

Stated Meeting ~ Presbytery of Geneva
Tuesday May 19, 2015
First Presbyterian Church, Bath, New York
The Rev. Stanley Bhasker, Pastor

*Together, we pray, play, and energize our congregations to live out the Good News of Jesus Christ.
 Together, we lift up each other in love.
 Together, we call others into the circle of God's grace.*

MINUTES

The Presbytery of Geneva held a duly-called Stated Meeting on Saturday May 19, 2015 at the First Presbyterian Church of Bath, New York.

CONVENING

The Rev. David Kilgore, Presbytery moderator, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., a quorum being present.

The Moderator offered the opening prayer.

ROLL

ACTIVE MINISTERS SERVING CHURCHES (P = Present; Ex = Excused; A = Absent)

Name	Jan 27	Mar 14	May 19	Sept 19	Nov
Baker, Kirk – Newark, Park (Transitional Pastor)	P	A	P		
Barnard, David – Jasper, Jasper (Stated Supply)	A	A	A		
Bhasker, Stanley – Bath, Bath	P	Ex	P		
Bond, Bryan – Pulteney, First (Stated Supply)	A	Moved			
Bond, Norma - Canisteo	A	Moved			
Campbell, Anne – Moreland, Moreland(Stated Supply)	Resigned	01-15			
Crimmins, Betsey – Elmira, First	P	P	P		
Donnan, Ellen – Dundee, First / Junius, Junius	P	Ex	P		
Duncan, Russell – Lyons, First	P	P	A		
Dygert, Steve – Almond, Union of Churches	A				
Farrell, Nancy – Palmyra, Western	Ex	P	P		
Griffis, Katherine - Hornell			P		
Grohman, Deb – Ontario, Ontario	P	P	A		
Heimberger, Gail – Sodus, First United	Ex	P	P		
Hicks, James – Spencer, Christ the King Fellowship	P	P	P		
Karr-Lyon, Beverly – Watkins Glen, First	P	Ex	P		
Kennedy, Glen – Painted Post, United (Stated Supply)	A	A	P		
Kerr, James - Canandaigua, United	P	A	P		
Knight, Jonathan – Horseheads, Horseheads	A	P	P		
Lester, Donald – Howard, Union*	A		A		
Lind-Schmitz, Deborah – Geneva, First	P	P	P		
Loving, Amy – Bellona, Bellona Memorial Seneca, Seneca #9	Ex	P	P		
Malles, Paul – Penn Yan, First	P	P	Ex		
Marr, Peter – Addison, Addison (Stated Supply)*	A	A	A		
Moore, Banu – Corning, First	Ex	Moved			
Moore, James – Corning, First	Ex	Moved			
Ntuala, Leah – Seneca Falls, First	P	P	A		
O'Leary, Lucinda – Rock Stream (Stated Supply)*	E	E	E		
Peoples, Cheryl – Trumansburg, First Ulysses	P	P	P		
Price, Richard – Big Flats, Big Flats	A	A	A		
Prong, Lee – Williamson, Williamson (Interim)*	P	Interim	Dissolved		
Riehl, Kirianne Weaver – Ithaca, Ithaca	P	P	P		
Roth, Russ – Huron, Huron	P	A	P		

Smith, Paul – <i>Marion, Marion*</i>	A	A	A		
Tierson, A.J. – <i>Phelps, United (Stated Supply)</i> <i>Shortsville, Shortsville (Stated Supply)</i>	P	A	P		
Waters, Kathleen – <i>Elmira, North (Interim)</i>	A	Moved			
West, Sarah – <i>Waterloo, First (Temporary Supply)*</i>	P	P	Ex		
Winters, Jane – <i>Elmira, Westminster (Temp. Supply)</i>	P	P	P		
Yao, James – <i>Lodi, Lodi</i> <i>Hector, Hector (Co-Pastor)</i>	P	P	P		
Yao, Nancy Meehan – <i>Hector, Hector (Co-Pastor)</i> <i>Hammondspport, First (Stated Supply)</i>	P	P	P		
TOTAL PRESENT	20	17	21		
TOTAL EXCUSED	6	3	2		
TOTAL ABSENT	15	11	9		

MINISTERS IN VALIDATED MINISTRIES / MINISTERS AT-LARGE

(V = Validated ~ AL = At-large)

Name	Jan 27	Mar 14	May 19	Sept 19	Nov
Ashby, David (V) <i>Temporary Pastor, another denomination</i>	P	Ex	A		
Campbell, Anne (AL)		A	A		
Davis, Joelle (AL)	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Delhagen, Harold (V) <i>Synod Executive, Synod of the Northeast</i>	A	Ex	P		
Diffenbacher, Bryan (AL)	A		A		
Fitzgerald, Janice (V) <i>Pultneyville, Reformed</i>	Ex	P	P		
Haines, Todd (AL)	A	A	A		
Huling Hummel, Cynthia (AL)	A	P	A		
McCollister, Dan (AL)	A	A	A		
Roth, Marjorie (V) <i>Chaplain, Friendly Home, Rochester, NY</i>	P	A	P		
Wareham, J. Christy (AL)	A	A	A		
Warrington, Karl (AL)	A	A	A		
TOTAL PRESENT	2	2	3		
TOTAL EXCUSED	2	3	1		
TOTAL ABSENT	6	6	8		

HONORABLY RETIRED MINISTERS (If serving a church, service is noted in parentheses) (Honorably Retired Ministers, if not present, are automatically marked as “excused.”)

