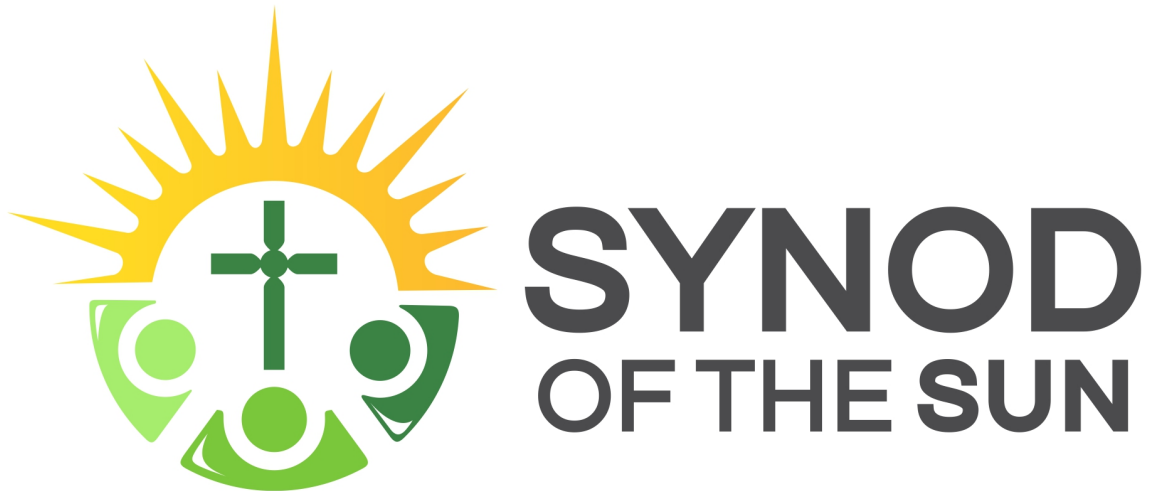




Synod Assembly

Fall Assembly | October 27 - 29th

First Presbyterian Church

El Paso, TX

Packet B - Additional Documentation

Synod of the Sun

2025 Fall Assembly | October 27th - 29th

First Presbyterian Church, El Paso TX



Event Schedule - Monday, October 27th

Abara House (1820 W. Paisano Dr.)

9:00 am **Arrival**

9:30 am **Opening Worship**

10:15-11:15 am **Tres Rios Border Foundation**

Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero
and John Nelsen

11:15am - **Abara**
12:30pm

12:30-1:30 pm **Lunch**

1:30-2:30 pm **Project Vida**

2:30-3:30 pm **Stories from Immigration Court**

3:30-5:00 pm **Presbyterian Mission Partners Present**

5:00 pm **Dinner**

6:00 pm **Return to Hotel**

Synod of the Sun

2025 Fall Assembly | October 27th - 29th

First Presbyterian Church, El Paso TX



Proposed Agenda - Tuesday, October 27th **FPC/ El Paso** (1340 Murchison Dr. Side Chapel)

Welcome, Introductions, Opening Prayer

Synod Moderator, Sharon Curry

Declaration of Quorum

Seating of Corresponding Members & Visitors

Adoption of Agenda

Acknowledgement of Land & People

Approval of Spring Stated Assembly Minutes

Finance Report

Bill Wiles, Synod Treasurer

Treasurer's Comments

2026 Proposed Budget

Explanation of Wednesday Community Options

Mitch Miller, Synod Leader and Stated Clerk

BREAK

REPORT: Human Resources Committee

Scott Campbell, Committee Moderator

Moderator Report

Sharon Curry

Synod of the Sun

2025 Fall Assembly | October 27th - 29th

First Presbyterian Church, El Paso TX



Proposed Agenda - Tuesday, October 27th

FPC/ El Paso (1340 Murchison Dr. Side Chapel)

Committee Meetings

Lunch

REPORT: Communication Services Plan

Thomas Riggs, Communication and Administration Coordinator

REPORT: SPDR

REPORT: Synod Leader/Stated Clerk

Mitch Miller

REPORT: Empowering Committee

Carlos Baladez, Committee Moderator

REPORT: Grants & Scholarship Commission

Polly Williams, Commission Moderator

REPORT: Equipping Committee

Molly Casteel, Committee Moderator

Greetings from the Office of Stewardship and Funds Development

Lemuel Garcia-Arroyo

Greetings from PC(USA) Mid-Council Relations

Sallie Watson

REPORT: Connecting Committee

Polly Williams, Committee Moderator

BREAK

Synod of the Sun

2025 Fall Assembly | October 27th - 29th

First Presbyterian Church, El Paso TX



Proposed Agenda - Tuesday, October 27th

FPC/ El Paso (1340 Murchison Dr. Side Chapel)

Covenant Partnerships and Renewals

Lyon College

Presbyterian Pan American School

Trinity University

Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest

Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center

Tres Rios Border Foundation

Presbyterian Mo Ranch Assembly

Solar Under the Sun

BREAK

Committee Meetings

Dinner

Worship

Communion and Installation of 2026
Moderator

Synod of the Sun

2025 Fall Assembly | October 27th - 29th
First Presbyterian Church, El Paso TX



Event Schedule - Wednesday, October 29th

Abara House (1820 W. Paisano Dr.)

