General Synod 33 NHCUCC Delegate Orientation Meeting (via Zoom) – June 08, 2021


The group shared brief introductions, including their name, home church and what people will miss about not attending an in-person meeting. Among the things we will miss: the diversity of people at Synod, connecting with old friends/meeting new people, the uplifting worship, roaming through the exhibit hall, exploring a new city, the in-person educational experiences.

Mandy (and others) mentioned Zoom fatigue when meeting online for so many hours. Mandy also shared her personal experience that attending an online Conference alone can be disappointing, but watching the online experience with someone else can add energy, give you someone to process the experience with and help glean new insights, feels much more participatory when done together.

Registration: Everyone in attendance has registered. The Conference will follow up with the Youth Delegates to ensure they are registered and have plans for the mandatory training.

Logistics:

- **Mandatory Delegate Training:** The national setting will offer mandatory training in the use of meet.ucc for delegates and others “with voice” admitted to the bar of the house. Delegates choose their own one-and-a-half hour training session during registration. **Delegates will not be seated without this training.**
  
  **Question:** How will Delegates get notification of their specific training session including information on how to logon?  
  
  **Answer:** For the trainings, National (General Synod Registrar) will notify you with a reminder about a week before the training and then another reminder on the day before the training.

- **Workshops:** 50 Workshops will be available on-demand throughout the week of General Synod and for a short time thereafter. Recorded workshops will be located at Frontline Faith starting July 11th for viewing. Frontline Faith portal access is available to those who registered. Find a list of the date/times and workshop descriptions at: [https://www.generalsynod.org/workshops](https://www.generalsynod.org/workshops/)
  
  Following Synod these workshops are available to churches for a small fee.

- **Virtual Display area:** The Virtual Exhibit Hall will open on July 11th and can be accessed from your personal login page on meet.ucc
• **Worship:** Gordon was able to view a few small snip-it’s of Synod Worship and shared that it is awesome, he was very impressed. All the music is original, done in high-def, and will be available for our churches to use following Synod.

• **Communion-ware** is available for purchase (paten, chalice, and altar cloth). Personal size. The Conference will be purchasing a set for use at Annual Meeting. Individuals may purchase, as desired, for use during Synod.

• **Volunteers:** National is looking for volunteers to chaperone the Youth/Young Adult events as well as to serve as ushers (assisting people as they gather for Synod business, worship and optional events). Volunteers need to be registered (visitor cost is $100).

• **Congregational Challenge:** With an online event, national is challenging every local church to have at least one person from their congregation participate. Our Conference will promote this challenge via *The Weekly News.*

• **NH Specific Caucus Meetings:** Delegates are expected to attend these. They will be done on one of our Conference Zoom Meeting accounts. Look for the link closer to the start of Synod. Caucus meeting schedule is as follows:
  - Sunday, July 11th, 3:30-4:30 pm
  - Wednesday, July 14th, 4:30-5:30 pm
  - Saturday, July 17th, 6-7 pm

• **Committee Assignments:**
  **Question:** How will Delegates know if they were selected for a Committee and which one?

**Business:** Delegates will be voting on

• Budget items

• The re-election of Rev. Traci Blackmon as Associate General Minister, Justice and Local Church Ministries

• Amendments to the UCC By-Laws
  - Delete the explicit use of Roberts Rules of Order and allow for electronic meetings
  - Language relating to diversity in Conference delegates is amended to be more generalized and to include gender and gender expression. Amendments are partially in response to 2019 General Synod Resolution 12
  - Have the Credentials Committee designated from the members of the UCCB, rather than the current staff driven committee.

• Resolutions
o Two types: Prudential Resolutions, which go directly to plenary without change and require a simple majority to pass. Changing Prudential resolutions would essentially make them null and void. Witness Resolutions go to Committee, and require a 2/3rds vote to pass. During Committee work these can be changed; similar resolutions may be merged; or Committees can decide to recommend a resolution not be brought up for vote.

o New this year are Implementation sessions, to help Delegates learn how to live into a passed resolution, practical ideas on how to carry forward the work.

o Prudential Resolutions (*Direct Involvement of the NH Conference or a NH Conference Church in the submission)
  ▪ The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers of the UCC Request to be Recognized as a Formal Group *

o Witness Resolutions:
  ▪ A Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent
  ▪ “Who Will Speak for the Trees?” A Resolution on the Rights of Nature *
  ▪ Declaration for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel *
  ▪ Becoming a Church of Contemplatives in Action
  ▪ A Resolution to Declare and Respond To Racism as a Public Health Crisis
  ▪ A Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System to Eliminate Racial and Social Injustices Inherent in the Present System
  ▪ A Commitment to Gender Safety and Equity in Ministry Settings
  ▪ A Resolution to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy
  ▪ A Resolution Encouraging to End 128 Years of War Between the USA and the Hawaiian Kingdom

o A Resolution on Protecting Workers at Churches and Other Religious Institutions to the UCC Board for Consideration

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**GroupMe Communication during Synod**

Ann created a group called “Synod 2021”. Current members are: Ann Desrochers, Bill Jones, Bruce Kinney, Carlos Jauhola-Straight, Carolyn Keilig, Gordon Rankin, Mandy Lape-Freeberg, Richard Slater, Stacey Kullgren, David Grishaw Jones, and Sharon Clough. For those not on this list, please click on this link to request being added to the group: https://groupme.com/join_group/68486713/XWToP34L

You will also need to download the GroupMe app on your phone to receive messages there.
Sacred Ally Quilt Project Workshop
There will be an opportunity for NH Delegates to participate in that workshop on Monday, June 28, 2021, from 6:00 to 8:30 pm.

Synod this year will involve a lot of online time, especially in the evenings – be sure to pace yourself.