Virtual congregational meetings permanently allowed:

In the December 15 “Upstate Update” we shared this message and from Jeff
Human, legal counsel for the UNYS:

“The New York Religious Corporations Law was amended by legislation signed on
November 8, 2021. Under this amendment, congregations (which are New York
religious corporations) may hold virtual meetings of members if the Church Council,
under the congregation’s Constitution or Certificate of Incorporation, is authorized to
determine the place of member meetings. If the congregation decides to hold a
member meeting virtually (by means of electronic communication), it must be solely
a virtual meeting, not a hybrid meeting where some members participate in person
and others virtually.

“Congregations may also still continue to hold meetings of members in person. It is
noteworthy that under the new legislation, New York religious corporations are
treated differently than other New York not-for-profit corporations.”

We have received a number of questions since sharing this change in legislation.

Some clarifying notes regarding this change:

- This change reflects an end to certain pandemic-time policies regarding
  the ways the religious corporations function administratively.
- The bishop and other leaders in the synod have no direct influence in this
decision. We share this information so that you are aware of the changes.
- Hybrid congregational meetings are now prohibited. The congregational
  meeting must be entirely in person or entirely online. You may still
  broadcast the meeting for those who cannot attend, but those who are in
  the meeting online are not counted in the quorum and are not able to
  vote.

- Hybrid council meetings are permitted under this law.

The Synod office will continue to share information as it becomes available, and
legislative updates as they occur.