

Stated Meeting
May 5, 2020

Meeting held Electronically
via Zoom

PRESBYTERY OF MISSOURI RIVER VALLEY

The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley held a stated meeting electronically via Zoom on May 5, 2020. The meeting was convened with prayer at 5:07 PM by the Moderator, Elder Dennis Brown.

Patricia Shipley, Stated Clerk, assured the moderator of the presence of a quorum. The roll is attached to these minutes [Attachment 1].

There were no new Minister of the Word and Sacrament members of Presbytery introduced. Ruling Elder commissioners serving for the first time were introduced. Audrey Rickert, Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation and Craig Huffman, Director, Calvin Crest Conference Center, were introduced.

Announcements:

1. Linda Reffert, chair of Faith, Education and Leadership Development (FELD) announced plans for upcoming training opportunities about Stewardship Campaigns to be held in August or September. It will be either in person or via Zoom. Specifics will be distributed later.
2. Audrey Rickert, Executive Director, Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation announced that the Board of Directors has approved a grant of \$25,400.00 to Presbytery of Missouri River Valley for the 2020 Presbyterian Disaster Response Work Weeks - "Celebration of Resilience & Recovery" project. Hope Presbyterian of Omaha to purchase supplies to fill backpacks with food for distribution at the local elementary school and New Life Presbyterian of Omaha to support their free after-school enrichment and food program. The next grant cycle happens in December.

There were no items of new business to add to the agenda.

Rev. Suzanne Gorhau, PMRV Vice Moderator-elect highlighted the Covenant-2020.

During worship, the Presbytery was led by the Worship Team. A Commissioning service was part of the worship service for Elder Dennis Brown and Rev. Jennifer Blake, Commissioners and Justus Jeanpierre, New Life Presbyterian Church, Youth Advisory Delegate, to the 224th General Assembly of PC(USA). The Presbytery received \$390 in offering received electronically or by mail and will be added to funds available for Emergency Assistance Grants.

A time for a Church Check-in was lead by the Moderator. Each church gave a three-word response to how they were doing right now.

FOR THE RECORD

The Commission took the following actions on behalf of the Presbytery at meetings held on February 25, March 24, and April 28, 2020:

1. Approved Installation date and Commission for Rev. Andy Hamer at West Hills Church. Installation date is March 8, 2:30 p.m. Installation Commission is PMRV Moderator Dennis Brown, Elder, First Presbyterian/Omaha; Rev. Deena Candler, HR; Kathy Padilla, Elder, West Hills Church; Rev. Marshall, Church of the Cross/Omaha; Rev. Martha Slocombe, First Presbyterian Church/Neola.
2. Approved the January 1-December 31, 2020 Temporary Pastoral Relationship between Al Zimmerman, CLP, and Florence Presbyterian/Omaha. Terms: 15 hours/week; Housing Allowance \$14,592; Travel at IRS rate up to \$750; Continuing Education \$365. Paid time off to attend two Great Plains Pilgrimages/year. Paid vacation of four weeks annually, paid continuing education leave of two weeks annually.
3. Approved the January 1-December 31, 2020 Temporary Pastoral Relationship between Rev. Tom Willadsen and Faith/LaVista. Terms: \$25,000 Salary; Housing--\$30,423; Effective Salary--\$55,423. Board of Pensions full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage \$11,577. Travel \$1,800; Continuing Education reimbursement--\$1200. Paid vacation leave of four weeks annually (including Sundays). Paid continuing education leave of two weeks annually (including Sundays).

