

PRESBYTERY DIGEST

A summary of actions & information from the meetings of Pittsburgh Presbytery

September 20, 2018

[Crestfield Camp & Conference Center](#)

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by the Rev. Dr. Trent Hancock, Moderator. The Rev. Dr. Sheldon Sorge gave a sermon titled, [I May Be Wrong](#). The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was served along with a litany for all the saints, and especially for the elders and pastors of Pittsburgh Presbytery who have joined the Church Triumphant in the last twelve months, listed by name in a bulletin insert. A special remembrance of the life and work of the Rev. Fred Rogers was led by the Rev. Dennis Molnar. An offering of \$1,669.11 was received for equal distribution to the [Lazarus Fund](#) and the [Hunger Fund](#). This amount will be matched by the [Pittsburgh Presbyterian Foundation](#).

From the Executive Committee

Announced the following:

- in light of the General Assembly approved study of funding of higher governing bodies, the Executive Committee declines to take any further action at this time in response to a request the presbytery remit to higher councils only the per capita contributions that it collects
- the allocation of funds from the Bellefield Church dismissal settlement
 - \$50,000 annually, for a minimum of three years, for the ministry of the new worshiping community Commonwealth of Oakland, to the members and neighbors of the university community in Oakland
 - the remaining \$20,000 of the settlement each year is to be designated for use by the Great Ends of the Church Fund
- the presbytery has received a clean audit for 2017
- the purchase of the parking lot across the street from the presbytery center
- the release of Right of Reverter for property at 1214 Liverpool Street to Manchester Youth Development
- the presbytery meeting schedule for **2019**:
 - **February 21, 1:00 PM** at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
 - **May 23, 4:00 PM** at Hampton United Presbyterian Church
 - **September 19, 10:00 AM** at Crestfield Camp & Conference Center
 - **December 5, 1:00 PM** at John McMillan Presbyterian Church

Elected the following to the Ecclesiastical Committee:

- Elder Christine Blackwood (Class of 2021A)
- Elder Nancy Gulliford (Class of 2021A)
- the Rev. Jodi Flack (Class of 2021B)

Approved the following:

- the request to encumber and to guarantee Presbyterian Investment & Loans Program loans for Riverdale United Presbyterian Church in the amount of \$30,000 and for Hiland Presbyterian Church in the amount of \$140,000
- the forgiveness of past-due per capita for the Riverview United Presbyterian Church in the amount of \$1,360.38 and the Forest Avenue United Presbyterian Church for 2018 in the amount of \$1,652.50.
- the building of temporary office space at the presbytery center
- the change in 2019 budget subheadings and line numbers

Recommended the following for presbytery action; **approved**:

- approval of the 2019 presbytery budget
- for audit, the receipt and filing of the February, March, April, May and June financial statements of Pittsburgh Presbytery

From the Stated Clerk

Announced the following:

- all requests for docket time and for waivers of the six-year limitation on terms for ruling elders and deacons at the December Presbytery meeting must be made to the Ecclesiastical Committee via the Stated Clerk's Office no later than noon on Wednesday, October 31, 2018
- deadlines for docket time and request for waivers in **2019**
 - February 21 deadline is **January 23**
 - May 23 deadline is **April 17**
 - September 19 deadline is **August 21**
 - December 5 deadline is **October 20**

Recommended the following for presbytery action; **approved**:

- the dissolution of the Brookline Boulevard United Presbyterian Church effective September 30, 2018
- the dismissal agreement of the Natrona Heights Presbyterian Church

Reported the following:

- the installation of the Rev. Dr. Colleen Molinaro as pastor for Carnegie Presbyterian Church on June 10, 2018

From Commission on Preparation for Ministry

Reported the following:

