Report to General Council

Structure, Staffing and Regions Task Force    February 4, 2017

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Introduction

At its meeting on October 28, 2016 in McAllen, at the recommendation of the Transition Team, the General Council took the following action:

That General Council appoint a short-term task force to work with Sallie Watson in the coming months on assessing structure (to include staff, committees and regions) and make any recommendations to General Council for Presbytery’s approval.
General Presbyter Sallie Watson asked the following to serve as members of this task force: RE Andy Anzaldua, TE Dan Fultz, RE Denise Haley, and TE Monica Smith. They were chosen because of their deep knowledge of the life of the Presbytery and their connections to the work of the Presbytery. Dan and Monica were members of the Transition Task Force; Andy and Monica were on the General Presbyter Search Committee; Denise is a member of the Personnel Committee.

The task force met four times – November 1, November 30, January 11, and January 19 (by conference call) – to complete this task. They also communicated frequently via email and read and studied documents in between meetings.

Conclusions and Motions

Regions
After consideration of the report of the Transitional Shepherd and the structure of similarly-sized presbyteries, the Task Force concluded that there are certain things which can be accomplished regionally – but they do not recommend that we move into a structure which would create “mini presbyteries” and further alienate churches and regions one from another. The notion of six part-time, compensated leaders, one in each region, is at present financially untenable.

The Task Force affirms continuing to have Regional Representatives to General Council who will coordinate activities in each region, and also continuing the regional representation in the nominating process and through the Committee on Ministry. Later in the report, the recommendation will be made to establish the “Clerk's Crew”, which is another opportunity for regional leadership and representation. But for now, with the arrival of the new General Presbyter and her efforts to unify the Presbytery, it seems unwise to the Task Force to recommend more formal divisions of the Presbytery into regions.

The Task Force recommends that the General Presbyter have more regular, intentional meeting times with the Regional Representatives to General Council, for guidance as well as for sharing mutual interests and exchanging ideas.

A map of Presbytery regions is in Appendix A, and a proposed position description for a Regional Representative to General Council is in Appendix C.

Staffing
For 2017, the Task Force recommends relying on the ongoing work of the Personnel Committee to adjust job descriptions, to provide training for new duties, and to evaluate the work of the
Presbytery staff. The Task Force therefore does not recommend any immediate changes in the Presbytery's staffing structure.

**Structure**

Examining and evaluating the structure (including committees and General Council) of the Presbytery, again with reference to other similar-sized presbyteries, occupied a large portion of the Task Force's work.

**Committee Structure**

The Task Force realized that Mission Presbytery is operating with the same structure and number of committees as it has for years, perhaps decades, but with a reduced size of Presbytery membership as well as staff. Committees have admirably taken on some of the work that staff used to do, but the number of meetings and amount of support still needed are a large burden borne by our staff. The Task Force therefore wanted to be able to increase the efficiency of the committees' work, enable the nominating process to proceed more easily, steward our human resources (staff and volunteer) responsibly and grace-fully, as well as reduce any redundancies and overlap between committees. The Task Force, and indeed the whole Presbytery, are deeply appreciative of the work of all of the committees, as well as the leadership of their chairs. The Task Force undertook to categorize the work of the committees within the Purpose Statement of Mission Presbytery, to be sure that each committee was functioning in service of our purpose. (See also Appendix D). Through this categorization, it became clear that some committees could be combined. The Task Force moves the following committee structure, beginning in January, 2018. This motion offers only the broad strokes of a restructuring; there are yet many details to be worked out, and bylaws to be changed. The Task Force moves that the following committee structure be adopted, beginning in 2018:

**MOTION**

We are Mission Presbytery, serving Christ in the world.

