

PRESBYTERY REPORTS

Report from the Stated Clerk

- The Stated Clerk reports approval of the commission to install Rev. Robert Zemke on April 18, 2021 at Ashburn Presbyterian Church, 4:00 pm.
- The Stated Clerk reports the dismissal of Rev. Daniel Duggan, HR, to Minnesota Valleys Presbytery.
- The Stated Clerk reports the dismissal of Rev. Edward Brandt, HR, to Peace Valley Presbytery

The Stated Clerk approved the following ministers to moderate session meetings:

- Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence to moderate the session meeting of Boyds PC March 10, 2021 and April 8, 2021
- Rev. Leslianne Braunstein to moderate the session meeting of Boyds PC April 20, 2021.
- Rev. Roy Howard to moderate the session meeting of Leesburg PC March 16, 2021 at 7:00 PM
- Rev. Lisa Larson to moderate the session meeting of Chesterbrook Taiwanese PC on June 6, 2021, and August 1 2021,
- Rev Rick Snyder to moderate the session meeting of Hermon PC on Feb.21, 2021
- Rev. Larry Hayward to moderate the called session meeting of Vienna PC on April 18, 2021
- Rev. Larry Hayward to moderate the stated session meeting of Vienna PC on April 20, 2021
- Rev. Stan Ott to moderate the congregational meeting of Vienna PC on May 2, 2021
- Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence to moderate the session meetings of Mizo PC on Feb. 14, March 14, April 11, May 9 2021
- Rev. Patrick Jackson to moderate the session meeting of Northeastern PC on May 8, 2021.
- The Stated Clerk reports that she has implemented the plan adopted by presbytery in May 2015 for the equalization of Ruling Elder commissioners and minister of Word and Sacrament commissioners eligible to vote at presbytery meetings as mandated in Book of Order G-3.0303 with the following results:
 - Ministers of Word and Sacrament Resident Within the Bounds 297
 - Ruling Elder Commissioners by Church Size 221
 - Ruling Elders on Leadership Council 8
 - Ruling Elders Chairing Committees 7
 - Officers/Exempt Staff 2
 - Ruling Elders Needed for Equalization: 58

So, the Stated Clerk allocated an additional Ruling Elder to 58 congregations regardless of membership size beginning with Trinity of Herndon and ending with Hermon PC as listed in the National Capital Presbytery Directory.

Report from the Leadership Council

Leadership Retreat/Meeting Minutes, April 7, 2021

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Via Zoom

Present: Charles Barber, Lee Bishop, Brian Clark, Miriam Dewhurst, Quinn Fox, Pat Futato, Diane Hendricks, Dave McClung Neill Morgan, Sterling Morse, Michael Rankin, Elsie Reid, Le Quan Turner

Excused: Nancy Neal, Laura Cunningham

NCP Staff: John Molina Moore, LaJuan Quander, Jan Moody, Tara Spuhler McCabe, Heather Deacon, Dina Bickel

Chair Charles Barber opened the retreat/meeting with prayer at 9:02 a.m.

John Molina-Moore led devotion with Isaiah 43:15-21 with focus on Isaiah 43:19 – “*God is doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?*” John charged the leadership to find the balance between creating change yet honoring what might be perceived as a loss. Some may feel excitement while other may feel a loss. We are looking for what God is pointing us towards - a new thing that is right before our eyes.

Jan led us through the organization and structure of NCP and where Leadership Council fits in. It was clarified that the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinating Team is under COM. Heather spoke about financial aspects of NCP; the policies, the players, and the type of funds NCP has and the role of Leadership Council. John spoke of what NCP, the body, decides on and what Leadership does. Tara led us in a team building exercise- In a simple drawing, who are we as NCP as it relates to the Triune God?

During the financial discussion, there was a focused discussion on the DC Resurrection Fund and the NCP Resurrection Fund. The DC Resurrection Fund is restricted to the ministry within DC. The NCP Resurrection Fund is directed toward strengthening and transforming all NCP congregations and worshipping communities. John noted that NCP has three churches in DC who cannot be sustainable if these churches operate the way they currently are. NCP can/will step in to help and how do we spend these funds wisely. Tara pointed out that NCP can and is facilitating the evaluative piece to help these congregations along. Time, pastoral care and need for full time ministry staff are all needed so laity is not burdened with vision and managing property. Charles asked about financial controls within NCP. Heather and John have shared access to accounts and more checks and balances will be implemented in the future. Budget and Finance and Leadership Council can take on some periodic checks.

