

**General Synod Council
Reformed Church in America
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115**

Minutes

Time and Place The General Synod Council (GSC) of the Reformed Church in America met on the campus of Union College in Schenectady, NY beginning at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, June 22, 2005. Moderator, Steven Vander Molen presided at the meeting. The meeting was opened with prayer.

Members Present The following members of the General Synod Council were present:

Greg Alderman	Donald Poest
Thomas Daubenspeck	Joyce Wrage
Karyn Ratcliffe	Barbara Fillette
Norman Donkersloot	Irving Rivera
Ted Dykstra	Ruth Webb
Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, ex-officio	Rex B. Schultz
Robert Terwilliger	Bradley G. Lewis
Pacia Ferrell Vamvas	Eugene Ligtenberg
Steven Vander Molen	Pedro Windsor
Johnnie Lovejoy	Carl Ver Beek
Nolan Palsma	William Vermilyea
Annie Lee Phillips	Ronald Vande Bunte (new member – term begins July 1, 2005)

Member Absent The following members of the General Synod Council were unable to attend the meeting:

Daniel J. Beyer	Paul Schreck
-----------------	--------------

Cluster Facilitators, The following staff were present for all or part of the meeting:

Gregg Mast	Kenneth Bradsell
Shari Brink	Bruce Menning
Paul Boice	

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Assignment of Business from General Synod The General Synod Council reviewed the recommendations adopted by the 2005 General Synod that were referred to the GSC for its action. The recommendations were referred to GSC committees, and staff was assigned to facilitate fulfillment of the synod's action according to the following table.

GS 2005 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL

R-#	Page #	Substance	GSC Committee	Assigned Staff
Revitalization				
Ov. 1R-1a	p. "a"	CRF	GSC	Shari - CW
Multiplication				
Discipleship				
6	110	Paper "Hist. Understand Doc. Stds.-ident. resources	GSC	Jeff/Chr. Unity
Ordained Ldr.				
Ov. 5 8e p. "d"	142a	Our Call and short GS	Steering Cte.	
P-2 Pres., R-8f	p. "d"	Our Call event	Steering Cte.	
Mission & Justice				
R-14	179	GSC distribute letter infertility-distribute letter	GSC	Dwayne
19	191	GSC to encourage...cross cultural events	GSC	Ken/Steve Robbins
Worship & Theol.				
R-21 substitute	246	Dialogue homosexuality; facilitator; (w/editorial change-instruct)	GSC	Wes/Cluster Facilitators

Discussion of R-21

The General Synod Council engaged in a discussion about first steps in responding to R-21. The recommendation adopted by synod reads as follows:

To immediately begin an honest and intentional denomination-wide dialogue on homosexuality; and further,

To instruct the General Synod Council (GSC) to hire a facilitator to begin work no later than January 2006 and to continue for up to three and a half years in order to give direction to the dialogue; and further,

To direct the GSC to provide an annual report to the General Synod with a final report not later than General Synod 2009.

The following members of the General Synod Council offered to work with staff to consider implementation steps to respond to R-21: Ronald Vande Bunte; Carl Ver Beek; Annie Lee Phillips; William Vermilyea. A team will be appointed by the GSC moderator. The GSC requested the general secretary appoint staff.

**Ad Interim
Appointment**

Upon recommendation of its moderator, the GSC:

GSC 05-41 VOTED: To appoint ad interim Patricia Mouquin as a member of the General Synod Council as the representative for the Regional Synod of New York.

**Appointment of
Committees**

Upon recommendation of its moderator, the GSC:

GSC 05-42 VOTED: To appoint the membership of the GSC to the Standing Committees according to the following table:

Ministry and Mission Committee	Finance and Administration Committee
Alderman, Greg*	Daubenspeck, Thomas
Beyer, Daniel	Donkersloot, Norman
Kaper-Dale, Stephanie	Dykstra, Ted
Lewis, Bradley	Palsma, Nolan
Poest, Donald	Phillips, Annie Lee
Vamvas, Pacia	Ratcliffe, Karyn
Webb, Ruth	Schultz, Rex
Windsor, Pedro	Ver Beek, Carl*
Bryant, Mary	Vermilyea, William
Mouquin, Patricia	Bechler, Mary
Ong, Sebastian	Gonzales, Anna
Vande Bunte, Ron	Kersten, Elizabeth

*committee moderator

Note: Michael Trice, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America appointee has not yet been assigned to a committee.

Upon recommendation of the Finance and Administration Committee, the GSC:

GSC 05-43 VOTED: To appoint Carl Ver Beek to the Personnel & Evaluation Committee, class of 2006.

The Ministry and Mission Committee reported that it will elect a member to the Personnel & Evaluation Committee at the next meeting. The moderator noted that he would make his appointment to the committee at a later date.

Upon recommendation of its moderator, the GSC:

GSC 05-44 VOTED: To appoint Carl Ver Beek moderator of the Finance and Administration Committee and Gregg Alderman moderator of the Ministry and Mission Committee.

