

The 5th Stated Meeting of The Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ

Via ZOOM

10 am, Saturday, January 22nd, 2022
*(to be approved at the 6th Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ)*

The Body of Christ, A Call to Gather

The Presbytery of Highlands of NJ of the Presbyterian Church (USA) held its 5th Stated Meeting on January 22nd, 2022 on the ZOOM platform.

The Moderator, Rev. Tracey Henry, called the meeting to order at 10 am and led the opening prayer.

Intro to Zoom Voting – *Rev. Tracey Henry, Moderator*

FORMATION OF THE ROLL

The roll was formed as Commissioners signed the registration forms. Stated Clerk, Teaching Elder Carl Wilton, certified that a quorum was present.

REPORT OF THE ATTENDANCE CLERK

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Teaching Elder</u>		<u>Ruling Elder</u>	
Allamuchy, Panther Valley	Rev. Ninabeth Metcalf	A		A
Alpha	Rev. William “Tex” Culton (HR)	P		A
Andover	Vacant	V		A
Basking Ridge (3)	Rev. Dennis Jones Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson	E P		A A A
Belvidere	Rev. Dr. Pamela Szurek	A		A
Blairstown	Rev. David Harvey	P	Deborah Albrecht	P
Boonton	Rev. Jennifer Van Zandt	P		A
Bound Brook (3)	Rev. Linda Owens	P	Douglas Boleyn Kathy Hobbs Marion Oliver	P P P
Branchville	Rev. Dr. Jefferson Hatch	P	Joanne Lawson	P
Califon, Fairmount	Rev. Scott Foster	A	Pete Peterson	P
Califon, Lower Valley	Rev. Chad Rodgers	A		A

Cedar Knolls, Hildale Park	Rev. Ross Lang	A		A
Chatham Township (3)	Rev. Dr. Ellen Clemot Rev. Thomas Brown	P P	Lynda Beighley Douglas Zehner	P P A
Chatham, Ogden Memorial	Rev. Kathi Heath	P		A
Chester	Rev. Christopher Scrivens	P	Jeanne Perry	P
Clinton	Rev. Tracey Henry	P		A
Delaware	Vacant	V		A
Denville, Union Hill	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P		A
Dover, First Memorial	Rev. Alan Schaefer (HR)	E		A
East Hanover	Vacant	V		A
East Hanover, Kitchell	Rev. Daniel Schroeder	P	Carol Williams	P
Flanders	Rev. Heather Morrison-Yaden	P	Lois Steward	P
Flemington (3)	Rev. Amy Lincoln	P	Kay Hoge Kim Manzella Pamela Watkinson	P P P
Florham Park, Calvary	Rev. Ronald de Groot	A	Nancy Lack	P
Franklin	Rev. Julie Raffety	P	Rich Simmons	P
Frenchtown	Rev. William Myers	P		A
Gillette, Meyersville	Rev. Barbara Aspinall	P		A
Hackettstown	Vacant	V		A
Hampton, Musconetcong Valley	Stephanie Farley, CRE	A		A
Hazen, Oxford 1st	Vacant	V		A
Lambertville	Rev. Dan Dorrow	A		A
Lambertville, 2nd English	Rev. H. Bradford Morgan	A		A
Lamington	Rev. Caroline Jenkins	P	Bisham Singh	P
Long Valley (2)	Rev. Ryan Irmer	A		A A
Long Valley, Highlands	Rev. Robin Ray	P	Ruth Babula	P
Madison	Rev. Jacquelyn Van Vliet	P	Becky Moody	P
Mendham (2)	Rev. Merideth Mueller-Bolton	P	Brian Elliott Cliff Lee	P P
Milford	Rev. Linda Erkert-Bullock	A		A
Milford, Alexandria	Rev. Nicholas Hatch	A		A
Milford, Holland Bible	Rev. Geoff Stanley	A		A

Mine Hill	Rev. Carie Morgan	P	Debbie Hooper	P
Morris Plains (2)	Rev. Donald Brown	P	Kristin Becht	P A
Morristown (3)	Rev. Leslie Dobbs- Allsopp Rev. Sarah Green	P P	Craig Barth Karen Griffith Dianne Grenz	P P P
New Vernon (2)	Rev. William Stone	A		A A
Newton	Rev. David Young	E		A
Newton, Yellow Frame	Rev. Michael Nelms	P		A
Oak Ridge	Rev. Christopher Doyle	A	Dave MacDonald	P
Ogdensburg	Rev. Alden Johnson	E		A
Parsippany	Rev. Donald Bragg	E		A
Phillipsburg, Harmony	Rev. Scott Bohr	P		A
Phillipsburg, Pilgrim	Rev. Richard Gelson	E		A
Phillipsburg, Westminster	Rev. Scott DeCaro	P		A
Pittstown, Bethlehem	Rev. Linda Gaden	P	Dorothy Youngs	P
Pluckemin (2)	Rev. Ian Rankine	A	Sue Quimby	P A
Port Murray, Rockport	Rev. Robert "Bronc" Radak	E		A
Ringoes, 1st Amwell	Rev. Courtney Cromie	A		A
Ringoes, Kirkpatrick	Vacant	V		A
Ringwood (2)	Vacant	V	Sue Cail	P A
Rockaway	Vacant	V	Donna Van Duyne	P
Somerset	Rev. Nancy Nalepa- Skibo	P	Thomas Hauck	P
Sparta (2)	Rev. Dr. Patrick Sileo	A		A A
Stanhope	Rev. Peter Magnan	P	Carol Barry	P
Stewartsville	Rev. Stephen Choi	P	Linda Williams	P
Stewartsville, Old Greenwich (2)	Rev. Mary Beth Mardis- Lecroy	P	Lisa Kolterjahn	P A
Stirling	Rev. Barbara Aspinall	P		A
Stockton	Rev. Jin Hee Han	E		A
Succasunna	Rev. Carie Morgan	P		A
Sussex	Rev. Katherine Scott- Kirschner	P	Sharon Alheidt	P
Taiwanese/American	Rev. D. Paul LaMontagne Rev. Chia Chun (Annie Kakun Tsai)	A A		A
Titusville	Vacant	V		A

Wantage, Beemerville	Rev. Barry Young	A		A
Warren, Trinity United	Rev. Roberto Fois	P		A
Washington	Rev. James Scovell	A		A
West Milford	Rev. Justin Choi	P		A
Wharton	Vacant	V	Ericka Berg	P
Wharton, Berkshire Valley	Rev. Christopher Doyle	A		A
Wharton, Hungarian	Rev. Csilla Lucskay	A		A
Whippany	Rev. Sarah Cairatti	A		A

Teaching Elders Engaged in a Validated Ministry

Rev. Mike Atzert (<i>Chaplain</i>)	P
Rev. Robin Miller Curras (<i>serving church out of bounds</i>)	A
Rev. Christine Davies (<i>Director of Pastoral Care – RWJ</i>)	P
Rev. Jennifer Hrynyk (<i>serving UCC church</i>)	A
Rev. John C. Kile (<i>serving RCA church</i>)	A
Rev. Joanne Miller (<i>Counselor</i>)	E
Rev. Jeanne Radak (<i>Presbytery Leader – Highlands Presbytery</i>)	P
Rev. Amy Sandlin (<i>Chaplain</i>)	A
Rev. Beth Scibienski (<i>Serving RCA church</i>)	A
Rev. Salvatore Seirmarco (<i>Chaplain – United Methodist Communities</i>)	A
Rev. Christopher Small (<i>Chaplain – Hunterdon Healthcare Systems</i>)	A
Rev. Angella Son (<i>Professor – Drew University</i>)	P

Members at Large

Rev. M. Elizabeth Blythe	E
Rev. Donna McDaid	A
Rev. Barbara Ewton	A
Rev. Hayley O'Connor	A
Rev. Gail Pendleton	A

Honorably Retired

Rev. Peter Amerman	E
Rev. Jeff Archer	E
Rev. Nancy Asbury	E
Rev. Charles Baier	E
Rev. Joicy Becker-Richards	E
Rev. Robert Beringer	E
Rev. Frederick Black	E
Rev. George Blank	E
Rev. Sally Campbell	E
Rev. Robert Colman	E
Rev. William "Tex" Culton (<i>serving Alpha</i>)	E
Rev. James D'Angelo	E
Rev. William Davis	E

Rev. Judith Dean	E
Rev. Richard Dole	E
Rev. Birda Ferguson	E
Rev. Guy Ferguson	E
Rev. Janet Fishburn	E
Rev. Benhardt Fraumann	E
Rev. Mervin Fry	E
Rev. Deirdre Greenwood White	E
Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Hall	E
Rev. Dr. Edward Halldorson	E
Rev. David Hengerer	E
Rev. Kathryn Henry	E
Rev. Jean Holmes	E
Rev. Herbert Huffmon	E
Rev. Harold Johnson	E
Rev. Eugenia Johnston	E
Rev. Philip Jones	E
Rev. Steven Kengeter	E
Rev. Heup Young Kim	E
Rev. Dr. David Lawrence	E
Rev. Winter Lantz	E
Rev. Unzu Lee	E
Rev. William Lehr	E
Rev. Tony MacNaughton	P
Rev. James Morris	E
Rev. Elizabeth Morrison	E
Rev. Szabolcs Nagy	E
Rev. Chet Penza	E
Rev. Barbara Peters	E
Rev. John Potter	P
Rev. Donald Prytherch	P
Rev. Claire Pula	P
Rev. Bronc Radak <i>(serving Rockport)</i>	E
Rev. Jack Roan	E
Rev. Stephen Ross	E
Rev. Lorrie Rowland-Skinner	E
Rev. Diane Ruffle	E
Rev. Alan Schaefer <i>(serving Dover)</i>	E
Rev. Bruce Schundler	E
Rev. Donald Scott	E
Rev. Sherman Skinner	E
Rev. Sarah Taylor	E
Rev. Charles Thompson	E
Rev. Alfred Tisdale	E
Rev. John Verser	E
Rev. Dr. Nancy Young	E

Ruling Elders by Virtue of Office

Paula Benson, Past Moderator, <i>Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley</i>	P
John Crozier, COM Moderator, <i>First Presbyterian Church of Boonton</i>	P
Wendy Doidge, Past Moderator, <i>Presbyterian Church in Morristown</i>	P
Alan Ford, Past Moderator, <i>Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown</i>	P
Lisa Gray, Past Moderator, <i>Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, Stewartsville</i>	P
John Hellriegel, ACT Member, <i>Community Presbyterian Church, Chester</i>	P
Joe Martinoni, Past Moderator, <i>First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway</i>	P
Mel Prestamo, Past Moderator, <i>Long Valley Presbyterian Church</i>	P
Donna Rahmann, Presbyterian Women, <i>Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon</i>	P
Scott Riker, ACT Member, <i>Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley</i>	P

Others in Attendance

Sonja Gaertner, Office Manager & Attendance Clerk (<i>Highlands Presbytery</i>)	P
Lizabeth Hutchinson, Financial Administrator (<i>Highlands Presbytery</i>)	P
Rev. Dr. Carl Wilton, Acting Stated Clerk (<i>Highlands Presbytery</i>)	P
Elise Bates Russell, Director (<i>Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center</i>)	P
Hildy Benjamin, <i>Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains</i>	P
Jamie Evans, <i>Flemington Presbyterian Church</i>	P
Betty Darcy, <i>Presbyterian Church in Morristown</i>	P
Lilly Kwong, <i>Kitchell Memorial Presbyterian Church, East Hanover</i>	P
Rev. Steven Shussett, <i>Lehigh Presbytery</i>	P

Total in Attendance – 102

~ Sonja Gaertner, Attendance Clerk – The Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ

Introduction of New Ruling Elder Commissioners

Enrollment of Corresponding Members

Steven Shussett, Presbytery of Lehigh

Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

Worship

Consent Agenda & Stated Clerk's Report

Items for Consent Agenda:

SC-1

Approve the minutes of the Presbytery meeting held November 9, 2021.

