

**Unification Commission
Zoom Meeting
September 14, 2024
DRAFT Agenda**

3:00 pm	Welcome	Felipe Martinez, Cristi Scott Ligon
	Prayer/Devotion	
	Land Acknowledgement	Kathy Lueckert
	Covenant	
	<i>Key Unifying Principles:</i> Relational, Streamlined, Nimble, Justice Focused, Vision Driven.	
	Approve Meeting Agenda	
	Approve Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 8-9, 2024 • August 16, 2024 	
	Co-Moderators Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unification Management Office (UMO) Update 	Cristi Scott Ligon, Felipe Martinez
	Work Group Reports	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances 	Scott Lumsden
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First reading for plan to establish Unification Commission Committees as we function as the Interim Governance 	Deb Avery
	Review and Approval of 2025 Unification Commission Meeting Schedule	
	Closed Session	
5:00 pm	Closing Prayer and adjournment	Felipe Martinez, Cristi Scott Ligon

**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
- to address things authentically, transparently, directly with the intention of gaining clarity in discussion.
- to assume good intentions.

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/committees/ga-special-committees-and-task-forces/commission-unification-oga-pma/#covenant>

*Adopted on December 17, 2022
Amended on April 5, 2024*

Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency
Minutes
Louisville, Ky. and Online
August 8-9, 2024

Gathering

The Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“the Unification Commission”) held their twentieth meeting at the Presbyterian Center, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Ky. and 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 at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 8, 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) [remote participant on Zoom]
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)
Frances Lin, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Riverside; At-Large [Ordained Aug. 11, 2023]
[remote participant on Zoom]
Scott Lumsden, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Seattle; Per Capita and Financial
Sustainability Special Committee
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 [remote participant on Zoom]
Kris Thompson, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of National Capital; At-Large

Staff:

Kelly Beeland, culture and change consultant
Barry Creech, Deputy Executive Director for Administration, Presbyterian Mission Agency
Ian Hall, Chief Financial Officer, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) A Corporation
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

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Guests:

CeCe Armstrong, co-moderator of the 226th GA (2024)
Tony Larson, co-moderator of the 226th GA (2024)
Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Diane Moffett, president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency
CeCe Armstrong and Tony Larson, the co-moderators of the 226th GA (2024)

Excused:

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
Emily Martin, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of North Central California; Young Adult
Advisory Delegate, 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 9:00 a.m. ET on August 8, 2024, with an opening prayer.

The devotional was led by Felipe N. Martínez, co-moderator of the Unification Commission. Felipe Martinez drew upon 1 Cor. 3:4-9 for a reflection upon how the church self-defines itself, and a role of adoption both personally and organizationally.

Land
Acknowledgment

Kathy Lueckert, president, PC(USA) A Corporation, led the land acknowledgment, informed by the Presbyterian Women. The former residents were recognized for their stewardship of the land, and how they were removed from their land, including the Shawnee, Cherokee, Hopewell, and Adena cultures.

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.

Minutes and
Agenda

Without objection, the Minutes of the June 15, 2024, meeting were approved. Some of the 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. By common consent, the Unification Commission followed the agenda as distributed

Introduction of the
Stated Clerk

Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), was introduced. Jihyun Oh expressed gratitude for the work of the Unification Commission, and shared a narrative example of penguin emperor chicks and a rite of maturation of jumping / diving from great heights into the water. Thanks were given for the Unification Commission’s leadership in this time of maturation and change in the church.

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Co-Moderator
Report

Cristi Scott Ligon provided the Co-Moderators Report. Individually or together the co-moderators participated in various work groups since the June 6-7, 2024, meeting. This work included Comments on Business before the 226th General Assembly (2022), as reflected in the Minutes of the General Assembly (GA). Further, the co-moderators served as resource persons for various GA committees (remotely) and the plenary meetings (in-person). The main item of business from the Unification Commission for the 226th GA (2022) was the 2025-2026 Unifying Budget, which was approved. Finally, there were individual and group preparation meetings, including Kelly Beeland, culture and change consultant, and the various work groups.

Governance: Work
Group Update

Upon recognition, Debra Avery, facilitator, provided an update for the Governance Work Group, and noted the group has met weekly, and included Carson Brown, Felipe Martínez, José Rosa-Rivera, and Bill Teng. There have been ongoing meetings with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA; also represented by Unification Commission commissioner Dave Davis), and Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAB; also represented by Unification Commission commissioner Dee Cooper). Recent topics included a history of regional representation on governing composition, and the review processes used by PMAB for the president and executive director. It was noted an area of PMAB focus was the different forms of repair of historic harm; and the intersection of PMAB with other boards, committees, and entities.

Finance Work
Group

Upon recognition, Scott Lumsden, facilitator, began the update for the Finance Work Group, which included Dave Davis, Frances Lin, and Kris Thompson. The Finance Work Group continued to meet with the Coordinating Table (the senior leadership of A. Corp., OGA, and PMA) to discuss budget reductions to realign with the recently adopted 2025-2026 Unified Budget. Meetings will continue with various members of senior leadership, with a goal of proposal for the October 2024 Unification Commission meeting.

Break and Recess
to Committee of
the Whole

Felipe Martínez, co-moderator, reviewed the agenda for the balance of this meeting of the Unification Commission. The commission would begin meeting as a Committee of the Whole. As such, the Committee of the Whole would not be making any decisions, and would be in deep discussions that would not be broadcast. A part of that discussion would be led by Kelly Beeland, culture and change consultant. Felipe Martínez suggested that at 3:30 p.m. Friday, August 9, 2024 there be an order of the day to enter executive session to discuss personnel and property matters, with the following participants anticipated to be invited for executive session: Kathy Lueckert, Barry Creech, Kerry Rice, Alex Sherman, Ian Hall, Kathleen Henry, Kelly Beeland, the interpreter. The motion was made and seconded, and after discussion, the Unification Commission adopted an order of the day for executive session. After executive session, it was announced the livestream would resume.

Without objection, the Unification Commission recessed to reconvene as a Committee of the Whole.

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Friday, August 9, 2024

Reconvening

Prior to the recording resuming, Felipe Martínez noted that Raymond Bonwell, recorder, was able to join the Unification Commission for dinner, with congratulations for being elected by the 226th GA (2022) as an At-Large representative for Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI).

Felipe Martínez, co-moderator, noted the Unification Commission voted to rise from executive session, and reported no action was taken.

Unification
Management
Office

Upon recognition, Carson Brown brought forth the following motion:

“The Unification Commission would establish a Unification Management Office (UMO) for the purpose of managing unification of the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency at the direction of the Unification Commission. The UMO shall be charged with:

- Implementing the commission’s decisions;
- Setting up a comprehensive unification program plan;
- Developing a change management and communications strategy that supports the unification program; and,
- Implementing and monitoring progress against the program plan and change management/communications strategy.

The UMO Program Lead shall report to the Unification Commission until such time as the executive leadership of the new agency is established and the Unification Commission directs the UMO to report to the new agency.”

Upon a second to the motion, a discussion followed. The Unification Commission recognized this was a time “when the organizational rubber could hit the road” and emphasized the Unification Commission was still the decision-making body, and the UMO would be tasked with carrying out the tasks, programmatic aspects, and work, with the co-moderators of the Unification Commission serving as the liaisons with the UMO. The hiring process and financial implications were discussed, and gratitude was provided for the work of Kelly Beeland.

There were no further questions or discussion. The Unification Commission adopted the motion as presented to create the Unification Management Office.

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Summary of the
Committee of the
Whole

Felipe Martínez, co-moderator, provided a summary of the work of the Unification Commission as a Committee of the Whole. This included the decision to create the UMO, and drafting a high-level program plan with key deliverables for the UMO. Schedules permitted Jihyun Oh to bring greetings yesterday in open session. While operating as a Committee of the Whole, the Unification Commission also received greetings from Diane Moffett, president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency; and greeting from and participation by CeCe Armstrong and Tony Larson, the co-moderators of the 226th GA (2024). Kelly Beeland provided a high-level advance summary of a report-in-progress on top elements of culture. The Unification Commission also discussed the drafting of an interim governance structure, with possible models of leadership for the new agency. [Recorder's Note: please see the minutes for the called meeting of August 16, 2024.]

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

There were no further comments from commissioners or staff. The Commission was reminded of a called meeting on Zoom for Saturday, September 14, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. ET, with the next in-person meeting to be October 9-11, 2024, in Denver, Colo. These meetings were anticipated to be live-streamed. Without objection and by common consent, the meeting was adjourned with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Raymond Bonwell
Recorder

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

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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.

