



The Synod of the Covenant

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Temporary Leadership Team of the Synod of the Covenant recommends that the Synod of the Covenant appoint an Administrative Commission (AC) for the Presbytery of Detroit per the report of disorder.

PC(USA) Book of Order, G-3.0109 b (5) – Administrative Commissions

Administrative commissions are designated to consider and conclude matters not involving ecclesiastical judicial process, except that in the discharge of their assigned responsibilities they may discover and report to the designating council matters that may require judicial action by the council.

Functions that may be entrusted to administrative commissions include, but are not limited to:

(5) (by presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly) visiting particular councils, congregations, or agencies over which they have immediate jurisdiction reported to be affected with disorder, and inquiring into and settling the difficulties therein, except that no commission of a presbytery shall be empowered to dissolve a pastoral relationship without the specific authorization by the designating body (G-2.0901);

Report of Disorder:

The moderator of the Coordinating Cabinet reported to the Synod that disorder exists in the Presbytery of Detroit between the Coordinating Cabinet, the Operations Committee and two key upper level members of staff. The Coordinating Cabinet requested that the Synod of the Covenant appoint an Administrative Commission to take jurisdiction of this matter and to inquire into and these settle difficulties therein.

Specific Disorder into which the AC would inquire and settle.

- Lack of clarity surrounding appropriate processes, authority and interactions between the Operations Committee, the Coordinating Cabinet and members of staff.
- Inability of Operations Committee and the Coordinating Cabinet to effectively address ongoing personnel difficulties.
- Confusion around staff position descriptions and appropriate entity and process to be used to address issues of poor performance of senior staff.
- Distrust and animosity between Operations Committee, the Coordinating Cabinet and senior members of staff.
- Senior staff not adhering to appropriate Presbytery processes.

Recommendation to the Synod of the Covenant and Scope of Authority for AC

Therefore, the Temporary Leadership Team recommends to the Synod of the Covenant, pursuant to *Book of Order* provision G-3.0109 b (5), that an Administrative Commission of three to five members be appointed by the Moderator of the Synod, in consultation with the Interim Synod Executive and Interim Stated Clerk, for the following purposes, including but not limited to:

1. To inquire into and settle the current personnel issues related to job performance and relationships between senior members of the staff by taking jurisdiction of this matter.
2. To work with the Coordinating Cabinet, the Operations Committee and the Presbytery Stated Clerk to clarify and resolve processes and boundaries of their work together, especially as they relate to personnel issues and processes by which relationships with personnel are resolved.
3. To clarify to members of senior staff appropriate communication processes as relates to content and distribution of grievances to appropriate presbytery entities and members.
4. To address issues of mistrust, lack of transparency and conflicts of interest between the Operations Committee, the Coordination Cabinet and members of staff.

It is further recommended that the Administrative Commission have the full authority of the Synod of the Covenant, except where limited by provisions of the PC(USA) *Book of Order*, to address personnel matters, boundary, authority, process and mistrust issues between the Operations Committee and Coordinating Cabinet, including assuming original jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Detroit for the specific purpose of correcting the disorder specified above if it is determined that either the Operations Committee or Coordinating Cabinet is unable or unwilling to successfully resolve irregularities in a timely manner. The Administrative Commission also has full authority to dissolve the relationship between the Presbytery and senior members of staff, if they are unwilling to successfully resolve irregularities in a timely manner. The Synod of the Covenant Administrative Commission must give fair hearing to all involved before assuming original jurisdiction, or before dissolving the relationships of any members of staff.

It is recommended that the following members to be appointed to the Administrative Commission: Carmen Cox Harwell (Western Reserve), Jeanne Gay (Maumee Valley), Andrew Pomerville (Lake Huron), Betsy Rees (Mackinac), Robert Sullivan (Cincinnati).