

New Jersey Missional Communities Administrative Commission (NJMCAC) and Charge
Approved by Synod Assembly – October 2020

Since May of 2018 there have been two working groups in New Jersey dedicated to considering a restructuring of the seven current presbyteries into fewer presbyteries with a new mission. The second group, the New Jersey Missional Communities Transition Working Group, reviewed the work of the first visioning group and recommended to the current presbyteries the creation of four new presbyteries referred to as missional community. This Working Group is close to the end of its work and needs to be succeeded by an Administrative Commission with limited jurisdiction, which will be charged with performing any essential activities on behalf of the former and new presbyteries prior to, during, or after the transition is approved by the General Assembly's Administrative Commission on Mid Councils. Therefore, The Synod Assembly approves the following charge:

Whereas the Synod of the Northeast received a proposal to restructure the seven presbyteries of the State of New Jersey;

Whereas the Jersey Missional Communities Transition Working Group has recommended the creation of four new presbyteries;

Whereas such an expansive transition is unprecedented in the life of the Presbyterian Church (USA);

Whereas the continuity of operations within all presbyteries, current and future, in the State of NJ is essential to ongoing congregational and pastoral support;

Whereas the Synod of the Northeast has responsibility for supporting the work of the presbyteries within its bounds as per G-3.0403;

Now, therefore, the Synod of the Northeast Assembly establishes the New Jersey Missional Communities Administrative Commission (NJMCAC) with limited jurisdiction and the following charge which includes but is not limited to the tasks below.

A. Subsequent to the voting of all 7 NJ presbyteries but prior to the vote of the Synod and the General Assembly, assume limited jurisdiction of the seven existing presbyteries of Elizabeth, Monmouth, New Brunswick, Newark, Newton, Palisades and West Jersey to the following extent:

1. Making changes to proposed names for new presbyteries in advance of communicating the motion to the Synod, in consultation with the participant presbyteries of the future presbytery.
2. Making boundary changes affecting individual congregations in the motion to synod with concurrence from the leaders of the participant presbyteries directly involved in the boundary change.
3. Ensuring fairness, consistency, and compliance in all staff transitions, the AC shall have the authority to review, modify, and approve personnel contracts, separation agreements, and severance matters for current and future presbyteries, in consultation with the participant presbyteries of the relevant future presbytery.

4. Endorsement of all legal documents related to the transitions in consultation with the participant presbyteries of the future presbytery.

B. After approval by the Synod and the General Assembly Administrative Commission on Mid Councils, assume authority for limited operation of the four new presbyteries of “Northwest”, “Northeast”, “Central” and “Southern” to the following extent:

1. Adoption of By-Laws, Standing Rules, and Manuals of Operations, if appropriate, for each presbytery prescribed by mutual agreement between the former presbytery participants in the new presbytery.
2. If the presbyteries slated to join together have not had the opportunity to agree upon By-laws, Standing Rules, and Manuals of Operations by mutual agreement, adoption of generic By-laws, Standing Rules, and Manuals of Operations that the new presbytery can live into and change in subsequent months.
3. Approve new corporation names for the four surviving presbytery corporations.
4. Set a date for the first meeting of each new presbytery.
5. Set a date for the election of the officers of each new presbytery.
6. Once these tasks are complete, in consultation with the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission, this authority shall be returned to the new presbyteries at the conclusion of each presbytery’s first meeting.

C. After approval by the Synod and the General Assembly Administrative Commission on Mid Councils, assume the authority of the presbyteries of Elizabeth, Monmouth, New Brunswick, Newark, Newton, Palisades and West Jersey to empower and supervise currently functioning Administrative Commissions and to delegate to one or more of the new presbyteries such authority and supervision within the first 6 months.

D. After approval by the Synod and the General Assembly Administrative Commission on Mid Councils, assume authority for each of the following presbyteries, Elizabeth, Monmouth, New Brunswick, Newark, Newton, Palisades and West Jersey, under Chapter 4 of the Book of Order to advise trustees on property issues (real and personal) until such power has been delegated by the NJMCAC to one of the new presbyteries. to the following extent:

1. Direct trustees regarding closure tasks and asset transfers.
2. Ensure completion of full financial audits or third-party financial reviews for these presbyteries.
3. Direct trustees to adopt provisions for payment and discharge of all liabilities and obligations with respect to the dissolving corporations of Elizabeth, Monmouth, and Palisades.
4. Execute dissolution documents for the presbyteries of Elizabeth, Monmouth, and Palisades, and file them with the Secretary of State of NJ. E. The NJMCAC will also be in a unique position to propose and organize shared services, to be made available to all NJ

presbyteries. They shall, where appropriate, propose the creation of a shared services model in support of legal, financial, property management, cemetery management, technology, and communications.

F. The NJMCAC may also propose shared resources or ministries, such as counselling, emergency congregational support, preaching, officer training, committee training, conflict management or mediation training and congregational resourcing.

G. The NJMCAC shall report any action taken on behalf of a presbytery to that presbytery's Stated Clerk via formal minutes.

H. The NJMCAC shall report its activities to the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission regularly through the Synod Stated Clerk.

I. The Synod Stated Clerk shall staff the NJMCAC.

J. Expenses incurred by the Administrative Commission for travel, postage, copying and for any Synod staff time will be borne by the Synod of the Northeast.

K. Presbytery expenses including but not limited to financial management or legal expenses will be borne by the closing presbyteries. Adequate funds for these purposes should be reserved in advance of the transitions.

L. The Administrative Commission shall seek advance approval from the Synod Leadership Team through the Stated Clerk before committing the Synod to pay any expenses for services required to carry out the provisions of this charge and the operations of the three non-surviving presbytery corporations.

When all the above tasks are accomplished, in consultation with NJMCAC, Synod Mission and Ministries Commission shall determine when to dissolve the NJMCAC.