SC-2

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of January 22, 2022.

SC-3

Approve the Bylaws change presented at the November 9, 2021 Stated Meeting as follows:

From:

The Presbytery is the corporate expression of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and consists of all the churches and teaching elders located in Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties, Somerset County excluding Kingston and North Plainfield, and in Passaic County, the towns of West Milford, Ringwood, Bloomingdale, Wanaque, and Pompton Lakes, New Jersey.

To

The Presbytery is the corporate expression of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and consists of all the churches and ministers of the word and sacrament located in Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties, Somerset County excluding Kingston and North Plainfield, the towns of West Milford, Ringwood, Bloomingdale, Wanaque, and Pompton Lakes in Passaic County, and Titusville, which is an unincorporated community located in Hopewell Township in Mercer County, New Jersey.

SC-4

Receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

SC-5

Receive the report of the Property and Insurance Team.

SC-6

Receive the report of the Committee on Ministry.

SC-7

Receive the report of the Administrative Coordinating Team
–Parts 1 & 2.

SC-8

Receive the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

SC-9

Receive the report of the Administrative Commission of the Christ Presbyterian Church, Martinsville.

CPM-1

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry moves that the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ adopt the Preparation for Ministry Policies dated November 2021. (See Attached.)

Items for Action:

SC-10

MOTION:

To concur with General Assembly Overtures 2022 [OVT-34], "On Fossil Fuel Divestment" and 2022 [OVT-41], "On Amending G-2.0301 to Allow Congregations to Elect Members as Ruling Elders for Service to the Larger Church." (See Attached.)

MOTION APPROVED

SC-11

Receive and take action of the report of the Administrative Commission of the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church.

The AC recommends that the presbytery set aside the assets of the Hillsborough PC to establish a fund that supports ministry programs to help people with essential needs and that the ACT assign the oversight of this new fund to a team of the presbytery and to dissolve the Administrative Commission with thanks. Grants may be made aligned with providing for essential needs such as Hunger Relief and/or programs that support homeless/unhoused people.

MOTION APPROVED

General Assembly Overture Concurrences

Motion to Concur with
General Assembly Overtures 34 and 41

BACKGROUND: Due to COVID, most of the overtures submitted by presbyteries to the 2020 General Assembly were deferred until the 2022 Assembly. During that time of deferment, the antecedent presbyteries of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey went out of existence and the new presbytery was formed. Due to that unique circumstance, the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) has determined that all 2020 overture concurrences coming from our antecedent presbyteries are null and void, and must be resubmitted by the Presbytery of the Highlands in order to come before the 2022 Assembly.

In 2020, the Presbytery of Newton voted to concur with Overture 34, "On Fossil Fuel Divestment" and with Overture 41, "On Amending G-2.0301 to Allow Congregations to Elect Members as Ruling Elders for Service to the Larger Church." Overture 34 originated in the Presbytery of Monmouth, but — because that presbytery is no longer in existence — the OGA has reclassified it as coming from the Presbytery of Hudson River, which was the first presbytery to submit a concurrence. Overture 41 comes from the Synod of the Northeast.

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Washington, N.J. has requested us to concur with Overture 34, and the Synod of the Northeast has asked us to concur with Overture 41.

The Administration and Coordinating Team is recommending that the presbytery vote to concur with Overtures 34 and 41.

The full text of these overtures may be found here:

Overture 34: <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3000876>

Overture 41: <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3000883>

MOTION: to concur with General Assembly Overtures 2022 [OVT-34], "On Fossil Fuel Divestment" and 2022 [OVT-41], "On Amending G-2.0301 to Allow Congregations to Elect Members as Ruling Elders for Service to the Larger Church."

MOTION APPROVED

Administrative Commission of the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church

The AC recommends that the presbytery set aside the assets of the Hillsborough PC to establish a fund that supports ministry programs to help people with essential needs and that the PCT assign the oversight of this new fund to a team of the presbytery and to dissolve the Administrative Commission with thanks. Grants may be made aligned with providing for essential needs such as Hunger Relief and/or programs that support homeless/unhoused people.

Report of the Nominating Committee
Items for Action:

Nominating Recommends the following:

Committee on Ministry

Class of 2024

- Rev. David Young (A) (First/Newton)
- Elder Susan Cail (A) (Community/ Ringwood)

Committee on Preparation

Class of 2024

- Rev. Christine Davies (A) (Chaplain/MAL)

Report of the Property and Insurance Team
Items for Action:

The Property and Insurance Team Recommends the Following:

P&I-1

That the presbytery approve the edited Presbytery of the Highlands Cemetery Association Bylaws. (See attached.)

MOTION APPROVED

P&I-2

That the Presbytery approve the PILP application of First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway in the amount of \$98,800 @ 3% per year. Term of the loan is 120 months. Purpose of the loan is for renovations.

MOTION APPROVED

P&I-3

That the Presbytery include the following as part of the Property and Insurance Team's Commission:

- The Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ authorize the Property and Insurance team to act on behalf of the Presbytery to approve loans to churches from external sources of up to \$50,000 when prompt approval by the Presbytery is not feasible, and to report such approvals at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.
- The Presbytery of the Highlands authorize the Property and Insurance Team to act on behalf of the Presbytery to approve Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program loans to churches when prompt approval by the Presbytery is not feasible, and to report such approvals at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

MOTION APPROVED

Background and Rationale for P&I-3:

The Book of Order provides that "a congregation shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation." (G-4.02.06). In the Presbytery of the Highlands, the Property and Insurance Team (P&I) is charged with reviewing requests for church loans and recommending approval of loans to the presbytery. These loans include those obtained from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) as well as loans obtained from banks and other private lenders. The Property and Insurance Team is empowered to make certain loans from presbytery funds for emergency repairs, but the amount of those loans is limited.

Situations can arise where a particular church has need for immediate access to funds in order to maintain the safety and structure of their properties. Breakdown of HVAC, water and septic systems, as well as damage from wind, weather and fire may need to be addressed with dispatch. These loans may be obtained from external sources, including government and commercial entities. Obtaining presbytery approval of a loan may result in inappropriate delay in securing a particular property

because of the timing of presbytery and Property and Insurance Team meetings.

In the case of PILP loans, which are often used for capital improvement projects that include both expansion and needed repairs, the presbytery is a guarantor of the loan. Again, the process of obtaining presbytery approval can result in inappropriate delay.

Report of the Committee on Ministry

Introduction of New pastor

Report of the Administrative and Coordinating Team - Part 2 **Resource Staff/Stated Clerk**

ACT-8

MOTION to recommend that the Presbytery elect the Rev. Dr. Steven Shussett as Stated Clerk, to transfer his membership from the Presbytery of Lehigh, and to contract with him as Resource Staff/Stated Clerk, beginning February 1, 2022 for a term of three years, with the following compensation and leave:

Annual cash salary:	\$44,000
Housing allowance:	\$26,000
BOP Pension, Medical & Death/Disability:	\$25,900
SECA allowance:	\$5,355
Continuing Education Reimbursement:	\$1,200
Travel/Professional Reimbursement	\$1,000
TOTAL:	\$103,455
Vacation: 4 weeks; Study Leave: 2 weeks	

The meeting closed with Prayers of Thanksgiving - Rev. Tom Brown, Vice Moderator

The Presbytery went into Small Groups - Rev. Tracey Henry,
Presbytery Moderator

Adjournment and Closing Prayer at 11:40

Attested: _____
Stated Clerk

Reports:

Administrative Coordinating Team

Committee on Ministry

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Property and Insurance Team

Administrative Committee for Hillsborough

Administrative Committee for Martinsville

Attachments:

Biography – Steven Shussett

Statement of Faith – Steven Shussett

Propose Committee Preparation for Ministry Policies

Administration and Coordinating Team Report

January 22, 2022

Items to Report:

The Administration and Coordinating Team reports the following from the November 30th, 2021 meeting:

ACT-1

Reviewed the November Presbytery Meeting.

ACT-2

Discussed the January Presbytery meeting theme and Agenda

ACT-3

Discussed “what did we learn?” from 2021 and took time to imagine what we could be doing by the end of 2022.

ACT-4

Heard a report from the Treasurer concerning the Presbytery Transition and the distribution of the Presbytery assets.

ACT-5

Approved the Presbytery Leader’s 2022 Terms of Call.

ACT-6

Stated Clerk reported that the Presbytery had been named on a Boy Scout Sexual Misconduct lawsuit and that he will be meeting with attorneys to discuss the lawsuit. (Update – Since this meeting the presbytery has been named in an additional lawsuit and attorneys have been consulted.)

ACT-7

The Presbytery Leader recognized and thanked the members of the Administration and Coordinating Team who were rolling off the team come 2022 – Paula Benson, Robin Miller Curras, and David Young. Ken Nickel will continue on the team in the past moderator’s position.

Committee on Ministry Report January 22, 2022

Items to Report:

From the December 7th, 2021 Meeting:

COM-1

Approved the dissolution agreement between Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood and the Rev. G. Benhardt Fraumann.

