

5 **-DRAFT-**
6 **PRESBYTERY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE**
7 **MINUTES OF ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FOURTH STATED MEETING**
8 **MAY 20, 2021**

9 The 144th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee was held via Zoom on Thursday,
10 May 20, 2021. Rev. Nolan Huizenga presented Zoom tips for the meeting and provided orientation for
11 first time commissioners. Moderator Chris Joiner called the meeting to order at 9:45 am.

12 **WORSHIP**

13 Worship was led by members of the Guatemalan Task Force and Keith and Lana Vandergrift,
14 mission co-worker in Guatemala, as well as persons who participated in mission trips through the years.
15 Special music was provided by Nate Strasser, music director at East Brentwood Presbyterian Church. The
16 offering was collected for the Guatemala Partnership.

17 **DECLARATION OF QUORUM / RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING MODERATOR /**
18 **STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES / FIRST TIME COMMISSIONERS / STANDING RULES /**
19 **CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

20 Moderator Joiner called the meeting back to order after worship, and declared a quorum was
21 present and reviewed procedures for the meeting. The Moderator stated that due to the pandemic, it is
22 still not possible for the Presbytery to meet safely in person, but a meeting is necessary to transact essential
23 business. The Moderator stated that *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (12th Edition)*, the
24 parliamentary authority for councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), states electronic meetings must
25 be properly authorized in the council's bylaws. The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee's bylaws, the
26 Mission and Operations Manual, does not allow the presbytery to meet electronically, and it is not possible
27 to meet in person to amend the Manual to allow electronic meetings. The motion was made, seconded,
28 and approved by the requisite three-fourths of commissioners to set aside the standing rules to allow the
29 electronic meeting and to ratify all actions taken at today's meeting at the next stated, in person meeting.

30 The Presbytery's Mission and Operations Manual and the *Book of Order* provide for the seating
31 of corresponding members and teaching and ruling elders with voice and those with voice and vote. Any
32 ruling elder serving as presbytery's Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Moderator-in-Nomination, chairs of
33 committees, members of the Administrative Committee, members of the Finance Committee, and the
34 Moderator of Presbyterian Women, are enrolled as members of presbytery and shall have voice and vote.
35 Ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service, and ruling elders who have previously served
36 as presbytery moderator, within five years of completion of his/her term of service, are enrolled as
37 members of presbytery with voice and vote. Any ruling elder serving as a committee representative to a
38 particular meeting of presbytery in the absence of the chair shall have the privilege of voice and vote for
39 that particular meeting of the presbytery. Persons certified in church service who are ruling elders shall
40 have the privilege of voice and vote at all meetings of the presbytery, during their term of service in
41 ministry in the presbytery of Middle Tennessee. Persons certified in church service, who are members of
42 congregations in the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, shall have the privilege of voice at all meetings of
43 the presbytery during their term of service in a congregation or other ministry validated by the presbytery.
44 Should a question arise concerning the enrollment of any person, the presbytery may resolve the matter
45 upon the recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Commission. Corresponding members were seated
46 without objection, and are listed with the roll.

47 First time commissioners were recognized and welcomed.
48
49

1 **ROLL**

2 The roll of commissioners, corresponding members, and visitors attending the presbytery meeting
3 is attached (Attachment A).

4 **AGENDA**

5 The Moderator stated that the agenda for the meeting had been provided in advance to
6 commissioners. The following agenda was approved without objection upon motion duly made and
7 seconded:

