

# RESPONSE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING REALIGNMENT OF SYNOD BOUNDARIES

## Executive Summary

November 24, 2015

The Synod of the Southwest (the “Synod”) has taken very seriously the mandate of the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (2014) which directed that “a new configuration of synod boundaries be established [based on an emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call] through a collaborative process between the synods and presbyteries resulting in no more than 10-12 synods...[and that the synods] report to the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly (2016)” the results of that collaborative process. The Synod of the Southwest has engaged in that collaborative process and, as a result, recommends that its boundaries not be reconfigured.

This process has been done prayerfully and with great thought and consideration. In fact the Synod began this process in 2011, as the Synod considered its work, ministry and relevance in serving our Presbyteries and their congregations. This was accomplished through the creation of the Review/Visioning for the Future Task Force (the “RVFTF”) that was established in June, 2011. Its final report was unanimously adopted by the Synod’s commissioners at the Synod Assembly in October 2013. (The RVFTF report is attached) Thus, by the time the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly had issued its decision in response to Mid Council Commission II’s report (General Assembly Item 05-04), the Synod was well on its way to being prepared to engage in discussions with its neighboring synods regarding the realignment of synod boundaries.

Following the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, the Synod of the Southwest transmitted to each of its presbyteries a suggested process for gathering information from its commissioners and others in those presbyteries regarding the realignment of the synods. The Presbyteries responded to this request in the following manner:

Presbytery de Cristo – Decided that the Synod remain a single, stand alone, synod consisting of its current, four presbyteries.

Presbytery of Grand Canyon - Decided that the Synod remain intact, as a viable, single entity synod.

Presbytery of Santa Fe – Responded to the question by submitting an overture to the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, asking for rescission of the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly’s action.

Presbytery of Sierra Blanca - Did not consider the question of the re-alignment of synods, believing it was not of sufficient import for it to undertake the discussion.



Responding to MCCII's request that the Synods engage in conversations in consultation with their presbyteries, and the vision of MCCII's report as "[a] church with mid councils that engage in conversations about collaborating, partnering, and networking, as they define their purpose and the best way to live out a new identity," the Synod engaged in conversations with the following synods in the western part of the country with which the Synod has contiguous boundaries:

- Synod of Southern California & Hawaii
- Synod of the Pacific
- Synod of the Rocky Mountains

In addition, the Synod through its elected leaders engaged in conversation with the Synod of Alaska-Northwest, though we have no common borders, because we recognized that like the Synod we each have large Native American Presbyterian populations within our borders.

No conversation was held with the Synod of the Sun, with the understanding that to become a part of that synod, which is already large geographically and numerically, would not serve the component parts of the Synod and the Synod itself well as it seeks to serve God and God's people in this part of God's world.

The Synod at its March, 2015 meeting also engaged its commissioners and others present to discuss the ramifications, benefits and detriments to realigning its borders such that the Synod would cease to exist as currently configured. The overwhelming response was really a question: "Why are we doing this and how would that enhance the mission and ministry of the congregations and presbyteries of the Synod?" The answer to the question seemed to be that there was no good reason to do this based on the Synod's emergent and emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call.

A similar conclusion was reached in each of the conversations with the other Synods noted above. Nonetheless, the result of those conversations serves to remind us that we are all part of one body and that, regardless of borders established to create the synods as they currently exist, there is much that we can learn from one another and mission and ministry that we could do together. We learned to appreciate and understand the principle raised by MCCII that we, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must be "a church with mid councils engage[d] in conversations about collaborating, partnering, and networking, as they define their purpose and the best way to live out a new identity."

In those conversations with the leaders of the other synods we recognized that there was much we could, and do, do in collaboration with one another and with other synods with whom we do not share common borders and as partners, but given our cultural and structural differences, reconfiguring synod boundaries will not enhance, clarify or promote our mission and ministry. Therefore, the Synod, after careful consideration of the directive of the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, recommends to the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly that the boundaries of the Synod of the Southwest not be reconfigured.



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This process has been done prayerfully and with great thought and consideration. In fact the Synod began this process in 2011, as the Synod considered its work, ministry and relevance in serving our Presbyteries and their congregations. This was accomplished through the creation of the Review/Visioning for the Future Task Force (the “RVFTF”) that was established in June, 2011. Its final report was unanimously adopted by the Synod’s commissioners at the Synod Assembly in October 2013. (The RVFTF report is attached) Thus, by the time the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly had issued its decision in response to Mid Council Commission II’s report (General Assembly Item 05-04), the Synod was well on its way to being prepared to engage in discussions with its neighboring synods regarding the realignment of synod boundaries.

Of significant importance was the RVFTF’s statement that “[a]s the Task Force has engaged in its work, its members have been mindful of the parallel work of MCCII and its possible impact on the work of the Task Force and the future of the Synod. As of this writing, the MCCII has released information that it will be recommending the realignment of the current synod boundaries such that the end result will be no more than eight synods..... [thus] it is now incumbent upon the executives, stated clerks and leadership of the various synods to expand their conversations in an attempt to be prepared to address how each synod will proceed should the General Assembly approve the reduction of the number of synods, how such actions would be implemented and what the effect of such actions would be upon the current synods.”

In fact, in all its work, the Synod mirrored the MCCII in stating that the synod should be an integral part of “[a] church with mid councils that engage in conversations about collaborating, partnering, and networking, as they define their purpose and the best way to live out a new identity”

Following the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, the Synod of the Southwest transmitted to each of its presbyteries a suggested process for gathering information from its commissioners



and others in those presbyteries regarding the realignment of the synods. The Presbyteries responded to this request in the following manner:

#### Presbytery de Cristo

On behalf of the Presbytery de Cristo, the Ministry for Leadership voted unanimously to call for the Synod of the Southwest to remain a single, stand alone, synod consisting of its current, four presbyteries. This vote was taken following a discussion of the long and rich relationships shared within the synod by members of the presbytery and in recognition of the many years of faithful support provided to the presbytery by the synod, its staff and committees. The Ministry for Leadership also reviewed and discussed the idea of consisting as a Synod of the Southwest as part of a larger "Synod of the West" and affirms that, as a secondary option only, this is something with which we would work.

#### Presbytery of Grand Canyon

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon's Leadership Team reviewed the purpose of Synod and our historic engagement in ministry together. Following a further review of a broad array of possibilities regarding the future of Synod, with vigorous discussion expressing a variety of opinions, a motion was approved unanimously to call for the Synod of the Southwest to remain intact, as a viable, single entity synod. Further, it was approved, also by unanimous vote, to call for the so-called "Synod of the West" option, if it is not possible for the Synod of the Southwest to remain a stand-alone synod. The Leadership Team affirmed these two options, in this order, rather than be united with one of our neighbors, dear to us though they are.

#### Presbytery of Santa Fe

The Presbytery of Santa Fe responded to the question by submitting an overture to the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, asking for rescission of the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly's action.

#### Presbytery of Sierra Blanca

During the period in question, the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca was undergoing significant introspection, which included an Administrative Commission, of its own creation, constituted to seek a way for the Presbytery to go forward, structurally and financially. As a result, the Administrative Commission, which had all the authority of the Presbytery, did not consider the question of the re-alignment of synods, believing it was not of sufficient import for it to undertake.

Responding to MCCII's request that the Synods engage in conversations in consultation with their presbyteries, and the vision of MCCII's report as "[a] church with mid councils that engage in conversations about collaborating, partnering, and networking, as they



define their purpose and the best way to live out a new identity,” the Synod engaged in conversations with the following synods in the western part of the country with which the Synod has contiguous boundaries:

- Synod of Southern California & Hawaii
- Synod of the Pacific
- Synod of the Rocky Mountains

In addition, the Synod through its elected leaders engaged in conversation with the Synod of Alaska-Northwest, though we have no common borders, because we recognized that like the Synod we each have large Native American Presbyterian populations within our borders.

No conversation was held with the Synod of the Sun, with the understanding that to become a part of that synod, which is already large geographically and numerically, would not serve the component parts of the Synod and the Synod itself well as it seeks to serve God and God’s people in this part of God’s world.

The persons participating in these conversations with the other Synods included the Presbytery Pastor of the Presbyteries of de Cristo and Grand Canyon, the Missional Presbyter of the Presbytery of Santa Fe, and the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca. In addition, the Moderator-elect of the Synod, the Treasurer of the Synod and Synod Stated Clerk/Executive were also engaged in those conversations. The cost to the Synod of the Southwest to engage in these conversations exceeded \$10,000.

The Synod at its March, 2015 meeting also engaged its commissioners and others present to discuss the ramifications, benefits and detriments to realigning its borders such that the Synod would cease to exist as currently configured. The overwhelming response was really a question: “Why are we doing this and how would that enhance the mission and ministry of the congregations and presbyteries of the Synod?” The answer to the question seemed to be that there was no good reason to do this based on the Synod’s emergent and emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call.

A similar conclusion was reached in each of the conversations with the other Synods noted above. Nonetheless, the result of those conversations serves to remind us that we are all part of one body and that, regardless of borders established to create the synods as they currently exist, there is much that we can learn from one another and mission and ministry that we could do together. We learned to appreciate and understand the principle raised by MCCII that we, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must be “a church with mid councils engage[d] in conversations about collaborating, partnering, and networking, as they define their purpose and the best way to live out a new identity.”

In those conversations with the leaders of the other synods we recognized that there was much we could do in collaboration with one another and as partners. For example, we could learn from the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii (“SSCH”)



how best to respond to judicial cases and issues and that when such issues and cases arise within our own Synod, we could look to SSCH for advice and counsel. We could partner with the Synod of Alaska-Northwest ("SAN") on issues relative to raising up leaders within, and responding to issues specifically relative to, our Native American Communities. We learned that we could find ways, using the example of the Synod of the Pacific ("SoP") to provide services and find ways to support our own Presbyteries.

Likewise, we know that the realignment of borders does not and could not necessarily enhance our relationships and ministry with Synods with which we do not share geographic borders. Of note is the partnership that the Synod has established with the Synods of Mid America, Lakes and Prairies and Lincoln Trails in establishing a Theocademy, which would serve Presbyterians throughout the denomination as they seek to teach our members: (a) what it means to be part of the Presbyterian family, (b) what it means to serve as a ruling elder or deacon within a congregation, and (c) how to establish well-functioning processes for preparing ruling elders to become Commissioned Ruling Elders. Theocademy has already been re-tooled within the Synod to establish a Native American Theocademy Project within our bounds. Utilizing the basic Theocademy project to identify and raise leaders within our own Native American faith communities and in a culturally sensitive and aware manner will serve our sisters and brothers in those communities well and help make, in our estimation, the PC(USA) a much more inclusive and diverse community of believers. In fact, the Synod has made a commitment of time, talent and treasure (in excess of \$200,000) to the establishment of the project which is expected to launch in January, 2016. However, there is concern that continued movement toward the realignment of synod boundaries may detract from the Native American Theocademy project, if not actually derail it entirely.

The Synod has also worked with the Synod of Mid America and financially underwritten the launch of a Spanish-language version of Theocademy that will not be simply a translation of the English-language version, but rather a culturally sensitive and Spanish-speaker led and presented iteration of Theocademy.

In doing the work of investigating the possibilities of realigned synod boundaries, the Synod kept in mind the theological reflections of the RVFTF that stated: .

*"We are reminded of the central significance of the Synod logo: "Ojo de Dios" (Eye of God). The vision statement that has been passed onto us as the Synod of the Southwest reads: "God is weaving the Synod of the Southwest into a tapestry of cultures, peoples and dreams – an 'Ojo de Dios' – that envisions a future of wholeness, grace and beauty." While we may agree that the purpose still holds true, the form is still undefined. But, a future, nonetheless, of wholeness, grace, and beauty still resounds, we believe, in our call from God."*

*The Synod is not static, the Synod is not dead, the Synod is not irrelevant, and the Synod has not been unresponsive to those we serve and the*



*RVFTF understood that, in an intellectual and Biblical context and framework. Thus, the guiding Biblical passage in its work and even now in our assessment of who we are and who we might become is rooted in the Old Testament, wherein “The prophet Habakkuk, speaking to the people of God, as they waited, enduring the brutal invasion of the Babylonians and suffering through the painful destruction of the economic, religious, cultural, governmental, and all tangible foundations of their life, without any apparent intervention, nor hopeful response from God, brought the unanswered, pressing questions and dismantled promises before the Lord (Hab. 2:1-4).”*

*So it was and is that the Synod also asked and continues to ask “Is there hope? Will there be a future? Are the promises of God now rendered useless and lifeless, and the recipients of those promises left utterly helpless? The prophet positioned himself in the watchtower to wait for the Divine to appear. God replied: The vision will come; wait for it. And the Lord also said: ‘The righteous live by their faith.’” (Hab. 2:4).*

*We in the Synod have waited for the vision and have lived by our faith that it will come.*

*So it is that “[i]n our much less dire, yet uncertain times, we wait for God’s vision to be revealed for the Synod. As we wait, as the people of God, as Presbyterians in this part of God’s creation, we all strive to live by faith. We all strive to be faithful to God and to one another. We seek to show our trustworthiness within the promises that shape who we are, in this one body. Our faith abides in the covenants and mutual trust we have with the presbyteries, their leaders and their churches, and their mission efforts. Our faith abides in our focus on those communities whose needs are served well through resources which the Synod can provide - our racial/ethnic ministries, border and immigrant ministries, the broadening of leadership skills, communication and relationship across presbytery borders. Our faith abides in the openness of the dialogical process...developing mission priorities: eye-to-eye, person-to-person conversation as much as possible, along with a widely cast, inclusive invitation for input through...[a] survey. Our bonds with one another, the Synod bonds with presbyteries and their leaders, is grounded on trust, openness, and a common pursuit of serving God, in the PC(U.S.A.), with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love”.*

This is our emergent and emerging sense of purpose, partnership, context, and call. We have found common purpose with our sisters and brothers throughout the Synod and have pursued, and will pursue, it with passion, energy, intelligence, imagination and love, for one another.

We are firmly convinced that the realignment of synod boundaries will not enhance, clarify or promote our mission and ministry. Therefore, the Synod, after careful



consideration of the directive of the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, recommends to the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly that the boundaries of the Synod of the Southwest not be reconfigured and, further, makes no recommendation to the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly regarding the reconfiguration of any others synod's boundaries.

We make this recommendation not because we are afraid of an as yet undefined future with new partners under a new structure, but because we believe by faith and our own collective soul-searching that we are being faithful to God and to God's yet unrevealed and ultimate purposes. And we are concerned that a realignment of Synod boundaries at this time in our life together, as a Synod in mission and partnership with its presbyteries, may in fact side track or even harm the bonds of trust we have worked so hard these past several years to establish and nurture as together the Synod and its presbyteries seek to serve God and God's people in this part of God's creation.



**ATTACHMENT**  
**TO**  
**THE SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST'S**  
**RESPONSE TO**  
**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**REGARDING**  
**REALIGNMENT OF SYNOD**  
**BOUNDARIES**

**November 24, 2015**



1                   **SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST**  
2                   **REVIEW/VISIONING FOR THE FUTURE**  
3                   **TASK FORCE**  
4                   **REPORT**

5  
6  
7                   **Final Report**  
8                   **To**  
9                   **The Commissioners**  
10                  **Assembled as**  
11                  **The Synod of the Southwest**

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13  
14                  October 25-26, 2013

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16  
17                  Revised October 10, 2013



18 **I. INTRODUCTION**

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20 At the Synod of the Southwest (the "Synod") Stated Meeting on June 18, 2011, the

21 commissioners approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the

22 Synod create a Task Force.

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24 A. 1. The Task Force shall be composed of 9 persons:

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26 a. 4 members of whom shall be appointed by the Moderator of the Synod

27 in consultation with the Executive Committee with one representative

28 from each Presbytery;

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30 b. 4 members of whom shall be appointed by the Councils of the

31 Presbyteries, one by each Presbytery Council and none of whom shall

32 be the Executive/Stated Clerk (or their equivalent) of the respective

33 Presbytery;

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35 c. The moderator of which shall be the Moderator-elect of the Synod

36 (2012-2013); and,

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38 d. The Interim Executive of the Synod who shall serve as the staff to the

39 Task Force.

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41 2. The Task Force is charged to:

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43 a. Review the seven (7) priorities of the Synod adopted in 2006 to

44 determine whether they should be changed, eliminated, or augmented

45 by additional priorities and to bring a plan to the February/March 2012

46 meeting of the Synod for implementing those priorities; and,

47 b. Develop and bring to the February/March 2012 meeting of the Synod a

48 plan for engaging in a conversation with the five (5) middle governing



bodies of the Synod, including a gathering of leaders from the five governing bodies as recommended in the de Cristo/Grand Canyon Overture, for the purpose of:

I. Identifying and developing possible ways to address the need to focus mission for the five middle Governing bodies more clearly and to use more wisely the resources entrusted to their care; and,

II. Proposing to the appropriate governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), steps these five middle governing bodies may wish to take to become more effective agents of Christ's mission in our region including, but not limited to, the reorganization and realignment of the life, work and boundaries of these five middle governing bodies.

B. The commissioners voted to approve the recommendation that the Synod continue to utilize the seven priorities adopted in 2006 as its roadmap for the work and mission of Jesus Christ in the region until it has received and adopted recommendations regarding those priorities as well as any recommendations that may result from the five middle governing body conversation as described in 1. A., above.

C. The commissioners voted to approve the recommendation that the actions taken in items A. and B. above, serve as the Synod's response to the de Cristo Presbytery/Grand Canyon Presbytery Overture as set forth in the Grand Canyon/de Cristo Conversation Group Mid-term Report dated March 7, 2011. (**See Appendix A.**)



After the Presbyteries appointed their representatives, the Synod elected the remaining members of the task force in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, (USA).

Thus, the Review/Visioning for the Future Task Force (the “Task Force”) was established with membership as follows:

Elder Rocky Mackey -- Moderator, Grand Canyon Presbytery (Elected by the Synod)  
Elder Steve Brownson – de Cristo Presbytery (Appointed by the Moderator of de Cristo Presbytery)  
Rev. Ray Thomas – de Cristo Presbytery (Elected by the Synod)  
Elder Clifford Oesch – Grand Canyon Presbytery (Appointed by the Moderator of Grand Canyon Presbytery)  
Rev. José Olagues – Grand Canyon Presbytery (Elected by the Synod)  
Elder Marty Bruner – Santa Fe Presbytery (Elected by the Synod)  
Elder Ruth Montoya – Santa Fe Presbytery (Appointed by the Council of Santa Fe Presbytery)  
Elder Janell Kane – Sierra Blanca Presbytery (Appointed by the Council of Sierra Blanca Presbytery)  
Rev. Wayne Hawkins – Sierra Blanca Presbytery (Elected by the Synod)  
Elder Conrad Rocha – Staff Resource (Interim Synod Executive/Stated Clerk)  
Elder Robin Thomas – Recorder (Synod Executive Assistant/Office Manager)

The committee first met in November, 2011, for the purpose of understanding the charge to the Task Force and to begin laying plans for the implementation of the Task Force’s charge. Meetings were held throughout 2012 and 2013 in the form of face to face meetings in both Phoenix and Albuquerque, “Go To Meeting” electronic conferencing at the VideoConferencing Centers (formerly referred to as the Cyber/Internet Cafes), and by conference calls. Additionally, on several occasions, members who could not be in attendance joined the meeting by telephone while the Task Force meetings were in session.



109 It was determined early in our meetings that the Task Force needed to hold  
110 conversations with the Presbytery Executives, the leadership of each of the Presbytery  
111 Councils, leadership of the Racial/Ethnic communities within the Synod, the Native  
112 American church leaders at their Fall 2012 Native American Consultation, Presbyterian  
113 Women of the Synod of the Southwest, Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee, the  
114 Synod Assembly of Commissioners (the "Assembly"), the Middle Eastern Presbyterian  
115 Fellowship, the Korean community, the African American community, and  
116 commissioners from the four presbyteries.

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118 The Task Force also discussed and considered what efforts at repurposing and  
119 refocusing were being undertaken by other synods.....including discussion of the  
120 reduced function Synod of Alaska-Northwest and the pared down functions of the  
121 Synods of Rocky Mountains and Boriquen (Puerto Rico). The more programmatic  
122 synods, such as the Synods of Living Waters and Lakes & Praries, were also  
123 considered; as well as the Synod of Southern California and Hawaii which is primarily a  
124 judicial function synod.

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126 Additionally, it was determined that to broaden the input from as many persons within  
127 the Synod as possible, the Task Force would develop a survey seeking information and  
128 advice on: the importance of the seven priorities with suggestions on whether and/or  
129 how the priorities could be modified, expanded or eliminated, recommendations on new  
130 priorities, historical participation in Synod sponsored events and programs, monetary  
131 assistance received by respondents from the Synod, an opportunity for respondents to  
132 raise any issues or make any comments not otherwise solicited in the survey and  
133 additional demographical information on the respondents. Respondents were not asked  
134 their name in order for the survey responses to remain anonymous and to elicit candid  
135 responses. Questions were designed by the members of the Task Force and were  
136 submitted to the Research Services office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the  
137 General Assembly for review and advice on their appropriateness for data collection  
138 techniques and to carry out that data collection. Once the responses were received



from the Research Services office, tasks force members reviewed this advice and finalized the questions on the survey.

There were 728 Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders identified within the four presbyteries to receive the survey. Ninety-one could not be contacted due to insufficient contact information, leaving 637 who were contacted either by e-mail or through the US Postal Service. Of the 637 contacted, 406 or 63% responded to the survey. The responses and data related to the survey are found in **Appendix B** of this report.

Over many weeks and meetings, we carefully sifted through the many conversations that had taken place, the information collected by the Task Force members and the data revealed in the survey. Our goal was to identify current themes from the voices within the Synod.

We then focused on what we believed needed to be done and the human resources that could help us accomplish those ends. Once we had accomplished those tasks, we set upon creating a budget to reflect that direction. That budget and the understanding of what we believed we heard our Synod should be were then tested by submitting drafts to, and engaging in conversations with, the Synod's Finance & Stewardship Development Committee (a first draft and based on their input a second draft) and with a gathering/consultation of the leaders of the four Presbyteries and the Synod (a third draft based on additional input from the Synod's Finance & Stewardship Development Committee). As a result, what you have before you is a final document that is now in its fourth iteration.

Very important to our task was to engage in Biblical reflection in its meetings. Seeking direction from the Holy Spirit, the Task Force reflected and sought to discern what God was saying to us in several passages of the Bible. Seeking God's will, applying it to the charge before us, and being of one accord, we present the following report for consideration by the commissioners assembled as the Synod of the Southwest.



## **II. BACKGROUND**

### **Boundaries**

The Synod of the Southwest (the “Synod”) is one of sixteen synods (regional governing bodies/councils) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It geographically encompasses Arizona, New Mexico and a small portion of Utah, and includes de Cristo Presbytery, Grand Canyon Presbytery, Santa Fe Presbytery, and Sierra Blanca Presbytery. The Synod, as a mid council (governing body) includes just under 30,000 members in 162 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches and chapels.

### **Rights, Responsibilities and Authority**

As established by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “Constitution”), the Synod has those rights and powers set forth therein, as well as all other rights, responsibilities and authorities granted by the Synod’s bylaws consistent with the Constitution and/or as expanded by the action or actions of the Synod. As such, the Synod:

1. Has ecclesiastical jurisdiction for the purpose of serving Jesus Christ and declaring and obeying his will in relation to truth and service, order and discipline. The Synod shall be a deliberative and policy making body;
2. Reviews reports and recommendations, engages in discussion and debate, makes decisions and examines purposes, priorities and programs. The Synod has authority to assign tasks to its committees and Task Forces and to require that they be accomplished; and,
3. Retains for itself responsibility for coordination of mission and program in light of its purposes and in harmony with the presbyteries and the General Assembly. When the Synod meets in consultation/negotiation, it serves as an arena in which



the presbyteries, the Synod, and the General Assembly can reach partnership agreements to "give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity" (G-9.0404).

It is important to note that when the Task Force began its work, there was a Middle Governing Body Task Force, established by the 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, in part at the request of the Synod, to review all governing bodies of the PCUSA. This Task Force, subsequently renamed Mid Council Commission I (MCCI), focused its work on considering the role of synods in the life and mission of the PCUSA. It eventually recommended to the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly that Synods, as council of the PCUSA, be eliminated. However, the Committee of the General Assembly tasked with considering the recommendations of MCCI, rejected the recommendations and, instead, recommended that the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly consider reorganizing the synods in such a way as to reduce the number of synods within the PCUSA. The 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, meeting in plenary and considering the recommendation of the GA Committee, in turn, rejected the Committee's recommendation while affirming the value of synods as an integral part of the PCUSA's system and structure of mission and governance. Further, in response to this "inaction", the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly created a new Task Force, now known as Mid Council Commission II, to review the role and mission of synods and to bring a recommendation to the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, which is scheduled to meet in Detroit, Michigan in June, 2014.

As the Task Force has engaged in its work, its members have been mindful of the parallel work of MCCII and its possible impact on the work of the Task Force and the future of the Synod. As of this writing, the MCCII has released information (**see Appendix C**) that it will be recommending the realignment of the current synod boundaries such that the end result will be no more than eight synods. Aware of that fact, the executives of fourteen of the synods and the stated clerks of the two other synods (Boriquen and Alaska-Northwest) that are without executives have already begun to engage in conversations on how to proceed should that be the recommendation of MCCII, and the General Assembly should subsequently adopt it.



Similarly, before this announcement, the chair of MCCII met with the synod executives to discuss this very approach and MCCII representatives held teleconferences with the moderator, moderator-elect, executive and treasurer of each synod to respond to the possibility of there being fewer synods.

In addition, it is anticipated that at least one presbytery in the denomination, perhaps more, will be sending overtures to the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to reject the concept of fewer synods and allowing each synod to determine whether and how it might partner with other synods, go it alone, or reduce their functions, as now provided in the denomination's form of government.