Name	Jan 27	Mar 14	May 19	Sept 19	Nov
Bartel, Joanne	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Bembower, Dean	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Bidelspacher, Nancy Torpey	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Bollinger, Zane	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Coffman, Fred	P	P	P		
Creelman, Gilmore	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Crego, Peter	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Edwards, Sam	Ex	P	Ex		
Elder, John	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Flaherty, Scott	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Gerling, Jim	Ex	Ex	P		
Gould, John	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Hood, Kenneth	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Husted, Susan	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Johnson, Timothy	P	P	P		
Kellam, Jeffrey	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Kilgore, David	P	P	P		
Magley, Fred	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Meiser, Jr., Edward	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Montgomery, Tom	Ex	Ex	Ex		

Murray, Virginia – <i>Interim, Hornell United</i>	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Newman, James	Ex	Ex	P		
Otterbacher, Suzanne	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Outterson, Hugh	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Rochelle, Robert	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Teller, Gailey	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Tennies, Herb	Ex	Ex	Ex		
Tyrrell, Jamie– <i>Interim, Atlanta</i>	P	Ex	Ex		
Valk, John	Ex	Ex	Ex		
TOTAL PRESENT	4	4	5		

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS (Ministers of another Denomination or another Presbytery Serving Presbyterian Churches in PGV)

Name	Jan 27	Mar 14	May 19	Sept 19	Nov
The Rev. Walter Stuber (<i>Wolcott</i>)	Ex	Ex	P		
The Rev. Val Fowler, Stated Clerk pro-tem	P	P	P		
TOTAL PRESENT	1	1	2		
TOTAL EXCUSED	1	1	0		

COMMISSIONERS FROM CHURCHES

Church Name	Jan 27	Mar 14	May 19	Sept 19	Nov
Addison	A	A	Bonny E. Moore		
Almond	A	A	A		
Andover	A	A	A		
Arkport	A	Lorraine Glidden	Beth Haines-He		
Bath	Kathleen Swan	A	Kathleen Swan		
Bellona	A	A	Janice Newby		
Big Flats	A	A	A		
Burdett	A	A	A		
Canandaigua	Ron Fulle	Ron Fulle	Ron Fulle		
Canisteo	A	A	A		
Cohocton	Michael Allen	A	A		
Corning	A	Kirk Allen	A		
Dundee	Ex	A	Ex		
East Palmyra	A	A	A		
Elmira, First	Rehanna Stanley	Rehanna Stanley	Rehanna Stanley		
Elmira, Lake Street	A	A	A		
Elmira, North	Jeff Richards	Jeff Richards	Jeff Richards		
Elmira, Westminster	A	A	A		
Fairville	William Randolph	William Randolph	A		
Geneva, Presbyterian (1)	Edwin Frick	Edwin Frick	Chris Gerling		
Geneva, Presbyterian (2)	Bill Fox	Bill Fox	Edwin Frick		
Hammondsport	James Walling	James Walling	James Walling		
Hector	A	A	Susan Rochell		
Hedgesville	<i>Dissolved 01/27</i>				
Hornell	A	Irene Schu	Cheryl Green		
Horseheads	A	James Zearfoss	Jim Zearfoss		
Howard	A	A	A		
Huron	Linda Hayes	Lois Wafler	Lois Wafler		
Ithaca	Micah Beck	Micah Beck	A		
Jasper	A	A	A		
Junius	Kristy Ward	Kristi Ward	Ex		
Lodi	A	Steven Frost	Martha Cherwak		
Lyons	Tracy Rankert	Tracy Rankert	Ex		
Marion	A	Connie Franks	A		
Moreland	A	A	Robert Bellman		
Naples	A	A	Joann Braun		