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4. Approved the January 1-December 31, 2020 Temporary Pastoral Relationship between Rev. Gary Eller and Gethsemane Presbyterian/Council Bluffs. Terms: Part-time. Salary \$10,000; Housing Allowance \$33,000; Effective Salary \$33,000. Mileage paid at IRS rate (\$.575/mile). Paid vacation leave of four weeks annually (including Sunday); Paid continuing education leave of two weeks annually (including Sundays).
5. Approved the January 1-December 31, 2020 Temporary Pastoral Relationship between Bob Sieck, CLP, and Avoca Presbyterian Church. Terms: 19 hours/week. Cash Salary--\$8560, Housing \$10,000, Travel reimbursement up to \$2560. Continuing Education reimbursement \$1000. Paid vacation leave of four weeks annually (including Sunday); Paid continuing education leave of two weeks annually (including Sundays).
6. Approved the Terms of Call for Designated Relationship between Rev. Bill Switzer and Walnut Presbyterian Church. Terms: Full-time. Cash Salary \$25,000; Housing and Utility allowance \$30,423; Effective Salary \$55,423. Full medical pension, disability, and death benefit coverage \$11,577. Travel \$1800. Continuing Education reimbursement \$1,200. Paid vacation leave of four weeks annually (including Sundays). Paid continuing education leave of two weeks annually (including Sundays). Moving expenses (if a move is required.)
7. Approved the dismissal with thanks of the Installation Commission for Rev. Leah Elrod, United Faith Church, Sidney.
8. Approved Rev. Becki Balestri and Rev. Tom Album for addition to the PMRV Pulpit Supply list.
9. Approved the dismissal with thanks of the Installation Commission for Rev. Andy Hamer, West Hills Church.
10. Approved revisions to COM Manual, Glossary of Commonly Used Terms and Pastor/Specialized Ministry Positions.
11. Approved dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship between Rev. David Matsumura and Hope Presbyterian Church, Omaha, pending the vote of the congregation.
12. Approved designation of Rev. David Matsumura as Honorably Retired effective June 1, 2020.
13. Approved designation of Rev. Marshall Ziemann as Moderator of Hope Presbyterian until that time when an Interim is in place.
14. Approved dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship between Rev. Vicki Evans and Mt. View Presbyterian and Westminster Presbyterian/Council Bluffs effective July 1, 2020 pending the approval of the congregation.
15. Approved the designation of Rev. Vicki Evans as Honorably Retired effective July 1, 2020 pending the approval of the congregation.
16. Approved Rev. Paul Masters to work with Rev. Bill Switzer as a mentor.

The Stated Clerk reported:

FOR THE RECORD

- A. The Presbytery's annual report to the General Assembly was reported. On December 31, 2019 there were 80 minister members of the Presbytery and four (4) ruling elders commissioned to particular service. Forty-three (43) churches are within the boundaries of Presbytery.
- B. All sessions of the Presbytery submitted their annual statistical reports to the General Assembly with the exception of Carter Lake, Center Ridge, College Springs, and Korean Presbyterian Church; First/Shenandoah and Walnut completed only membership information. The Presbytery's churches list 6212 active members, down from 6556 on December 31, 2018. Reporting churches indicated membership gains of 405 and membership loss of 749 for a net loss of 344. Of that loss, some is due to death and deletion of membership for various reasons. The following churches reported membership gains: First Essex, Fort Calhoun; United Trinity, Hamburg, Neola; Church of the Cross/Omaha; Discovery/Omaha; First/Omaha; New Life/Omaha.
- C. Rev. Gary Eller, Rev. Suzanne Gorhau, and Elder Jeff Dickinson, representatives of Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, and representatives of Homestead Presbytery continue to meet to discuss future possibilities for sharing resources.
- D. The Stated Clerk participated in weekly Zoom meetings conducted by the Association of Mid-Council Leaders.
- E. The Stated Clerk participated in scheduled Zoom meetings conducted for Synod Staff Leaders.
- F. The Stated Clerk resources Commission on Ministry, Leadership Team, Commission on Preparation for Ministry, and other Committees as requested.

