

STATED MEETING

9 JUNE 2020

PRESBYTERY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
Meeting by Zoom

The stated meeting of the Presbytery of New Brunswick was held on 9 June 2020 by Zoom conference.

ROLL

To be supplied for the permanent minutes.

WE GATHER IN FELLOWSHIP

The presbytery was called to order with prayer at 6:30 pm.

The moderator explained to the presbytery the procedures that we would use while meeting by Zoom. The moderator also told the presbytery that at 8:46 pm the order of the day would be a moment of silence for George Floyd and for the struggle of our nation to emerge from the endemic racism that strangles us.

The reverends Carlton Johnson, Associate for the Vital Congregations initiative and Tom Bryson, pastor of Southminster Presbyterian Church in Vestavia Hills, Alabama were introduced as guests.

The stated clerk reported that a quorum was present.

The stated clerk reminded the presbytery that we were meeting remotely under the rules from the 11th edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, which specify that, for a remote meeting to be legitimate, every attendee must be able to see and hear every other attendee and that each and every attendee must be able to address the whole assembly.

WE GATHER IN WORSHIP

The presbytery took the pleasure of worship together under the theme "From Lament to Hope." The reverends Marcia Lewis, Marcus Lambright, Wendi Werner, Len Scales, and James Klotz led the presbytery in worship with words from Isaiah 55, Psalm 134, Matthew 11, Psalm 22, Romans 8, and Isaiah 58. Music was led by Dr. Shelley Sanders Zuckerman.

**WE GATHER TO EQUIP OURSELVES AND ONE ANOTHER
IN MUTUAL MINISTRY**

Guests, the reverends Carlton Johnson and Tom Bryson led the presbytery through a review of the Vital Congregations Initiative. They shared the various measures of congregational vitality, and the seven marks of a vital congregation. They explained the two year program

and the sequence of the work in the Vital Congregations Initiative. They highlighted the themes of Reforming, Missional Clustering, and Resurrection. The variety of resources available to churches and presbyteries participating in the Vital Congregations Initiative were reviewed. The relationship between the initiative and the Matthew 25 Vision was explained. Emphasis was laid upon the themes of systemic racism, structural poverty, and the need for congregational vitality to deal with them.

WE GATHER to CARRY OUT the WORK of the CHURCH

The docket was presented.

6:30 pm Welcome
 Worship
 Equipping Us for Vital Congregations
 Consent Agenda
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Commissioning for General Assembly
 Committee On Ministry
 Introduction of the reverend Dan Dorrow,
 new minister at Lambertville
 Report of the Central Leadership Team
 Music Sharing Project
 Networking & Interactive Series
 Report of the Trustees – Treasurer’s report
 New Jersey Missional Structures Working Group Update
9:30 pm Adjournment

The docket was approved.

The consent agenda was presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

Committee on Ministry:

REPORTS:

1. Approved call of the reverend Dan Dorrow to serve the Lambertville Presbyterian Church.

Acting on behalf of presbytery on 2 June 2020 the Committee on Ministry approved the call of the reverend Dan Dorrow to serve the Lambertville Presbyterian Church, received him as a member of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, and approved his terms of call.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Cash Salary | \$ 0.00 |
| value of Manse | \$ 36,000.00 |
| Social Security offset | \$ 2,754.00 |

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| BoP Benefits | |
| pension | \$ 3,960.00 |
| death and disability | \$ 360.00 |
| major medical | \$ 15,750.00 |
| supplemental vision & dental | \$ 997.56 |
| Reimbursable expenses | \$ 3,100.00 |
| total compensation | \$ 62,921.56 |

Committee on Preparation for Ministry:
REPORTS:

1. Enrolled Kelly Spencer as an inquirer.

On 1 June 2020, acting on behalf of the presbytery, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry enrolled Kelly Spencer as an inquirer into candidacy for ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Kelly Spencer is a member of the Slackwood Presbyterian Church.

Report of the Stated Clerk

RECOMMENDS:

- 1. That the presbytery approve the minutes of the 12 May 2020 meeting of the presbytery.**

The Consent Agenda was approved.

