Standing Rules of The Synod of the Trinity of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

ARTICLE I - THE SYNOD

10.00 Jurisdiction

10.01 The Synod of the Trinity is a council of teaching and ruling elders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as defined by the *Book of Order*, comprised of representatives from the Presbyteries of Beaver-Butler, Carlisle, Donegal, Huntingdon, Kiskiminetas, Lackawanna, Lake Erie, Lehigh, Northumberland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Redstone, Shenango, Upper Ohio Valley, Washington, and West Virginia. The Governing Commission shall have authority to approve the celebration of the Eucharist for the annual Synod Assembly, Governing Commission meetings, regional gatherings, and other Synod events upon recommendation of the Expanded Leadership Team. The Governing Commission shall have authority to authorize the taking of an offering at any Synod event and the intended purpose of the offering.

10.10 Membership

10.11 The members of the Synod Assembly, both ecclesiastically and corporately, known as commissioners, shall be elected by each presbytery for three-year terms. Commissioners may be reelected. However, no commissioner may serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A commissioner having served a total of six consecutive years shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of at least one year. Each presbytery shall be represented by one teaching elder and one ruling elder. Commissioner's terms shall coincide with the calendar year.

10.12 The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and The Synod of the Trinity are committed to and shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership, and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusivity in its life and work. Presbyteries are urged to strive for an appropriate representation among their commissioners in the same way they would when securing members for presbytery committees, noting criteria such as male and female, age, racial ethnicity, and current or previous service to Synod. There shall be six additional racial ethnic commissioners, elected by their respective presbyteries, upon the request of Synod's Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Committee on Representation, selected to ensure compliance with this commitment. The provisions of Paragraph 10.11, concerning terms, length of service, etc. shall apply to these additional commissioners.

10.13. The Moderator, or co-moderators, of Presbyterian Women of the Synod shall be an ex-officio member of the Synod with voice and vote.

10.14 Synod Staff and Presbytery Executives, shall be ex-officio members with voice but without vote. Should any of those persons not be a ruling or teaching elder, they shall be invited as guests with the privilege of the floor.

10.15 Annually, all of the Synod's presbyteries may elect a Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) between the ages of 17 and 23. The YAADs will have voice, but not vote.

10.20 Meetings and Expenses

10.21 The Synod Assembly may meet in regular session, up to four times per year. Advance notice of all meetings and supporting materials shall be sent to commissioners and ex officio members of the Synod Assembly, not less than 10 calendar days if sent by USPS or 5 days if sent digitally, of the date of the meeting. Meetings shall be held in person, or may be held telephonically or digitally as long as all may fully participate in discussions and voting. The Synod Assembly shall hold an "annual meeting," ordinarily in October, at which time the Moderator and Vice Moderator, or co-moderators, shall be elected, installed, beginning their terms of service the day first of January of the next calendar year. The immediate past Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,, whose term has expired, on the Synod and Governing Commission, shall be an ex officio member of the Governing Commission, as past Moderator, or co-moderators,, with voice but not vote.

10.22 Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the Moderator, or co-moderators, in accordance with the provisions of the *Form of Government*, G-3.0405. Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be held via digital/electronic conferencing.

10.23 The room, board, and travel expenses of commissioners, ex-officio members and Young Adult Advisory Delegates to Synod meetings shall be met from the funds provided for Synod expenses.

10.24 All motions brought before commissioners at meetings of the Synod Assembly, shall include, at least, the following information: who shall implement the motion, the timing of when the motion shall be implemented, an estimate of the financial implications and the expected source of income for the motion's implementation.

10.25 Digital Meetings

I. Electronic/Digital

An "Electronic/Digital Meeting" as used in these rules means a meeting at which all participants are joined electronically/digitally. It is expected that each participant will attend the meeting individually on a computer or device, rather than one being shared by multiple members. Multiple attendees on a single device require approval of the chair in advance and may limit members' rights. Meetings of all boards and committees of the Synod of the Trinity are authorized to meet electronically at the direction of the chair, provided that all members have access to the necessary equipment.

