

BYLAWS OF THE SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST

1. NAME AND BOUNDARIES

1.01 The regional governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the areas of Arizona and New Mexico shall be known as THE SYNOD OF THE SOUTHWEST.

1.02 The Synod of the Southwest encompasses the Presbytery de Cristo, the Presbytery of Grand Canyon, the Presbytery of Santa Fe, and the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca. The combined territories of the presbyteries shall be the territory of the Synod of the Southwest.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS

2.01 The synod shall have the responsibilities and powers as set forth in the Form of Government Chapter Three: Councils of the Church, and all other rights, responsibilities and authorities granted by these Bylaws consistent with the *Book of Order* and or as expanded by the action or actions of synod.

2.02 This synod adopts the following Bylaws for its organization and operation in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II, *Book of Order*. If these Bylaws are at any point contrary to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the provisions of the Constitution shall prevail.

2.03 The synod 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.

2.04 Synod 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.

2.05 The synod 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 reinforce “such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church”. *F-3.0203*

46 3. MEMBERSHIP

47
48 3.01 The synod shall be composed of an equal number of elders and ministers of the
49 Word and Sacrament, called commissioners. "Presbyters are not simply to reflect
50 the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of
51 Christ." (F-3.0204) The Synod and presbyteries will be best served by
52 commissioners who are active participants in their presbyteries and have
53 knowledge of or experience with the Synod. Each presbytery shall elect a
54 minimum of four commissioners, two of whom shall be elders and two ministers;
55 in keeping with the *Book of Order* requirements for representation in G-3.0401.
56 At least one of the commissioners from each presbytery shall be a racial ethnic
57 person. Any presbytery having more than 5,000 communicant members shall be
58 entitled to elect additional commissioners according the following formula:
59

<u>Presbytery Membership</u>	<u>Synod Commissioners</u>
60 up to 5,000	Four (2 elders; 2 ministers)
61 5,001 - 9,000	Six (3 elders and 3 ministers)
62 9,001 - 13,000	Eight (4 elders and 4 ministers)
63 13,001 - 17,000	Ten (5 elders and 5 ministers)
64 Above 17, 000	Twelve (6 elders and 6 ministers)

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67 3.02 Commissioners shall be elected for two-year terms. The terms shall begin with
68 the January meeting following the election. Each commissioner is eligible to be
69 re-elected for two additional two-year term. However, the moderator and
70 moderator-elect may be elected for an additional two years, if necessary, to
71 complete their terms of office. Presbyteries shall, insofar as possible, elect one-
72 half of their commissioners, ministers and elders, each year for two-year terms at
73 a summer presbytery meeting, and forward their names, mailing addresses,
74 telephone numbers and email addresses to the Stated Clerk of the Synod not later
75 than September 1.
76

77 3.03 Moderators of Synod committees shall be enrolled as commissioners for their
78 terms of service (usually annual) and shall attend and report to the synod meeting
79 at the March meeting following the conclusion of their terms. (See 3.08)
80

81 3.04 To assure balance of elders and ministers, the Nominating Committee shall
82 recommend to the Synod at the time it presents annual nominations a method for
83 assuring equal representation of elders and ministers.
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85 3.05 An orientation for new commissioners shall occur in conjunction with the Synod
86 meeting and new commissioners will be expected to attend.
87

88 3.06 No commissioner shall serve for consecutive terms either full or partial
89 aggregating more than six years, unless he or she is elected as an officer.
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91 3.07 No alternate commissioners will be elected for commissioners who are unable to
92 participate.

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3.08 Additional members of Synod for their terms of office will be:

- a. The Moderator of Synod
- b. The Moderator-Elect of Synod
- c. Synod Executive/Stated Clerk
- d. Treasurer of the Synod
- e. Moderator of the Finance and Property
- f. Moderator of Committee on Representation and Nominations
- g. Moderator of Personnel Committee
- h. Moderator of Native American Ministries Coordinating Committee
- i. Moderator of Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee
- j. Moderator of Presbyterian Women

In order to assure the balance of elders and ministers, former synod moderators will be invited to serve as commissioners for a particular year.

