

GENERAL SYNOD  
REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

2024 Journal of Actions  
**Meeting 6**  
**Saturday morning - June 15, 2024**  
**Arizona Ballroom**

WORSHIP

The same musicians who led the opening worship service in meeting two led the Synod in worship along with representatives from the Council for Pacific and Asian American Ministries (CPAAM) – the Rev. John Chen, Louise Chen, Chen Hsen (Kenny) Huan, HengSheng (Tristan) Lin, the Rev. Dr. Young Na, Leonardy Poluan, the Rev. Grace Jeeyoon Rim, the Rev. Francisca Rumokoy, Jidong Shan, and the Rev. Andrew Yamamoto.

The Word was preached by Leonardy Poluan.

The president called to order the sixth meeting of the General Synod at 8:39 a.m. on Saturday, June 15, 2023.

REPORT OF THE RESTRUCTURING TEAM, CONTINUED

The president invited the members of the RCA’s restructuring team to the platform, along with the Rev. Stephen Shaffer (moderator of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance), to continue to present the restructuring team’s report and recommendations.

The following addressed the Synod:

- The Rev. Greg Brower, restructuring team member
- Michelle Chahine, restructuring team member and corresponding delegate from the General Synod Council serving as the Executive Committee of the General Synod
- The Rev. Sherri Meyer-Veen, restructuring team member
- The Rev. Dr. Micah McCreary, restructuring member and corresponding delegate from New Brunswick Theological Seminary

RF 24-5 was presented to the house (GS Workbook pp. 132-133).

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend RF 24-5 by adding the following as another guideline:

- Ensure that the theology of a candidate is in alignment with the RCA.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend the proposed amendment as follows (additions are underlined):

- Ensure that the theology of a candidate is in alignment with the theology of the RCA.

**VOTED:** To amend the amendment (yes 152; no 24).

The amended amendment was before the house.

**VOTED:** To adopt the amended amendment (yes 120; no 57).

RF 24-5 as amended was before the house.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to further amend the amended RF 24-5, as follows (additions are underlined):

To direct the Pastoral Formation Oversight Board (PFOB), in consultation with the Commission on Church Order, ~~and~~ the Commission on Theology, the Commission on Race and Ethnicity, and the Commission for Women, to develop guidelines ...

**VOTED:** To further amend RF 24-5 (yes 141; no 38).

**VOTED:** To adopt the amended RF 24-5 (yes 177; no 6). RF 24-5 as amended and adopted reads as follows:

To direct the Pastoral Formation Oversight Board (PFOB), in consultation with the Commission on Church Order, ~~and~~ the Commission on Theology, the Commission on Race and Ethnicity, and the Commission for Women, to develop guidelines for middle assemblies [classes] related to *BCO* Chapter 1, Part II, Articles 11-14, for report to the General Synod in 2025. These guidelines should:

- Clarify how the existing processes for ordination of candidates and reception of ordained ministers from other denominations apply to candidates and ministers coming from institutions of theological education and other denominations both inside the U.S. and Canada and outside the U.S. and Canada.
- Ensure that the theology of a candidate is in alignment with the theology of the RCA.
- Ensure the ordination and reception process in the RCA is equitable and just across languages, cultures, and ministry experiences.
- Include a process for the determination of equivalency of degrees, especially for candidates

coming from areas of the world where the master of divinity degree does not exist.

RF 24-6 was presented to the house (GS Workbook p. 135).

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend RF 24-6 as follows (additions are underlined, deletions are stricken):

To instruct the General Synod Council, in consultation with the Commission on Nominations and the Commission on Church Order, to ~~consider study~~ the size and membership requirements of the General Synod's commissions to ~~reduce-adjust~~ the number of members on commissions and possibly simplify the requirements for commission representation in order to right-size the volunteer requirements for a smaller denomination, keeping in mind the workload required to advise the Synod on its essential duties after the restructure and the need for commissions to be able to have at least one in-person meeting per year, and to bring-recommending suggested revisions to the General Synod bylaws (Book of Church Order Chapter 3, Part I, Article 5 [2023 edition, pp. 112-121]) with a preliminary report to the General Synod of 2025.

**VOTED:** To amend RF 24-6 (yes 168; no 8).

RF 24-6 as amended was before the house.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to further amend RF 24-6 as follows (additions are underlined):

To instruct the General Synod Council, in consultation with the Commission on Nominations and the Commission on Church Order, to study the size and membership requirements of the General Synod's commissions to adjust the number of members required on commissions ...

**VOTED:** To reject the further amendment to RF 24-6 (yes 69; no 111).

A motion was made and supported to cease debate.

