

Presbytery Coordinating Commission Minutes 26 March 2015

Presbytery of East Iowa ■ ■ ■ ■ Presbytery Office ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 26 March 2015

Present: Karen Bartel (Treasurer), Rebecca Blair (Stated Clerk), Kevin Cullum (Camp Wyoming), Ann Luedtka (COM), Richard Miller (Personnel), Karen Minnis (Trustees), Melody Oltmann (CPM), Kyle Otterbein (Moderator), Al Polito (Nominating)

Moderator Kyle Otterbein called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. with the lighting of the Christ Candle. Ruling Elder Karen Bartel shared a devotional reflection in the context of John 12:24 from the Presbyterian Mission Yearbook concerning the "This Little Light of Mine" program in Palo Duro Presbytery. New mission initiatives and ministry development grants afford us the opportunity to shine our light more effectively in the larger world.

Moderator Otterbein called upon Stated Clerk Rebecca Blair, who affirmed that a quorum was present. **A motion to approve the minutes of the 19 February 2015 meeting was seconded and APPROVED unanimously.**

Moderator's Report

The Moderator opened discussion of the question: How do we communicate resilience to all churches in the Presbytery, particularly small churches? Some discussion of this question followed that connected to the larger long-range planning processes in the Presbytery. The PCC will discuss and take any proposed action upon the invitation from Phil Bergey and Laurie Ferguson at the April meeting.

Vice-Moderator's Report/Trustees

Vice-Moderator Saturnia reported that the Trustees have discussed a number of property issues:

- Since the Presbytery affirmed moving forward with legal action concerning the Middletown property, the Trustees will move forward with this process. The Trustees have raised a question concerning how the Presbytery can do a better job of working through the process of closing churches. Do we need to move back to an administrative commission process to ensure that all aspects of closing as listed on the Presbytery protocol are attended to in a sensitive and timely way and not left for the Trustees or Stated Clerk to manage?
- Concerning the two funds held at First Community Trust, the Trustees have taken action to close these and move the monies into clearly-labeled accounts at University of Iowa Community Credit Union
- The Trustees have continued discussion of the financial exigencies associated with the Echo Hill church. A proposed meeting involving two representatives from the Trustees and COM with the Echo Hill session will occur in early April.

The Trustees feel that a proposition to sell the current Presbytery office and move the office to Echo Hill as a part of some kind of shared lease/office/staff arrangement is worth exploring and could prove to be a win-win solution for the church and Presbytery in terms of stewardship of funds and staff resources. The PCC discussion of this proposal was generally favorable, noting that this proposition represents creative thinking. There was a consensus among the PCC members to move forward with discussion of the projected details and consequences of this proposition.

Personnel Committee Report

Committee moderator Richard Miller noted that exit interviews had been completed with Sarah Dyck and Pam Prather. These interviews provided useful information to inform the structuring of staff positions moving forward. The Personnel Committee feels that the Finance and Administrative Associate position is not a full-time position, but could be accomplished in 10 hours per week. It may be that the Presbytery would want to contract this function, perhaps with the Synod or share church staff if the office re-locates to a church. There is an unmet need for an administrative assistant (50-75% appointment) to provide support for the Stated Clerk and committees. The Personnel Committee requested permission from PCC to hire a temporary administrative assistant and temporary financial assistant until this position can be permanently staffed. **A motion to engage a temporary administrative assistant and a temporary financial assistant until permanent hires can be made with the Personnel Committee to determine compensation for these temporary positions that is consistent with the amounts budgeted by the Presbytery and to write specific position descriptions for these positions, was seconded and APPROVED.**

Teaching Elder Miller reported that the Personnel Committee has hired the Reverend Warren Jensen to fill the Pastor to Pastors position, effective 1 June 2015. The Reverend Mr. Jensen is a minister member of the UCC denomination and may serve in the Pastor to Pastor position through the provision of the Formula of Agreement. In addition to offering a fresh, outside perspective, he brings pastoral expertise in a number of essential areas including pastor counseling and psychology. He will be working 10-15 hours per week and will partner with the Personnel Committee to help shape this position, including investigating the Abbot Program as a workable model. As a part of this process, he will be introduced to the Presbytery in May and will work to establish appropriate boundaries around this position as he creates a place of care and theological inquiry for pastors.

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. Mission receipts have increased during this reporting period. **A motion to receive the report was seconded and APPROVED.** In closing, Ruling Elder Bartel observed that she intends to write a manual of operation as a reference for the person hired to fill the financial associate position.

Stated Clerk's Report

Stated Clerk Blair called attention to the materials concerning the AIM Network that were mailed with the docket for this meeting. Following discussion of these materials, a **motion to recommend to the Presbytery approval of the AIM Network as an authorized network of the Presbytery of East Iowa and to recommend that the network receive \$500 in funding was seconded and APPROVED.**

Commission on Ministry Report

Ruling Elder Ann Luedtka, commission moderator, reviewed the COM policy recommendations that were approved at the March stated meeting. These changes will be made in the affected documents as soon as possible and posted on the Presbytery website. Ruling Elder Luedtka affirmed that COM takes the referred matter concerning pastor succession quite seriously and will organize and invite members of the Presbytery to participate in an open conversation about this issue soon.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report

Committee moderator Melody Oltmann reported that the results of the CPM survey of teaching elders achieved a 25-30% return rate, which is quite good for these kinds of surveys. CPM is considering how to process and report the survey results.

Camp Wyoming Report

Kevin Cullum, Executive Director, reported that the Camp Board will be able to make financial projections for the coming year, starting April 1. During March, the Camp did not need to tap into the line of credit, so the current balance remains at \$32, 925.91. In order to assist the Camp with regularizing its financial cycle, Mr. Cullum requested that the Presbytery's annual \$40,000 allocation of funding to the Camp be disbursed over eight months rather than in a single payment. The Trustees will consider this request and make a recommendation to the Presbytery. Also, the Camp will be requesting of COM permission to celebrate communion over this camping season.

Nominating Committee Report

Al Polito, committee moderator, 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*. Further, he noted that 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.

Other Business

Moderator Otterbein shared that he had received a telephone call from Pastor Majid Abel, pastor of the Naulakha Presbyterian Church and Stated Clerk of Lahore, Pakistan. With the recent actions by suicide bombers in Lahore, Christians must take measures

rapidly to increase security, including double-gating property and installing higher fencing with razor wire. These fortifications will cost approximately \$25,000. After discussion it was agreed that Moderator Otterbein will contact Pastor Abel to write a jointly-authored letter to be sent to all of the churches in the Presbytery. The Moderator will also send a letter to the Presbyterian Mission Agency requesting that funds from the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering be diverted to help Christians in Pakistan increase their security. **A motion that the Trustees put forward to the Presbytery a recommendation that a matching gift campaign be launched with dollar for dollar matching of donations from churches up to \$12,500 from currently held disaster relief funds, if the way be clear, was seconded and APPROVED.**

A motion to adjourn at 12:07 pm was seconded and APPROVED. The meeting closed with collective prayer.

The next meeting of the PCC is scheduled for Thursday, April 30 at 10:00 am in the Presbytery Office conference room. PLEASE NOTE: Committee reports for this meeting are due to the Stated Clerk no later than April 23.

Devotions this year will be supplied by the following persons:

March—Karen Bartel

April—Kevin Cullum

May—Al Polito

June—Karen Minnis

July—Mary Atwood

August—Ann Luedtka

Respectfully submitted,

Ruling Elder Dr. Rebecca Blair
Stated Clerk