- session visits were conducted with the following congregations:
 1. Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, Monroeville on May 16
 2. Unity Presbyterian Church on May 22
 3. Southminster Presbyterian Church on June 18
- the following individuals were Enrolled as Inquirers:
 1. Brenden Ashley, a member of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, Monroeville
 2. William Quinn, a member of Covenant-Community Presbyterian Church
- the following individual was Received as Candidate:
 1. Rebecca Reeder
- Annual Consultations were conducted with the following Candidates:
 1. Ashley Ashley
 2. Brendan Ashley
 3. Rebecca Reeder
- the following individuals were given permission to take the ordination examinations as specified:
 1. Emily Cooper (Bible Exegesis, Church Polity, Worship & Sacraments, and Theological Competence)
 2. Jane Larson (Bible Exegesis, Church Polity, Worship & Sacraments, and Theological Competence)
 3. Rebecca Reeder (Bible Exegesis)
 4. Victoria Voller (Bible Exegesis, Church Polity, Worship & Sacraments, and Theological Competence)
- hearing a sermon from Candidate Stephanie Martin
- Stephanie Martin was Certified Ready to receive a call

Introduced the following:

- Rebecca Reeder, a member of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, who was received as a Candidate at the Commission on Preparation for Ministry meeting on June 13, 2018

Requested the following for presbytery action; **approved**:

- the Oral Trials for Ordination be sustained for Deborah Smith

From the General Minister

Reported the following:

- the Rev. Dr. Sheldon Sorge invited members to share significant ministry and mission events that took place over the summer
- a summary of significant actions taken at the recent General Assembly, including but not limited to:
 - a special panel was charged to review our current per capita system of funding the church's work
 - encouraging our government and churches to be more active in assisting the South Sudan
 - modification of the overture to divest from the fossil fuel industry
 - affirm the authority of sessions to govern the use of their facilities
 - approval given for clergy of the PC (USA) and the Episcopal Church in the USA to conduct worship in congregations of either denomination

NOTE: a longer list of General Assembly actions is available [online](#)

- the election of the Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett as Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and noted she has agreed to preach for worship at the presbytery meeting on February 21, 2019, at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Recommended the following:

- written reports of our commissioners to the General Assembly, available to read [online](#)

From the Commission on Ministry

Reported the following:

- the completion of contracts between the Rev. Nancy Titus and Bethel United Presbyterian Church, Monroeville, effective June 30, 2018; the Rev. Maggie Smith and Concord Presbyterian Church, effective August 9, 2018; the Rev. Melany Hamilton and Bethany Presbyterian Church, effective October 31, 2018

Moved presbytery approve the following appointments; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Nancy Titus as Moderator of the Valley Presbyterian Church, effective July 1, 2018
- the Rev. Lee Nichols as Moderator of the Hoboken Presbyterian Church, effective June 15, 2018
- the Rev. Lee Nichols as Moderator of the Springdale United Presbyterian Church, effective August 1, 2018
- the Rev. Jane Esterline as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Plum Creek, effective May 22, 2018

- the Rev. Elizabeth Michael Ross as Moderator of the Community of Reconciliation, effective August 27, 2018
- the Rev. Steven Werth as Moderator of the Community House Presbyterian Church, effective August 1, 2018
- the Rev. Bonnie Taylor as Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church in Ingram, effective September 1, 2018
- the Rev. Deborah Smith as Moderator of the Liberty Presbyterian Church, effective October 21, 2018
- the Rev. Al Stuart as Moderator of Verona Presbyterian Church, effective September 15, 2018
- the Rev. Lynn Portz as Moderator of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, effective August 1, 2018
- the Rev. Deb Warren as Moderator of Hillcrest United Presbyterian Church, effective September 10, 2018
- the Rev. Dennis Molnar as Moderator of Covenant-Community Presbyterian Church, effective August 6, 2018
- the Rev. Sarah Robbins as Moderator of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, Monroeville, effective October 1, 2018
- the Rev. Anthony Rivera as Moderator of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, effective October 1, 2018
- the Rev. Deb Warren as Moderator of Bethel United Presbyterian Church, Monroeville, effective September 10, 2018

Moved presbytery approve the following calls; **approved** by consent:

- the call of the Community of Reconciliation for the services of the Rev. Elizabeth Michael Ross as Pastor, effective August 27, 2018
- the call of the Community House Presbyterian Church for the services of the Rev. Steven Werth as Pastor, effective August 1, 2018
- the call of the Bethany Presbyterian Church for the services of Rev. Jae Cho as Associate Pastor, effective October 15, 2018

Moved presbytery approve commissions to install; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Steven Werth as Pastor of the Community House Church on September 23, 2018 at 3:00 PM
- the Rev. Jae Cho as Associate Pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church on December 2, 2018

