

PRESBYTERY OF MISSOURI RIVER VALLEY

The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley held a Stated Meeting via Zoom on November 2, 2023. The meeting was convened at 5:32 PM with a greeting and prayer from Vice Moderator Rev. Matt Coplen in the absence of Moderator Marcia Cline who was called away for a family funeral. Following the greeting, a Call to Worship, Confession, and Assurance of Pardon was led by Elders Al Zimmerman and Ardys Hansum. Rev. Mike Geiler led the music to begin the Presbytery's Worshipful Work.

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

Rev. Sarah James, Minister of the Word and Sacrament member of Presbytery was introduced. Ruling Elder commissioners serving for the first time were introduced. Corresponding members introduced were Rev. Dr. Ken Green, Board of Pensions, a member of Chicago Presbytery, Craig Huffman, Director, Calvin Crest Conference Center.

Announcements:

1. Rev. Dr. Ken Green, Board of Pensions gave a presentation regarding upcoming changes to the Board of Pensions effective in 2025.
2. Rev. Jay Cline, Commission on Preparation for Ministry made an announcement regarding the Commissioned Pastor training available through PMRV and Synod of Lakes and Prairies and encouraged interested Elders to consider the training.

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

The Administrative Covenant-2023 was read to Presbytery Commissioners and guests, Rev. Mike Geiler; Nicole Geiler; Rev. Michael Elliott; and Rev. Becky Balestri. Rev. Matt Coplen shared some reflections about the Covenant by focusing on, "we will focus on building community."

A presentation, "Pastoral Leadership Revitalization," was given by Rev. Tricia Dillon Thomas, Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation, Director of Programming. She shared some changes that have occurred with the new sustainability grant. Various statistics about sustainability of pastoral leadership. PLR is for those serving as parish pastors serving in the OPSF 13-state territory whether ordained or serving in a commissioned elder status. It is a three-year program.

FOR THE RECORD

The Commission took the following actions on behalf of the Presbytery at meetings held on August 22, September 26, October 24, 2023:

A-1. Approved Presbyterian Church of the Master Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP).

A-2. Approved Rev. Gary Eller Temporary Pastoral Relationship with Presbyterian Church of the Master through December 31, 2023.

A-3. Approved Presbyterian Church of the Cross's discernment process.

A-4. Approved Presbyterian Church of the Cross election of an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC).

A-5. Approved Temporary Pastoral Relationship between Rev. Jon Sloan and Peace Presbyterian Church through December 31, 2023.

A-6. Elected Rev. Jon Sloan as Vice Moderator of Commission on Ministry effective January 1, 2024, with Rev. Nancy Ross-Hullinger continuing through the remainder of 2023 as a transition.

A-7. Approved addition of family medical leave to minimum terms of call.

A-8. Approved Rev. Paul Williams as a Temporary member of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley if the way be clear.

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- A-9.** Approved authorization for Soul Ventures (Rev. Tricia Dillon Thomas) to serve communion during those events.
- A-10.** Approved Rev. Martha Slocombe, Chaplain at Creighton, serving communion during Creighton student retreats.
- A-11.** Approved PMRV Family Medical Leave policy for installed/called ministers full-time positions for 2024.
- A-12.** Approved PMRV 2024 Minimum Effective Salary and all related components of it to access to a Minimum of 12-weeks of Family Leave.
- A-13.** Approved reaffirmation of PMRV Child Protection Policy.
- A-14.** Approved PMRV Sexual Misconduct Policy and procedures.
- A-15.** Approved PMRV Anti-Harassment Policy.
- A-16.** Approved PMRV Anti-Racism Policy.
- A-17.** Approved Gary Eller be approved to serve as Interim at First Presbyterian Church/Omaha effective January 1, 2024-December 31, 2024, if the way be clear. Terms: full time. Effective Salary: Cash \$32,000, Housing Allowance \$48,000 Effective Salary \$80,000. Board of Pensions-\$9,600; SECA \$6,120. Mileage at IRS rate up to \$2,200, Continuing Education \$1,500, Professional Allowance \$1,000. Paid vacation leave of four weeks annually (including Sundays). Paid Continuing education leave of two weeks annually including Sundays. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Lay Pastors who participate in a professional development event offered by the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation shall receive the time and registration cost of one (1) event above and beyond the Minimum Terms for Professional Development. Those Teaching Elders, however, who elect not to participate in an OPSF event shall not receive additional time and funds. The agreement may be terminated upon thirty days written notice by either party or by the Missouri River Valley Presbytery at their discretion. Quarterly reports will be due as expected of all interims.
- A-18.** Authorized Rev. Rick Sleyster and others to investigate a rural internship model with PC(USA) or a denomination with whom we are in communion.
- A-19.** Approved validated ministry of all currently serving Ministers of Word and Sacrament for 2024: Rev. Shelli Latham, Rev. Tricia Dillon-Thomas, Rev. Sarah James, Rev. Robert Rose.
- A-20.** Approved Rev. Cindy Harvey as moderator for Presbyterian Church of the Master commencing December 25, 2023.
- A-20.** Approved Rev. Brian Long as a member of Presbytery of Missouri River Valley pending the background check, if the way be clear.
- A-21.** Approved email authorization of completion of Child Protection Training.

The Stated Clerk reported:

- I. FOR THE RECORD
 - A. The Stated Clerk participated in twice monthly Zoom meetings conducted by the Association of Mid-Council Leaders.
 - B. The Stated Clerk participated in scheduled Zoom meetings conducted for Synod Staff Leaders.
 - C. The Stated Clerk serves as resource to Commission on Ministry, Leadership Team, Commission on Preparation for Ministry, and other Committees as requested.
 - D. The Stated Clerk serves on the four-member Administrative Team. Other members of the Administrative Team are Moderator of Commission on Ministry, Personnel Committee Representative, and Stewardship of Resources Chair. This four-member team meets at least monthly.
 - E. Received, reviewed, and returned completed Clerk of Session Minutes and Registry documents from: Westminster Presbyterian Church/CB.

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- F. Presbytery of Missouri River Valley continues to coordinate weekly Zoom meetings for Pastors and Commissioned Pastors currently serving a church.
 - G. The Commission on Preparation for Ministry designated PMRV will submit the following names as ordination exam readers for 2023: Rev. Deena Candler (HR) and Elder Sam Rennick, Church of the Cross pending his acceptance.
 - H. The Commission on Preparation for Ministry reports: PMRV is a partner Presbytery with The Academy for Commissioned Ruling Elder Training; 4 students are enrolled; Students will complete LeaderWise psychological assessment; students may contact COM to be placed on Pulpit Supply list; mentors for Students was discussed.
 - I. The Commission on Preparation for Ministry reports meeting with Inquirer for Ministry, Jessica Schoepner (West Hills). Regina Jeanpierre-Bryant (New Life Presbyterian/Omaha) is considering becoming under care of CPM. CPM met with individuals enrolled in Synod of Lakes and Prairies Commissioned Pastor cohorts: Kathy Padilla (West Hills), Linda Reffert, (First Bellevue), and David McBride (First/Omaha).
 - J. The Commission on Preparation for Ministry met on October 12 at Faith Presbyterian Church. The commission met with Inquirer Jessica Schoepner. Reports were received from those under care. A report was received from the Synod Academy. A budget request was approved for 2024, which will be sent to SOR. Names were discussed to submit to the Nominating Committee to replace two minister vacancies. Five minutes will be requested at the November Stated Meeting of Presbytery to talk about the Academy and CLP/CRE Training. CPM will meet on December 14, at 2pm, at Faith Presbyterian/LaVista.
 - K. Met with members of PMRV Personnel Committee for annual review on September 7, 2023, via Zoom.
 - L. Provided information and continuing support to Pastor Nominating Committees at Peace Presbyterian, Elkhorn, NE, and Presbyterian Church of the Master, Omaha as requested by the Pastor Nominating Committee Chairs.
 - M. Scheduled training for an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee at Presbyterian Church of the Master to be conducted on Tuesday, October 17, 2023.
 - N. Prepared Leadership Team docket and materials as needed.
 - O. Participated virtually in the Synod Stated Clerk meeting on September 11, 2023.
 - P. Notification was received from Rev. Pam Prouty, Stated Clerk of Synod of Lakes and Prairies stating that the 2022 minutes from Presbytery of Missouri River Valley were approved with minor exceptions. One silence was noted: there was no evidence of a Sexual Misconduct Policy (G-3.0106).
 - Q. Met with Stated Meeting Docket Planning Committee on October 3, 2023 to prepare docket for the Leadership Team meeting approval prior to posting.
 - R. Prepared policy documents required by Book of Order and 225th PC(USA) General Assembly for review by Leadership Team and submitted to Commission on Ministry for approval on behalf of Presbytery: Sexual Misconduct Policy, Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy, Anti-Racism statement, Anti-Harassment Policy, Family Leave Policy.
 - S. Prepared various docket materials for the November 2, 2023, Stated Meeting.
- II. All correspondence has been answered or forwarded, as needed.

Reports

The Administrative 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 reincluded with PMRV Committee Reports.

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

Pat Shipley, Stated Clerk, submitted a written report to Presbytery.

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PMRV Committees provided written reports to Presbytery. **[Attachment 3]**

Rev. Gregg Miller, chair of Stewardship of Resources (SOR) submitted current financial reports to the Presbytery. **[Attachment 4]**

Decisions Before Us

The Presbytery took the following actions:

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of August 12, 2023, Stated Meeting as presented.
- b. Receipt of Reports from PMRV Committees, Commissions, Leadership Team and Administrative Team.
- c. Report of the Stated Clerk.

Motion made to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

2. Report of Nominations Committee—On behalf of the Nominations Committee Elder Linda Reffert placed the following names before Presbytery for election:

- **Moderator** – Matt Coplen (M) – First Plattsmouth
- **Vice Moderator** – Regina Jeanpierre-Bryant (E) New Life
- **Commission on Ministry** – Gary Eller (M) First Omaha; Richard Davidson (E) Westminster, Clarinda; Cindy Harvey (M) and Kathleen Keefer (E) Church of the Master, Omaha—All Class of 26
- **Commission on Preparation for Ministry** – Paul Masters (M) New Horizon, Council Bluffs (Class of 26)
- **Permanent Judicial Commission** – Becky Balestri (M) Faith, LaVista (Class of 26)
- **Faith Education and Leadership Development** - 5 vacancies, no nominations
- **Worship and Spirituality** – Michael Geiler (M) Hope, Omaha (Class of 26)
- **Mission and Evangelism** – Rebecca Nicol (E) First Omaha; Sarah James (M) (Class of 26)
- **Personnel** – Cindy Harvey (M) Church of the Master, Omaha (Class of 26)
- **Social Justice and Peacemaking** – Nicole Geiler (L) Hope, Omaha; Robert Keefer (M); Dawn Goodsell (E) First, Neola (Class of 26)
- **Stewardship of Resources** – Mary Sheely (E) New Life, Omaha (Class of 26)
- **Self-Development of People** – Carolyn Grice (M) (Class of 26)
- **Commissioner to Synod** – Carolyn Grice (M) (Class of 26)
- **Young Adult Advisory Delegate**—Wilson Geiler, Hope Presbyterian/Omaha

Motion made by Linda Reffert on behalf of the Committee to cast a unanimous ballot for names proposed. Motion carried.

3. Report from Personnel Committee, Elder Kathy Moore—Kathy Moore reported that Elder Pat Shipley will step down as Stated Clerk effective May 31, 2024. A task force comprised of Leadership Team members and Personnel will review the Stated Clerk/COM Resource position prior to posting the vacancy. The anticipated election of a new Stated Clerk will be held at the April 16, 2024, Stated Meeting. The new Stated Clerk will assume the role effective June 1, 2024.

4. Report of Treasurer and Stewardship of Resources—Rev. Gregg Miller, Chair; Elder Dave Emry, Treasurer.

- a. Use of Martha Hoffman Estate Wyoming Land Sale proceeds
Motion made by Rev. Gregg Miller on behalf of Leadership Team and Stewardship of Resources Committee to use the proceeds of the Wyoming

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Land sale from the Martha Hoffman estate (\$187,000) for the Sudanese Fellowship's use to fund the pastor's salary. SOR will create a new 95 account to manage the funds for the Sudanese Fellowship. Motion carried.

b. 2023 PMRV Budget Presentation

Motion made by Rev. Gregg Miller on behalf of Stewardship of Resources (SOR) to adopt the 2024 Budget **[Attachment 5]** as presented. Motion carried.

No further business was presented to the Presbytery for action.

Vice Moderator Rev. Matt Coplen made comments and highlights regarding the 2024 Visioning submitted by Leadership Team.

The Worship and Spirituality Committee lead worship using a Worshipful Work format. Leading and introducing portions of worship were Rev. Michael Geiler, Rev. Becky Balestri, Rev. Paul Masters. The focus of the worship was "When have you been invited to do Meaningful Work?" with Commissioners in breakout rooms for a nine-minute time of sharing focusing on the question. Josh Beckner, Crossroads Connection, shared some information regarding the work of the program and offered a dedication for the offering. The Lord's Supper was served during the Worship Service with Rev. Michael Elliott and Elder Linda Reffert officiating. Prayers of the People included Sharing the Good News of PMRV Missions in Action with a brief video highlighting the work of the Nicaraguan Working Group, Hope Presbyterian's focus on Mental Health, and First Presbyterian/Omaha's "Hands Up for Housing" event held during October.

The Presbytery received \$227 in offerings collected electronically or by mail and designated to the ministry of Crossroads Connections.

Elder Linda Reffert gave the Benediction. Rev. Matt Coplen adjourned the meeting with prayer at 7:22 p.m.

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery will be Thursday, February 22, 2024, set to convene at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Patricia Shipley, Stated Clerk

Marilyn Puett, Recording Clerk

Attachments:

1. Roll of the Presbytery
2. Leadership Team Vision and Report
3. PMRV Committee/Commission Reports
4. Treasurer's Report and End of Month Financial Reports
5. 2023 Budget
6. Family Medical Leave Policy
7. Child Protection Policy
8. Sexual Misconduct Policy
9. Anti-Harassment Policy
10. Anti-Racism Policy

11/2/2023 PMRV Stated Presbytery Meeting via Zoom

Present	Vote	Last	First	Role	Organization
1	1	Friedli	David	CC	COM Chair
1	1	Reffert	Linda	CC	FPC Bellevue
1	1	Emry	David	CC	PMRV Treasurer
1	1	Hallberg	Vicki	Eld	Bethany Pres
1	1	Browning	Marie	Eld	Carson
1	1	Faltis-Serenil	Joyce	Eld	Discovery Pres
1	1	Babbe	Greg	Eld	Dundee
1	1	Zimmerman	Allan	Eld	Faith Pres
1	1	Comba	Tracy	Eld	Hope Pres
1	1	Brady	Joel	Eld	Mount View
1	1	South	Debra	Eld	Murray Pres
1	1	Tooles-Dyer	Patricia	Eld	New Life Pres
1	1	Potter	Lu	Eld	Oakland Sharon
1	1	Egr	Kathy	Eld	PCM
1	1	Carroll	Jim	Eld	Underwood Hills
1	1	Glasgow	Candy	Eld	West Hills
1	1	Tornblom	Royce	Eld	Westminster Clarinda
1	1	Moore	Kathryn	LT	PCOC
1	1	Shipley	Pat	LT	PMRV
1	1	Grice	Carolyn L	LT	PMRV Minister Member
1	1	Ross-Hullinger	Nancy	Min	Bethany & Gethsemane CB
1	1	Gorhau	Suzanne	Min	Carson & Oakland Sharon
1	1	James	Sarah	Min	Children's Hospital Chaplain
1	1	Dickinson	Sarah	Min	Discovery Pres
1	1	Balestri	Becky	Min	Faith Pres
1	1	Dougherty	Nick	Min	Faithful Shepherd
1	1	Elliott	Mike	Min	FPC Bellevue
1	1	Miller	Gregg	Min	Ft Calhoun Pres
1	1	Geiler	Michael	Min	Hope Pres
1	1	McConnell	William	Min	Murray Pres
1	1	Masters	Paul	Min	New Horizon Pres
1	1	Williams	Dwight	Min	New Life Pres
1	1	Dillon Thomas	Tricia	Min	OPSF
1	1	Latham	Shellie	Min	OPSF
1	1	Eller	Gary	Min	PCM
1	1	Carlson	Greg	Min	PMRV Minister Member
1	1	Keefer	Robert	Min	PMRV Minister Member
1	1	Pedersen	Caryn	Min	Red Oak Pres
1	1	Carlson	Sally	Min	Retired
1	1	Elrod	Leah	Min	United Faith Sidney
1	1	Hamer	Andy	Min	West Hills

