the work of the Nominating Committee as the unification process unfolds.

Background:

During its August 20, 2023, the Commission authorized a small group to provide feedback to the General Assembly Nominating Committee.