

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY REPORT
November 18, 2017
Geneva Presbyterian Church, Geneva, NY

The following items are from the October 3, 2017; and November 7, 2017 meetings of the Committee.

ITEMS FOR PRESBYTERY'S ACTION

The Committee VOTED to request that the presbytery:

(Romulus Administrative Commission)

1. **Elect** Elder Kermit Bossard (Spencer) to the Administrative Commission for the Romulus Presbyterian Church.
[NOTE: Elder Bossard serves as the COM liaison with the Romulus church.]

(Watkins Glen / Administrative commission to Install)

2. **Appoint** the following persons as the Administrative Commission to Install the Rev. Cara Sutton Milne as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Watkins Glen, NY on Sunday ____, 2017 at ____ p.m. in the Sanctuary of the church:

Moderator Elder Joann Braun (Naples) or her designee
The Rev. Jane Winters (Westminster, Elmira)
The Rev. Jim Hicks (Honorably Retired)
The Rev. Stanley Bhasker (Bath)
Elder Priscilla Andrews, CRE (Dundee)
Elder Kermit Bossard (Spencer)

Other participants may be named at a later date.

3. **Authorize** the moderator or her designee to make changes in the Administrative Commission to Install, as necessary and appropriate.
4. **Dismiss** the Administrative Commission to Install, upon completion of the Service of Installation.

(Elmira, Westminster / Administrative Commission)

5. **Appoint**—at the request of the session of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY—the following persons as an Administrative Commission to work with the session of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY as the session and congregation discern the issues of dissolving the congregation and/or selling the building.

Elder Jim Varner (Spencer)
The Rev. Jane Winters (Westminster)
Elder to be recruited and reported to the presbytery on November 18, 2017
Teaching Elder to be recruited and reported to the presbytery on November 18, 2017.

6. **Approve** the Charge for the Administrative Commission. [See **Attachment A**].
7. **Establish** the quorum of the Administrative Commission as three members.

(Watkins Glen / Installation of the Rev. Cara S. Milne)

8. **Receive** the minutes of the Administrative Commission to Install the Rev. Cara S. Milne as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Watkins Glen, NY on Sunday October 15, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the church sanctuary.

Minutes of the Administrative Commission to Install

Moderator Joann Braun called the commission into order on Sunday, October 15, 2017, 5:10 pm at the First Presbyterian Church, Watkins Glen, NY to Install Rev. Cara S. Milne. Rev. Jane Winters opened the Commission with Prayer. Moderator Joann Braun informed the Commission that Stanley Bhasker will serve as the Clerk for the Commission.

Members of the Commission Present:

RE Joann Braun, Moderator,
TE Stanley Bhasker (Bath)
TE Rev. James Hicks
TE Rev. Jane Winters
TE Rev. John Milne (Rtd)
TE Rev. Anita Milne
CRE Priscilla Andrews

CRE Kermit Bossard

The Commission has approved the Order of Service.

A motion was made by Rev. Jane Winters and seconded by Rev. Stanley Bhasker to dismiss the commission at the end of the Rev. Cara S Milne's installation service, and the commissioned voted in favor unanimously.

Before the procession into the worship service, Rev. Stanley Bhasker offered prayer.

The Constitutional Questions were answered affirmatively by Rev. Cara S. Milne and the congregation.

Rev. Cara S. Milne was ordained in the presbytery of Central Florida.

The Commission was dismissed following the close of the service with Benediction by Rev. Cara S. Milne at 6:40 pm.

Stanley Bhasker, Clerk of Commission, October 15, 2017

(Administrative Commission for Romulus / Minutes)

9. **Receive** the Minutes of the October 15, 2017 meeting of the Administrative Commission for Romulus. [See **Attachment B**]

ACTIONS TAKEN ON BEHALF OF THE PRESBYTERY

Acting on behalf of presbytery, the Committee VOTED to:

(Moderator Appointments)

1. **Appoint** the Rev. Nancy Farrell (HR) as moderator of the Session of Huron Presbyterian Church, Huron, NY for the month of October 2017.
2. **Appoint** Elder Bessie Tyrrell, CRE as moderator of First Presbyterian Church, Pulteney, NY.
3. **Appoint** Elder Priscilla Andrews, CRE as moderator of the Moreland Presbyterian Church, Moreland, NY.