11/2/2023 PMRV Stated Presbytery Meeting via Zoom

Present	Vote	Last	First	Role	Organization
1	1	Cline	Jay	Min	Westminster Clarinda
1	1	Coplen	Matt	Min,CC,LT	FPC Plattsmouth
1		Green	Ken	Vis	Board of Pensions
1		Huffman	Craig	Vis	Calvin Crest
1		Crick	Judi	Vis	COM Rep
1		Beckner	Josh	Vis	Crossroads Connection
1		Bushnell	Kevin	Vis	IPMN
1		Clark	Erin	Vis	New Life Pres
1		Jeanpierre-Bryant	Regina	Vis	New Life Pres
1		Hanna	Sandra	Vis	PCM
1		Hansum	ardys	Vis	PCOC
1		Geiler	Nicole	Vis	PMRV Staff
1		Keefer	Kathleen	Vis	Presbyterian Women PCUSA
1		Puett	Marilyn	Vis	Recording Clerk - PCM
1		Hanna	Chris	Vis	West Hills

56 43

24	Vote - Ministers/Commissioned Pastors
14	Vote - Elder Commissioners
4	Vote - Committee Chair/Leadership Team
1	Vote - Stated Clerk
43	Vote - TOTAL number of persons eligible to vote
56	TOTAL in attendance

*Every church gets one (1) elder commissioner vote

*Ministers and Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLP/CRE) get one (1) vote each

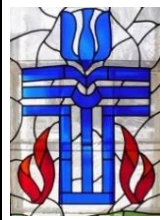
*Every Committee Chair (LT) gets one (1) vote (even if their church has a commissioner vote)

*Stated Clerk gets one (1) vote

PMRV 2024 Vision & Strategy Recommendations as of 10/12/23

To: LT/October 17, 2023 Meeting

From: MT & AT

**2024 Overall Vision – Suggested Theme for 2024****Energy, Intelligence, Imagination and Love**

This arose from the discernment that we sense a call of “back to the basics,” — what it means to be Presbyterian. The phrase is from the Presbyterian ordination service. It is one of the constitutional questions.

We hope this focus will inspire every aspect of PMRV life—not just internal PMRV structures but a blessing to individuals, congregations and the communities we serve.

Vision/Strategy/Discernment Process: ❶ See notes at end

Administrative Guidance Overall

- ♦ Keep building on what is working.
- ♦ Recall the **Book of Order**: Regarding the purpose of presbyteries—
Councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ BOO G-3.0101
- ♦ PMRV strategic guidance: **“Facilitating Faithfulness”**

Facilitating: PMRV is not called to do everything. But we sense a call to facilitate structures and networks that enhance congregations, pastors and ministries to experience God’s reconciling love in Jesus Christ and to connect with one another as the Body of Christ—for support, learning and inspiration.

Faithfulness: In addition to structures and networks PMRV provides theological, spiritual, humane and practical guidance in the challenging and healing way of being disciples following Jesus Christ together.

Covenant 2024 ♦ Matt C has a small edit to recommend ❷ See notes at end

Administrative Hub

- ♦ **What is the Administrative Hub?** ❸ See notes
- ♦ **Continue to use this model along with use of teams.**

This model is working and provides a faithful stewardship of resources. It allows us to grow in being Presbyterian—working collaboratively as a “priesthood of believers.” We will work on support and patience as we do new things, take on different shared responsibilities and continue to improve each aspect of the Hub.

Administrative Team (AT): Keep working through succession plan; Add to certain AT members – being liaisons to committees so that every committee has AT connection.

Moderator Team (MT): Keep working through succession plan. Defining roles as needed.

Other Guidance for 2024

♦ **Gatherings** Gathering together is important to being a presbytery and being the Body of Christ. We are open to developing in this area. May the conversation continue. ❹ See extra notes at end

- ♦ **Mission & mission** How are we called collectively as a presbytery to do mission together & separately?

The Mission Committee will be working on a Mission Snapshot/Hub that will help us adapt to new ways.

❺ See notes, a 2 page worksheet

- ♦ **Finances**

How do we collect and support Christ’s mission through PMRV financially? We had a great conversation about per capita and mission giving. We hope that each committee works through a process similar to what the Mission Committee is doing. (We have an asset/expenditure worksheet that we can use as an ongoing strategy reference.)

❻ See notes

- ♦ **Providing Committees support and alignment**

We hope that the 2024 theme helps unite us.

We recognize that some committees will be going through changes to align with Christ’s current PMRV calling.

Prayers of patience, adapting, love & support.

- ♦ **Radical Change**

In an increasingly secular and changing culture, we believe God has a calling for our Reformed tradition.

How does PMRV facilitate faithfulness? COM: will need a lot of support and wisdom. CPM: Support new ways of pastoral leadership

NOTES AT END

① Discernment process

Using an appreciative inquiry based process the Moderator Team and Administrative team prayerfully considered the whole of 2023 and the Administrative Hub across four 2 hour meetings. There was a follow up discussion with Mission & SoR.

Discernment Phrase that came to us & guided us: **What is God Calling Us Toward?**

② Administrative Hub & Team approach (LT, AT, MT)

We are entering year four of this.

The Hub is a snapshot of everything we sense a presbytery generally does and particularly PMRV's flavor. We consider what entities do certain things and what parts of the Hub could use development.

Current Hub is on the next page.

Team approach

We know it gets confusing and we are all learning. It's OK to ask questions. This is also a work in progress. The aims are—to work together, to have support and back up in the work, to perhaps reclaim “a priesthood of all believers”—where we share the load of ministry together rather than relying as much on paid executive staff. That said...

Leadership Team: Kind of like the Session of PMRV. Committee chairs plus Moderator Team and Admin Team.

Moderator Team: This was always in existence, but we are more pointedly developing these leaders and tying them together as a supportive team who can help each other and back one another up. The Moderator is the visible head of our presbytery, moderating our meetings. The vice moderator serves prior to becoming moderator. The immediate past moderator becomes the chair of the Leadership Team. Each person in this team has specific roles, too. We are asking that they serve 2 year terms in each role. We realize this is a bigger ask. At the same time we hope this gives more time to grow in proficiency. And in the team model, each person has supportive back up at any time.

Admin Team: A four person administrative safety net for PMRV and support for all teams. This grew out of a transitional time when we did not have an executive presbyter in place. This includes the Stated Clerk and 3 others who have experience serving in PMRV committees. This has a similar succession process to the Moderator Team. Year over year we are developing more clarity and specificity for what helps this model work.

③ Gatherings

We had an extended conversation about presbytery gatherings.

Here are some reflections that we think are important to keep in mind.

Gatherings are an important and nurturing part of being PMRV.

We are evolving from a “meeting” mindset to a what we are calling a “**gathering**” mindset.

This is a culture change in our thinking.

Yes, we need meetings and we are planning 4 stated meetings for 2024.

In addition, we affirm:

Flexible thinking

Would we ever have meetings that are business oriented be all by Zoom?

Would we consider meeting in person in places other than churches

What are things that gather us?

Learning, Spirituality, Activity, Conversation, Meals...

(it's not just about the 4 stated meetings)

And how are the 4 stated meetings already sturdy platforms for healthy gathering

We continue to have lively consideration of the values of Zoom and the values of being in-person. We know about hybrid-style meetings – but are cautioned by what it takes to make this effective.

We want to remember: It's always great to have small group conversations – whether in person or Zoom.

	<p>Administrative Hub original 11/4/21 Update: October 2023</p> <p>Leadership Team stewards the whole hub.</p> <p>Year by year we develop different aspects of the hub.</p>
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Administrative Hub Responsibilities	Notes, potential next steps
<p>Help PMRV embrace its call & challenges faithfully, always being reformed by the Spirit.</p> <p>-Listen, learn & equip collegially</p>	-Be open to conversations and learning that open us to being faithful amid radical change
<p>Help PMRV follow its covenant & mission</p> <p>-Practice healthy Christian culture and ethics (covenant)</p> <p>-Keep mission reviewed & fresh</p> <p>-Provide for inspiring & faithful PMRV mtgs</p>	-Covenant 2024 -Mission & missions – updated guidance for 2024 (see sep page) -See Gatherings wisdom
<p>Help LT to be spiritual & deliberative leaders who help PMRV embrace its call & challenges.</p> <p>-Develop LT gifts & collaboration</p> <p>-Structure LT meetings based on shared vision</p> <p>-Work through processes to realize change (such as: listening, relationship development, visioning, strategizing, experimenting, implementing, being open to constructive feedback)</p>	-Spirituality on LT
<p>Provide special support and resources that help PMRV & LT in its mission. (spiritual care, address new & emerging needs, problem solving, conflict resolution, sharing examples, affirmation)</p>	Aligning Vision, Mission and Resources
<p>Help church leaders embrace church ministry calls & challenges faithfully, ready for new ways.</p>	Faithfulness & support in radical change
<p>Pastor & Leader support – across all kinds of needs</p> <p>-wise, compassionate, respectful, collegial, encouraging</p> <p>-Facilitate collegial environment, empowering pastors to form own connections, resources & support</p>	Keep up Pastors' Zoom Retreat 2024
<p>Communication</p> <p>-Overall strategy, messaging, using of platforms</p> <p>-Determine & steward what material is significant to the presbytery's mission with consideration of the overall time, interest, energy & emphasis</p> <p>-Figure out which part of PMRV is impacted & entrust/delegate</p> <p>-Administrative information sharing</p>	Continue guidelines
<p>Guidance for significant committees, initiatives, tasks</p>	-SOR guidance, Mission guidance
<p>Hire, Support, Supervise staff</p>	
<p>Connect with Synod & GA, other presbyteries, other judicatories & entities [mid council, OGA...]</p>	
<p>Represent PMRV</p>	
<p>Share PMRV's witness beyond PMRV</p>	
<p>Keep PMRV, LT, MT & AT in prayerful accountability to its mission</p>	
<p>Committees, Task Forces, Groups</p>	
<p>Stated Clerk (SC) duties– see separate position description. Part of the Admin Team, specialist in polity, administrative connecting</p>	
<p>Office & Communications Coordinator– see separate position description</p>	

☞ This Hub reflects the overall ministry of a presbytery. [Personnel Note: I. Purpose Responsibilities] II. Accountability & Evaluation III.

📌 Mission & mission – Mission & missions Snapshot/Hub as of 10/12/23

What we are working on as we take a next step in Vision & Strategy

God is faithful and generous and has made us that way, too. We are made and called to partner with and care for those in need. We are in a time of radical change. As a Presbytery we notice: Congregations have different mission and giving patterns. And this makes us wonder about faithful stewardship of our “mission” portfolio as PMRV.

Some particular questions:

- Do we have a different strategy, knowing many churches do their own mission apart from PMRV?
- If we sharpen our mission focus, would this inspire churches to re-consider sharing mission funds with PMRV?
(Like, Matthew 25/local)
- Are we called to consolidate or concentrate entities we fund with PMRV mission funds.
Yet, independent of funding we can keep/promote missions as ones to recommend to congregations.
- Does it make more sense for churches to give directly to entities and not use PMRV admin as a pass thru?

These are some things that came up as the Administrative Team and Moderator Team did some deep visioning and conversations together. We hope that the Mission Committee can continue to do some deliberations.

First, some definitions.

Mission (& Ministry) of the presbytery:

Overall call to serve Christ in who we are and what we do

We organize and steward ourselves and our resources based on calling, need and context

“missions” of the presbytery

To distinguish this from “Mission of the presbytery,” by **missions of presbytery** we mean:

Multiple particular missions practiced as a whole and in other ways
(see *snapshot/hub on next page*)

PMRV Mission Committee

Helps PMRV to be a good steward of “missions”

Committee may not so much “do” – but rather create awareness, have knowledge & resources, provide connections and facilitate faithfulness.

“missions” criteria (10/12/23 conversation) – in developing focus areas

- 1 Special location connection (within presbytery bounds)
- 2 Presbyterian
- 3 More than 1 congregation involved
- 4 Covenant (relationship, partnership, communication, accountability)
- 5 Matthew 25 connection

Funding

Per capita funding goes to: Personnel, COM, CPM,

Mission and Ministry funding:

About ½ of the churches give to this (with redefined focus areas, can we inspire giving?)

These funds support: PMRV designated missions, SJP, SDOP, FELD, Worship,...

PMRV Admin pass through

Churches also give to (x,y,z) missions (is this through Mission & Ministry worksheet? Or separate?)

PMRV Meeting offerings

Go to specific causes.

“missions” Snapshot – for PMRV Overall & a Mission Committee to be aware of
This does not mean we are actively doing everything listed here. It is an acknowledgement of scope.

PMRV – Mission Committee - OVERALL GUIDANCE		
-Facilitate faithfulness; -Conduit for sharing stories & fun; -Particular guidance depending on area -Note 5 criteria on previous page		
PC (USA) ♦ Presbyterian Mission Agency	PMRV role/guidance (if any)	Other notes
-Special offerings [OGHS, Pentecost, Peacemaking, Joy]	-Facilitate resource sharing -Are we called to lift this up? Share local examples?	-PC(USA) directly advocates to congregations -Are there things local congregations would like to share in order to encourage one another?
-World Mission Mission co-workers, etc		-Individual churches have ties to particular mission co-workers & locations
-PDA [PMRV has separate committee] -Public Witness [PMRV SJP] -SDOP [PMRV separate committee]		
-Compassion, Peace & Justice -Presbyterian Hunger Program -Presbyterian Peacemaking Prog -Gender, Racial, Intercultural Justice	-Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural -Intercultural & Congreg of Color -YAV (with World Mission)	Source of Grants for PMRV
Matthew 25 – PC(USA) level		
-Congregations doing various things		
Synod		
-helps fund PMRV SDOP		
PMRV mission financial support		
Crossroads	PMRV funds; + indiv churches fund	
HELP Adult services	PMRV funds; + has own funding	
Mission Co-worker		
Arabic Fellowship-stipend		
Nicaragua	PMRV funds + indiv & churches	PMRV provides infrastructure
Mt 25 Various projects	New Life, 1 st Omh Walk	
SAPF – Update funding strategy	10/12/23 Mission proposal	
PMRV Congregations – Partner interest Individual Church Missions that have appeal to other churches within our bounds	“Review” for our standards/priorities Provide infrastructure for promoting -Help them get grants	Example: 1 st Omaha Walk Example: CoC: “BURM” world mission Example: Hope: Mental Health
Congregations – Own Missions Each congregation has its own calling	Platform for sharing, learning, inspiration, support	
Regional organizations Food, Clothing, Shelter, Safety... Ministry Support	-Example: Open Door Mission -OPSF -Nebraska Foundation	
Other organizations	That are great and we do or don’t know about	
PMRV Mission Committee Specialty Areas		
Komarek Trust 2 parts (brick & mortar/scholarships) [seminary scholarship]	\$5-7K scholarships \$16-20K brick & mortar	
Mini Grants Brick/mortar, tech,	\$8000 grants Has frequent flyers	-Mission Pledges
Matthew 25 Grants	\$	-Mission Pledges

OTHER MISSION & MINISTRY

Calvin Crest(FELD) (Mission & Ministry budget)

Are there other things like Calvin Crest to be aware of (that aren’t in the Mission Committee purview)

From FELD, SJP, SDOP etc

⑤ **Finances** —We have a worksheet we were looking through to understand financial assets and expected expenditures. We can consult this year over year and update.

⑥ Covenant 2024

PMRV Covenant 2023

With God's help we covenant to:

PRAY

To seek Christ's way in every deliberation;
To listen for God's Spirit as the cornerstone of every process;
To lift up our denomination, presbytery, congregations,
ministries and one another;

ACT

Trusting that we are the Body of Christ
and God uses our relationships;
Illustrating the Good News through encouragement and respect for one another;
Listening deeply with honest consideration;
Communicating directly with the truth in love;
Keeping healthy and honest boundaries that build trust.

