

Meeting Summary

October 2-3, 2022

Synod of Lakes & Prairies

2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 55122

www.lakesandprairies.org



The Fall Synod Meeting started on Sunday, October 2 with a welcome from Synod Moderator, Brian Entz, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

Figure 1 Moderator Brian Entz



Opening Worship was led by the Rev. Jihyun Oh, Director of Mid Council Ministries, Office of the General Assembly. We affirmed our faith using F-1.0404 (Book of Order) and Jihyun preached a sermon based on Galatians 3:27-29.

Figure 2 guest worship leader and presenter Jihyun Oh

²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
NIV

Jihyun then led an educational presentation on “Equity and Inclusion in Governance.” She shared information about equity primes and choice points which were used at General Assembly this past summer. These tools are recommended to ensure equitable participation in our decision making and are to be used alongside our polity and parliamentary procedures.

INDIVIDUAL EQUITY PRIME CARD

Provisional List of Rights of Members of GA committee underlying the equity primes card:

- Right to be recognized by moderator
- Right to disagree and voice disagreement
- Right not to be interrupted and finish a thought
- Right to vote, depending on status
- Right to speak in all of our various accents and dialects
- Right to request an interpreter
- Right to feel equal to others at the table
- Right not to be a cradle Presbyterian and have zero connections to the historical church

We each have a choice....to be a voice for equity and inclusion

When I see or hear someone being treated in a manner contrary to our values and rights as members of this committee, I can ...

- Send a private message to the speaker
- Ask for recognition to pause and address the issue in the moment
- Speak with the moderator at the break to address later

Am I using the meeting tools to maintain my own power

GROUP/COMMITTEE EQUITY PRIME:

QUESTIONS BEFORE DISCUSSION/DECISIONS

- Why are we trying to make the decision now?
- Do we have enough information to make an equitable /inclusive decision
 - Have we heard directly from those who will be most impacted?
 - Have we thought through the impact to the whole church?
- What additional voices/information do we need to make an equitable/inclusive decision?
- What information would lead to more equity?

GROUP/COMMITTEE EQUITY PRIME

QUESTIONS BEFORE DISCUSSION /DECISIONS

- Have we honored what's on our cards to honor each other's rights and check our own use of power?
- Is this decision being made with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

QUESTIONS

- What implicit associations or assumptions were underlying my words or actions?
- What new associations might I create in my brain to move from breaking behavior to bridging behavior?

Monday morning started with the business meeting. Each committee and staff member gave a report.

Highlights:

Ruling Elder Susan Medske, Presbytery of Central Nebraska, was elected to serve as the Synod Moderator for 2023 and Ruling Elder Jeff Dickenson, Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, was elected Synod Vice-Moderator.

The Synod received an update on year-to-date financial performance and approved its 2023 budget.

The Synod approved an updated version of its Financial Policies.

Synod Per Capita for 2023 will not increase. It remains at \$5.50.

The 2023 Synod meetings will be held April 30-May 2 at the Mt. Olivet Retreat Center and October 1-3 online via Zoom.

The Committee on Racial Ethnic Ministry is preparing to review applications for the Racial Ethnic Student Scholarship; a full report will be made at the spring Synod meeting.

This scholarship fund is an educational assistance program designed to encourage racial ethnic students in their preparation for academic success in higher education. Students must have a permanent residence within the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and be active members in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation. The synod is committed to partner with students and schools for greater access to lifelong leadership skills and affordable education. Scholarships are awarded in November of each year. We hope you will share the information about this program with your church and presbytery.

CREM also reported on the annual conference by the Facilitating Racial Equity Collaborative (FREC), November 11-12, 2022, at Metro State University in St. Paul. Minn. CREM contributes to the conference to make the Synod a sponsor of the Overcoming Racism Event. The theme of the conference is “The Power of Truth Telling.”

Self-Development of People Committee is in the process of reviewing applications for grants in 2023. Synod Executive Elona Street-Stewart asked commissioners to inform SDOP of groups in their presbyteries that may be candidates for an SDOP grant.

The Personnel Committee reported that individual meetings with Synod staff members will be held in November.

The Restorative Actions Task Force led the Synod in a time of education on Monday morning. They also shared about their new curriculum “A Time for Repair” which can be found on the website at: <https://restorativeactions.org/learn-more/upcoming-learning-events/>.

During Closing Worship, we thanked outgoing commissioners for their commitment and service to the Synod. Those commissioners are:

Lance Loveall, TE, Presbytery of Milwaukee
Diane Wray Williams, RE, Presbytery of Northern Plains
Cathy Hecht, RE, Presbytery of Northern Waters
Mark Ford, TE, Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys

Commissioners completing their first term were also recognized. They are:

Ann Johnson, TE, Presbytery of Des Moines
Carol Philips, RE, Presbytery of the John Knox
Linda Nepstad, TE, Presbytery of the John Knox
Gordon Moen, TE, Presbytery of North Central Iowa
Peter Sorenson, RE, Presbytery of Prospect Hill.

We had a time of remembrance for Stated Clerk Michael Lochow, Presbytery of Northern Plains.

The 2023 moderator and vice moderator were installed. The newly installed Moderator Susan Medsker closed worship with prayer and a benediction.



Our new Moderator Susan Medsker

A special note of thanks to Brian Entz for his thoughtful leadership of the Synod as Moderator for the past year.

The Synod Meeting Summary is an unofficial report of synod actions reported after each meeting. For more information about the Synod of Lakes & Prairies go to our website, www.lakesandprairies.org. The Synod can also be found on Facebook.