

**Report of the Synod Committee for the Presbytery of Mackinac Report
to the Synod of the Covenant
October 30, 2019**

Constituting the Synod Committee

The Synod Committee for the Presbytery of Mackinac (SCM) was constituted by recommendation of the 2018 Administrative Commission (AC) for the Presbytery of Mackinac to the Synod of the Covenant in its Report which was approved by the Synod of the Covenant Assembly, August 3, 2018.

“2. That the Synod Assembly adopt a process for continued oversight and evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations and directives of the Administrative Commission by having the Synod Moderator appoint a committee of up to five members with at least two of those members being members of the present Administrative Commission. The Committee shall be authorized to seek specialized assistance if needed. The Committee shall be appointed prior to the September 29, 2018 meeting of the Presbytery of Mackinac. The role of the Committee shall be to conduct the process for continued oversight and evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations and directives contained in the Report of the Administrative Commission. The Committee shall report back to the Synod Assembly as needed. The hope is that the work of the Committee will be completed by the November 1-2, 2019 Synod Assembly.”

Members of the Synod Committee for the Presbytery of Mackinac (SCM)

Commissioned Ruling Elder Ruth Azar, Member of 2018 Administrative Commission	Presbytery of Detroit
Rev. Christine Barnes, Moderator	Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Rev. Ted McCollough, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Lake Huron Committee Recorder	Presbytery of Lake Huron
Rev. Andrew Pomerville Elder Andy Thorburn, Member of 2018 Administrative Commission	Presbytery of Lake Huron Presbytery of Lake Michigan

The Synod Committee met for the first time in a face to face meeting on August 17, 2018. It received its instructions from the Synod Executive and organized its work. The Committee determined that members, in pairs, would attend all Coordinating Council Meetings and Synod Assemblies of the Presbytery of Mackinac that occurred during the course of the Committee’s work. A schedule of visitation was established. The Committee attended the Synod Assembly of the Presbytery of Mackinac, September 28 -29, 2018, to be introduced to the Presbytery.

How work proceeded

Pairs of Committee members attended 6 Coordinating Council meetings. After each meeting the Committee would meet by ZOOM Conference Call. Those who attended the Coordinating Council meeting would submit their observations of interactions and report how the actions of the Coordinating Council aligned with or deviated from the recommendations and directives of the Administrative Commission. Committee members also attended 3 Presbytery Meetings and reported back to the full

Committee via ZOOM Conference Call. Any requests from the Coordinating Council of the Presbytery of Mackinac to the Committee were shared during the conference calls. Answers formulated by the Committee were conveyed back to the Coordinating Council.

The Moderator of the Coordinating Council of the Presbytery of Mackinac divided work on the Administrative Commission's recommendations among Coordinating Council members and Presbytery of Mackinac Committees. At each Coordinating Council meeting, progress on recommendations and directives of the Administrative Commission was given time for report and discussion. The Coordinating Council Moderator drafted an interim report of progress by the Coordinating Council which the Council reviewed and amended. A final interim report was received by the Synod Committee on June 18, 2019. The Synod Committee met with the Coordinating Council on August 13, 2019, for a listening session to hear the Council's assessment of its status, its needs and plans for next steps.

Observations by the Synod Committee

The Coordinating Council took seriously the 2018 Administrative Commission's directives and recommendations. Some have been completed. Some have not. Timelines have not been met in all areas but some progress has been made.

- Coordinating Council interactions were mixed. Sometimes people were respectful of each other. Other times, interactions began to revert to old habits. There appears to be some progression of improvement in the Council's interaction with each other and with the Synod.
- The Nominating Committee has worked to recruit a diversified body of people to serve on the Coordinating Council. As is true in almost every case, when membership of a body changes, dynamics change as well. That is one of the strengths, as well as one of the challenges, of the Presbyterian system of rotating membership.
- The Synod Committee appreciates the use of the Holy Manners Covenant at Council and Presbytery meetings.
- The Synod Committee sees increased support for the office of the Stated Clerk. That needs to be encouraged.
- Participation in the *Vital Congregations* initiative and the strength of the Presbytery's embrace of this participation is seen as a positive step.
- The COM chair reaching out for assistance for wider training and education for COM is seen as a positive step.
- The Synod Committee believes the Coordinating Council of the Presbytery of Mackinac can continue to progress, with continuing help from the Synod Executive and the Synod of the Covenant.

Recommendations

To the Presbytery of Mackinac, the Synod Committee recommends:

The Coordinating Council complete those recommendations and directives from the 2018 Administrative Commission report that have not been completed.

The Coordinating Council shall submit a report to the Synod regarding completion of remaining items in the 2018 Administrative Commission report no later than May 1, 2020.

To the Synod of the Covenant, the Synod Committee recommends:

The Synod Committee presents its report. We believe we have done the observation and evaluation work that was to be accomplished given the guidelines and time frame authorized by the Synod. We respectfully request this Committee be dismissed.

Given that much work still needs to be done by the Coordinating Council, the Synod Committee sees the need for continued oversight and evaluation. It recommends the Synod Executive and the Synod continue to monitor and work with the Presbytery of Mackinac and its Coordinating Council to complete the tasks they have been asked to complete.