Newark	Paul Salisbury	A	Paul Salisbury		
Oaks Corners	A	Unreadable	Ernest H. Day, Sr.		
Ontario Center	A	A	A		
Ovid Federated	A	A	Roberta S. Morris		
Painted Post	A	A	A		
Palmyra	Philip Opdyke	Philip Opdyke	Terry Goodwin		
Penn Yan	Sue Goodrich	Sue Goodrich	Sue Goodrich		
Phelps	A	A	Nan Clark		
Prattsburg	Diane Muck	A	A		
Pultney	Harriette Potter	Harriette Potter	Harriet Potter		
Red Creek	A	A	A		
Rock Stream	A	A	A		
Romulus	A	A	A		
Seneca Falls	A	Susan Derr	A		
Seneca #9	A	A	A		
Shortsville	A	A	A		
Sodus	A	Jim Hopkins	A		
Spencer	C. Thomas Bailey	C. Thomas Bailey	C. Thomas Bailey		
Trumansburg	Kris Alling	A	Kris Alling		
Waterloo	Helen Wadsworth	Joyce M. Yost	Ex		
Watkins Glen	A	A	A		
West Fayette	A	A	A		
Weston	Vera E. Dykes	A	A		
Williamson	A	A	Josh Dorfner		
Wolcott	A	Carol Merrell	Carol Merriell		
TOTAL PRESENT	22	26	27		
TOTAL EXCUSED	1	0	4		
TOTAL ABSENT	40	34	28		

ADDITIONAL ELDER COMMISSIONERS

(Appointed by presbytery to correct elder-clergy imbalance)

Name	Church	Relationship	Jan 27	Mar 14	May19	Sept 19	Nov
Andrews, Priscilla	Elmira, Lake	CRE	Ex	Retired			
Beals, Steven	West Fayette	CRE	P	P	Ex		
Champlin, Virginia	Geneva	SNE Min. & Mission	P	P	P		
Colvin, Donna	Pultney	SNE Comm. 2015	P	P	P		
Evans, Richard	Burdett	CRE	A	A	A		
Novack, Joy	Romulus	CRE	A	P	A		
Peek, Donald	Canisteo	CRE	A	A	P		
Reynolds, Ellen	Geneva	General Council	P	P	P		
Richmond, Lucille	Red Creek	CRE	A	A	A		
Schied, Dick	Weston	CRE	P	P	P		
TOTAL PRESENT			5	7	4		
TOTAL EXCUSED			1	0	1		
TOTAL ABSENT			5	3	4		

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS ENROLLED FOR THIS MEETING

Name	Presbytery / Agency
The Rev. Amaury Tanon Santos	Networker for the Synod of the Northeast / Presbytery of Elizabeth
The Rev. Jim Renfrew	Synod Administrative Review Committee / Member, Presbytery of Genesee Valley / First Presbyterian Church, Byron, NY
Elder Karen Pryor	Synod Administrative Review Committee / Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, NY
Elder Nancy Sprengle	Synod Administrative Review Committee / First Presbyterian Church, Pittsford, NY

REGISTERED Guests (current meeting)

Includes CREs not serving churches

Lea Kone	Director, Camp Whitman
Priscilla Andrews	CRE, Retired
Rosanna Bates	Pulteney
Larry Bates	Bath
Donna M. Fillmore	Addison
Douglas Minnery	Pulteney
Dorrie Erb	Hammondsport
Milt Erb	Hammondsport / Presbytery Treasurer
Arloween Dennis	Hedgesville
Karen Lewis	Hedgesville
Mary Jane Peek	Pulteney
Cindy Weaver	Ithaca / Candidate under Care of Presbytery

SUMMARIES FOR EACH MEETING	Jan 27	Mar 14	May19	Sept 19	Nov
Total Minister Commissioners Present*	26	23	29		
Total Elder Commissioners Present	27	33	31		
Parity (expressed in terms of Elders, + or -)	+1	+10	+2		
Total Minister Commissioners Absent, Unexcused**	21	17	17		
Total Churches Unrepresented by Elders***	36	34	32		
Total Churches Unrepresented by Elders and Pastors	19	15	28		
Total Registered Visitors	4	4	12		

* Does not include Corresponding Members, as they have only voice, not vote; includes Validated, At-large, and Honorably Retired

** Does not include Corresponding Members or Honorably Retired Ministers

*** Includes churches marked "excused"

INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS

(Corresponding Members – Voice / No Vote)

The presbytery VOTED to enroll the following persons as Corresponding Members:

- The Rev. Amaury Tanon Santos (Networker for the Synod of the Northeast / Presbytery of)
- The Rev. Jim Renfrew (Presbytery of Genesee Valley / Byron, Synod Administrative Review Committee)
- Ruling Elder Nancy Sprenkle (Presbytery of Genesee Valley / Pittsford, First; Synod Administrative Review Committee)
- Ruling Elder Karen Pryor (Presbytery of Genesee Valley / Third, Rochester / Synod Administrative Review Committee)

(New Commissioners / Guests)

The presbytery welcomed the new elder commissioners and guests from the following congregations:

- Huron ~ Western, Palmyra ~ Hornell~ Geneva ~ Williamson ~ Moreland ~

The presbytery welcomed guests present for the meeting.