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- G. The Stated Clerk serves on the four-member Administrative Transition Team with Moderator of Commission on Ministry, Personnel Committee Chair, and Stewardship of Resources Chair. This four-member team meets at least twice per month.
- H. Presbytery of Missouri River Valley is conducting weekly Zoom meetings for Pastors and Commissioned Pastors currently serving a church.
- I. Annual Session Minutes/Registry Review are scheduled for Thursday May 21, 2020; all meetings will be via Zoom. Clerks of Session will have the option to attend at 10 a.m., 2:00 p.m. or 5:30 p.m. on that date. Clerks will be sent review materials for completion prior to the meeting and log-in information for the meeting. When materials are returned to the Stated Clerk, an email will be sent acknowledging receipt of the completed documents to be kept with Session minutes and registry to commemorate completion of the review in 2020 in lieu of stamping the Minutes and/or Registry of the individual church.
- J. All correspondence has been answered or forwarded, as needed.
- K. Recommendations
 - a. With respect to **redress of imbalance**:
 1. Our standing rules (I.C.) direct the stated clerk to ascertain the parity of teaching elder and ruling elder members and commissioners and make recommendation to Presbytery on redress if the number of teaching elder (minister) members exceeds the number of ruling elders with right to vote.
 2. Of the 80 Minister of Word and Sacrament members, 17 are retired and not in active service and 5 others are active and residing out of the area. Consequently, **we can expect 58 teaching elders in attendance at Presbytery meetings.**
 3. We automatically expect 43 ruling elders commissioned by their sessions. In addition, we have three (3) ruling elders serving as officers, five (5) ruling elders serving as chairs of standing commissions and committees, and four (4) ruling elders commissioned to particular service. Thus, by Bylaws III.B. 2 & 3 and D, **we can expect 55 ruling elders to participate in meetings of the Presbytery.**
 4. Standing Rules of the Presbytery state: "If the number of ruling elders equals or exceeds the number of teaching elders, there is no imbalance and no action is needed."
 5. **There is need for redress of imbalance.**
 6. Our Standing Rules instruct the stated clerk to give initial consideration to those congregations with more than 350 members. We have six such congregations. Since it is permissible for the number of ruling elders to exceed the number of teaching elders:

The Stated Clerk recommends that Presbytery ask the following sessions to commission two ruling elders to represent them at meetings of the Presbytery from July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021:

Church of the Cross, Omaha; Dundee, Omaha; West Hills, Omaha

Reports

The Administrative Transition Team comprised of Rev. Sarah Dickinson (Personnel), Rev. Gregg Miller (SOR), Rev. Sally Carlson (COM) and Pat Shipley, Stated Clerk, provided a written report to Presbytery included with PMRV Committee Reports.

Pat Shipley, Stated Clerk, reminded the Commissioners of the scheduling of Annual Minutes Review to be held via Zoom on Thursday, May 21st at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 5:30 p.m. Clerks of Session may attend any of the scheduled times. Due to the change in the location of the May Stated Meeting, Westminster/Clarinda has requested consideration as a host site in 2021.

Treasurer Dave Emry and Rev. Gregg Miller, chair of Stewardship of Resources (SOR) reported the financial status of the Presbytery. The majority of the report was an explanation of the Emergency Assistance Grants proposed for action later in the docket.

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A written report from PMRV Leadership Team was provided to Presbytery. [Attachment 2]

A written report from PMRV Committees was provided to Presbytery. [Attachment 3]

Decisions

The Presbytery took the following actions:

1. Motion made to approve the minutes of the Stated Meeting of February 22, 2020 as presented. Motion carried.
2. Motion made to approve the minutes of a Special Called Meeting held April 8, 2020 as presented. Motion carried.
3. Motion made to accept the Stated Clerks recommendation for redress of imbalance: that Presbytery ask the following sessions to commission two ruling elders to represent them at meetings of the Presbytery from July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021: Church of the Cross, Omaha; Dundee, Omaha; West Hills, Omaha.
4. Rev. Sally Carlson, Chair of Nominating Committee Report and Election presented the following names for election: Rev. Richard Meyer for Personnel, class of 2020. The nominee was elected to serve.
5. Rev. Gregg Miller, Stewardship of Resources chair made the following motion:
Stewardship of Resources moves that Presbytery use up to \$100,000 from the following long-term reserve 95 accounts: 2095.07 Revolving Loan Fund, 2095.48 Small Church Mini Grant, 2095.532 Disaster Relief Local NE & IA, and 2095.59 Woodbine, to help the churches of the Presbytery who are in need due to loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Churches will receive an application form, via email, this week and SOR will determine a maximum amount of assistance to be made available per congregation. **Deadline for grants to be considered is May 27, 2020. Grants will be distributed in June.**

The next stated meeting of the Presbytery is the joint meeting of Homestead and PMRV currently scheduled for Friday-Saturday, August 14-15 at Calvin Crest Conference Center. Scheduling will be dependent upon the status of COVID-19 advisories.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by the Vice Moderator, Rev. Suzanne Gorhau, at 6:08 PM.