In the Reformed Tradition, together we:

- Establish and equip congregations and sessions to carry out their missions;
  - General Council
- Recruit, receive, ordain develop and care for those called to service in the church;
  - Committee on Ministry
  - Committee on Preparation for Ministry
  - Pastoral Care Committee
• **Enable mission and witness to the Gospel that congregations cannot accomplish alone;**
  ◦ Church Development and Evangelism
  ◦ Education and Congregational Nurture
  ◦ Mission Outreach and Justice
  ◦ John Knox Ranch
  ◦ Presbyterian Women’s Coordinating Team
  ◦ Youth Connection Committee

• **And steward our resources faithfully and generously.**
  ◦ Committee on Representation and Participation\(^1\)
  ◦ Permanent Judicial Commission
  ◦ Personnel Committee
  ◦ Stewardship and Financial Oversight Committee\(^2\)
  ◦ Trustees of Mission Presbytery and of the Henrietta M. King Memorial Fund\(^3\)

*We are better together.*

This motion includes the following changes, noted above with footnotes:

1. The Committee on Representation and Participation incorporates the work of the previous Nominating Committee into the Committee on Representation. These committees' work are intertwined.

2. Stewardship and Financial Oversight combines the work of these two committees.

3. Trustees of Mission Presbytery includes the work of H.M. King Trustees as well, overseeing that fund and its loans.

**Clerk’s Crew**

The Task Force considered re-instating the Clerk's Committee, as it had been utilized in years past. In consultation with the Stated Clerk, the Task Force decided that a standing committee was not necessary. Instead, they move the following:

**MOTION**

That General Council establish a Clerk's Crew, to be comprised of six individuals, one from each region, recommended by the Stated Clerk and approved by General Council. The Clerk's Crew would assist the Stated Clerk with reviewing of Session minutes in
their region, considering overtures to General Assembly and amendments from General Assembly, and other tasks as requested by the Stated Clerk.

John Knox Ranch

The Task Force discussed the establishment of a standing committee for oversight and support of John Knox Ranch, but decided that a more comprehensive look at John Knox Ranch, its ministry, and its contribution to Mission Presbytery's Purpose was needed. The Task Force proposes the following motion:

MOTION

That General Council appoint a “blue ribbon” task force to consider and make recommendations regarding all matters related to John Knox Ranch. Areas under consideration will include staffing, programming, funding and facilities. The task force shall make an interim report to the General Council at its full May meeting and bring its final report to the General Council's full fall meeting. The task force shall then report its findings to the Presbytery for action at the October 2017 meeting and conclude its work at that time.

Notes:

The JKR Task Force would begin their work as soon as possible after this (February 2017) meeting of General Council.

The JKR Task Force is encouraged to imagine new ways of utilizing the Ranch in support of the Presbytery's mission.

The JKR Task Force would be free to utilize human resources outside the Presbytery, including the input of people such as Brian Frick from the Presbyterian Mission Agency, staff members from Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center in Arkansas Presbytery, staff members from Cho-Yeh Camp and Conference Center in New Covenant Presbytery, and Joel Winchip who is currently head of the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association.

It is understood that the temporary JKR transition team currently in place, which was elected by the Presbytery in October 2016 for one more year, would stay in place to provide guidance and support for the camp’s operations in 2017.
As the Task Force discussed the Committee Structure, it quickly became clear that any change in committee structure would also impact the composition of the General Council. The Task Force decided to look more broadly at the structure and functioning of General Council. The current large number of members on General Council has led to a sometimes unwieldy body, long meetings, and an unhealthy tendency toward protecting committee status and budget. On the other hand, the Task Force understands the value of having committee leadership’s voices on the General Council and wants to uphold that connection. The Task Force also wants to strengthen the role of the regional representatives on the General Council, as described above and in the position description in Appendix C. To these ends, the Task Forces moves:

**MOTION**

That General Council be comprised of the following 12 members, nominated by the Committee on Representation and Participation and elected by the Presbytery

- the immediate past Moderator of Mission Presbytery, who serves as chair
- the Moderator of Mission Presbytery
- the vice-Moderator of Mission Presbytery
- six regional representatives (Austin, Corpus Christi, Hill Country, San Antonio, Valley, Victoria)
- three at-large members

Mission Presbytery staff (General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, John Knox Ranch Executive Director, Youth Ministry Coordinator) serve ex officio on General Council, with voice but no vote.

Notes:

The Task Force strongly suggests that the first General Council meeting of each year include Committee Chairs for part or all of the meeting, in order to coordinate ministries and fellowship.

General Council meetings remain open to any member of Mission Presbytery. Therefore committee chairs are welcome to attend any meeting of General Council to present and speak to motions or other business.

