

# PRESBYTERY COORDINATING COMMISSION MINUTES

Presbytery of East Iowa 26 October 2017 Presbytery Office

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**PRESENT:** Karen Bartel (Treasurer), Rebecca Blair (Stated Clerk), Jim Claypool (Moderator), Jennifer Jennings (COM), Richard Miller (Trustees), Karen Minnis (Vice-Moderator, Trustees), Melody Oltmann (CPM), Larry Petrick (COM), Kris Ward (Personnel), Lori Wunder (Personnel)

**STAFF:** Kevin Cullum (Camp Wyoming), Sarah Hegar (Networking Associate), Harry Hoyt (COM Associate)

**EXCUSED:** Gary Burnett (Nominating), Curt Mayo (CPM)

Moderator RE Jim Claypool called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with prayer. The Moderator called upon Stated Clerk Dr. Rebecca Blair, who affirmed that a quorum was present. **A motion to approve the minutes of the 31 August 2017 meeting as amended was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.**

## **Moderator's Report**

Moderator Claypool raised the issue of how the Presbytery can be more connected. He asked if people who are not participating are interested in reconciliation. He explained the proposed use of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center to help us with a reconciliation process, noting that Lombard might help us to frame and engage the initial questions. He asked Stated Clerk Blair to present the substance of her information-finding conversation with the Reverend Bill Blank, Associate Director at Lombard. Mr. Blank inquired about the Presbytery's history and noted that the process he would propose would take place in two stages. The initial contacts with members of the Presbytery would be used to ascertain if a more engaged process would be productive or if there is unwillingness to re-engage with the work of the Presbytery or to engage in reconciliation process. The PCC engaged in extended, substantive discussion of Lombard, approaches to reconciliation, the layers of relational issues to be addressed, and the efficacy of any reconciliative initiative. **A motion to recommend that the Presbytery 1) authorize the Moderator to engage associates at Lombard Mennonite Peace Center to conduct an initial assessment concerning the possibilities for relationship and community building, and reconciliation processes within the Presbytery, and 2) authorize the PCC to pursue further information to determine any further action to be presented to the body at the 13 January 2018 stated meeting, was seconded and APPROVED by a vote of 7-2.** Members of the PCC also volunteered to call minister members who have been absent from stated meetings for a number of years.

Moderator Claypool then requested the Stated Clerk to review the Vision/Mission Strategic Planning documents from ACOG for the purpose of discussing the Presbytery's possible consideration of new structures at the upcoming stated meetings. Dr. Blair reviewed the vision, values, and new governance and missional structures. The PCC then discussed how to consider the new structure, opting for a First Reading with small table discussion at the 15 November

2017 stated meeting and the Second Reading with floor debate and vote at the 13 January 2018 stated meeting. The Stated Clerk observed that the adoption of the new structures would necessitate a revision of the Bylaws and Manual of Operation. In addition, the Personnel Committee would need to consult with the Trustees to determine what staffing would be affordable within the 2018 budget. Also, the Nominating Committee with support from the PCC would need to call those folks currently serving on committees to ascertain on which of the new teams they feel called to serve. The Stated Clerk noted that nominations for G.A. Commissioners need to be voted on at the November meeting as there is a December deadline by which they must be elected and reported to OGA.

Lastly, Moderator Claypool provided an update on Scott Nesbitt's legal process, noting that his request for change of bond has been considered in a hearing with the requested change denied. Additional hearings will be coming up, including a pre-trial conference to negotiate any agreement on potential plea bargains. Within our Presbytery, we have proactively been in conversation with the churches and other entities in which Scott served. To date, no victims have been identified. Our care efforts are still active, and the PCC should remain alert as the legal process moves forward. In the ecclesiastical setting, an investigating committee has been convened in John Knox Presbytery, where Scott is a member, and PEIA has appointed one member of that IC as a link between the two presbyteries.

### **Stated Clerk's Report**

The Stated Clerk solicited names of churches as possible locations for the 2018 stated meetings. She will provide more information about locations at the November PCC meeting. In addition, she presented the draft docket of the 16 November 2017 stated meeting for PCC review.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Karen Bartel called attention to the negative net figure on page three of the report, noting that with end of the year contributions, the hope is to break even at year's end.

