

## DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MISSION COUNCIL OF THE PRESBYTERY OF MONMOUTH

A meeting of the Mission Council of the Presbytery of Monmouth was called to order on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 2:10 pm at the Brick Presbyterian Church, with Moderator Elder Sue Smith presiding.

### ROLL OF ATTENDANCE

Moderator Ruling Elder Sue Smith P  
Vice Moderator The Rev. Merideth Mueller P  
Past Moderator The Rev. Gary Filson P  
Past Moderator Ruling Elder William Faust P  
Elder Patricia Apy, 2017,1 E  
Elder Charlotte Alderfer, 2018,1 P  
The Rev. Dana Eglinton, 2018,1 E  
The Rev. Stephen Heinzl-Nelson, 2018,1 P  
The Rev. Hannah Lovaglio, 2019,1 P  
Elder Walter Vincent 2019,2 E  
Stated Clerk The Rev. Carl Wilton (without vote) P  
(P=Present; A=Absent; E=Excused)

The Moderator, Elder Sue Smith, opened the meeting with prayer.

It was moved and carried to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2017 Mission Council meeting.

It was moved and carried to approve the rationale for the overture to the Synod, with rationale:

Overture to the Synod of the Northeast  
from the Presbytery of Monmouth  
September 26, 2017

The Presbytery of Monmouth overtures the Synod of the Northeast to create a working group including representatives from the seven geographic presbyteries of New Jersey to:

1. Work with those presbyteries to ascertain their needs and goals,
2. Examine the present boundaries and structures of those presbyteries,
3. Consider the possibility of redrawing presbytery boundaries, and
4. Make recommendations to the Synod.

### RATIONALE

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been steadily losing members for the past generation. Our membership is less than half the combined membership of our predecessor denominations at the time of our heyday in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

This is especially true among the presbyteries of the Synod of the Northeast, where the secularization of American culture has been proceeding at a more rapid pace than in other regions.

This is not a situation any of us are comfortable with, nor should we be. Downsizing is not the norm for the church of Jesus Christ. Our self-image, based on our founding narrative from the Acts of the Apostles, is that of a steadily growing community.

Our polity reflects this self-understanding. The Book of Order provides scant guidance or encouragement for reducing the number of governing councils.

Yet, that does not mean we should refrain from the work of organizing our presbyteries in a realistic way, based on present demographic realities. Our present map of presbyteries in the State of New Jersey — and, indeed, throughout the Synod of the Northeast — is largely unchanged since the Synod was established in 1973. We are simply not the same church we were back then. Many of our presbyteries, within their present boundaries, are struggling to marshal sufficient human and financial resources to effectively support their congregations in fulfilling the Great Commission.

“The Mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church,” says the first foundational section of our Constitution (F-1.01). There was a time when Christ’s mission dictated that the most sensible way to determine presbytery boundaries was the location of railroad lines — which is how a number of our present presbytery boundaries were established. Many of those boundaries are still in place, exactly as they were conceived in the 19th century, long after the original rails have been torn up and removed. Those archaic boundaries have, over time, become so familiar that we have lost touch with the missional impulse that dictated the original design.

We believe it is time to recover that missional impulse, and ask certain fundamental questions anew. These include:

- \* What is the purpose of a presbytery?
- \* What is the optimal size of a presbytery, based on both overall membership and the number of congregations?
- \* What resources and expertise should a presbytery provide its congregations to enable effective work and witness?
- \* What geographic, cultural and demographic realities impact decisions about presbytery boundaries?
- \* What is the unique organizational culture of our various presbyteries, and how may differences in culture affect future cooperation and/or boundary configurations?

Informed by the answers to these questions, the working group would then seek consensus about a new configuration of presbyteries within our State, right-sized for mission in the present day and into the foreseeable future.

**NEXT STEPS**

It is our intention to share the text of this overture with the other presbyteries within the State, inviting them to concur by sending similar overtures to the Synod. While concurrence with this or a similar overture is not a prerequisite for participating in the discussion, we believe it is beneficial for presbyteries to engage in discussion and vote at this time, so their members may be fully informed. Approval of the overture indicates merely a desire to be included in the conversation, and does not imply consent to any conclusions that may ultimately be reached.