Nevertheless, it is now incumbent upon the executives, stated clerks and leadership of the various synods to expand their conversations in an attempt to be prepared to address how each synod will proceed should the General Assembly approve the reduction of the number of synods, how such actions would be implemented and what the effect of such actions would be upon the current synods.

### Organization

In order to exercise its rights and authority and carry out its responsibilities, as currently set forth in the Constitution, the Synod has lodged its ecclesial, missional, administrative and legal responsibilities in its Assembly, which serves as the corporate Board of Directors, made up of commissioners elected by their respective presbyteries to serve in the Assembly and of which there are six from de Cristo Presbytery, ten from Grand Canyon Presbytery, six from Santa Fe Presbytery and four from Sierra Blanca Presbytery. Other members of the Synod include: the Synod moderator, moderator-elect, executive/stated clerk and treasurer, the moderator of the Presbyterian Women of the Synod of the Southwest, and the moderators of the Synod's committees, all of whom serve with voice and vote, during their terms of office. In addition, ex-officio members with privilege of the floor but no vote at meetings of the Assembly are: the executive presbyters (or their presbytery equivalent) of each of the four presbyteries,



the stated clerks/associate stated clerks of each of the four presbyteries, the moderators of Synod Task Forces or ministry teams, staff to Synod committees and past moderators of the Synod.

The organizational structure of the Synod was established to carry out and make recommendations to the Assembly relative to its ecclesial, missional, administrative, judicial, and legal responsibilities and priorities, as established by the Constitution and its bylaws. To this end, the Synod is organized into committees and ministry teams plus such Task Forces or task groups that may be established based on particular needs to address particular issues, as the Assembly may decide. The Synod's standing committees and teams are: the Committee on Representation and Nominations (ecclesial), the Native American Ministries Coordinating Committee (missional and currently dormant), the Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee (missional), the Border Ministry Team (missional), the Communications Team (missional), the Finance & Stewardship Development Committee (administrative/missional) and the Personnel Committee (administrative). There is also a Permanent Judicial Commission (judicial), established under the Constitution, to carry out the Synod's judicial functions and, currently, a Review/Visioning for the Future Task Force established by the Synod for the purpose of reviewing the current priorities of the Synod and to consider its structure and emphases as it moves into the future. Finally, there is an Executive Committee, comprised of the Synod moderator and moderator-elect, the moderator of the Synod Finance & Stewardship Development Committee, the Synod treasurer and the Synod executive/stated clerk, which is authorized to take actions and make decisions between meetings of the Assembly that require immediate action and such other duties and responsibilities as the Assembly may grant it. In addition, four of the members of the Executive Committee serve as officers of the corporation: The Synod moderator as President, the moderator of the Synod Finance & Stewardship Committee as Vice-President, the Synod treasurer as Treasurer and the Synod stated clerk as Secretary.



Priorities

The seven priorities of the Synod, as adopted in 2006 and the implementation of which began in 2008 are:

1. **COMMUNICATION.** That the Synod will enhance the comprehensive communication of the Synod by developing effective communication tools.
2. **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.** That the Synod will supplement the training and development offered by congregations in ways that: a) bring together the critical mass of resources which may not be available to presbyteries or congregations singly; and, b) provide the widest version of the church as a component of faith development, when equipping the saints for ministry.
3. **BORDER & IMMIGRANT MINISTRIES.** That the Synod will work to ensure a Presbyterian presence and ongoing regional relationships on and to the border – a reality which affects, in some way or another, all of our communities.
4. **NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT & CONGREGATIONAL REDEVELOPMENT (TRANSFORMATION).** That the Synod, while recognizing that the presbyteries are directly responsible for this aspect of the life of the church in our region, will resource all four presbyteries in what is for them a common task, as they plant new worshiping communities and revive others in an area of rapid growth and changing demographics.
5. **RACIAL/ETHNIC MINISTRY.** The Synod will assist in bringing together racial ethnic persons across presbytery lines and in ways that will strengthen congregations and individuals in regional racial/ethnic ministry.



6. ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS. That the Synod will undertake interfaith and ecumenical conversations in adaptive ways that may be beyond the scope of existing ecumenical and interfaith agreements.

7. STEWARDSHIP & FUNDS DEVELOPMENT. That the Synod will provide resources and training for presbyteries as we all work together toward self-support in a time when external resources are declining.

### Accomplishments

In addressing and implementing these seven priorities the Synod has, among many actions, activities and efforts:

1. Hosted two Synod-wide Native American Consultations, one in 2008 and one in 2012, with hope that this community would give direction and energy to the implementation of the Native American Ministries Coordinating Committee.

2. Co-hosted, with the Synod of the Sun, a gathering of representatives from the border synods (Sinodo del Noroeste and Sinodo de Israel) of the Presbyterian Church of Mexico (Iglesia Presbiteriana Nacional de Mexico - IPNM). This was followed by a number of exchanges and meetings in which the Mexican synods and the Synod sought to identify and work cooperatively to address areas of mutual concern and interest. However, the decision of the IPNM to sever ties with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has thwarted efforts to proceed in addressing those mutual areas of concern and interest.

3. Financially assisted existing border ministries, including Pasos de Fe, Café Justo, and Frontera de Cristo, as well as providing encouragement and a platform to showcase their ministries before the Synod Assembly and in other venues.



4. Provided support (financial and otherwise) to the creation and execution of events to educate Presbyterians and our ecumenical brothers and sisters about border issues.

5. Co-hosted, and provided scholarships for church leaders to attend, the annual church-wide Stewardship Kaleidoscope Conference.

6. Partnered with some of our presbytery executives and others to encourage the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to create a committee at the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2012) on Immigration. This effort proved successful and four overtures heard by that committee were authored by the Presbyteries of Grand Canyon and Santa Fe and by the Synod Assembly.

7. Has planned and hosted a Synod-wide conference on stewardship held in August 2013.

8. Hired a part-time independent contractor to serve as a consultant for Native American Ministries to assist the Synod in identifying issues that the Synod might address and organize the second Synod-wide Native American Consultation, as described above.

9. Hired a part-time Communication and Internet Specialist for the purpose of educating and providing support to our churches, in partnership with the Presbyteries, pertaining to the use of social media in “telling the story.”

10. Authorized an expenditure for, and with the assistance of the Communication and Internet Specialist, the creation of three “VideoConferencing Centers” in each presbytery and one in each of the current Synod executive’s offices (one in New Mexico and one in Arizona) for the purpose of facilitating communication and meetings by and among the presbyteries and the Synod. This project is currently a work-in-progress and the technology has already been used by the Synod for meetings of its committees and



Task Forces, thus reducing the expense of travel and general wear and tear of participants to conduct Synod business.

11. Provided innumerable scholarships for a variety of purposes in our pursuit of training church leadership.

12. Helped underwrite and promote the Phyllis Tickle event held in New Mexico.

13. Obtained funding for, organized, and hosted a series of training conferences in Biblical studies and preaching for pastors and CREs throughout the Synod.



### **III. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS**

We are reminded of the central significance of the Synod logo: “Ojo de Dios” (Eye of God). The vision statement that has been passed onto us as the Synod of the Southwest reads: “God is weaving the Synod of the Southwest into a tapestry of cultures, peoples and dreams – an ‘Ojo de Dios’ – that envisions a future of wholeness, grace and beauty.” While we may agree that the purpose still holds true, the form is still undefined. But, a future, nonetheless, of wholeness, grace, and beauty still resounds, we believe, in our call from God.

The prophet Habakkuk, speaking to the people of God, as they waited, enduring the brutal invasion of the Babylonians and suffering through the painful destruction of the economic, religious, cultural, governmental, and all tangible foundations of their life, without any apparent intervention, nor hopeful response from God, brought the unanswered, pressing questions and dismantled promises before the Lord (Hab. 2:1-4). Is there hope? Will there be a future? Are the promises of God now rendered useless and lifeless, and the recipients of those promises left utterly helpless? The prophet positioned himself in the watchtower to wait for the Divine to appear. God replied: The vision will come; wait for it. And the Lord also said: “The righteous live by their faith.” (Hab. 2:4)

In our much less dire, yet uncertain times, we wait for God’s vision to be revealed for the Synod. As we wait, as the people of God, as Presbyterians in this part of God’s creation, we all strive to live by faith. We all strive to be faithful to God and to one another. We seek to show our trustworthiness within the promises that shape who we are, in this one body. Our faith abides in the covenants and mutual trust we have with the presbyteries, their leaders and their churches, and their mission efforts. Our faith abides in our focus on those communities whose needs are served well through resources which the Synod can provide - our racial/ethnic ministries, border and immigrant ministries, the broadening of leadership skills, communication and relationship across presbytery borders. Our faith abides in the openness of the



dialogical process this Task Force chose for developing mission priorities: eye-to-eye, person-to-person conversation as much as possible, along with a widely cast, inclusive invitation for input through the survey. Our bonds with one another, the Synod bonds with presbyteries and their leaders, is grounded on trust, openness, and a common pursuit of serving God, in the PC(USA), with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. As we perceive God leading us into a hopeful, yet still uncertain future, we remain alive only by our faith in this God whose steadfast love endures forever.

Casting our efforts to define the future priorities of the Synod in terms of Biblical imagery, we suggest that God has brought us out and set us down in the middle of a valley; it is full of bones (Ezek. 37:1-14). As Ezekiel employed this powerful metaphor to develop his response to the voices of gloom and despair in his own time and circumstances, so do we invite his words to speak to us at this threshold in our collective story. We have heard some voices that suggest that Synod has entered that valley of the end:

*"I don't think we need Synod."*

*"I'm not sure we can afford Synod much longer."*

*"Synods should be eliminated."*

*"Synods are no longer important to the connectional or ministry life of the PC(USA)."*

*"Synod is, and has been, useless for many years: dissolve it."*

To that vocal minority, the bones are very dry. And this Task Force has been asked to consider: Can we find a way to bring these bones to life for them and all within the Synod?

Can this Synod live beyond being a bare bones, reduced functioning, mid-council, providing only the constitutionally required judicial process and administrative review of the work of the presbyteries, and meeting at least every two years?



477 Will there be a more lively and fruitful future, blessed by God, affirmed by the voice of  
478 the Synod and the four presbyteries?

479  
480 We, the Task Force, have heard a rattling, a bone meeting bone connection. We have  
481 identified the formation of sinews: strong and resilient connective tissue that is being  
482 enabled by the work of the Synod. We have heard praise for the Preaching  
483 Kaleidoscopes, Cyber Cafés, Native American Consultations, the contributions of Synod  
484 staff and leadership as they support presbyteries through times of transition, Hispanic  
485 ministries, Middle East Presbyterian Fellowship, Presbyterian Women, border  
486 ministries, and youth attending General Assembly. Our ears have perceived a rattling  
487 off of gratitude for the presence, the assistance, and the witness to Christ that the  
488 Synod has offered, and is offering, that have kept vital ministries and missions alive.  
489 There is life here and the Spirit is bringing new life; we watch it take shape during this  
490 season of change across our denomination.

491  
492 God is the giver of life. God breathes the Holy Spirit that invigorates, animates, and  
493 directs our life together as a Synod. We bear witness that there is life in these bones  
494 and hope for our future together. Critical connections are being made across the diverse  
495 and committed missions and ministries of the PC(USA) in Arizona and New Mexico.  
496 We believe God is at work in, and through, the Synod. Yet, as the “bones” are  
497 reconnected during this time of flux, a new form of our life is emerging, taking on an, as  
498 yet, unidentifiable form. Other influences are at play in the formation: the decisions of  
499 General Assembly regarding the future of mid councils and the decisions of the Synod  
500 regarding its future. We pray, hope, and trust, that the Spirit is active, in broad and  
501 unexpected ways, as the Synod is being molded and re-cast for our time and  
502 circumstances.

503  
504 In Isaiah 55:1, the prophet issues an invitation for everyone to “Come, buy wine and  
505 milk without money and without price”. Are we too focused on money as the  
506 determinant of our future? What is this wine, and this milk, that the prophet imagines?  
507 Can our important and serious conversations about decreasing financial resources also



be framed by faithful proclamation that our being together in relationship and in service is firmly grounded on the God whose steadfast love endures forever? How do we hold our enduring gratitude for God's sustaining grace, Bible, and spreadsheet together, in our collective hands, as we move into an uncertain future? We believe that our faith in the Triune God and our faithfulness to one another (Habakkuk), the connections and relationships that God is creating in us as one Synod body (Ezekiel), and the presence of the Holy Spirit/Breath (*pneuma* in Greek, *ruah* in Hebrew) will be the measure and the extent of our life together, no matter what our future form will be.

The Holy Spirit burst upon the Church on the Day of Pentecost, with unrestrained, multiple verbal outbursts about the mighty deeds of God, spoken in native tongues so every hearer could receive the message. The divine, powerful proclamations transported those who were gathered to a place of wonder, bewilderment, and scorn. "What does this mean?" The one disciple who had recently fallen from grace, the recovering denier, vulnerable to public doubt and personal derision, Peter, interpreted the meaning of the translucent moment, using a vision from words of the prophet Joel, concluding that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

We strive to be faithful and many tongued in the truthful proclamation of God's mighty deeds among us. We seek to communicate what God is doing in our midst to all four corners of our Synod with clear and understandable language. We are committed to being faithful to the voice of God whom we believe we have heard speak during our work together. We are willing to be accused of drinking fresh wine too early in the morning by going overboard in declaring our hope in a future life for the Synod that others may have not yet perceived. We pray that the Ojo de Dios may be present and be proclaimed by our simple, yet distinctive, human tongues in ways that enliven, strengthen, encourage, and connect God's people in common ministry and purpose.



#### **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SYNOD PRIORITIES**

As the Task Force members approached their work, we recognized that our best measure of success as a Synod is if we have healthy Presbyteries and, in turn, healthy congregations. To this end, most of what follows was our effort, having listened to a varied and diverse segment of our Synod-wide community, to seek to find ways either to partner with our Presbyteries or to provide resources we understood they sought to nurture them into blossoming as healthy, sustainable, Christ-centered communities of mission and ministry.

Likewise, throughout these recommendations we hope the reader recognizes our desire to engage in regular listening to our sisters and brothers within the Presbyteries to understand the complexities of “being” a presbytery and to assist them, as they seek our assistance, in “becoming” those Christ-centered communities of mission and ministry.

Finally we would note that though there is a great deal of specificity in the recommendations that follow, they are not intended to be final and absolute, but always subject to modification and adaptation as our mission environment changes and changes again.

##### **A. Communications**

**Context.** The Synod staff has worked extremely hard at upgrading the Synod website and maximizing its use in providing information about upcoming events. Additionally, the Synod hired an Internet and Communications Specialist to install and make operational a Synod-wide teleconferencing system (“cyber cafés”) that now enable the Synod and its four presbyteries and their committees to utilize technology in conducting electronic meetings, thus saving time and resources (human and financial). This specialist installed the equipment, tested its functionality, and trained individuals on how to initiate electronic communications using this media. In 2013, following the



resignation of the Synod's Internet and Communication Specialist, the Synod contracted with a computer and information technology consulting firm to provide support for, and the continued implementation and advancement of, the cyber cafés installed throughout the Synod in 2012.

However, as the Task Force engaged in conversation with many groups and individuals throughout the Synod, it again became apparent that, while electronic communication is important, it does not replace the personal, face-to-face presence and interaction. Members of our congregations, and even leaders within our presbyteries, may not be fully aware of the vital and critical ministry being performed by the Synod. As the Synod Implementation Team recognized in 2006, "a broader view of communication [is] needed. There are stories to be told, pictures to be shared, ideas to be exchanged, and events to be publicized, not just within the Synod, but also with the whole PCUSA." Interactive communication continues to be a challenge.

Communication, therefore, is not only the first priority for the Synod, it must become the number one priority for all members of the Synod (commissioners, committee members, and staff). The Task Force recognizes there are not only important administrative functions which must be accomplished in the efficient functioning of the Synod, but there are also important stories and events that need to be broadcast with an evangelical fervor to the Presbyteries and congregations. It is incumbent upon all members of Synod to share these stories with the members of their presbyteries, from the leadership level to every member sitting in the pews of our congregations.

In order to accomplish this critical work, the Task Force believes that all members of the Synod should be provided with the necessary tools to properly and adequately accomplish the kind of interactive communication required.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**



1. Affirm the need to develop and implement a communications team with the responsibility of initiating, providing, and overseeing a continuous means of communication to inform and educate members of presbyteries, congregations, and the denomination as a whole, of the vital ministries being conducted within the Synod of the Southwest;

2. Strongly encourage the regular reporting by the Synod commissioners to their respective presbyteries of the ministries of the Synod and provide them with the necessary tools to assist them in making informative and inspiring reports;

3. Prepare an “action summary” within two weeks following each stated Synod meeting, in newsletter format, to communicate with each of the presbytery leadership teams, or its equivalent, the action(s) taken by the Synod;

4. Continue to retain the services of an independent contractor to serve as a consultant on information technology for the purpose of providing support for, and the continued implementation and advancement of, the cyber cafés installed throughout the Synod.

5. Continue to retain the services of an independent contractor to serve as a consultant/webmaster with the Synod administrative staff facilitating regular updates, current calendar and stories to be shared electronically on the Synod website, including news of happenings in presbyteries. And, that the webmaster and/or office staff responsible for these communication tasks attend the annual training events of the Church Communicators Network in order to keep up to date and to network with other communicators;

6. Continually update mailing and e-mail lists for event announcements and recruitment as an interactive networking tool. These lists will identify persons by function, interest and presbytery for specifically targeted information (e.g. stewardship, border concerns, etc.). This will be referred to the Synod executive for implementation;



7. Submit information about events and stories of regional ministry to national publications of the PC(USA) and ecumenical bodies at least two to four times a year; and,

8. Provide consulting assistance and services, as resources are available, to presbyteries and congregations regarding the development of websites and the use of social media;

## **B. Leadership Development**

**Context.** The Task Force, in its conversations and through its survey, has noted that the past efforts and events aimed at the training and development of the leaders, and particularly the teaching elders, has been identified as extremely important. To this end, the Synod has hosted a series of Biblical teaching/preaching events known as “Biblical Kaleidoscope”. In 2014 we are scheduled to host three events. The longer, five-day, summer event will be held at Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, NM and two shorter, three-day, events will be held, one in de Cristo Presbytery and the other in Santa Fe Presbytery, with the shorter events designed around the interests and needs of the teaching elders in those particular geographical areas.

These efforts have provided resources which may not have been available to the presbyteries, congregations or others within the Synod community. Providing and reinforcing the components of faith development which serve in equipping the saints for ministries is an important and vital priority to the church and its growth. It was also clear that many events now held by presbyteries might be offered to the wider Synod community, enabling greater relationship-building across presbytery boundaries. These events could more effectively utilize resources, educational principles and practices, experiences, and expertise which may be more readily available in individual presbyteries. We consider and believe that the following recommendations continue to emphasize this important priority.



**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Assist in sponsoring Synod-wide conferences, in concert with the presbyteries, for the purpose of developing presbytery and congregational leadership;
2. Sponsor, wholly or jointly with the presbyteries, focused smaller groups, conferences and training events, making them available to Synod-wide participation;
3. Continue hosting the preaching events associated with “Biblical Preaching for Pastors in the West”, known as Biblical Kaleidoscope;
4. Convene, annually, representatives from among the Synod commissioners of each presbytery for the purpose of developing ideas for leadership development events/foci in the coming year, based on the input received from their presbyteries;
5. Design multiple ways to encourage and connect people from churches in Arizona and New Mexico to participate in the sending and receiving of people into regional, national and international contexts for mission education and action;
6. Maintain a Resource Page on the Synod website which would include information/documents such as Synod Grant Applications, By Laws, etc.;
7. Affirm the need for an Hispanic Gathering and an All-Racial/Ethnic Gathering, similar to those previously held for Native Americans and as described in the “Racial Ethnic Ministry” recommendations, below;
8. Assist presbyteries with educational/human resources on how to do new church development, as the presbyteries may deem necessary and appropriate; and,



9. Include Stewardship and Funds Development as an integral component of Leadership Development. *See G. Stewardship & Funds Development, below.*

### **C. Border & Immigrant Ministries**

**Context.** The Task Force recognizes that the mission of the Synod in its border ministries has been affected by the disassociation of the Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de Mexico from PC(USA). However, it has been made clear to us that it is still incumbent upon the Synod and its presbyteries to continue a “Presbyterian presence and ongoing regional relationships on and to the border...and to provide avenues to partner with our sisters and brothers beyond our borders.” (Ref: Final Report – Part I, Synod of the Southwest, Implementation Team , Prepared for the March 14-15, 2008 Synod Meeting, C. Border & Immigrant Ministries). **(See Appendix D.)**

Nonetheless, the members of the Task Force believe that elimination of the Border Ministries Team as a separate unit of mission best utilizes our human resources. Further, the Task Force recognizes that the current structure already has lodged, to a great extent, the portfolio of the Border Ministries Team within the Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee. Thus, a separate unit of mission to pursue the goals and objectives of the Border Ministries Team is not necessary, provided those goals and objectives remain within the Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Facilitate partnerships and networks in order to further cooperative border ministries among the four presbyteries, which shall include members of existing presbytery and local border ministry teams and groups;
2. Continue to be in conversation with the directors and leadership of all of the border ministries (at least in the Synod if not in our neighboring synods) for the



724 purpose of engendering regular communication, and encouraging advocacy on  
725 relevant issues;

- 726
- 727 3. Continue to devote a section of the Synod website to Presbyterian border  
728 ministries, including the work of the Young Adult Volunteers in Mission, Tucson  
729 Borderlands Project;

- 730
- 731 4. Identify, and direct Synod leaders to seek opportunities to encourage  
732 immigration reform advocacy and involvement of state and local officials,  
733 consistent with PC(USA) policy(ies);

- 734
- 735 5. Offer and publicize a wide range of opportunities for education and involvement  
736 for people of all ages with regard to border issues and realities, consistent with  
737 PC(USA) policy(ies), recognizing that people within the Synod have multiple  
738 and diverse perspectives about undocumented immigrants; and,

- 739
- 740 6. Affirm the existence of the goals and objectives of the Border Ministries Team,  
741 lodging its responsibilities of overseeing and initiating the aforementioned  
742 recommendations and related emergencies in the Synod's Hispanic Ministries  
743 Coordinating Committee (the "HMCC"), and eliminating the Border Ministry Team  
744 as a separate unit of mission of the Synod.

745

746 **D. New Church Development/Transformation (Redevelopment):**

747

748 **Context.** In 2008, the Implementation Team of the Synod Review Task Force  
749 recognized that "the starting of churches and fellowships is a presbytery task," but that  
750 "a regional ministry might bring together energy and an exchange of ideas." The Task  
751 Force recommended hosting workshops, providing financial support for new church  
752 development ("NCD") pastors to attend training, sharing information about where to find  
753 funding, and consulting with presbyteries to identify pastors with NCD/Congregational  
754 Transformation abilities for mentoring purposes. The majority of those interviewed and



755 surveyed agree that this is a presbytery function and the Synod could better use its  
756 resources in other areas.

757  
758 Nonetheless, the Synod should remain an active partner with its Presbyteries in  
759 providing resources and support as the Presbyteries, in consultation with the Synod and  
760 one another, might deem appropriate and helpful.

761  
762 **Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force**  
763 **recommends that the Synod:**

- 764  
765 1. Reaffirm the importance of New Church Development/Transformation  
766 (Redevelopment) in the life of the Synod through intentional partnering with the  
767 Presbyteries as the Presbyteries may deem appropriate and as the Synod is  
768 able; and,  
769  
770 2. Eliminate, as a stand-alone priority of the Synod New Church  
771 Development/Transformation (Redevelopment).

772  
773 **E. Racial/Ethnic Ministry**  
774

775 **Context.** The Task Force recognizes that many voices within the Synod have spoken,  
776 with appreciation, of the work that has been done and continues to take place in  
777 racial/ethnic ministries of the Synod. This is especially true in relation to the historic  
778 Native American and Hispanic communities and congregations. We also recognize  
779 there are other racial/ethnic ministries including the African American, the Middle  
780 Eastern, and the Korean communities which are integral to our mission, ministry and  
781 community.

782  
783 Initial expectations were that “the Synod, in consultation with the racial ethnic  
784 population, [would] contract with a consultant in racial/ethnic needs and ministries for  
785 not more than two years to assist racial/ethnic populations in assessing and making



recommendations on mission, ministry and leadership development strategies for the future." To this end, in 2011, the Synod retained the services of an independent contractor to serve as a Native American consultant to help identify the needs of the Native American community and propose how these might be addressed. Since adoption of these priorities, the Synod also sponsored two Synod-wide gatherings of leaders of Native American churches, chapels, and congregations with identifiable Native American communities. (Ref: Final Report – Part I, Synod of the Southwest, Implementation Team, Prepared for the March 14-15, 2008 Synod Meeting, E. Racial/Ethnic Ministry) (**See Appendix D.**) The Synod consultant has also engaged in conversations with staff persons within Grand Canyon Presbytery tasked with nurturing the leadership and health of its very significant Native American population. In this regard, the Task Force members are also aware that how we best serve the entire Native American population within the Synod's bounds we must engage in conversation to maximize the use of our limited resources and to serve well that segment of our Presbyterian population.

The Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee, (HMCC), also expressed a desire that the Synod underwrite a gathering of the Hispanic community to assess their missions, ministries, and leadership strategies. For a variety of reasons this has not yet taken place. However, there remains a desire to hold such a gathering. The Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee continues to advise the Synod on issues related to support of leadership development for Hispanic church members, leaders, and pastors. For example, funding the participation of Hispanic Women at Encuentro, the national Gathering of Presbyterian Women equivalent for Hispanic women, has been and is supported by the Synod at the Committee's request.

At the March 2013 stated meeting of the Synod, HMCC recommended to the assembly that the Synod of the Southwest advocate for, and seek ways to equip, domestic missionary opportunities within the Synod. The recommendation's goal is geared toward a program of domestic missionaries doing Hispanic Ministry within the Synod. It is recognized, however, that if such a program were to be initiated within our Synod it



must extend to other racial/ethnic immigrant communities within the Synod. If successful, this program might serve as a model for a church-wide approach not only for Hispanic ministries but other racial/ethnic groups as well.