II. Equipment

Electronic/digital attendance currently utilizes Zoom technology (www.zoom.us). Other technologies may be used at the discretion of the Synod Executive as technologies evolve. Participation requires high speed internet access on a computer or device. Audio is provided either through the computer, which requires computer audio capabilities (microphone and speakers – preferably earbuds or a headset), or connection by phone. Video capability is optional, but strongly encouraged. While tablets and smart phones are acceptable, laptop or desktop computers are preferred, because the screen content can become very small on tablets and phones, and only certain portions of the content can be displayed at a time. Immediate access to email is also a requirement.

III. Sign-In Procedures

- A. Prior to meetings, members will receive either a meeting id code or a link to a webpage. Clicking on the link should open a web browser and go directly to the meeting. If it does not do so, or if only the 9-digit meeting id (which is at the end of the link) was distributed, the participant can go to the appropriate login page such as: www.zoom.us, choose "join a meeting," and enter the id manually.
- 109 B. Members shall make every effort to sign into the meeting sufficiently in advance of the time of the meeting to enable their connections to be verified and, if necessary, assisted by troubleshooting. The following process shall be followed in entering meetings:
- 113 C. If using a laptop or desktop computer, complete a full "re-boot" just before entering the meeting.
- D. Enter the meeting as described in Section III.A. If prompted, download the appropriate software and choose to run or install. If prompted, enter your name and choose to enter the meeting.
- 118 E. Choose the method by which you will connect your audio and follow the prompts on the screen. If connecting by computer, check your speakers and microphone to ensure that you can hear and be heard.
- F. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking (on a computer, click on the microphone icon to toggle mute. On a tablet or phone, touch the icon).
- 123 G. Click on the videocam icon to activate, if using.
- 124 H. Click on the "Participants" and "Chat" icons to make those items visible. If a screen share has been initiated and a document is visible in the center of the screen, move the "Participants" and "Chat" windows to the side of the screen, so that the document is visible.

IV. Connection Issues

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- A. Each attendee is responsible for his or her connection to the Internet and the meeting room; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented him or her from participating in the meeting, provided that at least a quorum of members remains connected and adequately able to participate.
- 135 B. The chair may cause or direct the temporary disconnection or muting of an attendee's connection if it is causing undue interference with the electronic meeting.
 137 The chair's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be recorded in the minutes.
- The chair may rule that any meeting be recessed to allow the meeting room to be reset; upon which ruling the meeting shall be ended and a new meeting shall be established with the new meeting identification being sent by email to all participants who shall then enter the new meeting room.

V. Recognition and Assignment of the Floor

- 145 A. To seek recognition by the chair, a member shall activate the "raised hand" icon.
 146 Upon recognition of a member, that member and any others with raised hands
 147 activated shall lower them, which may also be accomplished by the facilitator if
 148 members do not promptly do so.
- 149 B. Another member who claims preference in recognition shall thereupon promptly raise (or raise again) his or her hand icon and the chair shall recognize the member for the limited purpose of determining whether that member is entitled to preference in recognition.
- 153 C. Upon being recognized, a member shall unmute his or her microphone. Upon yielding the floor, the member shall mute his or her microphone.

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VI. Interrupting Motions

- A. A member who intends to make a motion that under the rules may interrupt a speaker (Point of Order, Appeal from the Ruling of the Chair, etc.) shall activate the member's "No" icon (red X). The member shall be recognized to determine the purpose for which he or she is seeking recognition.
 - B. In the event that a member intends to make an interrupting motion during a vote when the "No" icon is in use to indicate a negative vote; the member may unmute and make the motion orally. A member may also make interrupting motions orally if not immediately recognized by the chair.