There was a discussion of possible interim leadership options for the Presbytery. Discussion at this meeting centered around a shared leadership model involving a combination of mostly very part-time paid leadership combined with volunteer leadership. At the next meeting, the Mission Council will discuss the feasibility of a single, part-time paid leader: a model similar to past leadership models.

The Stated Clerk will invite representatives from West Jersey and New Brunswick Presbyteries to meet with members of the Mission Council, to debrief from the recent Missional Structures Retreat.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm with prayer by the Rev. Gary Filson.

The next regular meeting of the Mission Council will take place on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 7:00 pm at the Rumson Presbyterian Church.

ATTEST:

The Rev. Carl Wilton, Stated Clerk

**THE DOCKET FOR THE SPECIAL OCTOBER 2017 MEETING OF MONMOUTH PRESBYTERY**

DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017

REGISTRATION: 3:45 PM

TIME: MEETING AT 4:15 PM; WORSHIP AT 6:15 PM

PLACE: FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RED BANK, NEW JERSEY

- 4:15 THE PRESBYTERY CONVENES WITH PRAYER ELDER SUE SMITH  
THE FORMATION OF THE ROLL AND BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS  
THE REPORT ON ARRANGEMENT  
THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE DOCKET
- 4:20 A FACILITATED CONVERSATION  
AN OPEN DISCUSSION ON PRESBYTERY STAFFING
- 5:45 DINNER
- 6:15 WORSHIP
- 7:10 THE COMMITTEE ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE  
THANKS EXTENDED TO THE HOST CHURCH  
THE CLOSING PRAYER
- 7:15 WORKSHOP SESSION #1
- 8:00 WORKSHOP SESSION #2

When you rise to speak, please identify yourself and the Church for which you are a commissioner.

The Presbytery of Monmouth approved a Special Meeting to be held at the First Presbyterian Church, Red Bank, New Jersey on Tuesday, October 24, 2017 at 4:15 pm for the purpose for continuing our discernment of the Presbytery's future direction and to provide an educational opportunity for the Presbytery.

# MONMOUTH PRESBYTERY

## **A POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD: PRESBYTERY LEADER, PART TIME, 24 HOURS/WEEK**

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

- Visioning – helping to create a culture that supports shared values, supporting commitment to our mission, conversations around new NJ missional structures/Presbyteries
- Pastoring – Spiritual leadership; being a pastor to the pastors, particularly in times of crisis
- Connecting – within the presbytery (congregations, elders, pastors) and outside the presbytery (Synod, GA), encouraging networks/joint ministries, disseminating information
- Staffing – Provide support to the Mission Council, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee, serve as head of staff for Presbytery staff.

### **SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Provide oversight and management for the ministry and business of the presbytery.
- Monitor and engage with broad church movements, including dialogue with neighboring presbyteries. Attend meetings and conferences as appropriate.
- Coordinate responses to crisis involving members of the Presbytery (ministers and churches)
- Convene working groups to plan and execute quarterly visioning sessions at Presbytery meetings, as well as Equipping the Saints, clergy retreats, and other events as appropriate.
- Provide support to the Mission Council, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee by attending meetings, performing background checks, etc.
- Supervise presbytery staff and volunteers. Encourage the staff to build and maintain collegial relationships while working from home and other mobile sites.
- Worship with each congregation in the presbytery at least once every three years.

### **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES**

- An innovative leader with experience in the PC(U.S.A.), who elicits hope and enthusiasm
- Demonstrates a vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ and unwavering dedication to his Church.
- A self-starter, able to motivate others, with the ability to delegate.
- Adept at conflict management and skilled at coaching others.
- Has a working knowledge of technology and uses it to facilitate communication and mission.
- Committed to be mobile, demonstrating a physical presence throughout the presbytery.

### **REVIEW & ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Presbytery Leader is accountable to the presbytery through the Mission Council and Personnel Committee, which will conduct annual performance reviews.

### **COST**

- Estimated range of \$43,000 to \$71,500.