In discussions with the leadership of the Korean, Middle Eastern, and the African-American communities, hopes were expressed for their respective ministries as well. Their expressed desires are to increase the interest in their respective congregations and eventually start new worshipping communities drawing on the skills of their current leaders, and to offer programs to attract youth and adults with similar racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Thus, the Task Force members have concluded that we must seek ways to serve not only our historic racial/ethnic communities, but also those equally important emerging racial/ethnic communities within our bounds.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Retain the services of an independent contractor to serve as a consultant for Native American Ministry to work with the Synod's Native American Ministries Coordinating Committee (NAMCC) to:
  - a. Explore the needs of Native American ministry across the Synod;
  - b. Identify strategic needs for Native American leadership development within congregations and presbyteries;
  - c. Provide opportunities for Native American people to talk about their experiences within their congregations, their presbyteries and the Synod;



d. Explore the future of Native American churches as funding from presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly, upon which support they are highly dependent, continues to be reduced;

e. Think together about Synod-wide communication in areas of interest to this unique segment of our Presbyterian community; and,

f. Engage the leadership of the Synod and the de Cristo, Grand Canyon and Santa Fe Presbyteries, which have existing historic Native American Presbyterian communities, in a conversation about how best to approach and, if appropriate, staff Native American ministry within the Synod.

2. In the near future, hold gatherings of representatives from Hispanic churches and congregations with identifiable Hispanic communities, as well as other identified Hispanic leaders within the Synod to:

a. Explore future needs for Hispanic ministry across the Synod;

b. Identify strategic needs for Hispanic leadership development within congregations and presbyteries;

c. Provide opportunities for Hispanic people to talk about their experiences within their congregations, their presbyteries and the Synod;

d. Explore the future of Hispanic churches as their funding from presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly continues to be reduced; and,

e. Think together about Synod-wide communication and staffing.

3. Encourage presbyteries to fund new church development/congregational transformation (redevelopment) among racial/ethnic communities including, but



not limited to, African-American, Asian and other emerging groups within the Synod, and that actions be taken to implement such opportunities as soon as possible;

4. Carry out and coordinate efforts with Synod and Presbytery leadership on racial/ethnic issues beyond Native American and Hispanic constituencies.

## **F. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations**

**Context.** Historically, participation in ecumenical and interfaith relations has been carried out primarily through the presbytery executives and/or their designees, congregations within their local community, or interested and dedicated individuals within the Synod. Through our discussions we have learned that for several years there has been very limited involvement of the Synod in organized ecumenical and interfaith activities and/or events.

Based on our conversations and the survey, the members of the Task Force have heard only a few voices supporting the continuation of this as a priority of the Synod. Although the Task Force agrees this is a worthwhile endeavor, we believe that these important relationships are better nurtured by the presbyteries and their respective congregations.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Eliminate Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations as one of the Synod's priorities.

## **G. Stewardship & Funds Development**

**Context.** While Stewardship and Funds Development is an important and vital aspect of church leadership, the Task Force determined that Stewardship and Funds



Development is important not as a single priority of our Synod but as a significant component of Leadership Development.

Nonetheless, the Task Force recognizes that in this time of financial stress in our Presbyteries, our Synod and, in fact, throughout the denomination, it is essential that concerted funds development efforts be undertaken to attempt to lessen that stress. To this end, the Task Force members noted that a restricted fund established to enable funds development efforts exists within the Synod and could and should be used as we all move into the future.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Reaffirm Stewardship and Funds Development as an important component of Leadership Development; by directing that it become an integral component of the Leadership Development priority;
2. Eliminate Stewardship & Funds Development as one of the Synod's independent priorities; and,
3. Direct the Synod executive to engage the staff leadership of the presbyteries within our Synod to begin discussions regarding funds development efforts that might be undertaken.



V. **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING STRUCTURE & STAFFING**

The range of structural/staffing possibilities available to the Task Force as it did its work and as it considered the future of the Synod proved to be many and varied, and followed a continuum rooted in the current Form of Government (Book of Order).

The Book of Order provides that a synod can become a "reduced function" synod. That is, it only engages in the functions required under the PC(USA) Form of Government and nothing else. Essentially, that equates to a part-time stated clerk, no office, no other support staff. Also, such a synod would only meet once every two years for the purpose of setting a budget and making financial decisions.

The other end of the spectrum would be a fully programmatic synod with multiple staff and multiple programs, a full-time stated clerk and some type of full-time leader (often referred to as a Synod Executive.....but subject to any number of titles) and a variety of additional support staff.

Our current Synod structure is one of a combined Stated Clerk/Synod Executive position, a full-time office manager/executive assistant, a part-time bookkeeper and a part-time treasurer. In addition, from time to time, we have also engaged independent contractors to provide staff support for particular emphases of the Synod (i.e. a Communication Consultant, A Native American Consultant, a Special Projects Consultant and even a Consultant for Funds Development, though that was several years ago).

As such, it was recognized that our current Synod structure/staffing model is closer to the "reduced function" end of the spectrum than it is to the fully programmatic end.

The Task Force also took note of the fact that under the current form of government, the Synod could move among a variety of structural/staffing models depending on the



perceived needs and foci of the Synod at any particular, time as determined by the Synod Assembly.

Thus, the Task Force considered its options. It could recommend that the Synod become a reduced function synod, as described above. However, given the identified needs and the foci of the Synod expressed by the majority of voices that responded in one way or another to the Task Force's request for input, it was determined that a reduced function synod would not be able to adequately address those needs and foci. Therefore, it is the judgment of the Task Force that the staff currently in place is key to the efficient functioning of the Synod and to its presbyteries, not only symbolically, but also practically, as we move into the future.

So, too, as noted above, given the elimination of Mission Partnership Funds as a source of funding for the Synod and which funding enabled the Synod to provide staff and mission support to its presbyteries over the past couple of decades, that further underwriting of presbytery staff was and is no longer feasible. As previously noted, the Task Force recognizes that in the area of Native American ministry there is the possibility for duplication of effort by both the Synod and the Grand Canyon Presbytery. It is incumbent upon us, once new leadership is in place within the de Cristo and Grand Canyon Presbyteries, to engage in conversation with those two Presbyteries and the Santa Fe Presbytery, with input from the NAMCC and its leadership, on what might be the best way to resource our Native American Ministry.

Nonetheless, the Task Force members recognized that in order to live into this model, with its varied priorities aimed at serving the Presbyteries, the best use of financial and human resources would be to utilize independent contractors insofar as possible. Thus, with the exception of the use of independent contractors to fulfill the financial requirements of the Synod as a transparent, efficient financial manager (Bookkeeper and Treasurer), all other independent contractors recommended in this report are to enable and facilitate particular emphases/priorities in serving our four Presbyteries and



their congregations (i.e. Native American Consultant, Internet Specialist and Special Events coordinator).

Finally, given the discussions and possible actions that may be recommended to the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2014, and recognizing that whatever actions the General Assembly may take relative to our current structure of mid councils that include synods, that moving forward with the recommendations in this report are not only necessary to the life and mission of the Synod as an important partner with its presbyteries, but will also serve to inform future conversations about the role of synods in the life of the entire denomination and, particularly, in the life of Christ's work and mission in this part of God's world. And because we are cognizant that changes mandated by the General Assembly could affect our life together, we are proposing that all recommendations set forth in this report be revisited beginning in mid-2014, following the close of the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, should the General Assembly take actions that could significantly impact the form and nature of synods as they currently exist.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Adopt a modified staffing/structural model that:

- a. would include employment of a full-time Synod stated clerk/executive and a Synod associate stated clerk/executive assistant;
- b. would utilize independent contractors to fulfill other tasks necessary to the effective operation of the Synod and/or as otherwise provided in the recommendations set forth throughout this report (which might include a consultant for racial/ethnic ministry);
- c. would not include the full implementation of the use of independent contractors until no later than August 31, 2014;



1030                   d. would be effective through December 31, 2016 or until such time as the  
1031                   Synod makes other adjustments/changes;  
1032  
1033           2. Revisit, beginning in mid-2016, following the close of the 222<sup>nd</sup> General  
1034           Assembly, all recommendations included in this report and those which may  
1035           subsequently be adopted by the Synod Assembly; and,  
1036  
1037           3. Immediately following the close of the 221<sup>st</sup> Assembly in June, 2014, co-host with  
1038           our four Presbyteries a collaborative consultation. The purpose would be to  
1039           identify our unique strengths and weaknesses, seeking ways to utilize those  
1040           strengths to fill the gaps resulting from our weaknesses to even better serve the  
1041           mission and ministry of our Lord in this part of God's world.  
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1060 **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ACTIONS OF THE MID COUNCIL**

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1062  
1063 As previously noted, at this writing it appears MCCII will be recommending the  
1064 reduction in the number of synods to no more than eight. It is the belief of the Task Force  
1065 members that notwithstanding these actions, the recommendations of this Task Force  
1066 relative to the next three years remain valid. Further, it is our belief that the work upon  
1067 which these recommendations were founded serve to position the Synod for those  
1068 conversations regarding the realignment of synod boundaries in order to accomplish the  
1069 recommendations of MCCII.

1070  
1071 **Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force**  
1072 **recommends that the Synod:**

- 1073  
1074 1. Direct the Synod Stated Clerk/Executive to continue to engage the executives of  
1075 the other synods and/or their counterparts, to begin to identify possible boundary  
1076 realignments, given that we are limited by the geographical constraints imposed  
1077 by our form of government as to shifting boundaries.
- 1078  
1079 2. Direct the Synod Stated Clerk/Executive to engage the Synod's presbytery  
1080 executives, or their equivalent, regarding how we might structure synod-wide  
1081 conversations regarding this issue.
- 1082  
1083 3. Create a task force to enable the engagement of these conversations beyond  
1084 those recommended in items 1 and 2, above, should the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly  
1085 adopt the recommendations of MCCII, whether that be adopting the MCCII  
1086 recommendations in whole or in a form that is conceptually the same, directing  
1087 the reduction of synods within the denomination; and, further,
- 1088  
1089 4. That such a task force be prepared to make a recommendation on how to  
1090 proceed beyond 2016 no later than the 2016 annual meeting of the Synod.



## **VII. BUDGET**

In considering what financial recommendations the Task Force would make to effect the recommendations of this report, a variety of scenarios were considered along with how each would impact the Synod and its presbyteries. It was noted that the cause for the planned deficits in the Synod budgets experienced over the last two calendar years, the current year included, were the result of the Synod's decades-long commitment to support the work and mission of its four Presbyteries. This was accomplished by providing grants equivalent to, and sometimes in excess of, the amount the Synod received in Mission Partnership Funds (the current year being an example of that extraordinary support). In fact, over the last ten years, the current year included, the Synod has provided support in the form of grants, often referred to by the presbyteries as Mission Partnership Funds, totaling \$6,764,162. Over that same period, the Synod has received from the presbyteries a total of \$2,779,495, which includes per capita payments of \$1,114,114. Thus, over the last ten years, the presbyteries have received \$3,984,667 more from the Synod than they have provided in support of the Synod. These figures do not include other support given by the Synod in the form of scholarships, specific programmatic support and underwriting of Synod-wide events.

In considering the 2014 budget recommendations, the Task Force members recognized that there were three significant factors in establishing a balanced budget: 1) anticipated reduction in per capita income due to declining membership throughout the Synod; 2) the Synod decision three years ago to not only hold the per capita assessment down, but also to reduce it to \$4.00; 3) the decline in mission support giving from the congregations, which traditionally has been funneled through the Presbyteries as part of unified mission support for the General Assembly, Synod and particular presbyteries; and, 4) the continued financial distress which the presbyteries themselves are experiencing. With the elimination of Mission Partnership Funds in support of the work and mission of the Synod beginning in 2014, added pressure on the sustainability of the current structure and staffing becomes more difficult.



Thus, the Task Force members, after considerable and serious discussion, believe that in order to move into the future and enable the Synod to support the presbyteries in their work and mission, through 2016, a budget dependent on the use of Synod Reserves is inevitable. Further, the Task Force members recognize that given the financial stress under which the Presbyteries find themselves, delving into their own reserves, that to increase the Synod's portion of the per capita assessment would ultimately not serve well the Synod or its Presbyteries.

However, the Task Force understands that the use of reserves cannot be a long-term pattern of funding and that, as noted in Recommendation 3 under the Stewardship & Funds Development heading, above, efforts must be made Synod-wide to ensure the financial sustainability of the presbyteries and their partner in mission and ministry, the Synod, through focused and intentional funds development efforts. Thus, it is the considered opinion of the Task Force that beginning in July, 2016, a complete review of the staffing/structure and programmatic emphases of the Synod will need to be revisited to determine what the Synod's emphases and direction will be beyond 2016. This will be especially important should the General Assembly take actions that affect the synods as currently constituted.

**Therefore, the Synod Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force recommends that the Synod:**

1. Retain the Synod Per Capita Assessment at \$4.00 for 2014;
2. Adopt the budget attached to, and made a part of, this report; and,
3. Receive the budgets for FY2015 and FY2016, as attached to and made a part of this report, to be used as the basic models upon which budgets for those years will be formulated.



## 2014 PROPOSED BUDGET - Per Capita Remains at \$4.00 - Mid Year Mod

		2013 Adopted					2014 Proposed					\$ Change FY2014 over FY2013
INCOME			Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds		Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	
<u>Mission Income</u>												
<u>Congregational Mission Support</u>												
	Presbytery of Grand Canyon	32,000	32,000				27,000	27,000				(5,000)
	Presbytery of Santa Fe	27,100	27,100				24,400	24,400				(2,700)
	Presbytery of Sierra Blanca	6,200	6,200				2,430	2,430				(3,770)
	Presbytery de Cristo	8,300	8,300				6,120	6,120				(2,180)
	<b>Total Congregational Mission Support</b>	<b>73,600</b>	<b>73,600</b>				<b>59,950</b>	<b>59,950</b>				<b>(13,650)</b>
<u>Mission Partnership Funds</u>		473,308	101,728		371,580		0			0		(473,308)
<u>Per Capita Assessment \$4</u>												
	Presbytery of Grand Canyon-13038	55,508		55,508			52,152		52,152			(3,356)
	Presbytery of Santa Fe-5762	24,884		24,884			23,048		23,048			(1,836)
	Presbytery of Sierra Blanca-1,401	5,604		5,604			5,604		5,604			0
	Presbytery de Cristo-6532	27,436		27,436			26,128		26,128			(1,308)
	<b>Total Per Capita</b>	<b>113,432</b>		<b>113,432</b>			<b>106,932</b>		<b>106,932</b>			<b>(6,500)</b>
<u>Investment Income</u>		45,000	22,500	22,500			35,000	17,500	17,500			(10,000)
<u>Drawn from Desig., Restr. or Reserve Funds</u>												
1	Acct#26702-8 Strengthening Small Churches	0			0		0			0		0
2	Acct.#25311 Young Pastors Leadership Conf.	0			0		0			0		0
3	Acct.#26000-8 Funds Development	10,000			10,000		5,000			5,000		(5,000)
4	Acct.#27150-8 Minister Training	50,000			50,000		70,000			70,000		20,000
5	Acct. #27170 Heiserman Grant	0			0		0			0		0
6	Acct. #26702-8 Strengthening Small Churches	8,233			8,233		0			0		(8,233)
7	Acct.#29995-8 Restrict. Funds Equity Reserve (For Synod Support of Cyber Cafes/Internet and Communication Specialist)	13,836			13,836		18,000			18,000		4,164
8	Acct#29995-8 Restrict. Funds Equity Reserve (For Native American Ministries Consultant)	18,000			18,000		18,000			18,000		0
9	Acct. # 28510 New Century Fund	0			0		0			0		0
9	Acct. #25313 Synod Scholarship Fund	5,000			5,000		5,000			5,000		0
10	Acct. #26000-8 Funds Development	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
11	Acct. #29999 Operating Reserve Fund	162		162			0		0			(162)
12	Accts. #24801/#24802 Minority Leadership Devel.	12,000			12,000		0			0		(12,000)
	<b>Total from Desig., Restr. or Reserve Funds</b>	<b>147,231</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>147,069</b>		<b>116,000</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>116,000</b>		<b>(31,231)</b>
<b>TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD INCOME</b>		<b>852,571</b>	<b>197,828</b>	<b>136,094</b>	<b>518,649</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>317,882</b>	<b>77,450</b>	<b>124,432</b>	<b>116,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(534,689)</b>



EXPENSES	2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	2014 Proposed	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	\$ Change FY2014 over FY2013
<b><u>Synod Payroll/Benefits Expense</u></b>											
Synod Interim/Called Exec./Stated Clerk Salary	88,800	71,040	17,760			60,000	24,000	36,000			(28,800)
Board of Pensions	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
Continuing Education	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
Medical Reimbursement	2,500	2,000	500			2,500	1,000	1,500			0
Professional Expenses	2,000	1,600	400			2,000	800	1,200			0
FICA	6,793	5,435	1,359			4,590	1,836	2,754			(2,203)
Total Interim/Called Exec./Stated Clerk Contract	100,093	80,075	20,019			69,090	27,636	41,454			(31,003)
Interim/Called Exec./Stated Clerk Travel Expense	25,000	17,239	7,761			0	0	0			(25,000)
Total Interim/Called Exec./Stated Clerk Expense	125,093	97,314	27,780			69,090	27,636	41,454			(56,003)
Information Technology Specialist	12,000			12,000		12,000			12,000		0
Travel Expense	6,000			6,000		6,000			6,000		0
Information Technology Specialisit Consult Exp.	18,000			18,000		18,000			18,000		0
Native American Ministry Consultant Stipend	12,000			12,000		12,000			12,000		0
Travel Expense	6,000			6,000		6,000			6,000		0
Total Native American Min. Consultant Exp.	18,000			18,000		18,000			18,000		0
Bookkeeper						6,167	3,084	3,084			6,167
Book Keeper Expense						4,500	2,250	2,250			4,500
Accounting Coordinator:											
Wages	25,965	12,983	12,983			17,310	8,655	8,655			(8,655)
Board of Pensions	12,780	6,390	6,390			9,045	4,522	4,522			(3,735)
1% Medical Reimbursement	260	130	130			173	87	87			(87)
Total Accounting Coordinator Expense	39,005	19,503	19,503			26,528	13,264	13,264			(12,477)
Exec. Ass't-Office Mgr/Exec. Ass't-Assoc. SC:											
Wages	44,610	22,305	22,305			46,690	28,014	18,676			2,080
Board of Pensions/403(b) Contribution	14,869	7,434	7,434			5,136	3,082	2,054			(9,733)
1% Medical Reimbursement	446	223	223			467	280	187			21
Total Exec. Ass't-Office Mgr/Exec. Ass't-Assoc. SC:	59,925	29,962	29,962			52,293	31,376	20,917			(7,632)
Staff Development and Travel	2,500	1,250	1,250			27,500	11,000	16,500			25,000
FICA/Medicare	5,399	2,699	2,699			4,896	2,938	1,958			(503)
Payroll Processing Fees	1,500	750	750			1,500	900	600			0
Workers Compensation Insurance	1,100	550	550			1,100	660	440			0
Total Other Staff Expense	10,499	5,249	5,249			34,996	15,498	19,498			24,497
Total Office Staff	145,429	54,714	54,714	36,000		154,317	62,387	55,929	36,000		8,888
Total Staff Payroll and Benefits	270,522	152,028	82,494	36,000		223,407	90,023	97,383	36,000		(47,115)



		2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	2014 Proposed	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	\$ Change FY2014 over FY2013
<b>EXPENSES</b>												
<b>Administrative Office Expenses:</b>												
	Telephone/Fax/Internet	6,000	3,000	3,000			6,000	3,000	3,000			0
	Postage/Delivery	2,000	1,000	1,000			2,000	1,000	1,000			0
	Rent	15,600	7,800	7,800			7,800	3,900	3,900			(7,800)
	Office Supplies/Equipment	3,500	1,750	1,750			3,500	1,750	1,750			0
	Computer Software/Training	1,000	500	500			1,000	500	500			0
	Computer Supplies/Equipment	1,500	750	750			1,500	750	750			0
	Office Furnishings	500	250	250			0	0	0			(500)
	Copier Fees	2,500	1,250	1,250			2,500	1,250	1,250			0
	General Insurance	2,000	1,000	1,000			2,000	1,000	1,000			0
	Bank Fees/ Service Charges	1,000	500	500			1,000	500	500			0
	Memberships/Subscriptions	500	500	0			500	500	0			0
	Audit Expense	9,000	4,500	4,500			9,000	4,500	4,500			0
<b>Total Administrative Office Expense</b>		<b>45,100</b>	<b>22,800</b>	<b>22,300</b>			<b>36,800</b>	<b>18,650</b>	<b>18,150</b>			<b>(8,300)</b>
<b>Ecclesiastical/Ministry Expenses</b>												
	Moderator Travel	2,500	0	2,500			2,500	0	2,500			0
	Reimbursable Expenses-Treasurer	1,000	0	1,000			1,000	0	1,000			0
	Executive Committee	3,000	0	3,000			3,000	0	3,000			0
	Synod Assembly Meetings	18,000	0	18,000			18,000	0	18,000			0
	Racial Ethnic Ministry Committee	2,000	2,000	0			3,000	3,000	0			1,000
	Personnel Committee	500	0	500			500	0	500			0
	Finance & Stewardship Develop. Committee	3,000	1,500	1,500			3,000	1,500	1,500			0
	Nominating Committee	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
	Committee on Representation	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
	Comm. on Representation & Nominations	1,000	0	1,000			1,000	0	1,000			0
	Presbytery Review of Records	1,800	0	1,800			1,800	0	1,800			0
	Border Ministry Team	1,000	1,000	0			0	0	0			(1,000)
	Judicial Commission	1,000	0	1,000			1,000	0	1,000			0
	Review Task Force	12,500	12,500	0			0	0	0			(12,500)
	Other Task Forces	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
	Legal Expense	1,000	0	1,000			0	0	0			(1,000)
	Synod Relations	5,000	5,000	0			5,000	0	5,000			0
	Communications Team	1,000	1,000	0			1,000	1,000	0			0
<b>Total Ecclesiastical/Ministry Expenses</b>		<b>54,300</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>31,300</b>			<b>40,800</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>35,300</b>			<b>(13,500)</b>
<b>Synod Program/Mission Support</b>												
1	Iglesia Del Pueblo NCD	0			0		0			0		0
2	Young Pastors Leadership Conference	0			0		0			0		0
3	National Stewardship Kaleidoscopes Event	10,000			10,000		5,000			5,000		(5,000)
4	Synod Kaleidoscopes-Minister Training	50,000			50,000		70,000			70,000		20,000
5	Four Synod Mission Partnership	0			0		0			0		0
6	Camino de Vida NCD	8,233			8,233		0			0		(8,233)
7	Synod Support of Presbytery Cyber Cafes	10,000			10,000		0			0		(10,000)
9	Synod Scholarship Fund	5,000			5,000		5,000			5,000		0
10	SSW Stewardship Event	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
12	Triennium for Minority Youth Participation	12,000			12,000		0			0		(12,000)
<b>Total Synod Program/Mission Support</b>		<b>125,233</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>125,233</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(45,233)</b>



		2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	2014 Proposed	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	\$ Change FY2014 over FY2013
	TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD EXPENSE	495,155	197,828	136,094	161,233	0	381,007	114,173	150,833	116,000	0	(114,148)
	TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD SURPLUS(DEFICIT)	357,416	0	(0)	357,416	0	(63,125)	(36,723)	(26,401)	0	0	(420,541)
	<b>SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION</b>											
	<i>Presbytery Support</i>											
	Presbytery of Grand Canyon:											
	Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
	Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
	Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
	Total Presbytery of Grand Canyon	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
	Presbytery of Santa Fe:											
	Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
	Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
	Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
	Total Presbytery of Santa Fe	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
	Presbytery of Sierra Blanca:											
	Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
	Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
	Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
	Total Presbytery of Sierra Blanca	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
	Presbytery de Cristo:											
	Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
	Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
	Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
	Total Presbytery de Cristo	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
	TOTAL SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION	473,308	0	0	473,308	0	0	0	0	0	0	(473,308)
	SURPLUS(DEFICIT) AFTER PRESBYTERY SUPPORT	(101,728)	0	(0)	(101,728)	0	(63,125)	(36,723)	(26,401)	0	0	52,767
	<b>ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION</b>											
	Presbytery de Cristo Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
	Presbytery of Grand Canyon Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
	Presbytery of Sierra Blanca Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
	Presbytery of Santa Fe Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
	TOTAL ADDITIONAL PRESBYTERY SUPPORT	46,692	0	0	46,692	0	0	0	0	0	0	(46,692)
	SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER ADDITNL PRES. SUPT.	(148,420)	0	(0)	(148,420)	0	(63,125)	(36,723)	(26,401)	0	0	99,459



			2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	2014 Proposed	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	\$ Change FY2014 over FY2013
													0
			852,571	197,828	136,094	518,649		317,882	77,450	124,432	116,000		(534,689)
													0
			480,991	197,828	136,094	147,069		381,007	114,173	150,833	116,000		(99,984)
													0
			520,000	0	0	520,000		0	0	0	0		(520,000)
													0
			(148,420)	0	(0)	(148,420)		(63,125)	(36,723)	(26,401)	0		85,295
			148,420	(0)	0	148,420		63,125	36,723	26,401	0		(85,295)