3.09 Ex-officio members with privilege of the floor but no vote at meetings are:

- a. Executive Presbyters
- b. Presbytery Stated Clerks/Associate Stated Clerks
- c. Moderators of Synod task forces or ministry teams
- d. Staff to Synod Committees
- e. Past Moderators of Synod

3.10 Presbyters in good standing in other governing bodies of this church or in any other Christian church who are present at any meeting of the synod may be invited by the synod to sit as corresponding members, with voice but without vote.

4. MEETINGS

4.01 The Synod shall meet three times per year, ordinarily in March, June and October. The October meeting is designated as the annual meeting. The March meeting will be designated to discuss strategy for, and review of, the synod's mission work, which will include presbytery council moderators or their designees, presbytery moderators or their designees, and presbytery stated clerks.

4.02 Special meetings may be called in accordance with G-3.0405, Form of Government. Synod meetings shall provide for public worship and celebration of the Lord's Supper. Meetings of the synod will be planned by the Synod Executive/Stated Clerk, the Synod Moderator and other persons of their choosing.

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4.03 Meetings of the synod will be designed with care to ensure that they will enable commissioners:

- 139 a. to transact ecclesiastical business;
140 b. to transact business as required by the Synod's Articles of Incorporation;
141 c. to coordinate mission and program; and
142 d. to "participate in planning and administration of the work of higher councils,
143 and in consultation between bodies concerning mission, budget, staffing and
144 fair employment practices and matters of equitable compensation". G-
145 3.0106
146 e. to use consensus decision-making, where appropriate
147
- 148 4.04 Commissioners are expected to be present for the entire meeting of the synod.
149 Commissioners desiring to leave before adjournment shall request permission to
150 do so from the body through the stated clerk.
151
- 152 4.05 Expenses of commissioners and ex-officio members for attendance at the synod
153 and on synod business will be reimbursed by the synod under policies that it shall
154 determine.
155
- 156 4.06 A quorum for a meeting of the synod shall be ten commissioners, at least five of
157 whom shall be elders and at least five of whom shall be ministers of the Word and
158 Sacrament representing at least three presbyteries. (G-3.0405)
159
- 160 4.07 Electronic meetings are authorized through the use of a conference telephone or
161 other communications equipment and electronic technologies by means of which
162 all persons participating in the meeting can engage in interactive dialogue and
163 discussion
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166 5. OFFICERS

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- 168 5.01 The synod shall elect as its officers a moderator, a moderator-elect, a stated clerk,
169 and a treasurer.
170
- 171 5.02 The moderator shall be elected for a term of two years.
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- 173 5.021 The duties of the moderator shall be those specified in Form of
174 Government G-3.0104.
175
- 176 5.022 Each minister of the Word and Sacrament or elder elected moderator shall
177 be enrolled as a commissioner to synod for the term of office whether or
178 not elected by his or her presbytery.
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- 180 5.03 The moderator-elect shall be elected for a term of two years.
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- 182 5.031 The duties of this office shall be in keeping with the will of the synod or at
183 the request of the moderator. When acting for the moderator, the
184 moderator-elect may discharge any of the ecclesiastical or corporate
185 functions of the moderator.