COM-2

Approved the Validated Ministry reports for the following:

- Rev. Michael Atzert
- Rev. M. Elizabeth Blythe
- Rev. John Christian Kile
- Rev. Donna McDaid
- Rev. Hayley O'Connor
- Rev. Christopher Small

COM-3

Recognized the following retirements as of December 31, 2021:

- Rev. Dr. Nancy Young
- Rev. G. Benhardt Fraumann
- Rev. Elizabeth Morrison

COM-4

Recognized the upcoming retirement of Rev. Daniel Schroeder (UCC) as of January 31, 2022.

COM-5

Approved the Interim Covenant Agreement between Rev. Caroline Unzaga and Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood.

COM-6

Approved the extension of the Interim Covenant Agreement between Rev. Dr. Scott Foster and Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon.

COM-7

Approved request from the Session of Pluckemin Presbyterian Church for an exemption from G- 2.0401 and G-2.0404.

COM-8

Approved a request for a special Presbytery online gathering to honor the retirees.

COM-9

Received the report that Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook was elected by the congregation of First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown as the Designated Pastor.

COM-10

Approved a Covenant/Transitional position description for the Delaware Presbyterian Church and the First Presbyterian Church of Oxford at Hazen congregations for 19 hours per week.

From the January 4th, 2022 Meeting:

COM-11

Meeting began with Orientation training for new members.

COM-12

Liaison list was reviewed and final assignments were made.

COM-13

Approved the following Terms of Call and Covenant extensions:

- Rev. Jin Han and the Stockton Presbyterian Church.
- Rev. Heather Morrison-Yaden and United Presbyterian Church, Flanders.

COM-14

Approved the Terms of Call for the following:

- Rev. Timothy Clarkson and Union Hill Presbyterian Church, Denville.
- Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook and First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown.
- Rev. Dr. Patrick Sileo and First Presbyterian Church of Sparta.
- Rev. Peter Magnan and First Presbyterian Church of Stanhope.
- Rev. Michael Nelms and Yellow Frame Presbyterian Church, Newton.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report

January 22, 2022

Items to Report:

CPM-2

November 15, 2021

- The committee met to consider revisions to the presbytery's Preparation for Ministry Policies. Additional changes were discussed at the meeting and subsequent emails.
- Summary of Revisions (from the former Newton Presbytery manual):
 - Updated to reflect name of the new presbytery.
 - Updated references to the Book of Order and PC (U.S.A.) "Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry."
 - Revised and shortened the opening section to remove outdated information.
 - Revised language to be gender neutral.
 - Revised "Suitability for Ordered Ministry" section (page 8) to clarify that Inquirers are to submit written statements when applying for Candidacy.
 - Changed the Education requirements (page 13) to encourage rather than require that exegetical courses be taken in the original languages.
 - Edited for consistency in grammar and layout.
 - *Motion* (approved via e-vote, Dec. 15, 2021): To recommend that the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ adopt the revised "Preparation for Ministry Policies" dated November 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Rahmann and Bronc Radak
CPM Co-Moderators

Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey
Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Preparation for Ministry Policies

(Proposed November, 2021)

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

The policies contained in this document are drawn from both the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry* and the *Book of Order*. Since this manual only summarizes portions of both the *Advisory Handbook* and the *Book of Order*, those preparing for ordination as well as those serving on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (hereinafter "CPM") should be familiar with the requirements contained in the *Book of Order* and the *Advisory Handbook*. The version of the *Advisory Handbook* to which this manual refers is dated December 2017 and is version 2.1. It can be found at:

<https://www.pcusa.org/resource/preparation-ministry-handbook/>

If, at any time now or in the future, this document conflicts with any part of the *Book of Order*, the *Book of Order* takes precedence. **In addition, these requirements take precedence over seminary requirements.**

The following policies contained in this document have been adopted by The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey (hereinafter "The Highlands Presbytery") to guide its CPM, Inquirers, Candidates, and churches as they work together to develop leaders to serve the church, to the glory of God, "discerning and developing gifts in individuals so they can serve others." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 2)

This manual contains the usual procedures required of Inquirers and Candidates by the CPM of The Highlands Presbytery. While these procedures are informed by the *Book of Order*, we recognize that each Inquirer or Candidate is a unique person with unique strengths and needs. *These procedures are guidelines and may be altered to meet the uniqueness of individuals.* However, you should not assume that they will be altered. Each individual should carefully discuss with the CPM their situation and how their situation can best be met within the requirements of the *Book of Order* and the *Advisory Handbook*. Since the CPM must function under the mandates of the *Book of Order* and the *Advisory Handbook*, every Inquirer and Candidate is also expected to know the requirements of these documents.

Thus, some advice to Inquirers and Candidates:

1. **Know the requirements** of the *Book of Order*, the *Advisory Handbook*, and this Procedure Manual.
2. **Plan ahead.**

PRESBYTERIAN PRINCIPLES OF ORDINATION

The requirements of the *Book of Order*, the *Advisory Handbook*, and the CPM guide all preparations for ministry. They are central to the theology of call to ministry in the Presbyterian Church -- a call to ministry must be perceived by the individual and confirmed by the church through the presbytery. The process of discernment of this call is a partnership involving the individual, their church and session, and the presbytery. The CPM of The Highlands Presbytery will endeavor to support, encourage, and guide Inquirers and Candidates through prayer, actively working alongside Inquirers and Candidates and using

the committee's collective insight with the Spirit's leading. As an individual moves through the process according to the guidelines provided, and maintains regular and open contact with the persons and committees involved, they can expect a rich and rewarding experience. For Inquirers and Candidates who enter into the process, there is a sense of solemn obligation to God and to the church. In some cases this means that it is the individual's responsibility to recognize and accept the fact that their call to ministry may be other than as a minister of the Word and Sacrament. It is the presbytery's obligation to develop effective means of testing and validating the calls of those seeking to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament, providing them with guidance and oversight, and bringing to active candidacy those with appropriate abilities and motivation.

"Preparation for ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA) is not like certification programs where by completing all the requirements you are guaranteed to reach the goal at the end. Inquiry is 'an opportunity... to explore' a person's call to ministry 'so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry' (G-2.0603). Candidacy is about 'provid[ing] for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament... through the support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate's fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination' (G-2.0604)." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 4)

"The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is firmly grounded in the Reformed tradition in its relationships with men and women who feel themselves called by God to be ministers of the Word and Sacrament serving in the ministries of the Word and Sacrament. Both in exploring with these persons their sense of vocation and in all subsequent procedures leading to ordination, the Reformed understanding of the church underlies what the *Book of Order* calls 'full preparation' for ministry (G-2.0601)." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 20)

"Presbyterians believe in 'the ministry of all the baptized' – that all church members, regardless of their occupational choice, are engaged in ministry. That is their Christian vocation (G-1.0304). Some among them may be called by the Holy Spirit, through the church, to serve as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. That ministry, then, is one among many occupations through which men and women express their God-given interests and abilities in life and daily work. Response to this calling, as to every other, is approached through a careful process of exploration and testing carried on within the community of faith during which gifts and motivations are evaluated in light of the needs of the church and the world." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 20)

PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS

"The essential role of ministers of Word and Sacrament is set forth in both the Bible and in the church's constitutional documents. Among its key concepts are the following:

- Ordered ministries are a gift of God to the church so that all God's people may be equipped for ministry (Ephesians 4:1-13).
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament (also referred to as teaching elders) in particular equip all the baptized for their ministry by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith/modeling faithfulness, joining with deacons in care for people, and together

with ruling elders ensuring that the church's life is governed in an orderly way (cf. G-2.0501).

- The church actively seeks and ordains persons whose gifts and abilities equip them for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament (G-2.0104); if a person ordained to this ministry is later called by God to other work, the church can release him or her from ordained office (G-2.0507).
- A person experiences God's call to ministry privately as an inner urgency. The church, however, experiences that call publicly as it affirms that individual's gifts for ministry and confirms God's call through the acts of ordination and installation (G-2.0103)." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 21)

The preparation for ministry process involves two phases: Inquiry and Candidacy. These two phases are designed to explore the call, evaluate the gifts, and support the preparation of men and women who either are personally exploring their sense of a call to ordered ministry as ministers of Word and Sacrament or have been encouraged by the faith community to consider the possibility that God is calling them to that particular ministry. The model for ministers of Word and Sacrament is the ministry of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the church's responsibility, acting primarily through the session of the person's congregation and the presbytery, is to help these individuals grow toward maturity in Christ and a deeper understanding of their place in Christ's ongoing ministry through the church.

"While both the inquiry and candidacy phases of the process have their particular purposes defined by the *Book of Order* (G-2.0603 and 2.0604), they accomplish those purposes by promotion and assessment of the individual's development in five key areas:

1. Education for Ministry, including evaluation of the individual's academic potential and progress, and reflection on their educational experiences in relation to their preparation for service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament.
2. Spiritual Development, providing a framework in which individuals can reflect on their personal faith journey and their spiritual practices to discern the will of God in their lives.
3. Interpersonal Relations, providing opportunities to reflect on how one relates to others, one's leadership style, and what they mean in terms of the functions and responsibilities of the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
4. Personal Growth, through which persons reflect on who they are, what areas they need to develop, how to understand their call, and how to develop personal stewardship.
5. Professional Development, to help persons develop specific skills that will enhance their effectiveness as ministers of the Word and Sacrament and as presbyters, especially in the areas of understanding one's ministry context and the ability to deal with conflict that may emerge in ministry settings where one serves." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 31)

During both the Inquiry Phase and Candidacy Phase, the individual's progress is measured

through the formulation of covenant agreements (G-2.0601) that set out specific expected outcomes formulated in light of these five growth areas. It is important that the expected outcomes be understood as essential goals rather than simply as minimum requirements to be met or papers to be written. These expected outcomes serve as the focus of ongoing consultations between the Inquirer or Candidate and the session and the presbytery's CPM as they discern the person's suitability for this form of ministry and evaluate readiness to be examined and ordained as a minister of Word and Sacrament.

It would be wise to seriously consider the options available outside the conventional parish ministry. Students should be aware of the current employment situation within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The CPM is concerned with the discernment of an Inquirer's call to ministry and with a Candidate's preparation to respond to that call. Guidance and support for Inquirers and Candidates are fostered through responsibilities shared by the committee with seminaries, sessions, and the presbytery. The CPM offers the following guidelines and requirements, with the understanding that it may modify or change them where permitted by the *Book of Order*.

All service to the church is with the approval and under the guidance of the Inquirer's or Candidate's CPM. Therefore, Inquirers and Candidates must obtain the committee's approval prior to accepting any position that entails ongoing ministry in the church, whether paid or volunteer.