2015 & 2016 PROPOSED BUDGET BASE - Per Capita remains at \$4.00												
		2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	2015 & 2016 Base	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	\$ Change Post 2014 over FY2013
<b>INCOME</b>												
<u>Mission Income</u>												
<u>Congregational Mission Support</u>												
	Presbytery of Grand Canyon	32,000	32,000				27,000	27,000				(5,000)
	Presbytery of Santa Fe	27,100	27,100				24,400	24,400				(2,700)
	Presbytery of Sierra Blanca	6,200	6,200				2,430	2,430				(3,770)
	Presbytery de Cristo	8,300	8,300				6,120	6,120				(2,180)
	<b>Total Congregational Mission Support</b>	<b>73,600</b>	<b>73,600</b>				<b>59,950</b>	<b>59,950</b>				<b>(13,650)</b>
<u>Mission Partnership Funds</u>		473,308	101,728		371,580		0			0		(473,308)
<u>Per Capita Assessment \$4</u>												
	Presbytery of Grand Canyon-13038	55,508		55,508			52,152	52,152				(3,356)
	Presbytery of Santa Fe-5762	24,884		24,884			23,048	23,048				(1,836)
	Presbytery of Sierra Blanca-1,401	5,604		5,604			5,604	5,604				0
	Presbytery de Cristo-6532	27,436		27,436			26,128	26,128				(1,308)
	<b>Total Per Capita</b>	<b>113,432</b>		<b>113,432</b>			<b>106,932</b>	<b>106,932</b>				<b>(6,500)</b>
<u>Investment Income</u>		45,000	22,500	22,500			35,000	17,500	17,500			(10,000)
<u>Drawn from Desig., Restr. or Reserve Funds</u>												
1	Acct.#26702-8 Strengthening Small Churches	0			0		0			0		0
2	Acct.#25311 Young Pastors Leadership Conf.	0			0		0			0		0
3	Acct.#26000-8 Funds Development	10,000			10,000		5,000			5,000		(5,000)
4	Acct.#27150-8 Minister Training	50,000			50,000		70,000			70,000		20,000
5	Acct. #27170 Heiserman Grant	0			0		0			0		0
6	Acct. #26702-8 Strengthening Small Churches	8,233			8,233		0			0		(8,233)
7	Acct.#29995-8 Restrict. Funds Equity Reserve (For Synod Support of Cyber Cafes/Internet and Communication Specialist)	13,836			13,836		18,000			18,000		4,164
8	Acct.#29995-8 Restrict. Funds Equity Reserve (For Native American Ministries Consultant)	18,000			18,000		18,000			18,000		0
9	Acct. # 28510 New Century Fund	0			0		0			0		0
9	Acct. #25313 Synod Scholarship Fund	5,000			5,000		5,000			5,000		0
10	Acct. #26000-8 Funds Development	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
11	Acct. #29999 Operating Reserve Fund	162		162			0	0				(162)
12	Accts. #24801/#24802 Minority Leadership Devel.	12,000			12,000		0			0		(12,000)
	<b>Total from Desig., Restr. or Reserve Funds</b>	<b>147,231</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>147,069</b>		<b>116,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>116,000</b>			<b>(31,231)</b>
<b>TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD INCOME</b>		<b>852,571</b>	<b>197,828</b>	<b>136,094</b>	<b>518,649</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>317,882</b>	<b>77,450</b>	<b>124,432</b>	<b>116,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(534,689)</b>



EXPENSE	2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	2015 & 2016 Base	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	Change Post 2014 over FY2013
<b><u>Synod Payroll/Benefits Expense</u></b>											
Synod Executive/Stated Clerk											
Salary	88,800	71,040	17,760			60,000	24,000	36,000			(28,800)
Board of Pensions	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
Continuing Education	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
Medical Reimbursement	2,500	2,000	500			2,500	1,000	1,500			0
Professional Expenses	2,000	1,600	400			2,000	800	1,200			0
FICA	6,793	5,435	1,359			4,590	1,836	2,754			(2,203)
Total Synod Executive/Stated Clerk	100,093	80,075	20,019			69,090	27,636	41,454			(31,003)
Synod Executive/Stated Clerk Travel Expense	25,000	17,239	7,761			0	0	0			(25,000)
Total Synod Executive/Stated Clerk Expense	125,093	97,314	27,780			69,090	27,636	41,454			(56,003)
Information Technology Consultant	12,000			12,000		12,000			12,000		0
Travel Expense	6,000			6,000		6,000			6,000		0
Total Information Technology Consultant Exp.	18,000			18,000		18,000			18,000		0
Native American Ministry Consultant Stipend	12,000			12,000		12,000			12,000		0
Travel Expense	6,000			6,000		6,000			6,000		0
Total Native American Min. Consultant Exp.	18,000			18,000		18,000			18,000		0
Accounting Coordinator/Bookkeeper:											
Wages	25,965	12,983	12,983			18,000	9,000	9,000			(7,965)
Board of Pensions	12,780	6,390	6,390			0	0	0			(12,780)
1% Medical Reimbursement	260	130	130			0	0	0			(260)
Total Accounting Coordinator Expense	39,005	19,503	19,503			18,000	9,000	9,000			(21,005)
Exec. Ass't-Office Mgr/Exec. Ass't-Assoc. SC:											
Wages	44,610	22,305	22,305			46,690	14,007	32,683			2,080
Board of Pensions	14,869	7,434	7,434			0	0	0			(14,869)
403(b) - Employer Contribution	0	0	0			5,136	2,568	2,568			5,136
1% Medical Reimbursement/403(b)/Emplr Match	446	223	223			467	233	233			21
Total Exec. Ass't-Office Mgr/Exec. Ass't-Assoc. SC:	59,925	29,962	29,962			52,293	16,808	35,484			(7,632)
Staff Development and Travel	2,500	1,250	1,250			27,500	11,000	16,500			25,000
FICA/Medicare	5,399	2,699	2,699			3,572	1,786	1,786			(1,827)
Payroll Processing Fees	1,500	750	750			1,500	750	750			0
Workers Compensation Insurance	1,100	550	550			1,100	550	550			0
Total Other Staff Expense	10,499	5,249	5,249			33,672	14,086	19,586			23,173
Total Office Staff	145,429	54,714	54,714	36,000		139,965	39,894	64,070	36,000		(5,464)
Total Staff Payroll and Benefits	270,522	152,028	82,494	36,000		209,055	67,530	105,524	36,000		(61,467)



EXPENSE		2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	2015 & 2016 Base	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	\$ Change Post 2014 over FY2013
<b>Administrative Office Expenses:</b>												
	Telephone/Fax/Internet	6,000	3,000	3,000			6,000	3,000	3,000			0
	Postage/Delivery	2,000	1,000	1,000			2,000	1,000	1,000			0
	Rent	15,600	7,800	7,800			0	0	0			(15,600)
	Office Supplies/Equipment	3,500	1,750	1,750			3,500	1,750	1,750			0
	Computer Software/Training	1,000	500	500			1,000	500	500			0
	Computer Supplies/Equipment	1,500	750	750			1,500	750	750			0
	Office Furnishings	500	250	250			0	0	0			(500)
	Copier Fees	2,500	1,250	1,250			2,500	1,250	1,250			0
	General Insurance	2,000	1,000	1,000			2,000	1,000	1,000			0
	Bank Fees/ Service Charges	1,000	500	500			1,000	500	500			0
	Memberships/Subscriptions	500	500	0			500	500	0			0
	Audit Expense	9,000	4,500	4,500			9,000	4,500	4,500			0
<b>Total Administrative Office Expense</b>		<b>45,100</b>	<b>22,800</b>	<b>22,300</b>			<b>29,000</b>	<b>14,750</b>	<b>14,250</b>			<b>(16,100)</b>
<b>Ecclesiastical/Ministry Expenses</b>												
	Moderator Travel	2,500	0	2,500			2,500	0	2,500			0
	Reimbursable Expenses-Treasurer	1,000	0	1,000			1,000	0	1,000			0
	Executive Committee	3,000	0	3,000			3,000	0	3,000			0
	Synod Assembly Meetings	18,000	0	18,000			18,000	0	18,000			0
	Racial Ethnic Ministry Committee	2,000	2,000	0			2,000	2,000	0			0
	Personnel Committee	500	0	500			500	0	500			0
	Finance & Stewardship Develop. Committee	3,000	1,500	1,500			3,000	1,500	1,500			0
	Nominating Committee	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
	Committee on Representation	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
	Comm. on Representation & Nominations	1,000	0	1,000			1,000	0	1,000			0
	Presbytery Review of Records	1,800	0	1,800			1,800	0	1,800			0
	Border Ministry Team	1,000	1,000	0			1,000	1,000	0			0
	Judicial Commission	1,000	0	1,000			1,000	0	1,000			0
	Review Task Force	12,500	12,500	0			0	0	0			(12,500)
	Other Task Forces	0	0	0			0	0	0			0
	Legal Expense	1,000	0	1,000			0	0	0			(1,000)
	Synod Relations	5,000	5,000	0			5,000	3155	1,845			0
	Communications Team	1,000	1,000	0			1,000	1,000	0			0
<b>Total Ecclesiastical/Ministry Expenses</b>		<b>54,300</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>31,300</b>			<b>40,800</b>	<b>8,655</b>	<b>32,145</b>			<b>(13,500)</b>
<b>Synod Program/Mission Support</b>												
1	Iglesia Del Pueblo NCD	0			0		0			0		0
2	Young Pastors Leadership Conference	0			0		0			0		0
3	National Stewardship Kaleidoscopes Event	10,000			10,000		5,000			5,000		(5,000)
4	Synod Kaleidoscopes-Minister Training	50,000			50,000		70,000			70,000		20,000
5	Four Synod Mission Partnership	0			0		0			0		0
6	Camino de Vida NCD	8,233			8,233		0			0		(8,233)
7	Synod Support of Presbytery Cyber Cafes	10,000			10,000		0			0		(10,000)
9	Synod Scholarship Fund	5,000			5,000		5,000			5,000		0
10	SSW Stewardship Event	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
12	Triennium for Minority Youth Participation	12,000			12,000		0			0		(12,000)
<b>Total Synod Program/Mission Support</b>		<b>125,233</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>125,233</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(45,233)</b>



EXPENSE	2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	2015 & 2016 Base	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	Change Post 2014 over FY2013
TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD EXPENSE	495,155	197,828	136,094	161,233	0	358,855	90,935	151,919	116,000	0	(136,300)
TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD SURPLUS(DEFICIT)	357,416	0	(0)	357,416	0	(40,973)	(13,485)	(27,487)	0	0	(398,389)
<b>SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION</b>											
<i>Presbytery Support</i>											
Presbytery of Grand Canyon:											
Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
Total Presbytery of Grand Canyon	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
Presbytery of Santa Fe:											
Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
Total Presbytery of Santa Fe	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
Presbytery of Sierra Blanca:											
Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
Total Presbytery of Sierra Blanca	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
Presbytery de Cristo:											
Mission Partnership Funds Formula	0			0		0			0		0
Staff Support (2013 General Allocation)	88,327			88,327		0			0		(88,327)
Racial Ethnic Ministries Support	30,000			30,000		0			0		(30,000)
Total Presbytery de Cristo	118,327			118,327		0			0		(118,327)
TOTAL SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION	473,308	0	0	473,308	0	0	0	0	0	0	(473,308)
SURPLUS(DEFICIT) AFTER PRESBYTERY SUPPORT	(101,728)	0	(0)	(101,728)	0	(40,973)	(13,485)	(27,487)	0	0	74,919
<b>ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION</b>											
Presbytery de Cristo Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
Presbytery of Grand Canyon Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
Presbytery of Sierra Blanca Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
Presbytery of Santa Fe Special Allocation	11,673			11,673		0			0		(11,673)
TOTAL ADDITIONAL PRESBYTERY SUPPORT	46,692	0	0	46,692	0	0	0	0	0	0	(46,692)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER ADDITNL PRES. SUPT.	(148,420)	0	(0)	(148,420)	0	(40,973)	(13,485)	(27,487)	0	0	121,611



SUMMARY			2013 Adopted	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrest ricted Funds	2015 & 2016 Base	Mission	Per Capita	Restricted Funds	Unrestr icted Funds	\$ Change Post 2014 over FY2013
													0
TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD INCOME			852,571	197,828	136,094	518,649		317,882	77,450	124,432	116,000		(534,689)
													0
TOTAL DIRECT SYNOD EXPENSE			480,991	197,828	136,094	147,069		358,855	90,935	151,919	116,000		(122,136)
													0
TOTAL SUPPORT OF PRESBYTERY MISSION			520,000	0	0	520,000		0	0	0	0		(520,000)
													0
OVERALL SYNOD SURPLUS(DEFICIT)			(148,420)	0	(0)	(148,420)		(40,973)	(13,485)	(27,487)	0		107,447
ADDITIONAL DRAW FROM SYNOD RESERVES - Account #29999 to cover deficit			148,420	(0)	0	148,420		40,973	13,485	27,487	0		(107,447)



## APPENDIX A.

Grand Canyon/de Cristo Conversation Group  
Mid-term Report  
March 7, 2011

### Background

In October 2010 groups from de Cristo and Grand Canyon presbyteries came together in Casa Grande for the first of numerous conversations about how we might work together as Arizona Presbyterians. Core members of this conversation group are Brant Baker, Roberta Fogel, Ron Hawkins, and Dave Wasserman (Grand Canyon), Dave Rockwell, Sue Westfall, and Carla Williams (de Cristo), with occasional attendance from other members of de Cristo Presbytery.

After getting acquainted the group quickly identified four possibilities to explore:

- Common programming
- Shared Staffing
- Merger
- Exploration of a single middle governing body for the state of Arizona (this item was officially added to the charge of this Work Group by action of the Council of Grand Canyon Presbytery at their meeting on October 21, 2010)

The Conversation Group began by exploring the history of relations between the two presbyteries, asking specific questions among themselves and addressed to their respective leadership boards:

- What is the history of the two presbyteries' relationship that might keep us from exploring cooperation?
- What are the assets of each presbytery that someone else would want to be part of?
- What are the areas of ministry we'd be interested in sharing more?
- What are the sacred cows?
- How could cooperation help/benefit our congregations?

These questions received attention from each of the two Presbytery leadership boards and from the replies no red flags emerged that would suggest discontinuing conversation.

The next task, therefore, was to gain clarity about why were having these conversations—what was driving the interest at this time. Several ideas emerged, in no particular order:

- We are in a time of shrinking resources
- We are in a time of general change within society and the church
- The Synod is at a transition moment
- We must be about a new thing to help resource and revitalize congregations

Overall it seems that both presbyteries have been doing a lot of good and creative thinking about ways to put more emphasis on congregations, about finding more flexibility in accomplishing the connectional work of the church, about higher expectations in our collegial relationships and leadership teams, and at the same time have suggested a greater willingness to explore and experiment.

Still another task was to do some baseline thinking about what it is that the mission of Christ, as expressed through local congregations, requires in the way of higher governing bodies. That is, what do these higher governing bodies provide to the local church as a means of strengthening their mission, which cannot be accomplished in any other way? A working list might include:



- provide for “minister management” (candidates, COM, discipline) as required by the Book of Order
- be a hub for sharing best practices from churches within and without the structure
- provide resources, creativity, and encouragement for churches who wish to experiment with new ways of being and doing church (Research & Development)
- provide opportunities for the building of relationships among clergy and elders
- provide a network for churches who share a mutual interest in outreach or mission, connecting those churches to one another via the latest technologies available
- be a body that looks strategically and missionally at a region (i.e. for new church development or campus ministries)

Knowing that the General Assembly had formed a Commission on Middle Governing Bodies [NOTE: need correct name] the Conversation Group next invited Jose Olagues to attend and share insights from that work. (John Dunham and Conrad Rocha were also invited to that meeting but were unable to attend.) Jose met with the group in January and described that there were three sub-groups within the Commission: one to consult and draft a strategy, one to identify models being used elsewhere (such as staff sharing and joint programming), and one to till the soil.

While the work of the Conversation Group will be continuing over the coming months, a mid-term recommendation has become clear in subsequent conversations. Given the far-ranging nature of our conversations to date it seems an appropriate moment to also engage others. Specifically, the Conversation Group asks the respective presbyteries, through the leadership boards to overture the Synod of the Southwest under the constitutional provision of G-12.0102 a, as follows:

- 1) to call and convene a Consultation of the leadership of the synod and its four presbyteries (deCristo, Grand Canyon, Santa Fe, Sierra Blanca) to mutually:
  - a. share information and discover learnings about the transition experiences each of the five middle governing bodies is currently experiencing;
  - b. identify and develop possible ways to address the need to focus mission for all of our middle governing bodies more clearly and to use more wisely the resources entrusted to its care;
  - c. propose to the appropriate entities steps these middle governing bodies may take to become more effective agents of Christ’s mission in our region, including but not limited to re-organization and re-alignments of the middle governing bodies life, work and boundaries;
- 2) and
  - a. to provide a Planning Team for this Consultation to be composed of at least one Council member from each of the five governing bodies (four presbyteries and the synod) and the executives of each body;
  - b. That the participants to the Consultation include eight persons from each of the five governing bodies (synod and the four presbyteries), the particular individuals to be determined by each council, along with the executive staff of each body, and
  - c. That the funds to support the planning and conducting of this consultation come from unbudgeted reserves from the Synod.

Rationale:

1. The General Assembly’s Commission on Middle Governing Bodies is now formed and holding hearings about the future of middle governing bodies providing the Synod of the Southwest the



opportunity to request Assembly approval to make changes as warranted and mutually agreed to;

2. it is the “responsibility and power of Synod to develop, in conjunction with the presbyteries, a broad strategy for the mission of the church within its bounds”(G-12.0102);
3. it is for us a perfect moment, as the Synod of the Southwest is in a time of transition between executive leaders;
4. the four Presbyteries comprising the Synod are, in different ways, living through a time of transition in their ministries; and
5. God calls upon the whole church to be faithful stewards of the resources (people, financial, spiritual) entrusted to it.

The direction of this Consultation, if agreed to, will in many ways determine the future work and direction of the Two Presbytery Conversation Group. We have begun discussion of various interesting ideas, but it seems that to continue without at least some dialogue with others who will ultimately be a party to possible outcomes would be unwise.

Respectfully submitted,

Brant Baker  
Roberta Fogel  
Ron Hawkins  
Dave Wasserman

Dave Rockwell  
Sue Westfall  
Carla Williams



## APPENDIX B.

### **Synod of the Southwest Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force**

#### **Strategic Planning Survey Fall, 2012**

##### **Survey Overview**

At the request of the Synod of the Southwest, the Research Services office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency conducted a survey as part of a strategic planning process coordinated by the synod's Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force. A four-page questionnaire was developed by Jack Marcum, Coordinator of Research Service, based on input from the Task Force and its chair, Rochelle Mackey, and from the interim synod executive, Conrad Rocha. A total of 728 teaching and ruling elders were identified by the synod office as potential respondents, all of them leaders in the synod or its presbyteries or congregations.

On September 17, all potential respondents with a known email address ( $n = 610$ ) were sent an invitation to take the survey on the web; the rest ( $n = 118$ ) were mailed a printed copy of the questionnaire on September 14. Both the email invitation and the cover letter accompanying the printed questionnaire came from Rochelle Mackey. The email invitation included a unique link to the web survey, while the mailed version included a unique ID number and a postage-paid reply envelope. Subsequent reminders were sent to all non-respondents. Those with an email address were sent three email reminders, on September 20, September 26, and October 2. The postal group was sent a postcard reminder on September 27, and a second copy of the survey on October 12. All reminders came from Jack Marcum.

Responses were accepted through November 13. Of the 728 potential respondents, 91 could not be reached because of incorrect email or postal addresses. Of the rest, 637, a total of 406, or 63%, completed the survey.

This report provides a narrative discussion of results. Tables showing the percentage responses to each option on fixed-choice questions are found in Appendix A. Appendix B presents the verbatim responses to open-ended questions.

##### **Summary of Results**

The median age of survey respondents is 64 years. A large majority are white, but around 5% each identify as Native American and as Hispanic, with smaller proportions identifying as African Americans and Asians. Consistent with the survey design, respondents hold a variety of leadership positions in the synod and its presbyteries and congregations. A majority are teaching elders, most of whom are pastors. Remaining respondents are ruling elders, with many serving either as commissioned ruling elders, session members, or clerks of session, with some holding more than one of these roles.

A quarter of respondents have had a formal role in the synod, such as commissioner or committee member, at some point during the past five years. An overlapping 43% have attended a synod training or education event over the same period, including 16% who have participated in a Kaleidoscope Preaching Event. Overall, one in eight respondents have personally received financial aid from the synod during the past five years, and about half as many report that their congregation has received a loan or another type of financial assistance from the synod.

Knowledge of the synod varies widely, with only four in ten respondents describing themselves as "very knowledgeable" or "somewhat knowledgeable." Of those familiar enough to respond, majorities rate the synod



positively in the work it has done over the past five years; similar shares positively rate their own experience with the synod and that of their congregation. Around one in four, however, give the synod a mixed rating—both positive and negative—on each of these same three aspects.

Majorities rate all seven current mission priorities of the synod as “very important” or “important.” Asked further to select the two most important priorities, three groupings emerge: at the top, Leadership Development and Border & Immigrant Ministries (both selected as one of the two most important priorities by around 40%); in the middle, Communications and New Church Development/Congregational Transformation (both at 30%); and at the bottom, Racial Ethnic Ministry, Stewardship & Funds Development, and Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations (all around 16%). Viewed differently, however, these results also reveal that, for each priority, at least 60% of respondents left it off their list of the two most important priorities. Nevertheless, few respondents want to change or eliminate any of the priorities. And only one in ten respondents indicate that there are existing presbytery or congregational ministries in the region that would be better undertaken by the synod.

## Findings

### ***Demographic Characteristics of Respondents***

The median age of respondents is 64 years. Two thirds are age 60 or older, including more than one in three (35%) who are 70 or older. Only 2% are younger than 40.

A large majority of respondents are white (86%). Another 6% are indigenous (Native American), and 5%, Hispanic. Another 2% each are African American, Asian, and “some other race,” though about half of the latter chose this response as way of objecting to the question (for details, see Appendix B). (These numbers total more than 100% because 12 respondents listed more than one racial or ethnic background.)

### ***Presbytery and Congregational Roles***

*Presbytery.* A majority of respondents are teaching elders (61%), with the largest shares being members of Santa Fe (36%) and Grand Canyon (34%) Presbyteries, followed by de Cristo (21%) and Sierra Blanca (9%). Overall, the distribution by presbytery for all respondents, based on the congregation they serve or attend, shows a similar pattern: Santa Fe, 33%; Grand Canyon, 32%; de Cristo, 22%; Sierra Blanca, 11%. An additional 2% list presbyteries outside the synod, belong to another denomination, or explain why the question does not apply (see specifics in Appendix B).

*Congregation.* Nine in ten respondents are associated with a congregation in some way (89%). The median size of these congregations is 200 members, much larger than that of the synod overall, where the median is 79.<sup>1</sup>

Most respondents occupy at least one congregational role (75% so respond), and many list more than one (30% overall, or 40% of those listing at least one congregational role). The overall average is 1.5 roles (1.9 for those who list at least one). Almost one in four respondents are pastors (38%), and another 14%, commissioned ruling elders. One in five are ruling elders on session (21%), and one in four, clerks of session (27%).<sup>2</sup> A quarter

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<sup>1</sup> This differential is due in part to the fact that larger congregations are overrepresented in the respondent pool because they, on average, have more pastors and larger sessions than smaller congregations.

<sup>2</sup> Because only teaching elders and ruling elders were surveyed, those who did not identify on the survey as teaching elders are all presumably ruling elders (39%). There was no general question asking whether respondents are ruling elders, however, and the total who indicated they are either a “commissioned ruling elder,” a “ruling on session,” or a “clerk of session” only totals 28%. Most if not all of the missing 11% are likely ruling elders not currently on session, but there is no way to confirm that likelihood.



are leaders or members of a congregational committee or task force (24%). Around one in five are musicians, music directors, or choir members (19%), and a similar share are officers or participants in a men's, women's, or young adult group (18%). Only 5% are active deacons.

### Synod Roles and Involvement

*Synod roles.* One in four respondents indicate that they have held a formal role in the synod during the past five years (26%), and many of these list more than one (among those who have held at least one role, the average number indicated is 1.6). One in ten have been commissioners to a synod assembly (10%), and one in 12 respondents report that their congregation has hosted a synod assembly in the past five years (8%).

One in six respondents (14%) report other types of involvement with the synod by their congregation or members in it. Their verbatim descriptions of this involvement are found in Appendix B.

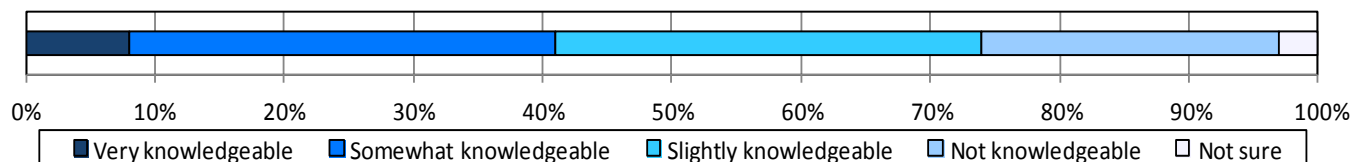
*Synod training and educational events.* Almost half of respondents have participated in at least one educational or training event of the synod over the past five years (43%). A total of 16% overall attended a Kaleidoscope Preaching Event, while 10% participated in Crossing Borders: Encountering God and 7%, in a Native American Consultation. In addition, 11% attended a different synod leadership training event and 21%, another training or education program of the synod. Respondents who participated in at least one synod training or educational event participated in 1.6 on average.

*Financial assistance.* One in eight respondents report receiving personal financial assistance from the synod in the past five years (12%; details on such assistance is found in Appendix B). In addition, a few respondents report that their congregation received either a loan from the synod over the same period (2%) or other financial assistance from the synod (5%) (including one respondent who indicated both).

### Knowing and Rating the Synod

Respondents vary widely in their reported knowledge of the synod overall. Only a few are “very knowledgeable” (8%), while a third are “somewhat knowledgeable” (33%). Another third are “slightly knowledgeable” (33%), and a quarter (23%), “not knowledgeable.” (The rest, 3%, are “not sure.”) (See Figure 1.)

**Figure 1. General Knowledge of the Synod**



Because so many respondents indicate relatively limited overall knowledge of the synod, questions that rate the synod over the past five years receive large percentages of “not sure/no contact with the Synod” responses (between 34% and 54%). To focus only on the responses of those with an opinion, Table 1 (next page) shows the percentage distribution for the three items rated after the “not sure/no contact” responses have been excluded.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> To see the overall percentages with “not sure/no contact with the Synod” included, refer to Appendix A.