186
187 5.032 Each minister of the Word and Sacrament or elder elected moderator-elect
188 shall be enrolled as a commissioner to synod for the term of office,
189 whether or not elected by his or her presbytery.
190
191 5.04 The stated clerk shall be elected for a term of five years and may be reelected.
192
193 5.041 The responsibilities of the stated clerk are included in the position
194 description of synod executive/stated clerk.
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196 5.042 The duties of the stated clerk shall be those specified in the Form of
197 Government G-3.0104 and the following:
198
199 (a) to provide to presbyteries, commissioners, and ex-officio members;
200 proper notification of all regular and called meetings;
201
202 (b) to edit and publish, thirty days prior to each synod meeting, a docket
203 and a summary of reports to be presented at that meeting;
204
205 (c) to edit and publish minutes of synod meetings with distribution to be
206 determined by the synod;
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208 (d) to publish annually a Synod Directory for distribution to be determined
209 by the synod;
210
211 (e) to advise the synod on the proper succession of all of its proposed
212 officers and committee members;
213
214 (f) to serve in an Ex-officio capacity to Synod Committees.
215
216 5.05 The treasurer is the fiscal officer of the Synod of the Southwest and is elected to a
217 two-year term (in odd-numbered years) by the Synod of the Southwest at its
218 annual meeting.
219
220 5.051 The duties of the treasurer shall be:
221
222 (a) The treasurer is the financial custodian of the Synod's funds and
223 accountable directly to the Synod as an officer of the corporation. As
224 such, the treasurer should be bonded,
225
226 (b) The treasurer is responsible for seeing that all financial records are in
227 good order and that all financial transactions are recorded.
228
229 (c) Working with Synod staff with financial accounting assignments, the
230 treasurer is responsible for presenting financial records for annual
231 audit, and presents audit reports to the Synod through Finance and
232 Stewardship Development Committee.
233

- 234 (d) The treasurer serves as ex-officio member of the Finance and
235 Stewardship Development Committee and other committees as may be
236 assigned.
237
238 (e) The treasurer, as an officer of the corporation, is a voting member of
239 the Synod and attends its meetings.
240
241 (f) The treasurer makes an annual report to the Synod, at the annual
242 meeting of Synod or at such other time as specified.
243
244 (g) The treasurer position is not a compensated position, but travel
245 expenses for required meetings are covered.
246

247 5.06 The moderator and moderator-elect shall assume their offices January 1 the year
248 following their election at the October meeting. Thus, the terms of the moderator
249 and the moderator-elect will be identical to that of other commissioners. The
250 stated clerk and treasurer shall take office at the conclusion of the meeting where
251 elected.
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253 6. SYNOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TRUSTEES

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256 6.01 The Executive Committee shall serve as trustees of the synod corporation, with
257 the following members serving as officers of the synod corporation: the
258 Moderator of Synod shall be the President; the Moderator of the Finance and
259 Property Committee shall be the Vice-President; the Stated Clerk shall be the
260 Secretary; and, the Synod Treasurer shall be the Treasurer. The trustees shall
261 have the power to conduct the business of the corporation as outlined in the
262 Articles of Incorporation. Actions shall be reported to the synod.
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264 6.02 The members of the Executive Committee shall be:

- 265
266 a. The Moderator of Synod
267 b. The Moderator-Elect of Synod
268 c. The Synod Executive/Stated Clerk
269 d. The Synod Treasurer
270 e. The Moderator of the Finance and Property Committee
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272 The Executive Committee may co-opt other members of the synod for specific
273 purposes.
274

275 6.03 The Executive Committee, between stated meetings of synod, shall have the
276 authority to act on behalf of synod on such matters that requires an action to be
277 taken before the next stated meeting. The Executive Committee must report
278 actions taken on behalf of the synod to the next stated meeting of synod.
279

- 280 6.04 The Executive Committee may have such other duties and authority as may be
 281 assigned to it from time to time by the synod.
 282
- 283 6.05 The Synod has the responsibility to review the records of its presbyteries. The
 284 Synod fulfills this responsibility through the work of the Committee on Review of
 285 Presbytery Minutes. Membership of that committee consists of the synod stated
 286 clerk and the stated clerks of each of the four presbyteries. The report is
 287 submitted in time for the annual meeting of the Synod in October.
 288
- 289 6.06 Records shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
 290
- 291 a. roll of ministers and churches, with changes therein;
 - 292 b. list of candidates and inquirers;
 - 293 c. list of certified Christian Educators;
 - 294 d. list of commissioned lay preachers;
 - 295 e. a copy of the presbytery's Standing Rules, Bylaws or other similar
 296 documents as currently revised, including a dated list of changes made
 297 during the year.
 - 298 f. Minutes of stated and called meetings.
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- 300
- 301 6.07 Upon report to the Stated Clerk that a written statement of an alleged offense has
 302 been received, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, any three of the following
 303 four are authorized to appoint persons to serve on an Investigating Committee in
 304 accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Discipline: Moderator, Moderator-
 305 Elect, Immediate Past Moderator and Treasurer. (*D-10.0200*)
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308 7. COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS OF SYNOD