REPORT of the NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The reverend Amy Lincoln reported for the Nominating Committee.

The reverend Jenny Lee was nominated to serve on the Committee on Representation. There were no nominations from the floor.

The presbytery elected the reverend Jenny Lee to serve on the Committee on Representation.

COMMISSIONING for GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The reverend Molly Dykstra led a service of commissioning for our commissioners to General Assembly, the reverend Karen Hernandez-Granzen and elder Cherry Oakley, and our Young Adult Advisory Delegate, Nora Flamer. Prayer was led by the reverend Larissa Abazia Kwong.

REPORT of the COMMITTEE on MINISTRY

The reverend Sharyl Dixon reported for the Committee on Ministry.

As reported in the consent agenda the Committee on Ministry approved the call of the reverend Dan Dorrow to serve the Lambertville Presbyterian Church. She introduced him to the presbytery.

In September the Committee on Ministry will lead the presbytery in an appreciation of the service that the reverend Bob Tomlinson has rendered the presbytery these last three years.

REPORT of the CENTRAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Elder Gooitzen van der Wal then reported for the Central Leadership Team.

Central Leadership Team REPORT TO PRESBYTERY of NEW BRUNSWICK 6.9.20

A. COVID-19 Update:

1. Ongoing conversations and projects

Weekly zoom calls for pastors and congregational leaders continuing - thanks to Sharyl Dixon (Kingston, Committee on Ministry Chair), Cherry Oakley (Westminster Trenton, Moderator), and Gooitzen van der Wal (Lawrenceville, Elder, Central Leadership Team) for facilitating.

Out of the Weekly Zoom Calls, worship sharing, and music resource sharing efforts are continuing. Contact Rev. Sharyl Dixon (Kingston) to help with future worship sharing; contact Elder Mike Meduski (Hamilton Square) re. music resource sharing. Thanks to Sharyl and Mike for their leadership.

Pandemic Response Conversation Group - meeting weekly on Monday mornings at 9am, consisting of county resourcing reps, leaders of Grants, Urban Mission Network Committee, & Social Witness, with Moderators and Transitional leader - all welcome - for zoom link contact presbytery office.

2. New action: At the Pandemic Response Group's request:

The Central Leadership Team wishes to identify one or more leaders from each county in our presbytery to take part in their county's COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster) in order to inform our presbytery's and congregations' community engagement. Currently, presbytery members are involved in Mercer and Somerset County. If any are already engaged in Hunterdon or Somerset COADs, please inform the Central Leadership Team; if you would be interested in engaging with the Hunterdon or Somerset COAD, or any other, and need assistance in doing so, please contact the Central Leadership Team.

B. The Central Leadership Team is convening a group to lead us in responding to racism and bias. For more information contact the Central Leadership Team.

C. Grants.

1. Grants received to date from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance/Presbyterian Mission Agency for outreach or mission continuity: Milford - \$2500; Westminster, Trenton - \$2500; Iglesia Presbiteriana Nueva Vida, Hamilton - \$2500; Arabic New Worshipping Community - \$2500; CAFE para el Alma New Worshipping Community - \$7500; Witherspoon Street, Princeton - \$5000; Dayton - to be determined 2. The Central Leadership Team asks the presbytery to endorse and adopt two grant applications: a. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Short/Long-Term Recovery Grant (completed and submitted on May 7).

MOTION: Endorse and adopt a \$25,000 Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) Short /Long -Term Recovery Grant application request submitted on May 7 to help in funding staffing/leadership personnel to establish a Mission Networking Group within the Presbytery.

Rationale: The grant project requests \$25,000 to "Create an ongoing presbytery network between local and regional congregational & community crisis/disaster/emergency resources" by establishing a Mission Network Working Group, enabled by a part-time presbytery staff role of Mission Networker, part-time compensated leadership roles among 6 existing presbytery members, and other volunteer participants. The funding is for a 12-month project. For further details see grant application, attached.