ACCEPT

We will have disagreements and
we will use prayerful ways to address them;
We will use protocols that create safety
in seeking understanding and clarity;
We will focus on building community and seeking consensus;
We will not dehumanize people.

BE GOOD STEWARDS

Following through on the responsibilities we have been given by:

Listening to God and one another;

Being the body of Christ;

Affirming that God uses us;

Practicing the Matthew 25 initiative and its three emphases:

building congregational vitality;
dismantling structural racism;
and eradicating systemic poverty.

Other Committees, Commissions

We hope that our covenant and the theme of the year help unite us and bring focus to each committee.

We know that this is a time of change and we hope our relationships and structure create the safety and support to committees.

Radical Change

We are committed to not being stuck in a rut.

We acknowledge this era of new reformation for the Christian church.

Some of the changes are scary for us.

We are a support system for being faithful in both good times and hard times.

Additional Notes

-We are intentionally closing out/handing off particular ministries of 2023

-We remind ourselves: Remember to review/discern in the last part of 2024 also! It is a fruitful discipline.

Leadership Team Report

November 2, 2023 Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

1. Approved Gethsemane Presbyterian and Bethany Presbyterian Churches as hosts and Gethsemane Presbyterian Church/Council Bluffs as the site for the April 13, 2023 Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
2. Approved the proposed policies from Synod Task Force: Anti-Harassment Policy, Anti-Racism Policy, and Family Medical Leave to be sent to COM for approval on behalf of Presbytery.
3. Approved Rev. Sarah Dickinson to serve on Nominating Committee for the Class of 2024 in behalf of the Leadership Team.
4. Approved forwarding to Presbytery of the Budget as presented to Leadership Team. The budget presented reflects per capita for General Assembly of \$9.80; Synod of \$5.50; and PMRV of \$25.50 for a total of \$40.80 per capita. The 2024 Budget reflects a Total Income of \$326,064 and Total Expenditure of \$323,498 reflecting a positive difference of \$2,566 between Income and Expenditures.
5. Approved the November 2, 2023, Docket for the Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
6. Approved Crossroads Connections as the recipient of the offering from the November 2, 2023, Stated Meeting of Presbytery.

PMRV Committee/Commission Reports to Presbytery For November 2, 2023 Presbytery of Missouri River Valley Stated Meeting

Social Justice and Peacemaking – Rev. Carolyn Grice, Chair

The committee met by email to establish the budget request for next year.

Self-Development of People (SDOP) – Rev. Carolyn Grice, Chair

The committee will be meeting in the near future to consider one application.

Calvin Crest Camp, Conference and Retreat Center – Craig Huffman, Director

The Calvin Crest Board is scheduled to meet again on November 11 at Calvin Crest. In the interim, the committees of the Board of Directors continue to do their work for personnel concerns, budgeting, programming, marketing and caring for the facility and property.

Upcoming events that Calvin Crest is hosting include the following:

- Quilt Retreat-October 25-29
- Worship Arts Workshop-November 4
- Scrapbook Retreat-November 17-19
- Men's Retreat-May 17-18, 2024

Faith Education Leadership Development (FELD) – Shelli Dart, Chair

The FELD committee has not met in months, but Nicole is getting me a list of the members and I will try and get everyone together in the next two weeks to review a request for scholarships. My focus has been on the Christian Educators committee and the Youth Ministry Team and with my mother's health issues that is all I've had the band width for.

Youth Ministry Team has been off and running since fall of 2022. We have been sponsoring quarterly events and plan on continuing building and growth. There are several churches in our Presbytery with small groups of young people and these events provide them the opportunity to meet Christian friends their age, to have fun together and worship and learn together. We've had 1 or 2 youth attend from several churches we've never seen at events which was wonderful.

Our first event January 2023 – a Neon Night of fun at West Hills was a kind of test run that West Hills, Hope and FPC Bellevue decided to try. People had so much fun and asked if we keep doing the large group events.

After this event Jessica Scheopner from West Hills and Becca Jackson-York from Hope joined me as the Youth Ministry Team. We were blessed that Jenny Gollehon from Hope jumped right on board after Becca left in May and the group has been creating wonderful events and planning many more.

The Youth Ministry Team has planned quarterly events through 2024. The goal is not only to build community between the larger and more active churches in our Presbytery but to also provide opportunities for young people from small churches to learn, worship and play together. Several of the larger churches with very active youth groups are on board with keeping these events going and growing which is also important.

Our first official group event was in March with a retreat at Camp Calvin Crest with 40 attendees including 4 small churches sending 1-2 attendees. Our next event was a team effort with David Friedli, Instadium 2.0 at Calvin Crest with 75 attendees from both PMRV and Homestead. 9 small churches sent 1 or 2 attendees. Our most recent event was at Skinny Bones Pumpkin Patch with over 100 attendees.

Future Events for 2024 are January 14th Day of Mission and Night of Neon, March 1-2 Calvin Crest Retreat, August date TBD Instadium 3.0 and September 29th Skinny Bones.

Administrative Team (AT & MT) – Sarah Dickinson, Sally Carlson, Gregg Miller, Pat Shipley

See Administrative/Moderator Team Visioning Report.

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

See the Budget presented to Presbytery.

Personnel Committee – Kathy Moore, Elder, Chair

The Personnel Committee met via Zoom on September 22nd. We reviewed notes from the three staff check-in meetings. The committee feels positive about the performance of all three staff and is grateful for the commitment and skills and passion that each person brings to the position. We appreciated the open and honest discussion of policies and procedures that could be reviewed for consideration of making further adjustment for the coming year.

The Personnel Committee would request 30 minutes on the October 17 Leadership Team meeting to discuss various personnel matters in preparation for 2024. These include:

- a. Staff performance, budgetary needs, and plans for 2024.
- b. Nicole would like to transfer all data from the Access Davtabase to an Excel database. Does anyone have any objections?
- c. Nicole wants to make further changes to the website to make it more user-friendly. Does anyone want further input into that process?
- d. We have suggestions about agenda items that could be added to the Annual Leadership Team training.
- e. We have suggestions about how COM might help pastors and congregations more clearly understand the role of each staff and committee.

Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) – Al Zimmerman, Moderator

CPM met on October 12, at Faith Presbyterian Church. The commission met with Inquirer Jessica Schooner. We received reports about those under care. We received a report from the Synod Academy. We approved a budget request for 2024, which will be sent to SOR. We discussed names to submit to the Nominating Committee to replace two minister vacancies. We will request 5 minutes at the Presbytery meeting to talk about the Academy and CLP/CRE Training. CPM will meet on December 14, at 2pm, at Faith.

Worship and Spirituality Committee – Rev. Suzanne Gorhau, Chair

The Worship & Spirituality committee met on September 21, 2023.

- We requested the same budget amount as last year.
- We're considering who would be a good member for the committee when Suzanne Gorhau goes off at the end of the year.
- We're working with Laura Rasmussen to offer an online spiritual formation group for anyone in the presbytery who would like to participate.
- We spent time talking about the worship service for the November Presbytery meeting and we'll finish putting that together next month.
- We are excited about the worship themes of Energy, Imagination, Intelligence and Love for 2024.

Mission and Evangelism – Rev. Matt Coplen, Chair

Members present for the August meeting – Matt Coplen, Carolyn Grice, Cindy Harvey, James Reiff and Joyce Serenil. The Committee met by Zoom.

Items of Information:

- Committee reviewed protocol for Komarek grants – applications are due by October 31st and the committee will be meeting on November 7th to review applications and make decisions related to the funds available and the applicants. Here is a link to the application: http://www.pmr.v.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2023_KomarekAppFillable.pdf
- Komarek scholarship funds are in the process of being allocated to 2 current students – 1 student is in the midst of Masters of Divinity studies and 1 student is pursuing Doctor of Ministry studies.
- Committee reviewed the 2023 budget and made recommendations related to the 2024 budget. Main items of budget business was a recommendation related to the Sudanese American Presbyterian Fellowship and ongoing support for Reverend Michael Koech.

Upcoming business

- November 7th meeting to review Komarek applications
- Review of mission priorities and current commitments

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Continuing Accounts
For the Nine Months Ending September 30, 2023

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Acct Description</u>	<u>Begin Balance Jan 1</u>	<u>Receipts YTD</u>	<u>Disbursements YTD</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
2095.03	Net Assets	1,321,227.16	\$ 0.00	0.00	1,321,227.16
2095.05	Pantry	0.00	2.00	(2.00)	0.00
2095.11	Desig TE & Candidate Assist	15,355.43	0.00	0.00	15,355.43
2095.19	Peacemaking	8,576.17	82.27	0.00	8,658.44
2095.20	In/Out Clearing	0.00	55,663.33	(55,663.33)	0.00
2095.28	National Youth Events	11,549.98	5,000.00	0.00	16,549.98
2095.29	Youth Ministry	25,774.49	0.00	0.00	25,774.49
2095.31	Resource Center	(185.29)	0.00	(84.75)	(270.04)
2095.321	Restricted Church Developm	10,580.01	1,756.93	(2,073.56)	10,263.38
2095.323	Middle Eastern Ministry	1,750.00	2,000.00	(3,750.00)	0.00
2095.34	Nicaragua Partnership	7,893.69	13,526.07	(12,908.10)	8,511.66
2095.37	Self Development of People	0.01	240.22	0.00	240.23
2095.42	Sudanese Working Group	13,380.29	500.00	0.00	13,880.29
2095.44	HELP	0.00	300.00	(300.00)	0.00
2095.45	Calvin Crest	625.03	1,525.00	(875.03)	1,275.00
2095.52	Crossroads Connection	435.00	1,000.00	(1,060.00)	375.00
2095.53	Disaster Response-General	1,010.61	0.00	(677.07)	333.54
2095.531	PDA Grants	10,590.95	0.00	0.00	10,590.95
2095.532	Disaster Relief Local NE & I	33,232.23	9,572.00	0.00	42,804.23
2095.68	Westminster Omaha Sale	0.00	61,084.05	(4,250.00)	56,834.05
2095.69	Westminster Omaha Bequest	0.00	3,332.05	0.00	3,332.05
	Totals	<u>1,461,795.76</u>	<u>\$ 155,583.92</u>	<u>(81,643.84)</u>	<u>1,535,735.84</u>
	<u>Other Non-budgeted accounts</u>				
	Mission Giving Account	<u>17,730.34</u>	<u>\$ 89,223.35</u>	<u>(99,893.04)</u>	<u>7,060.65</u>
	Totals	<u>17,730.34</u>	<u>\$ 89,223.35</u>	<u>(99,893.04)</u>	<u>7,060.65</u>

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Statement of Activities

For the Nine Months Ending September 30, 2023

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Last YTD</u>
	<u>Month</u>		<u>of Bgt</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
<u>INCOME</u>					
4001 Per Capita Receipts	\$ 5,049.12	\$ 206,299.79	101.07	\$ 204,124	212,367
4002 Per Capita - Prior Year	0.00	75.84	0.00	0	2,058
4011 Presbytery Mission Receipts	4,002.93	49,962.33	71.37	70,000	56,928
4101 Synod Support	833.34	7,500.06	100.00	7,500	7,500
4801 Investment Income	946.17	15,242.15	138.57	11,000	8,101
4901 Transfer from Reserves	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,000	0
4940 Transfers to/ from Designa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	24,434
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total Budgeted Income	\$ 10,831.56	\$ 279,080.17	86.50	\$ 322,624	311,388
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>PER CAPITA EXPENDITURES</u>					
Higher Governing Bodies					
5000 GA Per Capita	\$ 0.00	\$ 56,145.00	97.54	\$ 57,563	52,479
5010 Synod Per Capita	0.00	31,350.00	97.54	32,142	32,142
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Subtotal	0.00	87,495.00	97.54	89,705	84,621
Presbytery					
5100 Moderator's Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	500	0
5110 Committees, Council & Sec	0.00	2,996.00	74.90	4,000	84
5140 Legal Services	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000	0
5150 Audit Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,000	0
5170 Presbytery Travel	(248.00)	749.50	49.97	1,500	1,104
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Subtotal	(248.00)	3,745.50	34.05	11,000	1,188
The Presbytery Office					
5210 Utilities	584.60	2,745.79	91.53	3,000	2,198
5230 Building Repair & Mainten	65.00	2,144.29	85.77	2,500	1,432
5240 Insurance	1,399.75	3,271.75	65.44	5,000	4,190
5251 Office Supplies	21.39	104.03	11.56	900	622
5252 Postage	0.00	886.32	70.91	1,250	1,183
5253 Telephone	241.54	1,981.87	49.55	4,000	1,951
5254 Office Equipment Maint &	109.00	981.00	49.05	2,000	1,286
5259 Misc Office Expense	0.00	55.97	8.61	650	7
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total	2,421.28	12,171.02	63.06	19,300	12,869

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Statement of Activities

For the Nine Months Ending September 30, 2023

	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Percent of Bgt</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Last YTD</u>
Personnel					
6602 Salary- Stated Clerk	2,996.42	26,967.78	75.00	35,957	25,684
6603 Salary-Admin Secretary	2,413.34	21,720.06	74.29	29,238	20,686
6607 Wages - Accounting Assista	678.63	6,522.00	56.47	11,550	6,201
6608 Wages-Custodian	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	1,246
6609 Wages-Part time Admin As	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	770
6621 Adm. Asst- Pension & Cafet	574.58	5,171.22	78.00	6,630	5,171
6622 FICA	465.75	4,223.54	71.94	5,871	4,176
6623 Office Coordinator Cont. Ed	0.00	300.00	100.00	300	89
6624 Account. Assist. Cont. Educ	0.00	0.00	0.00	200	0
6625 SC Prof & Reimbursed Exp	0.00	1,442.90	36.07	4,000	1,465
6626 Adm. Asst. Expense	0.00	206.98	68.99	300	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	7,128.72	66,554.48	70.77	94,046	65,488

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Statement of Activities

For the Nine Months Ending September 30, 2023

	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Percent of Bgt</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Last YTD</u>	
Communication						
5330	Presbytery Web Site	180.00	1,440.00	57.60	2,500	1,080
	Total	180.00	1,440.00	57.60	2,500	1,080
	Total Per Capita Expenditur	9,482.00	171,406.00	79.15	216,551	165,246
MINISTRIES EXPENDITURES						
Social Justice and Peacemaking						
5410	Education & Interpretation	950.00	950.00	73.08	1,300	1,300
	Total	950.00	950.00	73.08	1,300	1,300
Faith Education and Leadership Development						
5520	Camp Scholarships	0.00	902.00	40.63	2,220	1,246
5530	Education & Educators' Sup	0.00	204.22	14.18	1,440	0
5555	Calvin Crest Camp & Confe	0.00	10,000.00	50.00	20,000	10,000
5560	Resource Center Materials	0.00	500.00	100.00	500	0
5570	Educational Ministry Events	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000	0
5575	Leadership Development (A	0.00	1,330.30	58.35	2,280	0
	Total	0.00	12,936.52	45.49	28,440	11,246
Youth Ministry						
5540	Youth & Young Adult Wor	0.00	95.67	0.00	0	0
5580	Youth National Events	0.00	5,000.00	100.00	5,000	0
	Total	0.00	5,095.67	101.91	5,000	0
Mission						
5440	Nicaragua Partnership	1,000.00	1,000.00	100.00	1,000	1,000
5750	Pby Mission Pgm-Mini Gra	0.00	4,000.00	50.00	8,000	2,000
5773	HELP	0.00	2,500.00	50.00	5,000	2,500
5776	Crossroads Connection	0.00	1,250.00	50.00	2,500	1,250
5778	World Mission	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500	0
6130	Sudanese & ME Ministry	2,500.18	22,501.55	75.01	30,000	22,502
6150	Matthew 25	0.00	4,000.00	80.00	5,000	4,000
6155	Matthew 25 Partnerships	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	500
	Total	3,500.18	35,251.55	66.51	53,000	33,752