- 8 9:00 am 1. Registration (Order of the Day in CAPS)
- 9 9:35 am Orientation to Zoom | First Time Commissioners (10 min)
- 10 9:45 am 2. CALL TO ORDER / WORSHIP
 - 11 • Offering: Guatemala Partnership
- 12 10:30 am 3. Establishment of Quorum / Statement of Procedures / Recognition of First
13 Time Presbyters / Seating of Corresponding Members / Adoption of Agenda
- 14 10:40 am 4. Stated Clerk’s Report – Therese Howell (5 min)
 - 15 • Approval of Minutes of 143rd Stated Meeting (February 6, 2021)
- 16 10:45 am 5. Administrative Committee – Cristi Scott Ligon (40 min)
17 *[Breakout – Vision 2020 Discussion]*
- 18 11:15 am 6. Finance Committee – Steve Douse (5 min)
- 19 11:20 am 7. Co-Executive Presbyters’ Report – Robin & Ray Thomas (10 min)
- 20 11:30 am 8. Committee on Mutual Support – Stuart Wilson-Patton (15 min)
- 21 11:45 am 9. Committee on Church Transformation – Chris Adams (15 min)
- 22 Noon 10. Living Waters for the World – Steve Young (10 min)
- 23 12:10 pm 11. Committee on Ministry Report – C. Nolan Huizenga (20 min)
- 24 12:30 pm 12. Concerns and Celebrations
25 Unfinished Business
- 26 **145th Stated Meeting – Saturday, July 17, 2021** (location TBD)
- 27 12:45 pm 13. Closing Prayer / Adjourn

28 **STATED CLERK’S REPORT**

29 Ruling Elder Therese Howell, Stated Clerk, presented the following report.

30 2020 Annual Statistical Reports

31 The 2020 Annual Statistical Reports reported by the clerks of sessions, were filed with the Office
32 of the General Assembly. The summary, as well as information for each individual church, is posted on
33 the website and will be included in the minutes of the May meeting. (Attachment B)

34 Hispanic Administrative Commission

35 The Committee on Church Transformation report includes a request from the Hispanic
36 Administrative Commission for its dissolution. When the stated clerk receives the final report and minutes
37 of the commission, this will be reported to the Presbytery and the final report spread upon the minutes.

38 Approval of Minutes of 143rd Stated Meeting (February 6, 2021)

39 The Minutes of the 143rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee (February 6,
40 2021) were presented for approval. The motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The
41 minutes were corrected to include the 2020 Summary B, provided with the February meeting packet,
42 which were inadvertently left out of the minutes, a clarification on the investigating committee reported
43 at the February meeting, as well as updating the roll of participants at the meeting. The minutes, as
44 corrected, were approved.

45 **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

46 Ruling Elder Cristi Scott Ligon, Vice-Moderator and chair of the Administrative Committee,
47 presented the committee’s report.

48 Virtual Office Working Group

49 The Administrative Committee received an update on the Presbytery’s move to a virtual office.
50 Records are being scanned, and other records will be deposited with the Presbyterian Historical Society
51 in Philadelphia.

1 Aimee Moiso / Communications Coordinator

2 Dr. Aimee Moiso has been hired as Communications Coordinator for five hours / week, \$20 / hour.

3 Reports of Officers and Executive Staff

4 The Administrative Committee received reports from the Co-Executive Presbyters, the Stated
5 Clerk, and the Treasurer.

6 LatinX Hub

7 The Administrative Committee received an update on the Latinx Hub. Chris Adams (Committee
8 on Church Transformation), Melinda Sanders (Finance Committee), and Mark DeVries (Ministry
9 Architects) are serving as a working group for the Latinx Hub, the new designation for Iglesia
10 Presbyteriana Nueva Vida. The Committee on Church Transformation is discerning the best next steps to
11 support the congregation and food bank at this time. The food bank needs volunteers!

12 Administrative Commissions - Update

13 The Administrative Committee received a report on existing administrative commissions.

14 Manual Revisions Working Group

15 The working group to review and revise the Mission and Operations Manual continues its work
16 and hopes to bring a revised work to the October Presbytery meeting.

17 Review of the Vision 2020 Plan

18 The Administrative Committee will oversee a review of the Vision 2020 plan. The Presbytery will
19 utilize break out groups to discuss the current plan and needed updates. A description of the discussion
20 process and questions was provided with the Presbytery packet.