(Park, Newark / Moderator for October)

4. The request for appointment of a moderator is because of the pastor's study leave. The Rev. Kyle Delhagen will be invited to serve. The Committee granted permission to the co-chairs to seek a moderator, if the Rev. Delhagen is not available.

ITEMS FOR THE PRESBYTERY'S INFORMATION

The Committee VOTED to:

(Addison / Term Limit Waiver)

1. **Recommend** that the presbytery approve a waiver of term limits for Ruling Elders. [NOTE: This waiver has been granted in previous years, due to the size of the congregation.]

(Wolcott / the Rev. Walter Stuber)

2. **Approve** the new Stated Supply Contract (half-time) between the session of First Presbyterian Church, Wolcott, NY and the Rev. Walter Stuber effective September 1, 2017 for 12 months, at the following terms:

Cash Salary	7,765.00
Housing Allowance	18,500.00
Total Effective Salary	26,265.00
Pension & Major Medical	13,779.96
Travel	1,500.00
Professional Expense	1,000.00
Study Leave	500.00

Study Leave: 2 weeks, including 2 Sundays

Vacation: 31 days, including 4 Sundays

NOTE: These terms of call meet the presbytery minimum salary requirements.

(Coaching)

3. **Approve** COM partnership in providing coaching for our two newest pastors: Sabrina Slater (Spencer) and Cara Milne (Watkins Glen). If the way be clear, two coaching sessions will be provided free and six sessions will be supported by the Hay Fund. Applications for financial support can be made to the Synod of the Northeast.

(Transfers of Membership)

4. **Approve** the transfer of the Rev. Marjory Roth to the Presbytery of Long Island, effective October 10, 2017.
5. **Approve** the transfer of the Rev. Russ Roth to the Presbytery of Long Island, effective November 7, 2017.
6. **Approve** the transfer of the Rev. James Yao to the Presbytery of Shenandoah, effective November 7, 2017.

(Lakemont-Rock Stream / the Rev. Lucinda O'Leary)

7. **Approve** the new between the sessions of Lakemont Presbyterian Church and Rock Stream Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Lucinda O'Leary, at the following terms:

	Total	Each Church
Salary and Housing	25,000.00	12,500.00
Effective Salary	25,000.00	12,500.00

[NOTE: Up to 60% may be used for housing.]

Pension & Major Medical	3,626.00	1,813.00
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Travel expenses reimbursed at current IRS mileage rate.

Vacation: 1 month, including 4 Sundays

Study leave: (2 weeks, including 2 Sundays)

(Big Flats / the Rev. Beth Frigard)

8. **Approve** the new Interim Pastor Contract (half-time) between the session of First Presbyterian Church, Big Flats, NY and the Rev. Beth Frigard, effective October 1, 2017 for 12 months, at the following terms:

The following terms are the same as the previous year:

Total Effective Salary (Cash Salary and Housing Allowance)

Pension & Major Medical

Travel

Study leave (2 weeks, including 2 Sundays)

The following terms are different from the previous year:

Books & Supplies \$2,000.00

Continuing Education \$1,000.00

Vacation: 31 days, including 6 Sundays

The two additional Sundays are included for dedicated pastoral training.

(Big Flats / Mission Statement)

9. **Approve** the Mission Statement for First Presbyterian Church, Big Flats, NY; and **grant permission** for the congregation to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee.

(Williamson)

10. The stated clerk reported to the Committee on Ministry that he has communicated with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (the stated clerk and assistant stated clerk of the Presbytery of the East), to the clerk of session of the Williamson Church, the Administrative Commission for Williamson, and Bruce Chambers (the attorney working on behalf of the Administrative Commission) that the congregation has not been officially dismissed to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church because the requirements for dismissal have not been met (remission of back per-capita payments to the Presbytery of Geneva; and transfer of the original session records and rolls of the congregation). As part of the communication, the stated clerk provided a copy of the action approved by the presbytery on March 15, 2015.