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- 310 7.01 There shall be the following committees, ministry teams or commissions of the
 311 synod:
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- 313 a. Permanent Judicial Commission
 - 314 b. Committee on Representation and Nominations
 - 315 c. Finance and Property Committee
 - 316 d. Personnel Committee
 - 317 e. Native American Ministries Coordinating Committee
 - 318 f. Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee
 - 319 g. Communications Team
 320

321 There may be workgroups or task forces as determined by the synod or executive
 322 committee, and appointed by the synod or executive committee.
 323

324 7.02 Each of the committees or teams, except the Committee on Representation **and**
325 Nominations, Hispanic Ministries Coordinating Committee and Native American
326 Ministries Coordinating Committee, shall have two (2) commissioners from each
327 of the presbyteries in the synod.

328 7.03 Committee/Team Membership – Terms. Committee/Team members shall serve
329 in classes of terms of three (3) years and no member may serve more than six (6)
330 years, in whatever combination of terms.

331 7.04 Committee/Team Moderators – Terms. Moderators of Committees/Teams shall
332 be elected annually, unless otherwise provided, and may serve no more than three
333 (3) consecutive terms as moderator.

334 7.05 Electronic meetings are authorized through the use of a conference telephone or
335 other communications equipment and electronic technologies by means of which
336 all persons participating in the meeting can engage in interactive dialogue and
337 discussion.

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339 8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SYNOD COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, TEAMS AND
340 TASK FORCES

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342 8.01 Each committee, commission, task force or team has the following minimal
343 responsibilities to the Synod:

- 344
345 a. To see that copies of minutes of each meeting are kept in the Synod office
346 b. Participation of moderators in synod meetings and special events as
347 appropriate.
348 c. Annual written reports of the work of the committee, commission, task
349 force or team to the annual meeting of Synod in October of each year.
350 d. Responsibility for operating within the agreed-upon budget for the year
351 e. If a synod-wide event is planned, such plans may not proceed until a
352 proposal has been presented to the synod for its approval. Such proposals
353 should include a detailed projected budget and funding sources.
354 f. To understand the ministry of the whole synod and its commitment to
355 regional ministry across the four presbyteries and to work within that
356 context.

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358 8.02 PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION.

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360 8.021 The synod shall maintain a permanent judicial commission as described in
361 the Rules of Discipline D-5.0100, and shall exercise the responsibilities
362 and powers as authorized in the Rules of Discipline.

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364 8.022 The membership shall be twelve members: six ministers of the Word and
365 Sacrament and six elders. The membership shall be so distributed that
366 each presbytery shall at all times have three members. *D-5.0101*

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- 8.023 The term of office shall be six years, with the membership divided into three classes. No person having served a full term shall be eligible for re-election for a period of four years. D-5.0103, D-5.0105
- 8.024 The commission shall elect annually from its members a moderator and a clerk.

8.03 COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION & NOMINATIONS.

- 8.031 The synod shall have a Committee on Representation & Nominations composed of nine members divided into three classes nominated by the Executive Committee and elected by the Synod; each serving for a three year term. Every effort will be made to identify members to be fully representative of presbyteries within the Synod and broadly representative of the constituency of the Synod and in conformity with the church's commitment to unity in diversity as set forth in F-1.0403, G-3.0103
- 8.032 The Committee on Representation & Nominations' main function shall be to advise the synod regarding the principles of unity and diversity; to advocate for diversity in leadership; and, to consult with the Synod on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403, G-3.0103

8.033 Duties of the Committee regarding Nominations:

- (a) to nominate persons for Synod committees, commissions, and task forces and teams
- (b) to recommend persons to be nominated by the synod to General Assembly committees and councils when requested to do so;
- (c) to nominate persons for the following offices from among the teaching and ruling elders: moderator, moderator-elect and treasurer.
- (d) to nominate moderators of committees, task forces and teams.

