

**Unification Commission**  
**November 12, 2023**  
**3:00 p.m. Eastern / 2:00 p.m. Central / Noon Pacific**

**DRAFT AGENDA**

Gathering and Opening Prayer	Felipe and Cristi
Land Acknowledgement – Columbus, Indiana	Felipe Martinez
Approve Agenda	
Approve Minutes - emailed	
Read Covenant	
Co Moderators report - emailed	
Key Unifying Principles:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The Unification Commission’s Key Unifying Principles guiding our work, and framing the work of the unified new Agency and the new Governance Body, lead us to be:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Relational</li><li>○ Streamlined</li><li>○ Nimble</li><li>○ Justice Focused</li><li>○ Vision Driven</li></ul></li></ul>	
Communications Unification	
Conversation or action items from workgroups (emailed reports)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Finance</li></ul>	Scott Lumsden
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Consultations</li></ul>	Dee Cooper
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Governance</li></ul>	Deb Avery
Closed Session	
Adjourn with prayer	

**Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency**  
**Minutes**  
**St. Louis, MO**  
**October 12-14, 2023**

**Thursday, October 12, 2023**

**Gathering**            The Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“the Unification Commission”) held their eleventh meeting in-person at the Hyatt Regency at the Arch in St. Louis, MO, concurrently with the Polity, Benefits, and Mission Conference (formerly the Mid Council Leaders Gathering). 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):

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, 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) [Recorder’s Note: Present  
remotely for Friday, October 13, 2023]  
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:**

Camilla Cohen, interpreter  
Barry Creech, Deputy Executive Director for Administration, Presbyterian Mission Agency  
Ian Hall, Chief Financial Officer / Chief Operating Officer, Presbyterian Church  
(U.S.A.), A Corporation  
Kathleen Henrion, communications specialist  
Kathy Lueckert, President, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation  
Kerry Rice, Deputy Stated Clerk, Office of the General Assembly  
Alejandra Sherman, Executive Assistant to the President, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),  
A Corporation

**Guests:**

Michael Wilson, Co-Moderator, Funding Model Development Team

## Unification Commission, Minutes, October 12-14, 2023, Page 2 of 7

Opening Prayer and Devotion	Felipe N. Martínez, 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. CT, and led the opening prayer and devotion, with a focus to on the task ahead, as informed by Isaiah 30:19-21.
Land Acknowledgment	Cristi Scott Ligon, co-moderator of the Unification Commission, led the land acknowledgment, which was written by Ryan Landino, the presbytery leader for the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy (which includes the meeting site in St. Louis, Mo.). This included the Osage Nation, Missouriia, and Illini Confederacy, and included the observation that Osage is the French transliteration of some original inhabitants with an original definition of “children of the middle waters.”
Introduction	Felipe Martínez introduced Kathleen Henrion, as contracted staff to assist with the communication to the various constituencies.
Agenda	By common consent, and without objection, <u>the Unification Commission adopted the agenda</u> . 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	By common consent, and without objection, <u>the Minutes of the September 17, 2023, meeting were approved</u> .
Covenant	Felipe Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon, as co-moderators, read the covenant as a reminder of what the Unification Commission had adopted.
Co-Moderator Report	Felipe Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon shared the co-moderator report. Their work included meeting with the Finance Work Group and working with staff to prepare for this meeting, including the consultation with participants of the Polity, Mission, and Benefits Conference. The co-moderators also met with Kathleen Henrion to discuss a communication strategy.
Common Mission: Work Group Update	<p>Upon recognition, Bill Teng, facilitator, provided an update for the Common Mission Work Group (also comprised of Frances Lin and Felipe Martínez). This work group has previously presented a statement on common mission for the New Agency, and shared the rationale and influences (including the Gospel, gathering, governing, goodness and generosity). The statement reads:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The New Agency exists to resource mid councils and equip congregations to engage others in thriving, vital covenantal communities as disciples of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>After discussion, and without objection, the Unification Commission received the statement, and tabled action until later in the meeting.</p>
Finance: Work Group Update	<p>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 update was posted to EQUIP (<a href="#">Attachment 1</a>), and was read by Scott Lumsden, who also noted the agenda anticipates a discussion on the outcomes of the September 7, 2023, meeting on the unified budget priorities.</p> <p>The Finance Work Group was thanked for their work and update.</p>
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), noting the Governance Work Group strives to meet weekly to discuss the “new governance” / “new agency.” The Unification Commission was reminded the previously shared dates of the Governance Work Group were more of a “guideline” than a fixed timeline. Kathy Lueckert, President,

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, was thanked for ongoing support of the work group. The Governance Work Group continues to stay focused on the question of “what will be the best way to accomplish unification, which is centered in an supports the missional goals of the General Assembly.”