(Approval of Docket)

The presbytery VOTED to approve the final docket for the meeting.

WELCOME BY HOST CHURCH / RESOLUTION OF THANKS

The Rev. Stanley Bhasker welcomed the presbytery to First Presbyterian Church, Bath.

The Moderator appointed Tom Bailey and Lea Kone to draft a Resolution of Thanks to the host congregation for presentation at the end of the meeting.

WORSHIP ~ A CELEBRATION OF THE HEDGESVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The worship service was a celebration of the Hedgesville Presbyterian Church, followed by communion (served by intinction).

Larry Bates, Chair of the Administrative Commission for Hedgesville, led a litany and prayer honoring the life and ministry of the Hedgesville Presbyterian Church. Ruling Elder Alloween Dennis, a long-time member of the Hedgesville church, offered reflections on the church's ministry and its impact on the life of her family.

Following the celebration of the congregation's ministry, the presbytery VOTED to:

Approve the following RESOLUTION regarding the dissolution of the Hedgesville Presbyterian Church, Hedgesville, NY:

The **Presbytery Administrative Commission Regarding Closing Of Hedgesville Church** (the "Administrative Commission"), with the concurrence of the **Presbytery Committee on Ministry**, and in recognition of the action taken by the Congregation of the **Hedgesville Presbyterian Church**, in the Hamlet of Hedgesville, Town of Woodhull, Steuben County, New York (the "Church"), at a duly called meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of such Church, held the 14th day of December, 2014 at the Woodhall Community Church, recommends that the **Presbytery of Geneva**:

1. **Dissolve such Church**, as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), effective immediately; and

2. **Authorize and direct the Presbytery Board of Trustees to:**

A. **Take custody and control of the real and other property** of the Church and take any and all actions as may be deemed necessary and appropriate to maintain and manage the real property known as Hedgesville Presbyterian Church, including but not limited to arranging for property management and maintenance, payment of utilities, insurance, and other such charges, pending disposition of such property, the cost of all such maintenance and management to be charged to Presbytery and paid from the _____ Fund pending sale or other disposition of the property.

B. **Petition the Supreme Court for Steuben County**, pursuant to § 17-b of the Religious Corporations Law for an Order to the effect that all property of whatever kind which may have belonged to, or have been held by, said Church shall vest in the Presbytery of Geneva in as full and ample a manner as the same shall theretofore have been vested in the Church.

3. **Authorize** the Chair of the Administrative Commission, the Chair of the Presbytery Board of Trustees, the Stated Clerk of Presbytery and/or the Presbytery Moderator to execute and deliver such documents, and take such actions as may be required to effectuate the foregoing.

4. **Direct the Administrative Commission and Presbytery Board of Trustees** to investigate and explore the appropriate disposition of the Church property, including providing for the marketing of such property for sale (such as listing of the property with a real estate broker), or determination of the disposition of such property by gift or other means, and otherwise taking other actions as may be conducive to the expeditious disposition of the property, the results of such investigation and exploration, and of the actions taken, to be reported to Presbytery for final approval as to any proposed disposition.

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK

Stated clerk pro-tem, the Rev. Val Fowler presented the report.

Action Items

Upon his recommendation, the presbytery VOTED to:

(Privilege of Voice)

1. **Grant** privilege of voice to those non-commissioners who are making or participating in reports.

(Minutes)

2. **Approve** the Minutes of the Stated Presbytery meeting, held on March 14, 2015 at the First Presbyterian Church, Penn Yan, NY.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Gail Heimberger presented the report of the General Council.

FOR PRESBYTERY'S ACTION

The presbytery VOTED to:

1. **Appoint** the following Administrative Commission to Install the Rev. Kirianne Weaver Riehl as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Ithaca, NY on Sunday July 19, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

The Rev. David Kilgore, HR (Presbytery Moderator), or his designee

The Rev. Betsey Crimmins (Elmira, First)

The Rev. Cheryl Peeples (Ulysees)

The Rev. Jeff Kellam (HR)

Elder Tom Bailey (Spencer)

Elder Susan Wade (Ithaca)

Elder John Peeples (Ulysees)

2. **Grant** the moderator the authority to make changes in the Administrative Commission to Install, as necessary and appropriate.

(Synod of the Northeast / Revised By-Laws)

NOTE: This action item has been rendered moot by a General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission decision in the Remedial Case *The Rev. James McKellar, Complainant v. Synod of the Northeast, Respondent* (see below).

The Council was prepared to present the following resolution to the presbytery, for action either affirmative or negative.

3. **Shall the presbytery approve** lines 85 – 110 of the Revised By-Laws for the Synod of the Northeast?

NOTE: The Synod of the Northeast requests all constituent presbyteries to vote on the recommended changes by May 28, 2015.