The **at-large members** of General Council will serve as a bridge between the committees and General Council. Committees present motions directly to the Chair of General Council. Other information could be passed, in either direction, between General Council and the Committee chairs. Each of the at-large members would have committees for which they are responsible, corresponding to the categorization of the committees according to the Purpose Statement, above. One at-large member would communicate with COM, CPM, and Pastoral Care. One at-large member would communicate with CD&E, ECN, MOJC, JKR, Presbyterian Women, and YCC.
The third at-large member would communicate with CORP (Committee on Representation and Participation), PJC, Personnel, Stewardship and Financial Oversight, and the Trustees of Mission Presbytery and of the HM King Fund. (See Appendix D for an organizational chart depicting this arrangement).

Hopes
Our hopes for a new structure and design include:

- Relieving some of the burden of the nominating process. We hope that people will be able to say “yes!” joyfully and whole-heartedly to serving on Presbytery committees. Fewer committees mean fewer positions to fill.
- Happy committee chairs, as they will only need to attend General Council meetings at which their committee has motions or other business before the Council.
- Possibility for greater diversity on General Council, as the nominating process might seek out at-large members who offer different viewpoints and experiences.
- Increasing and strengthening the ministry of regions, as well as improving the fellowship within regions.
- A more nimble and efficient General Council, which has deservedly earned the trust of the whole Presbytery.

We are better together.

MOTION: That General Council dissolve the Task Force on Regions, Structure, and Staffing
Motions Summary

1. Approve the following committee structure:

*We are Mission Presbytery, serving Christ in the world.*

*In the Reformed Tradition, together we:*

- Establish and equip congregations and sessions to carry out their missions;
  - General Council
- Recruit, receive, ordain develop and care for those called to service in the church;
  - Committee on Ministry
  - Committee on Preparation for Ministry
  - Pastoral Care Committee
- Enable mission and witness to the Gospel that congregations cannot accomplish alone;
  - Church Development and Evangelism
  - Education and Congregational Nurture
  - Mission Outreach and Justice
  - John Knox Ranch
  - Presbyterian Women’s Coordinating Team
  - Youth Connection Committee
- And steward our resources faithfully and generously.
  - Committee on Representation and Participation
  - Permanent Judicial Commission
  - Personnel Committee
  - Stewardship and Financial Oversight Committee
  - Trustees of Mission Presbytery and of the Henrietta M. King Memorial Fund

*We are better together.*

2. Clerk’s Crew: That General Council establish a Clerk’s Crew, to be comprised of six individuals, one from each region, recommended by the Stated Clerk and approved by General Council. The Clerk’s Crew would assist the Stated Clerk with reviewing of Session minutes in their region, considering overtures to General Assembly and amendments from General Assembly, and other tasks as requested by the Stated Clerk.

3. John Knox Blue Ribbon Task Force: That General Council appoint a “blue ribbon” task force to consider and make recommendations regarding all matters related to John Knox Ranch. Areas under consideration will include staffing, programming, funding and facilities. The task force shall make an interim report to the General Council at its full May meeting and bring its final report to the General Council’s full fall meeting. The task force shall then report its findings to the Presbytery for action at the October 2017 meeting and conclude its work at that time.
4. General Council Structure: That General Council be comprised of the following 12 members, nominated by the Committee on Representation and Participation and elected by the Presbytery

- the immediate past Moderator of Mission Presbytery, who serves as chair
- the Moderator of Mission Presbytery
- the vice-Moderator of Mission Presbytery
- six regional representatives (Austin, Corpus Christi, Hill Country, San Antonio, Valley, Victoria)
- three at-large members

Mission Presbytery staff (General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, John Knox Ranch Executive Director, Youth Ministry Coordinator) serve ex officio on General Council, with voice but no vote.