The stated clerk has received responses from the stated clerk of the Presbytery of the East that they are working with the congregation to address those unresolved issues. The stated clerk has provided copies of his communication to the Administrative Commission and to the attorney working with the Commission.

(Addendum AA, Standing Rules)

11. Request the stated clerk will convene a gathering of persons who have indicated willingness to work on clear policies to guide the presbytery, its congregations, and any elected Administrative Commissions. Those persons are:

- The Rev. Rob Mellgard (Ovid / member of COM)
- Elder Jim Varner (Hornell / member of COM)
- Elder Priscilla Andrews, CRE (Dundee / member of COM)
- Elder Donna Colvin (Pulteney / member of General Council)
- Elder Ellen Reynolds (Geneva / Chair of General Council)

The General Council has engaged in conversation regarding the policies for dismissal or dissolution of congregations.

(Boundary Awareness Training)

12. Approve holding a Boundary Awareness Training session in 2018. The Transitional Leader will contact David Olson as to his availability, and the cost for such a session.

Attachment A
Administrative Commission for
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY
November 18, 2017 Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Geneva
Geneva Presbyterian Church, Geneva, NY

CHARGE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

Approved by the Presbytery of Geneva during the stated meeting of November 18, 2017
at Geneva Presbyterian Church, Geneva, NY

The **Presbytery of Geneva** establishes the following **charge** for the work of the Administrative Commission for Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY.

BACKGROUND

During several meetings in 2017, the Committee on Ministry received indications from the Pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY that the congregation was beginning to consider the viability of the congregation in their current building, and thus the possibility of selling the building. Over time, that consideration has expanded to include the question of the congregation's dissolution.

The session of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY has requested that the Presbytery of Geneva appoint an Administrative Commission to work with the session and congregation as they discern the will of God regarding the continuation of the church as a congregation and/or the sale of the building.

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

- Ruling Elder Jim Varner (Spencer)
- The Rev. Jane Winters (Westminster)
- Ruling Elder to be recruited and reported to the presbytery on November 18, 2017
- Teaching Elder to be recruited and reported to the presbytery on November 18, 2017.

By presbytery action, the quorum for meetings of the Administrative Commission will be three members.

CHARGE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ELMIRA, NY

NOTE: This charge does not grant the Administrative Commission original jurisdiction of any responsibility of the session. The Administrative Commission is to (1) serve a partnering, advisory role with the session; and (2) protect the interests of the presbytery. If circumstances warrant, the Administrative Commission may request that the presbytery grant original jurisdiction for a portion or portions of the session's responsibilities, or for all of the

responsibilities of the session. Apart from such a request, the session has all the authority granted to it by the *Constitution* of the PCUSA, as spelled out in **F-3.0209**:

Councils possess whatever administrative authority is necessary to give effect to duties and powers assigned by the Constitution of the church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries.

Moreover, the duties outlined below are designed, in part, to guide the Administrative Commission in encouraging and supporting the work of the **session**. The assumption is not that the Commission will do all the tasks outlined below, but rather that the Commission will ensure that tasks are completed which are rightly the responsibility of the session.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