21 Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church

22 The Administrative Committee was informed that Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church has
23 become a Matthew 25 church.

24 Webinars

25 The Presbytery offered two webinars: one in March about returning to in-person worship, led by
26 an epidemiologist, and one in April on handling conflict during a time of stress and change.

27 Social Justice Working Group

28 The Administrative Committee received an update on the social justice working group.

29 Statistical Reports

30 The Administrative Committee received an update on the 2020 statistical reports.

31 Committee on Leadership Excellence

32 The Administrative Committee accepted with regret the resignation of Toby Mueller as chair and
33 member of the Committee on Leadership Excellence. Ms. Scott-Ligon stated that the Nominating Task
34 Force recommended that Aaron Stauffer be elected as chair of the Committee on Leadership Excellence.
35 The floor was opened for additional nominations, and there were none. Dr. Stauffer was elected to serve
36 as chair of Leadership Excellence.

37
38 The Presbytery then split into small groups to discuss the Vision 2020 plan for 30 minutes.

39 **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

40 Ruling Elder Steve Douse, Treasurer, presented the Finance Committee report. He commented
41 briefly on the financials provided in the Presbytery packet.

42 Payroll Protection Loan

43 As expected, Presbytery's \$62,300 Payroll Protection loan was forgiven. The loan was booked as
44 revenue during 2020 once Presbytery met the SBA criteria for loan forgiveness, so this action merely
45 confirms our previous treatment of this loan for accounting purposes.

46 LatinX Ministry

47 The Finance Committee voted to accept a \$20,000 grant from the Kharis Foundation to help fund
48 Presbytery's Latinx Ministry, subject to certain conditions relating to the use of the funds.

1 Church Property Working Group

2 Following passage of the Church Property Sale Policy at the last Presbytery meeting, the Finance
3 Committee approved the formation of a property working group, which will (a) assist the stated clerk in
4 maintaining accurate records of church property ownership and church debt, (b) implement the transfer of
5 ownership of church properties that are currently titled in Presbytery's name to the appropriate church
6 corporation, as directed by the policy, and (c) screen requests by churches that involve alteration of the
7 ownership position of churches in their property and recommend appropriate action to the Finance
8 Committee. Allen Kennedy agreed to chair the working group; Shawn Thomas Smith and Rosanna
9 Anderson will serve as members. Attorney Jack Stringham, a ruling elder at First Presbyterian Church,
10 Nashville, agreed to assist the property working group in effecting the necessary property transfers.

11 Budget Working Group

12 The committee's budget working group, chaired by Melinda Sanders, is reviewing Presbytery's
13 designated funds with an eye toward proposing revisions that will better align them with the funding needs,
14 resources, and vision of this Presbytery in the coming years.

15 Investment Task Force

16 The Investment Task Force is considering changes to the Investment Policy that would, among
17 other things, reduce the need for active management of Presbytery's investment portfolio by the Task
18 Force. If the Finance Committee is able to consider those proposals before the May Presbytery meeting,
19 it may offer them for approval, in which case the revisions will be made available in a supplementary
20 report.

21 Bellevue Presbyterian Church, Nashville

22 The Finance Committee has received a request from members of the Committee on Ministry, the
23 Bellevue Administrative Commission, and the Bellevue church's pastor nominating committee for
24 financial assistance that would be used for pastoral support in connection with the church's redevelopment
25 efforts. This request will be considered in connection with the committee's budgeting process.

26 Sale of Glencliff Manse

27 The sale of Glencliff Presbyterian Church's former manse to Rev. Teddy Chuquimia, the
28 honorably retired pastor of Nueva Vida, which was approved at a prior Presbytery meeting, was
29 completed.

