

PRESBYTERY OF YUKON
Report of the Stated Clerk
2022 Fall Stated Meeting/Meeting of the Corporation
October 6-8, 2022

ACTION ITEM:

Recommendations for Action by the Stated Clerk

1. Approve the minutes of the February 23-27, 2022 winter stated presbytery meeting.

INFORMATION PROVIDED FOR INCLUSION IN THE MINUTES

Leadership Team actions/key talking points:

The Leadership Team serves as the presbytery's Board of Directors and Board of Trustees. A record of annual proceedings will be posted on the Presbytery of Yukon's website as minutes become available.

1. Corporate Matters

- a. Appointment of Corporation officers: Alison Burchett as President, Jan Burger as Vice-President, Sharon Rayt as Secretary, and Joseph Brock as Treasurer. Furthermore, said officers were given the authority to sign any documents necessary and proper to sell, convey, mortgage, encumber and manage any property owned by the Corporation and to guarantee of repayment of principal and interest as required by lenders on loans of PCUSA churches within the bounds of the Presbytery of Yukon. [March 30]
- b. Insurance: The Leadership Team decided that the presbytery will not bill churches without a session. Presbytery remits payment for insurance premiums for itself, village churches, and a couple other ministries on a quarterly basis. Historically, presbytery has billed these entities for all or half of their premium, depending on their financial status. For assorted reasons, Savoonga PC, Chapel in the Mountains, and Kuukpik PC are now unable to pay their portion of the insurance premium. None of these churches have an active session.
- c. The Leadership team took action to authorize Jan Burger to sign on behalf of the presbytery trustees (Leadership Team) a quit claim deed transferring the deed of trust from Northwind Ministries to Ralph and Donna Ray, both of whom have been very active in Northwind Ministries. Northwind Ministries purchased the Nome Presbyterian Church building after it closed and has faithfully made monthly loan payments to the presbytery. Collier Law facilitated the paperwork on behalf of Northwind Ministries.

2. Mission and Strategy/Exec Search

- a. The Leadership Team gathered for a retreat April 21 – 22 at United Protestant Church in Palmer. The purpose was to discuss presbytery's mission and strategy which in the end will help inform presbytery's staffing and provide guidance to the executive presbyter search committee. Important points raised during the initial discussions:
 - Presbytery is not doing a good job of helping village churches. The model needs to change in the villages - a team is needed rather than a single commissioned pastor.
 - Native Ministries (NM) and the Road System (RS) regions are not working well. There is very little Alaska Native representation on our committees, and the two Korean congregations have not been a part of the conversations.
 - We are not raising up youth and elder training in the congregations.
 - Leadership Development training is critical for ministers, elders, deacons, etc. A particular mode of training does not fit each context. Training should be designed specifically for the native churches.
 - Race and reconciliation at all levels – within congregations, between congregations, and between cultures.
 - Relationships and connections have been lost. Part of the lack of connections recently is due to Covid and that presbytery has had no face-to-face meetings. Curt Karns had developed many relationships during his tenure as presbytery exec, but when he retired, some of those connections were lost.

- We can partner with Intergenerational Arctic Ministries to carry out a lot of the functions.
- Have all the churches bought into presbytery vision? The 'flag' has to be carried by others, not just the presbytery exec.
- The 'how' cannot succeed without the resources. Funding something without the 'why' is not sustainable, because the people did not buy into it.

From these discussions, four key presbytery priorities were identified:

- Leadership Development is needed at all levels – Leadership development work needs to begin now and not be postponed until a new exec is hired.
- Relationships/Connections between the congregations must again be rebuilt – between villages and the road system, villages and villages, and road system churches with other road system churches.
- Staffing – The Leadership Team discussed the executive presbyter's (EP) duties in broad terms – administrator, program focused, and pastor-to-past. It was decided that the search committee should focus on a single EP, and that the position would best be served by an EP who is not also the stated clerk or part-time pastor. Doing so would create a position which is more than full-time.
- Reconciliation at all levels – work must continue,
Future discussions should include how to encourage our Korean and struggling village congregations, and Bingle Camp and its future with the Presbytery.