DELEGATED ACTIONS AS A COMMISSION OF PRESBYTERY

The CPM has been given authority by The Highlands Presbytery to act as its delegated commission in the following areas:

- To receive Inquirers
- To certify Candidates ready to receive a call
- To give permission to a Candidate to circulate their Personal Information Form (PIF)
- To execute annual consultations with Inquirers and Candidates
- To remove an individual from the Inquirer or Candidate status

LIAISONS WITH THE INQUIRER/CANDIDATE

Session Liaison

The session of the individual's home church will designate an elder to serve as liaison to the Inquirer or Candidate. The Inquirer/Candidate and their session liaison should make contact at least once per quarter, and more often if the situation warrants.

Recommended duties of the session liaison:

- Learn the background of the Inquirer or Candidate, if it is not already known.
- Stay in touch via personal visits, email, or phone. Become acquainted in ways that seem natural to both the liaison and the Inquirer or Candidate.
- Take an interest in his or her academics, field education, annual consultation, and other activities related to their preparation for the ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- Share with the CPM, especially at the time of annual consultation, any areas of particular need which the Inquirer or Candidate may have, either financial or personal.
- Identify ways to keep the congregation aware of the progress of the Inquirer/Candidate.
- Initiate conversation with the session on the possibility of providing financial assistance or other tangible support. Consider, with the session, the possibility of assisting in the payment of necessary expenses incurred.
- At the presbytery meeting at which the Candidate is examined for ordination, make sure someone has been appointed to accompany the Candidate and their family when presbytery is making its decision. This applies to both physical and virtual spaces.
- Be present at the service of ordination and/or installation.
- Pray.
- Become acquainted with this manual so that all requirements and procedures are known and the liaison can provide timely support.
- Periodically discuss with the session the progress the Inquirer/Candidate is making.

In summary, the liaison should be a friend and offer a personal, moral, and spiritual interest in the Inquirer's/Candidate's training for the ministry. Hopefully, in performing these tasks, the liaison will also grow in grace and faith.

Committee Liaison

A member or members of the CPM will be assigned to serve as a liaison with each Inquirer or Candidate. The Inquirers/Candidates and their committee liaison should make regular contact. The liaison should keep the CPM updated on the Inquirer's/Candidate's progress on goals, be present at presbytery and CPM meetings, and act as a channel to help with any concerns or questions which the Inquirer/Candidate may have.

BECOMING AN INQUIRER

Purpose

"The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who

believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of Word and Sacrament to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the Inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry (G 2.0603)." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 38)

Requirements

To be enrolled as an Inquirer, the applicant shall be a member of the sponsoring congregation, shall have been active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months, and shall have received the endorsement of the session of the sponsoring congregation. (G-2.0602) (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 39)

The stated clerk of The Highlands Presbytery shall be asked to carry out a criminal background check on all applicants. The results should be received by the CPM prior to accepting the applicant as an Inquirer. If the background check has not been done prior to becoming an Inquirer, it must be done prior to advancing to candidacy.

Process

- The applicant should discuss their plans with their pastor.
- If necessary, the sponsoring session shall contact the CPM to understand the process and their role.
- The applicant must obtain and complete Form 1A ("Application to be Enrolled as Inquirer"), Form 1B ("Questions for Reflection") and Form 1C ("Financial Planning"):
<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/application-forms/> These forms should be submitted to the CPM at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- The applicant should make copies of Form 1D ("Session Evaluation and Recommendation") for each member of their church's session.
- The applicant must meet with the session of their church. The session must take formal action on the application to become an Inquirer. If the session endorses the application, the clerk of session will complete Form 1D and send it to the CPM of The Highlands Presbytery. The session will also appoint a liaison to work with the applicant and the CPM.
- The applicant must have copies of transcripts and diplomas from all college work (undergraduate and graduate) sent to the CPM.
- The applicant must meet with the CPM. The CPM will review the applicant's background information (Forms 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D), Form 2A, including "Growth Objectives," and Form 2B ("Inquirer's Covenant Agreement and Release"). The CPM will discuss with the applicant their journey of faith, their exploration and testing of their call to ministry, as well as their educational plans.
- If approved by the CPM, the CPM will present the applicant's name to The Highlands Presbytery to be enrolled as an Inquirer. In preparation for that meeting, the applicant must prepare, in writing for inclusion in the presbytery's "Meeting Material," a brief paragraph of biographical information that might include

schooling, church relationship, volunteer work or employment, family, children, interests, etc. The CPM encourages the applicant to be present at this presbytery meeting so that they may be introduced to the presbytery.

Note: the CPM must approve the applicant's educational plans, including specifically the theological institution where education requirements are completed. Approval is ordinarily given for Presbyterian seminaries; other seminaries that are members of the American Association of Theological Seminaries may be considered. There is a list of approved seminaries on page 14 of this manual. Every educational program must be so planned as to complete all requirements for ordination, including the requirements of the CPM as set forth herein.

Suitability for Ordered Ministry (*Advisory Handbook*, pp. 41-42)

A decision will be made at the end of the Inquiry Phase as to whether the overall experience of this phase points toward a future in the ministry of Word and Sacrament for the Inquirer, or whether his or her gifts and passions suggest a better fit with other ministries of the church.

As part of an Inquirer's preparation to become a Candidate, they should prepare written reflections on the six areas outlined below (approximately one half to one page each). These particular areas have been referred to in the past as "outcomes of inquiry."

1. An understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to their personal sense of call.
2. An expression of their personal faith in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of the Reformed tradition. Note: This is not expected to be a formal Statement of Faith.
3. An analysis of one concept from the personal statement of faith. An analysis of at least one concept from that personal faith statement at greater depth explaining what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships.
4. An explanation of what it means for them to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church.
5. A discussion of their personal and cultural background as it relates to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, including a concern for maintaining personal spiritual, physical, and mental health. Inquirers should also be able to relate their own personal cultural location to changes in American society and its increasingly multicultural character.
6. An explanation of their understanding of the tasks ministers of the Word and Sacrament perform, including expression both of his or her specific gifts for this particular ministry and of areas in which further growth is needed.

Everyone in the process must recognize that when a presbytery enters into the Candidacy Phase with an individual, the expectation is established that once preparation is

completed that person will find a call to this ministry. If the presbytery is still uncertain about whether an Inquirer's gifts are suitable for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, the individual needs to continue in the Inquiry Phase rather than establish false expectations by prematurely transitioning to candidacy.

BECOMING A CANDIDATE

Purpose

"The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery's support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate's fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination." (G-2.0604)

"A presbytery's decision to move an individual from inquiry to the candidacy phase indicates a communal discernment of that person's suitability for ordered ministry as a minister of Word and Sacrament." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 44)

"If the presbytery is still uncertain about whether an inquirer's gifts are suitable for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, the individual needs to continue in the inquiry phase rather than establish false expectations by prematurely transitioning to candidacy." (*Advisory Handbook*, p. 43)

Requirements

- The Inquirer will have passed the Bible Content Exam prior to seeking candidacy.
- The Inquirer will have completed one full year of seminary while under care of the CPM.
- The Inquirer will have participated in a psychological evaluation as set forth on page 13 of this manual.
- The Inquirer will submit written responses to the six statements listed under "Suitability for Ordained Ministry" above.
- If a criminal background check has not already been done, the stated clerk of The Highlands Presbytery shall obtain the results of the background check prior to application for Candidate status.

Steps to Becoming a Candidate

The CPM suggests that the request for candidacy status be completed by Inquirers between the end of the first year of seminary and the beginning of the third year of seminary.

- Form 5A ("Application to be Enrolled by the Presbytery as a Candidate") must be completed and submitted to the Inquirer's session.
- The Inquirer must meet with the session of their church. The session must take formal action on the application to become a Candidate. If the session endorses the application, the clerk of session will complete Form 5B and will send it to the

chairperson of CPM. The session will also appoint (or reappoint) a liaison to work with the Inquirer and the CPM.

- The Inquirer must meet with the CPM to discuss the statements and application. The CPM must take formal action on the application and must report this action to the presbytery. The Inquirer and the CPM will also complete Form 5C concerning "Growth Objectives."
- Form 5D ("Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release") will be completed and signed by the applicant, session and CPM.
- The CPM shall present the Inquirer and its recommendation to The Highlands Presbytery. Members of the presbytery will have the opportunity to ask questions with respect to the Inquirer's Christian faith and journey, forms of Christian service undertaken, motives for seeking the ministry, and preparation. No formal statement of faith will be presented at this time.
- If the presbytery votes affirmatively, the Inquirer shall be enrolled as a Candidate under the care of The Highlands Presbytery. At that time the Candidate formally agrees to accept the presbytery's guidance, support and supervision in their preparation for becoming a minister of Word and Sacrament.

Fitness and Readiness

A Candidate may not enter into negotiation for their service as a minister of Word and Sacrament without approval of The Highlands Presbytery. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a minister of Word and Sacrament shall include (G-2.0607):

- a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;
- a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;
- a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and
- satisfactory grades, together with the examination materials in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.

DURING INQUIRY AND CANDIDACY

General

- An individual is required to be enrolled under care of the presbytery as an Inquirer for at least one year and as a Candidate for a minimum of one additional year. Usually, and desirably, the time under care of the presbytery lasts for more than two years. During inquiry/candidacy, the individual shall remain on the active membership roll of their home church and subject to its concern, discipline, and prayers.
- The CPM shall appoint one or more of its members to be a liaison. The CPM liaison is responsible, on behalf of the CPM, for guiding the individual's educational preparation. The primary concern of the liaison is pastoral: to help the individual accomplish the necessary preparation to fulfill their ministry. Any concerns about the individual's educational, intellectual, and spiritual preparation may be discussed with the liaison.
- The individual should communicate with the CPM on a regular basis through the liaison. The CPM must be notified of any change of contact information or academic plans.
- During inquiry and before the CPM will act on an application to become a Candidate, the Inquirer must participate in a psychological evaluation.
- During inquiry and candidacy, the individual must personally meet at least once a year with their CPM liaison as set forth below to complete papers and forms to be submitted to the CPM.
- All papers and forms submitted to the CPM are to be submitted to the CPM chairperson no later than one week before the meeting at which the Candidate or Inquirer is to appear, so they can be made available to committee members.
- All Inquirers and Candidates under care are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical manner and pursuant to the presbytery's sexual misconduct policy.

