

SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY PRESBYTERY
Report of the Committee on Ministry
May 20, 2017

MOTIONS FOR ASSEMBLY ACTION:

1. COM recommends to Susquehanna Valley Presbytery that Ruling Elder Marsha Muller be approved to assume the position of part-time Commissioned Lay Pastor for the Deposit Church, and then commissioned to begin June 1st. Committee on Lay Preaching certified that Muller had met training requirements. Her **Statement of Faith** is attached to this report. [#4A]

1. Lead Sunday worship and preach, presiding at regular observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
2. Provide Pastoral Care-including visitation at hospitals, nursing homes, home-bound and taking communion to those unable to participate in Sunday worship.
3. Officiate at funerals/memorials for the church and church families.
4. Serve as Moderator of Church Session.
5. Help plan and lead Christian Education programs, such as Bible Study.
6. Officiate at the sacrament of Holy Baptism and at weddings for church members and family upon completion of training in marriage and baptism and certification from the Committee on Lay Preaching that CLP Marsha Muller is ready for this additional authorization.

The following one-year agreement is for ¼ time (12 hours/week) beginning June 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018.

\$ <u>8,500</u>	Cash salary in regular monthly payments
0	Deferred compensation
0	Medical deductible
0	Bonuses, Social Security offset
Reimbursed Expenses	
\$ 500	Continuing Education and books
\$ <u>1,000</u>	Mileage (at IRS rate)
\$10,000	Total Cost to Church Budget

2. COM recommends re-commissioning all current Ruling Elders listed for “Eucharistic Service” for a 3 year term at the May 20th SVP assembly in Owego. Rationale: Dates of service had not been included in previous official commissioning (a BOO requirement), and there was confusion over at least one commission (originally just to one church, not for larger presbytery service). The Book of Order used to only allow a one-year commission, but now allows up to 3 years – with annual review.

To be re-commissioned (3 years) as eligible to preside at the Lord's Supper at their home church or at the SVP list of churches authorized to use their service: JoAnn Aymar, Michele Brackin, Linda Breffle, George Budine, George Carruth, Shirley Davis, Fred Downs, Deb Fleming, Judi Gage, Marsha Muller, Lynn Reeves, Karen Siekmann-Marshfield, John Truscott.

To be re-commissioned (3 years) as eligible to preside at the Lord's Supper only at their home church of Bainbridge: Cheryl Nages, Paula Tillapaugh

ACTIONS TAKEN BY COM ON BEHALF OF THE PRESBYTERY:

Approval of Stamford MIF (“Ministry Information Form” – formerly called “Church Information Form”). This means the MIF can be posted on the PCUSA “Church Leadership Connection” website and begin to receive resumes (“Personal Information Forms” or PIFs) from Teaching Elders/Ministers of Word and Sacrament.

Approval of Central Delaware Trinity Covenant Mission Study Report. In the process of searching for a new minister, once the Mission Study Report is approved, a church is free to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC), who then uses the Mission Study Report to prepare the official “MIF” and begins the search for pastoral leadership.

Approval of renewal of part-time contract between George Budine, Commissioned Lay Pastor, and Nichols First Presbyterian Church, effective March 1, 2017-February 28, 2018:

Cash Salary: \$9,678 annual (payable monthly)
 Mileage: IRS rate reimbursed up to \$500
 Study Leave: 2 weeks annually (2 Sundays), \$200 and \$50 for books
 Vacation: 4 weeks annually (4 Sundays)

Approval of renewal of contract between Deb Fleming as Commissioned Lay Pastor and Cabin Hill Presbyterian Church, effective March 1, 2017-February 28, 2018:

Preparing, leading and preaching for worship with one Sunday off monthly.
 Moderating four Session meetings and Annual Congregational Meeting.
 Pastoral care, emergency & hospital visits, funeral reimbursed on hourly basis.
 Cash Salary: \$8,300 annual (payable monthly)
 Pastoral Care: \$25/hour
 Retirement Savings: \$700 annual
 Self-employment offset: \$635.95 (IRS rate of 7.65%)
 Mileage: IRS rate reimbursed
 Education Fund: \$550 annual (book allowance, Continuing Education)
 Vacation: August off, plus 2 additional Sundays with sufficient notice

Concurred with **Dissolution of Pastoral Relationship between Lisa Ruth Mays and Walton United Presbyterian Church effective April 30, 2017**, the Congregational Meeting having been held April 2, 2017 with Ruling Elder Deb Fleming as Moderator.