30 Financial Policies and Procedures

31 The Finance Committee recommended approval of the Financial Policies and Procedures,
32 including Appendices A-G (Attachment C). All of the appendices are available on the Presbytery web
33 site, except for Appendix B, the Grant Application Form, which is available upon request from the Co-
34 Executive Presbyters. Mr. Douse spoke to the recommendation, which was approved without objection.

35 After a brief break, the meeting resumed.

36 **CO-EXECUTIVE PRESBYTERS' REPORT**

37 Ray and Robin Thomas, Co-Executive Presbyters, reported on their ongoing work. They called
38 attention to updated accounting efficiencies, the new Filing Cabinet tab on the Presbytery website, and
39 the impending move to a virtual Presbytery office, as well as a new mailing address for the Presbytery.

40 **COMMITTEE ON MUTUAL SUPPORT**

41 Ruling Elder Stuart Wilson Patton, Presbytery's Hunger Action Advocate and chair of the
42 Committee on Mutual Support, presented the committee's report.

43 Guatemala Partnership Task Force

44 The Committee on Mutual Support invited the Guatemala Partnership Task Force to share the
45 history of the Guatemala Partnership between the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee and the Presbytery of
46 the Peten with the Presbytery. Members of the Guatemala Partnership Task Force are: David Carlton (RE,
47 Second); Barbara Hall (RE, East Brentwood); Kira Hilley (East Brentwood); John R. Hilley (TE, East
48 Brentwood); Mike Magee (TE, Honorably Retired); Lavona Russell (RE, East Brentwood), and Keith

1 Vandergrift (TE, Liaison in Guatemala). Members of the Task Force spoke of their experiences with the
2 mission in Guatemala, and Rev. Vandergrift offered a prayer.

3 Members of the Task Force reminded the Presbytery of the opportunities to support the mission in
4 Guatemala, including prayers, Basico scholarships, support for pastors, women's leadership, education,
5 food relief, theological education, and leadership development and empowerment. The next mission trip
6 to Guatemala is scheduled for March 2022. Rev. John Hilley then offered a prayer.

7 Hunger Grant Award

8 Approved Hunger Grant Applications from: (1) Hendersonville Home Bound Meals Program for
9 \$2,000.

10 **COMMITTEE ON CHURCH TRANSFORMATION**

11 Rev. Chris Adams, chair of the Committee on Church Transformation, presented the committee's
12 report.

13 2021 Areas of Focus

14 *New Worshipping Communities*

15 The committee is evaluating the current need for a new worshipping community in the I-
16 840 corridor of Williamson County.

17 Current NWCs: Evangelical Presbyterian Arabic Community in Nashville; Rock Eternal
18 Presbyterian Arabic Church; Telos at Southminster

19 *Immigrant Churches*

20 The committee will continue to work with immigrant churches, providing connection, guidance
21 and prayer when requested.

22 Current Immigrant Churches: Sudanese American Nuer Church; Iglesia Presbiteriana Nueva Vida;
23 Nashville Korean Presbyterian Church

24 *Existing Congregations*

25 The committee has received and endorsed from the NWC Task Force "Marks of a Church Ready
26 for the Future of Ministry." The committee is currently looking for feedback from groups within the
27 presbytery as we continue to develop these marks as a useful tool. The committee continues to work with
28 COM and Ministry Architects on finding alternative and innovative solutions to church leadership,
29 empowering churches for sustainability.

30 Hispanic New Church Development Administrative Commission

31 Rev. Adams reported that the Committee on Church Transformation received, and supports, the
32 request of the Hispanic New Church Development Administrative Commission to be dismissed with
33 thanks for their work. He spoke of the creation of the commission and its work, and reported that as of
34 June 30, 2020, four new pastors began working with this ministry. Rev. Adams thanked Ann Cox
35 (Donelson), Tony McMahon (Glencliff), Barb Hall (East Brentwood), for their ten years of service, and
36 thanked Kathy Ianni (Second) for her service on the commission. After discussion, the recommendation
37 was approved.