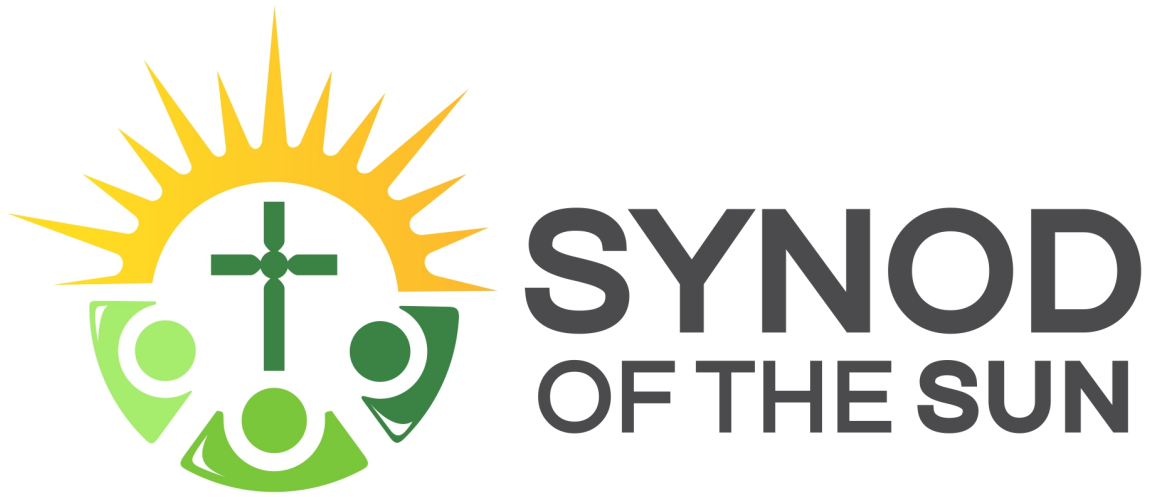
9:00 am - Noon Community Connection

Guided Walk to Juarez

Kelly Hunger Services

El Paso Holocaust Museum

Mexican American Cultural Center



**Covenant Agreement:
Presbyterian Historical Society of
the Southwest**

THE COVENANT BETWEEN THE PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF THE SOUTHWEST AND
THE SYNOD OF THE SUN, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A)

The Synod of the sun is a mid-council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with historic ties to the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest (PHSSW) which date to 1978. As an agency that serve congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas and the Cumberland Presbyteries within those states, the PHSSW now seeks to form a joint covenant partnership with the Synod of the Sun.

The Synod of the Sun serves Christ by connecting, equipping, and empowering Presbyterians for Christ's mission within and beyond the Synod's bounds of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. Providing leadership development, grants and scholarships, and communications services because we believe when we work together across boundaries, we make visible the Good News and find wholeness as the body of Christ. In our common calling, we impact lives together.

The Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest (PHSSW) seeks to encourage the accumulation, the preservation, and the widespread use of historical materials pertaining to the faithful and inspiring witness of Presbyterians in and from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. The Society hosts an annual meeting in one of these four states and offers its services to congregations as they celebrate anniversaries and research their own histories. Its board is made up of a representative from each of the member presbyteries in the Synod of the Sun as well as representatives from the Cumberland Presbyterian constituent presbyteries.

The Synod of the Sun and Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest embrace this joint covenant partnership and agree to mutual support one another's ministries. By signing this covenant partnership, the Synod of the Sun agrees to pray for, advocate on behalf of, and support the PHSSW as it seeks to respond to the biblical admonition in Isaiah 51:1 "Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the Lord. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug."

The Synod affirms the mission of the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest and encourages each of its member congregations to pray, advocate and support PHSSW's ministry. The Synod will provide opportunities for the PHSSW to share its ministry at Synod gatherings and through its print and electronic communications.

By signing this covenant partnership, the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest agrees to maintain a visible presence in the life of the synod of the sun, including their member presbyteries.

This agreement is 2025 is not a legal partnership and the Synod agree that the PHSSW may establish and maintain mission partnership with other agencies and denominations. The Synod and the PHSSW agree to renew this covenant partnership in 2030.

Mitch Miller, Synod Leader/Stated Clerk;
Synod of the Sun

Date

James S. Currie, Executive Secretary
**for the Presbyterian Historical Society of
the Southwest**

Date



**SYNOD
OF THE SUN**

**Covenant Agreement:
Presbyterian Mo Ranch Assembly**

**A Covenant Partnership Between
The Synod of the Sun, PC(USA),
and Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly**

The Synod of the Sun ("Synod") is a Mid-Council of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with historic ties to Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly ("Mo-Ranch"). As the Synod of the Sun, we believe when we work together across boundaries, we make visible the Good News and find wholeness as the Body of Christ. The role of the Synod is to connect, equip and empower its member presbyteries and Covenant Partners throughout Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

Since 1949, Mo-Ranch has served the Presbyterian community in covenant relationship with the Synod, providing a conference center, church camp, and a meeting place for religious education and worship. The mission of Mo-Ranch is to foster growth in God through Jesus Christ by sharing our unique living, learning, Christian environment. The purpose for which Mo-Ranch is formed includes the establishment and maintenance of a center of religious worship, and the advancement of the cause of Christian education by providing leadership, program, and facilities for conferences, religious worship, lectures, and Bible study.

This covenant is an agreement between the Synod and Mo-Ranch to affirm a present and historic relationship in which there is mutuality of purpose. To fulfill its role in relation to the Synod, Mo-Ranch operates under the sole direction of its Board of Trustees, the members of which are elected by the Board in accordance with the requirements in the Operating Manual of Mo-Ranch. The Board is responsible for Mo-Ranch and, as Trustees, the Board carries forward and cares for the "trust" on behalf of the Synod.

The Board of Mo-Ranch covenants to provide leadership and facilities for church conferences, worship, and events, and to be sensitive to the needs of the Presbyterian congregations and presbyteries of the Synod, as well as to the Synod as an entity of ministry. Mo-Ranch, through its Board and President, will strive to provide programming and leadership that upholds the historic and present focus of the Reformed tradition.

Through this covenant relationship, the Synod provides an important affiliative link between Mo-Ranch and the Presbyterian Church (USA), and recognizes Mo-Ranch as an institution of the Church. The Synod further covenants to encourage the use and financial support of Mo-Ranch by Presbyterian individuals, churches, and institutions, and recognizes Mo-Ranch as a place where ecumenical programs with multiple denominations and/or interfaith endeavors may happen.

Therefore, by this instrument, the Synod and Mo-Ranch enter a Covenant Relationship to join together in God's work. This Covenant Relationship will be renewed every five (5) years, and it may be reviewed at any time at the request of either party.