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VII. Motion Processing

- A. A member intending to make a main motion, offer an amendment, or propose instructions to a committee, shall, immediately after being recognized and assigned the floor, post the motion in writing to the chat window.
- 170 B. The stated clerk is responsible for the display of meeting materials, including all such motions, in the document that is displayed in the shared screen.
- 172 C. When any motion has been stated by the chair, the stated clerk shall copy and paste 173 it into the document and shall be responsible for accurately displaying any proposed 174 amendments under consideration, as well as the final version as adopted or rejected.

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VIII. Voting

- A. When the chair seeks unanimous consent on a matter, a raised hand shall constitute an objection to unanimous consent, and voting shall then proceed by another method.
- B. Voice votes shall be taken by means of the "Yes" or "No" icons and shall be considered a Division (not a counted vote). A motion for a division shall therefore not be in order following such a vote.
- 183 C. Counted votes, when ordered by the chair or the assembly, shall be taken by an additional "Yes" or "No" vote using the icons.
- 185 D. A roll call vote may be ordered by the assembly.
- 186 E. No secret ballot votes are in order.

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IX. Roles

- A. There shall be three designated roles with specific duties, any or all of which may be accomplished by one individual, at the discretion of the chair: the host/facilitator, the chair, and the secretary.
- B. The host/facilitator shall initiate the meeting, and therefore have control of the various features for meeting management such as the ability to manually mute one or more participants and clear status icons (raised hand, Yes, No, etc.).
- C. The chair shall preside at the meeting. In addition to normal duties, the chair shall direct the facilitator and secretary as necessary related to their duties in these rules.
- D. The secretary shall keep a record of meeting. In addition to normal duties, the secretary shall open a document on his or her computer (such as a blank document or the meeting agenda), change the "zoom" level to no more than 85%, and share the document in the meeting via screen share. The secretary shall then assist in processing the motion as stated in Section VII.

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10.30 Quorum

10.31 A quorum of the Synod Assembly shall be twelve commissioners, at least six of whom shall be ruling elders and at least six of whom shall be teaching elders representing at least six presbyteries.

10.40 Officers, Terms, and Election

10.41 The officers of the Synod shall be a Moderator, or co-moderators,, Vice Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,s, Synod Executive, Stated Clerk and Treasurer, and shall be known as the Synod Expanded Leadership Team.

10.42 The term of service of the Moderator, or co-moderators, and Vice Moderator, or co-moderators, shall be one year, and they shall be eligible for re-election. They shall be elected by the Synod Assembly and installed at the annual meeting of the Synod Assembly. The immediate past Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,, whose term has expired, of the Synod and Governing Commission, shall be an ex officio member of the Governing Commission, as past Moderator, or co-moderators,, with voice but not vote.

10.43 The Stated Clerk ordinarily shall be elected for a term of five years and be eligible for re-election. The Stated Clerk and Synod Executive shall serve in staggered including renewal or termination of the stated clerk's term. The Stated Clerk may name a journal clerk and assistant clerks, who need not be commissioners, to serve during the meeting of the Synod Assembly to assist in the recording of minutes, registration, recording leaves of absence, and to carry out such other duties and responsibilities as will facilitate the efficient functioning of the meeting.

10.44 The Synod Executive, and any Associate Executives, shall be elected for a term of five years and be eligible for re-election.

10.45 The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of five years and shall be eligible for reelection.

10.50 Governing Process

The governing process for the Synod of the Trinity shall be the Policy Governance^R Manual of the Synod, in its most recent edition as approved by the Synod Assembly.

10.60 Duties of Officers and Trustees

10.61 Moderator, or co-moderators, and Vice-Moderator, or co-moderators, 10.62 Functions:

a. The Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,s, presides over all meetings of the Synod Assembly and the Governing Commission until a successor is elected and installed. The Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,s, performs all duties assigned in the *Form of Government* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and shall see that business is conducted in accordance with the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* and the Standing Rules of the Synod Assembly. The Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,s, shall appoint committees and commissions authorized by action of the Synod Assembly not otherwise provided for.

b. If, because of the absence of a quorum, a special meeting of the Synod Assembly cannot be held, the Moderator, or co-moderators,, or co-Moderator, or co-moderators,, after consultation with the Synod Executive and the Stated Clerk, may name a committee or commission to carry out responsibilities assigned to the Synod in Form of Government, G-3.0405. Such committee or commission shall conduct a Special Administrative Review in

accordance with Form of Government, G-3.0108. If in the opinion of those officers, the appointment of a commission is warranted, due diligence shall be exercised to ensure that the provisions of Form of Government G-3.0109 are carried out.