38 Rev. Adams stated that the Committee on Church Transformation recommends that Iglesia
39 Presbiteriana Nueva Vida be changed from a new church development to a new worshipping community.
40 He spoke to the committee's rationale for this change. After discussion, the recommendation was
41 approved.

42 Rev. Adams spoke briefly on the Matthew 25 Food Program, and the committee's work with the
43 Committee on Ministry in seeking leadership. He stated there is an emerging new spirit, and he is grateful!

44 **LIVING WATERS FOR THE WORLD**

45 Ruling Elder Steve Young, Executive Director of Living Waters for the World, spoke of the
46 ministry's work to install water systems and train communities to support the systems. He reported that
47 they have installed 1,040 clean water systems in 26 nations. The ministry is focused on partnerships,
48 innovation, and support. Mr. Young stated the ministry would not be possible without the connection
49 polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

1 A brief video presentation was shared, and Mr. Young reported that Living Waters for the World
2 was a Matthew 25 program. He thanked Middle Tennessee’s Board members Suzanne Allen
3 (Westminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville), Donovan Drake (Westminster Presbyterian Church,
4 Nashville), and Leonard Jordan (St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Nashville). Mr. Young also thanked
5 Dr. Carson Salyer (Honorably Retired), who was one of the top Clean Water University instructors for
6 Living Waters for the World. Mr. Young thanked the churches in Middle Tennessee Presbytery for their
7 continued support of this ministry through their gifts and active support in water installations.

8 **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

9 Rev. Nolan Huizenga, chair of the Committee on Ministry, presented the committee’s report.

10 Annual Report Forms

11 Minister annual report forms will be posted on the presbytery’s website as well as emailed to
12 ministers by the end of May.

13 Annie McClure

14 The Committee on Ministry approved the status of Honorably Retired for Rev. Annie McClure.
15 Rev. Huizenga reported that Rev. McClure and her husband were moving to Louisville, KY, to be near
16 family, and could not be present at the meeting. Rev. Huizenga stated that Rev. McClure had ministered
17 to many people in her ministry, and asked that Presbytery send her to Louisville with thanks and blessing.

18 Downtown Presbyterian Church, Nashville / Ministry Information Form

19 The COM Transitions Task Force approved the Ministry Information Form for an interim pastor
20 for Downtown Presbyterian Church, Nashville.

21 Administrative Commissions

22 The COM receives regular reports from the Sparta and Bellevue Administrative Commissions.

23 First Presbyterian Church McMinnville / Rev. Jimmie Lancaster

24 The COM approved the renewal of the temporary supply contract between First Presbyterian
25 Church, McMinnville, and Rev. Jimmie Lancaster. The contract is effective 3/1/2021 through 2/28/2022.
26 Terms include cash salary - \$20,000, housing - \$18,000, Social Security self-employment - \$5,536,
27 professional expenses - \$3,000; four weeks of vacation and two weeks of study leave.

28 Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, and First Presbyterian Church, Watertown /

29 Rev. John Burgener

30 The COM approved the part-time stated supply contract between Rev. John “Bo” Burgener and
31 Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, and First Presbyterian Church, Watertown. The contract
32 term is 1/1/2021 – 12/31/2021 for 20 hours per week. Terms include effective salary of \$20,000, allocated
33 to housing, and 6 weeks of vacation.

34 Southminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville / Rev. Beth McCaw

35 The COM approved Rev. Beth McCaw as moderator of the session of Southminster Presbyterian
36 Church, Nashville.

37 Rev. Phillip Beisswenger

38 The COM dismissed the Rev. Phillip Beisswenger to the Presbytery of Des Moines to accept a
39 call, effective March 9, 2021.

40 Bellevue Administrative Commission

41 Rev. Huizenga reported that the Committee on Ministry received the Final Report of the Bellevue
42 Administrative Commission and presented it for information and action.
43 The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee formed the Administrative Commission for Bellevue Presbyterian Church on
44 October 18, 2018. With this decision the presbytery, through the Committee On Ministry, responded to the request
45 of the session of Bellevue Presbyterian seeking help with the discernment of its future.