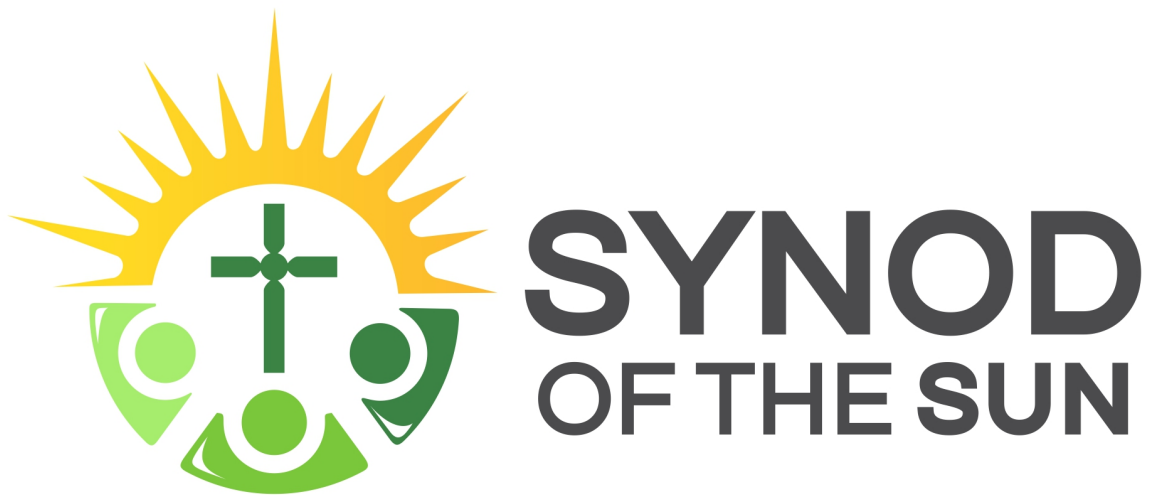
Mitch Miller
Synod Leader and Stated Clerk

Martha Richardson

Martha Richardson, Board of Trustees Chair
Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly

Date

Date



Covenant Agreement: Solar Under the Sun

Partnership Covenant between Solar Under the Sun and Synod of the Sun Covenant

Covenant description:

The covenant between Solar Under the Sun and the Synod of the Sun describes the partnership between the two organizations, including the vision, mission approach, and priorities by the partners, as well as the partners' respective roles and mutual expectations.

Partner descriptions and responsibilities:

1. Solar Under the Sun

Solar Under the Sun (SUS) is a covenant partner of the Synod of the Sun (Synod), a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

SUS will work with willing partners in the Synod of the Sun to equip disciples of Jesus Christ to end energy poverty by providing technical training, educational resources, and best practices in mission partnership.

Mission and Values

Solar Under the Sun is dedicated to ending energy poverty by providing comprehensive training and resources, empowering communities in partnership across cultural and national boundaries, and sharing the light and love of Christ with the world.

- A. Empowering -- We work to end energy poverty through partnerships that grow the knowledge and capacity of communities.
- B. Integrity -- We commit ourselves to build relationships rooted in honesty, cultural awareness, and the love of neighbor.
- C. Stewardship -- We recognize that any solutions to energy poverty must be achieved through care for creation and the careful use of the resources entrusted to us.
- D. Faith and Love -- We serve our neighbors in response to our faith in Christ's call to love one another.

2. Synod of the Sun

The Synod is a network of Presbyterians within the four states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. As part of its overall mission, the Synod desires to support and promote SUS as a covenant partner by:

- A. Supporting: Providing support for SUS, through appointing a representative to the SUS board of directors in order to foster the existence and growth of SUS and its programs.
- B. Promoting: Share the mission and program of SUS with the churches and partners of the Synod and encourage participation and financial support by all the presbyteries and churches within the Synod.
- C. Advising: Providing input, advice, and direction as needed from time to time, in order to further the mission, goals, and programs of SUS, and to improve the effectiveness of SUS' programs and activities.

This covenant is to be approved by SUS and the Synod and is to be reviewed and renewed every 3 years by each body. Each body shall keep an original copy of the covenant.

Solar Under the Sun

6400 Richard B. Hardie Drive

Little Rock, AR 72207

Email: info@solarunderthesun.org

Website: solarunderthesun.org

Synod of the Sun

6100 Colwell Blvd., Ste. 200

Irving, TX 75039

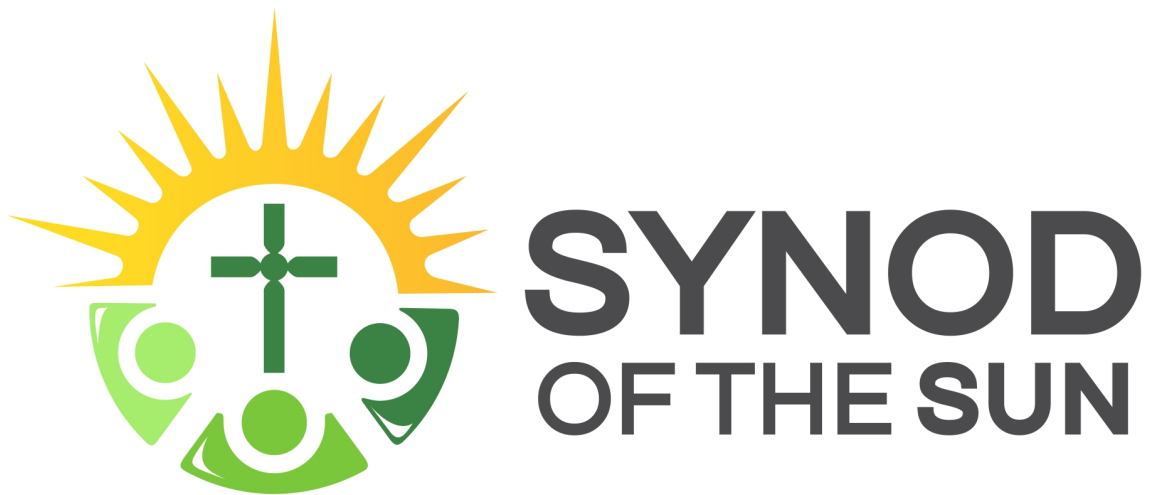
Email: synod.leader@synodsun.org

Website: synodsun.org

From **Presbyterians do Mission in Partnership**

A policy statement from the 215th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA):

“The discipline of partnership assumes that mission can best be done by joining hands with those who share a common vision. Partnership in mission involves two or more organizations who agree to submit themselves to a common task or goal, mutually giving and receiving and surrounded by prayers so that God’s word can be more faithfully accomplished. Theologically and biblically, partnership is based on the fundamental belief that God’s love for the world is greater than any one church can possibly comprehend or realize.”