1. The Administrative Commission shall confirm to the presbytery through the stated clerk, a moderator and a clerk of the Commission.
 - a. The moderator shall convene meetings of the Administrative Commission, lead the meetings of the Commission, serve as the primary contact for persons who wish to communicate with the commission, and ensure the Commission's support of the session of the Westminster church.
 - b. The clerk shall keep the minutes of the Commission and a record of the Commission's activities. The clerk shall complete all correspondence, as directed by the Commission; and report to the Commission any correspondence received. The clerk
2. The Administrative Commission shall approve the minutes prepared by the clerk.
3. The Administrative Commission, through the clerk of the Commission, shall provide to the stated meeting of the presbytery (for inclusion in the presbytery minutes) all Commission minutes since the previous stated meeting of the presbytery.
4. The presbytery stated clerk shall serve as the primary staff resource to the Administrative Commission.
5. The Administrative Commission will help the session in its discernment of the future of the church, through their presence in conversations and discernment activities, in providing resources (persons and written) that might assist the session's work, assisting with communication to the congregation regarding the session's work, and assisting the session in arranging for congregational conversations and discernment, and other supportive guidance as the Commission deems necessary and appropriate.
6. Decisions to dissolve the congregation, sell the building, or both will require two duly-called congregation meetings:
 - a. An informational meeting, with opportunity for questions and responses.
 - b. A meeting for congregational action on the recommendations of the session and the Administrative Commission.
7. The responsibilities and duties listed below will follow on the decision of the session to recommend sale of the building, dissolution of the congregation, or both.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

I. ARRANGE FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF CHURCH MEMBERS

1. Work with the session to identify where members wish to transfer their membership, and when the transfer is to be completed.
2. Provide pastoral support and care to the Pastor serving the Westminster church during this time of transition.
3. Prior to dissolution, the clerk of session will effect transfers of membership, as requested by members.
4. Provide to the stated clerk the names and contact information of members who have not transferred their membership prior to dissolution of the church. The stated clerk will effect transfers requested after dissolution.

II. ASCERTAIN THE FINANCIAL STATUS AND OUTSTANDING FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE SESSION

1. Conduct a financial review of the Treasurer's books for the last 12 months.
2. Determine location of checking accounts, savings accounts, endowment accounts, Sunday School accounts, Women's group accounts and any other financial resources.
3. On endowment or memorial accounts, determine if there are any bequest stipulations.
4. Have all accounts closed, transferring any balances to the primary checking account of the Session (to meet any outstanding obligations) or to the presbytery.

5. If any church accounts remain open, submit new signature card(s) for accounts with at least two officers of the presbytery designated as signatories (usually the treasurer and stated clerk).
6. Determine any outstanding debts/obligations.
7. Publish in local paper a public notice to the effect:
The _____ Church of _____, NY will end its ministry on or about (date). Any outstanding debts/financial obligations must be submitted in writing to the church treasurer at (address) by the close of the business day (date)
8. Authorize the payment of all financial obligations.
9. Provide a "statement of contribution" to all current year contributors.
10. If the church owns any stocks, bonds, certificates, or other financial instruments have ownership of such transferred to the Presbytery of Geneva.
11. Following the dissolution, transfer all remaining account balances to the Presbytery of Geneva and close any remaining church accounts.

III. SECURE THE SESSION RECORDS

1. Locate all Session minutes, the church register, and other financial and legal records to be submitted to the Stated Clerk of the presbytery for appropriate disposition.
2. The Clerk of Session will hand these symbolically to a representative of the Stated Clerk at the conclusion of the Presbytery's recognition of the ministry of the church.

IV. SECURE THE LEGAL RIGHTS TO THE PROPERTY

1. Secure a Clear Title to the property.
2. Provide a copy of the deed to the Presbytery Board of Trustees (General Council). A copy of the deed may be obtained from the County Courthouse. Ascertain if there are any deed restrictions or stipulations.
3. Transfer title of the property to the Presbytery of Geneva.
4. List the property on the Presbytery's property and liability insurance coverage, terminate any other current insurance coverage.
5. Notify the County Assessor's Office that the property is no longer used as a church as of the dissolution date.
6. Discover if the congregation is incorporated; if so:
 - a. Locate the Articles of Incorporation.
 - b. Publish a public Notice to Dissolve a Corporation in the local newspaper.
 - c. Adopt and publish the following motion:
"Pursuant to G-4.0203) of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbytery of Geneva is the legal successor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Elmira, NY.

V. SECURE THE BUILDING AND PROPERTY

The session has a responsibility and right to advise as to the distribution of the proceeds of the sale of the building, with the following parameters:

- If the sale **precedes the dissolution**, the Administrative Commission will guide the process of appropriately following that advice. The Presbytery of Geneva will have the final approval of such distribution.
 - If the sale **follows the dissolution**, the Presbytery of Geneva will determine the distribution of the proceeds of the sale of the property. The Administrative Commission will communicate the session's desires and recommendations.
1. Arrange for the disposition of furnishings. The Session, with the concurrence of the Administrative Commission may arrange for the disposition of furnishings, communion ware, hymnals, Sunday School supplies, pulpit, lectern, and communion table, etc. These may be given away, sold by the piece, or bids may be received for the entire lot of furnishing. The Administrative Commission shall be consulted and concur with the decision to dispose of any item thought to be of historic value. It is recommended that at least one appraisal by an antiques dealer/estate assessor be obtained before accepting any bids.
 2. These decisions should be documented in detail in both Session and Commission minutes.
 3. Ascertain which utilities should remain connected and which may be disconnected and make these arrangements with the proper companies. Transfer the billing for the utilities to the Presbytery of Geneva effective on the dissolution date. It may be necessary to maintain heat during the winter to avoid damage. Electricity and water should remain on.

4. Arrangements should be made to drain the water pipes if the utilities can be turned off.
5. Secure the building and recover keys from anyone who does not need access.
6. If distribution of keys is widespread and any contents are valuable, consider having the locks changed.
7. Make provisions through the Property Committee for a caretaker until the final disposition of the property, including mowing of lawn and maintenance of any sidewalks.
8. After the closing worship service remove any identifying signage and the cornerstone, if possible (checking for a time capsule).

VI. PLAN A FINAL WORSHIP SERVICE CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE CONGREGATION (in partnership with the session)

1. Set the date and time for the service.
2. Allow time for the date to be publicized and the invitations issued.
3. Decide what special features the service should include.
4. Determine whether the service will include the Service of the Lord's Supper.
5. Consider structuring the service using the resources from the *Book of Occasional Services* which has a service on "Vacating of a Church Building," including the dissolution of a church.
6. Identify a possible preacher and other participants.
7. Former pastors / preachers may be invited.
8. At least one representative from the church should be included.
9. At least one representative from the Administrative Commission should be included.
10. The stated clerk and the Transitional Leader should be included.
11. Identify favorite hymns of church members (and identify favorite hymns of the **congregation** as a whole).
12. Consider possibilities for special music.
13. Have the session determine where the proceeds from the offering will go.
14. Arrange for ushers, parking attendants (if needed), and elders to serve Communion (if that is part of the service).
15. Format, type, and print bulletins.
16. Arrange for preparation of communion elements.
17. Arrange for any needed cleaning of the facility before and after the service.
18. Arrange for a reception following the service (location / how food will be provided / financial resources of the congregation to pay for a reception .
19. Appoint a group to take charge of decorating and other arrangements.
20. Gather memorabilia to display.

VII. PUBLICIZE THE SERVICE ENDING THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH (in partnership with the session)

1. Have church members make a "guest list" (with contact information) of relatives, friends, former members, etc. whom they wish to invite to the service.
2. Have invitations printed and facilitate (sending them (sent by a person or group / sent by church members . . . with the stamps provided from church funds).
3. Design a flier or write a letter to be distributed to the churches and members of the presbytery. Send flier or letter to the presbytery office, with ample time for duplication and distribution.
4. Prepare a press release for local newspapers.
5. Arrange for local newspaper coverage and a photographer.

VIII. DISSOLUTION OF THE COMMISSION

1. The Administrative Commission for Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY is dissolved upon the completion of its work and its final report to the Presbytery of Geneva.