46
47 From the original charge to the AC:

48 “The congregation of Bellevue Presbyterian Church, Nashville, has declined in membership because of conflict
49 over recent years and is now under additional financial duress—perhaps to the verge of survivability--during a
50 period of pastoral transition. The most recent conflict, though it focusses on a decision of Session, is likely more

1 chronic and requires assistance from outside the resources of the congregation to assist in promoting healing and
2 reconciliation and the creation of new patterns of relating.”

3
4 The members of the Commission appointed at its formation were Mike Wilson, TE, Downtown Presbyterian
5 Church, Nashville (chair), Jane Herring, TE, Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Evelyn Graham, TE, Southminster
6 Presbyterian Church (at that time), Larry McElroy, RE, Northminster Presbyterian Church, Murfreesboro, and
7 William Russell, RE, First Presbyterian Church, Spring Hill.

8
9 A letter was sent to the session of BPC on October 21, 2018 requesting financial information for the church and
10 the Early Education Program, as well as enrollment figures for the EEP. The focus remained on the financial
11 health of the congregation through the remainder of this iteration of the AC. In late 2019 Mike Wilson and Larry
12 McElroy left the AC and were replaced with David Wood, RE, First, Nashville, and Steve Musick, TE, HR. This
13 new iteration of the Commission began meeting in January of 2020 to review the previous work and set a strategy
14 for going forward. It was decided to move the focus from strictly financial to the resourcing the congregation in
15 gaining the tools needed to attain its goal of eventually calling a pastor.

16
17 To this end, we met with the session on February 17, 2020 and began the process of helping them assess direction
18 and resources for moving forward. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic soon brought the shutdown of the
19 metro area, effectively suspending our work for a while. But during that period, plans and information continued
20 to be shared, including communication with other congregations that seemed open to assisting this project.

21
22 From that date in February, 2020 to the present enough progress has been made that it seems clear that the
23 Administrative Commission is no longer required for the continued progress and sustainability of Bellevue
24 Presbyterian Church. The following reasons support this assertion:

- 25 • The conflict which was the catalyst for requesting the formation of an administrative commission is now
26 resolved and past.
- 27 • The financial situation of Bellevue Presbyterian seems to be on par with other congregations of its size
28 and demographics, as well as being stable and adequate for accomplishing the goals developed by the
29 session in consultation with the congregation and the commission.
- 30 • The theological and relational frameworks for successfully achieving these goals has been established and
31 is understood by the session and the congregation.
- 32 • Officer training was conducted by Toby Mueller in the Fall of 2020.
- 33 • Conversations with other PC(USA) congregations in this presbytery have begun with potential
34 partnerships in financial assistance, pastoral leadership, and Christian Education being discussed.
- 35 • A goal of calling a part-time pastor was acknowledged early in 2020, leading to the foundational efforts
36 that have brought the congregation to calling a PNC and currently reviewing the credentials of potential
37 candidates.
- 38 • Committee On Ministry has assigned a permanent liaison—David Wood, RE, First, Nashville—who has
39 and will continue to support and assist the work of the BPC session.

40 In light of all these factors, we, the undersigned members of the commission, request its dissolution and our
41 release from its duties. We agree that the work of the Administrative Commission has been helpful and
42 meaningful to the life and future of Bellevue Presbyterian Church, and that our work is now finished. We
43 respectfully request that this commission be dissolved.

44 Your faithful servants,

45 Steve Musick, TE, Honorably Retired
46 Jane Herring, TE, Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Nashville
47 Evelyn Graham, TE, Member-At-Large
48 David Wood, RE, First Presbyterian Church, Nashville
49 William Russell, RE, First Presbyterian Church, Spring Hill

1 Rev. Musick and Mr. Wood spoke briefly of the marks of progress and excitement at Bellevue.
2 There were no questions or discussion, and the report was received and approved without objection. The
3 Moderator thanked everyone who served on the commission, and Rev. Huizenga offered a prayer.