Triennium Gratitude Corrected Copy



6100 Colwell Blvd; Irving, TX 75039; 214/390-1894



*To the coordinating team and
the Synod of the Sun : thank you.*

Thanks to a generous and unanimous and really joy- filled vote of the coordinating team of the Synod of the Sun, each presbytery was awarded \$1,000.00 (ten scholarships of \$100 per participant) toward sending a delegation to the first triennium in six years.

For the first time, a young adult track was introduced. **FINALLY**, it felt covid, to a degree, was in the rear-view mirror as adults, young adults and youth gathered, worshiped, celebrated and served in Louisville, KY.

A window of time to apply was communicated to each presbytery and on a first come, first served basis, the Synod of the Sun was SO proud and excited to be a small part of sending delegations from:

Grace Presbytery,
the Presbytery of Arkansas,
New Covenant Presbytery,
the Presbytery of South Louisiana,
Palo Duro Presbytery,
Mission Presbytery and
Cimarron Presbytery.

Listed alphabetically, this is: who we are,

how we are SO grateful and
thru whom we, the Synod of the Sun, were represented at the
PC(USA) Triennium Celebration 2025.

Yours in Christ,

Polly Williams

The Rev. Miss Polly Warren Williams
Moderator, Synod of the Sun Grants and Scholarships 2025
pollywarren@icloud.com 214/740-0122



Triennium
thank you continued:



sent **SEVEN**
from First PC, Stillwater OK!!



"This Triennium experience for our Oklahoma delegation was one of bonding and group-building. As we work to become one Oklahoma presbytery, we are working to find ways to connect youth across the state. Triennium provided us a way to deepen our connections with one another and with GOD even as we connected with other Presbyterian youth across the country. It was a week of growth in our group and growth in faith! Thanks to the Synod for helping make this Triennium experience happen for our youth! (the last photo includes some of our full Oklahoma delegation)." – Jenna Campbell

My gratitude goes to Gordon Edwards, Executive Presbyter and Jenna Campbell, the Oklahoma Delegation Registrar.

Words describing their experience? Included: **spirit** and *connection*



CHALLENGE ON: NAME the back drop, the building. Yes, the answer is on the building.
Yes, it is our PC(USA) National Headquarters!!



Triennium

thank you continued:



"With the support of the Synod we were able to take 44 youth, young adults and adults to Triennium. Representing 12 church from all corners of Grace Presbytery, for all but one, this was a first experience of Triennium"

– Jen



We have 11 congregations represented: FPC Fort Worth; FPC Longview;
FPC Dallas; FPC Garland; FPC Mesquite; FPC Kilgore; Ridglea Pres, Fort Worth;
Ghanian Fellowship, Irving; Grace First Pres, Weatherford; Trinity Pres, McKinney and
Canyon Creek Pres, Richardson

from Polly: my gratitude to the Rev. Dr. Jen Bluestein,
Coordinator of Generational Leadership Development,
Grace Presbytery and Project Director, Renewed Grace
Triennium
thank you continued:



**FROM A YOUNG ADULT PARTICIPANT,
A CURRENT STUDENT AT AUSTIN COLLEGE:**

"Triennium was truly an incredible experience to be a part of. I am still in awe of the magnitude of the conference and the diverse array of Presbyterians in attendance. The theme for Triennium was "As If We Were Dreaming," and through that theme we discussed our dreams for the church/ourselves and how to overcome the "nightmares" that might hold us back from fulfilling what God has intended. To help us navigate this theme, we had several ministers and guest speakers come to share their knowledge with us. From the co-moderators of the General Assembly to an activist from Texas Impact, getting to hear from a plethora of wise and inspiring individuals was one of my favorite aspects of triennium. In addition to this, I also enjoyed the worship service we had each night. I felt closest to God during this time through the music, messages, and energy that the worship space provided. Overall, I am so grateful that this conference made room for the young adults that missed out on going to triennium during Covid. Not only did this conference make room for us, but they crafted a unique young adult track that invited us to have deep conversations about our faith and how we can be leaders in our own communities. I enjoyed getting to dream about the ways in which we can enhance young adult ministry and it was wonderful to see the PCUSA supporting our voices. It was my honor to represent Grace Presbytery at Triennium, and *I am thankful for the support of my church family for allowing me to be a piece of the beautiful tapestry that is PCUSA.*"

Also from Jen: additional blessings and highlights:



traveling with the Arkansas delegation; and the hospitality of Arkansas Presbytery when Grace's delegation spent the night at the youth house at Second, Little Rock.

- † feedback from the youth gathering that last night: they are grateful for leadership capacities and relationships gained in church through presbytery-sponsored activities. They shared deep theological wrestling with their experiences at Triennium in worship including the presentation of a liturgical dance, the inclusiveness of the event, the statements from the preachers about our understanding of the cross and our role as Christians in the world for so many hours into the night it took other adults turning lights out to signal lights out that night!!
- † Other moments of faith development and relationship building included adults delivering snacks and t-shirts as they performed nightly room checks, the group that ordered pizza after worship and gathered to share it with their fellow youth, watching youth link arms and sway as they sang worship songs, and so on...
- † Jen's most special moment of Triennium occurred during the final worship when each delegation leader was invited to anoint their delegation with glitter. This holy moment with each attendee provided an opportunity to affirm them as a beloved child of God.



Triennium
thank you continued:



sent at least **FORTY**



from: New Braunfels, New Braunfels; Cross Roads, San Antonio; Westminster, Austin; Shepherd of the Hills, Austin; University, San Antonio; University, Austin; Hyde Park, Austin; First, Austin; First, Kerrville; First Brownsville; Parkway, Corpus Christi; Pip Creek, Pipe Creek; First, Georgetown, Hope, Austin; and FIVE from the Presbyterian Pan Am School.

