

**Presbytery of Mackinac Coordinating Council
Proposed Minutes of the March 6, 2018, Meeting
Zion Lutheran Church, St. Ignace, Michigan**

- 1 The Coordinating Council of the Presbytery of Mackinac met Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at Zion Lutheran Church in St. Ignace, Michigan. Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev. Jessica Paulsen, called the meeting of the Coordinating Council of the Presbytery of Mackinac to order at 10:01 a.m. and opened with the Morning Prayer from the Service and Liturgy, ***Celtic Daily Prayer: Prayers and Readings from the Northumbria Community*** for March 6, 2018. She advised that we would close with the Midday Prayer and noted that these prayers are said daily by Christians around the world. The Council Chair ascertained that a quorum was present.
 - 1.1 Coordinating Council Members present were the following:
 - 1.1.1 Coordinating Council Chair, Rev. Jessica Paulsen;
 - 1.1.2 Presbytery Moderator, Ruling Elder Richard Wissell;
 - 1.1.3 Presbytery Vice Moderator, Rev. Dr. William Myers;
 - 1.1.4 Budget and Financial Services Chair, Rev. Dr. Anne Hebert;
 - 1.1.5 Education and Leadership Development Co-Chair, Rev. Sandy Shaw;
 - 1.1.6 Ministry Chair, Ruling Elder James Halsey;
 - 1.1.7 Mission Member, Ruling Elder Joseph Leach;
 - 1.1.8 Personnel Chair, Rev. Melissa Lopez;
 - 1.1.9 Representation and Nominations Chair, Rev. David Henderson;
 - 1.1.10 Worshiping Communities Chair, Ruling Elder Kenneth Visser;
 - 1.1.11 Treasurer, Ruling Elder Thomas Juntune;
 - 1.1.12 Presbyterian Women, Ruling Elder Florence Morrison, ex officio;
 - 1.1.13 Administrative and Financial Assistant, Ms. Raeann Dunlop, ex officio; and
 - 1.1.14 Stated Clerk, Ruling Elder Kay Morrill.
 - 1.2 On motion duly made and seconded, Coordinating Council **VOTED** to excuse the following:
 - 1.2.1 Education and Leadership Development Co-Chair, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Murphy;

- 1.2.2 Representatives to Synod Assembly: Rev. Dr. Lois Aroian and Ruling Elder Michael Stoll;
- 1.2.3 Presbytery Point Camp and Conference Center Board President, Rev. Ryan Donahoe, ex officio;
- 1.2.4 Session Records Chair, Ruling Elder Patricia Pellett, ex officio.
- 1.3 Corresponding Member present was Ruling Elder Andy Thorburn, Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant Administrative Commission, Presbytery of Lake Michigan.
- 1.4 Coordinating Council Chair led self introductions with name, church affiliation, position on the Coordinating Council, and where you have felt God's presence in your consolations and desolations since the last Coordinating Council meeting. She noted that it is important for everyone to share because it helps build community.
- 1.5 On motion duly made and seconded, Coordinating Council **VOTED** to approve as submitted, the minutes of the January 9, 2018, meeting of the Coordinating Council as the official record.
- 1.6 Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev. Jessica Paulsen, reminded Coordinating Council members to be mindful of who may vote and emphasized the importance of stating one's thoughts during the meeting instead of afterward in the "parking lot."
- 1.7 **ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET**
Coordinating Council agreed by consensus to approve the docket.
- 2 **OFFICE UPDATE**
Administrative and Financial Assistant Raeann Dunlop reported.
 - 2.1 The Administrative and Financial Assistant has been purging and adding to and doing lots of things to organize the minister files. When asked what was being purged from the Minister Files, the AFA stated there were duplicates of some reports and in one instance a napkin with a telephone number written on it.
 - 2.2 She is still working on new pastor packets for new ministers who come into the Presbytery and just sent out the last two.
 - 2.3 **March conference calls**
During the month of March, the Presbytery office will be offering three informational conference call opportunities. To participate, one needs to email the office to receive the "call in" information,

including phone number and code.