Table 1. Rating the Work of the Synod†						
	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Mixed—Both Positive and Negative	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative	Total‡
How would you rate:						
a. the work the synod has been doing over the past five years?	27%	39%	26%	6%	2%	100%
b. your congregation's experience with the synod over the past five years?	25%	41%	25%	6%	2%	99%
c. your own personal experience with the synod over the past five years?	36%	36%	21%	5%	2%	100%

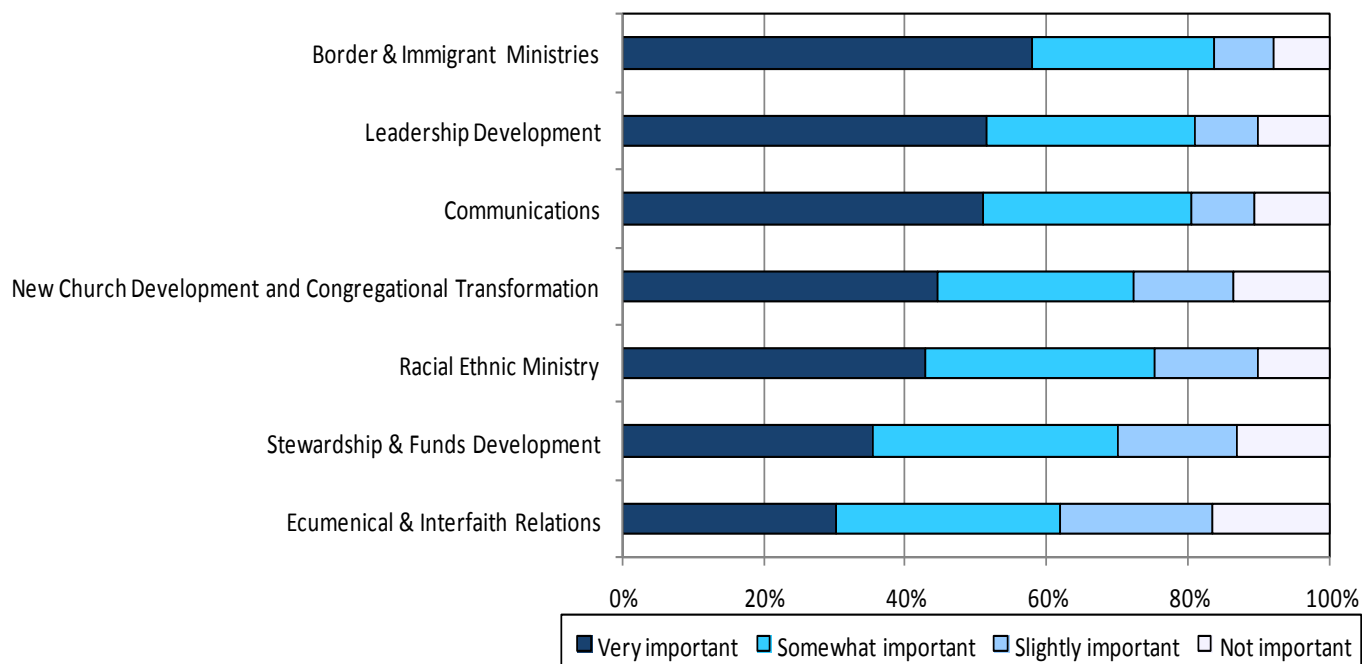
†“Not sure/no contact with the Synod” responses have been excluded.

‡Totals may not equal 100% because of rounding.

### Assessing Current Mission Priorities

Respondents were given a list of the seven current priorities of the synod and asked to rate the importance of each on a four-point scale (plus a fifth, “not sure”; those responses, ranging between 13% and 15%, are excluded here). Border & Immigrant Ministries rates the highest, with more than eight in ten responding either “very important” (58%) or “somewhat important” (26%), followed closely by Leadership Development (52%; 29%) and Communications (51%; 30%). Rated a bit lower, with around seven in ten combined “very important” and “somewhat important” responses, are Racial Ethnic Ministry (43%; 32%), New Church Development/Congregational Transformation (45%; 28%), and Stewardship & Funds Development (35%; 35%). Rated lowest is Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations, with a combined “very important” and “somewhat important” response total of around six in ten (30%; 32%). (See Figure 2.)

**Figure 2. Rating the Synod's Mission Priorities**





Asked to select the two most important priorities of the seven, the percentage selecting each is generally similar to the pattern shown in Figure 2:

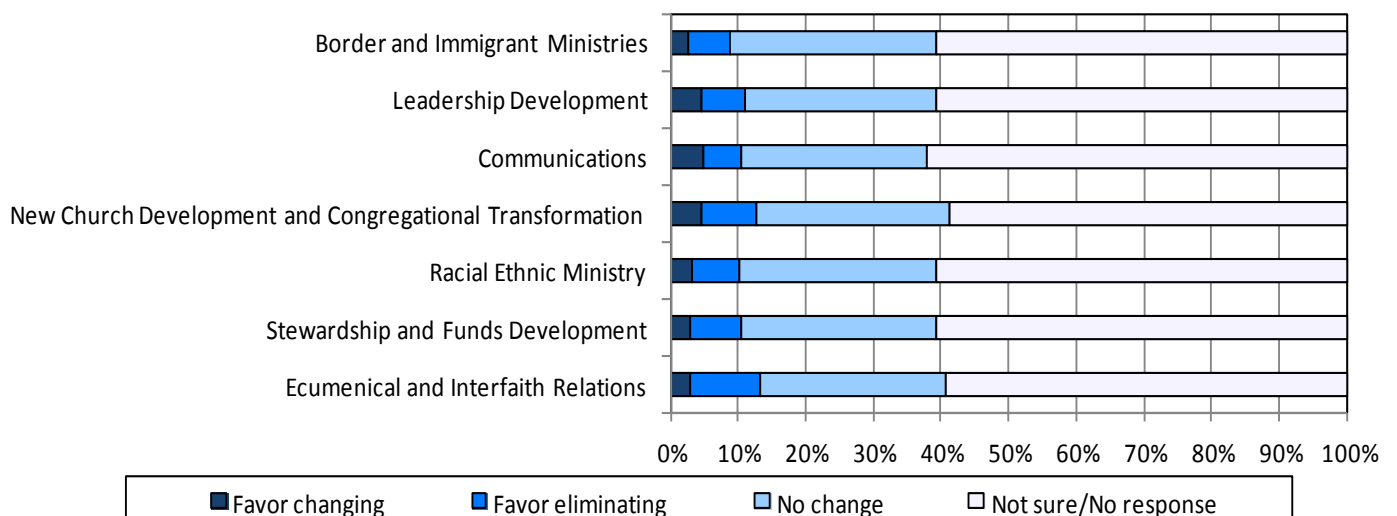
- Leadership Development, 40%
- Border & Immigrant Ministries, 39%
- Communications, 30%
- New Church Development/Congregational Transformation, 30%
- Racial Ethnic Ministry, 18%
- Stewardship & Funds Development, 16%
- Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations, 14%

Here, however, there emerge three sets of priorities, clearly separated from each other, with Leadership Development and Border & Immigrant Ministries at the top; Communications and New Church Development/Congregational Transformation in the middle; and Racial Ethnic Ministry, Stewardship & Funds Development, and Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations at the bottom.

Put differently, all of the priorities are rated as at least somewhat important by sizable majorities of respondents; the differences observed are of degree, not of type (refer to Figure 2). The differences stand out more sharply, however, when respondents are limited to selecting the two priorities that are the most important. Even here, though, it should be emphasized that there is far from a consensus on priorities. Because each respondent could select two priorities as their most important, that means that the top rated—Leadership Development and Border & Immigrant Ministries—were ranked no higher than third place by around 60% of all respondents.

Asked what they would suggest for mission priorities going forward, most either do not respond, say they are “not sure,” or opt for the status quo (combined total of at least 87% for each priority). No more than 5% favor changing any particular goal (5% want to change Communications and New Church Development/Congregational Transformation), while no more than 10% favor eliminating any specific goal (10% want to eliminate Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations).<sup>4</sup> (See Figure 3.)

**Figure 3. Recommendations for Mission Priorities**



<sup>4</sup> The “not sure” and “no response” totals are shown here, unlike for other variables, to emphasize the relatively small share of respondents who want some sort of change, including elimination, for any of the mission priorities.



A follow-up question, asking for specifics from respondents who favor changes in one or more priorities, yielded a variety of comments. Many of these recommend eliminating the synod or reducing its functions.<sup>5</sup> Another follow-up question, requesting ideas for new priorities, resulted in several varied suggestions, but without a common theme.

### ***New Synod Mission***

Only one in ten respondents (11%) believe there is a “regional mission or ministry project” that “would be better undertaken by the synod.” Most respond “not sure” (52%), with the remainder responding “no” (38%). A list of mission projects suggested by the 11% are found in Appendix B.



**Research Services**  
**A Ministry of the Presbyterian Mission Agency**  
**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**January 4, 2013**

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<sup>5</sup> This theme is also prominent in the comments in response to Q19; see Appendix B.



# Synod of the Southwest Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force

## Strategic Planning Survey Fall, 2012

### Appendix A. Survey Questions and Responses

Number of survey invitations sent .....	728
Number returned as undeliverable or ineligible.....	91
Number of completed surveys .....	406
Response rate .....	63%

Q1. Please indicate the roles, if any, that you have held in the Synod of the Southwest at any point *during the past 5 years*: (Mark *all* that apply.)

	◆
Commissioner to synod assembly .....	10%
Chair of the synod council.....	1%
Chair of a synod committee or task force.....	4%
Member of a synod committee.....	14%
Synod staff.....	2%
Moderator of synod .....	2%
Vice moderator of synod .....	2%
Member of the synod council.....	3%
Other (specify):.....	5%
None of these.....	74%

Q2. Have you, personally, been involved with the Synod of the Southwest *in the past 5 years* in any of the following ways? (Mark *all* that apply.)

	◆
Attended a Kaleidoscope Preaching Event.....	16%
Participated in a Native American Consultation .....	7%
Participated in Crossing Borders: Encountering God.....	10%
Participated in a synod leadership training event .....	11%
Participated in another training or educational program of the synod.....	21%
Other (specify):.....	5%
No, no involvement with the synod.....	56%

Q3. Have you personally received financial assistance from the synod in the past 5 years?

Yes.....	12%
No (skip to Q4).....	88%

Q3a. If yes, for what purpose(s) have you personally received financial assistance from the synod in the past 5 years?

n=49

[see Appendix B]

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

◆ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



- Q4. Has your congregation as a whole been involved with the Synod of the Southwest in any of these ways over the past 5 years? (Mark **all** that apply.)
- ♦
- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Received a loan from the synod .....                     | 2%  |
| Received other financial assistance from the synod ..... | 5%  |
| Hosted a synod assembly.....                             | 8%  |
| None of these (skip to Q6).....                          | 86% |
- Q5. Use this space to list any other involvement that your congregation, or members of your congregation, have had with the synod in the past 5 years?
- n=57
- [see Appendix B]
- Q6. In general, how knowledgeable are you about the ministries, activities, and programs of the Synod of the Southwest?
- |                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Very knowledgeable.....      | 8%  |
| Somewhat knowledgeable.....  | 33% |
| Slightly knowledgeable ..... | 33% |
| Not knowledgeable.....       | 23% |
| Not sure .....               | 3%  |
- Q7. How would you rate:
- a. The work the synod has been doing over the past 5 years?
- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| Very positive.....                      | 18% |
| Somewhat positive.....                  | 26% |
| Mixed—both positive and negative.....   | 17% |
| Somewhat negative.....                  | 4%  |
| Very negative.....                      | 1%  |
| Not sure/no contact with the Synod..... | 34% |
- b. Your congregation's experience with the synod over the past 5 years?
- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| Very positive.....                      | 12% |
| Somewhat positive.....                  | 19% |
| Mixed—both positive and negative.....   | 12% |
| Somewhat negative.....                  | 3%  |
| Very negative.....                      | 1%  |
| Not sure/no contact with the Synod..... | 54% |
- c. Your own personal experience with the synod over the past 5 years?
- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| Very positive.....                      | 21% |
| Somewhat positive.....                  | 21% |
| Mixed—both positive and negative.....   | 12% |
| Somewhat negative.....                  | 3%  |
| Very negative.....                      | 1%  |
| Not sure/no contact with the Synod..... | 42% |

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



Q8. In your opinion, how important is each of the current mission priorities of the synod?

a. Communications

	+
Very important.....	44%
Somewhat important.....	25%
Slightly important.....	8%
Not important.....	9%
Not sure.....	14%

b. Leadership Development

Very important.....	44%
Somewhat important.....	25%
Slightly important.....	8%
Not important.....	9%
Not sure.....	14%

c. Border & Immigrant Ministries

Very important.....	50%
Somewhat important.....	23%
Slightly important.....	7%
Not important.....	7%
Not sure.....	13%

d. New Church Development/Congregational Transformation

	+
Very important.....	38%
Somewhat important.....	24%
Slightly important.....	12%
Not important.....	12%
Not sure.....	14%

e. Racial Ethnic Ministry

	+
Very important.....	36%
Somewhat important.....	28%
Slightly important.....	13%
Not important.....	8%
Not sure.....	15%

f. Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations

	+
Very important.....	26%
Somewhat important.....	27%
Slightly important.....	18%
Not important.....	14%
Not sure.....	15%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



Q8. In your opinion, how important is each of the current mission priorities of the synod?

[Cont.]

g. Stewardship & Funds Development

	+
Very important.....	30%
Somewhat important.....	30%
Slightly important.....	14%
Not important.....	11%
Not sure.....	15%

Q9. Which 2 of these 7 synod mission priorities would you rate as the most important? Mark *no more than 2*.

	+, ♦
Communications.....	30%
Leadership Development.....	40%
Border & Immigrant Ministries.....	39%
New Church Development/Congregational Transformation.....	30%
Racial Ethnic Ministry.....	18%
Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations.....	14%
Stewardship & Funds Development.....	16%

Q10. Would you favor changing or eliminating any of the 7 current mission priorities of the synod?

Yes.....	24%
No (skip to Q11).....	27%
Not sure (skip to Q11).....	49%

Q10a. If yes, please indicate which mission priority(-ties) of the synod you would favor changing or eliminating. (Mark *one* column for each row.)

n=89

a. Communications

	+
Favor changing.....	30%
Favor eliminating.....	33%
Keep as is.....	21%
Not sure.....	16%

b. Leadership Development

	+
Favor changing.....	26%
Favor eliminating.....	40%
Keep as is.....	25%
Not sure.....	9%

c. Border & Immigrant Ministries

	+
Favor changing.....	16%
Favor eliminating.....	37%
Keep as is.....	39%
Not sure.....	8%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



Q10a. If yes, please indicate which mission priority(-ties) of the synod you would favor changing or [Cont.] eliminating. (Mark **one** column for each row.)

n=89

d.	New Church Development/Congregational Transformation	
		+
	Favor changing .....	26%
	Favor eliminating.....	44%
	Keep as is.....	25%
	Not sure .....	4%
e.	Racial Ethnic Ministry	
		+
	Favor changing .....	18%
	Favor eliminating.....	39%
	Keep as is.....	30%
	Not sure .....	13%
		n=89
f.	Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations	
		+
	Favor changing .....	16%
	Favor eliminating.....	58%
	Keep as is.....	18%
	Not sure .....	8%
g.	Stewardship & Funds Development	
		+
	Favor changing .....	17%
	Favor eliminating.....	42%
	Keep as is.....	28%
	Not sure .....	13%

Q10b. If you favor **changing** any of the mission priorities, please briefly describe how you would like each of them to be changed:

n=89

[see Appendix B]

Q11. Are there other activities, programs, or ministries not on this list—ones that the synod **does not currently do**—that you would strongly favor adding as mission priorities of the synod? List up to 3.

[see Appendix B]

Q12. Is there a regional mission or ministry project that you believe would better be undertaken by the synod, rather than a presbytery or local church?

		+
Yes.....		11%
No (skip to Q13).....		38%
Not sure (skip to Q13).....		52%

Q12a. If yes, please describe that mission or ministry project in this space:

n=39

[see Appendix B]

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



Q13. What is your age?

Less than 40 years .....	2%
40-49.....	8%
50-59.....	23%
60-69.....	32%
70 or older .....	35%

Q14. Are you a teaching elder?

Yes .....	61%
No (skip to Q15).....	39%

Q14a. In what presbytery?

	n=228
de Cristo .....	21%
Grand Canyon.....	34%
Santa Fe.....	36%
Sierra Blanca .....	9%
Other (specify):.....	—

Q15. How large is the congregation where you attend or serve?

Fewer than 50 members.....	15%
50-99 members .....	18%
100 to 199 members .....	16%
200 to 299 members .....	14%
300 to 499 members .....	14%
500 or more members.....	12%
Don't know.....	1%
Not currently involved in a congregation (skip to Q18).....	11%

Q16. In what presbytery is your congregation?

	n=328
de Cristo .....	22%
Grand Canyon.....	32%
Santa Fe.....	33%
Sierra Blanca .....	11%
Other (specify):.....	2%

Q17. Which of the following roles, if any, do you currently have in a congregation? (Mark ***all*** that apply.)

Pastor (including solo, head of staff, associate, interim, stated supply, etc.) .....	38%
Director of Christian education .....	4%
Commissioned ruling elder.....	14%
Other staff .....	5%
Active deacon .....	5%
Ruling elder on session .....	21%
Clerk of session .....	27%
Leader or member of a committee or task force .....	24%
Musician, music director, choir leader, or choir member.....	19%
Officer of or participant in a men's, women's, or young adult group .....	18%
Other (specify): .....	20%
None of these [this option was only available on the paper survey] .....	1%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



Q18. What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark *all* that apply.)

White or Caucasian .....	86%	♦
Black or African American .....	2%	
Indigenous (Native American) or Alaska Native .....	6%	
Asian or Pacific Islander .....	2%	
Hispanic, Latino/a, Spanish origin .....	5%	
Some other race (specify): .....	2%	

Q19. Please use this space for any additional thoughts or suggestions you'd like to share with the Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force of the synod:

[see Appendix B]

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Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

+ = non-responses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit non-responses)

n = number of respondents in the subset eligible to answer this question

♦ = percentages may add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response



**Synod of the Southwest  
Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force**

**Strategic Planning Survey  
Fall, 2012**

**Appendix B. Verbatim Responses to Open-Ended Questions**

**Q1. Please indicate the roles, if any, that you have held in the Synod of the Southwest at any point *during the past 5 years*: (Mark *all* that apply.) Other:**

Convener of [deleted] event
Presbytery [deleted] Staff
a humble member of the finance comm.
presbytery staff
elected officer, treasurer
Corresponding Member
Native American Ministries
Executive Presbyter
recording clerk
Executive Presbyter
i was part of a Synod work group planing events for [deleted]
PW Synod Coordinating Team
Transition team when former Exec/Stated Clerk left and member of the selection committee for Interim Executive/Stated Clerk
Task Force
Member of a task force
event planning team
clerk of church in synod
Nominating Committee
retired
presbytery executive
presbytery pastor
STIMULATOR OF C.L.P. PROTRAM IN [deleted].
Retired, and Tired
Presbytery [deleted] Stated Clerk
pastor
task force member
Attend kaleidoscope

**Q2. Have you, personally, been involved with the Synod of the Southwest *in the past 5 years* in any of the following ways? (Mark *all* that apply.) Other:**

Elder Commissioner
went to the Phyllis Tickle event sponsored by SSW
Hispanic Ministries



Presbytery [staff] Staff
stewardship meeting in Phx
advisory role [deleted]
As a retired pastor I wasn't available for a scholarship but would otherwise have attended a few events.
PW - Synod
Attend meetings
Spoke at Orientation for a travel seminar
kaleidoscope
moderator's conf. in Louisville; PW gathering
China Trip
young clergy meetings
The Breakfast in General Assambly
host
connection from Synod office to Presbytery office
my college-age daughter attended "Crossing Borders"
commissioner [deleted]
served on presbytery staff [deleted]
Help promote events
Visioning/Review TF
Referred folks to the Native American Consultation from my congregation
NO INvolmwents
attended two Synod meetings
financial matters
Participated in [deleted] as part of COM of [deleted] Presbytery
participating in Synod meetings

- Q3. Have you personally received financial assistance from the synod in the past 5 years?**  
**Q3a. If yes, for what purpose(s) have you personally received financial assistance from the synod in the past 5 years?**

Study leave grant
To attend the Kaleidoscope preaching event and to attend the national Stewardship event.
The have paid my mileage to Kaleidoscopic events.
They supported the Kaleidoscopic preaching series allowing me to go for only \$100.
Kaleidoscope event
scholarship help to attend stewardship events
The Synod played an integral part in providing me with scholarship to help me participate in mission trips abroad.
Reimbursement for travel and to attend meetings or events.
Pastor's continuing education
Stewardship Event
I have [deleted] received funds from The Smyth Fund for Pastors' Continuing Education.
help in attending the national stewardship conference, as a member of the finance and Stewardship Development committee Participant in a kaleidoscope preaching event
Attending events related to the Synod EP Forum.
For participation in a seminar on immigration issues at Ghost Ranch.



In the form of a scholarship to attend the Crossing Borders event.
To attend training.
Kaleidoscope
attended a Kaleidoscope Preaching Event. Received a study grant
When I worked as Presbytery Staff for [deleted], the program and my salary was supported by the Synod.
The costs for many of the synod functions were greatly subsidized. My church is currently seeking a Claude L Morten Loan as well.
Synod trip to China-- partial assistance was given to those who traveled, including myself.
Financial aid to participate of the Hispanic/Latino Presbyterian Men's gathering in Orlando, Florida in october 2011.
expenses to attend synod meeting; scholarship to attend all Kalidascope events
I'm not sure of the meaning of the question. I have enjoyed funds to cover travel expenses to Synod Assembly and Synod educational events. But no other support beyond that
Kaleidscope underwritten by Synod.
Attend training workshop
when I was attending seminary, I received some seminary aid one year
to attend conferences
kaleidoscopic conference
The synod subsidized 2 preaching events that I attended.
To attend Synod of the SW Conferences at Ghost Ranch--which I really appreciate!
I have paid the participant's part of the Kaleidoscope events in which I have participated, however I am well aware the Synod invests much more to make those available to us at such an affordable rate. I consider that support to be financial assistance from the synod.
Kaleidoscope Stewardship event and The Younger Pastors Gathering
I have received scholarships to attend Leadership training such as Pastoral Devolpment and New Church Development
Registration and transportation to Kaledesscope preaching events.
continuing education
Preaching Seminar at Ghost Ranch
To attend a mission trip to China
Tuition for a workshop
Support of Hispanic ministries
Travel expenses to meetings

**Q5. Use this space to list any other involvement that your congregation, or members of your congregation, have had with the synod in the past 5 years?**

Border Ministry, Amnesty International, Ecumenical and interfaith Relations.
My ministry is not congregation-based, so for me this is a N/A question.
4 synod relationship
One of our associate pastors has been Synod [deleted]; before than was [deleted] of the Synod [deleted] committee
member of congregation on council
Mission and Staff Assistance
Our present congregation is a Spanish language NCD and as such has received financial support from the Synod.
Border links Helping with providing water in the desert Speakers for worship and educational events
Hosted committee meetings.



We have participated in training for church development.
Hosting Synod assembly.
Current congregation: members serve on Synod Task Force and have served as Commissioners to Synod Council.
recieved Mission Partnership funds helped plan the Border Worship Service at [deleted] I served on [deleted] committee and helped [deleted] and visits from [deleted] visited church and pastor [deleted]
Our [deleted] Young Adult Volunteer received a grant from the Synod to help finance her YAV year
our congregation participated in the Holy conversations church planning program.
We [deleted] the Holy Conversations event, and I believe [deleted] was synod sponsored and held at our church.
Our associate pastor is currently [deleted] synod.
I am honorably retired.
Our congregation has been one of the sites to receive one of the internet caes in this presbytery.
Participated in some of the Native American events, served on Synod committees. We hosted a Presbytery meeting, and a Synod event on technology and social media.
atendiendo la conferencia de cross border
Conrad Rocha in many ways, Marty Bruner in many ways, currently [deleted] for Synod.
Was the Phyllis Tribble event a synod event? If so, some of us attended.
We received a Synod loan for some expenses with our facility. Our in-house fund raising covered the expense so we repaid the loan immediately.
en las conferencias de cross border
Synod has funded teleconferencing equipment for this church, has granted us significant funding for a well-attended, very successful 2011 Border/Immigration conference for the community and beyond and the Moderator visited us for worship and fellowship the summer before last. Members of the congregation have attended and appreciated Synod sponsored educational events led by nationally known figures such as Gil Rendle and Phyllis Tickle. A "Holy Conversations" team from the church received training through the Synod and has been at work for about for years, continuing the process. The 10 Kaleidoscope Preaching events have been stimulating and valuable events for myself as pastor and several have been attended by Commissioned Ruling Elders associated with this church and a retired pastor who leads our Audio-Visual programs.
hosted meetings of Presbytery [deleted]
Our congregation received a Claude L. Morton loan to help [deleted].
Pastor held office an led sponsored tours.
We hosted a meeting with an international mission couple visiting the US, which I believe was through the synod.
Since my congregation is the Presbytery, we are involved as members of the Synod.
Attended Synod training events.
Synod has placed funds with PILP which were designated to our church for rebate program
Unknown...I am a part time employee hired for visitation; ordained in another denomination and do not participate in Session meetings, Presbytey meetings or other.
[Deleted] is member. [Deleted] parishoner is active on Synod Council
The Synod gave a generous gift to [deleted].
Synod Commissioner

**Q10. Would you favor changing or eliminating any of the 7 current mission priorities of the synod? Q10b. If you favor *changing* any of the mission priorities, please briefly describe how you would like each of them to be changed:**

We don't need synods. Our synod is far too expensive for the modest returns to the local church.
Provide regular and ongoing support via seminars, webinars, etc. on the topics of communications, leadership development, and stewardship/funds development. Training or support on these topics need to be made available at a congregational level.