PROJECT FUNDS:

\$30,000 = from Presbytery sources:

\$5,000 from Peacemaking Fund [approved]

\$15,000 from Urban Fund [there are funds available both at the discretion of the Trustees and the Urban Mission Network Committee; we would work out details]

\$5,000 from congregational/presbytery gifts [we would have a fund drive]

\$5,000 from current staffing support [Presbytery administration would provide office support]

\$25,000 = Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Short/Long Term Recovery Grant

TOTAL = \$55,000

PROJECT BUDGET:

\$28,500 Networker compensation (1 person)

\$19,000 County & urban center leads compensation (6 people) [funds would be given to local congregation church to offset employee compensation]

\$5,000 Presbytery office administrative support

\$2,500 Travel (\$0.575/mi), meeting hospitality, communications
TOTAL = \$55,000

The presbytery deliberated the motion. In answer to a question, the stated clerk explained that “endorse,” means to approve making the application for the grant; “Adopt” means agreeing to carry out the project or projects specified in the grant application.

MOTION: It was moved and approved to divide the question between “endorse” and “adopt.”

The presbytery resumed deliberation on the motion to endorse the grant application. There were several questions about the project summary.

The presbytery voted to endorse the grant application.

The presbytery resumed deliberation on the motion to adopt the grant application.

It was moved and approved to refer the question to the trustees.

b. Application to Presbyterian Mission Agency for Vital Congregation Initiative Grant (\$50,000).

MOTION: Endorse and adopt a \$50,000 Presbytery Mission Agency grant for the Vital Congregation Initiative (Vital Congregations Initiative) to assist in funding Vital Congregations Initiative activities within the Presbytery for the years 2021 and 2022.

Rationale: The Presbyterian Mission Agency has notified all Vital Congregations Initiative presbyteries that they are eligible for a grant to fund their participation - to compensate facilitators, cover congregational costs, send participants to conferences, etc. This grant application is in process. The grant proposes the presbytery commit \$10,000 in each 2021 and 2022 to the Vital Congregations Initiative. \$5,000 is contained in our 2020 budget for Vital Congregations Initiative expenses.

The presbytery deliberated. Questions were asked about the grant application itself, which is not yet finished.

MOTION: It was moved and approved to divide the question between “endorse” and “adopt.”

The presbytery resumed deliberation on the motion to endorse the grant application.

The presbytery voted to endorse the grant application.

The presbytery resumed deliberation on the motion to adopt the grant application.

It was moved and approved to refer the question to the trustees.

3. The Central Leadership Team will hold a Post-Presbytery on Thursday, July 30 from 7-8:30pm to discuss the presbytery's application for the Lilly Thriving Congregations Grant, submitted on the presbytery's behalf on Monday, June 1. The presbytery will be asked to endorse and adopt the grant application at our regular meeting on Saturday, September 12.

D. The Central Leadership Team calls for a special meeting of the presbytery on Tuesday, July 14 at 7:00pm to adopt a new staffing configuration, position description/s, and compensation, and to elect/appoint a search team for this/these position/s, with candidate/s to brought to the presbytery at our September presbytery meeting for approval.

Motion: It was moved and seconded that the Presbytery meet only once in July and direct the Central Leadership Team to prepare the business for that meeting, including any discussion of the presbytery's application for the Lilly Thriving Congregations Grant, and that the Personnel Committee be directed to prepare a recommendation on any staffing matters related to these issues.

The presbytery deliberated, giving attention to the relationship between the Lilly Grant and possible changes in our staffing configuration.

The motion carried by a vote of 29 to 9.

E. Central Leadership Team Initiatives:

1. Vital Congregations Initiative (Vital Congregations Initiative) -

see separate documents; "equipping" portion of meeting tonight with Vital Congregations Initiative national staff Carlton Johnson and Presbytery of New Brunswick facilitator coach Tom Bryson.

National conferences are now scheduled to be held online July 21-22. Everyone encouraged to take part; more information to be provided as soon as available.

Facilitator conference August 17-18.

See our presbytery timeline in separate documents.

If your Session would like to discuss becoming involved, please contact a facilitator: Nina Reeder at ninareeder@gmail.com or Molly Dykstra @ mollymdykstra@gmail.com.