### **Commission on Ministry Report**

Commission moderator Larry Petrick noted that COM will have no action items at present. The Commission is involved in several conversations within churches that are moving toward resolution. In the near future, COM will be presenting a policy statement on social media usage as a part of the policy on separation ethics.

### **Trustees' Report**

Vice-Moderator Karen Minnis reported that the sale of the current Presbytery office condo property has been referred to the Presbytery's attorney for final negotiation with the potential buyer. A ballpark figure of the possible sale price ranges from \$270,000-\$275,000.

Concerning the relocation initiative, three churches applied to house the Presbytery's files and provide office space for the Stated Clerk and Treasurer. A subcommittee of the Trustees has done a walk-through of each of the three sites and will present a recommendation to the next stated meeting.

The 2018 budget is as it is at present. The next meeting of the Trustees on 7 November will be devoted to getting the budget in shape for presentation to the body at the November stated meeting. The Vice-Moderator reported that she has met with the Personnel Committee to discuss salary figures with the aim of presenting a budget that does not presume deficit spending.

The Trustees have also just received an idea for a mission trip to Houston with coordination with PDA and New Covenant Presbytery. As this initiative develops into a solid proposal, the Trustees will consider funding.

Lastly, the Presbytery has concluded the sale of the Center Junction manse, and the church building and surrounding property has been placed with a realtor for sale. The demolition process is moving forward at Ainsworth, Bethel with asbestos abatement to be completed prior to the final demolition.

### **Personnel Committee Report**

Prior to the presentation of this report, Moderator Claypool asked staff to leave the room. Personnel Committee moderator Kris Ward noted that the committee had been prepared to submit a proposed Communications and Project Manager position description for approval at the upcoming stated meeting but withdrew the proposal in light of the proposed new structures. Personnel Committee is prepared to undertake discussion of necessary staffing for the new structures. It is important for the Presbytery to understand that the budget for staffing comes from per capita payments. In order to maintain a balance between administrative costs and mission funds, approximately \$191,000-\$216,000 are available for staff compensation. Thus, there is a need for ongoing coordination between the Personnel Committee and the Trustees.

The Personnel Committee does support equitable benefits, which include the 36% BOP benefit and the 1.5% cost of living increase that are parts of the Presbytery's compensation recommendations for 2018. Lastly, the Personnel Committee noted the need to complete performance reviews for 2017.

At the conclusion of this report, staff members were invited to rejoin the meeting.

### **Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report**

Committee moderator Melody Oltmann reported that Kristine Shultis has successfully completed the CRE preparation process and will be presented for examination at the November stated meeting. She also reported that the committee has been engaged with a CCRE candidate within the Presbytery who, when asked to preach before the committee, shared a plagiarized sermon. CPM offered a pastoral response, but will probably deny her moving forward in the process.

Inquirer Brenden McLean (CR-Westminster) will be presented at the January meeting for examination to move to Candidacy.

### **Camp Wyoming Report**

Executive Director Kevin Cullum reported a carry-over debt of \$12,000 from 2017 to 2018 due to the relatively new rental business that the Camp has initiated. The Camp is also starting a timber management plan, clearing 40 acres every 5 years and replanting while also cutting those trees that pose dangers. The cash from this enterprise will be used to pay down the \$12,000 debt. Director Cullum also reported that he attended a symposium on Christian formation at PCUSA headquarters in Louisville.

### **Networking Announcements**

- The *Dying is Not a Succession Plan* workshop with Deb DeMeester to be held at Echo Hill PC has been cancelled as only 10 people signed up.
- The AIM Network workshop will be offered on November 11 at the Coralville Library.
- A group from Mt. Pleasant, First and Mediapolis, First United will travel to St. Louis to participate in the PCUSA's *Hands and Feet Initiative*.

**A motion to adjourn was APPROVED.** Moderator Claypool adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m. with prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Blair, Ph.D.  
Stated Clerk

#### **NEXT PCC MEETING:**

Thursday, November 30, 2017  
10:00 AM  
Presbytery Office