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Statement of Activities

For the Nine Months Ending September 30, 2023

	<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Percent of Bgt</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Last YTD</u>
Committee on Ministry					
6010 Scholarships/Cont Educatio	2,940.00	3,000.29	69.45	4,320	1,272
6050 COM Events	0.00	0.00	0.00	340	0
5420 Emergency Fund	0.00	(0.34)	(0.10)	340	0
	<u>2,940.00</u>	<u>2,999.95</u>	<u>60.00</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>1,272</u>
Total	2,940.00	2,999.95	60.00	5,000	1,272
Evangelism & Discipleship					
6140 Arabic Fellowship	0.00	5,000.00	100.00	5,000	5,000
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Total	0.00	5,000.00	100.00	5,000	5,000
Preparation for Ministry					
6210 Candidates	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500	0
6230 Lay Pastors	0.00	2,500.00	45.45	5,500	48
6240 CPM Training	0.00	0.00	0.00	500	0
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>33.33</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>48</u>
Total	0.00	2,500.00	33.33	7,500	48
Spirituality, Theology and Worship					
6310 Program Resources	0.00	0.00	0.00	150	61
6340 Program Resources & Event	0.00	200.00	13.33	1,500	0
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>200.00</u>	<u>12.12</u>	<u>1,650</u>	<u>61</u>
Total	0.00	200.00	12.12	1,650	61
Total Ministries Expenditur	<u>7,390.18</u>	<u>64,933.69</u>	<u>60.75</u>	<u>106,890</u>	<u>52,679</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>16,872.18</u>	<u>236,339.69</u>	<u>73.07</u>	<u>323,441</u>	<u>217,925</u>
Net Income	\$ <u><u>(6,040.62)</u></u>	\$ <u><u>42,740.48</u></u>		\$ <u><u>(817)</u></u>	<u><u>93,463</u></u>

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Per Capita Statement

Printed on: 10/19/2023

For the Period of

January 01, 2023 thru September 30, 2023

<u>Church</u>	<u>Pledge</u>	<u>Period Total</u>	<u>YTD Total</u>	<u>Pledge Remains</u>
Avoca, United	\$1,879.10	\$1,879.10	\$1,879.10	0.00
Bellevue, First PC	\$9,967.40	\$9,967.40	\$9,967.40	0.00
Carson, Carson PC	\$898.70	\$898.70	\$898.70	0.00
Carter Lake Community Church	\$817.00	\$817.00	\$817.00	0.00
Council Bluffs, Bethany	\$3,472.25	\$3,472.25	\$3,472.25	0.00
Council Bluffs, Gethsemane PC	\$2,696.10	\$2,696.10	\$2,696.10	0.00
Council Bluffs, New Horizon	\$10,049.10	\$10,049.10	\$10,049.10	0.00
Council Bluffs, Westminster PC	\$1,225.50	\$1,225.50	\$1,225.50	0.00
Clarinda, Trinity PC	\$3,227.15	\$3,227.15	\$3,227.15	0.00
Clarinda, Westminster PC	\$4,003.30	\$3,003.30	\$3,003.30	1,000.00
College Springs Presbyterian Church	\$1,225.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	1,225.50
Elkhorn, Peace	\$6,862.80	\$3,431.40	\$3,431.40	3,431.40
Essex, Presbyterian Church	\$1,919.95	\$1,919.95	\$1,919.95	0.00
Fort Calhoun Presbyter Church	\$7,230.45	\$3,615.24	\$3,615.24	3,615.21
Hamburg, United Trinity	\$1,511.45	\$0.00	\$0.00	1,511.45
La Vista, Faith PC	\$6,903.65	\$6,903.65	\$6,903.65	0.00
Missouri Valley, First PC	\$2,205.90	\$0.00	\$0.00	2,205.90
Murray, United PC	\$3,349.70	\$3,349.70	\$3,349.70	0.00
Neola, First PC	\$5,719.00	\$2,941.20	\$2,941.20	2,777.80
Oakland, Sharon PC	\$1,225.50	\$1,225.50	\$1,225.50	0.00
Omaha, Anderson Grove PC	\$2,410.15	\$2,410.15	\$2,410.15	0.00
Omaha, Church of the Cross	\$31,577.05	\$31,577.05	\$31,577.05	0.00
Omaha, Discovery	\$7,720.65	\$7,720.65	\$7,720.65	0.00
Omaha, Dundee	\$18,831.85	\$19,291.85	\$19,291.85	(460.00)
Omaha, Faithful Shepherd PC	\$4,248.40	\$4,248.40	\$4,248.40	0.00
Omaha, First PC	\$12,418.40	\$12,418.40	\$12,418.40	0.00
Omaha, Florence PC	\$1,429.75	\$729.75	\$729.75	700.00
Omaha, Hope PC	\$13,643.90	\$13,643.90	\$13,643.90	0.00
Omaha, Korean Presbyterian Church	\$3,390.55	\$3,390.55	\$3,390.55	0.00
Omaha, Church of the Master		\$13,439.65	\$13,439.65	
Omaha, Mt View PC	\$2,001.65	\$2,001.65	\$2,001.65	0.00
Omaha, New Life PC	\$2,042.50	\$2,042.50	\$2,042.50	0.00
Omaha, Underwood Hills PC	\$1,756.55	\$1,765.55	\$1,765.55	(9.00)
Omaha, West Hills PC	\$14,542.60	\$7,271.30	\$7,271.30	7,271.30
Plattsmouth, First	\$5,228.80	\$5,228.80	\$5,228.80	0.00
Red Oak, Center Ridge PC	\$408.50	\$484.34	\$484.34	(75.84)
Red Oak Presbterian Church	\$5,228.80	\$5,228.80	\$5,228.80	0.00
Shelby, First PC	\$1,797.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	1,797.40
Shenandoah, First PC	\$4,983.70	\$4,983.70	\$4,983.70	0.00
Sidney, United Faith Church	\$1,429.75	\$1,429.75	\$1,429.75	0.00
Villisca, First PC	\$2,001.65	\$2,001.65	\$2,001.65	0.00
Walnut, First PC	\$4,534.35	\$4,445.00	\$4,445.00	89.35
Grand Total:	\$218,016.45	\$206,375.63	\$206,375.63	\$11,640.82

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Remittance Summary

Attachment 04

Printed on: 10/19/2023

For the Period of

01/02/2023 thru 09/30/2023

<u>Church</u>	Pledge	GA	Syn	Synod Desig	Pby	Desig Pby	Unbgt Pby	Sel'd GA	Theol Educ	Denom Offerings	ECO	Disaster	Pledge Remaining
Avoca, United	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bellevue, First PC	5,000	2,500	0	0	2,500	0	0	0	0	1,445	570	0	0
Carson, Carson PC	2,550	638	638	0	1,275	0	0	0	0	889	0	0	0
Carter Lake Community Church	100	25	0	0	25	50	0	0	0	58	0	0	0
Clarinda, Trinity PC	5,015	0	667	0	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	413	1,353	0	1,672
Clarinda, Westminster PC	5,000	2,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,085	0	0	2,500
College Springs Presbyterian Church	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Bluffs, Bethany	300	75	75	0	150	0	0	0	0	370	0	0	0
Council Bluffs, Gethsemane PC	0	0	750	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Bluffs, New Horizon	9,000	1,688	1,688	0	3,375	0	0	0	0	2,195	0	0	2,250
Council Bluffs, Westminster PC	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	85	0	0	300
Elkhorn, Peace	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Essex, Presbyterian Church	350	88	88	0	175	0	0	0	0	496	0	0	0
Fort Calhoun Presbyterian Church	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamburg, United Trinity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
La Vista, Faith PC	7,160	1,200	3,007	0	667	0	0	0	0	1,691	0	226	5,293
Missouri Valley, First PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Murray, United PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	786	0	0	0
Neola, First PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oakland, Sharon PC	3,000	750	750	0	1,500	0	0	0	0	1,533	0	0	0
Omaha, Anderson Grove PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	535	0	0	0
Omaha, Church of the Cross	40,000	14,560	0	0	14,560	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,880

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Remittance Summary

Printed on: 10/19/2023

For the Period of

01/02/2023 thru 09/30/2023

<u>Church</u>	Pledge	GA	Syn	Synod Desig	Pby	Desig Pby	Unbgt Pby	Sel'd GA	Theol Educ	Denom Offerings	ECO	Disaster	Pledge Remaining
Omaha, Church of the Master	3,500	2,000	2,000	0	6,000	0	0	0	0	2,503	0	0	0
Omaha, Discovery	15,392	2,886	2,886	0	5,772	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,848
Omaha, Dundee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,590	0	0	0
Omaha, Faithful Shepherd PC	11,704	1,463	1,463	0	2,926	0	0	0	0	1,842	0	0	5,852
Omaha, First PC	12,900	2,250	500	0	1,503	0	1,750	0	250	1,062	200	0	6,447
Omaha, Florence PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	227	0	0	0
Omaha, Hope PC	2,000	500	500	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	2,013	0	0	0
Omaha, Korean Presbyterian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Omaha, Mt View PC	500	0	0	0	0	250	250	0	0	912	0	0	0
Omaha, New Life PC	500	125	125	0	250	0	0	0	0	229	0	0	0
Omaha, Underwood Hills PC	0	200	200	0	400	0	0	0	0	853	0	0	0
Omaha, West Hills PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plattsmouth, First	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	785	0	0	0
Red Oak Presbyterian Church	3,550	500	0	0	1,500	0	0	750	0	0	0	1,000	1,050
Red Oak, Center Ridge PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shelby, First PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shenandoah, First PC	9,639	1,807	1,807	0	3,615	0	0	0	0	2,192	0	0	2,410
Sidney, United Faith Church	720	135	135	0	270	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	180
Villisca, First PC	1,000	250	250	0	500	0	0	0	0	1,155	0	1,275	0
Walnut, First PC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total:	136,680	37,639	17,527	0	49,962	300	3,000	750	250	27,945	2,123	2,501	

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley Proposed Budget 2024

		2022	2023	2023 YTD	2024 <i>proposed</i>
INCOME					
4001	Per Capita Receipts	\$ 220,305	\$ 204,124	\$ 206,299	\$ 203,064
4101	Synod Staff Support - per capita	\$ 8,910	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500	\$ 10,000
4801	Interest Income	\$ 4,000	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 15,242	\$ 18,000
4900	Transfer from Reserves		\$ 30,000.00		
	Subtotal	\$ 233,215	\$ 252,623.84	\$ 229,041	\$ 231,064
4011	Presbytery Mission/Ministries Receipts	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 49,963	\$ 70,000
4901	Transfer from Wy. Land Sale Proceeds	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 25,000
	Subtotal			\$ 49,963	\$ 95,000
	Total Income	\$ 303,215	\$ 322,624	\$ 279,080	\$ 326,064
PER CAPITA EXPENDITURES					
2024					
Higher Governing Bodies					
		\$25.50/person MRV			
5000	General Assembly Per Capita	\$9.80/person	\$ 52,479.12	\$ 57,563.40	\$ 56,145
5010	Synod of Lakes and Prairies Per Capita	\$5.50/person	\$ 32,142.00	\$ 32,142.00	\$ 31,350
		\$40.80/person total	\$ 84,621.12	\$ 89,705.40	\$ 87,495
					\$ 80,157
Presbytery					
5100	Moderator Expenses	\$ 1,000	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500
5110	Committees & Council Expenses	\$ 6,500	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,996	\$ 4,000
5140	Legal Services	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000
5150	Audit/Review Services	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,000
5170	Presbytery Travel / General Assembly Expenses	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 750	\$ 5,000
5190	Presbytery Staff Search	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
			\$ 16,500	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 3,746
					\$ 14,500
The Presbytery Office					
5210	Utilities	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,746	\$ 3,000
5230	Building Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,144	\$ 2,500
5240	Insurance	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,272	\$ 4,000
5251	Office Supplies	\$ 1,000	\$ 900.00	\$ 104	\$ 500
5252	Postage	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 886	\$ 1,000
5253	Telephone	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,982	\$ 3,000
5254	Office Equipment Maintenance & Replacement	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 981	\$ 1,500
5259	Office Expenses	\$ 767	\$ 650.00	\$ 56	\$ 400
			\$ 19,767	\$ 19,300.00	\$ 12,171
					\$ 15,900
Personnel					
6602	Salary - Stated Clerk	\$ 34,245	\$ 35,957.25	\$ 26,968	\$ 37,396
6603	Salary - Admin Secretary	\$ 27,846	\$ 29,238.30	\$ 21,720	\$ 30,118
6615	Wages - Accounting assistant	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,550.00	\$ 6,522	\$ 12,012
6621	Admin Sec. Coordinator Benefits	\$ 6,630	\$ 6,630.00	\$ 5,171	\$ 7,530
6622	FICA	\$ 5,803	\$ 5,871.04	\$ 4,224	\$ 6,106
6623	Office Coordinator Continuing Education	\$ 300	\$ 300.00	\$ 300	\$ 300
6624	Accounting Assistant Continuing Education	\$ 200	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200
6625	Stated Clerk Expenses	\$ 7,760	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,443	\$ 4,000
6626	Administrative Assistant Expenses	\$ 300	\$ 300.00	\$ 207	\$ 300
			\$ 94,084	\$ 94,047	\$ 66,555
					\$ 97,961
Commission on Preparation for Ministry					
6210	Candidates	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,500	\$ -	\$ 1,500
6230	Lay Pastors	\$ 1,500	\$ 5,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,500
6240	CPM Training	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 500
			\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500
Commission on Ministry					
6010	Education/Vocation Assistance/Background checks	\$ 4,820	\$ 4,320	\$ 3,000	\$ 6,320
6050	COM Event	\$ 340	\$ 340	\$ -	\$ 340
5420	Emergency Fund	\$ 340	\$ 340	\$ -	\$ 340
			\$ 5,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,000
Communication					
5310	Communication With Congregations	\$ 1,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
5330	Presbytery Web Site	\$ 2,160	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,440	\$ 2,500
			\$ 3,560	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,440
					\$ 2,500
	Total Per Capita Expenditures	\$ 218,532	\$ 216,552	\$ 171,407	\$ 225,518

MISSION & MINISTRIES EXPENDITURES						
Social Justice and Peacemaking						
5410	Education, Interpretation & Programs	\$	1,300	\$	1,300	\$ 950 \$ 1,300
5420	Peacemaking					\$ - \$ 3,000
5430	Israel Palestine Mission Network (IPMN)					\$ - \$ 500
		\$	1,300	\$	1,300	\$ 950 \$ 4,800
Faith Education and Leadership Development						
5520	Camp / Synod School Scholarships	\$	2,220	\$	2,220	\$ 902 \$ 2,220
5530	Education & Educators' Support	\$	1,440	\$	1,440	\$ 204 \$ 1,440
5550	Curriculum Advocate	\$	120	\$	-	\$ - \$ -
5560	Resource Center Materials	\$	720	\$	500	\$ 500 \$ 500
5570	Educational Ministry Events	\$	1,800	\$	2,000	\$ - \$ 2,000
5575	Leadership Development (APCE)	\$	2,280	\$	2,280	\$ 133 \$ 2,280
5790	Calvin Crest Camp & Conference	\$	20,000	\$	20,000	\$ 10,000 \$ 20,000
		\$	28,580	\$	28,440	\$ 11,739 \$ 28,440
Youth Ministry						
5540	Youth & Young Adult Work	\$	200	\$	-	\$ 96 \$ 5,000
5580	Youth National Events	\$	5,000	\$	5,000	\$ 5,000 \$ 5,000
5585	Presbyterian Youth Workers	\$	200	\$	-	\$ - \$ 200
		\$	5,400	\$	5,000	\$ 5,096 \$ 10,200
Presbyterian Mission & Evangelism Ministries						
5440	Nicaraguan Partnership	\$	1,000	\$	1,000	\$ 1,000 \$ 1,000
5750	Mini-Grants	\$	8,000	\$	8,000	\$ 4,000 \$ 6,000
5773	Help Adult Services	\$	5,000	\$	5,000	\$ 2,500 \$ 2,500
5776	Crossroad Connection	\$	2,500	\$	2,500	\$ 1,250 \$ 2,500
5778	World Mission -support a missionary couple	\$	1,500	\$	1,500	\$ - \$ 1,500
6120	Sudanese Fellowship	\$	30,000	\$	30,000	\$ 22,502 \$ 5,000
6130	Sudanese Fellowship - from a 95 account					\$ - \$ 25,000
6140	Arabic Fellowship	\$	5,000	\$	5,000	\$ 5,000 \$ 5,000
6150	Matthew 25	\$	5,000	\$	5,000	\$ 4,000 \$ 5,000
6155	Matthew 25 Partnerships	\$	2,000	\$	-	\$ - \$ -
		\$	60,000	\$	58,000	\$ 40,252 \$ 53,500
Spirituality, Theology and Worship						
6310	Program Resources	\$	150	\$	150	\$ - \$ 150
6340	Spirituality, Theology and Worship events	\$	1,500	\$	1,500	\$ 200 \$ 1,500
		\$	1,650	\$	1,650	\$ 200 \$ 1,650
TOTAL EXPENDITURES						
	Total Per Capita Expenditures	\$	218,532	\$	216,552	\$ 171,407 \$ 225,518
	Total Mission & Ministries Expenditures	\$	107,430	\$	106,890	\$ 70,737 \$ 98,590
	Total Expenditures	\$	325,962	\$	323,442	\$ 242,144 \$ 324,108
Recap:						
	Total Income	\$	303,215	\$	322,624	\$ 279,080 \$ 326,064
	Total Expenditures	\$	325,962	\$	323,442	\$ 242,144 \$ 324,108
	Difference	\$	(22,747)	\$	(818)	\$ 36,936 \$ 1,956

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Family Medical Leave Policy for Installed Pastors
Proposed for Final Approval

Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving in an installed position within the bounds of Presbytery of Missouri River Valley shall have access to twelve (12) weeks of paid Family Medical Leave in compliance with the PC(USA)Book of Order (G-2.0804). The twelve (12) weeks of Family Leave shall be accessed for the following reasons: health issues of the pastor; parental leave following birth, adoption, or foster care; health issues of the pastor's immediate family (partner/spouse, child/foster child, parent); and for bereavement of the pastor's immediate family. This leave is available each calendar year and the time shall be recorded in the Session minutes.