4 Family Leave Policy

5 The Committee on Ministry recommended approval of a Family Leave Policy; a copy was
6 provided with the Presbytery packet. Rev. Huizenga spoke about the policy, and stated it was to provide
7 a guide to churches; the Committee on Ministry strongly recommends this and hopes to be able to help
8 churches in support of this policy. After discussion, the following Family Leave Policy was approved:

9 **Family Medical Leave Policy for the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee**

10 **Eligibility**

11 Because of the unique situation that is a church family, illness, the addition of a child to a family, or the
12 illness of a pastor's loved one creates a unique burden on both a pastor and the pastor's congregation. This
13 policy is our attempt to build a shared understanding of faithfully safeguarding both needed support of the pastor
14 and their family, and the continued vitality of the congregation. As a connectional church, with shared leadership
15 between Teaching and Ruling Elders, we hope to foster communication for mutual care.

16 This policy covers all Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving a PC(USA) entity including those
17 serving in temporary/transitional or part-time positions, as well as in installed positions. Churches are encouraged
18 to extend similar benefits to other employees, at the session's discretion.
19
20

21 **Parameters**

- 22 • Within any 12-month period, a maximum of 12 weeks (total, regardless of precipitating event or
23 circumstance) of Paid Leave may be agreed upon with as much advance notice as possible. For the sake
24 of the health of each congregation, consecutive use of Paid Leave, vacation and sabbatical is
25 discouraged.
26 Specific circumstances which call for the family/medical leave will help guide the agreement reached
27 about the length of the time for the family/medical leave. Possible partial performance of pastoral duties
28 during the absence is negotiable between the pastor and session. If desired, the Committee on Ministry
29 can provide assistance and support for these conversations. If there is disagreement about the necessity of
30 leave when it is not clear through the guidelines of the Board of Pensions, either the pastor or the session
31 can call on COM for help negotiating the Paid Leave.
- 32 • Paid Leave may be used consecutively or intermittently. Tracking use and substantiating documentation
33 of intermittent absences is the responsibility of each session and pastor.
- 34 • During Paid Leave, the pastor will continue to receive all benefits in their terms of call, including dues
35 paid to and benefits provided by the Board of Pensions.
- 36 • Paid Leave is not vacation or sabbatical, and Paid Leave Time will not reduce the vacation/study
37 leave/sabbatical time in the pastor's/employee's terms of call/contract. At the discretion of the pastor and
38 session, vacation time may be used to extend the Paid Leave outlined in this policy.
- 39 • Following the period of Paid Leave, the pastor shall be entitled to return to the same position with the
40 same title, terms of call, hours worked, and job description.
- 41 • We recommend that the pastor/full-time employee, COM representative(s), and session/board
42 representative(s) participate in a reentry/reevaluation conversation during the Paid Leave, before the
43 pastor/employee returns to work.
 - 44 · Becoming a parent, healing from a personal loss, and caring for ill/disabled family members are
45 major life events that can be substantially impactful. Having a conversation about the changes in
46 perspective/priorities brought about during/from the Paid Leave can smooth the pastor/employee's
47 reentry into the life of the church/entity.
- 48 • Churches and pastors/employees are encouraged to use the energy, intelligence, imagination, and love
49 promised in ordination vows to approach the structure of each leave situation.

1 For example, an employee with a life-altering reason for Paid Leave may be helped with a gradual
2 return to their job duties, which would ultimately benefit both the life of the church and the thriving
3 of the pastor/employee.
4

5 If desired, COM will consult with churches on pulpit supply — supported either by an emergency pastoral supply
6 fund, or by suggesting preachers who have agreed to forgo an honorarium under such circumstances.