Charles began Business Meeting at 11:11 a.m.

Appoint Elder Cynthia Gervais (Northeastern PC) to the Dismantling Racism Team.

Motion carries.

Pat Futato and Dave McClung volunteered to review the 2020 NCP Audit.

Debrief of Presbytery Meeting – Plan to move to hybrid possibly in May but definitely in September. Majority of people were pleased that we tried to accommodate the missing personal interaction during the meeting. LaJuan noted that although members wanted personal interaction, many had their video off. The time commitment for Open Space, Worship and Business meeting was an obstacle. Carving out 3-4 hours is tough. Jan noted that any dates and times were voted on and approved. Any changes require voting from Leadership Council and the presbytery and should be done at the beginning of the organizational year. Credit to the NCP staff for using technology in a successful way.

Updates:

Former Community PC Property – Motion to allow continued conversations along this direction of affordable housing but any final deals would need to come back to Leadership Council for approval. *Motion carries.*

Healthy Boundaries – Will tweak policy. Partnering with a new organization to do it digitally. There might be a fee and the training will come out of pastor’s Continuing Education. It’s an evolving training required every three years.

Training for Pastors - Partnering with Convergence for Trainings/Webinars for pastors. Requesting release of funds from the Retreat Fund for the purpose of a digital training. Request to withdraw \$6,000 for pastors’ cohort training event centered on preaching, ministry leadership without burnout and family systems. *Motion moved and carries.*

More work on DC and NCP Resurrection Funds - Charles stated additional work needs to be done on the Resurrection Funds. A Resurrection Fund working group was established to document the history of the funds, to provide a written description of the funds, and to draft clear guidelines on how the funds might best be used for the benefit of District churches and the Presbytery as a whole. This team would come back to the Leadership Council with their work and proposals. Brian suggested a team of 3-5 led by John. A team was created to include: John Molina-Moore, Sterling Morse, Mike Rankin, Heather Deacon, and Le Quan Turner.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Dave McClung at 12:06 p.m.

Leadership Council Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2021

12:30 PM via Zoom

Present: Charles Barber, Lee Bishop, Brian Clark, Laura Cunningham, Miriam Dewhurst, Quinn Fox, Pat Futato, Diane Hendricks, Dave McClung, Neill Morgan, Sterling Morse, Nancy Neal, Michael Rankin, Le Quan Turner

Excused: Elsie Reid

NCP Staff: John Molina Moore, LaJuan Quander, Jan Moody, Tara Spuhler McCabe, Heather Deacon, Dina Bickel

Guest: Karl Mattison, Stewardship Committee Chair

LC Chair Charles Barber opened the meeting with prayer at 12:30 PM.

John Molina-Moore's devotion, "Reframing our own Christology", invited members of LC to share experiences of knowing and seeing ways Jesus is moving in their lives.

Karl Mattison, Stewardship Committee Chair, presented the Annual Report of the Stewardship Committee. Because of the pandemic, the committee adapted their original plans for 2020 programming. They surveyed NCP churches to learn how they were adapting their stewardship programs given the challenges of virtual worship. They received many good and optimistic responses. The committee conducted another survey mid-pandemic. The response was not as great, but churches still felt optimistic and reported that giving was stable. The Stewardship Committee hosted a series of webinars with a focus on stewardship in uncertain times. LC commended the good and faithful work of the committee and NCP support staff.

Leadership Council voted on the following recommendation from Budget and Finance:

Motion: *Leadership Council moves to approve Budget and Finance Committee's recommended 2022 Budget Timeline.*

Approved

Leadership Council discussed the status of the loan with Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program to Wheaton Community Church by which National Capital Presbytery (NCP) is a co-borrower and then voted on the following motions:

Motion: *Leadership Council moves to approve the recommendation from the Administrative Commission on Congregational Property (ACCP) of National Capital Presbytery (NCP) that NCP pay in full the balance of the loan (the balance, as of 04/29/2021 was \$112,851.05), with Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program to Wheaton Community Church (formally known as Beltsville United Presbyterian Church) by which NCP is a co-borrower.*

Approved

Motion: Leadership Council moves to approve the Budget and Finance Committee recommendation that National Capital Presbytery (NCP) utilize money from the NCP Resurrection Fund to satisfy in full, as a lump sum payment, the balance of the loan, with Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program to Wheaton Community Church (formerly known as Beltsville United Presbyterian Church) by which NCP is a co-borrower.