Ongoing exploration and conversation include existing committees of the General Assembly and committees of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. There are also independent groups including Presbyterian Women, and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, that are structured as separate entities, and have connections to the work. Debra Avery concluded with an observation there may be recommendations for consideration on Saturday, after the scheduled day of work group meetings, scheduled for Friday, per the agenda as approved.

The Governance Work Group was thanked for their work and update.

Consultation:  
Work Group  
Reminder

Upon recognition, Dee Cooper, facilitator, provided an update for the Consultation Work Group (also comprised of Cristi Scott Ligon and Emily Martin). Dee Cooper thanked staff for the ongoing work to coordinate the consultations, and specifically the contributions of Kathy Lueckert, who has coordinated the timing of most of the consultations. Twenty (20) consultations have been completed, and there are four (4) remaining; and, Dee Cooper paused for a moment of celebration and thanksgiving for this work.

Dee Cooper continued with a high-level overview of the work ahead, including the following: the synthesis of the Mid Council surveys; a response for entities that request a second (follow-up) consultation; and, how the Consultation Work Group commissioners might continue to contribute, once the consultations have formally concluded.

Dee Cooper welcomed comments on what commissioners were seeing in the consultation data. There was an affirmation on the importance of culture.

Felipe Martínez reminded the commissioners to be mindful of the consultation observations while doing one’s own work group work. A very preliminary and high-level summary of the Mid Council survey was shared. The discussion focused on how to keep the broader church aware of the observations gleaned from the consultations; and affirming that consulted groups were indeed heard and impacted the conversation of the Unification Commission. Consultations with the racial-ethnic caucuses are still being scheduled. Commissioners affirmed the helpfulness of the consultation summaries.

The Consultation Work Group was thanked for their work.

Key Unification  
Principles  
Exercise

Felipe Martínez explained an exercise to discern key unification principles. Commissioners were provided with ten post-it notes, and were asked to write one principle per post-it, and each commissioner did not need to use all ten. Commissioner were asked to place their post-its on the wall, and Felipe Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon would group the principles and share the observations later in the meeting.

Funding Model  
Development  
Team Update

After a brief break, Felipe Martínez introduced Michael Wilson, Co-Moderator, Funding Model Development Team for an update. The Funding Model Development Team, a special committee formed by the 225th GA (2022) was tasked with looking at funding models of all councils above sessions, specifically presbyteries, synods, and the national church. Another task is to address the presbytery responsibility to remit all per capita even if the per capita was not provided by all sessions.

Michael Wilson noted the challenges of experimenting with funding streams. Commissioners were reminded that councils above sessions typically have four funding streams: per capita; mission giving; investments; and, reserves. Commissioners received a verbal report on funding models that are being explored. First, the per capita model, which ties funding to membership, is challenging with a declining membership. Second, a participation model, which could eliminate

per capita giving to replace with mission giving. Third, a percentage model, which could be a fixed percentage of a congregation – and the challenges are defining the item to base the percentage, the perception of tying giving to membership. It was also noted the challenges with “experimenting” or “piloting” new funding mechanisms, if existing mechanisms are assessed as sufficient.

Michael Wilson shared the Funding Model Development Team had a parallel timeline to the Unification Commission, with an update to the 226th GA (2024) and a report for the 227th GA (2026).

The discussion included exploring how other denominations are funded. The conversation observed how presbyteries are different in size, and a challenge of the scope of sustainability for organizations that are not average. It was also observed how the Office of the General Assembly is primarily funded by per capita, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency is primarily funded by mission giving – and a challenge to describe how a unified agency would be funded. A challenge of identifying the funding model is collapsing all sources into per capita, when other sources exist such as Special Collections. A hope for a future funding model is one that is elegant and easy to describe, and also easy to assess. The challenges of duplicating work at the national level were also noted. It was also noted that the Board of Pensions pricing model for medical benefits is also under review and discussion, which is another financial impact for the broader church. The work of fundraising by Mission Engagement and Support, and World Mission, was also lifted up as an additional potentially helpful conversation.