7 **Types of Leave**

8 **Events and Circumstances impacting the pastor** — These situations affect a pastor’s personal ability to
9 perform their duties. The Board of Pensions’ policy covers 60% of the effective salary of the pastor in these
10 situations:

- 11 • **Medical Leave:** Temporary Disability is defined by the Board of Pensions as when an employee is
12 “unable to perform regular work duties because of sickness or injury. Temporary disability benefits
13 are generally available for up to 90 days from the date of the disability, after a 14-day waiting
14 period.” The Board of Pensions Temporary Disability benefit will cover 60% of the
15 pastor/employee’s salary during Medical Leave, thus reducing the financial burden on the church. It
16 is up to the Session of each congregation to determine if they are able/willing to pay the remaining
17 40% of the pastor/employee’s salary during his or her leave.
- 18 • **Parental Leave:** Within one year of birth or adoption, a pastor/employee may take up to twelve
19 consecutive or intermittent weeks of time off for bonding and care for the new family member.
- 20 • **Childbirth:** The Board of Pensions Temporary Disability benefit will cover 60% of the
21 pastor/employee’s salary during Parental Leave *with approval from a physician*, thus reducing some
22 of the financial burden on the church. It is up to the Session of each congregation to determine if they
23 are able/willing to pay the remaining 40% of the pastor/employee’s salary during her leave.
- 24 • **Adoption:** In cases of adoption, the Temporary Disability Benefit will not apply. It is recommended
25 that churches pay either 60% of the employee’s salary, the full salary less the amount needed to pay
26 for pulpit supply, or some other amount negotiated by the session and pastor/employee. The Board of
27 Pensions does offer an adoption grant that the pastor/employee should be made aware of as they
28 navigate the costs of adoption.

29 **Events and Circumstances impacting the family of the pastor:**

- 30 • **Caregiver/Family Leave:** When a family member requires care due to an illness or disability, a
31 pastor/employee may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently,
32 depending on the nature of illness and need. It is appropriate for pastors and other covered employees
33 to clarify the necessity or relationship that requires caregiving. It is recommended that churches pay
34 either 60% of the employee’s salary, the full salary less the amount needed to pay for pulpit supply,
35 or some other amount negotiated by the session and pastor/employee.
- 36 • **Personal Loss Leave:** In the event of the death of a loved one or a tragic event, a pastor/employee
37 may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the
38 nature of event and need. It is recommended that churches pay either 60% of the employee’s salary,
39 the full salary less the amount needed to pay for pulpit supply, or some other amount negotiated by
40 the session and pastor/employee.

41 **Church [and Other PC(USA) Entity] Support**

- 42 • Where possible, pastors/employees are encouraged to anticipate Paid Leave with as much advance notice
43 as possible, and with sensitivity around the needs of the church/entity/body such as temporary
44 replacement and fulfillment of duties. Again, the COM is available to help sessions arrange appropriate
45 pulpit supply and pastoral services.

- Paid Family Leave is not intended to be a burden but rather a source of joy and comfort as churches/entities encourage pastors to take time for the good of their families. Churches with smaller staffs are encouraged to consult with the presbytery about implementing this policy.
 - Pastors laboring outside the parish setting are to be guided by their employers' FMLA policies (e.g. hospital chaplains). In the absence of an FMLA policy, this policy is recommended.

CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

Robin and Ray Thomas led in the sharing of concerns and celebrations. Rev. Thomas then led the Presbytery in prayer.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The Moderator called for unfinished business, and there was none. He thanked Kim Joiner and Nolan Huizenga for their Zoom expertise, and thanked everyone who helped with the Presbytery meeting. It was reported that \$1,525 had been collected for the offering.

The Moderator announced the 145th Stated Meeting was scheduled for Saturday, July 17, 2021.

The motion was made, seconded and approved without objection to adjourn after a closing prayer by the Moderator at 12:35pm.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk