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7/3/2014

Dear Members of the Presbytery of Geneva,

This letter is to share with you the news that, at a called Presbytery meeting on June 24, 2014, the Presbytery of Geneva approved a motion to dissolve the Executive Presbyter relationship between the Presbytery of Geneva and the Rev. Joelle S. Davis, effective six months from the date of the meeting, with compensation and benefits to continue for that period of six months, rescinding her authority as Executive Presbytery and relieving her of any and all duties and responsibilities as Executive Presbyter, effective immediately.

We know that this will be a shock to some of you and want to explain what led up to this action and the subsequent actions General Council and Personnel are taking following the decisions made by Presbytery. There has been on-going review and dialogue, over a number of months, as well as consultation with an outside, professional mediator, experienced in working with church organizations. David Olsen of the Samaritan Counseling Center recommended, among other things, that the relationship between the Presbytery and Dr. Davis be dissolved. (The summary of that report was previously sent to each church and is on the Presbytery website.) With much prayer, Council concurred with the recommendations and called the meeting for June 24. The actions taken at the Called Presbytery meeting are listed at the end of this letter.

The report from Dr. Olsen also noted that Council must take steps to rebuild trust and re-open communications. This will be a difficult job and we solicit your prayers, your patience, and your help. We know, in this in-between time, that we will all be called on to do more than usual in the ministry of the Presbytery of Geneva. Personnel and General Council give thanks for the professionalism of Karen Jensen, Administrative Assistant and Camp Registrar and Rhonda Everdyke, Communications Director and Interim Camp Director.

We have included in this letter a synopsis of recent actions of General Council and the Personnel Committee taken to help continue the ministry of the Presbytery. General Council, COM and Presbytery minutes can be found on our Presbytery website at [www.presbyteryofgeneva.org](http://www.presbyteryofgeneva.org). The user name is **directory** and the password is **fingerlakes**. We urge you to look at it often to learn about what is being done as we move forward.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact General Council Chair, Dick Schied at [schied1@roadrunner.com](mailto:schied1@roadrunner.com).

Blessings to you –

General Council of the Presbytery of Geneva

## RECENT ACTIONS

The General Council and Personnel Committees would like to assure you that the ministries of the Presbytery are continuing and we want to work with you to bring about a rebuilding of trust. Since the Called Meeting of Presbytery, these have happened:

- **Named New Camp Operator Team for 2014 and Camp Staffing Changes**

The Executive Presbyter wore many hats in the Presbytery. One of those was as Camp Whitman Operator. Since Camp is beginning now, it was imperative that the Camp Operator Role be filled immediately. Council named three people: Tom Bailey, who is President of the Board of Directors of Lions Camp Badger – a statewide project of the Lions Clubs International - and in that role acts as their camp operator; Bob Andrews, who has previous experience at Camp Whitman as the Camp Administrator from 1967- 1972; and the Rev. Colin Pritchard, who has experience at Camp Whitman as camper, counselor, and most recently chaplain. A letter has been written to Camp Parents and Camp Staff explaining the changes in Camp staffing for this season.

Changes in Camp Whitman Staffing – Camp Whitman is seeking two volunteer Camp Chaplains – one for the week of July 13th-July 18th and the second for the week of August 3rd-8<sup>th</sup>. Those interested should contact Rhonda Everdyke at [reverdyke@presbyteryofgeneva.org](mailto:reverdyke@presbyteryofgeneva.org). A new head cook has been hired.

- **Continuation of Audit Work** - Stephanie Annunziata, Vice-President of Heveron & Company Auditing Firm is continuing to lead the audit team in their audit of our financial records and we expect a report soon. We will report to Presbytery the findings when we receive them.
- **SARC Constituted** - The Synod Administrative Review Committee that General Council requested of Synod has been approved and we look forward to working with them. They had to constitute the committee and train them and we have been informed that we can expect them to begin working with us soon.

- **Stated Clerk Pro Tem Named** - Val Fowler will serve as the Stated Clerk Pro Tem for Geneva Presbytery until we have a Stated Clerk in place.
- **Begun the search for a new Stated Clerk.** A Stated Clerk Nominating Committee is being formed. Nancy Meehan Yao chairs that committee.
- **Web Site Upgrade** - Recognizing the importance of clear communication, Leah Ntuala and Amy Loving agreed to work together, in consultation with our Communications Director, on creating an upgraded, easier to use website for the Presbytery
- **Reference Checks** - The COM chair or a person she designates will perform the reference checks for teaching elders/candidates coming into the Presbytery of Geneva until an Interim Executive Presbyter is in place.

## ACTIONS OF THE CALLED PRESBYTERY MEETING OF GENEVA 6-24-2014

Business Item #1: The following motion was placed before the presbytery:

To rescind the decision of the presbytery, at its May 2, 2014 called meeting, to refer to General Council for a period of not less than three months, a dissolve the Executive Presbyter relationship between the Presbytery of Geneva and the Rev. Dr. Joelle S. Davis, effective six months from the date of this (May 2, 2014) meeting, rescinding her authority as Executive Presbyter effective immediately. The presbytery VOTED to approve the motion by a counted standing vote of 54/5.

Business Item #2: The following motion was placed before the presbytery:

To dissolve the Executive Presbyter relationship between the Presbytery of Geneva and the Rev. Joelle S. Davis, effective six months from the date of this (June 24, 2014) meeting, with compensation and benefits to continue for that period of six months, rescinding her authority as Executive Presbytery and relieving her of any and all duties and responsibilities as Executive Presbyter, effective immediately, and to act on any modifications and additions to the termination and severance package as may be proposed by the Personnel Committee. The presbytery VOTED to approve the motion by a counted standing vote of 63/9.

Business Item #3: The following motion was placed before the presbytery:

To authorize the General Council and Personnel Committee to negotiate any additional issues and take such actions as are necessary to effectuate the termination and severance. The presbytery VOTED to approve the motion by a standing counted vote of: 75/0.

Other Items Pertinent to Items 1, 2, & 3:

The presbytery VOTED to approve a resolution of thanks to God and Joelle Davis for the ways in which Joelle's ministry has enriched our presbytery and prayer that the grace and peace of Christ might bring healing to the areas in which we have experienced or continue to experience conflict. The standing counted vote was 73/0.