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- c. In the case of complaints against actions or decisions of the Synod Assembly to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, the Moderator, or co-moderators, and the Stated Clerk of Synod shall have authority to appoint a Committee of Council.
- d. The Moderator, or co-moderators, may attend a meeting of the General Assembly during his/her/their term of office. The Synod will provide reasonable expense reimbursement for such attendance.
- The Vice Moderator, or co-moderators, fulfills the duties of the Moderator, or comoderators, in the absence of the Moderator, or co-moderators, or when the Moderator, or co-moderators, deems it necessary. Should the Moderator, or co-moderators, become ineligible to serve, the Vice Moderator, or co-moderator, shall become Moderator, or comoderators, for the remainder of the term.
- Expenses incurred by the Moderator, or co-moderators, or Vice Moderator, or comoderators, in the performance of their duties on behalf of the Synod will be paid from budgeted Synod funds.

10.70 The Stated Clerk

10.71 The Stated Clerk shall perform all duties required in the Form of Government of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Stated Clerk shall give official notice of the time and place of Synod Assembly meetings and, when the Synod Assembly convenes, shall form the roll and report it to the Synod Assembly. The Stated Clerk, with the cooperation of the Synod Executive and the Moderator, or co-moderators, shall prepare the docket for the Synod Assembly meeting. The Stated Clerk shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of Synod Assembly meetings, and for the timely transmission of these minutes to commissioners.

10.72 If the office of Stated Clerk should become vacant, the Moderator, or co-moderators, shall appoint a teaching or ruling elder to be acting Stated Clerk, who shall serve until Synod shall elect a Stated Clerk.

10.80 The Synod Executive

10.81 The Synod Executive and any Associate Executives shall perform those duties specified in the position description as prepared by the Governing Commission and approved by the Synod Assembly.

10.90 The Synod Treasurer

10.91 The Treasurer shall fulfill his or her duties described in: the position description approved by the Synod Assembly and provided in the personnel policies; these Standing Rules; fiscal or financial policies adopted by the Synod Assembly or Governing Commission.

11.00 Trustees

11.01 The commissioner members of the Governing Commission shall act as the Board of Trustees for the Corporation which shall be authorized under the charter of the Synod to receive, hold and transfer property, and to facilitate the management of the corporate affairs of the Synod in such manner as to realize the "Ends of the Synod" and in accord with the Executive Limitations in the Policy Governance^R Manual of the Synod.

11.02 The Corporation officers shall be the Moderator, or co-moderators, and Vice Moderator, or co-moderators, of the Synod, the Stated Clerk and the Treasurer of the Synod who shall serve respectively as President, Vice President, Secretary (Stated Clerk) and Treasurer of the Corporation. The Synod Executive shall serve as the chief executive officer for the Corporation. A quorum of the Governing Commission/ Board of Trustees shall be a simple majority of the commissioner members.

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11.03 The Synod Assembly shall meet as the Corporation annually, and at such other times as shall be deemed necessary. The meeting of the annual meeting of the Corporation shall be the same as the ecclesiastical meeting of the Synod Assembly.

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ARTICLE II - SYNOD ENTITIES

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The Synod carries out its duties and responsibilities through:

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Permanent Judicial Commission

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The Governing Commission and the Synod Executive

Book of Order Required Committees and Commissions

Committee on Representation and Nominations

Advisory and Operational Task Groups as appointed by the Synod Executive.

