

Presbytery of Great Rivers
Committee on Ministry Report
17 May 2022

Committee on Ministry (COM) has had three meetings since the last Assembly meeting in February 2022. We continue to meet by Zoom and foresee this practice continuing.

We continue to worship together and to lift up the ministry of our congregations and minister members in prayer. Please let us know how we can be praying for you and your ministry.

Actions Taken

The committee has approved numerous Terms of Call and Contracts across the Presbytery. As these are approved, we are trying to return them in a timely manner. If your congregation has not returned an approved terms of call or contract for a pastor/CRE yet this year, please do so. A list of approved calls and contracts will be in the August report.

We have approved and are working on organizing a Presbytery-wide training for Ruling Elders in congregations who lack pastoral leadership who would like to serve communion for their congregation. It has been a while since this has happened, and we want to make this broadly available. Please watch for dates to be announced or contact your ministry partner to indicate interest.

Several changes were approved to the pulpit supply list, both removing and adding to the list. We welcome the Rev. Pam Laing to the list and commend her to you.

We have a transitions that have been approved:

Welcome to...

- Rev. Pam Laing from Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois
- Rev. William McClean from Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois

Administrative Commission Report

The Administrative Commission (AC) for Pleasant Plains-Farmingdale has elected its officers and begun its work. It has worked on familiarizing itself with the history of its objectives and contacted relevant parties. It is presently working on its charges to complete the dissolution, negotiate the severance package, and call a congregation meeting to approve it.

Motions

On behalf of the COM, I move to approve the following update to the COM Manual: Section II, Part 4, Procedure for Calling a Pastor, D, 3, Steps in the Process:

- i. With the assistance of the COM Ministry Partner, PNC develops procedures and criteria for evaluating PIFs.
- ii. PNC develops **list of questions for either initial interview or as supplemental questions to be sent to candidates in whom they have a serious interest.**
- iii. Interviewing potential pastors
 - a. **A PNC, after receiving, reviewing PIFs, and determining which candidates it wishes to interview, may make initial contact with a potential candidate to determine availability and interest. The PNC may describe its process and schedule an electronic first interview, but not conduct an interview at the initial contact. At this point, the Lead Presbyter shall be notified of the PNC's contact and conduct a Presbytery to Presbytery clearance reference check. It is the MP's responsibility to facilitate and ensure this requirement is met.**

Rationale: The COM recognizes that the initial stages of receiving Pastor Information Forms (PIFs) requires ascertaining a basic level of interest and compatibility that does not necessarily entail a great deal of emotional commitment from either a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or potential candidates and is not found in the PIFs themselves. As such, it is appropriate for PNCs to inquire via e-mail as to a potential candidate's availability and generate initial "boilerplate" questions that can be submitted to such candidates and returned to the PNC without needing to overburden the General/Executive/Lead Presbyter with a great number of requests for background checks.

The language in this change delineates that the Presbyter's involvement comes only once a face-to-face contact is desired. The net result of this change will be more ability for a PNC to sort available and compatible candidates, a reduction in the Presbyter's workload, and no loss to safety in the process.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. James A. Benson
Chair, COM