2.3.1 Active Youth Ministry on March 9, 1:00 p.m.

The Rev. Josè Lopez of The First Presbyterian Church of Traverse City, and Jenny Cammarata of First Presbyterian Church of Marquette will be discussing the growing and thriving youth ministry within their churches and their community.

2.3.2 Online Giving on March 21, 10:00 a.m.

Presbyterian Foundation Regional Advisor Stephen Keiser will be discussing the Online Giving Program offered by the Presbyterian Foundation. Stephen will be answering specific questions about how the program works and what is involved in getting started.

2.3.3 Water, Water Everywhere March 22, 10:00 a.m.

Insurance Board Representative Mark Lambert will be discussing what to look for in your current policy regarding water damage due to recent rapid snow melt as well as some of the questions to ask your current agent regarding water damage.

2.4 The Administrative and Financial Assistant will be sending Budget request forms for 2018 to Committee Chairs earlier this year.

2.5 The Presbytery Moderator asked what churches she has visited. She indicated that she would be visiting Alpena on Thursday and will be going to Menominee, Kingsford, and Escanaba the end of March.

3 STATED CLERK

Stated Clerk, Ruling Elder Kay Morrill, reported.

3.1 The 2017 Session Annual Statistical Reports have been received from 33 of the Presbytery's 39 churches, with East Jordan filing an incomplete report, and Ishpeming, Munising, Neebish Island, Northern Lakes Traverse City, and Trout Creek being non compliant.

3.2 Preliminary report for 2017 statistics shows a decrease in membership from 4,900 to 4,640 at year end 2017, a drop of 260. The Stated Clerk will be requesting a decrease in per capita from OGA. A few churches—Traverse City, Harbor Springs, Escanaba, Iron River, and Menominee—have shown a significant decreases due to those churches having purged their membership rolls. The complete 2017 Presbytery Report will be submitted to the

Presbytery.

- 3.3 In accordance with G-3.0301 in the **Book of Order**, information regarding the year-end 2017 parity between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders will be reported and submitted to the Presbytery. There was a shift of Committee Chair positions from Ruling Elders to Minister Members.
- 3.4 Annual reports submitted to OGA—Church Summary, Minister Summary, and Miscellaneous—were completed and submitted. The Mid Governing Body Expense Report was submitted incomplete as line items required in the report were combined in the Presbytery’s accounting system and were not available. Information for this report was mandated by the 185th (1973) General Assembly and the 187th (1975) General Assembly.

4 **2016 AND 2017 FINANCIAL REVIEWS**

- 4.1 Committee on Budget and Financial Services Chair, the Rev. Dr. Anne Hebert, reported the committee met on Monday, March 5, 2018, and reviewed the Financial Review for 2016, noting there was nothing significant in the Review. The Coordinating Council took no action on the report.
- 4.2 The Committee has decided that it can accomplish in house what the CPA firm did for the 2016 Review at less expense and intends to appoint three (3) people, including at least one CPA, to complete the Financial Review for 2017 in an afternoon and completed by June 1, 2018. She requested suggested names from Coordinating Council members. The Committee does not want to spend another \$2,500 to have done what the committee believes can be done in house.
- 4.3 The Stated Clerk reported that it is a requirement that the financial review for 2017 needs to be completed and approved by the Presbytery in 2018 to be compliant, noting that the Stated Clerk of the Synod has advised that the Financial Review for 2016 is a year late.

5 **REQUEST FROM ISHPEMING CHURCH**

Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev. Jessica Paulsen, reported that the United Presbyterian Church of Ishpeming has asked the

Presbytery to grant a waiver of limitation of terms of service as stated in the **Book of Order (G-2.0404)**, citing a limited number of members in the congregation available to serve as Elders. Discussion followed. On motion duly made and seconded Coordinating Council **VOTED** to end debate. On motion duly made and seconded, Coordinating Council **VOTED** to approve the United Presbyterian Church of Ishpeming request for an exemption under the **Book of Order, G-2.0404**, for Ruling Elders Daniel Richards and Steven Roberts to serve one (1) additional term of three (3) years each. Ruling Elder James Halsey requested that his “No” vote be recorded. Council members expressed their concerns regarding this measure being a short-term fix, and noted it cannot continue to grant exceptions indefinitely. Coordinating Council Chair noted that Council has acted on this matter because the congregational meeting to elect officers was scheduled before the Presbytery could act on it. She stated the Presbytery would need to affirm this action at the May Presbytery meeting.

