

Synod of the Trinity 2020 Assembly Report

Online Zoom Gathering | Oct. 25-27



SUNDAY NIGHT

Beloved Community Conversation

- Pittsburgh native the Rev. Dr. John Welch (was pastor of the Bidwell Presbyterian Church for seven years and vice president for Student Services and Community Engagement & Dean of Students of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary for 13 years) spoke on “Hyper-partisanship.” With a contentious election coming up, John said, “How would Jesus mediate a situation like this? What would Jesus do in this moment? The church cannot be silent. The church has to be powerfully resolute in not taking any one side but pulling sides into a middle common ground.” View the recording [by clicking here](#).

MONDAY

Recording of Monday’s gathering is available [by clicking here](#).

Distinguish Commissioners

- Commissioners (green) and ex officio (maroon) were outfitted with matching T-shirts with the inscription “Being Together Apart.”

Acknowledgement of the Land

- Susan Nesti (moderator of the Synod’s Presbyterian Women), a full-blood Native American Indian from the Chickasaw tribe in Oklahoma, spoke about those native to Pennsylvania and West Virginia. She said, “The stance of state government is that there are no Native Americans in Pennsylvania. However, there is a large and growing community of Native Americans that is growing more active and more frustrated with the state’s position. Only 14 states celebrate to honor Native American histories and cultures, which is on Columbus Day or referred to as ‘Indigenous Peoples Day.’” Her presentation is available [by clicking here](#).

Opening Worship

- Rev. Linda Morgan-Clement (Dean of Spiritual and Religious Life, Lawrence University, Appleton, WI) spoke on “Loving Beyond the Walls.” She asked, “What is it that we wall out and wall in? The cracks between those loaf-sized rocks and the round-size rocks that allow them to tumble to the side as soon as the farmer’s back is turned is the space created by discernment, that becomes our small contribution to abstention from hostile thought, word and deed, our small step from Christ’s command to love our enemies.”

- The offering benefited the Presbyterian Hunger Program. The amount collected to this point is more than \$680. You can still contribute through the information [available here](#).
- Online communion was held.
- Musical accompaniment for worship was supplied by Synod commissioner Matt Camlin (Shenango).

Executive Search Committee

- With Synod Transitional Executive Susan Faye Wonderland's contract ending in December of 2021, an Executive Search Committee of eight (including one alternate) chosen by the Synod's Governing Commission was announced. An overview of the process, which will begin in January, was also presented.

Financial Report

- The financial report included a 2021 budget overview. The Synod per capita amount for 2021 will remain at \$2.40, which was announced at last year's Assembly.

PCUSA Co-Moderators Visit

- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Co-Moderators Elona Street-Stewart and Gregory Bentley joined the Assembly by Zoom. Their message was "The Road Ahead," speaking about moving forward and the denomination's Matthew 25 invitation. The co-moderators allowed several Synod commissioners to share about the ministries at their congregations.

"Around the Synod" Videos

- Reports were shown during the meeting, featuring:
 - Ministries at East Stroudsburg Presbyterian Church
 - Recollections from a minister rally in Pittsburgh following the death of George Floyd
 - Recap of summer activities at Bluestone Camp & Retreat in West Virginia

TUESDAY

Recording of Tuesday's gathering is available [by clicking here](#).

Transitional Executive Report

- Susan Faye Wonderland gave her Transitional Executive Report, highlighting among other things the Synod staff's work as it relates to the Synod's six ends (primary objectives). This includes the current Beloved Community speaker series and sharing best practices during the pandemic.

Synod Ends Review

- Synod commissioners were placed in breakout rooms, allowing for small-group conversations regarding the Synod's ends. Discussion focused on how to live out the ends

in the near future given the state of the current pandemic and what ends are most important in the life of the Synod's presbyteries and congregations?

Closing Worship

- Outgoing Synod Moderator Judy Angleberger (Beaver-Butler) was recognized and celebrated for her service, along with seven commissioners who have faithfully filled their terms.
- 2020 Vice Moderator Charlie Best (Carlisle) and Martha Jordan (Lackawanna) were named as co-moderators of the Synod for 2021. The co-moderator distinction, which aligns with the denomination's structure, will be a one-year trial basis.
- With the Synod selling its building in Camp Hill, PA, a decommissioning video for the structure was shown featuring current and past leadership sharing their reflections on the ministries that have occurred there during the past 59 years. This video can be viewed [by clicking here](#).