Annual Consultation

- In preparation for the annual consultation, the Inquirer/Candidate must complete Form 3 and submit this to their liaison and the chairperson of CPM as soon as possible and contact their liaison to arrange a personal meeting to review.
https://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/mid_council_ministries/form3.pdf
- Transcripts and field education reports, if applicable, should be included in the submission to the CPM.
- The Inquirer/Candidate should meet with their liaison to review Form 3.
- The Inquirer/Candidate must meet with the CPM, who will make a determination of

whether to continue the individual under care and review recommendations for growth in the coming year. Form 4 ("Report on Annual Consultation") will be completed at that meeting.

Psychological Evaluation

All Inquirers must complete a psychological evaluation approximately six months prior to their one year review after becoming enrolled as an Inquirer. Inquirers are responsible for signing the necessary releases to have the results of their psychological evaluation sent to the chairperson of the CPM. The psychological evaluation will be reviewed with the members of the CPM and discussed with the Inquirer at their annual consultation. Confidentiality is assured. This evaluation is a tool to be used to point out strengths and areas where growth is needed. It may also highlight areas of concern and bring to light issues which need to be addressed in order for the Inquirer to become an effective minister of Word and Sacrament. Inquirers will not be advanced to the Candidacy Phase until this process has been completed.

The CPM requires that the evaluation be done at:

Physis Associates
Dr. Dennis J. O'Hara
109 Fox Knoll Lane
West Chester, PA 19380
800-220-3774 or 610-269-3037

The chairperson of the CPM should be notified when an appointment has been made so that payment of the presbytery's (1/3), church's (1/3), and Inquirer's (1/3) shares of the cost may be arranged. The Inquirer is responsible for the cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Financial assistance may be available. Appointments are generally booked months in advance. Inquirers are encouraged, therefore, to call the center for an appointment as early as possible.

Personnel File

A permanent file shall be kept at The Highlands Presbytery office for all Inquirers and Candidates under care of this presbytery. Access will be strictly limited and confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The file shall contain, but is not limited to, the following documents:

- All forms which have been submitted for annual consultations
- All financial forms
- Written documents which have been directed to or from the Inquirer or Candidate
- Correspondence/reports from the internship supervisor
- Transcripts
- Psychological evaluation report
- Results of Ordination Exams
- Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) final evaluation

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Seminaries of, and related to, the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX
Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA
Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, Atlanta, GA
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY
McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ
San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, CA
Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond, VA
Union/Auburn Theological Seminary, New York, NY
Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR

Educational Requirements

Hebrew (equivalent of 2 semesters)
Old Testament Exegesis*
Greek (equivalent of 2 semesters)
New Testament Exegesis*
Church History
Reformed Theology
Reformed Worship and Sacraments
Preaching
Pastoral Care and Counseling
Christian Education
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Polity

**When possible, CPM encourages students to take these courses in their original languages.*

In addition, the CPM reserves the right to require additional courses, in order to correct deficiencies in a student's undergraduate or graduate programs.

Field Education

Inquirers and Candidates are expected to complete the equivalent of two semesters of one-day-per week supervised field education in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) parish setting as part of their seminary program. **Service in the Inquirer's/Candidate's home church is not acceptable to the presbytery, regardless of whether or not the seminary grants credit for the experience.** A mid-year and final report from the field education position is to be sent to the CPM chairperson within 30 days of the completion of the respective academic term.

The CPM reserves the right to require a second year of field education in a Presbyterian Church due to circumstances and/or readiness for a call. All field education plans must be submitted to and approved by the CPM prior to acceptance of the position. Inquirers/Candidates will be required to resign from their home sessions and cease any

active leadership roles in their home congregations while they are serving their field education assignments.

Students are encouraged to consider a full-year full time field education placement, either as part of their seminary field education or following graduation.

Clinical Pastoral Education

Inquirers and Candidates are required to complete a basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), as accredited by the Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education (ACPE), Inc. and to send a copy of their CPE final evaluation to the chairperson of the CPM. Results of the evaluation will be shared with the committee and will remain in the Inquirer's/Candidate's file.

Transcripts

At the conclusion of each year of seminary study, students are required to send a copy of their seminary transcript to the chairperson of the CPM. An unofficial transcript ("student copy" or photocopy) is acceptable for this purpose, with the exception of the final transcript, which must be an official transcript, indicating receipt of the Master of Divinity degree. The final transcript must include the seminary registrar's raised seal, and must be mailed directly from the seminary registrar to the chairperson of the CPM.

ORDINATION EXAMINATIONS

Bible Content Examination

Inquirers are strongly encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination as soon as possible after enrolling in seminary and must pass this examination before applying for Candidate status. It is the Inquirer's responsibility to apply to take this examination and to pay any examination fees.

Final Year Examinations

Candidates must obtain the approval of the CPM before they can take the ordination examinations in Bible Exegesis, Polity, Theology, and Worship and Sacraments, and these exams can be taken no earlier than the student's final year of seminary. Permission to take these examinations will ordinarily be given at the annual consultation prior to the beginning of the student's final academic year of seminary. It is the Candidate's responsibility to apply to take these examinations and to pay any examination fees.

REMOVAL FROM COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

Inquiry and candidacy continue until a presbytery acts in one of three ways to end the covenant relationship and remove the person's name from its roll of Inquirers and Candidates.

1. Once a Candidate who has been "certified ready for examination for ordination" receives a call approved by a presbytery and has been examined, ordained and installed, the presbytery of call notifies both the session and the presbytery of care to

remove the person from the membership roll of the congregation and the roll of Inquirers and Candidates of the presbytery of care.

2. Persons under care as either an Inquirer or Candidate may withdraw from the process by notifying their session and the CPM.
3. As part of CPM's delegated authorities, the CPM may act on its own to end the covenant relationship, because it has determined that an Inquirer is not suitable for ordered ministry as a minister of Word and Sacrament or that a Candidate's continuing preparation would not result in a determination of "fitness" and "readiness." If a person is removed from the process by the CPM, the CPM must report its action to both the session and the presbytery at their next respective meetings. As the CPM reviews the policies and procedures for this action with the person, it should make every effort to be supportive and caring. The CPM must also explain as clearly as possible why the decision has been made, emphasizing the person's strengths, as well as indicating the weaknesses that led to the decision. Suggestions through a group discernment process for alternative occupations or forms of ministry and service should be discussed with the person. In addition, the person's home church pastor and session liaison should be contacted to explain the action, giving them the reasons for the action, and alternatives that were suggested. Finally, an opportunity for the person and their advocates to be heard by the CPM should be provided.

READINESS FOR MINISTRY – FINAL ASSESSMENT

General

During the second half of their senior year (after January), Candidates may begin the final steps to becoming "ready" to receive a call. These steps must be completed before the CPM can consider the Candidate "ready" to receive a call and therefore be presented to the presbytery for examination for ordination.

Steps to Becoming Ready

- The Candidate should carefully review the steps necessary and complete all requirements for "Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ordained Ministry" as detailed in G-2.0607.
- The Candidate must be a Candidate for at least one year.
- As part of the CPM's delegated authorities, the Candidate must submit to CPM (carefully prepared and typed double spaced):
 - **Sermon:** Such sermon, including the reading of Scripture, should be no more than 10 minutes in length. A copy of the sermon manuscript or outline must be submitted to the CPM at the exit interview. This same sermon will be preached at a CPM meeting.
 - **Exegesis:** Exegetical study of the biblical material out of which the

sermon arose including a study of key words, discussion of context, notes on significant points of grammar and variant readings, and an interpretation of the passage.

- **Statement of faith:** This statement should be a statement of the Candidate's personal faith (not a restatement of a creed) and ought to address such doctrines as the nature of the Godhead, the meaning of salvation in Christ, the life and mission of the Church, the authority of Scripture, and the role of the Sacraments. The statement of faith should not be longer than one side of an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper. It should be single-spaced, and double-spaced between paragraphs. We recommend sensitivity to the use of inclusive language.
- The Candidate must meet with the CPM to discuss all aspects of their preparation and readiness for ministry.

NOTE: It is the CPM's responsibility to certify the Candidate ready to receive a call. Certification of the validity of a particular call is the responsibility of the presbytery (usually through the Committee on Ministry) in which the calling body or church is located. When another presbytery is issuing the call, the committee will still conduct the final assessment as a means of determining the Candidate's readiness. The difficult, and most important, part is determining whether the Candidate possesses the qualities listed in G-2.0607a:

1. Wisdom and maturity of faith
2. Leadership skills
3. Compassionate spirit
4. Honest repute
5. Sound judgment

CIRCULATION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM

Candidates are encouraged to begin writing their Personal Information Form (PIF) no later than the summer before their senior year of seminary. Candidates must submit the final copy of the PIF to the chairperson of the CPM for review.

The CPM will consider the PIF for approval to circulate once the Candidate has passed all five standard ordination examinations and is in their final semester of seminary having completed all other requirements. The CPM chairperson, or that person's designee, must provide written permission before the Church Leadership Connection (pcusa.org/clc) will accept the PIF for circulation.

FOLLOWING APPROVAL FOR ORDINATION

The Candidate is still responsible to the CPM and under its care until the individual receives a call and is ordained. It is not uncommon for a period of time to elapse between the completion of all requirements for ordination and the receipt of a call.

The CPM continues to have care and concern for the Candidate and continues to carry them in prayer. The CPM will continue to express this concern through the required annual consultation and annual report. This report may be less structured and formal than what is done during the seminary years, but it is essential to stay in contact with the Candidate to help as they continue their theological, intellectual, professional, and spiritual growth and preparation for ministry. The liaison will continue their role as support during this period.

ORDINATION PLANS

"Ordination to the ordered ministry of minister of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to ordered ministry. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery of care and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call." (G 2.0701)

"The presbytery placing the call to the candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain, and install the candidate." (G-2.0702)

Both the services of ordination and installation (if they are separate services) are services of the presbytery and are to be conducted according to the provision in the Directory for Worship. If the presbytery responsible for the service has particular policies regarding the conduct of the service beyond those in the Directory for Worship, it needs to ensure the Candidate is aware of these requirements at the very beginning of the planning process.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Aid

The Highlands Presbytery expects Inquirers and Candidates applying for financial aid to first seek support from all other available sources. Within the limits of available funds, the presbytery may award scholarship grants to its Inquirers or Candidates who meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrated financial need
- Enrolled at least half-time in a Master of Divinity program at a seminary approved by the CPM (the definition of "half-time" will be that used by the seminary)
- Making "satisfactory progress" in the Master of Divinity degree program, according to the seminary's definition of that term (i.e. not on academic probation)

Application Procedures

Applicants for financial aid must submit a completed scholarship application form to the CPM chairperson. Scholarship grant decisions will be made at the next meeting of the CPM. With their application form, applicants must also submit an updated copy of Form 1C as well as a copy of ONE of the following documents from their seminary:

- Their financial aid "award letter" for the academic year for which they are applying for aid, OR
- A financial aid transcript, showing the year in which they are applying for aid, OR
- A letter from the financial aid director of their seminary, indicating the amount of financial aid they will be receiving in the year for which they are applying for aid.

