

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 1 of 13

ACTION TAKEN BY COM WORK GROUP ON BEHALF OF PRESBYTERY: Rev's Lorrie Day Anson and Lorrie Cooney, co-chairs:

1. **Approved** Interim contract between Rev. Monica Styron and First Presbyterian Church of Skaneateles. (*document in attachments*)
2. **Approved** Terms of Employment Contract between Rev. Barb Blom and United Ministries of Aurora. (*document in attachments*)
3. **Approved** Ministry Information Form for First Presbyterian Church of Cazenovia
4. **Approved** the addition of Shavonn Lynch, Candidate under care of the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, to the approved Pulpit Supply List

Items for Information from the COM Work Group:

1. COM has asked the Stated Clerk to begin sending out questionnaires to those on the pulpit supply list for a better sense of who is still interested in supplying pulpits and to understand both the talents and the needs of our supply preachers.
2. COM has asked the Stated Clerk to take inventory of ministers serving at-large, in temporary pastoral relationships, and in specialized ministry for the purpose of developing stronger review processes.
3. COM continues to hold meetings via Zoom in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and prays for the health and the futures of our ministers, congregations, and members throughout the presbytery.

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER: Elder Gordie Howard

I have signed promissory note with Groton First National Bank for a Payroll Protection Program Loan of \$5,800 at an interest rate of 1% with payments beginning in November. I expect that in accordance with the CARES act, this loan will be forgiven. PPP loan requires certification that "Current economic uncertainty makes this loan request necessary to support the ongoing operations of the Applicant."

Following explains Presbytery need for PPP loan.

Due to CORVID caused uncertainty of investment performance and per capita income, undefined upcoming expenses, current budget deficit, and declining membership trends, the Presbytery needs PPP loan to support ongoing operations

Specifically,

- Presbytery operating funds investments are down (about 15%) due to CORVID impact on stock market. Future direction of the stock market is uncertain.
- Presbytery income from per capita payments is uncertain. The amount of per capita that churches are unable to pay will come from operating funds. Although the magnitude of this issue is unclear, it could be as much as 5% of the Presbytery operating funds in 2020.
- Uncertain, but expected to be significant, expenses associated with VanderKamp will be another mandatory draw on operating funds (likely to be in excess of 10% of operating funds)
- Current year budget deficit is uncertain but was expected to be in excess of \$100,000 or about 20% of operating funds. Due to COVID, the deficit will likely be greater than expected.

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 2 of 13

-- Presbytery membership in the future is uncertain. There has been a steady decline in membership for years but the impact of CORVID on churches could result in unanticipated closures. Lower membership results in less per capita income (given a cap on per capita of \$38.50).

In summary, in response to the uncertainty associated with Presbytery finances caused primarily by CORVID, Presbytery needs PPP loan to support ongoing operations.

Submitted by:

Gordon Howard, Treasurer

The following financial reports are attached for review and will be filed for audit:

1. Per Capita Report, Apr. 2020
2. Statement of Financial Position by Fund, April 2020
3. 2020 Presbytery Budget as of April 30

REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND PROPERTY WORK GROUP

On April 5, 2020, the Leadership Team approved a motion from the Finance and Property Work Group to waive Per Capita for one quarter for each church in the Presbytery in 2020 with the stipulation that churches who are able to make their Per Capita payments in full are encouraged to do so, and with the understanding that their portion of the forgiven Per Capita obligation will be added to a new fund designated to assisting churches with special needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Any church who has paid their 2020 Per Capita in full and would like to receive a refund of 25% of their per capita payment should contact Elder Bob Davenport (inspections4u@aol.com) or Elder Gordie Howard (ghoward1951@yahoo.com) with an email letter including: name of the church, statement that a refund is requested, date that session approved requesting the refund, and the name, position and contact information of the person submitting the email.

The above motion also included the stipulation that \$33,543 from the Mission Initiatives Fund would be transferred to the Operating Fund to cover this Per Capita waiver.

The demands placed on the Christian witness of our churches during this time of COVID-19 pandemic are great. We pray that this Per Capita forgiveness will assist you in your ministry.

Since COVID-19, meetings have been conducted virtually or by tele-conference.

Monthly financial reports were reviewed and will be filed for audit.