I think the synod needs to focus it's work in a concentrated way that recognizes what it does best and let presbyteries, congregations, and the GA do the other ministries. I don't know what the synod does best, I only know what two areas I've experienced.
I feel it was a mistake not to eliminate synods
My personal opinion is the Synod is redundant and can be eliminated.
Congregational Transformation needs to be Job 1 for any of the higher courts of the PCUSA. May be too little too late, but it's worth a try. Not sure, however, if the Synod is the most effective or relevant place for this initiative.
I am looking for the Synod in the PCUSA that has the wisdom, foresight and courage to lead the way to eliminating the synod-level council in the structure of the church, and providing for a transition of its responsibilities, opportunities and resources to the presbyteries and/or to the General Assembly.
Transfer responsibilities to the presbyteries and provide financial assistance as possible
It is time for synods to be removed from our structure.
Our church knows little of Synod activity - Leadership is questionable, weak-Border issues hot subject in Arizona and denomination needs to abide by the rules in place - aid to illegals sounds good but might be to the wrong people ie. drug cartels, human smuggling etc. - if church wants change, needs to go through proper procedure - illegals are a mixed bunch and hard to define what their agenda is - border is a federal responsibility but they have not acted positively so states started to protect their own and did so rightfully. The denomination is shrinking in the USA - why ? - Christianity is growing everywhere else - they have been through the fire and know truth in their hearts - we sway too much to social issues - need to get back to God's Word.
Border issues are a hot subject in Arizona - the church has been involved in some cases in a questionable way - there are rules that govern border and state issues and they should be respected and followed - illegals are a mixed bunch and one never knows their true agenda - ie. drug cartels, human smuggling. Feds have responsibility to protect our borders - they have not done so - states have the right to protect their people, and rightly so. If change needed in this area, should be done through proper procedure. Ch. develop has not gone very far in our area - present churches already have trouble remaining afloat. Not sure what "transformation" really addresses - might be a "last ditch" effort to save what we've got?
Give both racial ethnic and ecumenical relations top priorities.
Though these are priorities of Synod, and each has their importance, the questionnaire is skewed....My fundamental belief is that the work of the Synod could be done by Presbyteries, and that Synod level of connectedness is no longer needed. The Synod has done great work in leadership development, but each Presbytery could do that as well
If the Synod is to continue, there needs to be a task group, whatever, to intentionally work develop a sense of Christian stewardship. Teaming it with the finance committee, is not working -- very little emphasis on developing a true stewardship program Communications. Too much emphasis on electronic; there is still a great need for a print newsletter that would have an extensive mailing list. Synod website is not cutting it and there is no electronic newsletter type of publication
Basically, the Synod of the SW has been and continues to waste of time and money. The change that I would suggest is to eliminate the synod complete. That is the change in priority that I suggest.
I see New Church Development and Congregational Transformation as more of a function of the presbyteries. Perhaps it could be changed to reflect "supporting presbyteries in new church development and congregational transformation."
communications is too broad, who are you communicating with and what are you saying? New Church development is best done at the Presbytery or Local level.
Communications needs more emphasis; Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations should be redesigned or eliminated.
Not sure what should be done other than I feel most of what the Synod does can be done by the presbyteries in planning for mission that crosses presbytery lines.
Use monies dedicated for unnecessary ministries to expand border/racial ministries.
I personally think that congregations should be empowered through their networks with other congregations in presbyteries and beyond to claim and live into the mission priorities that they discern that God is calling and shaping their collective life around. I really don't see a role for synods. The gatherings I have attended for preaching and young clergy have been good, but I could find resourcing for this in other ways. In this "synod" the presbyteries are struggling, and the synod seems to be at a distance. Communication that is shared is not



comprehensible, either because it is aimed at an "insider" audience, or because there is not a shared ownership of the so-called mission priorities. Presbyteries (and synods and GA for that matter) must be charged with the tasks of equipping and supporting pastors and congregations in the mission field every single one of us is in - and that's it. Sorry, but the days of the usefulness of synods are past. But, somehow, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of our corporatist denominational system has entrenched the synods in the structure...so synods are likely to collapse until there is catastrophic system failure.
No comments
Empower churches to develop partnerships to in mission and ministry, moving away from the organizational model we have been operating under.
With shrinking and limited resources, we will be better off to concentrate on things directly impacting us. I don't feel ecumenical is one of those.
Eliminate the Synod in the border ministries and leave them to the presbyteries. Change the ecumenical and interfaith to be ecumenical only. Interfaith is better done at the local level where the churches are in relationship with and know the participants more closely.
Being in communication with problems or issues is key. Leaders that lead instead of feed off of others is key. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations is key with our worldwide situation.
The Synod's resources could be better utilized if more emphasis was placed on assisting, encouraging, supporting, and training local churches, as in leadership training/mentoring and providing resources for ministry.
Involve the presbytery more in communications. Encourage Racial Ethnic and Ecumenical development with scholarships that are promoted better.
Not concerned
b, d, and g could be reduced in importance, but not eliminated entirely. These are all areas of primary focus for presbyteries, and don't need much support from Synod.
strengthen
The Synod established itself years ago with a self writted job description not to "do program". In that it has pretty much succeeded. What is lacking in our two state area is: a coordinated effort to work toward caring for the aged (mostly Presbyterians), which other Synods are doing; reestablish some contacts with University youth across the two states; ministry to veterans (we have a large military presence in both states; and deepen the relationship among the three major cultural groups [hispanic, anglo, and native american].The lesson to be learned from the failure to develop Christian Unity among all Presbyterians in New Mexico speaks to me of a deeply rooted cutural divide that flies in the face of God's expressed desire "that they all may be one."
We do not need a programatic synod therefore we do not need priorities and can eliminate the governing body or reduce its function to purely ecclesial
I honestly don't know which ones I would change without assessing each of them in terms of their effectiveness. I probably should have checked "not sure" and especially because I am retired and have not had much to do with Prebytery or Synod for the past two and one half years.
Synod itself has become more of a burden than a help. It simply adds a layer of bureaucracy.
Focus more on the local church
Focus on networking people, congregations, presbyteries in a more organic bottom up approach as opposed to a programmatic top-down approach.
Eliminate synod!
transfer all to presbytery and/or GA

**Q11. Are there other activities, programs, or ministries not on this list—ones that the synod *does not currently do*—that you would strongly favor adding as mission priorities of the synod? List up to 3.**

History of Presbyterian Mission in the Southwest
Christian Education
Ministering to the ministers of the synod through spiritual direction, mentoring and pastoral counseling
Racial Ethnic Ministry



intercultural ministry
Education workshops for church educator
Youth Ministries
Leadership role in outreach to communities
Support for ministers (not financial)
poverty and the church
Youth and Young Adult Engagement
personal and local peacemaking - extremely important!
Would favor seeing Synod minimize itself and put more dollars back to work at the congregational level.
none, synods seem mostly redundant and irrelevant
none
Evangelism strategy and training
Community outreach for Native communities
Cross cultural relations/communication
Small church ministries
Just need to improve on priorities
Developing stronger Clergy relationships to the Denomination
Serious coordination and support of campus ministries at UNM, NMState, ASU, Ariz. primarily, plus the other smaller state campuses-4 in NM
need to improve on priorities in place.
No
Support interim ministries.
Telling the story of mission in the SW should be covered by communications, leadership development and stewardship. The new slant should be the acceptance by synod churches and members of the funding for these missions, formerly funded from the national headquarters.
Clergy care/support
Basic training programs for clerks of session
Need to Focus on Funding of Presbytery Exec.
congregational support
connecting with individual congregations so they understand the synod's ministries better
Same-Sex Marriage Education
education
None
Training in Discernment processes
Transfer its functions to the presbyteries
Policy of the Church
Environmental Concerns
Native American Ministry
Exploring with presbyteries other ways of "doing ministry" which will take into account our theological differences
Native American
spiritual growth
Spirituality and Health
integration of technology into church management etc
no
Training in conflict management



evangelism
Chaplaincy in the US Military
Stewardship & Funds Development for churches
campus ministry
SOUNTERACTING HOMOPHOBIA
transformation of presbyteries
n/a
more time and effort in re-building the executive level relationships with presbyteries and Synod
Emergent Church models/issues
Native American Ministries
Personal Accountability groups
Help implement staff sharing for presbyteries
Older Adult Ministry
Elderly care
Congregational/ New Membership Growth Strategies
"house church" as evangelism tool
Leadership development
Promoting youth ministries
Development of Youth and Youth Adult Ministries
Indian Churches
Young Adults/Collegiate
Synod activities for youth beyond summer conference
Not sure
Indian Ministres
Youth ministry--the Presbyterian church is aging because the greatest majority of memberships is seniors
Stronger support for border ministries
Peacemaking in community
help with native american in seeking pastors
How to attract new members in different locations
Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations
Administrator workshops for church administrators
empowering congregations in political issues
Peacemaking and Reconciliation
help with Lay Pastor programs
Building strong Small Church relationships and support
Serious planning with Presbyteries for NCD, especially in 3 metro areas
events for young clergy
Workshop on grant writing and submission
congregational education
Certified Ruling Elder training
Cease to exist
Biblical and Theological Reflection
Chaplaincy in hospitals
Reaching out to the addicted.... supporting them



Sister Synod program/share missions and ideas
Veteran/family ministries
Stewardship
Youth participation in Synod activities
Not sure
Training making ministers
Stronger support for immigration concern
Use professional surveys not necessarily religiously oriented to ask different questions
Music and worship workshops/exchanges/development
Camp and Conference Centers
More resourcing of Presbyteries in support of local congregations
Consultations with rural or small town churches
cut programs to zero and only work in developing inter and intra presbytery networks of congregations and clergy
Compassion Ministry
Ministry in Politics
Resource sharing
Illegal, harmful drug abuse.
Mission outreach
Not sure
let the individual churches go their way
Stronger support for Hispanic ministries

**Q12. Is there a regional mission or ministry project that you believe would better be undertaken by the synod, rather than a presbytery or local church?**

**Q12a. If yes, please describe that mission or ministry project in this space:**

Collection, preservation and providing access to the History of Presbyterian Mission in the Southwest. This information is as important as Genealogical History.
Doing away with Synod
CLP training
Well, in this Synod, especially broad-based educational and ethnic coordination.
Anything on this side of the border involving immigrant ministries; prison privatization issues
Programs that the Presbyteries can not manage to do because of money or persons. Such as the Stewardship events and keidescope events that have been held.
As a regional body in the SW, involving two border states, border/immigration ministry is an area that is well-suited for synod-wide collaboration - two excellent conferences, for instance, have been organized over the last 6-7 years, with major oversight from synod.
All the Synod activities could be managed by Presbytery, or by the local Church.
COM and CPM, Stewardship, Pastoral and Leadership training events
Cross cultural communication and relationship development among our four presbyteries and with adjacent presbyteries or presbyteries with similar interests.
Environmental issues especially in regards to mining. Strengthen the church's voice in the political arena in Arizona and New Mexico.
One of the disasters when there was a shift to regional synods (though regional synods are critical for the areas such as NM & AZ) is that campus ministries fell to presbyteries and local churches. The Synods must be involved. Note: Often joint ministries with the other denominations help but the UCC and Christian Churches are very weak in the SW and the Un. Meth. tends to want to do its own thing. I am in favor of synods and, especially for those in states where we are fewer in numbers, but some of those in the Mid-West, NE and SE need to be divided back to



the old state sized synods, not NM or AZ. Would a Synod School for church members be a good idea, maybe at Ghost Ranch?
Ongoing support for Middle East Presbyterian Fellowship hosted in Tucson is becoming more and more important as the arrival of additional immigrants and refugees enter the community here. The ministries there are extremely significant to people arriving here -- fleeing Middle East countries torn by violence, destruction, and death to Christians. They arrive with little or no possession and unfortunately are able to only enter the work force at menial jobs. Additional support is needed for these Christians who come here -- able to provide little or no support for the ministries there -- but needing desperately support that the ministries have to offer. Synod has helped in the past. Needs are even greater now and resources have been lessened. Presbytery and local churches are becoming more aware and helping financially with mission funds -- but this remains in the beginning stages.
Going back to my previous suggestion on Same-Sex Marriage education, I believe the synod could well lead the way in encouraging congregations and congregational leaders to study this issue -- an issue undoubtedly coming back to GA in the future.
Support of Racial Ethnic ministries may be better handled by the Synod simply because there would be greater numbers of leaders available to address issues at a Synod level.
Educational events such as speakers, conferences, camps that churches and presbyteries can no longer do on their own financially.
Pulling together the Certified Ruling Elder training from the Presbyteries into a Synod wide program would strengthen both the training, and the commitments to church leadership in the Synod.
Leadership development
Compassion Ministry to the Poor
Ongoing border ministry
crear un programa y/o conferencia a nivel de sinodo para capacitacion de liderazgo y desarrollo para los hispanos (en espanol)
The Southwest contains racial/ethnic homelands, both Native American and Hispanic, which have wonderful but largely unappreciated gifts to offer the dominant culture. Synod has an important role to play in attending to these cultures; presbyteries and local churches are becoming less and less interested or able to do this. Also, the border regions contained within the Synod, when left to presbyteries or local churches, will lose valuable voices and advocates necessary if healing and justice will ever exist there.
I think the Synod is better positioned to lead missions to the native American tribes because the Synod overlays many different tribes and can better coordinate those activities.
The regional ministry has more effective information and understands their own circumstances and situations, and also more efficient in activity.
Hispanic Ministries
A synod has not the power to do anything. A presbytery does. I've never seen anything from a Synod that amounted to a hill of beans aside from a Presbytery which is locked an a conglomerate of congregations feeding the money holders to build or put money into some thing or building or project(s) that congregants are willing to spend upon. A Synod is absolutely without face or power to do a thing aside from a Presbytery. We can do without a Synod or Synods from the old times in the book of Polity. A synod never did a thing for me and I never saw a synod do a remarkable thing in my entire life as an Ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament. Presbyteries have the power and the money and the vote to do what has to be done. The General Assembly is even more removed and I shall restrain myself from remarks there toward. Too much higher administration in the PCUSA that feeds off of the congregants and parishes. Administration (leaders of the PCUSA willing to go outside of the colloquial fields into international events with terrorism) needs to get off their behinds and do what Jesus did if they believe in Jesus the Christ: Go forth and live the life of Faith as His Contemporary Disciples did. Leaders of this Church should read Soren Kierkegaard's "Training In Christianity" and take it into their own hearts to do what they were born into the world to do with their talents their skills their courage. It will take more courage than dealing with border issues and gay issues. It will take the courage to face terrorism and uncertainty in today's world.
Leadership training of lay leaders at synod level
campus ministry
Border & Immigration Issues
Native American ministry and mission; boarder ministry and mission; I pray for the time when our Presbyteries are



unified in their approach to ministry and mission, not to mention administration and core values
I think the Synod's work, including involving congregations, in border ministries/immigrant rights is very important.
Sister synod sharing: two synods of different size, geographics and missions becoming sister synods. The staff could interact and with the help of electronics, meeting together, leadership training and visioning. This would allow Presbyterians get to know other parts of the church.
Ganado, needs all the help we can provide
As above> I am of the opinion that what is needed is to spend time thinking about what areas of hurt are being felt in the population in these two states.[Years ago it was a lack of education, medical assistance and parish {non Roman Catholic) ministry. We moved into what we felt were those untouched areas of need established schooled, clinics, and churches. Ask: who are the people who would be helped in our geographic area whose hurts and hopes we can support by working together?.
Indian ministries
When I was synod staff, I provided leadership for border ministries, Racial Ethnic immigration and concern for undocumented advocacy for justice and concern for poor

**Q14. Are you a teaching elder?**

**Q14a. [If yes,] In what presbytery? Other:**

I just transfered from [deleted] in [deleted] 2011
been in de Cristo, Grand Canyon, Sante Fe

**Q16. In what presbytery is your congregation? Other:**

our ministry is in partnership with congregations in all 4
Being retired, I currently am a parish associate at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Tucson. I am not the pastor in any church.
Mid Kentucky
Plains & Peaks
Not yet organized
EPC
San Gabriel
won't enter
st Francis in the Foothills UMC

**Q17. Which of the following roles, if any, do you currently have in a congregation? (Mark *all* that apply.) Other:**

ex-Clerk of Session
MEMBER AT LARGE
Spiritual Director to the Pastor
secretarial duties
Youth Leader
Parish Associate
Retired, "friend of congregation"
none
Parish Associate
Treasurer



treasurer
Elder-inactive
Mentoring new members
occasional pulpit supply, Sunday school teacher
Memorial Garden Director
retired but very active in churches
Memorial Garden Director
Librarian
Program Committee and Nominating Committee
Retired pastor
no role at this time
honorably retired
parish associate
Greeter Volunteers
retired
Retired pastor
Shawl mission
Parish Associate.
HR
member of PNC
church administrator
Clerk of Session for one church, Office Manager and Financial Secretary for a different church
preach occasionally
Treasurer
specialized ministry
pulpit supply/moderator
pastor emeritus
As retired I do a lot of volunteering and CE and Stewardship.
Church secretary/bookkeeper
retired
Parish Associate
retired pastor
Retired, occasional preaching, pastoral care, etc.
attending
occasional supply pastor
Lead adult Bible study class
preach 1 or 2 times a month, sing in choir, help out when needed with pastoral duties on a non-official basis
Office Administrator
Adult Education Leader
worshipper
Counting & Recording Treasurer
parish associate
retired
Teach Adults



None
retired
Teacher of Adult Class
Parish Associate
Attending retired Minister and Musician
Worship
parish associate
teaching elder in residence
worshipping in a congregation, currently on disability
Elder Commissioner to Presbytery [deleted] and serve on Presbytery committees, also was Commidioner to [deleted] General Assembly in [deleted]
none
pastor emeritus
chaplain
facilitating classes, pulpit supply
attending Disciples Church
attend and occasionally do communion to release pastor early for preaching elsewhere
participate in worship
Parish nurse
COM rep to a church in interim time
Teacher, support group leader
Retired Associate Pastor, Adult Teaching and Small Group Leader
parish assoc
Coord. of Adult Christian Ed.
Supply pastor pulpit
volunteer Asst. to the pastor
moderator of session
retired pastor sometimes asked to preach
lead worship and provide social services for the community

**Q18. What is your race or ethnicity? (Mark *all* that apply.) Some other race:**

mixed
human
Mixed American
I don't believe in separating people by race. How do we ever see people as they are if we bring in race?
Multi-cultural
I dislike such questions
inappropriate question
mexican
mexican

**Q19. Please use this space for any additional thoughts or suggestions you'd like to share with the Review and Visioning for the Future Task Force of the synod:**



I believe the Synod to be an important element in the organizational structure of the PCUSA. In the sparsely populated Southwest(New Mexico, Arizona), abandonment is an issue.
I was raised in the Presbyterian church. I am probably going to resign my membership in PCUSA by the end of the year. In an effort to be "relavent" PCUSA is bending to meet the norms of society. Good luck.
Most of our churches are in decline and yet we continue to waste the money given by members on Synods. I have served 3 churches in the Synod in the last 15 years and do not believe the time and money spent on this outmoded structure have been good stewardship.
I think the Synod does its best work when it focuses on serving the congregations and the people and pastors of those congregations.
If communication is a Synod priority, it has been managed poorly, because I have heard nothing about Synod activities. Seems we should have a newsletter or updates or something.
Having a Synod does play a vital role for many small churches. However, they need to be more visible and have more communications between Presbytery and Synod and GA. We'd like to have them come visit churches, be part of our ministries, and be there to support our future church members..the Youth!
Although synods take a lot of flack from other levels of the Church, I suspect that, at the end of the day, this is a reflection of resentment (at least from presbytery leadership) at having to share scarce resources. I do not think that this is a legitimate reason to shut down an entity that has probably the best record in the Church when it comes to the utilization of the gifts and skills of racial/ethnic and women.
As far as our congregation is concerned, I don't think we need Synod. They haven't done anything for us as a church or probably any of the churches in Sierra Blanca. Money can be kept at the Presbytery level & local church level instead of sending anything to the Synod. We don't need an Executive Presbyter either. We can just have a Stated Clerk for Presbytery and save alot more money. By the way, how do retired preachers get money from either One Great Hour of Sharing or Christmas Joy Offering to help with living and medical expenses?
Need to have Synod representative visit community churches; feel disconnected.
Ministers -- some of them -- need chances to be encouraged and supported in the very difficult work they do for us. Other ministers are the best source of such support and camaraderie. Does the Synod carry out such a program?
I believe the structure of our denomination is far too top heavy and cumbersome for our current size and future trends
The Synod needs to do more "marketing" of itself to the local churches, as most have no clue what you do--and I'm not real certain, either! Why do we need a Synod in addition to Presbyteries or churches? I'm not asking that critically--I would like you to use that question as your jump-off for a communication strategy.
This survey was difficult for me to complete as my calling is very diverse. I am a CRE who works with 3 Northern NM Churches in a wide variety of capacities. My duties include all things required to run a church from serving the pulpit, leadership training, moderating sessions to serving as Chaplain at Hospital and Fire Department. Although I have not received a lot of monitory support directly, the level of education I have received through the Synod has made it possible for me to do a better job in fulfilling my Call. They have helped me in ways that can not be counted on a survey. Thank you for the opportunity to express my thanks. [deleted]
I'm not sure we can afford the Synod much longer.
Due to old age I have been out of active participation in the courts of the church for several years except for the Presbytery to some extent. However I am vitally interested in the future of the Synods as well as the rest of our denominational courts from the local sessions up. It may be that some difficult changes must be made due to changes in the world in which we live today. However, change must be made for the good of the church as a whole, not change just for change sake!
Eliminate Synods; it is a level of mission we do not need
I think the the of the Synod has passed. Synods should probably be eliminated. Regional functions can be resourced (staff and funding) as ad hoc regional collaborations between interested individuals, congregations and presbyteries. I am not trying to be mean about this but times, needs, resources, methods and assumptions have changed. I think the main reason we still have synods is a combination of nostalgia and the investment of individuals who have had meaningful personal experiences with synod in years gone by. There is also the tendency of institutions to self preservation.I have been serving the church for about 30 years and synod has been pretty much of no consequence to me or the congregation I have served in the time. I have been to two or three useful training events or conferences but none of them really needed a Synod to occur. I really really do not think most of the church would even notice if synods just disappeared.