Child Protection Policy Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Approved by Council
April 22, 1999

Approved by Presbytery
May 18, 1999

Approved Revisions by Presbytery
February 20, 2016

Reviewed and reaffirmed by Presbytery
November 2, 2023

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND POLICY

The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley (PMRV) believes it is called by God to provide and maintain a safe, nurturing environment for all children, youth under the age of 18, and vulnerable adults while in its care during any Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored event (including events and activities sponsored by any PMRV congregation). Each PMRV church shall be required to develop its own Child Protection Policy as required by the Book of Order, G-3.0106.

A commitment to this call includes preventing the following types of inappropriate conduct:

Physical Abuse, including any unwanted touch, any physical contact intended to coerce or do harm, any hitting or touching in anger.

Emotional/Verbal Abuse, including insults, name calling, belittling remarks, unfavorable comparisons with other children or youth, shaming, deliberately causing fear, or using speech to hurt.

Sexual Abuse, which is defined as any sexual contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults in a leader's charge, including:

- fondling private parts
- oral, genital, or anal penetration
- sexual intercourse
- forcible rape
- suggestive sexual comments
- showing pornography (sexually explicit materials)
- exposing sex organs
- allowing children to witness sexual activity

For the protection of our children, all persons working directly with children, youth and vulnerable adults, whether paid or volunteer, at any Presbytery of Missouri River Valley sponsored or cosponsored events are subject to the provisions of this policy. Therefore, all such persons are expected to participate in pre-event training and orientation including but not limited to training to increase their sensitivity to the prevention of any form of abuse to and protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

II. SELECTION AND SCREENING VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

It is the policy of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley that all adults working with or supervising minors during any presbytery-sponsored or cosponsored activities and programs (including events and activities sponsored by any PMRV congregation) must satisfactorily complete an application form and police background check. The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our activities and programs. It is also the policy of the Presbytery that at least one member of a team working with children or youth must be an active member of a congregation within the bounds of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley.

Procedures:

- A cover letter, application form, and release form for background check will be provided to all potential staff and volunteers by the Presbytery committee responsible for administration of the program.
- Forms must be completed and returned by the deadline set by the Planning Team or committee responsible for the program or event at which the applicant seeks to serve.
- All forms will be reviewed by the Presbytery committee members assigned to the event and at least one member of the Planning Team or committee responsible for the event or its designee. The review will include:
 - Checking form for completeness.
 - Reviewing answers to questions.
 - Checking references.
 - Securing additional information as reviewers deem necessary.
 - Securing appropriate police background check.
- The reviewers, using the information at their disposal, will decide whether or not the applicant will be approved. Their decision must be unanimous.
- Persons not approved will be so notified in writing.
- Completed forms and related confidential information will be kept in confidential files in the Presbytery office.
- Approval will apply for the calendar year in which it was made, and for the next two calendar years. After that period, the applicant must reapply.
- No person shall be exempt from these procedures.
- At all times, the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley reserves the right to determine who shall serve.

III. TRAINING

The Presbytery Faith, Education and Leadership Development (FELD) Committee will offer and inform congregations of training opportunities several times each year on the importance of protecting children and youth from abuse and the specific provisions of the presbytery's policy. All persons working with and/or responsible for children and/or youth at Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored events and activities (including events and activities sponsored by PMRV congregations) will be required to participate in this training. This training should be provided after recruitment and prior to the beginning of one's time of service. The Presbytery will make every effort to provide this training at a time and location which will allow those who are required to be trained to participate in an appropriate training event. In some instances this may mean providing more than one training event; however, it is the presbytery's responsibility to provide reasonable opportunities for this training. No person who refuses or is otherwise unable to participate in planned training events will be allowed to be responsible for children or youth at a Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored event or activity.

Training will include the following components. Specific events and activities, by virtue of their unique qualities, may require additional components.

1. Scriptural basis for child advocacy, e.g.
 - Deut. 30:19, choose life
 - Prov. 13:24, those who spare the rod ...
 - Mal 4:6, turning hearts of parents to their children
 - Mark 9:36-37, welcoming the children
 - Mark 10:13-16, Jesus blessing the children
 - Luke 17:1-3, forgiveness? The dilemma
 - I Cor. 3:16-17, our bodies are God's holy temple; called to be advocates for the victims.
2. Importance of the issue for the church
3. Recognition and reporting of child maltreatment to include neglect, emotional physical and sexual abuse
3. The specific components of the Presbytery's Child Protection Policy
4. Review of specific safety procedures relevant for the event or activity
5. Concluding litany of affirmation or covenant for leaders

IV. SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

In addition to careful screening procedures and training for all children/youth workers, the Presbytery will provide for supervision of all persons with responsibility for children and/or youth at Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored events and activities. This is for the protection not only of the children and youth in our care, but also for the persons working with them. This supervision will take the following forms:

- Designation of a "Supervisor"** At each event during which there are programs or activities for children or youth, the Presbytery will recruit and/or designate an adult to supervise the children and youth activities and leadership. While the specific title of this position may vary from event to event, this person will have overall responsibility of the program and for the persons providing leadership. The person may or may not have responsibility for recruitment of leadership, but will be responsible for their performance of tasks and behavior during the event in relationship to their work with children and youth. Ordinarily this person will be the one to whom reports of alleged abuse will be made and who will initiate the official reporting process. It is the responsibility of this supervisor to be familiar with the details of the program design and plans and to know what is happening within classes, workshops, or other groupings of children and/or youth. When there is more than one person assigned supervisory responsibility for a program, specific assignments will be made for each person so that both the individual and the leaders/teachers will be clear about to whom and for whom they are responsible.
- Two Adult Rule** Ordinarily, there should be at least two adults working with each group of children or youth. In those cases when older youth are part of the care-giving team for children, an adult must always be present with the group. Insofar as possible, no one should be left alone, one on one, with a child or youth. The only exception to this two-adult policy would be in a situation in which the contact occurs in a public place and other persons are in and out of the areas where the adult is working with children or youth. This will be emphasized during the training of all leaders for children's and youth programs. This rule is intended to protect children and to protect the leaders from false accusation. The Presbytery is committed to providing adequate personnel for all events so that this rule may be maintained.
- Parental Permission** The Presbytery will seek parental permission for children and youth to participate in any Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored event during which the children or youth will be under the care of someone other than the parents. The permission forms will indicate the specific nature of the event or program, the type of adult leadership which will be

provided, and any release from liability which may be requested. The Presbytery will also request insurance information and parental permission to seek medical treatment for each child or youth participating in the case of a medical emergency.

Training

All volunteers who work with children or youth will be trained in understanding the nature and various forms of child maltreatment such as neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse and the effects each has on the lives of children. Through recognition of these signs of possible abuse, all volunteers will follow the reporting requirements of the state in which the activity or event occurs and in accordance with this policy.

Suspicious Behavior

Supervisors and all persons providing leadership for programs for children and youth will be asked to be alert to and report any suspicious behavior which might suggest inappropriate conduct or relationships between an adult and a child or youth or between older and younger youth at the event.

V. REPORTING ALLEGATIONS AND INCIDENTS

Anyone who has knowledge or suspicion that inappropriate conduct has occurred should report it immediately to the Supervisor of the Children or Youth Program or the Event Staff person and to the proper law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services (LE/CPS) if the conduct involves suspected physical or sexual abuse of a child. It is especially incumbent upon those in leadership positions within the children and youth program to be particularly sensitive and alert to warning signs of abuse and potential incidents. When an individual reports an incident or allegation, that person should refrain from engaging in questioning the alleged victim so that the appropriate investigative procedures may be followed.

Preliminary Steps

The person observing and reporting an incident of alleged inappropriate conduct should first:

- I. Secure the safety of the child/youth. This may include an immediate call to emergency services as deemed necessary.
2. Secure the safety of others and stabilize the environment in which the incident occurred. Under no circumstances should a reporter who has responsibility for a group of children or youth leave them unsupervised in order to report an incident. Seek help from other caregivers who are close at hand.

Internal Reporting

The following procedure should be used to report the incident to the appropriate supervisors or staff at the event:

- I. Reporter reports orally to his/her immediate supervisor, the alleged offender's supervisor, or to the Event Staff if the supervisor is less accessible at the time of the incident or the time of reporting. If the reporter is an event participant and not someone providing leadership, it is appropriate to report directly to the Event Staff. *Event Staff is the delegated Presbytery Staff member assigned to and on-site at the event.*
2. If the incident involves suspected physical abuse of a child or sexual abuse of a child the original witness should place the call to LE/CPS to ensure that the most direct firsthand knowledge is shared. The original witness should remain available to the supervisor to give first-hand information to the officer or professional investigator. The child should not be questioned any further by any Presbytery representative, leaving all questioning and investigation to the child protection professionals.
3. Supervisor reports the allegation/incident to the Event Staff.
4. If the incident does not involve physical abuse of a child or sexual abuse of a child, Event Staff:

- a. Investigates the facts of the incident/allegation.
 - b. Prepares the official incident report (See Appendix G).
 - c. Initiates the response to the allegation and incident.
 - d. Reports to Presbytery office and/or Presbytery Attorney regarding insurance or legal implications, if deemed necessary.
 - e. Contacts parents or responsible adults as soon as feasible.
5. For incidents of suspected physical and sexual abuse of a child, event staff:
- a. Prepares the official incident report (See Appendix G)
 - b. Reports to Presbytery office and/or Presbytery Attorney regarding insurance or legal implications, if deemed necessary.
 - c. Contacts parents or responsible adults as soon as feasible (I would make clear here, that again LE/CPS would drive this. There should be no communication to the parent from anyone other than one of those two if a call has been made unless they are not going to pursue it.

Reporting to Child Protection or Other Civil Authorities

The specific definition of a "mandatory reporter" varies from state to state according to its relevant law. (See Nebraska and Iowa Law below). Ordinarily, these definitions could be extended to include those who have responsibility for the care of children and youth. The Presbytery recognizes that it has a moral, if not legal, obligation to exercise the care evidenced in Christ's invitation to the little children to "come to him." Therefore, when the investigation of an incident or allegation confirms that the incident or allegation is consistent with what would require reporting to civil authorities, the Event Staff will do so. If the incident is such that it poses an immediate or imminent threat to the safety of the child or youth, any person witnessing the incident may report it to the appropriate authorities. All incidents so reported should also be reported to the Supervisor and/or Event Staff as soon as possible. Training for all children and youth leaders will include appropriate procedures for reporting and how to contact appropriate civil authorities if it should become necessary.

Record Maintenance

A confidential record will be kept on file in the Presbytery office that a report of suspected abuse or neglect was made. This notation will include the name of the event or activity and the staff person to whom the report was made, the date and time that the report was made, and the names of the persons making that report. Nothing confidential will be included in this notation.

Iowa Child Protection Laws

Professionals Required to Report Ann. Stat. §§ 232.69; 728.14

The following persons are required to report:

- Health practitioners
- Social workers or psychologists
- School employees, certified para-educators, coaches, or instructors employed by community colleges
- Employees or operators of health-care facilities, child care centers, Head Start programs, family development and self-sufficiency grant programs, substance abuse programs or facilities, juvenile detention or juvenile shelter care facilities, foster care facilities, or mental health centers
- Employees of Department of Human Services institutions
- Peace officers, counselors, or mental health professionals
- Commercial film and photographic print processors

Reporting by Other Persons Ann. Stat. § 232.69

Any other person who believes that a child has been abused may report.

Institutional Responsibility to Report Ann. Stat. § 232.70

The employer or supervisor of a person who is a mandatory or permissive reporter shall not apply a policy, work rule, or other requirement that interferes with the person making a report of child abuse.

Standards for Making a Report Ann. Stat. §§ 232.69; 728.14

A report is required when:

A reporter, in the scope of his or her professional practice or employment responsibilities, reasonably believes that a child has been abused.

A commercial film and photographic print processor has knowledge of or observes a visual depiction of a minor engaged in a prohibited sexual act or in the simulation of a prohibited sexual act.

Privileged Communications Ann. Stat. § 232.74

The husband-wife or health practitioner-patient privilege does not apply to evidence regarding abuse to a child.

Inclusion of Reporter's Name in Report Ann. Stat. § 232.70

The report shall contain the name and address of the person making the report.

Disclosure of Reporter Identity Ann. Stat. § 232.71B

The department shall not reveal the identity of the reporter to the subject of the report.

Nebraska Child Protection Laws

Professionals Required to Report Rev. Stat. § 28-711

Professionals required to report include:

- Physicians, medical institutions, or nurses
- School employees
- Social workers
- The Inspector General appointed under § 43-4317

The office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare is created within the office of Public Counsel for the purpose of conducting investigations, audits, inspections, and other reviews of the Nebraska child welfare system. The Inspector General shall be appointed by the Public Counsel with approval from the chairperson of the Executive Board of the Legislative Council and the chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature.

Reporting by Other Persons Rev. Stat. § 28-711

All other persons who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect must report.

Institutional Responsibility to Report

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Standards for Making a Report Rev. Stat. § 28-711

A report is required when:

A reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect.

A reporter observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that reasonably would result in abuse or neglect.

Privileged Communications Rev. Stat. § 28-714

The physician-patient, counselor-client, and husband-wife privileges shall not be grounds for failing to report.

Inclusion of Reporter's Name in Report Rev. Stat. § 28-711

The initial oral report shall include the reporter's name and address.

Disclosure of Reporter Identity Rev. Stat. § 28-719

The name and address of the reporter shall not be included in any release of information.

Reporting Procedure: Child Physical or Sexual Abuse

- A. If a volunteer or staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child or youth has been subjected to physical or sexual abuse they must:
 - 1. Report to secular authorities:
 - a. Law enforcement at 911
 - b. Iowa Child Protective Services at 1-800-362-2178; or
 - c. Nebraska Child Protective Services at 1-800-652-1999
 - 2. Contact a Pastor, Director of Christian Education, or event coordinator
This information will be kept confidential
- B. Neither the volunteer nor the staff member should engage in "investigation" nor should they attempt to determine whether the reported incident actually occurred.