Descriptive words

fun

enlightening

from student participants:

transformative

impactful





*Triennium
thank you continued:*



from polly: deep thanks to Caitlin Donohue Supcoff,
Youth Advocate, Director of Communications, Mission Presbytery
and all who help this group with this experience.





*Triennium
thank you continued:*

sent more than **FIFTEEN**

from First PC, Abilene; Covenant PC, Lubbock;

First PC, Littlefield; Grace PC, Lubbock; First PC, Graham.

From Polly: deep thanks to Rev. Dr. Scott Campbell, EP and to Rev. Grace Sosa, AP for Youth Ministries, First Abilene who writes,

"In late July, I took a group of 18 youth, young adults, and adults from our presbytery to Louisville for PYT. It was an amazing week of worship, games, and connecting with Presbyterian youth from all over the country. For some of our students, this was their first time flying, so that was an adventure!



other young people in their faith tradition is an experience I know they won't forget."

When I asked the students their favorite part of Triennium, some of them said the games or even getting to pet goats, but most of them said their favorite part was worship. In worship, they got to experience contemporary music and dynamic preachers. They saw dance teams and a drumming circle from Trinidad and Tobago. They heard slam poetry and responded with "amens" and Pentecost-colored streamers.

I didn't grow up Presbyterian, so I never attended Triennium. But I know that the memories of this conference will continue to impact our youth. Seeing thousands of



*Triennium
thank you continued:*



sent **Seven**

from FPC Searcy; FPC Jacksonville; FPC Conway;
First United PC, Fayetteville; and FPC Bentonville.



from Polly: many thanks to Dr. Sarah Leer and all who were so strongly involved in our Arkansas group!

"Over 2,000 youth, young adults, and adult leaders gathered in Louisville, KY for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. Though traditionally a youth event held every 3 years, due to COVID, this event hasn't been held in person since 2019. We brought a group of youth and young adults from around the Presbytery. We shared transportation with our friends from Grace Presbytery and spent three days experiencing dynamic worship, service projects, creative recreation time, and theological discussions held in small groups. We were well represented throughout the event with Arkansas Presbys leading and sharing their voices on various PYT leadership teams. We are a strong Presbytery that care deeply for our youth and young adults, and it showed!"





*Triennium
thank you continued:*



sent **Twenty-three**

from First PC, Alvin; First PC, Bryan;
First Northwoods, Houston; and St.
Luke's, Houston.

*from Polly: many thanks to Lynn Hargrove,
General Presbyter and Stated Clerk for
Administrative Process, joiner of Grants and
Scholarship, Synod of the Sun and especially
ROSY MURPHY,
Coordinator for Youth Ministry,*

Youth input:

Uplifting, Reinvigoring,

Spiritual, and Hopeful





*Triennium
thank you continued:*



sent **Ten!!**

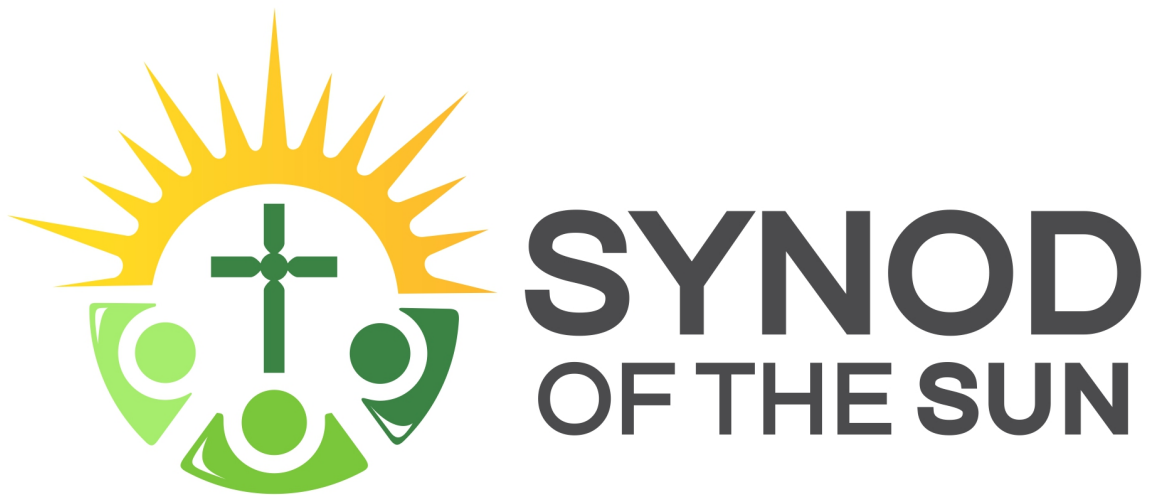
**From First PC, New Orleans; University PC,
Baton Rouge; Broadmoor PC, Baton Rouge;
and Covington PC, Covington.**



My apologies to our South Louisiana crew: I did not see a referenced photo with CeCe Armstrong, GA Co Moderator. HOW fun to meet her, hear from her and pose with her, I'm jealous in the best possible way!

An article on the Triennium young adult track is available through the link below. My thanks to Dr. Sarah Leer for bringing this article to my attention.

“Check out this article to read more about Maggie and Jeremy's leadership last week with the young adult learning track: <https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/2025/8/4/believing-dream-goals-over-dream-jobs>. “



Human Resources Report - Amended

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SYNOD OF THE SUN

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

I. Overview

The Synod of the Sun (known also as “Synod”) is committed to the full use of the human potential of its staff through an open-partnership style of shared rights, responsibilities, and accountability. The human resources policies of the synod are established by the synod and administered by the human resources committee. The Human Resources Committee shall be responsible for the review and oversight of Synod staff, development, compensation, and maintenance of Human Resources Policies and management of the hiring process.

All members of the Human Resources Committee, including the Chair, shall be elected by the Assembly and will include one (1) person optimally from each of the three (3) standing committees with HR experience if possible, one (1) member of the EP Forum (rotates annually), and at least two (2) at-large members who are ruling or teaching elder members of presbyteries within the Synod. At-large elders who come with HR field experience may be the ideal asset.