Michael Wilson thanked the Commission for their time and input. The Commission thanked Michael Wilson for the update and conversation.

Communication Consultant Update	Felipe Martínez shared an update on retaining a communications consultant. There has been additional work done to clarify the scope of work. Carson Brown was thanked for contributions to summaries from previous meetings; and Kathleen Henrion was thanked for contributions to this meeting. It was emphasized that the minutes serve as the official record, and this communication strategy focuses on a pastoral and informational approach to potentially affected agencies and individuals.
Summary of Key Unifying Principles	<p>Cristi Scott Ligon shared a summary of the key unifying principles from the earlier exercise with the post-its. The top item was clarity of purpose. The second item was a sense of shared ministry / collaboration / connectivity. The third item was working in a nimble and adaptable matter. Other items included transparency and being Christ-centered. It was noted that finances were not explicitly a top-ranked item, affirming a focus on mission.</p> <p>Felipe Martínez noted that key unifying principles are intended to be dynamic and flexible. The Finance Work Group expressed thanks for this exercise, to ensure the entire Commission has an appreciation for principles and priorities.</p>
Executive Session	Upon motion, second, and an opportunity for discussion, <u>the Unification Commission entered executive session</u> to address personnel and property matters. Staff and Guests were invited to participate in the executive session. [Recorder’s Note: the livestream was paused. Per the agenda, the Unification Commission will rise from Executive Session and recess for the evening. Friday is scheduled as a day for work groups, and will not be livestreamed. The livestream is anticipated to start again when the Commission reconvenes on Saturday, October 14.]

**Friday, October 13, 2023**

Work Group / Committee of the Whole [Recorder's Note: following the agenda, as adopted and published, the Unification Commission met Friday, October 13, 2023, in work groups, and as a work group of the whole. Following the adopted practice, work group meetings were not livestreamed.]

**Saturday, October 14, 2023**

Reconvening and Returning to Open Session Upon resumption of the livestream video broadcast, Cristi Scott Ligon called the meeting back to order in open session at 9:00 a.m. CT, and recognized Francis Lin for an opening prayer. Felipe Martínez announced the Unification Commission voted to rise from executive session on Thursday, October 12, 2023, and no further action was taken. For the record, Felipe Martínez stated Friday, October 13, 2023, was a day for work groups, and the Commission took no action.

Agency Leader Participation Felipe Martínez provided an addition to the Co-Moderators Report. Felipe Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon shared the expectations that the Office of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency leaders (respectively Bronwen Boswell, Acting Stated Clerk, and Diane Givens Moffett, President) were neither required nor expected to participate in the meetings of the Unification Commission, and reiterated that all are welcome to view the livestream or the archived recording.

Working Mission Statement for New Agency Upon recognition, Bill Teng offered the following motion to accept the Common Mission Work Group working Mission Statement. The rationale – based on the Gospel, gathering, governing, goodness, and generosity – was referenced. Without objection, the Unification Commission adopted the following Working Mission Statement:

The New Agency exists to resource mid councils and equip congregations to engage others in thriving, vital covenantal communities as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Common Mission Work Group was thanked for their work.

Working Purpose Statement for New Governing Body Upon recognition, Deborah Avery offered the motion from the Governance Work Group on the purpose statement for the New Governance (“NewGov”) to inform the New Agency (“NewAg”). The motion was appropriately amended to serve as a “working” purpose statement. Without objection, the Unification Commission adopted the following Working Purpose Statement for Governance:

NewGov sets the vision for NewAg, providing the resources and wisdom to assess emerging needs, develop program priorities, evaluate agency effectiveness, and serve as a bridge between General Assembly directives and the NewAg.

The Governance Work Group was thanked for their work.

2024-2025 Budget Directions Upon recognition, Scott Lumsden offered a motion with four parts, to further guide the work of the Administrative Services Group (“ASG”) and the work of the Finance Work Group. It was discussed the reference to “executive leadership” was intentionally broad to invite the appropriate staff into the conversations. The Finance Work Group perfected their motion. Without objection, the Unification Commission directed:

1. The Administrative Services Group to develop a unified chart of accounts for Fiscal Year 2025 working in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency executive leadership under the direction of the Finance Work Group.
2. ASG to develop plans for changing the organization’s fiscal year from the current calendar year (Jan-Dec) to one that better coordinates with General Assembly (i.e., year-end giving, standing rules, and fiscal policy).