Approval of full-time contract between Lisa Ruth Mays to serve as Interim Pastor for Delhi, First Presbyterian Church, effective May 1, 2017-April 30, 2018:

Cash Salary: \$20,343 annually (payable monthly)
 Deferred Compensation: \$6,000
 Housing Allowance: \$21,600
 Board of Pension Dues: \$17,499
 Social Security offset: \$3668
 Reimbursed Expenses:
 Continuing Education and Books: \$1300
 Mileage: \$1500 at IRS rate
 Other: \$1200
 Total Cost to Church Budget: \$73,110
 Study Leave: 2 weeks (including 2 Sundays)
 Vacation: 4 weeks (including 4 Sundays)

Approval of renewed Interim Pastor Contract Lisa Heckman/Owego-Contract from March 2, 2017-March 1, 2018.

COMPENSATION
 \$ 31,400 Annual cash salary (in regular monthly payments)
 \$ 1,000 Medical deductible
 \$ 25,000 Housing Allowance
 \$ 57,400 Effective Salary (subject to Board of Pensions Dues)
 \$ 20,951 Board of Pension dues

REIMBURSED EXPENSES

\$ 1,200 Continuing Education and books
 \$ 3,300 Mileage (at IRS rate) and professional expenses
 \$ 4,391 Social Security offset
 \$ 87,242 Total cost to church budget
 Study Leave: 2 weeks (including 2 Sundays)
 Vacation 4 weeks (including 4 Sundays plus additional 2 Sundays)

Approval of renewed part-time Interim Pastor Contract Barbara Renton/ Bainbridge from July 1, 2017- Dec. 31, 2017, to be terminated one week before a new pastor takes office.

Moderate Session meetings and any congregational meetings.

Officiate at Sacraments (communion, baptism)

Be available to officiate at weddings and funerals.

Meet with committees as needed and appropriate.

Preaching for morning worship to be reimbursed at Pulpit supply rates.

Guide and advise the Session and Deacons.

Participate in Council of Churches and in any community religious services when appropriate.

COMPENSATION: \$400 month plus 15.3% Social Security, with Rev. Dr. Renton to file quarterly according to Social Security and IRS.

Appointed Moderators for churches without a pastor: Ruling Elder Deb Fleming for Walton United Presbyterian, Ruling Elder JoAnn Aymar for Hancock Presbyterian.

FOR ASSEMBLY INFORMATION:

Proposed Vision for Partnership Congregations Moving away from the COM Liaison for every church model, feedback on the proposal made at the March 18, 2017 SVP Assembly re: having churches resource each other at presbytery level was requested. Marena & Garrett Vittorio-Schindler summarized feedback (attached) [#4B].

COM met with Evangelical Lutheran Church of America(ELCA) minister Ernie Varga and gave him permission to circulate his ELCA ministerial profile and to suggest his name to SVP churches looking for pastoral leadership. (One of the “Formula of Agreement” denominations, a Lutheran minister can serve a PCUSA church without changing their denominational affiliation.)

Added Andes and Walton to the list of churches eligible to use Ruling Elders commissioned for “Eucharistic Service” (upon request of their Sessions). The complete list is now: Afton, Andes, Immanuel (Binghamton), John Hus (Binghamton), Broad Ave Chapel, Bainbridge, Deposit, Hancock, Smithville Flats, Stamford, Laurens, Lordville, East Guilford, Walton, Windsor. (First Delhi had been on the list, but with the arrival of their new Interim on May 1st, no longer meet criteria.)

Reminded Interim & Temporary Pastors of expected “Quarterly Reports” (COM Form #8). The next gathering of DISTP (Designated, Interim, Stated and Temporary Pastors) is asked to have the forms available to fill out as well.

Boundary Awareness trainings: COM Policy is that new pastors should have such training in their first year, and then every five years. Among presbyteries in Central New York, it is Northern New York’s turn to host this year; Susquehanna Valley’s turn will be in 2018. Information from Boundary Awareness training offered by sister denominations, such as UCC, has also been sought.