2.000 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

2.100 Membership

2.101 Commissioners: The Synod Assembly shall consist of one teaching elder, one ruling elder, two members at large and one young adult member (age 17-22) elected as Commissioners by each presbytery within the bounds of the Synod for the purpose of voice and vote. Their term shall be two years, commencing at their first Assembly meeting and continuing for all Stated and Called meetings until their successor's first meeting.

2.102 Alternate Commissioners: Each presbytery shall also elect one presbyter or active church member to serve as alternate commissioners. The alternate commissioner shall serve when the commissioner is unable to attend a particular Synod Assembly meeting, and may complete the unexpired term of the Commissioner when so designated by the presbytery.

2.103 Additional Members at Large: In order that the Synod Assembly may be a diverse community of gracious welcome, it may provide in its standing rules for additional members at large.

2.200 Unexpired Terms: In the event that commissioners' or alternates' terms conclude prematurely, their presbytery shall elect someone to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.

2.300 Conduct of Elections: The Synod Standing Rules shall govern the conduct of elections.

2.301 **Eligibility for Re-Election:** Members of the Synod Assembly are eligible for re-election at their presbyteries' discretion, for not more than three consecutive terms.

Background:

A New Way Forward: new, leaner design of Synod Government effective October 2014. The 2014 Synod Assembly marked the end of the transition year for the New Way Forward.

The New Way Forward includes a commitment to support and facilitate programs and initiatives that encourage and resource our young leaders who are under the age of 40. A working group met over the last 18 months culminating in the first retreat with emerging leaders across the Synod and beyond. The retreat was a time of conversation, connection, movement building and finding new partners in ministry. The group will hold at least one additional large gathering. In the meantime, they will organize through social media and meet in smaller groups locally. While they do not know yet how this group will manifest itself within the Synod, they do know they will engage with each other and with the Synod with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

Starting with this fall, the Synod Assembly will meet every two years. During the alternate years, the Synod will plan an event similar to the Big Tent in which presbyteries will share innovative programs as well as the progress of the Synod networks. A tentative month for the 2015 meeting is May – location is being determined.

The Synod Leader, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer will stand for election by Synod Assembly for a term of four years. The following were elected: Synod Leader - TE Harold Delhagen, Stated Clerk - TE Nancy Talbot, and Treasurer – RE Alan Ford.

Synod Council's name has changed to Synod Mission and Ministries Commission to reflect the value that mission is at the center of our work. The Mission and Ministries Commission is to have one member from each presbytery (total of 22 presbyteries). The Commission will meet four times each year. The Commission will have three working groups: Mission, Networks, and Administrative. Each working group will do the detailed work and discussion required before bringing recommendations to the Commission for action and vote.

- **Mission** – articulate the Synod's common mission – including diversity, emerging leaders, leadership, innovation, collegiate ministries, and special projects

- **Networks** – develop and coordinate networks, or groups of individuals, churches, and/or presbyteries recognized by the Commission and committed to gathering and working together with a common purpose that embodies the overall mission of the Synod. The Synod Networker will assist with development and coordination

- **Administrative** – carrying out administrative functions of the Commission – with respect to finance, insurance, legal affairs, management of capital assets, sponsoring training events for presbyteries, etc.

The By-Laws create a leaner organization which should be quicker to respond to ideas and projects from congregations or a group of people with similar interests and goals.

The By-Laws require a simple majority of presbyteries to vote for Lines 87 – 110 which describe presbytery representation at the Synod Assembly. The vote must be taken by May 28, 2015. Each presbytery will have four commissioners (as well as one alternate) – one Teaching Elder, one Ruling Elder and two Members at Large who may or may not be TE or RE. Preferably, one of these commissioners will be under the age of 35. It is expected that the Members at Large will encourage participation by younger people than is typical now.

- Each presbytery will have one Young Adult Member, 17 – 22 years old at time of Synod Assembly, who will have voice and vote.

On May 2, 2015 the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC), meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, delivered a decision in the Remedial Complaint, *The Rev. James McKellar v. Synod of the Northeast*. The substance of the decision is printed here. The full decision may be accessed at www.pcusa.org/gapjc.

A pre-trial conference was held pursuant to D-6.0310. By agreement of the parties on April 22, 2015, the facts were stipulated as follows:

For the past several years, the Synod of the Northeast has been engaged in a process of self-study and missional reorganization, resulting in a plan called "A New Way Forward." The Synod Assembly adopted this plan in October, 2013 and formally implemented it through By-laws and Standing Rules that the Synod Assembly adopted in October, 2014. The members of two different Synod Assemblies concurred, adopting not only A New Way Forward, but also the By-laws and Standing Rules, by a substantial margin.