Terms shall be staggered three (3) years and may be renewable once, for an aggregate of no more than six (6) continuous years. The Human Resources Committee Chair serves on the Synod’s Coordinating Team. The Synod Moderator and Head of Staff serves as Ex Officio with voice but not vote.

One member of each Mission Network employing staff, with HR experience, if possible, shall serve Ex Officio with voice but without vote. In calendar year 2026, no formal networks with staff exist.

The Human Resources Committee will conduct its business with the following understandings and philosophy:

- A. The committee will work in cooperation with the synod staff.
- B. All committee members will respect confidentiality of information.
- C. The committee will become informed from the synod staff as to:
 - 1. work loads
 - 2. staffing assignments
 - 3. work effectiveness
 - 4. financial health of the Synod
- D. It is the responsibility of the committee to write job descriptions and human resources policies for approval by the Synod. The committee may request assistance from appropriate committee and staff in writing job descriptions. Mission Network staff job descriptions will be written by their respective boards.
- E. The committee will annually provide information and recommendations to the proposed budget group and the coordinating team in the determination of annual salaries for the Synod staff for whom Human Resources Committee is responsible.
- F. The committee will meet annually with the staff to listen and to offer support in order to facilitate healthy communication.

- G. When a new synod executive is to be called, the human resources committee will nominate the Nominating Committee, with additional individuals as needed to ensure the representative of each presbytery, to serve as the slate for the search committee. The slate will be presented and elected by the synod. HR committee members may be candidates for the PNC.
- H. The Human Resources Committee chooses its own chair.
- I. A quorum will be three (3) voting members.

Mission Networks shall be responsible for supervising their own employees and accountable to the appropriate committee of task force of the Synod. However, each Mission Network may be exempt from particular provisions, as defined in this document or by the Coordinating Team. Any deviation from these policies must be approved by the Synod with the advice of the Human Resources Committee.

II. **GENERAL POLICIES**

- A. **Change in Policy:** The synod reserves the right to change any policy at any time, including those covered here. Changes will be dated and distributed to all employees after agreement by the assembly.
- B. **Employment Relationship:** Employment with Synod of the Sun is voluntary, and employees serve at will.
- C. **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:** The Synod of the Sun is an equal employment opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or age.
- D. **Position Descriptions:** A position description is required for each position.

The **human resources** committee will review these descriptions at least every two (2) years. The committee will recommend any modification to the Coordinating Team after review. Mission Networks will write their own employees' job descriptions subject to oversight of the appropriate body of Synod in accord with these policies.

- E. **Annual Review:** All staff will receive an annual evaluation of their progress and performance. The head of staff will conduct such reviews. The head of staff will review these evaluations with the **human resources** committee. Mission Networks will evaluate their own employees subject to oversight of the appropriate body of the Synod in accord with these policies.

- F. **Record Keeping:** The Synod Leader is responsible for the oversight of the full-time and part-time staff, including job descriptions, annual evaluations, payroll and tracking of hours, and government-required documentation and other job-related record keeping.

- G. **Employment Probationary Period:** The first 90 days of employment constitute a probationary period which gives both the employee and the supervisor the opportunity to evaluate interest in and qualifications for the position under actual working conditions. After the probationary period, a written performance appraisal is discussed. Separation policies do not apply to employees working under a probationary employment period.

- H. **Safety:** The synod and staff make every effort to provide a safe working environment for all employees. Safety is everyone's responsibility. Therefore, the synod requests that employees do everything reasonable and necessary to keep the synod office a safe place to work. **Sexual Misconduct Prevention**

and Boundary Training is required for all staff; synod leaders and ministers are already required by BOO to take this training every thirty-six months.

- I. **Synod Leaders Discretionary Fund:** When the budget allows the Synod Leader a discretionary allowance for pastoral care-special needs, he or she is free to use the sum when other Presbyterian funds available have already been explored. This is often sensitive and confidential, but the Synod Leader is to share, if only, the expenditure amount with the Moderator and the Coordinating Council.

III. COMPENSATION

Synod may employ full- or part-time staff in exempt and non-exempt positions. Exempt and non-exempt distinctions are defined in the Fair Labor and Standards Law. Mission Networks are responsible for setting compensation in accord with these policies except when granted deviations.

- A. **Salaries:** The synod is committed to salary policies that provide fair pay for the work performed, incentives for personal achievement and growth, and flexibility to meet changes in duties and the cost of living. Salaries will normally be reviewed every twelve (12) months. The synod executive will consult with the human resources committee, which will make recommendations regarding staff salaries to the coordinating team and budget group. Mission Networks shall set the compensation for their employees, subject to these policies and oversight of the appropriate synod body. Part-time employment is typically a non-exempt role of 34 hours or less, who is eligible for overtime pay on an hourly basis with agreement and

oversight of their supervisor. The part-time role may have other benefits, including flexible hours at the discretion of the Synod Leader, based on the needs of the Synod. At the discretion of the organization and the Synod Leader, the part-time employee may be salaried with the freedom of setting their own schedule.

- B. **Pensions & Insurance:** may be offered as defined in attached sheets or successor documents.
- C. **Social Security:** All salaried and hourly employees are governed by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security).
- D. **Continuing Education:** Each non-exempt staff employee has five (5) days per year, and each exempt staff employee has two (2) weeks per year of continuing education. Funding is designated annually for participation in continuing education for the enhancement of skills used in their work or to be added to their responsibilities on the initiative of their supervisors and/or the synod executive.

Funding and the annual two weeks for continuing education may be accumulated, not to exceed three (2) years. How this discretionary time is planned is agreed upon by the employee and the supervisor or supervisory group in support of the Synod's calendar of events. Funding and time to attend the annual Southwest Region conference of the Administrative Personnel Association (PCUSA) is granted to non-exempt employees. If work prevents employees from attending the regional conference, they may attend the national conference with the same time and funding as they would have

used to attend the regional conference.

- E. **Days Off:** Each full-time non-exempt staff employee works a 37.5-hour week. Specific days off will be selected with the approval of the synod executive and will ordinarily be the same days each week.