Approved

Motion: Leadership Council moves to authorize General Presbyter, ACCP and CDC, in their respective roles, to memorialize the outstanding debt and urge Wheaton Community Church to cooperate and work through the steps to determine viability.

Approved

Leadership Council voted on a recommendation from the Church Development Commission to reduce the number of members serving on the commission from 12 to 9.

Motion: Leadership Council moves that a change to the Manual of Administrative Operations to provide that the membership for the Church Development Commission read: "Commission shall be composed of 9 ruling and teaching elders divided into three (3) equal classes, one of which is elected each year by the Presbytery. Term of service is three (3) years with an individual eligible to serve up to six (6) consecutive years."

Approved

Leadership Council discussed ways to provide guidance and support to congregations discerning best practices for returning to public worship.

Updates:

Church of the Pilgrims - Charles Barber, Neill Morgan, Juli Wilson- Black, Lloyd Morgan, and John Molina-Moore continue to meet, together with a representative of the church session, to develop plans for the church property. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent to developers who have 60 days to respond. Meanwhile the working group continues to follow the progress of the Washington D.C. proposed comprehensive plan that will set the regulatory framework for zoning and land use.

Cooperative Parish - John Molina-Moore and Jan Moody met with Reverends Dawn May (Manassas PC) and Eric Beckman (Greenwich PC) to discuss possible future shared ministries with churches in Virginia located in the same geographical area.

Boys – Pat Futato, member of the Boyds PC AC, reported that Moderator Michael Rankin approved the addition of Rev. Leslianne Braunstein, newly hired Stated Supply at Boyd PC, to the AC. The AC continues its work with the session and congregation.

Insurance Claim – John Molina-Moore and Heather Deacon are in conversation with the NCP insurance company to discern the pros and cons of filing a claim. They will report back to Leadership Council.

Next Leadership Council meeting will be Wednesday, June 2 @ 12:30 PM.

Rev. Neill Morgan closed the meeting in prayer at 2:40 PM.

Report of the National Capital Presbytery
Administrative Commission for Boyds Presbyterian Church
May 13, 2021

At the November 17, 2020 NCP meeting, the following motion was approved:

The Coordinating Commission of COM moves, with the approval of the Leadership Council, that the presbytery designate an Administrative Commission (AC), members to be appointed by the moderator, for Boyds Presbyterian Church (BPC) to address rebuilding of trust in leadership and ensuring effective ministry to the current congregation and the community. The AC will have the authority to assume original jurisdiction to accomplish these goals if it judges that action advisable.

Moderator Michael Rankin appointed Reverends Mary Beth Lawrence and Patrick McElwaine and Ruling Elders Pat Futato and Jan Summers to serve on the AC. In May, 2021, Moderator Rankin appointed to the AC a fifth member: the Rev. Leslieanne Braunstein, currently serving BPC as Stated Supply Pastor.

Beginning in December 2020, the AC met regularly to share observations and to review the ministry of the church. Every meeting began with prayer and reflection on 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 and its reminder of our call to serve as ambassadors for Christ with an appeal to be reconciled to God.

In consultation with the BPC session (Session), the AC attended the following church gatherings: session meetings, deacon meetings, listening sessions with members of the congregation, one congregational meeting, Bible study classes, a Prayer Walk, Nominating and Worship committee meetings, New Officer Training and Sunday worship services.

Based on its review, the AC's findings are:

1. It was revealed in AC listening sessions and correspondence with BPC members that several members orchestrated an effort to gain control of the nominating committee of the congregation beginning in the fall of 2018, and continuing through 2020, to ensure individuals with certain views of the future of the church were nominated to join the session, which they now refer to as "the reconstituted session." This orchestration was confined to certain individuals and was not discussed as part of the nominating process and was intended to create a specific majority for session deliberations.
 - a. *G-2.0401 – Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons – The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation's membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness.*
 - b. The priority to screen both members of the nominating committee and then nominated elders according to their views on the future of the congregation, and to withhold from the congregation at large this screening criterion, is a violation of the above reference from the Form of Government.
 - c. This abridgement of doing all decently and in order has led directly to many members of the congregation believing their efforts and views were not being heard, resulting in their exit from the congregation.
 - d. The long-term effects of this abridgement threaten the ongoing existence of the congregation.