We need funding for the renewal of congregations with new and younger pastors. We have the church plants but need to revitalize the congregations with younger participants.
See previous comment. I dearly hope that THIS Synod can be the one to take the lead in the denomination in helping us organizationally let go of this mid-council level of the church. While synods, including this one, have served the church strongly and well in previous decades, it is long past time for this layer of the church's mission and ministry structure to recede. With decreased membership numbers, we have become too top-heavy an organization. More important, with increased clarity, in this newly missional age, that congregations are the primary agents of God's mission in the world, presbyteries are in a much better place to equip congregations and their leaders for local ministry and mission. Can the Synod of the Southwest and its staff do the big-picture thinking and the graceful, generous, loving work of working themselves out of a job? of celebrating the gifts and legacies of times past, and then letting them go to help us move into a different future? It would be an excellent, and desperately needed, gift to the PC(USA).
Blessings in all your efforts.
Reflecting on the current responsibilities, pressures and priorities of the Presbyteries involved in the Synod... I question whether any of the mission priorities of the Synod would be attended to at all if the Synod wasn't there to do it. The question is, Does the "greater Church" deem those mission priorities important enough to spend the time, resources and energy to recruit, train and support the involvement of the folks necessary to sustain those ministries?
I appreciate the time and commitment that is required by this task force and have seen the value of its work in shaping the direction for the Synod to take in supporting the presbyteries and their congregations.
The Synod in my opinion has tried to foster relationship between the Native communities, for me, it has been a positive experience being involved with the Synod. My hope for the Synod is that it continues to foster this relationship.
I believe that Synods are not necessary to the life of the PCUSA. I believe that in a time of dwindling financial resources, they serve as an unnecessary drain on the budgets of local congregations. Congregations would have more available resources if they did not send mission support and per capita to the Synod. This is my third stint in this synod over the past 38 years, and I see minimal value in its presences.
I have served in a number of Synods across the country, and think that Synod of the Southwest is the most effective. It is a pleasure being a part of this Synod.
The Synod is no longer necessary. Functions currently being undertaken can be taken over by presbyteries individually or in conjunction with each other in informal networks. The way we are doing things now is not good stewardship. Further, relationships between the Synod and Presbytery have often been troubled, in part due to the role of money.
This survey seems to assume the continued existence of synods. A better instrument would have questions about the option of eliminating of synods.
I believe the Synod of the Southwest continues to play a very valuable role in the southwest region and in the national and international Church as well. I would like to see the Synod's work expanding to incorporate more members of the presbyteries and local congregations. The ministry they are striving for in the area of Border Ministries and immigration reform, for example, should be better communicated to these other governing bodies, inviting, training, and sending out others to accomplish the work the Synod has already begun. Yes, there will be significant opposition, but real debate and honest discussion should be the order of the day in each presbytery. Being nice is good, but the work of Christ is not always nice. It is necessary and needed. The Synod can stand as a more positive, stronger leader than many of the presbyteries are able to do at this time.
Not sure of viability of Synod and that its mission might be just as well served by presbyteries.
I made my pitch already in this survey. The coordination is necessary between presbyteries. In the case of the SW Synod there is much of ministry that overlaps. I pray we do not surrender synods. Can you imagine the confusion when it comes to assets designated perpetually to synods, or even synod obligations? Personally, in spite of the cost, I think that the Synod of the SW needs to have, perhaps double the number of commissioners at its meetings. Regional Synods have lost too much contact with local churches and ministers. Again, without mentioning cost, I always liked the Synods which were open, so that every minister and church was present, as was the case when I was in Michigan.
Thank you for allowing participation in this survey - am aware the subject of eliminating the Synod was brought to the GA recently but was refused. It is felt our denomination has been too top heavy for quite some time, evident in the recent trimming of de Cristo - feel any important Synod work could be dispersed to Presbyteries or GA - might



<p>be quite cost effective with fruitful production - apparently churches are hurting as our denomination (as well as others) is decreasing significantly - a strong statement by people that if not receiving the spiritual food they're seeking, will tell us by not pledging and /or not attending - especially true of the young - church has been too caught up in political issues - we're too busy "running for office" when we should be busy standing for God. Christianity is growing everywhere else except here in this country - other countries have gone through the fire. They now are beginning to feel the peace and comfort brought by the Word of God. It's real and works - we do not feel the threat yet to be serious enough. The Presbyterian church needs to do some introspecting - too much theology and theory gets in the way - the Lord gave us a simple message - we need to walk it and live it - words sometimes do not support what our actions / behavior are - last comment is: feel Synod could be eliminated and improve in areas left. God guide you in your serious contemplation on this matter. [deleted]</p>
<p>I see little value in maintaining the work of the Synod of the Southwest.</p>
<p>Thank you for taking the time to do this survey. The future of our church is at stake and this is an important task.</p>
<p>I enjoyed the meeting that was held it gave a chance to network with other Native Churches. I had attended a Synod meeting many years ago when I was in the Youth Group at my Church. I believe sessions even day sessions are a good idea. I did enjoy the governmental overview it helped to understand our form of government.</p>
<p>"A many years ago", (as Gilbert &amp; Sullivan would say) I was extremely active in another synod and presbytery, and actually voted to eliminate synods. I think we should empower presbyteries to be more involved in developing their territories.</p>
<p>Eliminate mission aspects of synods.</p>
<p>I really don't know how you got my name. Since I was a ruling elder I have changed my church membership and currently am involved as a member of the church but have no official duties at this time.</p>
<p>You do not ask the most important question. Is the Synod needed? And the answer to that is that the cost of maintaining an office and staff is not worth it. It is going to be harder and harder to keep the synod as it is now constituted financially feasible if churches continue to reduce their financial support to Presbyterian mission. Synod of SW is not able to evaluate or somehow guide mission within its bounds. Presbyteries do what they want, when they want, and how they want. I've never seen the Synod able to evaluate or guide.</p>
<p>The PCUSA has lost the leadership role that formerly resided in the national offices. This has weakened many parts of our synod program, particularly with regard to funding. Somehow the presbyteries and churches of the Synod of the Southwest should seek to provide that former leadership, in terms of communications, leadership development and stewardship. The Synod of the Southwest is undergoing a change from its former status as an object of mission concern from the whole denomination, and will need to discern who, what and how mission in the whole synod should be addressed.</p>
<p>The involvement and support of Synod of the Southwest is critical in providing support for leadership development among the teaching/pastoral leaders. Some financial aid -- training events -- improved communication between and among churches and presbyteries is extremely valuable at a time when the denomination as a whole is leaking membership rather rapidly. Continue to support events related to stewardship -- leadership training -- communication -- and other identified critical areas of concern to us as caregivers, caretakers, and leadership as we move forward not forgetting the work Christ calls us to do -- and enabling the people to be His people.</p>
<p>I generally have not had much interaction with Synod. I believe that this is an unneeded layer of government causing overhead costs which may be duplicated at Presbytery or General Assembly. To streamline Presbyterianism I would seriously consider eliminating the Synod.</p>
<p>Synod should significantly narrow it's focus, it is trying to do too much.</p>
<p>Other than already indicated- I see the Synod able to host events or projects that would be too large an undertaking for a congregation or Presbytery.</p>
<p>What is now in the portfolio of the Synod could be managed through committees working with each presbytery. Synod office and staff in putting an unnecessary layering before mission is accomplished.</p>
<p>I really have not seen much evidence of the Synod's role in my presbytery.</p>
<p>I am very concerned about how we will fund our Presbytery Execs salary in the future. I believe that most of the goals mentioned above on the Synod level have more relevance at a local church level or Presbytery level. I am concerned that we will have a functioning Synod but we do not have funds to pay our Presbytery Exec after 2014. This is confusing.</p>
<p>There is very sparse contact with the Synod. Our congregation doesn't really understand its purpose, and sees it as</p>



an unnecessary level of church government that uses resources that could be used for better purposes in our community.
I would like to see the Synod do more of it's wonderful work with Continuing Education, Leadership Development and Racial Ethnic Ministries, and less Governing Body stuff. I would like to see the Synod be intentional about including the broad spectrum of theological belief in the Synod. Sometimes the Synod has been a bastion of progressives. It's not a bad thing to be progressive, but we don't need our Synod to come across as exclusive on a theological position.
Develop an educational means by which congregations are taught about the functions of their Presbytery and Synod. Create an avenue that will get the pew sitters excited and involved. Maybe a brochure that describes the individual duties of committees for both Presbytery and Synod.
I had served as an Executive Presbyter for 19 years up to the time I retired. My feelings is that the role of the Synod has never really been explored since the time the larger presbyteries were created synods tried to continue mostly in the same fashion as before the realignment of prebyteries. I am not sure why this has happened and in the 2 synods in which I served as an E.P. this was a subject of contining discussion and with never any resolution. Synods, when they were primarily defined by state boundaries with smaller presbyteries served a real function, and the role and function of a synod subsequently was never seriously raised. Since the creation of the regional synod in 1975,76 we have just sat on this issue. My answers to this survey should indicate that it is time to reconsider the role of synod by creating smaller presbyteries with no staff or reduce the role of synod to serve primarily as an intermediate court of appeal in judicial cases, with a base of defined presbyteries for this process.
I have been in [deleted] for about 1 year, and am seeing a significant lack of knowledge in this congregation about what the synod actually does and what is their purpose for existing. I feel like what I tell them is just words until they actually meet someone from synod or see the effects of the synod's work. Several things that are regional concerns to us: elder ministry/need for outreach to youth and shrinking small town because of economic hardship This combination of concerns make small town life difficult for us and has shaped this church into looking inward instead of outward. Therefore, they feel isolated from the larger presbytery and even feel suspicious of the workings of the presbytery. They have similar feelings towards the synod because to them it seems to equal "big government." So this is a general attitude that I am seeing in our congregation here. I am trying to help them feel more connected and more optimistic about the future and the future as members of PC(USA), hopefully combating some of that skepticism. Just a little feedback on the climate here in [deleted] New Mexico. Thank you.
I'm not sure there is a continuing role for Synods. The Church of Scotland does well without them.
I think we cannot afford the current Synod structure
Thank you for this opportunity and for your own self-study!
It would be helpful to have some sort of body made up of Native Americans to address, in collaboration with presbyteries, the issues that arise in Native American congregations. I do not believe that Native American church leadership even know that it is possible to work across Presbytery boundaries via the Synod.
Q12. I serve on Committee on Ministry, and we are struggling with the number of vacant pulpits.Also, we don't have a committee for Preparation for Ministry, but have two inquirers among the membership, with more interested. I'm reluctant to take on another assignment.....
Dear Rocky -On behalf of Rev. Dr. Suzanne Citron of Sunnyslope Presbyterian Church, she asked that I thank you for her for all the work and time you put into, not only this survey, but your total involvement in the Presbytery and Synod. In addition, she wishes to thank all of the members of Synod for their diligent work in their review and vision for the Future Task Force. Sincerely, [deleted] for Rev. Dr. Suzanne Citron
In the grand design, Synod of SW, is far more important than many other synods. THere are a lot of ministries being done at the synod level here that would not get done if not for the synod. Not the case for all synod's, but certainly for ours.
Could you do a study that would compare the present state of the finacial picture of the four presbyteries and projections for the next five years, and compare that to what the picture would look like if the synod ceased its operations, presbyteries retained the per capita paid to synod, and other funds of the synod were distributed among the presbyteries? Also, wrestle with this. How can it be justified that the synod spend resources on staff and operational overhead, as some presbyteries are looking at the possibility of future with no staff to support the congregations?
Ask not what the presbyteries can do for the synod. Ask what the synod can do for the presbyteries. The current focus on becoming more of a hierarchy does not serve the cause of Christ well.



There seems to be a continuing issue with geography. Native Americans are very present in rural areas that are far from "centers" like Abq, Phx and Tucson. This seems to contrast with the immigrant/ border ministries which are often concentrated in urban centers and are more accessible for synod folk who want to get involved. In my time with the synod I have not seen any serious efforts to work through the isolation of NA congregations. Neither the communications work, nor the stewardship or leadership development efforts have made strides in this regard and it saddens me because NA congregations really could benefit from these mission areas. It is time to be more creative.
I have none at this time
I'm ordained PC(USA) but I currently serve through [deleted] so my answers do not reflect a current ministry in the PC(USA).
This is to complete a survey that was ended accidentally. To sum up, I have never been associated with a Synod in any active way. I do know that with finances so tight, it is important to see if what the Synod is doing is duplication or something that could be better done by Presbytery or GA.
I believe we need to move away from Synods and invest their connectional roles in the region's presbyteries and churches.
I am quite well acquainted with the main staff members in the last few years, and find them very helpful, considerate, easy to communicate with. In this part of the country, I think we need the connection of the synod to keep us together at least in communication; otherwise we don't really feel a 'sense of belonging.'
Obviously from my answers I've had very little to do with Synod over my years in [deleted] Presbytery. That would be true for me for most of my ministry. I was a commissioner to Synod once, otherwise no Synod activity. I have questioned the value and relevance of Synod and wondered why we don't just incorporate the various Synod ministries into a beefed up Presbytery.
I apologize for not having much knowledge about the Synod, which became apparent in completing this survey. I do receive correspondence and our Pastor does relay pertinent information, but truthfully not sure about the "Synod" in the organizational chart in relation to Presbytery [deleted] or not? Additionally I am very busy with being a ruling Elder, Clerk of Session, Chair of Nominating Committee and I work full-time. With that, I don't and can't manage anymore even in regard to just being able to read and keep anymore information in my mind. Hope that made sense. Peace.
Decisions by the PCUSA regarding gender issues have and will continue to have negative implications for local church body life, fund-raising/tithing, church planting, and leadership development. Churches will continue to leave the Presbytery and deeply cut income for synods. It's a sad state of affairs. Sincerely in Christ, [deleted] PCUSA pastor, now in retired status as I work with [deleted] worldwide
Unless visibility of the Synod and its programs is increased, funding won't follow. Without the funding down to Presbyteries, the Synod becomes more irrelevant.
I am deeply grateful for the continuing education that the Synod has subsidized for preachers. I appreciate the work on immigration as well. I strongly believe though that synods should be eliminated. The church will undergo a death in the next decade or two and God willing a resurrection as well. But I do not see synods as a part of that resurrected body.
This Synod is a very good one and has been a needed support for this Presbytery. It has had excellent programs for pastors and laity as well. I would hope it continues in this capacity
continuar en oracion, reforzando los proyectos existentes y manteniendo como siempre una excelente comunicacion
Synods are no longer important to the connectional or ministry life of the PC(USA). Let's spend our ministry dollars in other ways instead of creating jobs for Synod Execs.
I greatly appreciate the attitude the Synod exhibits toward serving the congregations within its bounds. It has made and is making a difference in the lives of its congregations and members, offering invaluable programs and opportunities. This Synod has proven itself trustworthy and compassionate. Besides this, I greatly value the relationships my participation in Synod has fostered between me and many regional colleagues in ministry, clergy and lay. The threat of losing this essential part of the connectional system of the Presbyterian Church saddens me, not for myself, but for those who come after me.
With the passage of 10-A, for me the PCUSA has no longer any relevance to the mission of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I am not responsive and not caring what the synod does.
I found this survey to be very telling. It is focused on congregations. It is my view that the Synod's role (if it has



any meaningful role at all) is to connect and equip presbyteries for their work with congregations. The Synod should take its cue from the presbyteries and offer support services that the presbytery feels are necessary for its congregations as opposed to operating in its own vacuum of what it dreams up congregations need. In the Synod of the Southwest the people who lead in the Synod are not the leaders in each presbytery and a most unfortunate gap in communication and collaboration results. The Synod seems to be doing its own thing rather than supporting the efforts of the presbytery. The whole survey itself illustrates how out of touch the synod is with the presbyteries' priorities and needs.
I believe it is time for the Synod to turn its role over to the presbyteries.
I am very grateful for the support of former Board of National Missions ministries in northern New Mexico that gave me the opportunity to be an interim in six of the churches. I helped a lot!
I believe the Synod still has a relevant and necessary role in the PC(USA)
It is to revive the uniqueness of the Southwest Synod mission throughout the comprehending of the major issues with deeper and higher understanding of our faith journey.
I have no suggestions.
thank you for funding training events for me/others
modernize
For decades I have been a member of Synods that were useless. Same old commissioners over and over again. There was a time when Synods were most effective in providing leadership training in education, stewardship, great Synod Schools, etc. The time before reorganization to larger ones. Big mistake. With a few exceptions, Synods have no relationship to local churches and provide nothing for local churches. Present Synods do nothing but provide high paying salaries for executives who do nothing but travel to attend meetings here, there and everywhere and fund an office facility and staff. The last two Synods of which I have been a member for close to 30 years : Rocky Mountains & Southwest.
My answers will not be very helpful as I have served in [deleted] for less than two years, in a [deleted] congregation.
Regardless of the good work the Synod is doing, it seems to me that the Congregation as a whole needs to focus on reaching out to new members. The Presbytery forms the foundation of our Church and because of our dwindling resources, emphasis should be placed on outreach within the presbyteries. The Synods, to me, seem to be a nice but secondary luxury.
During the past five years I have been in the bounds of the [deleted] Presbytery in [deleted], but I am a retired member of [deleted]. This is why my answers are so minimal and probably useless. I am, however, conflicted about the role of synods and whether they should continue. I would like to hear more of the discussion on this matter.
Since retiring and moving to a retirement community in [deleted], I have not been active in presbytery or synod. My hearing is poor and I find most churches have grossly inadequate sound systems, or speakers do not speak well enough to be heard or understood. I finally gave up. This was a difficult decision to make.
I am an active member of La Jicarita Cluster of Presbyterian Churches, a group of 12 small churches in northern New Mexico. We do things together that we are too small to do separately, e.g. sponsor summer youth camps, hold various training sessions, etc. I can see clusters of churches working effectively together in similar manner throughout the large expanses of New Mexico and Arizona especially in areas comprised of mostly small congregations.
I participate at Albuquerque [deleted] Presbyterian Church when asked in areas of my pastoral, musical, and teaching, and worship planning skills as needed. [deleted]
I think I stated it already.
I thank the Synod for providing the Native American conferences.
Synod should focus on Transformation (might get overshadowed by the 1001 GA initiative. Offer training programs for leadership development and pastoral care by lay (or teach ministers how to this training at home).Mission trips are nice but only available to a very small number of Synod members.Kaleidoscope definitely should be continued after the grant runs out. We all can use help on preaching.
I view church as a plsc to comr together and worship God. Most people are anxious to follow their pastor and to leave the administraion of the local church to locally elected leaders.
I believe the Synod has outlived its usefulness; thus, it is a waste of scarce money, as well as peoples' time. The overhead of Synod should be transferred to the Presbyteries so that they might afford some staffing or appropriate



mission. A commission of the current presbyteries should meet annually to review the minutes of the Presbyteries to hold them accountable. Other functions could be transferred to the various presbyteries.
I truly believe the mission and role of the Synod as presently structured has passed.
Personally, I would hate to omit the Synod structure, especially that of the Synod of the Southwest. The more "regional" aspect helps to keep the church in-volved in a broader vision/scope.
only that I currently have little access to online computer time due to the death of my computer. I apologize for my tardy responses.
I appreciate the efforts the Synod of the Southwest makes to keep me/us informed. I am fairly new to the synod region and have much more to learn about the ministries and mission. I look forward to hearing about and participating in the years ahead.
THINK THAT PRESBYTERY OF SANTA FE DOES NOT NEED THE SYNOD. PRESENT LEADERSHIP COULD FUNCTION WELL WITHOUT SYNOD.
We have [deleted] installed Cyber Cafe - thanks to Synod! We haven't used it for [deleted]. David Hicks was terrific. Some of the Stewardship events are also excellent. I am not as informed as I should be about the Synod -- mostly due to time. thank you!
I also think increasing Synod communication (for instance I didn't know you had 7 priorities until now) with churches across the region would be very helpful; as well as opportunities available for folks in the churches to get involved.
I have been reired 18 years, and really not involved or interesteed in Synod affairs. I do attent Presbytery meetings sometimes.
I have only been a member for 9 months and attending the church for 8 years. [Deleted], our minister will be responding soon.
take a more active role in native american ministries and more financial support for ministries on the reservations, in paticular Ganado
I have only been at my current church for 10 months so have had little if any connection thus far with the synod.
Some questions not answered due to difficulty marking answers...not sure why. Again, I am not currently a member of the Presbyterian Church although I have been trained in and served in several Presbyterian congregations.
I wish you well and pray for God's leading for you.
As the visionary synod that asked the GA to make it possible to end middle governing bodies, it would behoove us to take steps in that direction work to eliminate our synod or if that is not feasible at least reduce its function to purely ecclesial meaning whatever are the bare minimum requirements for the Book of Order. The elimination of mission partnership funds means the days of a programatic synod has ended. Let's divide up the assets among the presbyteries and plant seeds for ministry at the local level for the future.
There are considerable efforts to recognize, respect and honor the extraordinary diversity in the Synod as well as the Presbytery of the Grand Canyon, however sometimes it appears that within the overwhelming nature of the circumstances existing in our minority communities, the African American community winds up hidden in the shadows and frequently not getting the direct attention needed.
I question whether we need to have a such a highly paid Synod Exec.
Somehow gathering those committed to facilitating ongoing dialogue in small groups with members of other Presbyterian congregations. This could also be a good way to foster a greater sense of the connectional church, as well as open theological issues that separate rather than unite us at this time. A side benefit of any inter-congregational dialogue is finding and seeing new and refreshing ways of "doing things."
I believe quite firmly that the Synod is a wasteful anachronysm which has outlived its purpose in this day and age. In an earlier generation with more limited communications ability Synods provided an appropriate layer within our polity. However, given the variety of ways we can presently share with one another, Synods have become a vestigial tail on the Presbyterian system
No longer in touch with function, programs, politics of Synod
I am now retired. From my experience in Presbytery [deleted] a few years back and later in [deleted]. I recognize the greatest importance for the Synod being to Presbyteries which are relatively poor as compared to presbyteries which are relatively wealthy. I think that the Synod's role is to assist the least of the Presbyteries and the least of the congregations. I have never been interested in diminishing the Synod because I think that diminishes the whole



church and especially those part of the church the most in need.
My prayer is that the PCUSA would become more scripture based and strive to be a beacon of truth, reflecting historic Christianity.
I have been in the synod less than a year.
Our greatest strength as a Synod is our people We have superb leaders with great experience and amazing wisdom. Our Interim Synod Executive has performed superbly. Committee chairs really fulfill their responsibilities well. Our Moderator has provided outstanding service at the synod level. Our leaders are striving to hold meeting at various sites throughout our geographically-huge Synod. Our Administrative Assistant Robin Thomas is without peer - she is tops! We do not always agree on every issue, but continue to work shoulder-to-shoulder serving Christ in these Southwest states. We need to coordinate more with Glen Snider, on the GA Mission Board, regarding tapping and using GA funds which may be available for particular purposes. Most of all, we need to reaffirm that "mission" is not keeping the ecclesiastical machinery well-oiled, but rather mission is reaching out to the unchurched.
Part of the survival of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. involves eliminating traditional structures and and replacing them with a more streamlined, efficient and effective organization which supports the church and makes it relevant in the 21st century. It is my opinion this includes elimination reduction/restructuring/reorganization of synods as we know them today. Our form of government is one of the things that makes it difficult for us to attract and retain members; it's one of the things that make it difficult for people to relate to us.
I love my congregation, and we are fortunate at my church to have a fairly large group of young adults. However, in general, we are an aging congregation like most churches in our denomination. I think there needs to be a much larger focus on young adults as well as collegiate ministry because if the synod keeps putting that population on the back burner, our churches will dwindle to almost nothing in the not too distant future.
I suspect that most of the congregations in the synod know little or nothing about what the synod does. Communication is almost nonexistent in terms of how the synod serves the larger church. Frankly, when I am asked about it, I don't know what to say.
It would be nice to have information about Synod activities and stands on current social issues for publication in our local monthly newsletter.
This survey CANNOT be taken as representative of Presbyterians in the synod. In talking about priorities you have said nothing about the effectiveness. I think the priorities are great. I think the effectiveness is VERY low.
Synod is and has been useless for many years--dissolve it.
Ministry is more informal in city ministry, rather than ministry on the Indian reservations. We are the last one to get help from presbytery, if any. Historically, the Presbyterian Church was established in Arizona to be the ministry on the Indian reservation. In 1968 Gonudo Mission School was closed down because presbytery did not stand up on its behalf. Presbytery of over than AZ was combined with Grand Canyon where was a minster. Presbytery of Northern AZ was a good presbytery for the Reservation. I was ordained by that presbytery [deleted].
I am retired 80 years old
I am not sure I received the right survey. It appears to assume that I am a church pastor, but I am now retired, but active in a church--Synods have not been very important to any of the churches I served in 40 years, except one in mid-west that had great synod schools. Other than that, I was disappointed that GA did not have the courage to begin the process to decommission synods. In our day and time we can't afford this extra level of the church and I don't feel it is that effective at helping local churches. While I know others disagree, I think synods are behind the times, an unnecessary part of our church. Time to move on.
Much of the time I feel this judicatory is irrelevant to the ongoing ministry of the church in the world.
Synod is a useless body and should be eliminated
After twenty five years, thanks for remembering me. I retired from [deleted] as a Senior Chaplain on [deleted] at the age of [deleted]. I was involved shortly in two committees of the Grand Canyon presbytery. When, my eye was diagnosed with [deleted]. I resigned because I stopped driving for quite a while. I suggest further communications with retired personnel of the church and the clergy seeking new members of growth in our congregation locally and globally. Thanks and God bless you.
We are no longer providing for the vital ministries we once had in the Mexican or Native American churches. Border ministries and immigration need greater commitment and financial support
Sometimes committee are called--then you wonder why? A waste of resources and time.



This presbytery has ignored me as if I did not exist
Our synod is too spread out. Covers two states. To attend meetings its very expensive and time consuming! The needs for the 4 different presbyteries are culturally very different
I have no contact with synod and know nothing of what they do.
I am grateful for the kaleidoscope trainings. The staff that I have met are very professional, kind and helpful. Also I plan to attend the Spanish task force gathering in August 2013. Thanks for the invitation to the mensazjeos!
Please forgive for late response letter fell into black hole. The Native American congregation we serve needs to be able to bypass some requirements for seeking pastor. The process for white churches is complex with lots of forms. Needs to be better understanding of abilities of smaller churches.



## APPENDIX C.

### Group 2 Report

The Commission at its last meeting asked that a sub-group develop a proposal for a “Fewer Synods Option.” The following Report includes recommendations and rationale for reducing the number of synods:

#### **Recommendations**

- 1. That the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (2014):**
  - a. Direct that the number of synods be reduced to no more than eight.**
  - b. Direct the Moderator of the 221st General Assembly, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, to appoint six members of Mid Council Commission II, 220th General Assembly (2012), to consult with and assist synods and their presbyteries in seeking to determine ~~and implement~~ the most prudent boundary changes to accomplish the reduction in the number of synods to no more than eight, with the results of that consultation to be reported to the 222nd General Assembly.**
  - c. Recommend that if the synods and their presbyteries are unsuccessful in reaching agreement as to a proposal to reduce the number of synods to no more than eight for action by the 222nd General Assembly, that the 222nd General Assembly direct its Moderator, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, to appoint an administrative commission with the authority to recommend to the 223rd General Assembly the boundary changes necessary to reduce the number of synods to no more than eight.**
- 2. That the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (2014) direct the agencies of the PCUSA to review their processes to streamline any that require approval by a synod of a request by a lower council if such approval has become perfunctory or unnecessary.**

#### *Rationale*

#### *Recommendations regarding Reducing the Number of Synods through a Collaborative Process*

The Mid Council Commission created by the 220th General Assembly (2012) (Mid Council Commission II) was charged to bring to the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (2014) recommendations that consider the composition and organization of mid councils in ways that reinvigorate their capacity to support missional congregations, and advance the ecclesial nature and character of those presbyteries, within the unity of the church. It was also charged to review the nature and function of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (formerly General Assembly Mission Council) and the Office of the General Assembly, specifically with respect to their relationship with and support of mid councils as they serve the vitality and mission of congregations in our changing context. Finally, it was charged to further discuss and refine recommendations 1-4 of the its predecessor Mid Council Commission’s report to the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.



Mid Council Commission II has diligently sought to carry out this work. Set forth below are its review of the nature and function of the PMA and the OGA, and its refinement of recommendations 1-4 of its predecessor Mid Council Commission's report. This work, its review of the work done by its predecessor commission, its consultations with the synods, and its discernment of Christ's will for this denomination today have lead it to the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. **Eliminating synods as ecclesial bodies at the present time would add complexity to the governance structure of the PCUSA, rather than simplify it.** As noted in the discussion of this Commission's charge, one of the tasks we were assigned to undertake was to refine Recommendations 1-4 from Mid Council Commission I's report. These recommendations would eliminate synods as ecclesial bodies. In undertaking that work, it became clear to this Commission that the "cure" of eliminating synods of ecclesial bodies, at least at this time would very likely be worse than the harm of keeping and streamlining synods as a council within our polity and system of mutual accountability.

In this regard, the Commission agreed with the rationale offered the 220th General Assembly by the Presbytery of St. Andrews in support of Item 05-02:

Rather than viewing the practice of the Christian faith as a purely individual matter, Reformed Christians practice their faith together, in community. A significant historic role of church councils in the Reformed tradition is to provide the accountability that is necessary in a large, diverse Christian community like the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

At the same time, as distinct from forms of church government in which authority is exercised downward from the few to the many, the Presbyterian form of government assumes that accountability is exercised with mutuality—government by those who are governed (or their chosen representatives).

Relatedly, we believe that the synods are providing a space for advocacy and development of racial/ethnic constituencies in our denomination that would not easily be filled at either the presbytery or General Assembly levels of the PCUSA.