8.05 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND PROPERTY

- 8.051 The Committee on Finance and Property shall be composed of eight members: two of whom shall be synod commissioners. All four presbyteries shall be represented in the membership.
- 8.052 Responsibilities assigned to the committee include developing the operating budget for the synod, making recommendations concerning synod per capita, and propose budget adjustments to synod during the year.

415
416 8.053 The committee shall provide reports to the synod regarding its status. The
417 annual budget of the synod for the following year will be presented for
418 adoption at the annual meeting in October.

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420 8.054 The Committee will recommend to the Synod the use of restricted and
421 unrestricted funds, and review proposals from within the synod and/or
422 presbyteries for specific projects which may fulfill the regional ministry
423 objectives of the synod.

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425 8.06 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

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427 8.061 The Personnel Committee shall be composed of eight members: two of
428 whom shall be synod commissioners. All four presbyteries shall be
429 represented in the membership.

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431 8.062 The Personnel Committee will include at least one Hispanic member and
432 one Native American member at all times. To accomplish this, the Synod
433 Nominating Committee shall be empowered to nominate at-large members
434 should that be necessary.

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436 8.063 The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for personnel matters,
437 nominate synod staff, and consult with other governing bodies in
438 administrative staff process as outlined in G-3.0104 and G-3.0110

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440 8.064 The synod executive/stated clerk shall be nominated to the synod by a
441 special representative nominating committee elected by the synod for that
442 purpose *G-3.0110* Other approved synod staff shall be nominated by the
443 synod personnel committee for election by the synod. *G-3.0110*

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445 8.07 HISPANIC MINISTRIES COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

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447 8.071 The committee shall be composed of 8 members. Every effort shall be
448 made to represent all four presbyteries. They shall discuss Hispanic
449 ministries in the Synod and its presbyteries and engage in dialogue with
450 the Synod and its presbyteries about the nature of that ministry. The
451 committee:

452
453 (a) Will relate to other synods' caucuses as appropriate regarding Hispanic
454 ministry;

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456 (b) Shall identify opportunities for Hispanic leadership development in the
457 Synod and its presbyteries, and participate in national leadership
458 development opportunities as appropriate;

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- 460 (c) Shall encourage the Synod and its presbyteries in carrying out their
- 461 historic multi-cultural mission work in light of the present realities;
- 462
- 463 (d) Will designate the leadership to attend the biennial assembly of the
- 464 National Hispanic Presbyterian Caucus, and will notify the synod
- 465 executive/stated clerk 60 days prior to the deadline for submission of
- 466 names required;
- 467
- 468 (e) Offer and publicize a wide-range of opportunities for education
- 469 and involvement of people of all ages with regard to border issues
- 470 and realities, consistent with GA policy and recognizing that
- 471 people within the synod have multiple perspectives about
- 472 undocumented immigrants;
- 473
- 474 (f) Communicate appropriate information and emergent border
- 475 realities before the synod;
- 476
- 477 (g) Hold border conferences;
- 478
- 479 (h) Plan face-to-face mission opportunities which include visits to and
- 480 conversations with people on the border – in their churches homes
- 481 or various work places;
- 482
- 483 (i) Create opportunities for communication with one another and
- 484 government officials in pursuit of changes in legislation affecting
- 485 the border on the state or national levels; and,
- 486
- 487 (j) List on the synod website border-related resources available for all
- 488 age levels;

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490 8.072 Staff to the committee will be a staff person who is Hispanic from among

491 the presbyteries or synod, or the synod executive, or a person so

492 designated by the Executive Committee.