3. The Finance Work Group to oversee the Fiscal Year 2024 budget review. The Unification Commission empowers its Finance Work Group to provide regular updates to the full Commission and bring any requests which may come from Executive Leadership for expenditures outside of the current Fiscal Year 2024 budget for Commission approval.
4. The executive leadership to continue to prioritize programmatic, operational, and administrative work that ties directly to unification during Fiscal Year 2024. This will require increased strategic planning, coordination, and executive level conversations about potential cost/program reduction in order to begin moving all areas of ministry (programmatic, operational, and administrative) into alignment as we move toward a unified budget in Fiscal Year 2025.

The Finance Work Group was thanked for their work.

Unifying  
Communications  
Functions

Upon recognition, Dave Davis explained that executive leadership had approached the Unification Commission with a proposal to unify the communications function of the various agencies. This motion was inspired by additional conversations with Felipe Martinez and Carson Brown. Executive leadership across agencies are preparing for communications around the 226th GA (2024), and the technology processes to support the website; unifying this work now would yield efficiency and clarity.

The motion was perfected to use the same generous reference to executive leadership. There was a discussion on how the Commission should act if executive leadership does not make progress; and, there was a firm belief among the commissioners the executive leadership would act, and the Finance Work Group and Co-Moderators would have a proposal should there be no action. After second and further discussion, the Unification Commission voted to:

support and give the greenlight to the request of the executive leadership to move ahead immediately in unifying the communication functions of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Office of the General Assembly, and the Administrative Services Group. The executive leadership will provide a report to the Unification Commission as soon as possible and no later than its November meeting on the communications staffing and supervision plan. Specifically, the executive leadership will report on the naming of the leader of the unified communications team and to which current executive that position will report. If no plan or decision is made, the Unification Commission is prepared to take action specific to a leadership and supervision plan.

Overall  
Commission  
Work and  
Timeline

Cristi Scott Ligon noted the next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 12, 2023, online. Felipe Martínez offered to coordinate the balance of the post-its observations into a format to be shared with the Commission.

Each Work Group responded to Cristi Scott Ligon's inquiry on an update on their work and where they hope to be.

Governance shared their appreciation for the adoption of the purpose statement, and their focus is on the New Governing Body, and not yet on the New Agency, with a goal of the working structure in January 2024 (with an affirmation the timelines are aspirational).

Finance shared their focus on the budget, and continues their weekly work group meeting.

Consultations shared there are four conversations left, in addition to the Administrative Services Group; and, an overview of items learned to be shared with the Commission. The idea of this continued feedback loop was warmly received by the Commission.

Common Mission shared appreciation for adoption of the statement; and suggested members of Common Mission could be repurposed to other work groups.

Felipe Martínez is scheduled to participate in the Funding Model Team meeting in-person in Louisville, Ky.

Items for the  
Good of the  
Body

It was noted that in-person meetings tend to finish ahead of schedule, and if in-person meetings could be scheduled for full days, it might make travel easier. It was also noted the Friday work groups were exceptionally productive, leading to being ahead of schedule today.

There was a discussion on a communications strategy. Felipe Martínez reminded the Commission that the minutes remain the formal communication, and communications between meetings from the Commission are pastoral in nature, with an initial focus on groups impacted by unification. The consultant conversation is continuing with Felipe Martínez, Cristi Scott Ligon, Dee Cooper, and Kris Thompson. To help commissioners stay unified in their comments on each meeting, the circulation of a summary of key actions might be helpful.

There was a discussion around when to meet in-person for 2024 (January and April 2024, are scheduled in-person). There was consensus that was a sufficient schedule for in-person meetings. The discussion included a focus for the monthly meetings on specific topics, beyond the current general agenda.