20.00 Mission Networks

20.01 The Synod will facilitate and support the development of a system of Mission Networks among presbyteries and affinity groups. These Mission Networks will focus on areas of common interest, need, and mission. Because of the diversity of needs throughout the Synod, these Mission Networks will focus the Synod's mission resources and energies where the people and needs dictate. Mission Networks are not limited by intra nor inter Synod geographical boundaries. Mission Networks provide responsive and flexible shared ministry opportunities. Mission Networks may help to identify those needs that should be addressed through a sustained program.

21.00 Committee on Representation & Nomination

- 21.01 The Committee on Representation & Nomination shall carry out the duties prescribed by the Form of Government F-1.0403.
- 21.02 The Committee on Representation & Nomination will recruit, or seek, candidates for future election as commissioners, through its connections with presbytery Committees on Representation, various racial ethnic people of color constituencies, constituencies of women, disabled persons, youth, or other minorities, as well as "persons designated by national racial ethnic membership to discover potential racial ethnic members.
- 21.03 The Committee on Representation and Nomination shall also be available to serve as an advisory group to the Synod Executive on matters of social and racial justice within the boundaries of the Synod.
- 352 21.04 The tasks of the Committee on Representation & Nomination for elections for Synod positions
- a. Nominate a Moderator, or co-moderators, and Vice Moderator, or co-moderators, to the Synod, with regard for diversity and inclusiveness. The nomination of a Vice Moderator, or co-moderators, should ensure teaching/ruling elder balance;
- b. Nominate commissioners to serve on the Governing Commission to fill expired terms or vacancies.

22.50 Presbytery Records

22.51 The stated clerks of the presbyteries shall conduct an annual peer review of presbytery records as prescribed by the *Form of Government*, G-3.0107 and G-3.0108. They shall review the minutes of the presbyteries and a statement attesting to the review shall be signed by the Convener, who shall be annually elected by the presbytery stated clerks. The report shall be circulated to each presbytery annually for reaction on the part of the presbytery. Any request from a presbytery to remove or modify an exception shall be directed to the Stated Clerk of the Synod for further consideration by the Synod Assembly.

22.52 The official action of the Synod with regard to the presbytery minutes shall be communicated to each presbytery through its Stated Clerk and the action of the Synod Assembly recorded in the minutes of the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

22.60 Permanent Judicial Commission

22.61 The Permanent Judicial Commission is the court of judicial process for the Synod. It shall function according to the provisions of the *Rules of Discipline, in the Book of Order*.

22.62 The Permanent Judicial Commission shall consist of eleven members elected for six-year terms, serving in three equal classes. Each class will contain two teaching and two ruling elders. Members shall be nominated by the respective presbyteries and elected by the Synod Assembly, giving due attention to the principles of inclusivity set forth in Form of Government Chapter 4.0400 and elsewhere, as well as to a rotation of members among the various presbyteries of the Synod. The Permanent Judicial Commission shall elect from among its members a Moderator, or co-moderators, and a clerk.

22.63 The Permanent Judicial Commission is staffed by the Synod Stated Clerk.

22.64 The Permanent Judicial Commission shall meet to consider the cases brought before it. If there are no cases, it shall meet for education and training, at least annually.

22.65 No person having served on the Permanent Judicial Commission for a term of up to six years shall be eligible for re-election until four years have elapsed.

22.66 In case a time should arise when the Permanent Judicial Commission has no Moderator, or co-moderators,, the Stated Clerk shall be authorized to convene the Commission and preside for the election of a Moderator, or co-moderators,.

22.80 Self Development of People (SDOP)

398 22.81 The Self Development of People Committee shall consist of not fewer than six and not 399 more than twelve members, elected by their presbytery, in three equal classes serving 400 three-year terms.

22.82 The SDOP awards grants to groups of poor, oppressed and disadvantaged persons seeking to make significant and long-term, sustainable changes in their particular situations.

- 22.83 SDOP utilizes three primary criteria for groups submitting proposal for grants:
- 406 1. The project must originate from within the group writing the proposal.
- 407 2. The group must control the project.
 - 3. The members of the group must directly benefit from the project.

