

February 1, 2022 Assembly Highlights
Cbh 2/3/22

On 2/3/22 the winter assembly of the Synod of the Covenant was held by zoom, with 19 commissioners, eight presbytery leaders and stated clerks, nine corresponding members, and four Synod staff members in attendance. Here are some of the highlights:

- Andrew Pomerville (Lake Huron) preached at the opening worship service, which encouraged us to avoid the temptation to look backwards into an idealized past, and to keep our eyes open looking for how God is at work now.
- One of the Synod's ministry focus areas for 2022 is to encourage innovation and experimentation in presbyteries, churches, and ministries. Attendees broke into small groups to discuss how they interpret this goal and bright lights in their churches and presbyteries which show us what is possible when we move beyond our typical patterns of ministry.
- Interim Executive Chip Hardwick's report reviewed highlights from 2021 (such as nearly \$140,000 in grants and scholarships invested in leaders and ministries; virtual worship services with almost 2500 views; leadership development opportunities; monthly preaching workshops, and receiving jurisdiction returned from the General Assembly) and spoke about 2022 opportunities (visit <https://synodofthecovenant.org/synod-ministries/> for more information).
- Several actions were taken which help provide administrative strength and guidance for the Synod's work.
 - Juliann Joy (Eastminster), Carmen Cox-Harwell (Western Reserve), Brian Maguire (Miami Valley), and Tim Dyke (Muskingum Valley) were elected to the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod.
 - The Assembly approved Temporary Bylaws for Trustees, Permanent Judicial Commission, Administrative Commission, Investigating Committee, and Committee of Council. (Read them here: <https://synodofthecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/A-6-Governance-Recommendation-Temporary-Bylaws-for-2022.pdf>)
 - The Assembly approved \$30,000 over budget for funding a bookkeeping service or bookkeeper, as well as a position description for bookkeeper (The approved description included up to 19 hours of weekly work, rather than the 25 hours listed here <https://synodofthecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/A-8-2022.02.01-SOC-Bookkeeper-Position-Description-for-Approval.pdf>)
 - The current contract for the Interim Synod Executive was extended through May 3, 2022.
- The treasurer's report included a preliminary draft income statement for 2022 which showed that the Synod was approximately \$160,000 in the black, due to revenue more generous than planned and expenses more modest than planned. These results will be further refined by the finance committee and the Synod's auditors before finalization.
- The Synod formed an Administrative Commission (AC) in response to a report of disorder from the Presbytery of Detroit, with Carmen Cox Harwell (Western Reserve), Jeanne Gay (Maumee Valley), Andrew Pomerville (Lake Huron), Betsy Rees (Mackinac), Robert Sullivan (Cincinnati). You can read the scope of the AC's work here: <https://synodofthecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/A-9-2022.02.01-Request-for-AC-Detroit.pdf>.