To aid the exec search committee in completing the Ministry Information Form (MIF), the Leadership Team:

- Set a proposed salary range of \$90,000 - \$100,000.
 - Identified desired MIF Leadership Competencies
 - Theological/Spiritual Interpreter: Compassionate, Spiritual maturity
 - Communication: Communicator, Technologically Savvy
 - Organizational Leadership: Advisor, Risk Taker, Organizational Ability, Collaboration, Culturally Proficient, Strategy and Vision
 - Interpersonal Engagement: Interpersonal Engagement, Motivator, Bridge Builder, Flexibility
- b. Rev. Shari Munson, transitional exec and stated clerk with Olympia Presbytery is providing guidance to the search committee and willing to do so at no cost to the presbytery. The Leadership Team allocated the \$5,000, originally designated for consultant fees, for church visitation travel expenses. Two committee members would visit every church in the presbytery, starting at the end of June. Rev. Tim Carrick will lead that effort. [June 6]
- c. Given that expenses have exceeded the original \$5,000 allocated in June, the Leadership Team approved a motion to pay/reimburse all the expenses for visiting all of the churches, and that committee members may request reimbursement for mileage as appropriate. [Aug. 23]

3. Stewardship

- a. With Commissioned Pastor Beulah Nowpakahok retiring at the end of February 2022, Lucy Apatiki, June Walunga, and Merle Apassingok will begin to be paid a monthly stipend for their work as Commissioned Pastors. Gambell's Commissioned Pastors are paid out of endowment investment earnings for a two-year period, which expires at the end of 2022. [Mar. 30]
- b. The Leadership Team designated the financial secretary as a check signer and interim exec as a signatory for agreements with Merrill Lynch, in place of Curt Karns. The stated clerk remains as the other agreement signatory. [Mar. 30]
- c. Financial secretary Rachel Graham, Stewardship chair Bob Christensen, and treasurer Joseph Brock, were granted, in that order, with full authority to transact business with the Mission Development Certificate program on behalf of the presbytery. [June 6]

- d. A proposal was approved to share internet costs for St. Lawrence Island with Intergenerational Arctic Ministries. [Oct. 3]
4. **Fall 2022 Stated Meeting** [Aug 23]
- a. 2 Corinthians 5:16 -21 was chosen as the meeting's theme Scripture
 - b. Designated the elder commissioner focus questions: In light of the theme scripture and the ordination question '*Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors and work of the reconciliation of the world?*'
 - What does reconciliation mean to you?
 - Where do you see reconciliation happening right now?
 - Where would you like to see it?
 - c. The Thursday before the October presbytery meeting will be devoted to Race Reconciliation and Restoration training. The basic outline Rev. Henry Woodall set forth for a third day of presbytery on Thursday was approved. Thursday's session is open to anyone, not just commissioners to presbytery.

5. **Miscellaneous**

- a. Regarding overture to the 225th General Assembly: '*On Directing the Office of the General Assembly to Issue Apologies and Reparations for the Racist closure of the Memorial Presbyterian Church, Juneau, Alaska*'. The decision was made to not tack on additional rationale to the overture, as rationale can be provided by the overture advocate when championing for the overture's passage. Of those recommended to serve as advocate, Rev. Curt Karns accepted the responsibility. [Mar. 30].
- b. Regarding the stated clerk's classification change: Historically, the stated clerk's position satisfied the three federal criteria necessary to be considered exempt (paid a salary, types of administrative duties performed, and minimum salary threshold). However, a change to the Fair Labor Standards Act as of Jan. 1, 2020, increased the minimum salary threshold for an exempt position to \$35,568 annually. The stated clerk's salary is currently set at \$26,530. Following discussion, the Leadership Team took action to designate the stated clerk as a non-exempt, hourly paid position. [Hourly pay to begin with the hiring of a new stated clerk.] [July 28]
- c. Regarding future presbytery meetings: The Leadership Team approved a motion to appoint, in advance of each meeting, a Parliamentarian to serve at that face-to-face presbytery meeting. [July 28]

Correspondence

- a. Rev. Britt Johnston tendered his resignation as co-moderator of the search committee, leaving Dennis Berry as the sole moderator.
- b. From First Anchorage PC pastor Rev. Matt Schultz: In conjunction with the Rasmuson Foundation, Municipality of Anchorage, and a few other major funders, First Anchorage PC is moving forward to facilitate the purchase of a hotel to be used to house people who are currently homeless. The church is creating an LLC to temporarily hold ownership for a brief time until long-term owners take over. No money will change hands for the church, which will simply serve as a 501c3 on paper and offer input as to direction of the project. Non-profit attorney Steven Mahoney and First Anchorage member, municipal attorney Ralph Duerre are working to ensure that all legal aspects are considered. The LT expressed no concerns, as long as the legalities are taken care of. The church was applauded for taking a step to address the homeless issue.
- c. Intergenerational Arctic Ministries (IAM) co-executive Rev. Curt Karns has requested that the Presbytery release the funds budget for IAM for 2022. IAM is finding it difficult to find adequate support for the ministry on St. Lawrence Island, so the presbytery support continues to be very important for our work.