Those By-Laws and Standing Rules contain provisions that allow presbyteries, seeking to comply with Book of Order mandates for unity in diversity and openness, to elect church members who are neither ruling elders nor teaching elders as commissioners to the Synod Assembly. They also permit the Synod's Leadership Team to name, from among a group of individuals nominated by the presbyteries, church members who are neither ruling elders nor teaching elders as members of the Synod's Mission and Ministries Commission (a commission that is responsible for the operations of the Synod between biennial Synod Assembly meetings).

In accordance with G-3.0401, the Synod's presbyteries are currently voting on those portions of the By-laws and Standing Rules related to participation and representation. The voting results to date are 10 presbyteries in favor and none opposed, with a total of 12 presbyteries required (out of 22) to form the necessary majority.

The appellant, a former Stated Clerk of the Synod, was a commissioner to the Synod Assembly who spoke against this measure and who voted in the minority.

In addition to these stipulations, at the trial held on May 1, 2015, one witness appeared on behalf of the Respondent.

ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES

1. *The Synod of the Northeast erred in constitutional interpretation by adopting Bylaws and Standing Rules that allow presbyteries, seeking to comply with the mandates for unity in diversity and openness, to elect church members who are neither teaching elders nor ruling elders as commissioners to the Synod Assembly.*

This specification of error is sustained.

2. *The Synod of the Northeast erred in constitutional interpretation by adopting Bylaws and Standing Rules that permit the Synod's Leadership Team to name, from among a group of individuals nominated by the presbyteries, church members who are neither ruling elders nor teaching elders as members of the Synod's Mission and Ministries Commission (an administrative commission responsible for operations of the Synod between biennial Synod meetings).*

This specification of error is sustained.

DECISION

This Commission commends the Synod's goal to hear the full diverse voice of the church as affirmed in F-1.0403; "The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the church's membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction." In so doing, the Synod also honors the witness of Scripture "For God shows no partiality." (Romans 2:11).

Nonetheless, the Synod erred in the approach it adopted because by definition a synod is “composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. ... The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between ruling elders and teaching elders” (G-3.0104). This definition conforms to F-3.0202, which provides: “This church shall be governed by presbyters, that is, ruling elders and teaching elders.” Contrary to the Synod’s arguments, the adoption of the New Form of Government reaffirmed rather than diminished these principles. It is not intrinsically discriminatory to require presbytery, synod and General Assembly commissioners to have prior experience in the government of local congregations, the “basic form of the church” (G-1.0101). To the extent the Synod’s Bylaws and Standing Rules fail to give proper weight to the requirements of F-3.0202 and G-3.0401 by giving vote to members who are neither ruling elders nor teaching elders, they are unconstitutional.

The issue of broader representation in decision-making is significant to the wider church.

For instance, this Commission notes that the 221st General Assembly (2014) encouraged the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to continue the discussion of how to include young adults in all levels of the life and ministry of the PC(USA), including encouraging sessions to affirm the call of young adults to the office of ruling elder (Minutes, 2014, 12, 170, Item 303). We strongly encourage the wider church to continue this discussion.

ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that those portions of the Synod bylaws allowing presbyteries to elect Synod Commissioners who are not ruling elders or teaching elders, and allowing such commissioners to serve on Synod commissions are declared null and void.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Northeast report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first stated meeting following the date of this Order, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from the Synod’s minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Presbytery debate and action

A motion was made and seconded, that the Presbytery of Geneva applaud the desire of the Synod Assembly to include non-ordained persons in leadership of the Synod; and encourage the Synod of the Northeast to determine a solution that is in line with the requirements of the Book of Order.

A motion was made and seconded to postpone indefinitely the previous motion. Debate began on the motion.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to close debate.

The presbytery VOTED by standing vote to **defeat** the motion to postpone indefinitely, by a vote of 22 / 28.

Discussion continued regarding the main motion above (to applaud the Synod's desire and to encourage development of a solution).

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to close debate.

The presbytery VOTED to **approve the main motion**.

That the Presbytery of Geneva applaud the desire of the Synod Assembly to include non-ordained persons in leadership of the Synod of the Northeast; and encourage the Synod of the Northeast to determine a solution that is in line with the requirements of the *Book of Order*.

(Temporary Standing Rules)

4. **Receive for first reading**, the *Temporary By-Laws for the Presbytery of Geneva*, as prepared by the Synod Administrative Review Committee and reviewed by the General Council during the April and May meetings of the General Council. Action will be taken during the September meeting of the presbytery. [NOTE: This action does not set aside the 28 Addenda to the current Standing Rules.]

ITEMS FOR PRESBYTERY'S INFORMATION

The General Council VOTED to:

(Hedgesville / Legal Expenses)

1. **Authorize** payment of legal expenses for the transfer of the building, anticipating recovery of those expenses from the Boyd's Corners Bible Church, if the way be clear.

(Camp Whitman)

2. **Approve** that the expenses of the necessary repairs (convection oven, freezer, golf cart) be paid from the Vittum Fund.

3. **Approve** a 2% raise for the Camp Whitman Property Manager (\$480), effective January 1, 2015. **[NOTE: The money is already in Camp Whitman Budget, so this action does not represent a budget increase.]**

(Presbyterian Women)

4. **Approve** the request for communion during the May 2, 2015 meeting of the Presbyterian Women.

(Personnel Committee)

5. **Approve** the presbytery's Flexible Spending Plan.

(Camp Whitman)

6. **Approve** the purchase of a new golf cart for Camp Whitman, to be paid from the Vittum Fund. The cost will be about \$2,000.

7. **Authorize** the Camp Whitman Operating Team to dispose of two motor boats which do not operate. Repairing the boats will be cost-prohibitive. A person associated with the camp will take care of disposing of the boat.

(Mission Funding Committee Recommendations)

8. **Approve** the Two Cents a Meal Program Funding for 2015 (\$15,252 available / \$15,200 awarded)

9. **Approve** the Session-endorsed Mission Grants [1/3 congregation / 2/3 presbytery] (\$50,000 available / \$49,682.72 awarded)

(Protestant Cooperative Ministry at Cornell University)

10. **Approve** a grant of \$2,000 from Synod Block Grant money to support the Protestant Cooperative Ministry at Cornell University. **[NOTE: in the future we should ask the Mission Grants Committee to Look into our support of Ministry in Higher Education within the bounds of the presbytery, and apply for grants from the Synod.]**

(Budget & Finance Committee)

11. **Appoint** Russ Roth as the Alternate Signer for presbytery accounts.

Rationale: Jim Yao reported that Gary Montgomery has had to resign due to health issues.

(Geneva Presbytery Women)

12. **Endorse** a grant application by the Geneva Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team for a \$125,000 grant from the Women's Birthday Offering for *Building Minds in South Sudan*. Linda Wertz is helping with the grant application.

THE PRESBYTERY RETREAT: Part 1

Kirk Baker and Nancy Meehan Yao presented a report of the recent Presbytery Retreat, held at First Presbyterian Church, Geneva. The focus of the report focused on *What are our core values?* The retreat generated the following four core values:

- Relationships
- Mission
- Worship
- Transformation

The presbytery was invited, at tables, to respond to the following three questions:

- *What do you think of these values?*
- *Do they resonate with you?*
- *Would you add others?*

The table groups reported their conversations to the body as a whole.

LUNCH

Following the prayer for the meal, offered by Cheryl Peebles presbytery recessed for lunch, provided by the Women of First Presbyterian Church, Bath.

RECONVENING

Vice-Moderator Dick Schied called the meeting back to order with prayer.

PRESBYTERY RETREAT: Part 2

The conversation about the retreat continued with a focus on *Dreaming about the possibilities*. David Kilgore described the framework for the retreat:

Discover
Dream
Design
Deliver

David Kilgore and Ellen Reynolds led the “dreaming” phase of the presbytery’s conversation. Again, conversation occurred around the tables, followed by reports from each group.

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Jim Yao presented the report of the Budget & Finance Committee. He thanked the churches for their continued financial support of the work of the presbytery. The financial reports are on the presbytery website. The first half of the session-endorsed grants and the 2-cents-per-meal grants will be sent later this week. Representatives from Heveron & Heveron were at the presbytery office last week, preparing for the annual financial review.

Jim Yao introduced Milt Erb (Hammondsport), the new Presbytery Treasurer.

CAMP WHITMAN

The report was presented by Tom Bailey (Chair, Camp Whitman Operating Team) and Lea Kone (Camp Whitman Director).

Lea Kone reported that there will be almost 300 children and youth that will be attending Camp Whitman. There are still openings for camp participants, and scholarships are still available. Almost all the staff is set for the summer.

The openings are:

Assistant Camp Nurse
Lifeguard
Two counselors
One chaplain (hopefully from this presbytery)

Tom Bailey encouraged attendance at the annual Chicken Barbeque on June 6. Among the participants at the barbeque will be a work group. He encouraged use of the camp for congregation worship on Sunday morning (there are no campers on Sundays). It would be great to have visitors during the week, to get an idea of what happens at Camp Whitman.

The Operating Team (Tom Bailey, Bob Andrews, Colin Pritchard) have been working with the Advisory Board, in the hope that the work of the Operating Team will end by the end of 2015. The goal is for the Advisory Board to have the role of overseeing the camp.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Rev. Deborah Lind Schmitz presented the report of the Committee on Ministry. She and co-chair Paul Salisbury led a brief service celebrating the ministry of Nancy Farrell who will be retiring in mid-summer, from service as Pastor of Western Presbyterian Church, Palmyra, NY.

