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General Synod 2020 Postponed; Special Session Set For Fall

May 28, 2020

UPDATE: In June, the General Synod Council determined it will not be safe to convene a special session in October. General Synod will next meet in June 2021.

In light of widespread health concerns and current travel restrictions, the RCA's General Synod

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possibilities, including a virtual General Synod, postponing synod for a month, holding synod in the fall, or waiting until June 2021.

“We asked questions and weighed implications about the options, seeking to identify what decision would best serve the RCA,” says Phil Assink, General Synod vice president. “We had to think about the kind of facility needed to host a synod, the availability of a place, legal implications based on our bylaws and *Robert’s Rules of Order*. All of our conversations were made with the awareness that the current health crisis puts us into uncharted territory.”

A virtual event was ruled out after examining General Synod bylaws and *Robert’s Rules of Order*, which only permits them if authorized by an organization’s bylaws. The General Synod’s bylaws do not.

A sense of urgency related to the report of the Vision 2020 Team drove the decision to call a special session in the fall. “Due to the significant work of the 2020 Vision Team and the emphasis of bringing the issues facing the RCA to some form of resolution in 2020, we feel it is important to make every effort to hold a special meeting to hear their report in this calendar year,” says Ned Beadel, moderator of the General Synod Council.

“The unintended delay gives our hardworking Vision 2020 Team a few additional weeks to formulate the proposal they believe can help the RCA discern the next steps in our journey,” says Assink. Anticipating that synod may be rescheduled, the Vision 2020 Team had recently asked for an extension on the deadline for their report, which was due at the end of April; their final report will now be available in June.

“They are meeting almost weekly through Zoom to continue their work,” says Beadel. “We have a dedicated group of people on this team that want to make sure they get their work and recommendation right.” The Vision 2020 Team will virtually meet April 20-21 and will provide an update after that meeting.

A special session of General Synod includes the full slate of voting and corresponding delegates that would participate at a regular session of synod. General Synod Council will set the agenda and expects it to focus almost exclusively on the Vision 2020 report.

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be made in August.



Regular sessions of General Synod did not take place twice before, in 1933 and 1935, due to economic challenges during the Great Depression.

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