**VOTED:** To cease debate (yes 173; no 7).

**VOTED:** To adopt the amended RF 24-6 (yes 178; no 2). RF 24-6 as amended and adopted reads as follows:

To instruct the General Synod Council, in consultation with the

Commission on Nominations and the Commission on Church Order, to study the size and membership requirements of the General Synod's commissions to adjust the number of members on commissions and possibly simplify the requirements for commission representation in order to right-size the volunteer requirements for a smaller denomination, keeping in mind the workload required to advise the Synod on its essential duties after the restructure and the need for commissions to be able to have at least one in-person meeting per year, recommending suggested revisions to the General Synod bylaws (Book of Church Order Chapter 3, Part I, Article 5 [2023 edition, pp. 112-121]) with a preliminary report to the General Synod of 2025.

RF 24-7 was presented to the house (GS Workbook p. 137).

The president called upon the Rev. Stephen Shaffer, moderator of the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance, to provide the advice of the committee. The advice was to amend RF 24-7 as follows (additions are double underlined):

To adopt the following amendments to the *Book of Church Order*, Chapter 1, Part II, Article 7, Section 3 (2023 edition, p. 36), for recommendation to the classes for approval (additions are underlined; deletions are stricken):

*Sec. 3.* The classis shall appoint a minister or elder as supervisor of all proceedings of the consistory of a church without an installed minister. If the minister or elder to be appointed as supervisor is a member of another classis, then the classis shall consult with the ~~minister's other classis of membership~~ prior to making such appointment. The classis shall determine the appropriate training and responsibilities for the supervisor.

Reason:

1. Appropriate training for minister or elders supervising churches will better serve the churches.

**VOTED:** To adopt the amendment to RF 24-7  
(yes 173, no 3).

The amended RF 24-7 was before the house.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to further amend RF 24-7 as follows (additions are double underlined, deletions are stricken and

highlighted):

... *Sec. 3.* The classis shall appoint a minister or elder from a different church as supervisor of all proceedings of the consistory of a church without an installed minister. A supervising elder shall be a member of classis during the period of supervision, if not already serving as an elder delegate to the classis from a local church. A supervising elder may serve as an elder delegate to General Synod from their home classis. If the minister ~~or elder~~ to be appointed as supervisor is a member of another classis, then the classis shall consult with the ~~minister's~~ minister's other classis ~~of membership of membership~~ prior to making such appointment. The classis shall determine the appropriate training and responsibilities for the supervisor.

A motion was made and supported from the floor to refer the amendment of RF 24-7 back to the Advisory Committee on Church Order and Governance.

**VOTED:** To reject the referral of the amendment to RF 24-7 (yes 71; no 105).

The further amendment to RF 24-7 was once again before the house.

**VOTED:** To reject the further amendment to RF 24-7 (yes 12; no 167).

The amended RF 24-7 was once again before the house.

A motion was made and supported to cease debate.

**VOTED:** To cease debate (yes 130; no 49).

**VOTED:** To adopt the amended RF 24-7 (yes 106; no 37).  
RF 24-7 as amended and adopted reads as follows:

To adopt the following amendments to the *Book of Church Order*, Chapter 1, Part II, Article 7, Section 3 (2023 edition, p. 36), for recommendation to the classes for approval (additions are underlined; deletions are stricken):

*Sec. 3.* The classis shall appoint a minister or elder as supervisor of all proceedings of the consistory of a church without an installed minister. If the minister or elder to be appointed as supervisor is a member of

another classis, then the classis shall consult with the ~~minister's other classis of membership~~ prior to making such appointment. The classis shall determine the appropriate training and responsibilities for the supervisor.

RF 24-8 was presented to the house (GS Workbook p. 139).

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend RF 24-8 as follows (additions are underlined, deletions are stricken):

To instruct the Commission on Church Order, in consultation with the Commission on Theology and the General Synod professorate, to propose amendments to the Book of Church Order to enable deacons to serve as voting delegates to middle assemblies [classes], for report to General Synod ~~2025-2026~~.

**VOTED:** To reject the amendment to RF 24-8 (yes 55; no 124).

**VOTED:** To reject RF 24-8 (yes 89; no 91).

RF 24-9 was presented to the house (GS Workbook pp. 141-142).

A motion was made and supported from the floor to amend RF 24-9 as follows (additions are underlined, deletions are stricken):

To direct the General Synod Council to limit the percentage rate of General Synod covenant shares to no more than 2.0 percent of contributions received (line 21 in the Consistorial Report Form [CRF]) by ~~2027~~ 2026, with a goal of no more than 1.75 percent by 2027.

**VOTED:** To adopt the amendment to RF 24-9 (yes 109; no 70).

A motion was made and supported to cease debate.

**VOTED:** To cease debate (yes 131; no 49).

**VOTED:** To reject RF 24-9 (yes 65; no 113).

RF 24-10 was presented to the house (GS Workbook p. 144).

**VOTED:** To adopt RF 24-10 (yes 161; no 20).

The restructuring team expressed its appreciation to all those who assisted with their work and joyfully concluded their report.

**RECESS**

The president declared the General Synod recessed at 11:49 a.m., following prayer by Albert Plat, regular delegate from the Classis of Canadian Prairies and corresponding delegate from the General Synod Council serving as the Executive Committee of the General Synod.