6 **UPDATE FROM SYNOD ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION**

- 6.1 Ruling Elder Andy Thorburn, Clerk of the Synod of the Covenant Administrative Commission to the Presbytery of Mackinac and member of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, addressed Coordinating Council with an update. He apologized for being the only AC member present citing scheduling conflicts for other members of the AC. The Administrative Commission was elected in June of 2017 at a Special Synod Assembly held via Telephone Conference Call to inquire into the allegations of disorder in this Presbytery and to assist the Presbytery of Mackinac to become a healthier Presbytery.
- 6.2 He reported that the AC is currently in the discernment period. The AC is hoping and planning to bring to the April Coordinating Council meeting a preliminary report to share and discuss the AC’s findings before making its report to Synod Assembly. Most areas of concern can be identified as systemic, structural, or behavioral. Coordinating Council asked if the AC report would be accessible prior to the meeting and when the Coordinating Council can see the four letters along with the writers’ identities. He advised that

the AC is still discussing strategy and the how to, and resolve it ahead of time and be respectful to the process the Synod has designated.

- 7 **BOOK STUDY DISCUSSION: *Pursuing God's Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups*** by Ruth Haley Barton, founding president of the Transforming Center, a spiritual formation ministry to pastors and Christian leaders; and trained spiritual director, and teacher and retreat leader.
- 7.1 Assigned reading for this session was the **Chapter 2, *Beginning with Spiritual Transformation*, and Chapter 3, *Leaders Who Are Discerning*, of Part One, *Becoming a Community for Discernment***. Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev. Jessica Paulsen, led the book study discussion with these questions and invited Coordinating Council members to share. *What is your experience of solitude and silence these days? How are you experiencing God's transforming presence in the context of these key spiritual practices?* The Leader stated that we cannot come together as a community, a group, if we are not already practicing spiritual disciplines on our own.
- 7.2 Leader, the Reverend Paulsen asked Coordinating Council members to reflect on the connection between spiritual transformation and discernment. *Is there a connection? What is the connection? How do we understand spiritual transformation?* Additional questions for reflection were—*What spiritual rhythms do you have in place? How are you experiencing God in the midst of these rhythms? Where does spirituality stand in your rhythm and what do you feel you still need? What are the life rhythms that keep you healthy, growing and transforming? What spiritual practices do you have in your life and how does that relate to group discernment?*
- 7.3 *What aspects of spiritual transformation are important to the work we are doing as a Council? In looking at the Presbytery, what is the Presbytery and how are we functioning and where are we headed?*
- 7.4 Prayer for Indifference wherein we ask God to work in our hearts to make us indifferent to anything but the will of God was referred to

as a blessing.

- 7.5 The Reverend Paulsen asked Coordinating Council members to think about consensus building.
- 7.6 In wrapping up, Coordinating Council Chair gave opportunity to anyone who had not said anything to contribute to the conversation.

8 **LUNCH**

Coordinating Council recessed for lunch at noon to reconvene at 1:00 p.m. The Coordinating Council reconvened at 1:20 p.m. with prayer by Ruling Elder Kenneth Visser.

- 9 Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev Jessica Paulsen, requested an adjustment to the docket due to new business which had just come to the Chair's attention without prior notice. In addition, she is monitoring bridge closure due to inclement weather. On motion duly made and seconded, Coordinating Council **VOTED** to adjust the Agenda, with projected adjournment time falling between 2:00 and 2:30 p.m.