2. The session failed to work in a connected and missional fashion in accord with the presbytery's stated mission emphasis.
 - a. *G-1.0101 – The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for Worship, and to offer care and nurture to God's children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, and to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world.*
 - b. With the arrival of Interim Pastor (later Stated Supply) Carrie Yearick in January, 2017, session (i.e. the session prior to the so-called "reconstitution") spent nearly two years of study and discernment, resulting in new mission and vision statements, and a comprehensive Strategic Plan for congregational revitalization, including a new position description for a Director of Next Generation Ministries (DNGM). This plan was presented to the congregation and set in motion. Initial progress was very encouraging, and included at least one large, unsolicited donation toward the effort.
 - c. In the March 2021 stated meeting of the BPC session, with AC members present, session members revealed the action taken in October 2020, stopping implementation of the Strategic Plan, and returning the donation(s) noted above.
 - d. Session also voted in October 2020, to not renew the contract of the Stated Supply Pastor, further impeding the established mission and vision of the church.
 - e. Failure to support the vision of the church and the ministry of the congregation to reach the community is an abrogation of the session's responsibility as given to them in the Form of Government.
 - f. These actions jeopardize the witness, viability, and ministry of the congregation and do not seek the glory of God.

3. The reconstituted session took action in opposition to the voice of the congregation as expressed in the CAT Scan Interpretation provided to them in 2016. This led to a decline in trust by members of the congregation and a failure to address issues of congregational health which are legitimately the obligation of the session.
 - a. *G-1.0103 – The session leads the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.*
 - b. The vision of the current Session does not align with the radical welcome and love required by Scripture or with the Great Ends of the Church and other objectives of the Book of Order.
 - c. The Session abrogated its stated duties in failing to act on and implement the findings of the church assessment.
 - d. The Session has a responsibility in accord with the Form of Government to seek the upbuilding of the whole church and provide service for all people.
 - e. In rejecting the Strategic Plan formulated to implement the recommendations of the assessment, the session knowingly rejected an opportunity to fulfill its responsibility to build the entire church and provide service to all people – most notably new neighbors without a church home. Session took this action without providing a blueprint for a viable future.

4. In view of the above abrogation of responsibility by the Session of Boyds Presbyterian Church, the Administrative Commission, after consultation with the session on May 13, 2021, will meet to decide if they will assume original jurisdiction of the congregation.
 - a. *G-3.0303 e. (The Presbytery may) assume original jurisdiction in any situation in which it determines that a session cannot exercise its authority.*
 - b. Through the above actions this Administrative Commission duly appointed by the Presbytery believes the session of Boyds Presbyterian Church is unable and unwilling to manage its affairs wisely and in accord with the provisions of the Form of Government. The actions taken over the last few years have threatened irreversible harm to the ministry of Boyds church and the members over which the session was to provide care and support.
 - c. To provide the congregation of Boyds Presbyterian Church the care and leadership required by our Form of Government it is essential a new path forward be established. Your Administrative Commission intends to work closely with the current membership and will also reach out to recent members who have withdrawn their membership to determine the path forward.

5. In assuming original jurisdiction of the existing session, the AC would become the council for the congregation (i.e. the BPC Session) and take on the responsibilities assigned to the session according to the *Book of Order*.
 - a. G-3.0201-Session has responsibility and power to provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard; provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received; and to nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ.
 - b. G-3.0205- Session shall prepare and adopt a budget; determine the distribution of the congregation's benevolences; provide full information to the congregation concerning its decisions in such matters; and elect a treasurer.
 - c. G-3.0104- Session will elect a clerk.
 - d. F-1.0404- Session will appoint a committee to develop a strategic mission plan that reflects a new openness to God's mission in the world with vision "to see both the possibilities and perils of the church's institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God's activity in the world." This plan will be presented to session and then to the congregation.
 - e. F-1.0302a, b- Session will appoint a committee to reflect on the marks of the church and how it is called to seek "to include all people and is never content to enjoy the benefits of Christian community for itself alone" and to strive for the "purity, righteousness, and truth revealed to us in Jesus Christ and promised to all people in God's new creation."
 - f. The session-appointed committees will present monthly reports to session and the congregation.

The AC presented this report to the Session of Boyds Presbyterian Church at its Stated Meeting on May 13, 2021. Subsequent to that meeting, the AC met and voted to assume original jurisdiction, effective May 13, 2021 at 8:00 pm.