Patricia Shipley, Stated Clerk

Marilyn Puett, Recording Clerk

Attachments:

1. Roll of the Presbytery
2. Leadership Team Report
3. PMRV Committee Reports

<u>The Roll</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Tom Albaum, HR		X
Becky Balestri	X	
William Beatty, HR		X
John Besançon, HR		X
Jennifer Blake	X	
William Bowers, HR		X
Charles Bulger, HR		X
Kenneth Bunnell, HR		X
MaryAnn Calta		X
Deena Candler, HR	X	
Greg Carlson, HR	X	
Sally Carlson, HR	X	
Jay Cline	X	
J. Keith Cook, HR		X
Matt Coplen	X	
*James Crapson		X
Christine Dempsey	X	
William Denny, HR		X
Sarah Dickinson	X	
Nickolas Dougherty		X
Neal Earley, HR		X
Gary Eller	X	
Mike Elliott	X	
Leah Elrod	X	
Vicki Evans	X	
Jody Filipi, HR		X
Roy Fox, HR		X
Lyle Franzen, HR		X
J.D. Georlett	X	
James Goodenberger		X
Suzanne Gorhau	X	
Dan Graham, HR	X	
Ernest Gutha,HR		X
Andrew Hamer		X
Mary Hansen, HR		X
Cindy Harvey	X	
Mike Harvey. HR		X
James Hendricksen, HR		X
Brad Hertzler		X
Rob Hubler, HR		X
Portia Iverson, HR		X
Johnstone, Matthew		X
Robert Keefer	X	
Ronald Kinsey, HR		X
Lowell Knauss, HR		X
Chet Mason, HR		X
Paul Masters	X	
David Matsumura	X	
McConnell, Bill	X	
Lyle Meester, HR		X
Richard Meyer, HR		X
Gregg Miller	X	
Mary Newbern-Williams		X
William Osick, HR		X
Sunjin Park		X
Sunwook Park		X

Caryn Pedersen	X	
Stephen Pike, HR		X
Lori Robinson		X
Nancy Ross-Hullinger	X	
Kirk Ryckman, HR		X
Marvyn Schultz, HR		X
Rick Sleyster	X	
Jon Sloan	X	
Martha Slocombe	X	
Dean Sparr, HR		X
Ed Steinmetz, HR		X
*Bill Switzer		X
Emad Tawadrous		X
Sara Tonje	X	
Sandra Wainwright	X	
Tom Willadsen	X	
Bonnie Wilkins	X	
Dwight Williams	X	
Mark Witmer, HR		X
Jay Won Yu, HR		X
Marshall Zieman	X	

* Temporary Member

HR – Honorably Retired [Excused if Absent]

Ruling Elder Commissioners

Anderson Grove		X
Avoca		X
Bethany	X	
Carson		X
Carter Lake		X
Center Ridge		X
Church of the Cross	X	
Church of the Master	X	
College Springs		X
Discovery	X	
Dundee	X	
Essex		X
Faith		X
Faithful Shepherd	X	
First, Bellevue		X
First, Omaha		X
Florence		X
Fort Calhoun		X
Gethsemane		X
Hope		X
Korean		X
Missouri Valley		X
Mount View	X	
Murray	X	
Neola	X	
New Horizon		X
New Life	X	
Oakland-Sharon	X	
Peace	X	
Plattsmouth	X	
Red Oak		X

Shelby		X
Shenandoah		X
Sidney	X	
Sudanese Fellowship		X
Trinity, Clarinda	X	
Underwood Hills	X	
United Trinity, Hamburg		X
Villisca		X
Walnut		X
West Hills	X	
Westminster, Clarinda	X	
Westminster, C.B.	X	
Westminster, Omaha		X

Ruling Elder Members of Leadership Team

Dennis Brown		X
Dave Emry	X	
Carolyn Grice	X	
Deborah Kippley	X	
Linda Reffert	X	
Pat Shipley	X	

Commissioned Ruling Elders:

Marcia Cline	X	
David Krueger		X
Michael Kuach		X
Robert Sieck	X	
Al Zimmerman		X

Corresponding Member:

Visitors:

Audrey Richert (Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation), Kate Belt (Common Ground Presbyterian, Portland OR), Craig Huffman (Calvin Crest), Justus Jeanpierre (New Life)

Number of ministers present: 33
 Number of elder commissioners present: 26
 Total number of persons eligible to vote: 59

Committee Reports

May 5, 2020 Stated Meeting

FELD—Linda Reffert, Chair

FELD did not meet in March. In lieu of the March meeting, a list of questions was sent to Committee members to explore why each member of the committee agreed to serve on FELD, what their hopes were for the committee, and what they saw as the faith and leadership educational needs of our presbytery. Committee members were also asked about preferred event types, speakers, and the types of roles they were most comfortable filling, etc. The questionnaire was kept to a few questions but there was a lot of meat in the answers of those who responded.

As of this date not all members have responded to the questionnaire. Of those who answered some answers would surely be changed in response to the way our lives (and ways of doing church) have turned upside down. The next FELD meeting will be via Zoom on April 22nd.

Commission on Preparation for Ministry—Rev. Jay Cline, Moderator

CPM has not met. They plan to meet in May.

Stewardship of Resources (SOR), Rev. Gregg Miller, Chair

Dave Emery reported that about 70% of per capita pledges have been received, which was about the same as last year at this time.

There were no concerns with the financials, except that investments have been hit hard with the market's downturn. They are expected to recover.

Discussions and Decisions made

The Korean Church has requested SOR to return their funds held in the 95 account. JD moved and Mike seconded that SOR send them a check to clear the 95 account. The motion was approved. There was discussion about the response the Presbytery should give considering the coronavirus pandemic and its effect on our churches. Some Presbyteries are giving cash grants to smaller churches to upgrade technology. 20 churches responded to Pat Shipley's survey about needs caused by the pandemic. SOR developed a Presbytery Response to the Covid-19 facing our churches.

- We are going to make available \$100,000 from the 95 accounts to be used for grants to our churches and to include Calvin Crest.
- SOR will determine a cap per congregation after the needs are known. COM will be asked to personally contact the pastors at our churches to tell them about these available funds. They will be directed to send their requests/statements of need to Gregg by April 24th. SOR will determine what the grants will be.
- Pat Shipley will be asked to contact the Stated Clerks of Session to have them begin the process of determining how the funds will be used.

The next official meeting will be held Wednesday, May 20, 2020, at noon, hopefully at The Presbytery Office. SOR will meet before this meeting to discuss the requests from churches who need a grant. SOR's grant recommendations will hopefully be a part of the Presbytery meeting on May 5th.

Mission and Evangelism—Debbie Kippley, Chair

Mission Evangelism had an email meeting.

The consensus of the Mission Evangelism Committee is that it would benefit PMRV to be a Matthew 25 Presbytery. We believe that we are already doing many things contained in the Matthew 25 guidelines.

If we have to address, one-area members believe eradicating systemic poverty would be appropriate and that this aspect affects the other guidelines. One member also stated that the existence of the Sudanese and Arabic Fellowships are strong aspects of our Presbytery that follow the Matthew 25 guidelines.

Michael Kuach's company has closed but he has retained his benefits. His wife works for a meatpacking company; she is working several days a week. He remains in good spirits. Easter Sunday, he recorded a worship service in the basement at Discovery on Facebook Live. He sang the hymn is Nuer, and it is so precious. It is in several different recordings, and you can see it on his Facebook page.

Sarah Dickinson and I have talked about the PDA Covid-19 Short/Long-Term grant for the Sudanese. We have brainstormed what path to take and will have a proposal.

We continue to be frustrated with this year's Komarek Grant procedure. We finished our work in January. Generally, once PMRV knows the amount that we have been allotted, the funds are available soon after that. We contacted the recipients in

February. Jody Filipi indicated that it might be May before funds are released. Even though the Mission Evangelism Committee has no control over this, it is a poor reflection on our committee.

PDA—Jon Sloan, Chair

PDA met April 16, 2020 via Zoom. We reviewed our first 2020 Presbytery Work Week and considered the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to that project.

We received reports on State and local work being done on the flooding and COVID-19 front. We reviewed two applications for PDA COVID-19 grants, approved one, and suggested a revision to the other. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at noon via ZOOM.