The Finance and Property Work Group offers the following two recommendations:

Electing Bob Davenport and Victor Jenkins to the ECA/CNYPCC boards

In view of the ECA/CNYPCC (Vanderkamp) board members' actions to resign on April 17, and in view of the extenuating circumstances surrounding the status of Vanderkamp, and in view of the Leadership Team's action on April 27, 2020 to appoint Robert Davenport and Victor Jenkins to the ECA and CNYPCC boards effective April 17, the Finance and Property Work Group moves that Presbytery hereby elect Robert Davenport and Victor Jenkins to three-year terms on the Ecumenical Camp Association board and the Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center effective beginning April 17, 2020.

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 3 of 13

Use of \$50,000

In view of the urgent need to establish adequate cash flow to meet the legal financial obligations of the Ecumenical Camp Association relative to Vanderkamp Center, the Finance and Property Work Group moves that the Presbytery approve expanding the use of the \$50,000 identified for the hiring of appropriate professional personnel to help Robert Davenport and Victor Jenkins resolve Vanderkamp issues to also include depositing monies into the ECA account, in collaboration with our two judicatory partners, in an effort to avoid potentially more costly and damaging liabilities in the months ahead. These monies would be handled as a loan to the ECA with the promise, secured in a legal note, that those monies would be recovered by Cayuga-Syracuse first before property assets are liquidated and distributed among the three partner judicatories.

Respectfully submitted,
Elder Bob Davenport, Chair
May 24th, 2020

ECUMENICAL CAMP ASSOCIATION REPORT TO THE PRESBYTERY OF CAYUGA-SYRACUSE

This is the initial report of elders Victor Jenkins and Robert Davenport to inform the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse of recent ECA activity.

The following excerpt from the April 27, 2020 minutes of the Leadership Team is a portion of the Finance and Property Work Group report regarding the matter of presbytery representation on the ECA and CNYPCC boards, commonly referred to as the "Vanderkamp Board."

Bob then introduced the matter of presbytery representation on the boards of the Ecumenical Camp Association (ECA) and the Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center (CNYPCC) with a recommendation that both Bob and Victor Jenkins be appointed to the two boards. To provide context, Bob reviewed the history of events leading to this recommendation.

The ECA board (commonly referred to as the Vanderkamp board) is comprised of three representatives each from the three stakeholder judicatories responsible for the program operations of Vanderkamp Center, namely the presbyteries of Utica and Cayuga-Syracuse and the Upstate New York Synod of ELCA. The CNYPCC board is comprised of representatives from only the presbyteries of Utica and Cayuga-Syracuse and is the owner of the real estate. For a number of years, presbytery persons elected to one board were automatically elected to serve on the other board for the same three-year term of service.

During discussions held by leadership representatives of the three judicatories beginning in the Fall of 2019 and in the months following regarding the viability of Vanderkamp, it was posited that each judicatory appoint or elect two new persons each to replace their current board representatives as soon as the way be clear with the objective of bringing fresh eyes and particular skill sets to assess the assets and liabilities of Vanderkamp Center, address the systemic issues which have been so challenging to the financial stability of Vanderkamp, and make recommendations regarding the future of Vanderkamp Center.

At the February 2020 meeting of Presbytery, elders Bob Davenport and Victor Jenkins, both members of the Finance and Property Work Group, were elected to represent Cayuga-Syracuse on the six-member Vanderkamp joint task force. Following this February meeting, and subsequent to the other judicatories selecting their representatives to this task force, each

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 4 of 13

judicatory's primary leader contacted their ECA board representatives to apprise them of the development of the task force. At their March 26, 2020 meeting, the ECA board moved, in part, "that as of close of business April 30, 2020, the Ecumenical Camp Association doing business as Vanderkamp in its current configuration ceases to exist...." The ECA board went on to discuss "dissolution" and decided to "wait to do so until instructed by the judicatories."