Awards

Scholarships may be used at the students' discretion to cover tuition, fees, room, board, books, medical insurance, or other necessary expenses.

Limitations

Scholarship aid will not ordinarily be awarded for more than six semesters of study. One way to earn extra money during the school year and the summer is to guest preach at churches throughout the presbytery.

Summary of Financial Responsibilities

The Inquirer/Candidate must be aware that they are financially responsible for costs incurred while pursuing their degree, including, but not limited to the following:

- ½ of the psychological evaluation costs
- Exam application fees
- Education expenses including books and fees
- Housing and board

WAIVERS AND EXCEPTIONS

The CPM will consider exceptions to the above policies only under the most exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Inquiries concerning exceptions should be directed to the CPM chairperson. The CPM will be governed in this regard by the *Book of Order*:

"When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an individual seeking ordination, it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-fourths vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred." (G-2.0610)

APPENDIX ONE – Checklist

Applicant:

- Session approval
- Completed forms to CPM
- Release form for Background Check
- Picture for applicant's folder

Inquirer:

- Passing grade on the Bible Content Exam
- Annual Consultation (complete with Form 3 submitted to CPM)
- Psychological Evaluation
- Session approval to move to Candidate status
- Submission of "Suitability for Ordained Ministry" statements

Candidate:

- Pass Ordination Exams
- Annual Consultations (complete with Form 3 submitted to CPM)
- Clinical Pastoral Education
- Field Education
- Complete Coursework, including Reformed Theology classes and Exegetical work
- Statement of Faith

Property and Insurance Team Report

January 22, 2022

Items to Report:

The Property and Insurance Team Reports the following from their November 15th, 2021 Meeting:

P&I-4

Approved the sale contract for the Hildale Park Presbyterian Church, Cedar Knolls for undeveloped lot, 170 x 70, located at 21 Grand Avenue, for \$263,500. Sold to Robert Roselli.

P&I-5

After a discussion about New Jersey Historic Grants, the Property and Insurance Team discourages churches from use of the Historic Grant programs because of the strings and liabilities often attached with them. The team will be reviewing the present Historic Grant Policy.

P&I-6

The Property and Insurance Team worked on development of the Cemetery Boards in accordance with the Presbytery's Cemetery Association. Approved recommending to the Presbytery changes to the Cemetery Association Bylaws.

P&I-7

Approved the use of the Manse Fund for 2022. Congregations with manses are encouraged to apply for matching funds for energy efficient improvements to the manse. See attached for Manse Fund description.

The Property and Insurance Team Reports the following from the January 6th, 2022 meeting:

P&I-8

The Team updated the Covid guidelines. See attached.

P&I-9

Reviewed the final document for the Manse fund – see attached

P&I-10

Review issues concerning the Presbytery Insurance and will continue to investigate concerns.

P&I-11

Heard a report from the Presbytery Leader and Stated Clerk concerning Boy Scout of America lawsuits where the Presbytery was named. Agreed that Stated Clerk would be the point person and represent the presbytery concerning the legal issues around the lawsuits.

P&I-12

Approved recommending to the Presbytery approval of the PILP application for the First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway.

Attach the Following

Cemetery Association Bylaws
Manse Fund announcement
COVID guidelines

BY-LAWS OF

THE PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS, NEW JERSEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION,

A NEW JERSEY NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION

Revised on JANUARY 6, 2022

A. NAME, PURPOSE, LIMITATIONS, AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES, PROPERTY

Section 1 Name. The name of the Corporation shall be “The Presbytery of the Highlands, New Jersey Cemetery Association” which shall operate as a corporation under the New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act, N.J.S.A. 15:1-1, *et seq.* (“the Act”).

Section 2 Purpose. The Corporation is expressly organized as the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Presbytery of the Highlands, New Jersey Not-For-Profit Corporation (the “Presbytery”), a religious corporation formed and existing pursuant to N.J.S.A. 16:1-11, 16:11-4 and 16:11-18, *et seq.*, of the New Jersey Religious Societies and Associations Act. (The “Religious Societies Act”). The Corporation’s exclusive purpose is to manage and maintain cemeteries and burial places, and any real estate suitable for any or all of said purposes, owned or controlled by the Presbytery, and to ensure that only members of the faith are interred at such locations. The Corporation’s authorized purposes shall include retaining the services of persons and entities to maintain the assets and the disbursement of funds, as authorized by the Presbytery, to maintain and improve said cemeteries and burial places.

Section 3 Authority. In carrying out such purposes, the Trustees and the Corporation shall be under the authority of the Presbytery and shall at all times and in all respects conform to and support the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as it is now or shall be from time to time amended, established, made, and declared by the authority of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Religious Societies Act and the Act.

Section 4 Duration. The duration of the Corporation shall be perpetual.

Section 5 Limitation of Authorities and Duties. The authorities and duties of the Corporation and its Trustees shall not infringe upon the authorities and duties of the Presbytery.

Section 6 Authorities and Duties. The Corporation shall have the authority to manage and maintain the cemeteries, properties and related lands suitable for such purposes, owned or controlled by the Presbytery, but only within the budgetary limits and authorities granted by said Presbytery. Acts by any Trustee that extend beyond the limits of the authorities granted by the Presbytery, set forth in these Bylaws, or that are inconsistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are barred as ultra vires.

B. MEMBERS The Corporation shall have no members.

C. TRUSTEES

Section 1 Membership on Board. The directors of the Corporation are designated "Trustees." The Trustees of the Presbytery serve *ex officio* as Trustees of this Corporation and shall be automatically appointed upon their election as Trustees of said Presbytery. Trustees shall be eligible to serve only so long as they are qualified and in good standing as Trustees of the Presbytery. The President of the Presbytery corporation and the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall serve *ex officio* as Trustees if they are eligible; if either is not eligible, then the Nominating Committee of the Presbytery shall nominate an eligible person for election under the rules of the Presbytery.

Section 2. Term. The term of each Trustee shall coincide with his or her term of office as Trustee of the Presbytery.

D. CEMETERY BOARDS

Section 1 Appointment. The Trustees shall annually appoint a Cemetery Board of no fewer than three persons to oversee and manage a single cemetery, as assigned by the Trustees, as, in its judgment, shall be necessary to carry out the purposes and duties of the Corporation. ~~Only those persons who are Trustees of the Corporation may serve on a Board.~~

Section 2 Duties. Each Cemetery Board shall serve at the pleasure of the Trustees, attend to the management and maintenance of a cemetery, burial place and related properties designated by the Trustees, including the oversight and maintenance of all funds kept in trust for said property. Each Cemetery Board shall report its activities, budget and statement of assets to the Trustees for ratification.

Section 3 Chairperson. Each Cemetery Board shall elect, by simple majority vote, a Chairperson to preside at all meetings of the Cemetery Board. The Chairperson shall prepare and circulate to all members of the committee in advance of meetings all correspondence and agenda items to be considered. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chairperson, the Cemetery Board shall elect a successor Chairperson at its next meeting or as soon as practicable.

Section 4 Meetings. Meetings of each Cemetery Board shall be called by the Chairperson upon written notice sent pursuant to the notice requirements for meetings of the Board of Trustees as are specified in these Bylaws. The meeting requirements and provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall govern the conduct of all meetings. In addition to those requirements and provisions, these Bylaws provide specific guidance for the Corporation. The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall provide the rule for parliamentary process. Minutes of all Cemetery Board meetings shall be kept by a Cemetery Board member designated by the Chairperson and a copy of all such minutes shall be transmitted to the Secretary of the Corporation within the time designated by the President.

E. MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 1 Conduct. The meeting requirements and provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall govern the conduct of all meetings. In addition to those requirements and provisions, these Bylaws provide specific guidance for the Corporation. The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall provide the rule for parliamentary process.

Section 2 Notices. The President shall give notice of the time and place and, in the case of a special meeting, the purpose of every meeting of the Board of Trustees, in writing and shall be duly sent, mailed, e-mailed or otherwise delivered to each trustee not less than ten (10) days before the meeting; provided, that no notice of any regularly scheduled or adjourned meeting need be given. Meetings may be held at any time without notice if all of the Trustees are present or if those not present waive notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting, either before or after the holding thereof.

Section 3 Quorum. A majority of the trustees on the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at the regular meetings of the Board of Trustees, and the action of the Board of Trustees present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the action of the Board of Trustees; provided that if the trustees shall unanimously consent in writing to any action to be taken by the Board, such action shall be valid as though it had been authorized at a meeting of the trustees. If at any meeting of the Board of Trustees there shall be less than a quorum present, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum shall have been obtained.

Section 4 Special Meetings. Special meetings may be held at any time upon the call of the President, or of not less than one-third of the Trustees then in office.

Section 5 Minutes. The minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Trustees and of all annual and special business meetings of the Corporation, and a statement of the receipts and disbursements of the Treasurer, shall at least annually, be submitted to the Presbytery for review, for incorporation in its records, and for report to the higher judicatories of the Corporation, according to the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) . The Trustees shall promptly provide any record, account, book or thing requested by the Presbytery.

F. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Section 1 Annual Meeting, Place and Time. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Corporation that shall take place ordinarily on the first Sunday in February, or as soon thereafter as shall be decided by the Trustees.

Section 2 Moderator, Quorum. The President of the Board of Trustees shall be the moderator for the business conducted at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation. The quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the number of Trustees.

Section 3 Voting. Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, all actions taken by the Trustees shall be by simple majority vote of the quorum present. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

G. OFFICERS

Section 1 Officers. The Board of Trustees shall have these officers: President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Board of Trustees, at each Annual Meeting, shall elect from their number a President and Secretary. The Treasurer of the Corporation shall serve as *ex officio* Treasurer of the Cemetery corporation.

Section 2 Term. The term of office for all officers shall be one (1) year or until their respective successors are chosen. Any officer elected by the Board of Trustees may be removed from the office at any meeting of the Board of Trustees by the affirmative vote of a majority of the trustees then in office, whenever in their judgment the interest of the Corporation will be served thereby. Upon vacancy in any office of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees shall elect a successor at the earliest opportunity.