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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

Governance Workgroup Report

September 2024

Summary: Since the last Commission meeting, our team has focused on details for the Interim Governance (IntGov) structure. Our focus has been on the changing role of the Unification Commission and a committee structure that will support the implementation of unification. We met weekly for 60-90 minutes.

The Role of the Unification Commission - 2025-2026:

As we transition into Interim Governance, the Unification Commission moves into a new role - Unification Implementation. The moderators will continue to provide primary leadership. Commissioners will be assigned to one of three committees. Committee leaders will work with the moderators to plan meetings and discern how to address emerging needs.

The Work of the Unification Commission as a Commission

- Attend to fulfillment of Commission responsibilities as directed by the 225th General Assembly
- Provide for necessary structures and appropriate leadership to implement and complete unification
- Determine a decision making timeline to ensure the best cadence for UC meetings that allows sufficient time between meetings for committees to complete their work
- Provide oversight and bridging necessary to ensure that coordination flows between committees
- Interface with committees and staff to facilitate meaningful and productive connection and support

First Reading of the Interim Governance Committee Structure:

(motions to be finalized for the October 2024 meeting)

Although this structure is intended for the Interim Governance period, all Committees will track tasks and structures to help the UC determine what will be appropriate/necessary to continue in a permanent governance structure. Committee members and leaders will be determined by the Moderators of the UC.

Motion: That the Unification Commission form a Stakeholder Coordination Committee which will work during the Interim Governance period to address the following:

From our charter: The commission will have the authority to review, adapt, align as necessary, and organize the role(s) and relationships of those committees of the General Assembly, entities, boards, committees and constituent bodies that are not explicitly established in the Book of Order toward long-term faithfulness, financial sustainability, and a unified new structure.

1. Take responsibility for understanding, navigating, and making recommendations to the UC regarding mid-council relationships and support
2. Identify and make recommendations regarding existing and future linkages with other boards, committees, or entities.
3. Receive reports from, and provide any necessary linkage to the General Assembly for the Advisory and Advocacy committees or other groups/entities that currently report through or work directly with COGA and PMAB.
4. Receive reports from the current PMAB and COGA members appointed/assigned as representatives to other boards, advisory or advocacy committees, and/or other entities/committees.

Motion: That the Unification Commission form a Ministry Coordination Committee which will work during the Interim Governance period to address the following:

From our charter: This commission shall have the power to combine, unify, eliminate, and/or create any necessary organizational structure, including personnel and budget, to accomplish these missional strategies and priorities.

1. Work with COGA/PMAB leadership to transition mission critical work currently being done by them in order to provide oversight, and to facilitate decision making and coordination during the interim period
2. Coordinate with and provide oversight for executive leadership
3. Coordinate with and provide support for UMO as needed
4. Interface with staff as needed to receive reports and bring concerns to the Commission.
5. Ensure coordination of any decisions related to the 227th General Assembly procedures and planning

Motion: That the Unification Commission form a Resource Coordination Committee which will work during the Interim Governance period to address the following:

From our charter: The commission shall review, address, and align the financial agreements including per capita, restricted, and unrestricted funds, among the Foundation, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Office of the General Assembly, and the Presbyterian Church (USA), A Corporation (A Corp) to support the new Organization for Mission so that each area of mission has adequate funds to sustain its mission long-term. Coordinate with ASG on budget/finance and resource development

1. Coordinate with the A Corp board where necessary and appropriate for the overall stewardship of the resources of the PCUSA.
2. Coordinate with ASG regarding critical issues that emerge related to financial resources, stewardship of property, technological resourcing, and human resources.
3. Receive regular reports from the CFO/CTO of A Corp and any other PCUSA executives as requested in order to recommend any necessary actions to the Unification Commission.
4. Provide oversight for ongoing unification of agency communication

Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency
Establish meeting dates for 2025

A poll was conducted to establish commission meeting dates for 2025. There will be four in person meetings, and eight meetings via Zoom. The dates selected are those that had the most commission members indicating they would be able to attend. Please note that there may be additional work group or committee meetings in addition to the full commission meetings.

2025 Meeting Dates for the Unification Commission

January 23 – 24 :	In person
February 15:	Zoom
March 27 – 28:	In person
April 5:	Zoom (optional, due to close proximity to March meeting)
May 10:	Zoom
June 12:	Zoom
July 24:	Zoom
August 20 – 21:	In person
September 11:	Zoom
October 23 – 24:	In person
November 13:	Zoom
December 11:	Zoom