The 226th General Assembly (2024) was discussed (also “GA”). There is no expectation for the Unification Commission to be present at the 226th GA (2024). The GA schedule calls for virtual committees, and in-person plenary. There are limited times outside of plenary to gather. There will be virtual “town hall” spaces to prepare and educate General Assembly commissioners in late May and early June. The Unification Commission could decide at the January 2024 meeting to participate in “town halls”. The 226th GA (2024) will receive a report from the Unification Commission, and no action is anticipated being requested. There was a discussion about the appropriate path for reports from the Unification Commission to go through a GA committee, when the Unification Commission should be directly accountable to GA (and therefore not be mediated through a committee).

Regarding reassigning the members of the Common Mission Work Group, the co-moderators of the commission will reassign members.

Thanks were expressed to all gathered, including staff, and guests.

Closing  
Prayer

Cristi Scott Ligon noted the Unification Commission would adjourn with a closing prayer with entertained a motion to adjourn. With a closing prayer from Dee Cooper, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m. CT.

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*

**CO-MODERATORS REPORT**

Co-Moderator Felipe Martinez met in person with the Funding Models Team in Louisville on November 1, 2023. Felipe brought greetings to the Team on behalf of the Commission, offered an overview of the Commission's progress and overall work timeline, and answered questions from Team members. Felipe also had a call with Kathleen Henrion to pursue the possibility of contracting with her for ongoing communications work for the Commission.

Co-Moderators Cristi Scott Ligon and Felipe Martinez met via Zoom with Kathy Lueckert, Barry Rice and Barry Creech to debrief the October 12-14 Unification Commission in person meeting, and then met via Zoom with Kathy Lueckert and Alex Sherman to plan the November 12 Zoom meeting.

The Co-Moderators are also meeting with Acting Stated Clerk Bronwen Boswell on November 9 at the Presbyterian Center, as part of the effort to meet personally with the executive leadership of OGA and PMA (having met with Diane Givens Moffett and J. Herbert Nelson previously).

# Key Unified Budget Process :: Next Steps

Finance Workgroup :: October 19

**To the Executive Team:** We are very grateful for your work on the Key Unified Budget Priorities at our September 7th meeting; and for the spirit, honesty, and transparency in which you offered it. As we move forward, we are mindful of what we shared earlier – “that this is a transitional, hybrid, and iterative process. We will learn together what a unified budget looks like as we do it.” In that spirit, we offer the following guidance on our next steps in developing a FY25 Unified Budget.

**FY25:** At our October meeting, the Unification Commission (UC) approved not only the development of a unified chart of accounts, but also a possible change in the fiscal year. In terms of budget approval, we are operating under the assumption that the UC is empowered by the General Assembly (GA) to oversee and approve the budget through FY26. This obviously changes the normal budget process and timelines for staff and may extend the FY24 budget into the first half of FY25.

**Key Unified Budget Priorities:** In the UC’s committee of the whole work, the finance workgroup presented four key unified budget priorities that arose from our September meeting: completing IT roadmap, unifying communications, mid-council support in their support of congregations, and leadership development in all levels of the church (especially among young leaders and members of the BIPOC community). Other identified priorities included the continued development of Restorative Ministries and the maintenance of client services for ASG. The first two unified budget priorities are being addressed in the UC action to unify the office of communications (that came to us from staff). It is our understanding that this IT and communications work has no additional budget implications for FY25. Please inform us if this is not the case.

**2025 Budget Assumptions:** We also want to affirm the prioritization of mid-council support and leadership development, however the FY25 budgetary implications for those priorities are less clear to us. Therefore we want to clarify that, in our view, the FY25 budget should:

- Reflect significant progress toward unification, simplification, and transparency of reporting
- Not increase overall FY24 expenses more than inflation
- Include progress toward unified priorities, as able, with funding coming from the unification of existing programs, and/or from reductions in other program areas
- Base program expenses on yearly average of actual cost over the past several years rather than on the current practice of underspending; in other words, FY25 should bring income and expense into line with actual experience across all areas of ministry and program in GA
- Not assume 100% of all staff positions will be filled but should base (unfilled) personnel cost on a percentage determined by the average of filled/unfilled positions over the past several years. This may even include strategic decisions NOT to fill positions based on anticipated unification of programming.
- Be balanced – with any reserve spending being equitable and proportional with OGA/PMA reserves respectively.
- Identify more opportunities to use restricted funds for programs/areas that have traditionally been funded strictly by per capita funds.