5. Dissolution of Task Force: That General Council dissolve the Task Force on Regions, Structure, and Staffing
Appendix A: General Council Regions Map
### Appendix B: Staffing Assignments for Committees (in Proposed Structure)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Staff Person</th>
<th>Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CDE</strong> (Church Development and Evangelism)</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>CH/EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COM</strong> (Committee on Ministry)</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CPM</strong> (Committee on Preparation for Ministry)</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORP</strong> (Committee on Representation &amp; Participation)</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECN</strong> (Education and Congregational Nurture)</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>CH/EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SFO</strong> (Stewardship and Financial Oversight)</td>
<td>GP/SC</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GC</strong> (General Council)</td>
<td>GP/SC</td>
<td>CH/EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOJC</strong> (Mission, Outreach and Justice)</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PCC</strong> (Pastoral Care)</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PJC</strong> (Permanent Judicial Commission)</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel</strong></td>
<td>GP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trustees of MP and of HM King</strong></td>
<td>GP/SC</td>
<td>EW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YCC</strong> (Youth Connection)</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>CH/EW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Proposed Job Description for Regional Representative to General Council

Purpose: To coordinate activities and communicate with the constituency of the region.

- Communicate with, and coordinate with, regional representatives for the Committee on Ministry and the Clerk’s Crew, and include those representatives in the communications of the region as necessary.
- Coordinate officer training within the region.
- Serve on General Council.
- Develop contacts with local congregations and fellowships.
- Establish meeting dates and locations.
- Send reminders to members of the region, making sure to include those honorably retired and/or in specialized ministries to encourage their participation.
- Ensure that minutes of such meetings are shared with all congregations in the region.
- **Update region members on upcoming events in the wider Presbytery, and share news from Presbytery gatherings, General Council meetings, etc.**
Appendix D: Organizational Chart for Proposed Structure

*We are Mission Presbytery, serving Christ in the world.*
*In the Reformed Tradition, together we:*

- **Establish and equip congregations. And sessions to carry out their mission***
  - General Council
  - COM
  - CPM
  - Pastoral Care

- **Steward our resources faithfully and generously***
  - Committee on Representation and Participation
  - PJC
  - Personnel
  - Stewardship and Fiscal Oversight
  - Trustees of Mission Presbytery and H.M. King

- **Enable mission and witness to the gospel that congregations cannot accomplish alone***
  - CDE
  - ECN
  - JKR
  - MOJC
  - PWCT

*We are better together*
Appendix E: Timeline for Carrying Out Proposed Changes in Committee Structure, 2017-2018

2017

**February 4** – General Council hears and considers recommending the Task Force report to Presbytery

**March 4** – Presbytery hears and considers approval of the Task Force report. If it passes:

- No changes will be necessary for Personnel
- General Council and Committee structure would begin in 2018
- Regional reps would begin their restructured work immediately

**Between March and May** – work would commence on rewriting the Bylaws and other documents necessary for implementing the structure. Committee moderators work as necessary with each other on handbooks and committee descriptions for the Manual of Operations.

**May** – General Council meets, date to be set. GC would receive the proposed bylaw (and other documents) changes for information.

**June 23** – General Council meets briefly before the Presbytery meeting

**June 23-4** – Presbytery meets in New Braunfels. Presbytery considers a first reading of the revised bylaws and other documents necessary for implementing the structure.

**September** – General Council meets, date to be set.

**September 16** – Nominating meets to begin its 2018 work in earnest, and will work to provide nominations based on the new committee structure.

**October 27** – General Council meets

**October 27-28** – Presbytery meets at Corpus Christi Parkway. The body would vote on the second reading of the changes in bylaws (and other documents). Nominating would present the slate of nominees for 2018 based on the new committee structure.

**November** – Committee chairs meet for training and orientation with the Stated Clerk and General Presbyter
2018

January or February – General Council meets; date to be set. GC meets with all new committee chairs for some portion of the meeting.

February – General Council meets; Presbytery meets

May – General Council meeting; a first review of the structure changes “in actuality” will take place.

June – General Council meets; Presbytery meets. The reports to Presbytery will include a report of the first review of the new committee structure “in actuality.” CORP would present its annual “Representation” review to the Presbytery.

September – General Council meets; date to be set. GC would recommend any “tweaking” of the restructuring to the fall meeting of Presbytery.

September – CORP to begin its work for 2019 nominations, giving due consideration to the findings of its Representation component.

October – Any tweaking to the restructure offered by General Council would be considered by the Presbytery. CORP would present its “Nominating” slate to the Presbytery.