VI. RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS AND INCIDENTS

The Presbytery recognizes that we have an obligation to respond to a number of individuals and audiences, depending on the facts of the particular allegation/incident.

The Presbytery also affirms that any response decision is at the sole discretion of the Event Staff person in consultation with the committee responsible for the event and in the best interest of the event. A determination of an unfounded accusation may nonetheless result in a leader being asked to relinquish their leadership responsibility and/or to leave the event if such separation is deemed in the best interests of the event and its participants.

The following guidelines shall apply as the Event Staff and committee or Planning Team determine the appropriate response:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| To victim(s): | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine need for and provide appropriate care for and follow up on immediate needs of the victim(s). |
| To the accused: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove the accused from leadership, at least temporarily, until the investigation of facts is completed. 2. Report of an allegation is not a presumption of guilt and, therefore, appropriate care will be exercised to provide the accused with an opportunity to be heard. 3. The Committee responsible for the event should not engage in any investigation or attempt to determine whether the incident actually occurred. After LE/CPS has completed its investigation the Committee should meet to determine the next steps regarding the accused's further participation in and presence at similar events. 4. The Committee may recommend pursuance of any further disciplinary action needed |
| To parents or responsible adults: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share the facts of the incident, the committee's actions, and provide care and follow up as appropriate. |
| To the Event: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Event Staff or committee/Planning Team member reports the facts of the incident to a plenary of event participants as necessary and appropriate, exercising appropriate pastoral care for the victim, the accused, and the other event participants. |

COVER LETTER FOR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Child Protection Policy
APPENDIX A

«FirstName» «LastName»
«Address»
«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear «FirstName»:

Thank you for your interest in volunteering to work with the children and youth of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley. Our programs include child care at Stated Meetings and other events, and youth activities such as trips, lock-ins, and Triennium.

Because of the growing awareness of child safety issues, especially in the area of sexual abuse, the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley now requires that every potential volunteer complete the attached application form. We realize that the information requested is of a personal nature, but we believe that this screening process is the best way to meet both our moral and legal obligations. Above all, we want to provide a safe and secure experience for our children and youth.

Please note that at least one of the adults providing supervisory leadership for children and/or youth in a particular situation must be a member of a presbytery or congregation in the synod.

Also understand that a yes answer to one or more of the questions does not automatically disqualify you from working with children and/or youth. It may simply mean that we will need some additional information.

Because of the potentially sensitive nature of the information on the form, access to your application will be very limited. Each application will be reviewed by two people, designated by the committee or planning team for the event and/or the assigned Presbytery staff member. They will review the application, obtain any other necessary information, and decide whether or not to approve your application. All completed forms will be kept in a confidential file in the Presbytery Office.

Please read all of the enclosed information carefully. When you have completed the attached form return it to the Presbytery office addressed:

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Confidential Volunteer Application
302 S. 74th Street
Omaha NE 68114-4617

We look forward to sharing with you the joys and challenges of working with children and youth of the church.

Sincerely,

Enclosure: Application Form
Authorization for Background Check

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

This application is required of all volunteers working with or supervising minors. It is used to assist us in providing a safe environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs. The information is for Presbytery of Missouri River Valley use only. Please send this completed form to the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley at the address below.

Name -----
Las/ First Middle

Address _____

City _____ State ___ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ 0 Birthdate _____

Social Security Number _____

Enclose a photocopy of your Driver's License or Identification Card with this form.

Age range and type of work preferred: _____

Related training, experience, or gifts _____

Name of your church _____

Address _____

City _____ State ___ Zip _____

Phone _____ Pastor _____

How long have you been a member of this congregation? _____

In working with children and youth, we believe it is our responsibility to seek an adult staff that is able to provide a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment. Please answer the following questions accordingly.

1. Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty to a violent or sexual crime or any crime involving children or vulnerable adults?

Yes_ No_

If yes, please describe: _____

2. Have you ever been formally charged with child abuse or neglect? Yes No

*Please list three personal references we can contact on your behalf.
(not former employers or relatives)*

1. Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Pastor _____

2. Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Pastor _____

3. Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Pastor _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references listed in this application to release any records or information related to working with minors. I understand that the information provided in this application will be held in confidentiality.

Signature *Date*

Return this completed form to:
The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Confidential Volunteer Application
302 S. 74th Street
Omaha NE 68114-4617

**AUTHORIZATION FOR
BACKGROUND CHECK**

CONFIDENTIAL

Background Check Authorization

Print Name: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Former Name(s) and Dates Used:

Current Address Since: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Social Security Number: _____ **DOB:** _____

Telephone Number: _____

Drivers License Number/State: _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley and its designated agents and representatives to conduct a comprehensive review of my background causing a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated for employment and/or volunteer purposes. I understand that the scope of the consumer report/ investigative consumer report may include, but is not limited to the following areas: verification of social security number; credit reports, current and previous residences; employment history, education background, character references; drug testing, civil and criminal history records from any criminal justice agency in any or all federal, state, county jurisdictions; driving records, birth records, and any other public records.

I further authorize any individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency (including the Social Security Administration and law enforcement agencies) to divulge any and all information, verbal or written, pertaining to me, to the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley or its agents. I further authorize the complete release of any records or data pertaining to me which the individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency may have, to include information or data received from other sources.

** The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley and its designated agents and representatives shall maintain all information received from this authorization in a confidential manner in order to protect the applicants personal information, including, but not limited to, addresses, social security numbers, and dates of birth.

Signature: _____ Date: _ _ _ _ _

Return this completed form to:
The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Confidential Volunteer Application
302 S. 74th Street
Omaha NE 68114-4617

REFERENCE CHECK SCRIPT

The following script is suggested for telephone reference checks. If reference checks must be done in writing, this script may be adapted for inclusion in a letter requesting information. The person doing the telephone check should keep notes of the reference's responses. These should be placed in the person's file with their application form and other documentation.

Suggested Script:

My name is _____. (Briefly describe your role in the Presbytery - committee or Planning Team on which you serve, etc.).

_____ (name of person being checked) is being considered for a position as (be as specific as possible describing the work they will be doing and the event at which they will serve). He/She gave us your name as someone who could speak to us about his/her work with children and/or youth and has given us permission to contact you. Would you be willing to answer some questions for us?

1. What leadership or teaching responsibility that you are familiar with has _____ had with children and/or youth?
2. What specific gifts or talent do you believe _____ will bring to this position?
3. Our primary concern is for the health and safety of our children and youth. Do you believe that _____ can provide a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment for children and youth? On what do you base that judgment?
4. Are you aware of any problems which may have arisen while _____ was responsible for children and/or youth?
5. Do you have any hesitation in recommending _____ for (this position)?

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley
Child Protection Policy
APPENDIX E

COVENANT FOR LEADERS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

I consider this a vow to God, a promise to those who planned this event, and a covenant between myself, the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, and the children and youth with whom I will work and their families.

- ▶ During my time at (event) I will live as a Christian called to service in God's kingdom.
- ▶ I understand that I have been entrusted with the safety and welfare of all the children and youth assigned to me. At all times I will guard their physical safety and mental, emotional and bodily health.
- ▶ I understand that I have been entrusted with the spiritual health of all the children and youth assigned to me. At all times I will care for their faith development. I will care for their needs for friendship and security and I will work to build a caring, loving community within the classroom and within the (event).
- ▶ I will take care of my own physical and spiritual health.
- ▶ I understand that I must be careful of "suggestive" situations. I will never be alone with a child or youth in my care. If someone requests time alone with me, we will meet in sight of others, but not necessarily where others can hear us.
- ▶ I will never touch a child or youth in anger.
- ▶ I will use appropriate signs of affection and Christian caring. I will respect the feelings of those who do not enjoy even the slightest casual touch.
- ▶ I understand all sexual contact with minors including that which is of mutual consent is a criminal offense and must be avoided.
- ▶ I will guard my language. I will not swear or use inappropriate language in the presence of children and youth.
- ▶ I will set a good example of respecting the property where (event) is held and the property of others and I will be a good steward of God's earth.

I have read the job description and covenant and agree to abide by these statements. I understand that if I do not abide by this agreement, my volunteer services can be terminated at the discretion of the Presbytery staff and/or committee or Planning Team for this event. By signing below, I am acknowledging this covenant between the Presbytery and myself.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Under 18 Parental Agreement

Date

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

A. Defining Discipline

"Discipline is teaching, through experience, how to have self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem, and orderly conduct. It is assuming responsibility for our actions and making decisions about our behavior which build healthy relationships." This view of discipline provides a basic understanding for the Logos Program in many churches. Discipline, when promoted with this definition, encompasses much more than negative behaviors, but an entire system of dealing with one another. The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley will uphold this view of discipline as a nurturing and learning process, incorporated with our ministry.

As a result, everyone in a leadership position must be intentional when dealing with children and youth. In a sense, we must be disciplined in our discipline. Almost everyone will encounter some circumstance where discipline is involved. To be effective we must know the basics, practice, and learn from our experiences.

In *How to Be a Great Camp Counselor*, David Burrow explains four reasons why discipline is necessary in a camp setting. Translated to a broader range of settings, his reasons are:

1. Discipline is for the child/youth. If a child/youth is misbehaving, she/he is missing out on our program.
2. Discipline is for the program/event. We not only have a responsibility toward the child or youth, but for every aspect of the program/event. One person cannot be permitted to spoil the atmosphere or destroy the facilities.
3. Discipline is created for all participants. No one person has the right to prohibit others from having a positive experience, or from feeling safe and secure while participating in a Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored event.
4. Discipline is for our leadership. Remaining in a role of leadership is crucial to the success of a program/event.

Therefore, the Presbytery has adopted the following philosophy for discipline at its events.

B. What is NOT Discipline

Things will go wrong at times. Often, our reflexes are to act in a manner not constructive to promoting positive discipline - discipline that will help others learn and grow. Below are five methods of discipline that don't work when dealing with young people and should not be applied to anyone at a Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored event.

1. Physical Punishment - No person with responsibility for the leadership of children and/or youth is permitted to touch another in anger. Not only is this method not permitted, it is not effective. Studies show that employing physical punishment tends to teach that violence and aggression are appropriate solutions to problems. This is not a lesson which we want to teach.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

2. Ignoring the Problem - Problems will not just vanish. By not acting, the young person is learning that the inappropriate behavior is acceptable.
3. Permissiveness - This method will not teach young people to deal with their mistakes, and only contribute to continued misbehavior.
4. Answering in Kind - This is the "bigger and better" game many enjoy playing. Do not allow yourself to respond in a similar, negative manner to that of a young person. Remember that there are reasons for misbehavior and answering in a frustrated or angered tone will only make the situation worse.
5. Sarcasm - This is a popular method of communication in our culture, but not an effective means of discipline. Sarcasm only humiliates the young person and may serve to destroy your relationship with him or her, destroying any hopes for restoring a positive atmosphere. With young children, sarcasm is often misunderstood and is likely to create more distraction than cure.

C. Basic Rules

Rule for dealing with One Another: Everyone is to treat everyone else as a Child of God. No one has the right to treat others as if they do not matter.

Rules for being at a Presbytery sponsored or cosponsored event:

1. Tell adults where you will be at all times. Do not leave the grounds without adult supervision.
2. Do not bring tape players, walkmans, CD players, electronic games, cell phones, etc. with you to an event unless they come with your parents.
3. Alcohol, illegal drugs, firearms and weapons are not permitted at any Presbytery event. Violation can result in immediate expulsion from the event at parents' expense, based on the discretion of the Event Staff. All prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications must be turned over to the Event Staff unless parents are present to be responsible.
4. Be careful in your use of the property and equipment provided for the event. If anything does get broken, or you notice anything on the grounds that needs attention, please tell your teachers or the Event Staff. Participants will be held responsible for reimbursing the Presbytery for any property damaged as a result of misbehavior.
5. Children and Youth are expected to follow the daily schedule for the event in which they participate. This includes lights out and curfew times.

D. Guidelines for Dealing with Misbehavior

1. Define the Misbehavior
 - a. Gather information concerning the incident. Give everyone involved the opportunity to explain the situation.
 - b. State explicitly the misbehavior.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

2. Determine Possible Causes or Reasons for Misbehavior
 - a. Discuss with the child/youth possible reasons for misbehavior, separating emotions from actions.
3. Options for Action
 - a. Consult and advise Supervisor or Event Staff.
 - b. Try to establish and maintain an understanding relationship with the child/youth.
 - b. Recognize that there are usually specific reasons why a child misbehaves. Try to discover what his/her reasons are. Keep it private, if possible.
 - c. Attempt to determine if behavior occurs at home and school as well to see how it is handled in these settings.
 - d. Try to determine if the child/youth behaved in this manner because he/she wishes to be caught, reprimanded or punished.
 - e. Keep others informed of the incident as necessary, upholding confidentiality when appropriate.
 - f. Make every effort to get the misbehaving child/youth to develop greater self-control.
 - g. Approach the child/youth with kindly firmness, justice and mercy.
 - h. In serious situations, after consultation with the Supervisor and/or Event Staff, contact parents to discuss the matter in a sense of cooperation.
 - i. Be sure to conform to the basic principle of discipline and control: consistence, suitability, flexibility.
 - J. Create meaningful and just consequences for misbehavior. Be sure to not create a greater sense of resentment on the part of the child/youth.
4. What to Avoid
 - a. Disciplining in anger.
 - b. Public condemnation of the child/youth.
 - c. Use of derogatory terms
 - d. A defensive approach
 - e. Driving the child/youth away from the group
 - f. Loss of communication and contact with the child/youth
 - g. Threatening punishment that cannot or will not be enacted
 - h. Striking a child/youth
5. Specific Steps to Prevent Occurrence or Reoccurrence of Misbehavior
 - a. Discuss and establish standards, policies and practices for issues such as personal property, appropriate language, respect for one another (and staff) and use of facilities.
 - b. Reaffirm individual's rights to privacy.
 - c. Reaffirm rights of the group
 - d. Create covenants for the group

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

E. Suggestions for Being a Good Disciplinarian

1. Begin with yourself. Set a good example by following all the rules and policies. Keep a positive attitude.
2. Be consistent and fair. Get help when you need it.
3. Do not "label" children.
4. Do not assume the worst.
5. Reward the good.
6. Catch behavior problems at the beginning.
7. Change the arena or atmosphere.
8. Avoid defensive confrontation.
9. Use modification to change behavior.
10. Allow for restitution when needed.
11. Think before you react.
12. Keep a sense of humor.

Adapted from Calvin Crest's "Discipline Guidelines", 1997.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Reason for report _____

Date of Incident Time

Event/Activity _____

Name of Reporter _____ Class/Group _____
 Title

Name(s) of Child(ren) _____ Age(s) _____

Quote the child's/youth's first words verbatim: _____

Briefly describe child's/youth's demeanor/appearance: _____

Briefly describe what happened: _____

What action did you take? _____

Has the incident been resolved? Yes No Explain: _____

Were there any witnesses? Yes No

Names:

Signatures of witnesses (if possible): _____

Report submitted to: _____

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Bless Our Children: Preventing Sexual Abuse. Video. Seattle, WA: Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. (\$99 to purchase; rental also available. Contact Ellen at 206-634-1903.)

Hear Their Cries: Religious Responses to Child Abuse. Video. Seattle, WA: Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. (\$129 to purchase; rental also available. Contact Ellen at 206-634-1903. [available to borrow from MRV Resource Center])

Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church. Video, study guides, and resource booklet for policy development including models for forms and policy statement. Church Law and Tax Report, Christian Ministry Resources, PO Box 1098, Matthews, NC 28106. [May be borrowed from MRV Resource Center]

Striking Terror No More: The Church Responds to Domestic Violence, edited by Beth Basham and Sara Lisherness. Resource book on issue of domestic violence. Louisville, KY: Bridge Resources, Presbyterian Church (USA), 1997.

We Won't Let It Happen Here! Preventing Child Sexual Abuse in the Church. Prepared for the Presbyterian Church (USA) by Lois Rifner, Susan Keil Smith, and the Presbyterian Child Advocacy Network. Resource book for policy development including models for forms and policy statement. Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Church (USA), 1997. To order call 1-800-524-2612 and ask for PDS #72-650-97-002.