- 9.1 The Presbytery of Mackinac had received a request from the Presbytery of Cincinnati, through its General Presbyter, the Rev. Dr. Nancy Kahaian, to concur on its overture requesting the 223rd General Assembly (2018), to "establish an Administrative Commission to address disorder in the Synod of the Covenant." The proposed overture was distributed to members of the Coordinating Council. **APPENDIX A, OVERTURE—ON APPOINTING AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE SYNOD OF THE COVENANT**

- 9.2 General Assembly requires that overtures from presbyteries require concurrence from at least one other presbytery. Question was raised whether Coordinating Council was authorized to concur on an overture on behalf of the Presbytery. Coordinating Council Chair advised that the Coordinating Council can concur on behalf of the Presbytery if there are matters of urgent business that have deadlines. Council Chair advised that the Coordinating Council is not overstepping its bounds and agreed that this question needed to be asked and considered. The Presbytery's Manual of

Operations empowers the Coordinating Council to act between meetings on Presbytery's behalf. Since this overture has financial implications (funding needed for the commission), it was understood that any concurrences needed to be submitted to the Office of the General Assembly least 90 days before the Assembly convenes. The Assembly convenes on Saturday, June 16, 2018, which means that the 90-day deadline is Friday, March 16, 2018. Due to this deadline the Council decided to act on behalf of the Presbytery in this matter.

- 9.3 Following a lengthy discussion, on motion duly made and seconded, Coordinating Council **VOTED** to concur [seven (7) in favor; five (5) against] with the Presbytery of Cincinnati's Overture On Appointing an Administrative Commission for the Synod of the Covenant. The Rev. Dr. William Myers requested his "No" vote and the reason for his vote—he believes there are inaccuracies in the rationale of the overture—be recorded. Council so ordered.
- 9.4 Council commended and thanked Jessica for her leadership especially through difficult issues during the last two years.
- 9.5 Question was raised to have someone draft a rationale. Council Chair asked for two people who would be willing to work together to draft a Rationale to offer with the Presbytery of Mackinac's concurrence to the Overture from the Presbytery of Cincinnati. A motion was made and seconded and subsequently withdrawn by both parties.
- 9.6 At the request of General Presbyter, the Rev. Dr. Nancy Kahaian, and on motion duly made and seconded, Coordinating Council **VOTED** to appoint Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev. Jessica Paulsen, Overture Advocate to the 223rd General Assembly. The Presbytery of Cincinnati has offered to pay for a portion of the Overture Advocate's expenses to the 223rd General Assembly.
- 9.7 Coordinating Council **VOTED** to appoint the Rev. Sandy Shaw, Alternate Overture Advocate.
- 10 Committee on Budget and Financial Services Chair, the Rev. Dr. Anne Hebert, reported that the Committee approved and recommended to the Coordinating Council that the signatories for the New Covenant Funds be the Chair of the Committee on Budget and Financial Services who is the President of the Corporation,

Stated Clerk, Treasurer, and Administrative and Financial Assistant. Coordinating Council **VOTED** to approve.

11 Committee on Ministry Chair, Ruling Elder James Halsey, reported being asked by congregations why the Presbytery has meetings in February and why meetings cannot be held on weekdays rather than Saturdays. Coordinating Council Chair requested that the COM Chair send his questions to her so that she can include them on the docket for a future Coordinating Council meeting.

12 Coordinating Council Chair noted the need to adjourn despite the remaining items on the docket which can be addressed later. The proposed agenda for the Coordinating Council Retreat to be held at Presbytery Point Camp and Conference Center from noon on Thursday, April 26, to noon on Friday, April 27, was available.

13 **JOYS AND CONCERNS** were shared.

14 **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no impending business to come before the Coordinating Council at this time, the meeting was closed at 2:35 p.m. with prayer by Coordinating Council Chair, the Rev. Jessica Paulsen. The next meeting of the Coordinating Council will be Tuesday, April 10, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, 999 S. State Street in St. Ignace, when the Coordinating Council will receive a preliminary report from the Synod Administrative Commission.

Kay Morrill
Stated Clerk

**APPENDIX A OVERTURE—ON APPOINTING AN
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE SYNOD OF
THE COVENANT**

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