**GS 2006 and
Beyond Task Group**

Rex Schultz, Nolan Palsma and Ken Bradsell provided an oral report on the continuing work of the GS 2006 and Beyond Task Group. The group met on June 7th at the RCA's Interchurch Center offices. The group has determined that modifications in the schedule and agenda can be made without amending either "the Government" or the "Bylaws and Special Rules of Order" contained in the BCO. The group has begun work on a revised schedule and agenda for the meeting and has begun consideration of changes in the way business is handled at the meeting. A full report will be prepared for the fall meeting of the GSC. The group noted that it wants to propose to the GSC that a meeting of the General Synod officers along with the moderators of the General Synod commissions be held during the fall meeting of these entities for the purpose of determining the work that will be brought to the annual meeting in June from these bodies.

GSC 05-45

VOTED: To request staff to plan a meeting of GS officers and the moderators of the commissions within the time frame of the meeting of the commissions and the GSC in the fall of 2005.

The GSC asked the group to consider the following concerns at its next meeting:

- Revise synod rules to set time limits on debate;
- Provide the GSC with "A" and "B" schedules for consideration at the fall 2005 meeting;
- Develop for GSC review a process for conducting the business of the synod that includes significant use of reflection, discernment, discussion, and prayer among the delegates at their assigned tables as part of the process for making decisions;
- Develop a plan for use of a "consent agenda" for certain organizational and administrative business of the synod;
- Incorporate into future synod planning the seating/table arrangements used at GS 2005.

Pastoral Letter

The General Synod referred to the GSC a draft of a pastoral letter prepared by the Rev. Dr. Charles Van Engen and read to the delegates at the Wednesday (June 22) session of the General Synod meeting. The GSC:

GSC 05-46

VOTED: To request the general secretary and the General Synod officers to revise and edit the letter and send it to the congregations and ministers of the Reformed Church in America.

**Pastoral Care for
the Rev. Dr. Norman
Kansfield**

The General Synod Council discussed the need to appoint a pastoral care team to provide care and support to the Rev. Dr. Norman Kansfield and Mary Kansfield. The moderator asked Barbara Fillette and Irving Rivera to serve on the team with Barbara Fillette serving as facilitator. The moderator informed the GSC that he would invite the Rev. Steve Sayer (GS 2005 delegate and pastor of the Reformed Church of Bushkill, PA) to serve on the team.

Note: Following the meeting, the moderator determined that Irving Rivera's service on the team during his term as president of the General Synod created a potential conflict of interest. The moderator asked Thomas Daubenspeck to serve in place of Irving Rivera.

**Revised Consistorial
Report Form**

Shari Brink was asked to provide a summary and review of the proposed revised Consistorial Report Form. Following discussion of the revisions the GSC:

GSC 05-47

VOTED: To approve the revised Consistorial Report Form.

Engagement Letter

The General Synod Council reviewed a proposed engagement letter requested by the General Synod office from Mr. David A. van der Woerd of the law firm, Ross & McBride, LLP. Ross & McBride is prepared to provide legal counsel to the General Synod and its agencies for matters within Canada. Following its review and discussion, the GSC adopted the following resolution:

GSC 05-48

VOTED: Be it resolved that the Corporation retain Ross & McBride LLP as its solicitors to advise and represent the Corporation in all matters in Canada, more particularly described in the Legal Services Engagement Letter shown to us today and to take such actions and conduct such proceedings as they may in their discretion consider necessary or proper for the representation on its behalf as authorized by us through our staff.

Be it resolved that Kenneth R. Bradsell be authorized to execute the Legal Services Engagement Letter in the form attached hereto on behalf of the Corporation.

The undersigned Secretary of the Corporation hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution passed by the Board of Directors of the Corporation at a duly called and properly constituted meeting of such board held on the 15th day of June 2005, and that the said Resolution is in full force and effect, unamended, as of the date hereto.

Dated this 15th day of June, 2005

Kenneth R. Bradsell, Secretary

- Carver Governance Training** The GSC members who have not yet attended Carver Governance Training were reminded to notify Mornier Rich if they are able to participate in the September 16-17, 2005 training session in Atlanta, GA. Mornier Rich will send reminder information and will invite new GSC members to sign-up.
- Thanks to Retiring Members** GSC moderator, Steven Vander Molen thanked those members of the GSC who are completing their service. The members were given a framed print by RCA artist, Joan Bohlig. The members completing their service are: Barbara Fillette; Johnnie Lovejoy; Robert Terwilliger; Eugene Ligtenberg; David Schutt; Paul Schreck and Joyce Wrage.
- Next Meeting** The next meeting of the GSC will be October 14-16, 2005 at the Sheraton Gateway Hotel on Mannheim Road near the O'Hare Airport in Chicago, IL. Members who travel from other cities may need to arrive at the hotel on the evening of October 13th. The meeting will convene with worship for the GSC and General Synod Commissions on the morning of the 14th.
- Adjournment** The meeting adjourned following closing prayers at 3:30 pm.