F. Vacation Days: Exempt staff are entitled to four weeks of vacation annually.

Full-time non-exempt staff are entitled to ten (10) working days of vacation granted annually after one (1) year of continuous service; after five (5) years of service they will receive fifteen (15) days of vacation annually. Part-time non-exempt staff will have five (5) paid days of vacation granted annually after one (1) year of continuing service; after five (5) years of service they will receive ten (10) days of vacation annually. First year vacation is granted on a prorated basis based on hire month. Vacation may be granted **all at once or in increments**, all to be charged to the total vacation leave. All vacation leave will be pre-arranged and approved by the synod **leader**. Vacation time will not be cumulative from year to year, though with the permission of the synod executive, vacation from one year may be used in the first quarter of the next year. Contract employees receive no vacation pay. **The Synod Leader will provide a calendar of his/her schedule in an informal format to the Coordinating Council. The Synod Leader's vacation is most often dictated from his employment letter and Terms of Call.**

If a non-exempt employee started in:	Full-time:	Part-time:
January	10.0 days/yr	5 days/yr.
February	9.0 days/yr.	4.5 days/yr.

March	8.0 days/yr.	4 days/yr.
April	7.5 days/yr.	3.5 days/yr.
May	6.5 days/yr.	3 days/yr.
June	6.0 days/yr.	2.5 days/yr.
July	5.0 days/yr.	2 days/yr.
August	4.0 days/yr.	2 days/yr.
September	3.0 days/yr.	1.5 days/yr.
October	2.5 days/yr.	1 day/yr.
November	1.5 days/yr.	.5 days/yr.
December	.5 days/yr.	0 days/yr.

G. **Holidays:** Exempt and non-exempt paid employees closed New Year's Eve Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day. If a holiday falls on Saturday, Sunday, or other day when office is closed, the **Synod Leader** will determine which alternate days will be observed as holidays. If the holiday falls within a vacation period, the additional time may be added to the vacation time with the approval of the **Synod Leader**. Contract employees will not receive holiday pay. **The Synod Leader has the freedom to offer comp. days.**

H. **Personal Business Leave:** Each full-time staff member will receive ten (10) working days of personal leave during each calendar year. Personal leave will be cumulative from year to year but will not exceed 120 working days. Personal leave entitlement during the first year of employment will be prorated

based on hire month. Each part-time staff member will receive five (5) paid days of personal leave per calendar year; this time will be cumulative from year to year but will not exceed 120 working days. Personal leave pay is based on the employee's average daily rate. At the time of termination of employment, either voluntary or involuntary an employee will have no claim for pay in lieu of unused personal leave. Contract employees will not receive any personal leave. Personal leave shall be documented by the Synod Leader or in the case of the Synod Leader, by the Chair of the Committee.

If an employee started in:	Full-time:	Part-time:
January	10.0 days/yr	40 hours/yr.
February	9.0 days/yr.	36 hours/yr.
March	8.0 days/yr.	32 hours/yr.
April	7.5 days/yr.	30 hours/yr.
May	6.5 days/yr.	26 hours/yr.
June	6.0 days/yr.	24 hours/yr.
July	5.0 days/yr.	20 hours/yr.
August	4.0 days/yr.	16 hours/yr.
September	3.0 days/yr.	12 hours/yr.
October	2.5 days/yr.	10 hours/yr.
November	1.5 days/yr.	6 hours/yr.
December	.5 days/yr.	2 hours/yr.

I. Administrative Leave:

1. A maximum of one (1) week of leave with pay will be given in the event

of the death of a member of the employee's immediate family.

2. In the event an employee is called for jury duty, regular salary will be paid for the time served. If the absence of the employee will seriously affect the operation of the office, postponement of the jury duty may be requested of the court.
3. The **synod leader** may declare the office closed because of inclement weather. Employees may be compensated without reporting to work. If the office is not declared closed, employees failing to come to work will be expected to make up for the lost time within that pay period or suffer loss of compensation for time.
4. Military leave will be granted in accordance with the law. Upon presentation of a military pay voucher, employees will be reimbursed for the difference between their normal compensation and the pay they receive while on such military training duty, up to a maximum of twenty (20) calendar days a year. In addition, employees returning from active military service who apply for re-employment, and who comply with their obligations under USERRA, may return to employment as provided for in that statute and its accompanying regulations.

J. **Leave without pay:** Requests for leave without pay may be made to the synod executive and will be considered on an individual basis. **The Synod Leader has discretion to respond to each situation differently.**

K. **Workers Compensation:** The synod carries insurance to cover the cost of

work-incurred injury or illness. To be assured of maximum coverage, the employee must immediately (within 48 hours) report work-related incidents to his/her supervisor so that appropriate action can be taken to file timely claims.

- L. **Flexible Spending Plan:** If eligible, employees may designate a portion of their salary to be placed in a flexible spending plan for the purpose of covering medical expenses not covered by insurance. To receive reimbursement for medical expenses, employees are to provide validation (receipts) of expenses. Employees forfeit any monies remaining in the fund at the end of the fiscal year. Monies may not be carried over to a subsequent year.

IV. SABBATICAL LEAVE

May be granted in accordance with attached policies.

V. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND CHILD PROTECTION

- J. Synod of the Sun follows PC(USA) policies and constitution. Employees shall act in compliance with all policies adopted by Synod, including these. All offers of employment are pending results of a background check. Background checks for all employees shall be conducted prior to hire and every three (3) years thereafter.

Each staff member and Synod Leader must take Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Boundaries Training every thirty-six months. Synod leaders and ministers are already required by BOO to take this training every thirty-six months.