Approval of Early Ministry Institute participation & payment to Synod of the Northeast:

- Bobby Outterson Murphy/Delhi United Ministry
- Sharon Knoell Russo/Valley United

Concurred with Cabinet to pay for the tuition of \$1400 for Mediation training for Marena and Garrett Vittorio-Schindler. Also voted to support a minister using \$1500 in Clergy Care funds; and received a bill for \$1200 for a clergy career assessment previously authorized by COM.

COM Policies and Procedures: A team had been formed a couple years ago tasked with updating COM Policies, Procedures and Forms to ensure they follow the new Book of Order and current SVP organizational structure. Mark Montfort, Bea Mooney, Doug Hatch, and Jim Martin had been trying to eliminate duplicate policies, eliminate references to an Executive Presbyter, and make numbering consistent between “Policies” and “Forms.” Janet Adair Hansen and Lynn Shepard met with Mark Montfort on April 20 to review work-to-date and make new suggestions for when the group meets again.

- Distinguish “policy” (something that needs presbytery approval when changed) from “procedure” (internal how to do it document)
- Group policies & procedures by type of pastoral service - installed pastorates, temporary (e.g. Interim, Designated), and have a parallel section for Commissioned Lay Pastors

COM also recognizes a need for the content of some of the procedures to be updated and make sure they are “user friendly.” Current COM Policy #3 details what should happen between when an installed pastor leaves and a new pastor is installed. RE JoAnn Aymar worked up a document (with former COM Co-Moderator Mark Montfort’s help) to guide a church through the transition process, with MIF and PNC, etc. This could be added to the “Procedures” or used to modify the details of current COM Policy #3. The COM Policies and Procedures also need to address the increasing role that Ruling Elders play in providing Pastoral Services to our churches.

With COM official membership reduced, **former members of COM are being asked** to help with specific tasks, such as continue to work with churches in transition through their PNC process. For example, TE Doug Hatch is continuing his work with the Dryden PNC. To better support churches in transition, COM is considering trying to have both a Teaching Elder and a Ruling Elder assist (not necessarily to be at every local meeting). This would allow perspectives of both clergy and church members to give input to the MIF writing and PIF reading, and alleviate pressure on someone new to COM.

Reference Checks & COM Interviews with Prospective Members

Since Teaching Elders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament) belong to the presbytery, before a church can bring in a potential new pastor to be voted on by the congregation, they must have a clearance interview with the Committee on Ministry. If a PNC brings a candidate from out of state for a neutral pulpit, a COM interview can be arranged for the same weekend, instead of inviting a more local candidate to a regularly scheduled COM meeting.

Background/Reference checks are also done on ministerial final candidates – in presbyteries with an Executive Presbyter, that check is done by the EP. In the absence of an Executive or General Presbyter, reference checks across presbytery lines are done by COM Moderator. At the suggestion of Stated Clerk Jim Martin, Executive Presbyters in Long Island and National Capital Presbyteries were consulted to come up with a Reference Check List of questions that SVP COM Co-Moderator can ask of another presbytery when one of the SVP churches is seriously considering one of their members to come to Central New York.

COM is currently working under a 3 team structure to provide oversight and ensure that the work is done (not necessarily do all the work of the committee). The **Transition team** is responsible for making sure that all the churches in transition are taken care of and have COM reps working with them. The **Small Churches team** is focusing on the needs of our smallest churches – the tiniest ones don’t have regular pastoral leadership. The **Mediation team** is making sure we have trained individuals who can resource congregations and publicizing how churches can find trained support.

COM was reminded by Stated Clerk Jim Martin of the need to annually review those in specialized/validated ministry (e.g Campus Minister) and also to annually report changes to Terms of Call for those serving in our presbytery. COM will try to gather information and conduct reviews before the September Presbytery Assembly.

Keeping Track of Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders doing Pastoral Work

With assistance from Office Administrator Christine Rogalski and Stated Clerk Jim Martin, COM is developing a “master” spread sheet to keep track of our pastors – when they came into the presbytery, positions served, ordination date and place, boundary awareness & other training (such as Interim/Transitional training), etc. COM is developing another spread sheet to better track Ruling Elders commissioned for special service in the presbytery – not only Commissioned Lay Pastors but those commissioned for “Eucharistic Service” (they can preside at communion for a church without a pastor), for pastoral care, or authorized to Moderate a Session (Ruling Elders who are past or present COM members may be appointed Moderator per 11/16/2016 Presbytery Assembly).