**FY25 Budget Work:** The finance workgroup thus empowers the executive leadership of ASG, OGA, and PMA to begin drafting their FY25 budgets in the same collegial, connected, and cooperative manner in which they began this process – seeking input and collaboration among one another wherever and whenever possible – communicating regularly to the financial workgroup with progress updates and any further questions.

**Finance Work Group Focus:** The finance workgroup will focus our work in the following areas: developing a new chart of accounts and a new fiscal year with Ian and his staff; receiving regular reports on FY25 progress from ASG, OGA, and PMA; exploring with the Foundation and executive leadership better ways to utilize restricted funds for a more unified ministry of GA; and meeting with the executive team in person and remotely to bring greater unification to the financial operations of the General Assembly.

**Finance Work Group Request:** In order to best facilitate our work together, the finance workgroup needs more familiarity with the way financial operations are practically handled and reported to ASG, OGA, and PMA boards and their executive teams. Therefore, we request the following reports:

- Quarterly financial reports for the past 3 years for ASG, OGA, and PMA.
- Quarterly management reports pertaining to finances for ASG, OGA, PMA for the past 3 years.
- Minutes of ASG, OGA, and PMA for the past 3 years.
- Budgets for ASG, OGA, and PMA for the past 3 years.

**Guiding Thought for Our Ongoing Work Together:** *“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined together and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, **as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.**” Eph 4:15-16*

**Next Meeting:** Late November/Early December, date and time TBD for presentation of draft budgets.

**FINANCE WORK GROUP REPORT**

**Report**

The Finance workgroup met twice since our meeting in St. Louis -- once to finalize next steps in the FY25 budget process, and once to meet with the Executive Team to review/dialogue about FY25 budget questions. The Next Steps document will bring the UC up to date on our thinking about our financial work in general as well as the FY25 budget process. We're pleased to share that the meeting with the Executive Team went well and because of the volume and urgency of that work, we could make that a monthly zoom meeting.

**Discussion/Action**

We continue to learn quite a bit about the financial and organizational operations of OGA/PMA/ACorp and the more we learn the more we see a longer trajectory for unification. What we mean by that is -- yes, some decisions about initial unification (budget and governance) can happen in 2025, but the deeper change that will be needed to ensure unification's success is a complete restructure/rethinking of the ministry of GA that will take many years. Though that's an obvious statement, we're beginning to think of what structures and understandings and leadership needs to be in place to continue what we are tasked with starting.

**Other Note:** It's great to welcome Frances to our workgroup! In that spirit, her email address for her commission work is [Frances.yang.lin@gmail.com](mailto:Frances.yang.lin@gmail.com). Please correct me if I'm wrong Frances. And of course, Dave, Kris, Frances, please feel free to chime in on our report.

### **CONSULTATIONS WORK GROUP REPORT**

When we meet again, we will have completed the following consultations:

Oct 17	1:00 PM	GACEIR	Bill T	Kathy	Jose
Nov 2	4:00	1st Caucus	Dee	Kathy	Jose
Nov 3	3:00	PILP	Frances	Kathy	Carson
Nov 6	7:00 PM	2nd Caucus	Cristi	Kathy	Jose

This leaves 2 more on our list of the initial and required ones from the GA directive.

Below is our work plan, and we have been trying to find a time to meet ... The outlined work pieces ahead are these:

We left St Louis with the following items of business for us to cover:

1. Meeting with ASG staff- Kathy is already on this and scheduled time.
2. Meeting with the ecumenical partners- Kerry is asking Diana to take the lead on this and set up a time for us to meet with them.
3. Provide directions to Susan Barnett to synthesize the newer consultations into the one she created a few months ago - Kathy has already initiated this.
4. Discuss with Susan about creating a report from the Mid Council listening sessions around the table, the input that they handed to Felipe and Cristi, and the survey they completed.
5. Sharing this with the Mid Council Leaders.
6. Creating a report to be shared with all who participated in our listening sessions (and also the larger denomination).
7. Creating a feedback loop (like a test market not starting over) with OGA/PMA staff Mid council leaders and integrating the executives.

Then, the discussions moved to the awareness and process of molding two cultures together. This became a theme echoed by each of the other workgroups. As we progress into shaping, we have to understand the cultures and then understand or support how to bring them together into one new culture.