VI. SEPARATION POLICIES

- A. Exempt staff are encouraged to give a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days or the preferred amount of four (4) months' notice prior to leaving employment, and all other employees are encouraged to give fourteen (14) calendar days' notice prior to leaving.
- B. **Reduction in Force:** In the event that reduction of staff is necessary through no fault of the employee, written notice of separation will be given thirty (30) calendar days in advance. In the event notice is not given, employees will be given additional of severance pay.
- C. **Dismissal:** Dismissal will be by the Synod Leader in conversation with the moderator of the human resources committee. Dismissal of the synod executive will be by a vote of the plenary assembly upon recommendation of the human resources committee. Under extraordinary circumstances, for example, suspicion of financial or sexual misconduct, the Moderator of the Synod and the Chair of Human Resources Committee may place the executive on paid leave. Within three (3) days of this action, the Human Resources Committee shall convene to consider the process they will follow to determine whether or not to recommend the dismissal of the executive.
- D. **Synod Property:** All Synod property remains the property of the Synod and must be returned at the time of separation. Exceptions to this must be approved in writing by the Head of Staff or in the case of the Head of Staff, by the Chair of the Human Resources Committee. The Synod maintains ownership of equipment and work products. Intellectual property such as

sermons belong to the employee. The Synod maintains its right to continued use of all intellectual property developed by the employee during their time of service. Intellectual property of substantial economic value shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, but in all cases the Synod maintains its right to continued use. Copies of all intellectual property shall remain with the Synod. Electronic files, passwords, social network tied to the Synod and other programs may not be taken by the employee and must be returned to the Synod when leaving employment. All member lists with phone and email information are confidential property and stay within the synod. HR plans exit interviews with employees who have announced their intention to leave the organization where both can openly talk about things that worked well and made their job easier and things that in their opinion could be changed that would have improved their work and position. This is also a time when we historically looked at Job descriptions and compensation and other issues. This interview may happen with 1 to 2 HR members.

- E. **Continued Confidentiality and Non-Disparagement:** Former and current employees shall not disclose any sensitive or confidential information learned in the course of their employment and shall not disparage the Synod or its employees, members or constituents during or after employment.

VII. GRIEVANCE POLICY

Any employee who feels he/she has a grievance will discuss the problem first with his/her immediate supervisor. If the grievance is not resolved, the head

of staff will be consulted. If this discussion does not result in solution of the problem, the matter will then be taken to the **human resources** committee with **two designated members present**. These lines of communication will be respected; and employment difficulties will not be discussed with individual members of the synod.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All employees shall read, understand, and sign a copy of these policies. A signature on this document is an acknowledgement that the employee understands and agrees to adhere to these policies. It is the employee's responsibility to ask any questions necessary for fully understanding the meaning of these policies.

Employee Signature

Date

Revised by Personnel Committee: 2016

Approved by Synod of the Sun: August 2016

Synod Leader/Stated

Clerk Honoraria and

Reimbursements

The Synod Leader/Stated Clerk (SLSC) is often called to represent the Synod within the presbyteries and their congregations and institutions. On some occasions, the SLSC is asked to make a presentation, to lead a workshop, to preach and/or to participate in some event. The Synod budget includes funds to underwrite the expenses of the SLSC.

On some occasions, presbyteries, congregations, institutions or groups decide to offer the SLSC an honorarium and/or an expense reimbursement. Ordinarily, when this occurs, the honorarium will be deposited in the Synod Budget as miscellaneous income and any expense reimbursement into the expense account for the SLSC. The SLSC will report to the Human Resources Committee any such transactions. Travel expenses include mileage reimbursements as part of the Synod Leader's budget following the IRS standard each year.

Should the SLSC be given a material gift, such as jewelry, a liturgical stole, etc., these would be considered as personal expressions of gratitude for the SLSC and would become the SLSC's personal possessions.

Adopted by Human Resources

Committee October 7, 2025

EMPLOYER BENEFITS COVERAGE

All exempt clergy roles will carry salary and Board of Pensions benefits. Other roles will be decided case by case.

Sabbatical Guidelines

Synod of the Sun

November 2017

Policy Statement

Synod of the Sun recommends to the Synod commissioners that full-time exempt staff working for the Synod of the Sun **may** be granted a compensated sabbatical leave of at least three months following seven years of service to the Synod.

Rationale

Sabbatical leave is a planned time of study and renewal by which one seeks personal and professional growth. Sabbatical leave may include continuing education, spiritual formation, mentoring with respected teachers, and personal refreshment. It is an opportunity for an individual to disengage from regular and routine tasks so that his/her ministry may be viewed from a new perspective.

Sabbatical leave is an extension of the biblical concept of the Sabbath year of renewal. It is both an act of faith that God will sustain us through a period of reflection and an occasion for the renewal of vital energies. The goal of the sabbatical leave is to allow the staff member to return to their professional responsibilities with renewed energy, spiritual vision, and effectiveness.

Sabbatical leave is qualitatively different from “time off” or “vacation” in that there is a plan for personal and professional renewal. Neither vacation nor study leave should be affected by sabbatical leave. However, accrued vacation or study leave may be taken in conjunction with the sabbatical leave, adding no more than four additional weeks to the sabbatical leave.

Responsibilities of the Person Requesting Sabbatical Leave

1. Bring a written proposal for a sabbatical leave and an outline for sabbatical time to the **Human Resources** Committee of Synod at least six months prior to the anticipated leave.
2. Secure the approval of the Synod for the sabbatical leave through recommendation of **Human Resources** Committee to Synod and work with the Synod staff to provide the necessary coverage for professional responsibilities.
3. Assure the Synod of continued service to the Synod for at least one year from the conclusion of the sabbatical leave. (Taking a sabbatical leave cannot formally obligate one to continued service to the Synod, but it should at least be the intent of the person at the time of the sabbatical.)
4. Bring up to date all pending responsibilities, in consultation with the Executive Committee or responsible committee, prior to departing on sabbatical leave.
5. Upon return, present a written and verbal overview of the sabbatical experience to the synod.

Synod Responsibilities

1. **Human Resources** Committee is to share a copy of the approved plan for the sabbatical leave with the Executive Committee, or responsible committee, of Synod for information prior to Synod action.
2. Synod, through the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, acts on the proposal for sabbatical leave. Negotiation of the details of the proposal will ordinarily be completed at least four months prior to the leave. Details are to be worked out through the Personnel Committee of Synod.
3. Continue the terms of call to the minister/educator during the sabbatical leave.
4. Fully fund any temporary pastoral or professional services necessary in the absence of the minister or educator. Synod may wish to set aside funds each year, in anticipation of requests for sabbatical leave.

Resource Information

The Louisville Institute, a Lilly Endowment Program housed at Louisville Seminary, provides study grants for pastoral leaders.

JRF, May, 2004

Revised by committee, Nov 2017