22.84 Meetings:

- 411 1. Once a year, normally in May to review proposals.
 - 2. SDOP may meet by conference call or digital/electronic conferencing, as needed.

ARTICLE III - SYNOD STAFF

30.00 Administrative

30.01 The Synod Administrative Staff consists of a Synod Executive and such other exempt and non-exempt staff as determined by the Synod Executive.

30.02 The Governing Commission shall provide for annual comprehensive reviews of the work the Synod Executive and Stated Clerk. The Synod Executive shall review the work of other members of the Synod staff.

31.00 Synod Executive

31.01 The Synod Executive shall be elected as provided for in *Form of Government*, G-

3.0110. The duties of this office shall only be limited as set forth in the Executive

Limitations, as stated in the Policy Governance manual, and the application of the principle "any reasonable interpretation."

31.02 The Synod Executive shall be selected by the Governing Commission upon the concurrence of the Synod Assembly.

31.021 Termination of the service of the Synod Executive shall follow the same procedures as for the selection of the Synod Executive.

31.022 Annually, at the first meeting of the Governing Commission, the Synod Executive shall name a person to serve as an emergency interim successor for up to 90 days, renewable by the Governing Commission.

32.00 Other Staff

 32.01 Other staff shall be employed for terms stipulated in their position descriptions.

32.02 They shall fulfill their duties and their performance will be reviewed, as provided for in the Synod personnel policies.

ARTICLE IV - CODE OF CONDUCT

40.01 The Synod shall adopt a Code of Conduct applicable to all elected Commissioners, Officers of the Synod, employed Synod staff, Synod Commissions, Synod Mission task groups, and includes some customers, vendors, organizations, and any others doing business with or on behalf of The Synod of the Trinity.

40.02 The Synod Stated Clerk shall have lead responsibility for the development of policy, distribution, implementation, and maintenance of records relating to the Synod's Code of Conduct.

40.03 Distribution of the Code of Conduct shall be made in accord with the criteria specified in the Code with records distribution and acknowledgment of receipt maintained in the Synod Stated Clerk's office where the records shall be available for review as may be necessary and appropriate.

40.04 Commissioners shall not be seated and persons elected to various positions in the Synod shall not be permitted to participate until a signed Acknowledgment and Acceptance

461 Form from the Code of Conduct, including a conflict of interest provision, has been received 462 and is on file. 464 **ARTICLE V - AMENDMENTS** 465 466 50.01 The Standing Rules may be suspended temporarily, for a definite purpose and a definite length of time, by two thirds vote of the Commissioners present at either a stated 468 or a called Synod Assembly meeting. 470 50.02 These Standing Rules may be amended at any meeting provided that at least a tenday written notice has been given to all Commissioners and by a two-thirds vote of the members present. A special meeting may be called for the purpose of amending these 473 Standing Rules with the same provision as the called meeting. 474 475 **ARTICLE VI – Hierarchy of Governing Authority** 476 60.01 The hierarchy of governing authorities shall be: Scripture 478 The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 479 Part One: Book of Confessions 480 Part Two: Book of Order 481 Federal and State Law 482 Articles of Incorporation of The Synod of the Trinity 483 Bylaws of The Synod of the Trinity

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60.02 If there should be a conflict between the Policy Governance Manual and the Standing Rules, the Policy Governance Manual shall be considered primary until the conflict shall be reconciled by either an amendment to the Policy Governance Manual and/or to the standing rules.

Policy Governance Manual of The Synod of the Trinity

Standing Rules of The Synod of the Trinity

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, most recent edition

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APPENDIX

The Synod of the Trinity includes all of the State of Pennsylvania; all of the State of West Virginia except the following counties: Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, Pendleton; and the following counties in Ohio: Belmont, Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe, the southern sector of Columbia. One congregation in New York and two congregations in Maryland belong to the Synod, but their counties are associated with other synods.

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AMENDED

504 SYNOD ASSEMBLY 10.22.2022