The Presbytery of Missouri River Valley acknowledges the Synod of Lakes and Prairies which developed this policy using the following resources: the presbyteries of Grace, Pueblo and Homestead and the Presbyterian camps at Calvin Crest (Fremont, Nebraska) and Clearwater Forest (Deerwood, MN).

**Presbytery of Missouri River Valley and
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY
AND ITS PROCEDURES**

I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter referred to as PC(USA)) that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship always. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.

Distribution

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all council and entity offices. It is intended as guidance for churches, mid-councils, and related entities and if properly implemented by them can be used by church members, church officers, employees, and volunteers. This is a policy of the General Assembly of the PC(USA), which governs and protects employees of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly. This policy and its procedures should be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including those who are or claim to be victims of sexual misconduct and their families. Other councils of the PC(USA) may use this policy as a guide to develop their own policies and procedures related to sexual misconduct.

II. Standards of Conduct

... As [God] who called you is holy, be
holy yourselves in all your conduct;
... Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, ...
not under compulsion but willingly, ...
not for sordid gain but eagerly. ...
not lord it over those in your charge,
but be examples to the flock.

... You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

1 Pet. 1:15; 5:2–3; Jas. 3:1, NRSV

The ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0104a,b).

The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of pastors, employees, volunteers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and advisors of any kind who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a trust relationship. It breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of parishioners, clients, co-workers, and students.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relation to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the parishioner, student, client, or employee initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the pastor's, counselor's, officer's, or supervisor's responsibility to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.
3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful to act for their own welfare, including children. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

Definitions

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

Child sexual abuse; including, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the sexual abuse definition of a child is anyone under age eighteen.

Sexual abuse as defined in the *Book of Order*: "Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position" (*Book of Order*, D-7.0901).

Sexual harassment; defined for this policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an

individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or

d. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.

Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

Sexual conduct is offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.

Sexual Malfeasance; is defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.

Misuse of technology; use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

III. Church Response to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct

A. *Principles*

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek healing and assure the protection of all persons. Where possible, the privacy of persons should be respected, and confidentiality of communications should be maintained.

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek to uphold the dignity of all persons involved, including persons who are alleging harm, persons who are accused of sexual misconduct, and the families and communities of each.

The PC(USA) has jurisdiction over its members, officers, and employees such that if a member, officer, or employee is alleged to have committed an offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution, the church has the duty to inquire into the allegations and, if the allegations are proven, to correct the behavior of the member, officer, or employee and ensure the safety of others in the community. Allegations of sexual misconduct are always considered allegations of offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution that trigger the disciplinary processes of the PC(USA) set forth in the *Book of Order*. In the case of an active non-member who is employed or volunteers with the church, the individual will be covered by

the procedures of the written personnel policies of the council or entity.

If the person accused of sexual misconduct is no longer a member, officer, or employee of the PC(USA), but the conduct occurred while the person was acting on behalf of the PC(USA), the church does not have jurisdiction to correct the behavior, but it does have a duty to hear the allegations of offense and to take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm. The council may appoint an administrative committee or commission to hear the allegations of sexual misconduct. The council may also take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm through education and policy.

B. *Reporting Requirements*

1. *Reporting Sexual Misconduct*

A person needing to report that a member, officer, employee, or volunteer of the PC(USA) has committed sexual misconduct is encouraged to seek guidance from a PC(USA) teaching elder or ruling elder regarding filing the report.

Congregation: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a member, ruling elder, deacon, volunteer, or employee of a congregation, the report of allegations should be made to the teaching elder, the clerk of session, or the chair of the personnel committee. If the accused is a member or officer of the church, the church will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the accused is a nonmember employee or volunteer, the church will respond by using procedures set forth by the session of the congregation.

Presbytery: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a teaching elder member, the report of allegations should be made to the stated clerk of the presbytery. If the report of allegations is placed in writing, the presbytery will respond by using the procedures set forth in Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a volunteer or nonmember employee of the presbytery, the report of allegations may be made to any of the staff or volunteers of the presbytery. The presbytery will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the presbytery.

Higher Council or Entity of the General Assembly: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is an employee or volunteer of the higher council or entity, contact the council or entity directly for the appropriate person to receive the

report of allegations. The report of allegations may be made to any person with supervising capacity. The entity will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the entity.

2. *Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct*

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct will occur in a variety of ways.

Because a council or entity cannot control to whom the victim of sexual misconduct will speak first, it is important that officers, employees, and persons highly visible to church members and visitors understand how reports of incidents are channeled to the proper person. The allegations may come from persons who have or who do not have a formal relationship with the PC(USA) and may be made to a variety of officers or leaders within the PC(USA). It is the duty of these officers to see that any allegation of sexual misconduct is reported appropriately keeping in mind the mandatory reporting requirements for allegations of child abuse.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities as outlined below.

The first person to learn of an incident of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry alone or question either the victim or the accused unless the incident is divulged in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session. If the victim is hesitant to talk to “higher authorities,” the person who has received the initial report has a special pastoral responsibility to build trust and willingness to speak with the accuser, lest the church be unable to respond because no one is able to give firsthand information.

The person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall analyze the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the PC(USA) and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council with jurisdiction over the person accused. This may be done by the person alleging harm or by any member of the PC(USA).

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing. A report of allegations of sexual misconduct in writing from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense must be acted on according to Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If a clerk or stated clerk receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed sexual misconduct, the report also should be acted on according to Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing,

any member of the PC(USA) may make the written statement that will automatically trigger Church Discipline of the *Book of Order*.

3. *Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse*

All ruling elders, deacons, Certified Christian Educators, and teaching elders are required to report knowledge of child abuse to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities according to the *Book of Order*. The *Book of Order* requires that

- “Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse” (G-4.0302)

Further

“In the exercise of pastoral care, teaching elders (also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament) and ruling elders who have been commissioned by a presbytery to limited pastoral service (G-2.10), shall maintain a relationship of trust and confidentiality, and shall hold in confidence all information revealed to them in the course of providing care and all information relating to the exercise of such care.

When the person whose confidences are at issue gives express consent to reveal confidential information, then a teaching elder or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service may, but cannot be compelled to, reveal confidential information.

A teaching elder or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service may reveal confidential information when she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person (G-4.0301). All persons covered by this policy have an additional duty to report knowledge of child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or council representative. All persons should be informed of and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse. These reports should be made within a reasonable time of receiving the information.

These provisions of the *Book of Order* attempt to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For teaching elders, the provision strives to balance the duty to protect children from future harm with the duty of a teaching elder to hold in confidence any information revealed to them during the exercise of pastoral care in any ministry setting as defined in G-4.0301 in the *Book of Order*.

For ruling elders, deacons, and certified Christian educators, the provisions strive to balance the duty of an officer of the church to protect children from harm and any secular duty the officer may have to hold in confidence any information revealed as a result of a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient. The secular duties will be a function of secular law and may vary from state to state.

C. *Responding*

The appropriate council or entity response will vary according to the relationship of the PC(USA) with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Church members and officers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the *Book of Order*. Non-church member employees and volunteers are subject to oversight and correction by the council or entity that employs them.

1. *Accused Covered by Book of Order*

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the council will report to the council that an offense has been alleged and that the council will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. The council should appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused.

Councils and entities must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed.

The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members.

A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving teaching elders. A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the “Word imperatively demands it” (G-2.0904). However, a presbytery may only place a teaching elder on administrative leave when allegations of child abuse have been received and the presbytery has followed the *Book of Order* procedures to conduct its risk evaluation to determine whether a teaching elder member accused of child abuse should be placed on administrative leave (D-10.0106). It is recommended that the permanent judicial commission (PJC) members who will conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing should also consider secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the clerk or stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the council and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the council. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the council at that time.

2. *Accused Not Covered by Book of Order*

When a council or entity of the General Assembly receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response of the council or entity will be guided by the written personnel policies of the council or entity. Usually the council or entity will have a personnel committee that will be responsible for the

inquiry. If a council does not have a personnel committee, it may appoint either a committee or administrative commission for the review of the allegation.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to make a decision about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused's permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the council, employing agency, or entity of the General Assembly.

3. *Council or Entity Record Keeping*

The council or entity should keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept confidential as far as possible. In Case # 208-6, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) interpreted the Rules of Discipline to say that a council or entity may share the contents of inquiry reports with other councils or entities of the PC(USA) when necessary. The clerk of the council or director of the entity will maintain the records while the inquiry is in process.

IV Prevention and Risk Management

A. *Implementation*

The Book of Order requires that all councils adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy (G-3.0106). The General Assembly urges all councils and related entities including colleges, universities, and theological institutions to establish policies, procedures, that make it a violation of the employer's work rules to engage in sexual misconduct and that encourage reporting of sexual misconduct. Councils and entities are strongly encouraged to take appropriate steps to inform members, employees, volunteers, and students of the council's sexual misconduct policy and the standards of conduct and

the procedures for effective response when receiving a report of sexual misconduct.

B. Liability and Insurance

A council or entity can be held liable for harm caused by sexual misconduct of an officer, teaching elder or employee based on several legal theories. Councils and entities should take such potential liability into consideration when establishing hiring and supervisory practices.

Councils and entities should regularly inform their liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The standard insurance policy should usually be enhanced by endorsements to cover specific exposures such as camps, day-care operations, shelters, or other outreach programs.

It is also recommended that councils and entities obtain an endorsement to their general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation. Such coverage may provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the council or entity, its officers, directors, or employees.

C. Employment Practices

1. Record Keeping

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of hiring and supervision practices of churches, middle governing, bodies and related entities. Every council and entity should maintain a personnel file on every employee, including teaching elders. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, references responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records which may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.

2. Prescreening Applicants

Councils and entities are urged to establish thorough and consistent hiring practices. If an applicant is unknown to the employer, the employer should confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. The council should perform a background check, including a national criminal background check, on all applicants that may interact with children and youth.

Part of pre-employment screening should include specific questions related to discovering previous complaints of sexual misconduct. See Appendix B: Sample Exhibit E.

3. References

The employing council or entity is responsible for contacting references for prospective

teaching elders , employees, or volunteers. A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the teaching elder or employee's personnel file. (See Appendix B: Sample Exhibit B for a sample reference form).

A council should delegate responsibility for previous employer reference checks.

The person within the council or entity authorized to give a reference is obligated to give truthful information regarding allegations, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct of the applicant.

If false or misleading information is given by the applicant, or relevant information is withheld, the applicant should be eliminated from consideration.

Applicants should be informed of negative comments regarding sexual misconduct and shall be given an opportunity to submit additional references or to give other evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained from a reference.

V. Educating and Training- Awareness

Since the issue of sexual misconduct has become an ever more present reality, there is an emerging need to educate and train a wide variety of persons. Persons needing this specific education include: teaching elders; volunteers; officers; nonprofessional and professional staff; ministerial candidates; professionals who will be working with this issue within the denomination; members of the congregation; and council staff including supervisors, employees, and stated clerks.

Education for these people and groups will be different on a group-by-group basis. A primary requirement for all persons should be common knowledge regarding professional and ministerial boundaries, the General Assembly Sexual Misconduct policy and their own specific council or entity policy.

Theological institutions should include material in their existing curriculum on sexual ethics including the appropriate use of ministerial power, the General Assembly policy and its procedures on sexual misconduct, and other resources. It is further urged that the appropriate presbytery committee(s) include training for inquirers, candidates, newly ordained pastors, and new pastors to their presbyteries regarding sexual misconduct, especially including education on their specific policy and procedures.

Much of a congregation's education currently happens in response to an actual case of sexual misconduct. However, it is recommended that the congregation be as proactive in this area as possible, offering education in a variety of settings. There are already numerous resource materials available that could be adapted to a congregation's setting.

Employing entities need to make sure all employees are well acquainted with, understand, and abide by their policy and procedures. Employing entities should offer additional training and resources, such as: a workshop during staff meeting; lunchtime discussion group; articles and books made available; etc.

Any professional (therapists, attorneys, advocates, mediators, arbitrators) used by a council should have access to experts qualified in the field of sexual misconduct if they themselves are not.

Appendix A

Definitions

Accused is the term used to represent the person against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is made.

Accuser is a term used to represent the person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not have been the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct. A person such as a family member, friend, or colleague may be the accuser.

Church when spelled with the initial capitalized refers to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Church when spelled with the initial in lowercase refers to local churches. The word congregation is used loosely for members and participants.

Employee is the comprehensive term used to cover individuals who are hired or called to work for the Church for salary or wages.

Entity is the term used to refer to any program or office managed by a board, committee, council, or other body whose membership is elected by a council.

Council is a representative body composed of ruling elders and teaching elders: sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. A council may establish entities such as day-care centers, conference centers, camps, or homes for the aged. A council may have both church members and nonmembers as employees.

Inquiry is the term used in the Church Discipline to determine whether charges should be filed based upon allegations of an offense received by a council. See *Book of Order*, D-7,11.

Mandated Reporter includes a person under the PCUSA constitution who is mandated to report to the civil authorities any reasonably held belief that there will be future harm and is also described by some states' laws as a person who is required to report any and all suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse that come to their attention. State laws vary from defining "all persons having knowledge" as mandated reporters to specifying very limited lists of professions whose members are required to report.

Persons Covered by this policy includes church members, church officers, teaching elders, and nonmembers who are employees or volunteers of the General Assembly of the PC(USA). All other councils or entities of the General Assembly are urged to create a sexual misconduct policy using the guidelines set out in this policy.

Response is the action taken by the council or entity when a report of sexual misconduct is received. It may include (1) inquiry into facts and circumstances, (2) possible disciplinary action (administrative or judicial or both), (3) pastoral care for victims and their families and others, and (4) pastoral care and rehabilitation for the accused and care for their families.

Civil Authorities are the governmental bodies, whether city, county, state, or federal, who are given the responsibility to investigate, criminally prosecute, and/or bring civil charges against individuals accused of sexual crimes or offenses against adults and children.

Secular Law is the body of municipal, state, and federal laws and is often referred to collectively as civil and criminal law. Prohibited behavior addressed by this policy may result in criminal and/or civil charges filed under secular law.

Victim is a person claiming to have been harmed and/or abused by a person covered under this policy.

Volunteer is the term used for those who provide services for the General Assembly of the PC(USA). Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups. For purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.

Appendix B

Employment Procedures-With Forms

Each "Employing Entity" should have already established and implemented entity personnel policies that include employment procedures for the search, selection, and call of entity staff. The employment procedures should spell out the process to be followed during the election of chief administrative officers and other staff, the appointment of exempt and nonexempt staff, and the call of teaching elders, chief administrative officers, and elected staff. These employment procedures should also include candidate/applicant reference checks prior to employment. Employing entity personnel policies should contain a clearly defined grievance process, a periodic performance review process, and a section that prohibits sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment). These provisions should be applicable to all full-time, part-time, temporary, and interim staff. The personnel policies should also provide for confidential communication channels whereby staff members can voice concerns or apprehensions without fear of retribution.

Churchwide and public advertisement of vacant positions as a part of an employing entity's search procedures to fill vacant positions is required of General Assembly entities and related bodies and is recommended as a guideline for councils by the churchwide personnel policies as well as the Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment and Affirmative Action. In support of this policy and its procedures on sexual misconduct, all vacant positions of religious leadership forwarded to publications for advertisement, distributed to units of the church, as well as posted on local bulletin boards will include the following statement:

"The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is an equal opportunity employer. In addition, the church has a strong policy opposing sexual harassment or abuse. References and records will be checked during the employment process."

This statement will also be included in all information distributed through the Personnel Referral Services of the Church Vocations Ministry Unit.

The following forms are included in this appendix: Exhibit A, Employee Questionnaire; and Exhibit B, Confidential Employee References. These two forms will be used by General Assembly entities and institutions and are recommended for use by all other employing units of the church. Exhibit C, a form for Implementing Policy of Sexual Misconduct, is to be used by each employing entity as it distributes its sexual misconduct policy to employees and others. Exhibit D, Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct, is for gathering basic information to be passed along to the appropriate person or group handling sexual misconduct cases for a unit or other entity.