Members of the congregation attested to the congregation meeting, and spoke to the ministry of the Rev. Nancy Farrell. The congregation is hosting a "Pie-Luck" from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. on Sunday May 31.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Committee VOTED to:

(Hornell / the Rev. Katherine Griffis)

1. **Approve** the call of the United Presbyterian Church of Hornell, NY to the Rev. Katherine Griffis to be Pastor, effective March 16, 2015, at the following terms:

Cash Salary	28,600.00
Manse Value	15,000.00
Deferred Compensation	4,400.00
Total Effective Salary	48,000.00

Board of Pensions Benefits	17,280.00
Continuing Education	3,000.00
Reimbursed Travel at \$0.57 per mile	

Study Leave: 2 weeks / 2 Sundays
Vacation: 4 weeks / 4 Sundays

Approximate moving expenses: Up to \$10,625.00

(West Fayette / Elder Stephen Beals, CRE)

2. **Approve** Commissioned Lay Pastor Contract (3/8 time) between the session of the West Fayette Presbyterian Church and Elder Stephen Beals, CRE, effective January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015, at the following terms:

Base Salary	6,090.00
Housing Allowance	11,880.58
Pension (PCUSA)	5,804.78
Study Leave	375.00

(Arkport / Ministry Information Form & Pastor Nominating Committee)

3. **Grant** permission to the congregation to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee and **request** the Pastor Nominating Committee and the session to work together to prepare a Ministry Information Form, for presentation to the Committee on Ministry for approval and submission to the Church Leadership Connection process.

(Ithaca / Ministry Information Form)

4. **Approve** the Ministry Information Form for the position of Associate Pastor (full-time) of First Presbyterian Church, Ithaca, NY.

(Board of Pensions Representative)

5. **Appoint** Russell Duncan as the Presbytery Representative for the Board of Pensions (PCUSA).

(Ontario Center / the Rev. Deborah Grohman)

6. **Approve** the new Terms of Call (7/8 time) between the Ontario Center Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Deborah Grohman, effective

Cash Salary	6,186.00
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Manse Value	29,000.00
Deferred Compensation	5,250.00
Total Effective Salary	40,436.00

Board of Pensions Benefits	16,392.00
SECA	3,093.00
Continuing Education	1,000.00
Professional Expense	1,000.00
Car Allowance	1,500.00

Study Leave: 2 weeks / 2 Sundays
 Vacation: 4 weeks / 4 Sundays

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

Nancy Meehan Yao, Chair, presented the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. With joy she reported that the Committee has certified Candidate Cindy Weaver (Ithaca, First) as ready to pursue ordination. Cindy shared a brief expression of her journey. She shared that her story is full of the presence of a loving, caring, abiding, and strengthening God, even in the midst of wrestling with serious questions.

The presbytery VOTED to approve the certification of Cindy Weaver as ready for ordination.

Nancy Meehan Yao offered prayer.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The presbytery VOTED to elect Priscilla Andrews, CRE to a three year term on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

At the request of the Moderator, the presbytery voted

REPORT FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Carol Limner presented the report. She reported concerning the upcoming Women's Triennium; four persons from Geneva Presbytery will attend ; Deb Lind-Schmitz will be leading two workshops. The Presbyterian Women are working on their directory.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Moderator introduced the representatives of the Committee who are present. Jim Renfrew (secretary of the SARC) spoke to the presbytery. Regarding the Temporary By-Laws was in response to the suspending of the previous By-Laws in 2013, attempting to bring them more up-to-date and to get the presbytery started on developing new By-Laws. If you have questions and suggestions, those need to be directed to the Chair of the General Council, Gail Heimberger. The General Council reviewed the Temporary By-Laws over two successive meetings, offering amendments and changes.

The SARC has presented two reports to the Synod. One has been reviewed by the Synod and transferred to the General Council, on a confidential basis for the present. The other report will hopefully be approved by the Synod in June, and reported to the General Council and the presbytery.

If and when the main report from the SARC is available, it will be posted, thus making it available to the presbytery prior to the September presbytery meeting.

The General Council will be making a report concerning the confidential SARC report, when other steps have been taken by the General Council.

MISSION & MINISTRY COMMISSION, SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST

Virginia Champlin presented the report of the Commission. The spring meeting occurred in April. [Full report to be provided by Virginia Champlin, and will be inserted.]

RESOLUTION OF THANKS

The presbytery AFFIRMED the following *Resolution of Thanks*, prepared by Lea Kone and Tom Bailey.

Be it resolved that the Presbytery of Geneva does hereby thank the First Presbyterian Church of Bath for hosting this meeting and for their hospitality.

CLOSING

The presbytery VOTED to adjourn the meeting. Vice Moderator Dick Schied offered the closing prayer.

Attest: Val Fowler, Stated Clerk Pro-Tem

As you go...

- **What have you learned about the Presbytery today?**
- **Who have you gotten to know better today?**
- **What blessings have you shared today?**

Future Presbytery Dates

Saturday September 19 – Lyons