ATTACHMENT B
Administrative Commission for
Romulus Presbyterian Church, Romulus, NY

MINUTES – October 15, 2017

The regular meeting of the Romulus Presbyterian Church was opened with prayer by Moderator Joy Novack following the church service and a dish-to-pass. The AC portion of the meeting was the last item on the regular Session meeting agenda. Present were: Pastor Joy Novack, Session members George Bassett, Ruth Bassett, James Hinman, Diana Hinman, Susan Deidrich, and AC members Pastor Steve Beals and Kermit Bossard. For the AC portion of the meeting, Steve acted as Moderator and Kerm as clerk.

Current status:

- ❖ They are currently worshipping in the church, but would like to move back into the reception area as soon as the room is cleared of all the items for the yard sale. Note-items not sold will be given to the Salvation Army.
- ❖ Church items-including pulpit, chairs, communion table, etc—are being offered free to churches affected by flooding or disasters. It was suggested that those items be inventoried and pictures be available to churches who may want these items.
- ❖ A purchase offer has been made for the church for \$110,000. That was countered by the church for \$125,000.
- ❖ That process was interrupted when COM told them that they need to have an appraisal first. The appraisal is being done by the John Parrot agency at a cost of about \$1000 and will be available in about two weeks.
- ❖ Historical records will be sent to Philadelphia. Presbytery needs to tell them what needs to be kept, and what to do with items such as financial reports.
- ❖ Their total cash is currently about \$8000. That will drop by \$1000 when they pay for the appraisal.
- ❖ After thought and prayer, Joy would like to "Change my mind" concerning my decision to "retire" at the end of this year. When the congregation decided to sell the church building, I told them I would stay with them no matter what the future held. I would like to honor my promise, with support and assistance from the COM. I plan to inform the congregation of my decision on Sunday.
- ❖ If COM agrees, I would ask that, if possible, my Annual Pastoral Review be done during the November 19th session meeting.
- ❖

If the building is sold

- ❖ The congregation has not made a decision about whether they will or will not continue to worship as a congregation.
- ❖ The congregation will either use the money to continue worshipping together, give the money to several designated sources (Food Pantry, STEPS, Mt. Green Cemetery, Camp Whitman, Fire Department, Christmas Joy Offering, Presbyterian Disaster Relief, 2 cents per meal fund), or a combination of the two.

If the building is sold after January 1, 2018

- ❖ Pastor Joy has a contract until 12/31/17.
- ❖ Pastor Joy will be available to conduct Sunday services as a supply Pastor at the regular suggested rate, or to extend her contract with the congregation..

Pastoral Care

- ❖ Discussed, but not knowing the direction the congregation wants to take; this was difficult.
- ❖ Right now, Joy is handling all Pastoral care items-visitation, etc.

After Jan. 1, the AC will need to help the congregation figure this out. At the point when the congregation may decide to dissolve, additional help will be needed.

ATTACHMENT C

Liaison Assignments Revised September 5, 2017

Kirk Allen:

Addison
Elmira Lake Street & Fusion on Fire
Jasper
Painted Post
Westminster, Elmira

Priscilla Andrews:

Bath
Hammondsport
Penn Yan
Pulteney
Rock Stream,
Weston

Stanley Bhasker:

Corning
Corning Chinese Christian Church
Hornell

Kerm Bossard:

Burdett
Hector
Lodi
Romulus
Trumansburg

Ellen Donnan:

Newark
Sodus

Jim Kerr:

Lyons
Geneva
Oaks Corners
Phelps

Gail Heimberger:

Huron
Ontario Center
Red Creek
Wolcott

Jim Hicks:

Ithaca
Ovid
Watkins Glen

Rob Mellgard:

Bellona
Seneca Falls,
Seneca #9
Waterloo,
West Fayette

Carol Merrell:

East Palmyra
Junius
Marion
Shortsville

AJ Tierson:

Palmyra Western

Dick Schied:

Atlanta
Dundee
Moreland
Prattsburgh

Bessie Tyrell

Canandaigua
Cohocton
Naples

Jim Varner:

Almond
Andover
Arkport
Canisteo
Howard Union

Jane Winters:

Big Flats
Elmira North
Elmira First
Horseheads
Spencer