Moved presbytery approve the following temporary pastoral contracts; **approved** by consent:

- the request of the Center Presbyterian Church, McMurray PA, for the services of the Rev. Tom Moore, effective July 1, 2018
- the request of the Valley Presbyterian Church for the services of the Rev. Nancy Titus as Temporary Pastor for one year, effective July 1, 2018

- the request of the Hoboken Presbyterian Church for the services of the Rev. Lee Nichols as Temporary Pastor for one year, effective June 15, 2018
- the request of the Presbyterian Church of Plum Creek for the services of the Rev. Jane Esterline as Interim Pastor for one year, effective June 1, 2018
- the request of the United Presbyterian Church in Ingram for the services of the Rev. Bonnie Taylor as Temporary Pastor for one year, effective September 1, 2018
- the request of the Liberty Presbyterian Church for the services of Deborah Smith as Temporary Pastor for one year, effective Oct. 1, 2018
- the request of the Forest Hills Presbyterian Church for the services of the Rev. Anthony Rivera as Interim Pastor for one year, effective October 1, 2018
- the request of the Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church to renew the services of the Rev. Tami Hooker as Temporary Pastor for one year, effective January 1, 2018
- the request of the Pine Creek Presbyterian Church to renew the services of the Rev. Diana Harbison as Temporary Pastor from May 20, 2018 to January 1, 2019
- the request of the Logan's Ferry Presbyterian Church to renew the services of Tim Sweigart as Temporary Pastor from September 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018

Moved presbytery grant member-at-large status to the following; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Maggie Smith, effective August 10, 2018
- the Rev. Conrad Sharps, effective September 1, 2018
- the Rev. Allan Drake, effective June 1, 2018

Moved presbytery receive the following members; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Elizabeth Michael Ross from New Hope Presbytery, effective August 27, 2018
- the Rev. Jae Cho from Whitewater Valley Presbytery, effective October 15, 2018
- the Rev. Dr. Colleen Molinaro from Redstone Presbytery, effective May 1, 2018

Moved presbytery grant dissolution to the following; **approved** by consent:

- the request of the Shadyside Presbyterian Church to dissolve the call of the Rev. Conrad Sharps, effective August 31, 2018
- the request of the Covenant-Community Presbyterian Church to dissolve the call of the Rev. Matthew Bussell, effective August 5, 2018
- the request of the Hillcrest United Presbyterian Church to dissolve the call of the Rev. Aaron Gordon, effective September 9, 2018
- the request of the Mt. Pleasant United Presbyterian Church to dissolve the call of the Rev. Dr. Dan Corll, effective September 30, 2018
- The request of the Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community to dissolve the call of the Rev. Mike Holohan, effective September 30, 2018
- The request of the Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, Monroeville, to dissolve the call of the Rev. Rob Marrow, effective September 30, 2018

Moved presbytery grant dismissal to the following; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Rene Whitaker to Redstone Presbytery, effective July 5, 2018
- the Rev. Rob Marrow to Peace River Presbytery, effective October 1, 2018
- the Rev. Jeff Hopson to Homestead Presbytery, effective September 20, 2018

Moved presbytery approve the following validated ministries; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Susan Rothenberg as a consultant with PneuMatrix

Moved presbytery approve the following commissioned pastors; **approved** by consent:

- the request of the Forest Avenue Presbyterian Church for the renewal of the services of Elder Louise Schoppe to serve as part-time Commissioned Pastor for one year, effective October 1, 2018
- the request of the Bull Creek United Presbyterian Church for the renewal of the services for Elder Robert Henry to serve as part-time Commissioned Pastor for six months, effective September 1, 2018

Moved presbytery receive the following minister from another denomination; **approved**:

- the Rev. Henry Knapp be approved for reception from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church as a member of Pittsburgh Presbytery

Honorable Retirement

- the request of the Rev. David Carlisle, effective July 31, 2018
- the request of the Rev. Dr. Dan Corll, effective September 30, 2018
- the request of the Rev. Deborah Evanovich, effective October 1, 2018
- the request of the Rev. Melany Hamilton, effective November 1, 2018

From the Committee on Nominations (elections at the December meeting)

Nomination for 2019 Senior Vice-Moderator:

- the Rev. Charissa Howe, Emsworth and St. Andrews

Executive Committee:

- Elder Chris Martin, East Liberty (2021A) – East
- Elder Bob Crynack, Glenshaw (2021B) – North
- Elder Dan Beckstrom, Bethel Park (2021B) – South
- Elder Mark Mizer, Sharon Community (2021A) – West
- Elder Larry Shoup, Hebron, Clinton (2021B) - West
- the Rev. Scott Hill, Aspinwall (2021A) – East
- the Rev. Dr. Ron Peters HR (2021B) – East
- the Rev. Jeff Tindall, John McMillan (2021A) – South

- the Rev. Kevin Long, Sewickley (2021A) – West
- the Rev. Jodi Flack, Rennerdale (2021B) – West

Commission on Ministry:

- Elder Frank Hancock, Oakmont (2021B) – East
- Elder Lora Bethea, East Liberty (2021A) – East
- Elder Robert “Deac” Dressing, Pleasant Hills (2021A) – South
- Elder Bucky Savatt, Ken Mawr (2021B) – West
- Elder Louise Schoppe, Forest Avenue (2021A) – West
- the Rev. Dr. Vincent Kolb, Sixth (2021B) – East
- the Rev Paul Roberts, Eastminster (2021B) – East
- the Rev. KJ Norris, Kerr (2021A) – East
- the Rev. Dr. David Wood, Glenshaw Valley (2021A) – North
- the Rev. Jessica McClure Archer, Sampson’s Mills (2021A) – South
- the Rev. Ben Schneider, First Elizabeth (2021A) – South
- the Rev. Jim Tinnemeyer, Specialized (2021A) – South
- the Rev. Charissa Howe, Emsworth/St. Andrew’s (2021B) – West
- the Rev. Don Brown, New Life (2021A) – West

Commission on Preparation for Ministry:

- Elder Drew Wilson, Forest Hills (2021A) – East
- Elder Rebecca Abbott, Unity Presbyterian (2021A) – West
- Elder Judy Huemrich, Clinton (2021A) – West
- the Rev. Gavin Walton, Grace Memorial (2021A) – East
- the Rev. Kendra Smith, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2021A) – East
- the Rev. Jason Freyer, Westminster (2021A) – West
- the Rev. Carolyn Cranston, Pleasant Hills (2021B) – South
- the Rev. Diane Flynn, Crafton UP (2021A) – West
- the Rev. Sarah Bird, Sewickley (2021A) – West
- the Rev. Laura Strauss, Clinton (2021B) – West

The Response Team:

- the Rev. Todd Leach, Shadyside (2021B) – East
- the Rev. Dr. Jermaine McKinley, Bethesda Pittsburgh (2021A) – East
- Elder Michelle Snyder, Bower Hill (2021A) – West

Permanent Judicial Commission:

- the Rev. Dr. Jack Lolla, Bellevue (2024) - West

Pittsburgh Presbytery Foundation:

- Elder Dave Lavender, Ross Community (2021A) – North
- Elder Jim Martin, Southminster (2021B) – South
- the Rev. Chris Taylor, Fox Chapel (2021A) – North
- the Rev. Dr. Jim Gilchrist, Westminster (2021B) – West

Synod Commissioner:

- Elder Elsie Knappenberger, St. Andrews (2021A) – West

Reports Given to Presbytery

- the Rev. Ayana Teter reported on new programs and initiatives being offered by the [Board of Pensions](#)
- Elders Lenore Williams and Alan Perry reported on recent grants that have been made by [Freedom Rising](#) and urged congregations to contribute their share of the [Peace & Global Witness Offering](#) to the Freedom Rising project
- the Rev. Dave Carver reported on the coming visit by our colleagues in the [International Partnership](#) from South Sudan and Malawi
- the Rev. Dr. Jim Gilchrist reported on programs and resources being offered to all congregations by the Generosity Committee which is staffed by the Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley, [Presbyterian Foundation](#) regional ministry relations officer
- the Rev. Brian Wallace and the Rev. Mike Holohan reported on the newest worshipping community, Commonwealth of Oakland
- the Rev. Michael Gehrling reported on the national progress of the [1,001 New Worshipping Communities](#)