# MONMOUTH PRESBYTERY

## A POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD: SHARED LEADERSHIP

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Visioning – holding and communicating the vision for the presbytery.
- Pastoring – Caring for the pastors and leaders of the presbytery
- Connecting –to churches and councils both within and outside of the presbytery.
- Staffing – Provide support for the staff and key committees of presbytery
- Resourcing – help to provide training events, disseminate information

These can be all be accomplished without a paid general presbyter. How?

### SHARED STAFFING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Stated Clerk – takes on head of staff role, is our out-of-presbytery point person for making connections responsible for reference checks, being a voice at the table as “presbytery leader”.
- Mission Council – add quarterly “visioning” meetings to be intentional about holding and implementing the vision of the presbytery.
- Pastor Care Team – A team of 2-4 pastors who are identified as safe and confidential people that our Presbytery pastors can reach out to when they need a pastor. They make contact with each pastor at least once a year to remind them that they are there for them and are praying for them.
- Administrator –increased responsibility to include resourcing/connecting/staffing
- Moderator –expected to hold a significant amount of the visioning piece as moderator of mission council; assure moderator has funds to go to annual moderator’s meeting in Louisville for training

### NURTURING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

- An annual Clergy retreat to live into our value of relationships, to offer resources and connect.
- An annual Elder retreat to live into our value of relationships, to offer resources and connect.
- Presbytery Meetings with Break-Out time for connecting around shared interests, resources.
- Utilizing the mediation network of the Synod to come alongside COM work
- Boosting the Genesis Center to use it as a greater resource for training in the Presbytery

### BENEFITS

Some of the benefits of this model include:

- Engages more members of presbytery in leadership and responsibility for the life of the presbytery.
- Strengthens relationships within the presbytery
- Costs less than half of the cost of a part-time position

### COST

- To support additional compensation, two annual retreats, reimbursements for the work of the Pastor Care Team, and extra resources for the Genesis Center we anticipate an annual cost of \$20,000-\$25,000.

## **Tower Hill Ministry Mini-Conference Breakout Sessions**

### **LAUNCH: Starting or improving your Contemporary service**

**Rev. Dr. Jason Tucker**

Launching a new service can be overwhelming. There are audio/visual, liturgical, aesthetic, theological, human resource, marketing and financial needs (to name a few). What should a Contemporary service look like? How do I know if people will come? What if I have a small church and can't sustain splitting our attendance? Learn how to put together a game plan that works for you (and actually execute it).

### **CIRCLES ARE BETTER THAN ROWS: Small groups for adults**

**Rev. Julie Thompson**

Your congregation may have small groups, but does it have a small group ministry? The latter takes time and intentional focus. It takes recruiting, training and ongoing support for your leaders. Whether you're starting a new small group ministry, re-launching one, or simply looking to grow your current ministry, this breakout session will provide tools and resources to bring to your ministry context.

### **FIXER UPPER: Creating welcoming environments for all ages & stages**

**Suzanne Duffy, Karen Gyimesi and DeeAnn Memon**

What is environment? It's the visual marketing leading up to your events- it's the person you see when you first walk in the door. And it is the physical space itself. In this breakout, you will hear how Tower Hill has created three strategies to make their environment appealing to all generations.

### **FUNDAY SCHOOL: for the iGeneration**

**Lindsey Larkin and Jenn Giunta**

Does FUN matter in Sunday School? Should we be looking for ways to increase the FUN factor? Does it even matter? We believe FUN should be a critical part of Sunday School programming, especially for our current generation of kids who want information on demand! In this breakout, we will discuss a strategy on how to make Sunday School curriculum for kids (Nursery - Middle School aged) fun and engaging to foster their faith development. We will provide tips on how to implement this strategy while facing volunteer shortages and helpful ways to arm your leaders with the tools needed to make your vision of FUN a success!

### **PRAISE HIM: Traditional and Contemporary Music**

**Nicole Cochran & Dan Corboy**

In a church of strong tradition, is it possible to establish a more contemporary avenue for worship while sustaining meaningful tradition? How can a worship space be functional for two contrasting worship styles? How does a traditional service remain relevant throughout all of these changes? Learn how the two music leaders of Tower Hill coexist in the same space while utilizing their passions to enhance their individual service models.