Social Justice and Peacemaking—Carolyn Grice, Chair

We met via email. We approved a motion to join the Abide Network, Pastor/Faith Leaders group of the Empowerment Network of North Omaha to seek donations for residents of the Omaha Housing Authority Towers in North and South Omaha. Most of these residents are low income elderly people with no family, no transportation and no food. We are working to get donations of food and supplies to deliver to the residents. I wrote a blurb for Monday Morning asking for help if churches feel so inclined. The Abide Network has a drive through for food and supplies on Monday afternoons, an deliver food and supplies Tuesday-Saturday. As with so many places now, they are low on donations. New Life Session has approved being a drop off site for donations.

From Transition Admin Group

Pat Shipley/Stated clerk, Sally Carlson/COM, Gregg Miller /SOR, Sarah Dickinson/Personnel.

We met on March 30 & April 13, 2020 (switching from monthly to every two weeks amid pandemic context) We checked in on a range of items. Some brief highlights below:

- COVID-19 Context
 - Grateful for Pat's leadership
 - Pastors' Zoom meetings - debrief
 - Emergency funds for congregations and ministries – understanding processes and opportunities
 - Gregg/SOR doing a big follow up; stay tuned
- PMRV meetings
 - Grateful for those who have helped PMRV adapt to Zoom context
 - Working through other niceties for big Zoom meetings
- Personnel
 - Continuing to discern needs especially given new context. Sarah tasked with Joan follow up (see below)

From Personnel

The search for our Presbytery's new office coordinator is underway.

A first batch of applications is being evaluated.

But also:

With the new context of pandemic is nearly impossible to imagine Joan training a new person on May.

Sarah spoke with Joan. Joan is willing to stay on for extra weeks (up to end of summer).

This will allow a safer exit for her and start for someone new.

So we will change the time frame for celebrating her service and retirement.

Please continue to keep this search process in your prayers.

From Sudanese American Presbyterian Fellowship Covenant Group

The PDA Covid grant singles out refugee and vulnerable populations so the SAPF seems like a fitting place and platform for disaster relief assistance.

Sarah and Debbie K. submitted proposal to Pat and our local PDA team April 17, 2020.

See Debbie's report for a delightful window into Pastor Michael's foray into Facebook Live on Easter.

COM, Sally Carlson, chair

We are currently working with Hope Church to support their interim search. We're in the process of contacting every pastor in the presbytery to express our support and remind them they have a team of folks praying for them. We have completed our revision of the COM section of the PMRV manual of operations. Triennial visits are on hold due to COVID-19.

Worship & Spirituality Team, Suzanne Gorhau, Chair

We met on April 16 to plan the 20-minute worship service for the Zoom Presbytery Meeting on May 5.

May 2020 Stated Meeting Report

Leadership Team Actions from February 18, March 17, April 21, 2020

1. Discussion of process and designation of Presbytery Missouri River Valley as a Matthew 25 Presbytery.
2. Discussion of Komarek Trust process.
3. Discussion of Discernment Process begun at February 22, 2020 Stated Meeting.
4. Approved language related to electronic meetings for Presbytery, Leadership Team, Commissions and Committees.
5. Approved development of a Communication Protocol by Transition Team.
6. Leadership Team endorsed designation of Presbytery of Missouri River Valley as a Matthew 25 Presbytery. A final recommendation will be forwarded to the August Stated Meeting for discussion and action.
7. Authorized a task force composed of Gary Eller, Suzanne Gorhau and Jeff Dickinson to continue conversations with Homestead Presbytery regarding future collaborations. The task force will report to Leadership Team.
8. Heard initial plans for development of Emergency Assistance Fund and process being developed by Stewardship of Resources. A report will be presented at the May Stated Meeting. PMRV churches, Arabic and Sudanese Fellowships, and Calvin Crest will be eligible to apply for assistance.
9. Approved the use of Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation as a fiscal agent for the collection of electronic giving.
10. Directed the Administrative Transition Team to develop a communication to be sent to churches regarding stipulations for when resumption of in-person worship might resume. It will also address and provide guidance regarding Session's development of plans for re-engaging congregations to in-person worship and gathering.