2. Matthew 25:

We are now at seven congregations in our presbytery! One more (20% of our congregations) and we can act to become a Matthew 25 presbytery. We hope to do so at our September meeting.

Milford

Ewing/Covenant

Westminster Trenton

Witherspoon Princeton

Flemington

Bound Brook

New Brunswick

F. Central Leadership Team gives thanks

We are very thankful that Rev. Leslie Dobbs-Allsop has joined the Presbytery as the interim Presbytery leader. Leslie has been a great support for the staff, the Central Leadership Team, and Trustees, and she has been very involved with the Grant applications, spending more than the contracted 10 hrs/week during this difficult pandemic time. Thank you, Leslie!

Also, a big thank you to the teams that have been writing Grant applications during the last two months.

The presbytery halted to observe the Order of the Day: a moment of silence for George Floyd and for the struggle of our nation to emerge from the endemic racism that strangles us.

REPORT of the TRUSTEES

Treasurer Linda Gilmore reported for the Trustees.

The treasurer presented the financial report as of the end of April 2020.

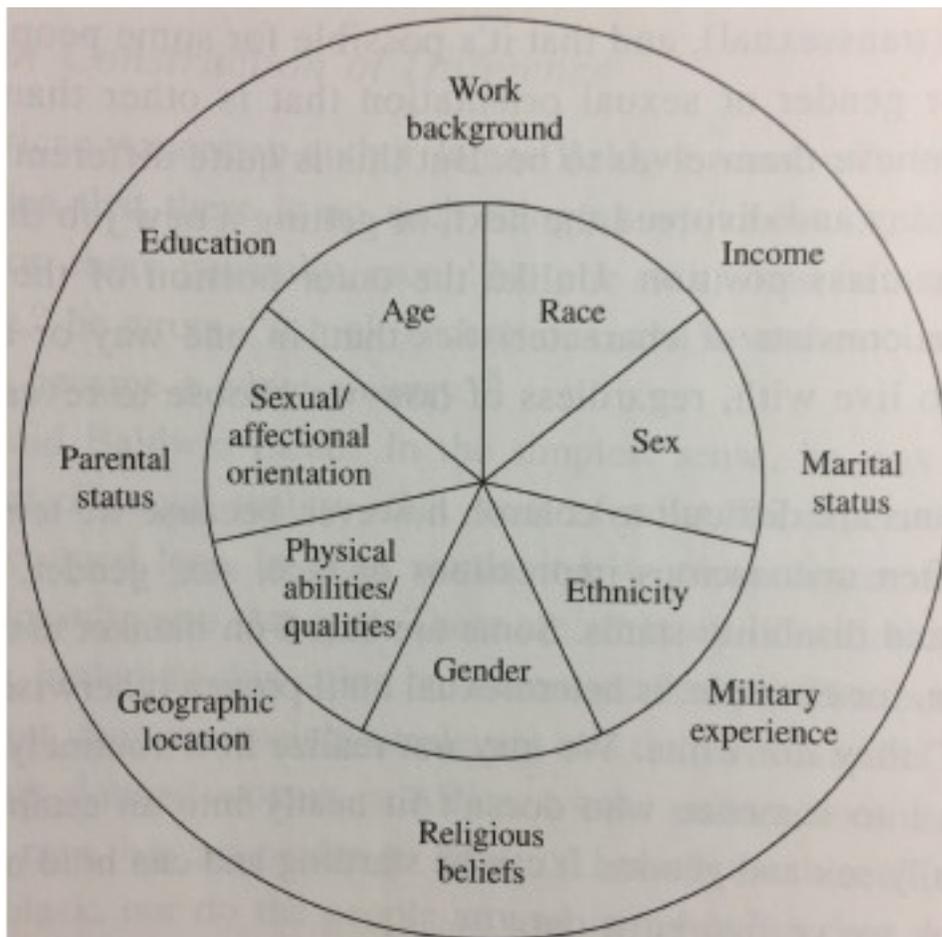
The treasurer made the presbytery aware of the possibility of congregations taking out Payroll Protection Program loans and warned that care is necessary in doing so, especially with respect to preparing to apply for loan forgiveness.