Debra shared the Way Forward cultural analysis- this might be a template to do an update. Kerry shared that OGA has done some informal analysis

Berry shared that PMA has been doing extensive analysis as well as developed a process of a culture code

Felipe, Cristi, Kris, and I had met to discuss consultants- and had begun early conversations that this might be an area which we would benefit greatly from a skilled consultant.

## GOVERNANCE WORKGROUP REPORT

### Working Purpose statement

*NewGov sets the vision for NewAg, providing the resources and wisdom to assess emerging needs, develop program priorities, evaluate agency effectiveness, and serve as a bridge between General Assembly directives and the NewAg.*

Since we met in St. Louis, we have been focusing on roles for the NewGov. We structured our conversation using RJ Dunn's work in *The Change-Making Board: Consequential Governance for Public & Nonprofit Organizations* (Mill City Press, 2021). We will be building out from these roles to create the NewGov structure.

### First Things: What flows from the working purpose statement?

- Keep at the forefront that this is a *leadership* body
- Determining paths for oversight and assessment of both NewGov (self-eval) and NewAg is vital
- Keep finger on the pulse of contextual dynamics (ex: pandemic) to make recommendations and execute necessary changes

### Visioning/Discernment

- Organizational leadership needs to be centered on the health of the organization as a whole. Overarching image: Vine and branches and many gifts, one Spirit, one body
- While responsible for receiving, interpreting, and providing strategy for implementation of GA directives, NewGov is also responsible for proactive vision setting that goes beyond reacting to what GA provides
- Collaboration and representation
- NewGov is a crucible of hope that inspires and motivates the church

### Strategic/Analytic

- "Conscious governance" (Summerville/Roberts, The Mindful Board) means that planning, budgeting, evaluation, problem-solving, implementation are more than just technical projects. It is the work of connecting vision to implementation in real time/real life conditions.
- Planning for sustainability and to accomplish goals that emerge from vision/discernment work.
- This is a Big Picture responsibility, not in the weeds micromanaging programs.
- Past-orientation: The evaluation and assessment of NewAg efficacy includes executive evaluation and supervision
- Now-orientation - Connection to the bigger picture means understanding the needs expressed by mid-councils/congregations.
- Future-orientation - Discerning whether and how to move is dependent on contextual implications and assessments of efficacy

### **Fiduciary/Operational**

- Primary image: Duty of care - It is the responsibility of NewGov to steward the well-being of the church
- Keeping in mind the existence of A Corp Board and ASG as well as the ecclesial functions of at the NewAg level, parsing out what the following looks like at the NewGov level is fundamental to the structure and to navigating intersections with other Boards and groups.
  - financial oversight, corporate functions, risk management, organizational reputation
  - stewardship of resources
- The role of holding all work between assemblies with commitment to obediently respond to the decision of the assembly and to ensure the same for the whole church

### **Structural/Technical**

- Both the NewGov structure and the structure of NewAg flow from strategic direction.
- Nominations processes need to allow for strategic moves necessary to be effective while staying agile in order to adapt to changing context.
  - include recruiting replacements for the NewGov with particular skills and gifts that meet the needs identified by the board as necessary for the accomplishment of the vision.
  - Hold to our value for representation and inclusion.
  - What to do about interlocking boards? how are these roles filled?
- Technical needs: meeting management (agendas, minutes), structure (officers, committees), rules for the good of the order, chair/moderator/leader.
- Chairperson/Moderator of board - what authority do they have? Chair vs. moderator.

### **External/Ambassadorial**

- Multiple “audiences”: NewAg, the wider church, to the non-church world
- Maintain, build, or rebuild relationships with stakeholder groups
- Maintain, build, or rebuild relationships with partners beyond NewAg and/or PCUSA
  - advocacy
  - ecumenical and interfaith relationships
  - mission partnerships
- Importance of building and/or identifying critical relationships for program engagement, funds development, motivating constituencies to participate (volunteers)
  - Inter-agency
  - Intra-agency
  - The wider denomination (mid-councils and congregations)
- Interpret and communicate the work of NewGov, New Ag, and General Assembly

### **NEXT STEPS:**

- 1) Develop each role using Presbyterian distinctives
- 2) Determine the role of executive leadership of NewGov and NewAg, including the role of the Stated Clerk
- 3) Determine the status of the NewGov: Board? Commission? Council? Committee?