As the Commission sought to refine Recommendations 1-4 with this premise in mind, it recognized that while the PCUSA is certainly smaller than it once was, it remains too large to simply eliminate any intermediate level of accountability between the General Assembly and the 173 presbyteries of the denomination. The General Assembly and its commissions and committees simply do not have the ability to engage in meaningful oversight over 173 councils. Conversely, we observed, at least on the part of some, a concern that such a reorganization would put too much power in the General Assembly. While the Commission found the first concern significantly more meritorious than the second, it has concluded that a structure recognizing both concerns would have to replace the current ecclesial functions of synods with administrative and judicial commissions made up of members from those regions.

Accordingly, in perfecting Recommendations 1-4, the Commission found that the only means providing for such oversight was a combination of regional administrative and judicial commissions (together with regional committees on representation) to serve the role of



intermediary in the administrative and judicial review of presbyteries. In the Commission's view, such a structure complicates rather than streamlines the governance of the PCUSA. It is difficult to assure that such regional commissions.

- Reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, gender, and theological diversity consistent with our basic principles of governance, and
- that the expenses of such commissions are reasonably allocated and overseen, and
- that such commissions diligently carry out the work they have been assigned.

If the PCUSA wishes to move to a three council governance structure, the most practical means for doing so is to increase the size, and decrease the number, of presbyteries so that the General Assembly could engage in a meaningful review of their work. Such an action, however, would have its own costs, and was beyond the charge given this Commission.

**2. The number of synods in the PCUSA needs to be reduced, and their functions and role streamlined.** While the Commission concluded that eliminating synods as ecclesial bodies at this time would not accomplish the goal of simplifying and streamlining the governance structure of the PCUSA, the commission believes that the PCUSA has a denominational structure that was designed for a church that no longer exists. The current number of synods was established when we were a significantly larger church than we are today, when denominational loyalty to the mission decisions of higher councils was significantly deeper, and when technology made geographic distance a more important obstacle to efficient administration than it does today. Continuing in place a larger number of synods than is needed for the PCUSA at this time is poor stewardship of the human and financial resources of the denomination. Based on its review of the judicial case loads of the current synod permanent judicial commissions, it appears entirely feasible for larger synods to carry out that work. Likewise, administrative review and the work of Committees on Representation can be carried out efficiently and effectively by larger synods.

In the view of this commission, it is also feasible for the mission activities of the current synods to be carried out by synods with a larger geographic scope. The Commission heard concerns from Synod leaders about loss of relationships and the challenge of combining or continuing current localized mission endeavors. This proposal however, does not prevent larger synods from organizing in ways to foster relationships and mission in smaller geographic areas or moving certain work to presbyteries within that region.

Accordingly, the Commission recommends that the number of synods be reduced to no more than eight synods by reorganization of the boundaries the current synods.

**3. A reduction in the number of synods is best accomplished by collaboration between the existing synods and presbyteries, rather than as a directive from the General Assembly.** The task of combining sixteen synods into no more than eight will not be without its challenges. Staff and leadership structures will need to be reordered, assets, transferred or reallocated, and existing legal obligations reassigned. Moreover, combining existing synods will require the integration of councils with different cultures, norms and unwritten assumptions as to how work



is done and decisions are made. Those closest to those synods – their current leadership and the leadership of the presbyteries within them – are the ones best equipped to discern the best parameters for combining these councils and resetting their boundaries. Such work will require consideration of the purpose of the new synod and whether it will focus on essential functions or missional priorities. Accordingly, the commission believes that the opportunity needs to be given for synods and their constituent presbyteries to reach consensus as to such reordering.

The commission believes that this proposed process for realignment is consistent with the significant shift in the PCUSA away from denominational control toward more local control, by in the first instance placing such decision-making in the hands of the presbyteries and synods. Further, this proposal would provide the opportunity for the church to model real consultation and negotiation.

Further, such a process will encourage and require presbyteries to examine carefully their own connections with the synod they will be a part of, and the parameters of that synod's role. We recognize that some presbyteries, faced with questions as to their own future and the up-building of the church within their bounds simply have not had the time or energy to focus on the role of synods. However, the presbyteries have an important interest in engaging in this process. While combining existing synods may be the simplest process legally, a presbytery bordering more than one synod may find that the culture of one of those synods more closely fits its own culture; regional demographic patterns may draw it more naturally in a particular direction; or it may choose to be part of a neighboring minimal function synod or a fully missional synod, if that is the type of council that will best support its response to God's call.

While building such consensus regionally is in this commission's view the best means of creating new synod boundaries that simplify and streamline the governance of the PCUSA, as Reformed Christians we understand that the wisdom of the larger body often serves to give guidance and insight to those in more local bodies. The members of two Mid Council Commissions over the last four years have wrestled hard with these issues for two years, and learned much. We believe that such insight should not be lost in this process. Accordingly, we recommend that part of this discernment process include offering synods and presbyteries the experience of some (six) of the members of this commission as consultants in the process of realigning synod boundaries.

4. **The reduction in the number of synods needs to move forward promptly with a timeline for approval of new boundaries.** . Unlimited delay of the streamlining and consolidation of synods is something that the PCUSA cannot wait for indefinitely. While it is desirable for synods and their presbyteries to reach agreement among themselves as to boundaries, that may not be possible. Accordingly, we believe that if the synods and presbyteries cannot reach agreement among themselves as to realigning boundaries within the next two years, the 222nd needs to insure that the process moves forward. Accordingly, we recommend that if the realignment of synods is not completed within the next two years, an administrative commission be appointed with the charge to complete that work. Such a commission will likely find that in many areas agreement has been reached, and it is hoped its work can be limited to resolving a relatively few instances in which agreement as to the boundaries of the realigned synods could not be reached.



The Commission recognizes that the legal and practical steps necessary to complete the reorganization of the synods cannot be completed until the General Assembly approves new boundaries for such synods, and that the process of completing the reorganization of the synods will not be complete by the convening of the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. The goal of the timeline proposed is to put the synods in the position to take those legal and practical steps soon after the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly adjourns in order that the new structure can move forward in their work as soon as is reasonably possible.

5. **The PCUSA should streamline approvals that are perfunctory or unnecessary.** The predecessor to this commission expressed great concern that the denomination needed to become less regulatory. This commission of course believes that the PCUSA needs to insure that its governance gives freedom to the work of the Spirit in our midst. On the other hand, mutual accountability should not be confused with regulation. The councils of our church do not operate in a vacuum. They covenant to act in concert with one another - to be responsible to and for each other - for the sake of the whole church. At times, one council may err and must be held accountable to the explicit covenant to which they have willingly bound themselves. It is in these moments that the work of the Synod shifts to guide a presbytery back to faithfulness, drawing upon the diverse gifts of the region. We do not view such work as regulation. Nor have we found examples of the synods impairing the work of the church by excessive regulation.

Nevertheless, to a degree to which we have not ascertained, there may be opportunities for streamlining the work of the church by eliminating perfunctory or unnecessary approval requirements by synods.



# APPENDIX D.

## **FINAL REPORT – PART I**

### **SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST**

#### **IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

**Prepared for March 14-15, 2008 Synod Meeting**

#### **PREAMBLE**

In June 2004, Moderator Hilbert Schouten invited the Council of the Synod of the Southwest (the “Synod”) to discuss the qualities and style of an effective synod. A process was set in motion which reviewed the “model of synod” we had been living into since a new design was adopted in 1998-99. One of the discoveries of the review was that although the decision was made to shift programmatic responsibilities formerly lodged in the Synod to the presbyteries, our experience was that people valued the programs and opportunities for leadership development that emerged within the fabric of our synod relationships. In 2006, a Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and seven specific recommendations regarding collaborative and regional ministry and mission were established by the Synod. The vision is to be a more effective instrument of mission in the world. The Synod is called to undertake this mission even at the risk of losing its life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel, and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ.

One of the roles of Synod is to be a coordinator of ministry that can be facilitated from a broad regional base, in consultation with the presbyteries. This role is not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ. Coordination involves conversation and planning, mutual support and encouragement, dialogue about different perspectives, racial inclusiveness and partnership. Each of these interactions requires “practice” among the partners that often hold historic perspectives that presuppose power, money and control. Every effort must be made by all five governing bodies to work for the ministry God invites and demands of us in this place at this time and to set aside any historic perspectives that do not honor or may undermine our ability to work together.

The nature of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (the “PCUSA”) governance is such that it engages in deliberative decision-making and shared power and responsibility. Our system of governing bodies sustains such mutual relationships within our structures as a way to express the unity of the church. The Synod has deliberately sought to create a non-hierarchical model of relationships that promote viable regional ministry, as the PCUSA in New Mexico and Arizona.

In “regional ministry,” presbyteries and Synod work cooperatively as partners, and collaborate in areas where the resources of experience, knowledge, perspective, finances, facilities, and personnel of each are needed to maximize the effectiveness of regional ministry. This fosters growth of connection between individuals, churches, presbyteries, and ministries within our Synod’s bounds, thus allowing us to move forward



with the unique mission priorities within our region. In addition, by working cooperatively, and by being informed about the mission and ministry within the Synod's bounds, we provide a witness to the larger church of our area's unique opportunities and challenges.

In a presbytery context "regional" means within the presbytery. In a Synod context, "regional" describes ministry with the Synod and one of or more of its presbyteries.

We believe a regional ministry structure will enable us to initiate and carry out mission where work and witness are broader than a single presbytery and where national systems are either too distant or lack an understanding of regional mission (e.g. US/Mexico Border). To this end:

1. Regional and local financial resources need to be more fully and broadly developed as national resources decline for the support of ministry in the Southwest.
2. Mutual accountability (ecclesiastically, programmatically and financially) of presbyteries and the Synod in partnership will be required:
3. A new way of using the resources, financial and human, that are currently assigned to, or deployed for use by, the presbyteries as they deem appropriate, may necessarily change; and,
4. We must change as God calls us to meet new and emerging mission challenges.

In order to address and enable the implementation of the priorities identified as common to all five middle governing bodies within the Synod and specifically addressed by the Synod Review Task Force, and subsequently adopted and approved by the Synod, the Synod Moderator, Al Gephart, appointed an Implementation Team whose membership included: Marilie Blanchard (former member of the Synod Review Task Force ) (SF); Marty Bruner (SF); Genni Denetsone (GC); Jan DeVries (Synod Staff); Florence Hamilton (SB); Chris Lieberman (Chair, Synod Finance Committee) (SF); Conrad Rocha, Chair (former member of the Synod Review Task Force) (SF); J. Kyle Weir (GC); and, Brandon Wert (deC).

The Implementation Team met several times, as a group, several other times in smaller groups with presbytery councils and then as a group with presbytery executives, to find ways to implement the Synod's priorities for Regional Ministry. As a result of those meetings and deliberations, always grounded in an effort to discern the will of God for this part of God's world and its people, the Implementation Team makes the following recommendations:

## **A. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Context.** As the Synod Review Task Force listened to the Synod Council and presbytery councils, it became apparent that interactive communication about who we are and what we are about in ministry was not happening in ways that empowered and connected us. Work to update and connect us through presbytery and Synod websites has already begun. A webmaster was hired to assist with the design and technical



support. The administrative assistant in the Synod office was given additional responsibilities for maintaining the site with current information and updates.

However as the Implementation Team began its work in 2006, we felt that a broader view of communication was needed. Electronic communication is vital but does not replace the person-to-person, face-to-face presence and interaction. There are stories to be told, pictures to be shared, ideas to be exchanged, and events to be publicized not just within the Synod but also with the whole PCUSA.

If we are to be about “regional ministry”, regular and consistent communication about resources, tools for ministry and stories that challenge people in ministry is a must. We believe that the Synod’s use of their website is an opportunity for networking for regional ministry. These recommendations only begin to consider the scope of communications that are possible.

**Recommendations.** Therefore, the Implementation Team Recommends that the Synod:

1. Provide for continued employment of a webmaster over the next 5 years with the Synod administrative staff facilitating regular updates, current calendar and stories to be shared electronically on the Synod website, including news of happenings in presbyteries. That the webmaster and/or office staff responsible for these communication tasks attend the annual training events of the Church Communicators Network in order to keep up to date and to network with other communicators;
2. Prepare an “action summary” newsletter format to communicate with each of the presbytery councils within two weeks of each stated Synod meeting the actions taken by the Synod in its deliberations. Ideally this would be a part of the recording clerk’s responsibilities beginning with the first meeting of Synod Council in 2008;
3. Continuously update mailing and e-mail lists for event announcements and recruitment as an interactive networking tool. These lists need to be able to sort persons by function, interest and presbytery for specifically targeted information. (e.g. stewardship, border concerns, etc.) This will be referred to the Synod Executive for implementation;
4. Create a “roving” Synod display highlighting regional ministry. This display would have some permanent pieces such as a map, vision and mission statements, regional ministry priorities as well as a space for current events, pictures and stories. The display could be made available for Synod and presbytery meetings or special events;
5. Submit information about events and stories of regional ministry to national publications of the PCUSA and ecumenical bodies at least two to four times a year;
6. Host a training and sharing event on web use and development, to be held in 2009 for interested presbyteries and congregations;



7. Participate in the development of a synods-wide, web-based newsletter, allocating the appropriate funds in the current year and providing for its support in the synod budget annually, thereafter; and,
8. Affirm the creation of a Communication Task Force with the responsibility of overseeing and initiating the aforementioned recommendations.

## **B. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

**Context.** The Synod Review Task Force in its report noted that the aim of this series of recommendations was to supplement the training and development offered by congregations in ways that: a) bring together the critical mass of resources which may not be available to presbyteries or congregations singly; and, b) provide the widest version of the church as a component of faith development, when equipping the saints for ministry.

In this regard, we believe the recommendations that follow will create the relational and experiential opportunities that enable us to accomplish the aims adopted by the Synod and articulated by the Synod Review Task Force. We also note that in our conversations with councils there was a variety of opinion about, and interest in, facilitating the equipping and training of Committees on Preparation for Ministry (CPMs) and Committees on Ministry (COMs), thus the recommendation related to such training will depend in large part on the particular needs and desires of individual presbyteries. It was also evident that many events now held by presbyteries might be opened up to the wider Synod community, enabling more relationship building across presbytery boundaries and utilizing more effectively resources and expertise that may be more readily available in particular presbyteries.

**Recommendations.** Therefore the Implementation Team recommends that the Synod:

1. Confer with presbyteries to facilitate the equipping and training of CPMs and COMs;
2. Sponsor Synod-wide conferences for the purpose of developing presbytery and congregational leadership;
3. Sponsor, wholly or jointly with the presbyteries, focused smaller groups, conference and training events making them available to synod-wide participation;
4. Host the preaching events associated with "Biblical Preaching for Pastors in the West." Events are scheduled in 2008 for August and October; in 2009 in February, August and October; in 2010 in February;
5. Design multiple ways to encourage and connect people from churches in Arizona and New Mexico to participate in the sending and receiving of people into regional, national and international contexts for mission education and action. The range of these options might be:



- a. Sponsoring mission experiences within the Synod and other faith communities in countries other than the U.S. In this regard, the Implementation Team *affirms* the Synod sponsorship of “Global Mission – China”;
  - b. Encouraging presbytery, congregational and Synod partnerships with Christians in other countries *See Border and Immigrant Ministries Recommendation 2, below*;
  - c. Building a “People in Mission” fund for scholarships for persons traveling on exchanges and for international visitors within the Synod (also related to Stewardship and Funds Development recommendations);
  - d. Encouraging participation of mission volunteers regionally, nationally and internationally through the PCUSA, including working with presbyteries;
  - e. Affirming the presence of volunteers within the life of the Synod and encourage Presbyterians to consider their own involvements as mission volunteers through interpretation by existing volunteers and the use of the Synod website. (See also “Communication” and “Border and Immigrant Ministries” recommendations.); and,
  - f. Promoting opportunities for youth and young adult ministry using the Synod website and links to such programs at Ghost Ranch, Montreat and campus ministries – for example “JC 411” at Ghost Ranch, Youth Triennium and similar events; and,
- 6. Develop a section of the Synod website for leadership development resources, including links to the Alban Institute, Net Resources, etc.; and,
  - 7. Affirm the Native American Gathering and the Hispanic Gatherings described in the “Racial Ethnic Ministry” recommendations, below.

### **C. BORDER & IMMIGRANT MINISTRIES**

**Context.** The Synod Review Task Force in its report noted that the purpose of the series of recommendations related to border ministries was to “ensure a Presbyterian presence and ongoing regional relationships on and to the border – a reality which affects, in some way or another, all of our communities.” The report also noted, and we affirm, that in order to address Border & Immigrant Ministries, we must simultaneously address leadership development and racial ethnic ministries. Finally the report noted that because the General Assembly Council no longer has border ministry staff in place, it is incumbent upon the synods and presbyteries to provide avenues to partner with our sisters and brothers beyond our borders as together we deal with the hard questions of economics and immigration that face us and enable us to share learned insights and experiences with the larger church.

It is the Synod’s desire to create regional opportunities for all of our presbyteries to engage in this ministry, providing a tie between and among the presbyteries such that



we can become a regional witness and partner in border and immigrant ministries. It is also clear that border ministry teams and groups already exist within at least one presbytery and it is not the intent of the Synod to supplant or duplicate those groups.

We also recognize that in the context of immigrant ministries there exist multiple and oftentimes contradictory views about undocumented immigrants.

**Recommendations.** In this context, we recommend that the Synod:

1. Facilitate partnerships and networks in order to further cooperative border ministries among the four presbyteries, which shall include members of existing presbytery and local border ministry teams and groups as well as the Synod executive or her designee;
2. Affirm the four-synod covenant adopted in principle on May 31, 2007 by the Synod of the Sun, Synod of the Southwest, Sinodo de Noroeste, and Sinodo de Israel. And encourage further conversation in fleshing out the covenant in addressing both issues and opportunities for shared learning and interaction;
3. Initiate, in 2008, a conversation among the directors and leadership of all of the border ministries (at least in the Synod if not in our two neighboring synods) for the purpose of talking about regular communication, advocacy;
4. Affirm Synod sponsorship of a bi-national ( PCUSA and Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de Mexico (INPM)) border ministries event in 2010 and recommend that Synod seek national funding and authorize a budget not to exceed \$40,000, representing no more than a 50% funding participation by the Synod;
5. Sponsor a border seminar every 12-18 months to one of the PCUSA border projects;
6. Continue to devote a section of the Synod website to Presbyterian border ministries, including the work of the Young Adult Volunteers in Mission Tucson Borderlands project;
7. Continue support for the Tucson Borderlands Project;
8. Identify and direct Synod leaders to seek opportunities to encourage immigration reform advocacy and involvement of state and local officials, consistent with PCUSA policy;
9. Offer and publicize a wide range of opportunities for education and involvement for people of all ages with regard to border issues and realities, consistent with PCUSA policy(ies) and recognizing that people within the Synod have multiple perspectives about undocumented immigrants; and,
10. Affirm the creation of a Border Team with the responsibility of overseeing and initiating the aforementioned recommendations and emerging issues.

**D. NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT/TRANSFORMATION (Redevelopment):**



**Context.** The Synod Review Task Force in its report recognized that in order to address the priorities of New Church Development (NCD)/Congregational Transformation (Redevelopment) there need to be resources for all the presbyteries. While the starting of churches and fellowships is a presbytery task, a regional ministry might bring together energy and an exchange of ideas. We also noted that it is most important that we begin ministries, not necessarily churches.

**Recommendations.** Therefore, the Implementation Team recommends that the Synod:

1. Sponsor/host Congregational Transformation (Redevelopment) workshops over the next 3-5 years;
2. Provide financial support for NCD pastors to attend training beginning with funding in the 2009 budget cycle and provided for in the Synod budget annually thereafter;
3. Continue to share information with presbyteries about where to find funds for projects and available workshops and training events and encourage presbyteries to seek those funds and events; and,
4. Consult with presbyteries to identify pastors with NCD/Congregational Transformation abilities who could be partnered with other pastors for mentoring.

## **E. RACIAL/ETHNIC MINISTRY**

**Context.** The Synod Review Task Force in its report recognized that “during the last seven years...regional racial ethnic ministry in the Synod and its presbyteries have become fragmented....[and that]...the role of the Synod... [should be one of] bringing together racial ethnic persons across presbytery lines and in ways that will strengthen congregations and individuals in regional racial ethnic ministry”. It further noted that in doing so, “specialized emphases [should be] on work with Hispanic and Indian communities and congregations, urban and rural”.

Particularly, the report recommended that “the Synod in consultation with Racial Ethnic populations contract with a consultant in Racial/Ethnic needs and ministries for no more than 2 years to assist racial ethnic populations in assessing and making recommendations on mission, ministry and leadership development strategies for the future.”

Since adoption of the report, the Synod Council has directed that a Synod-wide gathering of Native American churches, chapels and congregations with identifiable Native American communities and identified Native American leaders within the governing bodies of the four presbyteries and the Synod be held sometime in the fall of 2008 and has provided funding for Native American Presbyterian Women to participate in a gathering in 2008.

Likewise, the Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee has advised the Synod Council on a number of issues related to the Hispanic community ranging from support of leadership development of Hispanic church members, leaders and pastors to funding of participation of Hispanic women within the Synod to the Encuentro V in Dallas July



2007. All of which advice and recommendations have been adopted by the Synod Council.

**Recommendations:** Therefore, the implementation Team recommends that:

1. A Synod-wide gathering of representatives from Native American churches and congregations with identifiable Native American communities and identified Native American leaders within the governing bodies of the four presbyteries and the Synod be held in October 2008 for the purposes of:
    - a. Exploring future needs for Native American ministry across the Synod;
    - b. Identifying strategic needs for leadership development within congregations and presbyteries;
    - c. Providing an opportunity for Native American people to talk about their experiences within their congregations, their presbyteries and the Synod;
    - d. Exploring the future of Native American churches as funding for presbyteries and synods is increasingly reduced by General Assembly; and,
    - e. Thinking together about Synod-wide communication and staffing;
  2. Gatherings of representatives from Hispanic churches and congregations with identifiable Hispanic communities and identified Hispanic leaders within the governing bodies of the four presbyteries and the Synod be held sometime in 2009 for the purposes of:
    - a. Exploring future needs for Hispanic ministry across the Synod;
    - b. Identifying strategic needs for leadership development within congregations and presbyteries;
    - c. Providing an opportunity for Hispanic people to talk about their experiences within their congregations, their presbyteries and the Synod;
    - d. Exploring the future of Hispanic churches as funding for presbyteries and synods is increasingly reduced by General Assembly; and,
    - e. Thinking together about Synod-wide communication and staffing.
- And, further, that Council authorize funding for such gatherings not to exceed \$35,000 from Synod reserves;
3. Racial/Ethnic Staff not be hired unless and until the Native American Consultation and Hispanic Gatherings have met to make recommendations on whether such hires would benefit those ministries and, if so, what gifts and expectations would be required of such staff;



4. Synod provide opportunities for, and encourage presbyteries to use, restricted funding for new church development/congregational transformation (redevelopment) racial-ethnic work, particularly encouraging, but not restricted to, African-American and Asian groups within the Synod and actions be taken to implement such opportunities as soon as possible; and,
5. Racial/ethnic ministry funding provided by Synod from Mission Partnership Funds be administered by the presbyteries from 2008 through 2010 in accordance with a formula and criteria which have been established by Synod.

## **F. ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH RELATIONS**

**Context.** The Synod as a regional body will participate in ecumenical and interfaith work as time and opportunity permit. Direct involvement of the Synod can occur as a recommendation to the Synod or through invitation to the Synod Executive. Currently and historically, participation in state conferences of churches has been primarily through the presbytery executives and/or their designees and not directly by the Synod and we anticipate that to continue.

**Recommendations.** Therefore, we recommend that the Synod, through the Synod Executive and as Synod is able:

1. Continue to be an initiator and initial partner in ecumenical and interfaith work, often directly through the work of the Synod Executive;
2. Continue participating in dialogue with and between the Jewish and Presbyterian communities in Tucson;
3. Continue to work at identifying and developing shared public policy issues that involve ecumenical and interfaith witness; and,
4. Co-sponsor a seminar related to ecumenical and interfaith issues within the next 3-5 years at Ghost Ranch.

## **G. STEWARDSHIP & FUNDS DEVELOPMENT**

**Context.** The Synod Review Task Force in its report noted that Stewardship Education and Funds Development is one of the priorities common to the Synod and presbyteries as established by action of the Synod in March, 2006. The current model has been for the Synod to provide financial support of particular presbytery endeavors. Over the past several years, much of the funding for these endeavors has come from Mission Partnership Funds (MPF) designated for the purpose of developing funding education and processes that would enable the MPF receiving synods and their presbyteries to work toward self-sufficiency.

Thus, for the years 2007 and 2008 the Synod has made some commitments to its presbyteries for staff support for stewardship education and funds development. Evidence of a shift toward regional support of stewardship education and funds development is apparent in the Synod's partnering with de Cristo and Grand Canyon



Presbyteries in a joint presbytery event in 2008. The Synod has already been part of the planning and will share in the costs of this event.

The goal, however, is to engage our Synod, presbyteries, congregations and individuals by developing, in each presbytery, new leaders with the expertise and passion to carry on stewardship and funds development efforts within their respective presbyteries. We anticipate funding for this new focus and direction will come from the MPF-designated funding allocated to and held by the Synod for funds development purposes.

With these goals and resources in mind, the Implementation Team in making the following recommendations, notes that should these recommendations be completed successfully, consideration be given to hiring a coordinator to work in the stewardship and funds development area to work with the trainers endorsed by their presbyteries to determine resource and training needs and encourage the development of a 2-4 year plan for congregational stewardship development.

**Recommendations.** Therefore, the Implementation Team recommends that the Synod:

1. Initiate a “training of trainers” program to develop a cadre of 3-7 persons as stewardship/funds development resource persons in each presbytery who are able to continue to work with congregations in the analysis of funding needs and in the preparation of strategies to meet those needs; and,
2. Encourage each cadre to identify and train people in congregations who may be the next generation of stewardship and funding resource persons within congregations.