

Synod of the Northeast
2024 Biennial Meeting Outcomes
October 25-26, 2022

Attendees: RE Judy Mellgard, TE Michelle Serra, RE Rob Anderson, TE Aaron Frank

The Synod Assembly was a time of both business and friendly engagement with Presbyterians from across the region. A few highlights:

- RE Lisa Baker from the Presbytery of Southern New England and member of the MLK Jr. Community Presbyterian Church of Springfield, MA was elected Moderator.
- Rev. Sue Smith from the Coastlands Presbytery, currently serving as a Trustee to the Presbytery, was voted Moderator-Elect.
- Rev. Nancy Talbot from the Presbytery of New York presented her report regarding the extensive work of the Synod PJC and the conclusion of the work of the AC for Susquehanna Valley Presbytery.
- Rev. Dr. Sandawna Gaulman Ashley, Transitional Synod Leader, presented her report on her leadership over the last 2 years. She has focused on improving communication with Presbyteries, training new Presbytery Leaders, supporting the Discernment Team, cultivating shared ministry conversations between presbyteries and reframing the Synod's Missional narrative.
- Rev. Gregory Simpson was elected Treasurer of the Synod for a 4 year term. He is pastor of Nauraushaun Presbyterian Church in Pearl River, NY, in Hudson River Presbytery.
- Synod received the Discernment Team's Year 2 report. Key learnings and recommendations included: enhancing the Grant program where financially possible, further supporting the Clergy Coaching Network, the Early Ministry Institute, Robert Washington Scholars program, and the Small Church Residency program. Broadly, the Discernment Team encourages Synod to dedicate time and resources to supporting smaller presbyteries (and their churches) wherever possible and to help foster collaboration between presbyteries through regular regional gatherings. Their final report will be received in November 2025, during a special called meeting of the Synod Assembly. (Commissioners will be needed.)
- Synod passed its budget for 2025. As part of the budget a \$0.15 increase to Per Capita was approved.
- A resolution to endorse, support, and work together in Christian partnership the, approved, GA Resolution (RSG-05) "Addressing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and the Realities of Hispanic Latino-a-e Ministry" within the Synod of the Northeast, was passed.
- Joyous worship was shared throughout the Assembly, and lest you think that Synod Assembly is just a work event, an evening of Karaoke and Talent was shared on Friday.

Prior to the Synod Assembly a “Pre-Assembly” gathering was offered, entitled, *Exploring Culture, Identity, and Faith to Confront Racism*, presented by Rev. Molly Casteel and Christine Saxman. Through lecture and small group discussion attendees studied the PCUSA policy, ‘Facing Racism.’ The workshop provided “frameworks and tools for you to understand how culture and identity impact how racism permeates your community whether you perceive it or not. Fundamental to our approach is that everyone will thrive when all are liberated.” RE Virginia Champlin, TE Marjorie Ackerman, TE Sabrina Slater and TE Aaron Frank attended this workshop.