Section 3 Authorities and Duties. The officers of the Corporation shall respectively have such authorities and perform such duties in the management of the affairs of the Corporation subject to the control of the Trustees as generally pertain to their respective offices, as well as such additional authorities and duties as may from time to time be conferred by the Board of Trustees. No action taken by the officers shall infringe upon the authority of the Presbytery and all actions shall be in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Subject to this Section, these Bylaws, and the Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation, the officers shall have the following authorities and duties in regard to the Corporation:

- (a) The President shall: (1) preside at meetings of the Corporation and the Board of Trustees; (2) make such appointments as directed, authorized, or required, including appointing Trustees to serve on committees who shall be responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees on the activities of their respective committees; (3) execute any and all documents of whatsoever kind and nature necessary to carry out the purpose and functions of the Corporation; (4) be responsible for carrying out the directives and requirements of applicable law, these Bylaws, and the Articles of Incorporation; (5) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of President; and (6) perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Board of Trustees.
- (b) The Secretary shall: (1) perform for the Corporation those duties set out in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); (2) keep the record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and provide minutes of such meetings to the Trustees; (3) be the custodian of the corporate seal, if any, and affix it to all documents to be executed on behalf of the Corporation under its seal; (4) receive reports of all Committees of the Corporation; (5) report periodically, but not less than semi-annually, to the Presbytery on the affairs and activities of the Corporation; (6) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of secretary; and (7) perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Board of Trustees.
- (c) The Treasurer shall: (1) perform for the Corporation those duties set out in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); (2) have charge of and be responsible for the safekeeping of monies which are contributed to the Corporation, and shall keep a correct account of the receipts and disbursements of the same, under his or her official title as "Treasurer" of all funds and assets; (3) render a statement in writing of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding year at each Annual meeting of the Corporation, and from time to time render such other financial statements as shall be required by the Presbytery or the Board of Trustees; (4) be responsible for the filing of any and all tax and other financial reports as required by

applicable law; (5) be responsible for the deposit of all monies, drafts, and checks in the name of or to the credit of the Corporation at such banks or depositories as the Board of Trustees shall designate; (6) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer; and (7) be the custodian of all policies of insurance and securities of the Board of Trustees, and all books, papers and documents pertaining to the temporal affairs of the congregation, except the book of minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Trustees, which shall remain in the custody of the Secretary of the Board, and shall deliver them and the balance of monies in his hands as such treasurer to his successor in office on demand, and, (8) perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Board of Trustees.

- (d) No member or members of this Board shall have any authority whatsoever except in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Section 4 Checks, Notes, Drafts. The Board of Trustees may, from time to time, prescribe the manner of making signature or endorsement of bills of exchange, notes, drafts, checks, acceptances, obligations, and other negotiable paper or other instruments for the payment of money and designate the officer or officers, agent or agents, who shall from time to time be authorized to make, sign, or endorse the same on behalf of the Corporation.

H. FISCAL YEAR; SEAL; OFFICE OF REGISTERED AGENT

Section 1 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be the calendar year: January 1-December 31.

Section 2 Seal. The Board of Trustees shall provide a suitable corporate seal for use by the Corporation if deemed appropriate.

Section 3 Office. The name and address of the Corporation's registered agent is, "Secretary, Board of Trustees of Presbytery of the Highlands, New Jersey Cemetery Association, 390 Route 10 West, Randolph, New Jersey 07869."

I. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws of the Corporation may not be amended or added to, nor may new bylaws be adopted, unless such amendment, addition or deletion comports with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and takes place at a duly called meeting of the Board of Trustees, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and eligible to vote; provided that there has been a full reading of the proposed change(s), or the Board of Trustees shall have distributed a printed version before the meeting.

J. INDEMNIFICATION OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS

Each Trustee and officer of the Corporation shall be indemnified by the Corporation against expenses reasonably incurred in connection with any action, suit, or proceeding to which the Trustee or officer may be made a party by reason of being or having been a Trustee or officer of the Corporation (whether or not he or she continues to be a Trustee or officer at the time of incurring such expenses), except in relation to matters as to which he or she shall finally be adjudged in such action, suit, or proceeding to be personally liable. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be exclusive of other rights to which any trustee or officer may be entitled as a matter of law.

K. DISSOLUTION

If the Corporation is formally dissolved by action of the Presbytery, or has become extinct by reason of the dispersal of its assets, the abandonment of its work, or any other cause, all such property, both real and personal, present and future, as the Corporation may have shall be vested in and be the property of the Presbytery, pursuant to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), said Presbytery being an organization qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States and in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (Book of Order G-8.0300, G-8.0400, G-1 1.0103; Article of Incorporation XVII).

I certify that these Bylaws were adopted by the Members of the Corporation at a duly called meeting with proper notice on January 6, 2022.

By:

, Secretary Board of Trustees of The Presbytery of Highlands,
New Jersey Cemetery Association



History of the Manse Fund Grant

In 2021 the Manse of the Stillwater Presbyterian Church was sold. A condition on the deed, from 1892, required the money be returned to the people who originally contributed to the manse fund. The task to find living relatives of the original 30+ families who contributed was impractical, so the

courts determined that the proceeds from the sale could be used to provide assistance for minister housing in the Presbytery of the Highlands. The proceeds of \$229,541 were invested with the New Covenant Trust, and income will be distributed based on the Foundation's formula of 4.25% per year of a rolling average balance. The Property and Insurance team has determined that approximately \$10,000 will be available for 2022 from the Manse Fund and can be used for matching grants for energy efficient improvements for manses within the presbytery. The annual amount for use for grants will be determined annually by the Property and Insurance team.

Matching Grants for Energy Efficient improvements for the Manse

All congregations with a manse within the Presbytery of the Highlands may apply. Priority will be given, however, to congregations under 150 members.

Sessions may apply for a **matching grant up to \$2000** for any energy efficient improvement for the manse. The Property and Insurance team will review all requests and award grants up to the allocation of the year. For 2022 the allocation is \$10,000.

Grant applications are available online, and must be submitted by February 20, 2022. Grant awards will be made by late February.

The manse must be used by a Pastor of the requesting church. Congregations in the process of seeking a new pastor may also apply.

Energy Efficient improvements may include new appliances, energy efficient windows or doors, energy efficient air conditioning or heating, insulation or other such types of improvements.

If you have questions to whether your session qualifies, questions about projects or the application process please contact Liz Hutchinson.

Application can be found the Presbytery Website -
<https://highlandspresbytery.org/2022/01/07/manse-improvement-grants-for-2022-are-now-available/>

We were all hopeful that by summer we would be seeing the back end of the COVID virus. That was not to be. We find ourselves this winter amid another surge led by the Omicron Variant. Even though there are reports that this variant is not as “deadly” as previous variants, it still brings on serious illness and death, especially to those who are not vaccinated or have underlying conditions. The long-term effects of this variant are unknown. We strongly recommend that you take this as seriously as previous variants.

That said, this is not March 2020. We do have more tools and experience in managing exposure to the virus such as masking, social distancing, virtual gatherings, digital technology, and vaccinations. We recommend you use all those tools to assist you as you continue your worship and ministry.

Over the last few weeks, the following questions have been asked in various ways. The Property and Insurance team, tasked with keeping track of COVID protocols, offers the following as recommendations, guidance and responses to your questions.

Question and Answers concerning the Omicron Variant and Church life.

Should we suspend in person worship/gatherings/meetings?

There are many contributing factors to this question. First, if your county is Red or Magenta (Covidactnow.com) or if the county positivity rate is above 15%, you should consider suspending in person gatherings and programs. (i.e., coffee hour, fellowship, etc.) Worship should be suspended if you are unable to social distance and wear masks safely and/or have a cluster of members test positive for the virus. Have plans ready to go for online alternates for meetings and gatherings.

What about if we wear masks and social distance?

If you are meeting in person, Mask Wearing must be mandatory for all in people at the meeting or gathering. The CDC and NJ Department of Health recommend that people upgrade for single layer of cloth to at least the minimum of two layers and a surgical mask or a N95 or KN95 mask. Social distancing must also be mandatory while in the building or sanctuary. If your sanctuary is not large enough to keep social distance of 6 feet than you should consider going to online or virtual worship.

What about singing?

Because of the extremely contagious nature of the Omicron Variant all singing, including choirs, should be suspended until the positivity rate in your area is below 15%.

What should we do next?

Your next steps is for the session to approve the protocols for this next season of the pandemic and communicate them with the congregation.

What do we do if someone tests positive and was in worship or another gathering?

- Send a communication to all who may have attended the gathering/worship service. In the case of a worship service, the letter should go to the entire congregation.
- Encourage all who attended to get tested as soon as possible whether they have been vaccinated and/or masked at the time of gathering. Vaccinated people can contract the virus and may spread it to others unknowingly.
- Anyone who comes back with a positive test should contact the church office and should isolate according to their doctor's recommendations.
- Plan for online worship or gatherings should there appear to be a cluster of cases from this incident.
- Have a plan should the COVID positive person (s) are the worship leaders.

What should you include in your communications?

- First find out from the person informing you of their positive test if you can use their name (s). This might be helpful for people to know how close and maybe exposed they were.
- If it was a small group send out an email to everyone who participated with specific information followed by an email to larger congregation informing them that someone at a small group tested positive.
- If it was a large group, like the worship service, send an email to the whole congregation with as much detail information as possible.
- Encourage all participants of whatever event to get tested and to quarantine until they are tested.
- Keep the communication focused on care for the people and not on blaming anyone or any one group.

How do we know the Positivity Rates for our County?

COVID ACT NOW (covidactnow.org) is the best resource to find out the positivity rate for your county on a daily basis. The information is based on the previous day's testing results.

What is the "Percent Positive" or "Positivity Rate" and why does it matter? (from John Hopkins: Bloomberg School of Public Health)

The percent positive is exactly what it sounds like: the percentage of all coronavirus tests performed that are actually positive, or: $(\text{positive tests})/(\text{total tests}) \times 100\%$. The percent positive (sometimes called the "percent positive rate" or "positivity rate") helps public health officials answer questions such as:

- What is the current level of SARS-CoV-2 (coronavirus) transmission in the community?

- Are we doing enough testing for the amount of people who are getting infected?

The percent positive will be high if the number of *positive tests* is too high, or if the number of *total tests* is too low. A higher percent positive suggests higher transmission and that there are likely more people with coronavirus in the community who haven't been tested yet.

The percent positive is a critical measure because it gives us an indication how widespread infection is in the area where the testing is occurring—and whether levels of testing are keeping up with levels of disease transmission.