As required by acceptable personnel procedures, an employee handbook should be written, published, and distributed to each employee of church employing entities. All existing personnel policies and employee handbooks should be updated to include a sexual misconduct policy.

It is advisable to seek legal advice as other councils, related bodies, and entities develop and publish policy and procedures on sexual misconduct using this General Assembly policy as a guide. All forms should be checked for compliance with state laws.

Sample Exhibits and Forms for Implementation
Sample Exhibit A

This is a sample employment questionnaire. In addition to the usual questions, one finds on an employment questionnaire, the writing team has added certifications and releases that focus on past incidents of sexual misconduct. All entities are urged to have this or any substitute form they design examined by their legal counsel before using it.

Sample Employment Questionnaire

Name: _____
Last
First
Middle

Address: _____
Street

City
State
Zip

Business Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Have you ever been known by any other name? _____ Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please provide other name(s): _____

Employment Record (List current and previous employers for the last five years)

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Supervisor's Title _____

Employed from (month/year) to _____ (month/year) _____

Why did you leave? _____

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Supervisor's Title _____

Employed from (month/year) to _____ (month/year) _____

Why did you leave? _____

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Supervisor's Title _____

Employed from (month/year) to _____ (month/year) _____

Why did you leave? _____

I certify that (a) no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; (b) I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

Signature Date

Note: If you are unable to make the above certification you may instead give in the space provided a description of the complaint, termination, or the outcome of the situation and any explanatory comments you care to add.

Release

The information contained in this questionnaire is accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the employing entity. I hereby authorize (*Name of Employing Entity*) to make any and all contacts necessary to verify my prior employment history, and to inquire concerning any criminal records or any judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant. By means of this release I also authorize any previous employer and any law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities to release any and all requested relevant information to the (Name of Employing Entity)_____.

I have read this release and understand fully that the information obtained may be used to deny me employment or any other type of position from the employing entity. I also agree that I wily hold harmless the employing entity or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and cause of action for the legitimate release or use of any information.

Signature _____

Witness _____

Witness _____

Sample Exhibit B

This is a sample form that may be used to keep a record of all face-to-face or telephone reference checks. Additions that have to do with sexual misconduct or child abuse may be needed by the entity to justify to a court of law that they have done reasonable and prudent screening before hiring a person for a position within that entity.

Confidential Employment Reference

1. Name of applicant: _____

2. Reference or church contacted (if a church, identify both the church and person contacted):

3. Date and time of contact: _____

4. Person contacting the reference or church: _____

5. Method of contact (phone, letter, personal conversation): _____

6. Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for the position, any convictions for or actions pending related to sexual misconduct, sexual harassment or child abuse): _____

Name _____ Title _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Sample Exhibit C

This is a sample designed to implement the sexual misconduct policy. It is necessary that all employees acknowledge being in receipt of the sexual misconduct policy. The policy provides protection and empowerment for die employee.

Form for Implementing Policy of Sexual Misconduct Acknowledgement of Receipt

I hereby acknowledge that I received on _____ (date), a copy of the "Policy and Its Procedures on Sexual Misconduct of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" dated _____ that I have read the policy, understand its meaning, and agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy.

Signature _____

A similar acknowledgement should be signed at the time amendments to the policy are made and distributed.

Sample Exhibit D

This exhibit provides entities with a sample Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct. It provides space for the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of victims, the accused, possible witnesses, and others involved. It also provides space for a description of the offending behavior as well as other pertinent information. This form or a revision of it should be filed with the appropriate supervisor, office, or administrator of an entity who is required to file this with the constituting authority or its response coordination team (See section on Subsequent Reporting in this policy and its procedures.)

Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct

Reported by: _____

Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

City, State, and Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Date of Report: _____

Person suspected of misconduct:

Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

City, State, and Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Other person(s) involved (witness or victims):

Name _____ Title _____

Age _____ Sex _____

Address _____

City, State, and Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct

Describe incident(s) of suspected sexual misconduct, including date(s), time(s), and location(s):

Identify eyewitnesses to the incident, including names, addresses, and telephone numbers, where available: _____

Sample Exhibit E

Employment Questions to ask of potential employees:

Councils and entities should ask persons seeking ministerial calls or employment in nonordained positions questions such as:

a. Has a civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical complaint ever been sustained against you involving sexual misconduct by you?

b. Have you ever resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to allegations of sexual misconduct by you?

c. If so, indicate the date, nature and place of these allegations, and the name, address, and telephone number of your employer at that time.

d. Have you been required to receive professional treatment, physical or psychological, for reasons related to sexual misconduct to you?

e. If so, please give a short description of the treatment including the date, nature of treatment, place, and name, address, and telephone number of the treating physician or other professional.

A sample employment questionnaire is attached as Exhibit A for adaptation by councils and entities. The questions included in this sample may be integrated into a standard employment questionnaire along with other necessary questions.

Appendix C
Meeting the Needs of All Involved

In cases of sexual misconduct there are needs that have to be met for the good of all persons, groups, and entities. To ensure that the council is ready to meet the variety of needs present, an independent response coordination team may be named. This team will not investigate the allegation or in any way function as an investigating committee for disciplining members or officers, but should confine itself to coordinating a process that will meet the specific needs of victims and their families (if any), the accused and family (if any), employing entities, congregations, and councils:

A. The Needs of the Victim

The council, employing entity, and response coordination team should assure that adequate treatment and care are available for alleged victims of sexual misconduct and their families. Sometimes, the victim or family is so angry and alienated from the church, that offers of help may be perceived as insincere or as attempts of a cover-up. If the victim or family at first refuses, the church should continue to offer help. Above all the church should not act in a self-protective manner by ignoring the victim and their families.

The extent of the damage to the victims of sexual misconduct will vary from person to person, and is influenced by such factors as the degree or severity of abuse, the age and emotional condition of the victim, human dynamics, and the importance of one's religious faith. The council, entity, and response coordination team is to assume in all cases that the victim has been wounded by the experience.

Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, mistrust, lowered self-esteem, unworthiness, and feelings of alienation from God, self, the religious community, and family are frequent injuries suffered by victims. It is important for the response coordination team to be sensitive to the victim's pain and need for healing, and to act by making appropriate pastoral care available.

The following are some of the needs of the victim:

1. To be heard and taken seriously. From the time that the victim is first able to indicate that sexual misconduct has occurred, that person should receive immediate attention and serious consideration from all church representatives.

2. To receive pastoral and therapeutic support. The victim may require spiritual and professional assistance because of sexual misconduct. The response coordination team should offer to help arrange for such support from a pastor and therapist, if the victim desires. Discussions with such people would be confidential, privileged conversations.

3. To be informed about church process and progress with regard to the accusation. One member of the response coordination team should be the church contact person for the victim. Frequently, this contact person will give the victim information as to what is happening in the church as a result of the accusation.

4. To receive legal advice. The response coordination team should suggest that the victim might benefit from independent legal advice. (Legitimate claims might be more effectively pursued and flimsy

or false claims discouraged.) If requested, the response coordination team should suggest ways in which independent legal advice can be obtained.

5. To be assured of an advocate of one's own choosing. A victim may need continuing moral support from one individual who is present while the church process deals with the accusation. This advocate may be a relative, friend, or someone suggested by the response coordination team. This advocate could speak for the victim, if necessary.

- To be assured that justice will be pursued. The victim needs to be told by the response coordination team, and shown by the processes of the church, that justice is being pursued through fact-finding, truth-telling, confrontation, and agreement that may include removal or temporary exclusion of the accused from office or adjudication of the complaint.
- To receive healing and reconciliation. In addition to specific forms of restitution mentioned above, the victim needs to receive a sense of healing and reconciliation with all concerned—the self, the family, the church and, ideally, the accused. The response coordination team can help bring this about using the church's processes and resources. While the above are needs of the victim, one recognizes that all of these needs may also not be met through a reasonable handling of a specific case but may only occur over a lengthier period of time. All of these needs, however, should be taken seriously and compassionately, and the rights of the victim respected.

B. The Needs of the Accused

The council or entity shall offer treatment and care for the accused as well as alleged victims and families. If the accused is a teaching elder, this is the primary responsibility of the presbytery (Book of Order, G-3.0307).

Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, mistrust, lowered self-esteem, depression, unworthiness, and feelings of alienation from God, self, the religious community, and family are often experienced by the accused. In addition, there may be fear of job loss, incarceration, and indignation if an allegation is false.

When a person is found not guilty of charges of sexual misconduct, it is important for the council or entity to see that the decision is disseminated as widely as possible within their power, unless doing so would further injure the person accused.

1. Personal Care

Whether the allegations about the accused are eventually found to be true or not, the accused deserves to be treated with Christian kindness and respect.

The response coordination team may suggest that the accused seek spiritual support or professional counseling. People in staff positions, such as presbytery executives or stated clerks, should not engage in personal counseling of the accused because of their potential involvement in disciplinary process.

2. Economic Security and Care for Family of Accused

When an allegation of sexual misconduct has been made against a teaching elder, the economic security of the accused is directly threatened, along with reputation, career, and family relationships. Again, the presbytery can be of assistance.

The response coordination team may alert the presbytery to the possible spiritual, emotional, and financial needs of the family of the accused and recommend expert resources.

C. The Needs of a Congregation in a Context of Sexual Misconduct

The council, employing entity, and response coordination team should be aware of the problems a congregation or employing entity may experience following allegations of sexual misconduct by a teaching elder, employee, or volunteer. The allegations may polarize the congregation or organization, damage morale, create serious internal problems, and even limit the trust a congregation may place in succeeding pastors. Efforts should be taken to recognize and identify the problems and heal any damage that may be done to the congregation or organization.

When there is sexual misconduct on the part of a teaching elder, non-ordained staff, or volunteer in a particular congregation, several needs unique to that congregation will emerge since sexual misconduct impacts congregations in different ways. Therefore, these needs will not necessarily emerge in the same sequence in each situation. Depending on the parties involved in the sexual misconduct, some of the needs may not emerge. In any event, those managing the church's response to the sexual misconduct will want to know that the following needs may emerge:

1. Pastoral Care

Members and staff of the congregation will need pastoral care. If it is the pastor who is involved in the sexual misconduct, care will need to be provided by another member of the ordained staff (if the church is a multiple-staff church) or by a trained interim pastor. If the pastor leaves because of sexual misconduct, in extreme cases a trained interim pastor or consultant in sexual misconduct may need to work with the congregation for an extended period of time.

If it is not a pastor who is involved in the sexual misconduct, then the pastor will provide the needed care for the congregation. The pastor, if not previously trained in this specialty area, will need to consult with denominational specialists who will advise him or her how to proceed and any anticipated problems.

2. Information About the Case

Members of the congregation will need opportunities both to receive and give information. If a case of sexual misconduct becomes a matter of public knowledge within a congregation and if a pastor has been found guilty of sexual misconduct, the interim pastor or consultant may hold appropriate meetings with individuals, small groups, or with the whole congregation. Such meetings should provide information about sexual misconduct in general, Presbyterian polity and our judicial process, and how others who may have been victimized may be heard and ministered to. If the offender is not the pastor, then the pastor may perform these functions. At such meetings, one may expect members to vent their feelings. An opportunity for this to happen should be provided. If this venting does not take place, then it may create serious problems for the future of the congregation, for future pastors, and for the governing

body.’ Dynamics may differ somewhat in racial ethnic churches, but no empirical studies have yet demonstrated different dynamics.

3. Resource Persons

In light of the above needs, the following are several resource persons whose services would be valuable to a congregation in the context of sexual misconduct: a trained interim pastor, a presbytery representative knowledgeable in polity and the effects of sexual misconduct in the church, a consultant or therapist with knowledge and experience in dealing with sexual misconduct, an attorney who can discuss legal aspects of a case, an insurance agent who can advise the congregation about their exposure to liability or coverage.

It is the responsibility of the council to establish policy and its procedures governing cases of sexual misconduct in that jurisdiction. The PC(USA) policy and its procedures are intended to guide the development of council policy and procedures.

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

Anti-Harassment Policy

Pending Approval

1. Introduction: As the Church of Jesus Christ, love is the rule of our relationships.

- a. Jesus said, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets,” (Matt. 7:12), and “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35).
- b. The Book of Order states, “The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.” (F-1.0301, “The Calling of the Church: the Church is the Body of Christ”)
- c. Because we believe this, and because we seek to live it out in all aspects of our personal and corporate life, we believe that harassment in all its forms is incompatible with who we are as followers of Jesus.

2. What is harassment?

- a. Harassment, simply put, is “*repeated unwanted behavior.*” To take the parts in reverse order:
- b. *Behavior:* harassment consists of words or actions that demean, threaten, offend, or humiliate another person.¹ This could include, but is not limited to, name-calling in private or public, or in electronic communication such as email; offensive or demeaning social media posts (see the presbytery’s Social Media Policy); stalking; and mockery of another person’s appearance, demeanor, gender, or racial/ethnic identity.
- c. *Unwanted:* teasing or humorous language that might appear inoffensive to an observer is characteristic of some relationships, but if the person who is being teased in this way finds that teasing offensive or demeaning, it has crossed the line into harassment. In these cases intention is irrelevant; it is how the language is received that is crucial.
- d. *Repeated:* in an emotionally-charged setting, a person may use insulting or demeaning language. Ideally, this leads to apology, forgiveness, and

¹ This language is adapted from the National Archives document, “Factsheet about Workplace Harassment,” <https://www.archives.gov/files/eo/policy/facts-about-workplace-harassment.pdf>

reconciliation. But when the insulting or demeaning language is repeated, it becomes harassment.

3. How do we prevent harassment in the Church?

- a. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don't always live up to that standard. That means we must begin with ourselves in stopping harassment of our fellow believers. One way is to ask ourselves before we speak in a meeting or write in an email, "will what I am about to say or write tend to build up the community or break down the community?" More specifically, "have I fallen into a pattern of using dismissive or demeaning language toward this person or this group?" This does not preclude legitimate criticism; it does mean that when criticism is necessary, it must be done in genuine love and concern not only for the body as a whole but also for the individual.
- b. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don't always live up to that standard. That means that we acknowledge together that harassment in all its forms is wrong, and we commit ourselves to repentance and genuine reconciliation whenever harassment occurs.
- c. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don't always live up to that standard. Those in positions of power like pastors, ruling elders, and youth leaders are particularly tempted to use insulting or demeaning language to those with less power. Men are more likely to harass women. If we are in a position of power, we need to test our words and actions by Jesus' standards.

4. What do we do when harassment takes place?

- a. Jesus' words in Matthew 18:15-19 are a good place to begin:
If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
- b. If you are being harassed, or if you witness harassment, call it out, if possible. It may be that the person engaging in harassing behavior will recognize their fault, repent and apologize.
- c. If that doesn't work, others should be brought in.
- d. Finally, the session should counsel with the person engaging in harassing behavior. If that doesn't lead to repentance and reconciliation, it may be necessary to initiate a Disciplinary Process under Chapter VII of Church Discipline section of the Book of Order, always remembering the purpose of

church discipline (D-1.0301) and the duty to conciliate and mediate whenever appropriate (D-1.04)

5. This policy takes effect when it is approved by the session/presbytery council. The session/council will review it every three years and change it as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the Book of Order. Each session member will be provided with a written copy of this policy. *The policy will be included in the Presbytery Manual of Operations.*

This policy statement is by its nature stated in negative terms. At the same time, it is written to be consistent with the Statement of Ethical Conduct of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),² in the belief that those who adhere to the ethical conduct set forth in that document will avoid the kind of harassing behavior the present document is meant to deal with.

² The Standards of Ethical Conduct can be downloaded here: [Standards of Ethical Conduct PCUSA](#)

Presbytery of Missouri River Valley Anti Racism (Diversity) Policy

Pending Adoption

F-1.0403 states, *Unity in Diversity*:

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

Racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others. Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, the PC(USA) must stand against, speak against and work against racism. (GA policy reference)

G-3.0106 requires each Council to adopt an anti-racism policy.

As a congregation within the PCUSA we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people (believers)
2. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
3. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching and music) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
4. Study Matthew 25 materials and resources to increase our awareness of systemic racism and its impact. (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/matt-25-resources/>)
5. Apply to hiring practices and church leadership