

Presbytery Coordinating Commission Minutes

25 June 2015

Presbytery of East Iowa ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Presbytery Office ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 25 June 2015

Present: Mary Atwood (Immediate Past Moderator), Karen Bartel (Treasurer), Rebecca Blair (Stated Clerk), Anita Burnett (CPM), Harry Hoyt (COM Associate), Ann Luedtka (COM), Sam Massey (COM), Richard Miller (Personnel), Karen Minnis (Trustees), Kyle Otterbein (Moderator), Al Polito (Nominating)

Moderator Kyle Otterbein called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. with the lighting of the Christ Candle and prayer. Ruling Elder Karen Minnis shared the devotional from Psalm 130, followed by prayer. Moderator Otterbein called upon Stated Clerk Rebecca Blair, who affirmed that a quorum was present. **A motion to approve the minutes of the 21 May 2015 meeting was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.**

Moderator's Report

The Moderator suggested that his report and the discussion of long-range planning be moved to the end of the meeting. The PCC concurred by affirmative consensus.

Trustees Report

Trustee Karen Minnis reported that the Trustees met on June 18, 2015 with members of the Echo Hill Finance Committee to discuss the financial situation of the church. She reported that the Trustees were assured by this conversation that the session and Finance Committee of the church are following a prudent path as they approach the February 2016 advent of larger payments. The Trustees will continue to closely monitor this situation and to be in conversation with the church as this date draws nearer.

The Trustees are also beginning the process to generate the 2016 presbytery budget. Each committee, commission and task force moderator will soon receive an e-mail requesting funding priorities for 2016.

Personnel Committee Report

Committee moderator Richard Miller noted that the committee has put together and shared in our publication venues and other Presbyterian venues a communication concerning the application process for the revised Networking position. The committee will update PCC and the Presbytery as this process progresses. In addition, the Personnel Committee will be meeting with staff soon to conduct 6 month reviews.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Karen Bartel reviewed the financial report of account balances, noting that she continues to update accounts with the aim of bringing great clarity and transparency to the report. More review and adjustment will be necessary. She noted that monies for the Lahore security project are still coming in. So far, \$8220 in pledges have been

received to be matched. The monies will be sent during the first week of July. Moderator Otterbein noted that Majid Abel may be returning to Iowa City around August 1. **A motion to receive the report was seconded and APPROVED.**

Commission on Ministry Report

Ruling Elder Ann Luedtka, commission moderator, reported that COM met after the stated meeting to discuss further the pastor succession issue. All of the actions proposed at the stated meeting were approved. The new validated ministry policy will be included soon on the website.

COM leadership continues to meet with the Echo Hill Staff Relations Team and with the session. Good developmental work has occurred thus far concerning the establishment of better relationships and the revision of guiding governance documents. This is a comprehensive process that concerns the structure and governance processes for the church as a whole. The focus here is to shift the understanding from the church as a building to the church as a congregation enacting mission.

The CRE Task Force continues to work on policy and process statements to clarify and regularize the commissioning process. This group is also prioritizing contact with and affirmation of current CREs and their ministries.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report

Committee member Anita Burnett observed that since there are currently a low number of folks in the preparatory pipeline, the committee has an opportunity to look at its processes and procedures. There will be a work session to review and organize the files. Further, the committee is engaged in a conversation with persons in key leadership positions at Dubuque Theological Seminary concerning how the Presbytery may better partner with the seminary to ensure a high quality preparatory experience for those preparing for the ministry of word and sacrament.

Nominating Committee Report

Al Polito, committee moderator, announced that the deadline for selection of General Assembly commissioners has been moved to December, an earlier date than has been the case in past years. The committee will be meeting in July to begin this selection process. He further noted that the recommendation form and self-nomination form will be included on the new Presbytery website and will be included in *Out and About*. To facilitate this process, the committee will be generating and distributing descriptions of the skill sets needed for service on the various committees, commissions and task forces in order to assist those interested in nominating themselves or others to serve.

Moderator's Report—Long-Range Planning

Moderator Otterbein asked RE Ann Luedtka to share the outcome of her further inquiry into other consulting firms that might be appropriate to facilitate the long-term planning and reconciliation processes for the Presbytery. She reported that she and Rebecca Blair conversed by telephone with Linda Kuhn and Dave King of Sand Bur

Consulting in a 90-minute conversation on June 4. These consultants subsequently sent a proposal that seeks to address long-term systems planning and reconciliation issues.

It is important for the PCC and the Presbytery to make a commitment at the outset to carry through with the chosen process. These consultants would initially sit down with the PCC to discuss the potential plan. The PCC, in the event of proposing this process to the Presbytery, needs to clearly state that this process is inclusive—no smaller groups, cliques, etc. will be involved. Rather, the process will be comprehensive and transparent.

In making this proposal, it may be helpful to list what we have learned about our Presbytery's culture from past initiatives. This proposal needs to be concrete, so that the Presbytery understands that there will be clear outcomes. Also, if we decide to move forward with this proposed process, those who are disaffected need to be invited into the planning process from the beginning. Some may opt out of participation, but this choice would be theirs, rather than leaving them out of the process. The PCC discussion at this point centered upon two essential questions: 1) How do we bring meaning that is life-giving to what we do together as a Presbytery? and 2) How do we bring joy to the Presbytery and cultivate joyfulness as the predominate state of being in our culture?

A motion that, on August 10 or 11, depending upon availability of participants, the PCC contract with Sand Bur Consulting to converse with a small group of persons including the officers, other PCC members and members of the Presbytery at large, for a half-day meeting to begin the initial consultation process, was seconded and APPROVED.

A motion to adjourn was seconded and APPROVED. Moderator Otterbein adjourned the meeting with prayer at 11:40 a.m.

THE NEXT PCC MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 20 AT 10 AM. Ann Luedtka is responsible for devotions at the August meeting, and Mary Atwood has this responsibility for the September meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruling Elder Dr. Rebecca Blair
Stated Clerk

ATTACHMENT 1

Presbytery of East Iowa Proposal – Possible involvement of Sand Bur Consulting

(www.sandburconsulting.com; contact: linda@sandburconsulting;
dave@sandburconsulting.com; 608-847-5597)

Goals (as we understand them from conversation with Ann & Rebecca):

1. Live into new leadership model
 - Cultivate spiritual and theological resources
 - Support staff and volunteer leadership
 - Increase pool of effective leaders
 - Conduct presbytery meetings that matter

2. Encourage healing and reconciliation to build trust
 - Deal with grief and anxiety
 - Transition from a culture of power toward a culture of covenant community
 - Build effective working relationships
 - Conduct presbytery business transparently

Examples of support we might offer as the presbytery pursues these goals:

Work directly with COM to build trustworthy and effective relationships with churches.

- Training for COM members and leaders in use of theological and technical tools available to member churches
- Workshops focused on missional vitality and viability for congregations in clusters around the presbytery
- On-going coaching presence with COM over a period of several months

Coach staff, committee leadership and officers.

- Examine and modify structures and practices that have supported a power-based culture
- Identify and support practices that build trust and relationships
- Support presbytery meeting planning team
- Be available by phone or e-mail to listen, commiserate and coach.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

We would be directly accountable to the PCC during the time we are consulting with the presbytery. In consultation with the PCC we will modify the scope and context of our work to suit the emerging needs of the presbytery.

COST:

The costs to the presbytery will vary depending on how extensively we are asked to be involved. Our travel costs (mileage, meals and lodging) will be about \$400 each time we travel to Iowa City for a day. Perhaps we can combine activities into a couple of days per trip. We typically figure \$100 per hour of face-to-face time. Workshops, retreats, training events, etc are estimated at \$750 for half-day and \$1500 for full-day. We will provide a firm cost prediction before PCC approves any particular involvement on our part.

ACCESS:

During our work with the presbytery we will need direct access to:

- Staff (including any consultants currently engaged)

- PCC (including all officers, committee, and task force leaders)

- Presbytery meeting planning team

- Individual members of presbytery as their leadership significance is identified