The Positivity Rates for COVID in the Presbyteries Counties (as of January 10, 2022)

Sussex County – Severe Risk Level – 34.3 %

Passaic County – Severe Risk Level – 40.6%

Morris County – Severe Risk Level – 33.6%

Warren County – Severe Risk Level – 36.7%

Somerset County – Severe Risk Level – 35.9%

Hunterdon County – Severe Risk Level – 33.4%

Mercer County – Severe Risk Level – 27.9%

Presbytery of the Highlands
Stated Meeting
Hillsborough Presbyterian Church
Administrative Commission Report
January 22, 2022

**Final Report of the Administrative Commission of the Highlands Presbytery
of New Jersey
for the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church
January 14, 2022**

On June 22, 2021, the ACT of Highlands Presbytery of New Jersey appointed an Administrative Commission to work with the Session of the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church on their request to dissolve the congregation and to celebrate their ministry and faithful witness. The Presbytery appointed the following people to serve as the Administrative Commission: Rev. Amy Lincoln (moderator), Rev. Meredith Mueller-Bolton, RE John Hellriegel.

The Hillsborough Presbyterian Church was founded in 1963 and their ministry has been one focused around joyful worship, meaningful Christian Education, deepening relationships with God, and actively addressing the needs of underserved populations in the area. Memories celebrating church family picnics, work parties to make the grounds and building of the church look nice and serving together at SHIP (Samaritan Homeless Interim Program in Somerville) to help those struggling with homelessness and food insecurity were named. We give thanks for the legacy of teaching, worship, stewardship, and mission that lives on in the lives and hearts of those who came to know God's love at Hillsborough Presbyterian Church through the years.

The AC began its work together with a virtual Training on July 17, 2021, led by the presbytery Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Carl Wilton, and Rev. Jeanne Radak, Presbytery Leader.

The AC then held its first meeting via zoom on July 26, 2021, where we were joined by Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Carl Wilton, and Liz Hutchinson, the Financial Administrator of the presbytery.

The following actions were taken:

The AC voted to dissolve the congregation effective at the end of the closing worship service.

The AC voted to start the process of financial transactions associated with dissolution.

The AC also outlined goals for next steps in their work together including: Seeking to meet with the HPC session to understand pastoral care needs, address the final accounts, bills, transfers, etc. with their treasurer, and set a date for the closing service.

A meeting of the AC and the session of the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church was held via Zoom on August 5, 2021. Present were Rev. Amy Lincoln (moderator) and Rev. Merideth Mueller-Bolton present for the AC, Liz Hutchinson and Rev. Dr. Carl Wilton present for the presbytery staff, and Ruling Elders Lorna Fletcher, Charlie Schramm, Vicki Elkins, Brian Richter, and Diane “DJ” Junkins were present for HPC. A time for celebrating memories of highlights of HPC’s ministry was shared and tasks around finance and insurance were delegated. The church’s property has been transferred to the Taiwanese PCUSA congregation that is worshiping in their former building. Members will plan to go to different congregations, presbytery will hold their membership, and transfer them upon request during the coming year.

Subsequently, members of the AC worked with the session on plans for the Closing Worship Service and Celebration of the Ministry of HPC, a hybrid service, which came together beautifully and was held on Sunday, October 17, 2021, with the Rev. Larissa Kwong-Abazia preaching.

The Hillsborough Presbyterian Church has turned over their remaining assets in the amount of **\$322,259.81** to the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.

The AC recommends that the presbytery set aside the assets of the Hillsborough PC to establish a fund that supports ministry programs to help people with essential needs and that the PCT assign the oversight of this new fund to a team of the presbytery and to dissolve the Administrative Commission with thanks. Grants may be made aligned with providing for essential needs such as Hunger Relief and/or programs that support homeless/unhoused people.

Elder and Clerk of Session Lorna Fletcher suggests calling the fund, the **HPC MEND Fund** (with MEND = Meeting Essential Needs with Dignity) [*borrowing this acronym from an organization in Essex County*]

As the AC assisted with celebrating the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church and its 59 years of ministry, it has been an honor to hear stories of its legacy of

mission as it is brought to a close. We now trust that God's love lives on in the lives of those whose spirits were nourished by the people of this former congregation.

With thanks and praise to God,

Rev. Amy Lincoln (moderator) on behalf of the AC

Presbytery of the Highlands
Stated Meeting
Administrative Commission for the Christ Presbyterian
Church, Martinsville Report
January 22, 2022

The Session of Christ Presbyterian Church, Martinsville (CPC), requested that the Presbytery of Elizabeth create an Administrative Commission to help conclude the affairs of the Church. The AC was approved at the October 13, 2020 meeting of the Presbytery, and Lois Tangowski, Ian Rankine and Alan Ford, with Jamie Breeding of the Christ Church as liaison, were appointed. Subsequently, as part of the reorganization of the presbyteries in New Jersey, the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey, of which CPC has become part, authorized the continuation of the Administrative Commission.

The Interim Report at November 9, 2021 describes the process followed which will lead to the dissolution of CPC and the transfer of all remaining assets to Bound Brook Presbyterian Church (BBPC) which will, for a period of further discernment, continue the Martinsville church property in community mission under the supervision of BBPC. This is guided by "The Plan for Moving Forward." approved by the BBPC Session and the CPC Session. The Plan is a guide for managing the CPC property until the assets of CPC are transferred to BBPC and the church is dissolved.

Complicated by significant damage to the property by hurricane Ida, the completion of the plan is nearing completion, with final resolution expected by the end of February. Most of the repairs necessitated by the flood damage as well as some improvements planned before the storm have been completed. A few remaining tasks remain to complete those repairs and renovations. Upon completion the CPC will take final action to dissolve the congregation and to transfer the accounts and other assets to BBPC. Note that the title to the CPC church real property has already been transferred, as of November 1, 2021.

The issues with insurance have been settled, with the immediate remediation costs having been covered by the agreed settlement at no cost to CPC. Repairs to the HVAC systems, flooring and drywall have been paid from the assets, which include some improvements that were contemplated before the hurricane struck. It appears that financial assets in excess of \$400,000 will be transferred to BBPC when the work is complete, and that these assets will be sufficient to support the ongoing operation of the building and property as the discernment process continues.

We are continuing the walk alongside the CPC Session and congregation as the process nears conclusion. We pray for continued guidance in the days ahead, and expect to make a final report to the March presbytery meeting.

Respectfully submitted for the AC by Alan Ford

BIO

Rev. Dr. Steven Shussett

I am, according to my Twitter bio (the bio taking more time to create than I have actually spent on Twitter), “a laid back husband and father who loves God, my family, and things that make me laugh...and cry.” I feel so blessed to get to do God-stuff all day, from church and worship leadership to spiritual direction and writing. I am an avid reader, sports fan of all things Pittsburgh, and a walker.

For inquiring minds that want to know more...I am a native of Pittsburgh PA, which I fondly refer to as “the land of milk and honey.” I attended the University of Pittsburgh for my BA (Political Science and English Writing), and its Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) for a Master’s Degree focusing on International Relations and International Security.

It was at GSPIA that I met Alicia, with whom I am more in love now than I was over 30 years ago when we got married. She is from outside Philadelphia, in the Main Line area. It was during this time that I began attending church and was eventually baptized in a church that valued asking questions as much as giving answers. After my first opportunity to serve as a liturgist I began to think about pastoral ministry, eventually graduating from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

While serving congregations in Buchanan, VA and Frostburg MD, Alicia and I became the parents of two children, now adults living elsewhere in Pennsylvania. In parish ministry, I enjoyed the wide variety of pastoral responsibilities like leading worship, visitation, and programming, and appreciated opportunities for ecumenical and social justice activities.

It was while we were in Maryland that I began a Doctor of Ministry program at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Chestnut Hill College. In 2002, I received my degree, with a focus in Christian Spirituality. By then we lived in Louisville KY, where I was the Associate for Spiritual Formation for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and editor of *Hungryhearts*, a periodical with 10,000 subscribers. This ministry included teaching around the country, and writing on matters of Christian spirituality in resources like *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*.

Since 2005, we have lived in eastern PA, where I served as Executive Presbyter for ten years and Stated Clerk for four, and subsequently served two Lutheran (ELCA) congregations. I am also a spiritual director and practice the supervision of directors, as well as a writer and retreat leader. I have also been on the faculty of two educational institutions, teaching spirituality and spiritual direction.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Dr. Steve Shussett

I believe in God, Lover, Beloved, and the Love binding them and us. who assures us that we are God's and God is with us, in life, death, or after death.

I believe that by grace alone we know the relationship between Creator and created, of the holy desire for us to love God, neighbor, and self. This is revealed to us in Scripture, God's story and our story. Whether the words are tender or angry, calling for compassion or accountability, Scripture is God's love letter written to us.

God's choice to love us comes at a price, as sin is our choice to not cooperate with Love. Fearful and apathetic, we make gods of our own, whom we worship but that cannot save. In forgetting that there is but one God, we violate creation, others, and ourselves. Though made to be in communion with God and one another, we choose to walk alone and apart. We desire to be other than who God made us to be. God is always with us, but we are not always with God.

I believe it is in Jesus that God's deepest desires are revealed: that all would live in faithful and loving obedience. Jesus was born as we are, and through him God learned of human life firsthand, and we witnessed what it means to live a godly life. Jesus' greatest defeat, death on a cross, became his greatest triumph: that God is supreme over all life, all death, and all after death. In the crucifixion, death fell to God, and resurrected life was assured us, new life in Christ Jesus. Thus, the promise that in heaven or Sheol, God is with us.

I believe that God's grace is freely given, but it comes at a price: to love God means to love all creation, those known and unknown to us. As God's children we are to bear witness that the cross gives life through pain and suffering. Forgiven as we are, we can be honest with God and ourselves, and able to forgive others and ourselves. We are not protected from all evil and danger, but we can take courage and be at peace, for Jesus has conquered the world.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, our knowing Guide on this unknown journey, enabling us to find God in everyone and everything. God's creating Breath spoke at creation, through prophets of old, and speaks now through Scripture and church of saint and sinner. In the sign and seal of the Sacraments, the Spirit calls us to our true self in the new creation. We are made one with Christ and his Body through Baptism of water and Spirit, and by this same Spirit we eat and drink with Christ at his Table in heaven. The fullness of God's victory is revealed, and even now the Spirit enlightens us, so we might be a light to the world. We are of this world, but the Spirit will not let us forget that first we are of God.

I believe that God is One, and blessed are all who come in the name of the Lord. God calls us to depart from evil and do good, to seek peace and pursue it, to be who God made us to be, and to know that we

are loved. And we can live trusting that the God who is, who was, and who is to come is with us now, and will be forevermore.