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494 8.08 NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

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496 8.081 The Native American Ministries Coordinating Committee shall be

497 composed of 8 members from any of the four presbyteries who have

498 Native American ministries. The responsibilities are:

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- 500 (a) To engage the Synod of the Southwest and its presbyteries in dialogue
- 501 about the nature of that ministry;
- 502
- 503 (b) To relate to other synods’ caucuses as appropriate regarding Native
- 504 American ministry;
- 505

- 506 (c) To relate to the General Assembly Native American Consulting
507 Committee; and,
508
509 (d) To identify opportunities for Native American leadership development
510 in the Synod and its presbyteries and participate in national leadership
511 development opportunities as appropriate.
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513 8.082 Staff to the committee will be a staff person who is from among the
514 presbyteries or synod, or the synod executive, or a person so designated by
515 the synod.
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517 8.09 COMMUNICATION TEAM
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519 8.091 The Synod shall have a communication team of six (6) members, two of
520 whom shall be commissioners, representing all four presbyteries. The
521 team shall enhance the comprehensive communication of the synod and
522 developing effective communication tools by:
523

524 8.092 Optimizing the website as an interactive communication tool;
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526 8.093 Using assorted media to communicate with congregations and
527 presbyteries, such as: website, email, bulletin and newsletter inserts,
528 synod newsletter, DVD/CD for interpretation and teaching:
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530 (a) Encouraging face-to-face communication;
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532 (b) Using web-based resources for leadership training and
533 development
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535 9. STAFF
536

537 9.01 There shall be a synod staff which shall include the synod executive/stated clerk,
538 associate stated clerk/executive assistant and other staff as approved by the
539 Synod.
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541 9.02 The synod executive/stated clerk shall be elected for a five year renewable term.
542 The synod executive/stated clerk is supervisor of synod staff and has the authority
543 to appoint individuals for specific tasks when requested by other governing
544 bodies.
545

546 9.03 Annual performance reviews shall be conducted for all exempt staff. The Synod
547 Personnel Committee shall be responsible for the performance reviews of exempt
548 synod staff personnel. Annual performance reviews for nonexempt staff are
549 conducted by the synod executive. Position descriptions of all exempt and
550 nonexempt positions are subject to review by the synod personnel committee
551 whenever review is deemed appropriate by the committee.

- 552
553 9.04 For all exempt staff elected for renewable multi-year terms, the personnel
554 committee will conduct a comprehensive review one year before the end of a
555 term. This review will be the basis for recommending election for another term.
556
557 9.05 Arrangements for employment of staff, review of functions and performance, and
558 termination of positions or employment of persons shall be in accordance with the
559 Form of Government and the synod's Employee Handbook.
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561 9.06 Synod staff members are covered by the Synod's Officers Liability Insurance.
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564 10. SYNOD COVENANTS WITH INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES
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- 566 10.01 The synod may seek to develop and respond to covenant relationships with
567 institutions, agencies, or corporations whose work is related to the mission of the
568 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in two or more of its presbyteries; or in three-way
569 agreements with a presbytery, and an institution, agency or corporation, and the
570 synod.
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572 10.02 All covenant agreements or changes therein negotiated by representatives of the
573 synod are subject to final synod approval.
574
575 10.03 The synod has the responsibility for negotiating, monitoring, and reviewing synod
576 covenants with institutions and agencies within the bounds of the synod.
577 Covenants shall be renewed every three years.
578
579 10.04 These covenants are not contracts or legal documents.
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582 11. AMENDMENTS
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- 584 11.01 The Bylaws may be amended at any stated meeting of synod by a two-thirds (2/3)
585 vote of the members present, provided a thirty (30) day notice of the proposed
586 changes has been given to the stated clerk in writing, and that copies of these
587 proposed changes have been sent to commissioners along with the call to the
588 meeting at which they are to be voted on.
589
590 11.02 The Bylaws may be suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the commissioners
591 present at any stated meeting of synod.
592

593 12. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY
594

- 595 12.01 All meetings of synod shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent
596 edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except in those cases when the Constitution of
597 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides otherwise. *G-3.0105*

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