REPORT of the COMMISSIONERS to the NEW JERSEY MISSIONAL STRUCTURES WORKING GROUP

The reverend Wendi Werner and elder Sal Lalama reported on the work of the New Jersey Missional Structures Working Group. The group has now divided itself into two teams. One of them is primarily concerned with financial and administrative issues. Another team is concerned, among other things, with issues about representation in the working group and in the proposed new presbyteries. Marcus Lambright has been invited to work with the New Jersey Missional Structures Working Group as a resource on this issue.

REPORT of the SOCIAL WITNESS WORKING GROUP

Elder Ted Settle reported for the Social Witness Working Group.



Let me introduce myself using this diversity wheel taken from the book, *Privilege, Power, and Difference*, by Allan Johnson (p. 15). (I encourage you to do the same). Inner wheel, those characteristics that come with us, I am white, male, heterosexual, cisgender, able, over 65, in fact, over 80. Outer circle, acquired characteristics: I am a committed Christian in the Presbyterian Church USA, PhD in sociology, married 56 years, no military experience, grew up in California, lived in

Chicago, Ohio, but most of my life in New Jersey, a Father and a Grandfather, worked as an assistant pastor, teacher at Rutgers, and Researcher/Committee Aid at the Office of Legislative Services in Trenton, now retired, income from pensions and social security –

So, from this you can see that I am of the white, male privileged part of our society.

Drawing on my sociological past, especially from the book of Allan Johnson, *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. To quote him,

“It isn’t news that a great deal of trouble surrounds issues of privilege, power, and difference, trouble based on gender and race, sexual orientation and identity, disability, social class. Or that it causes a great deal of injustice, anger, conflict, and suffering. We seem unable, however, to do anything about it as it continues from one generation to the next. We are, as individuals, as a society, stuck in a kind of paralysis that perpetuates the trouble and what it does to people’s lives. We are, each of us, part of the problem, because, in one way or another, and for all our differences, we have in common the fact of our participation in a society we did not create.

We can also make ourselves a part of the solution, but only if we know how. That there are choices to be made is true for everyone, no matter how we are located in the world, and the effectiveness of those choices can be no better than our understanding of how our society works. What we bring to that is shaped by our” (the following is my paraphrase of his writing at this same location) experiences in this society based on our given characteristics and our current position in society based on our acquired characteristics. “But no matter who we are and what we know because of it, we still need tools for making sense of reality in ways that connect us with the experience and lives of others. Because it is only then that we can come together across lines of difference to make something better than the legacy that was passed to us.”

(from the Introduction, page ix, *Privilege, Power, and Difference*, Allan G. Johnson. Third Edition, McGraw-Hill Education, 2018 (note, since it is considered an education book, it is ridiculously expensive for a less than 200-page paperback)

Let us now go to the prophet Micah and read: “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.”

In this current situation, we are directed to emphasize Do Justice! But for us Whites, we are instructed to walk humbly, to listen. So, it is not for me from my position of White privilege to say what doing justice means.

But this is the challenge I make to you tonight, with me, take a 21-day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge journey. please check this out simply by using

your search engine and typing <https://www.eddiemoorej.com/21daychallenge> and check out the journey. If you are willing to join me, please email Ilene at the Presbytery office and let her know and provide her your email. In early July, we will set up a ZOOM meeting to discuss what we learned and plan to do justice based on what we have learned.

We are at a time in our history when change must occur and I encourage you join with me to be part of that change, however difficult the journey might be.

Let us pray:

We ask O God that your spirit will intercede for us in our weakness, in our fears as we approach change and do not know where this will take us. We know, O God, that you are for us so we ask for your blessing as we leave this time together, that we may indeed understand and do justice. We make our prayer in the name of our Lord Jesus, who clearly lived and demonstrated what it means to do justice for those who lived in his time.

Amen.

ADJOURNMENT

The presbytery adjourned with prayer at 9:33 pm.

respectfully submitted
D. Paul La Montagne
Stated Clerk