On the evening of April 17, 2020 the ECA board and the six-member task force (often referred to as the Team of Six) met together via Zoom in what was intended to be a getting-to-know-you meeting with the task force seeking background information from the ECA board and offering to assist the board as advisors in this time of transition. Unbeknown to Bob and Vic and the task force, and contrary to the ECA board's stated objectives in their minutes from March 26, the only action the ECA board was prepared to engage in on April 17 was to present a motion for the entire ECA board to resign immediately and leave the future of Vanderkamp in the hands of the task force and the three judicatories. The motion passed. The ECA board members resigned, closed the meeting, and left the Zoom call, leaving the task force to talk among themselves. Both Bob and Vic were surprised by this early motion. The task force had been prepared for a transition on April 30, the date indicated by the ECA board in their minutes of March 26. After the April 17 Zoom call the task force was faced with having to step up immediately in order that Vanderkamp Center not become more vulnerable than it already was.

In view of the above sequence of events, the Finance and Property Work Group presented the following motion to the Leadership Team:

"In consideration of the fact that Presbytery's current representatives on the Ecumenical Camp Association Board and the Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center Board have resigned effective April 17, 2020, the Finance and Property Work Group moves that the Leadership Team of the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse appoint elder Victor Jenkins and elder Robert Davenport to both the Ecumenical Camp Association Board and the Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center Board for three-year terms retroactively effective as of April 17, 2020."

Chairperson Lynn Jacques reminded the team that a second was not required and opened the floor for discussion of the motion. Elder Jackie Murphy, chair of the Camping Ministry Work Group, participated in the April 17 Zoom meeting, not as a board member but as a guest and advocate for Vanderkamp, and shared that the experience of the meeting was heart wrenching for her. Bob acknowledged that the ECA board has been in a difficult position regarding the status of Vanderkamp for some time and expressed empathy for those in our presbytery with strong emotional ties to Vanderkamp. Ben asked if the task force had met subsequent to April 17 and Bob replied yes. Ben also asked for additional clarification on the status of the two boards and how presbytery representatives are ordinarily elected or appointed. Linda Russell and Gordie Howard shared that the Leadership Team, acting on behalf of Presbytery, has made appointments to the Vanderkamp boards in the past. Ben expressed concern that while our current bylaws permit the Leadership Team to make these appointments, he had reservations about the bylaws. Karen Chamis pointed out that in New York State individual ECA board members can resign but they cannot unilaterally dissolve the board. She further pointed out that these boards need to be kept active in order to be able to deal with pending insurance matters and keep presbytery and the other judicatories protected.

*There being no further discussion, the chair called for the vote and the motion was **voted APPROVED.***

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 5 of 13

Bob then gave a brief recap of actions that the task force has taken up in the past couple weeks. Chairperson Jacques asked if camp operations would be shutting down if it were not for COVID-19. Bob explained that when presbytery's Administrative Commission made their decision in December when it recommended that camp operations continue and the campgrounds not be sold for two years, the AC was not in full possession of the data regarding demographics and markets or the camp's full financial picture for the past five years and thus did not have a complete picture of the status of Vanderkamp operations. In addition, our two partner judicatories stated unequivocally that they wanted out of Vanderkamp; one partner was on the record eight years ago as wanting to withdraw. Thus, COVID-19, with all its accompanying liabilities for a camp, was the final stamp on the inevitability of this development.

Subsequent to Presbytery's action in February appointing Bob and Vic to the Vanderkamp task force "Team of Six," our partner judicatories selected their representatives so that the Team of Six included:

Victor Jenkins	Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse
Bob Davenport	Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse
Shelly Coe	Presbytery of Utica
Heather Nunniker	Presbytery of Utica
Grey May	Upstate New York Synod of ELCA
Kathy Hill	Upstate New York Synod of ELCA

Subsequent to the resignations of the former ECA board members on April 17, the Leadership Team, at their April 27, 2020 meeting appointed Bob and Vic as new representatives of Cayuga-Syracuse to serve as members of the ECA board. Our partner judicatories have taken similar measures so that the six persons listed above could become functioning members of the ECA board.

As a newly constituted ECA board, the six members have elected the following as officers of the ECA board: President: Greg May; Vice-President: Bob Davenport; Treasurer: Shelly Coe; Secretary: Heather Nunniker. The new ECA board has met several times by video or conference call, met with the directors, and toured the camp.

Since the events of late April, the new ECA board has been working on a number of issues related to the status of Vanderkamp, including:

- Determining outstanding liabilities of Vanderkamp/ECA such as Director's back pay, return of collected rental deposits, insurance, utilities, solar contract etc.
- Researching and reviewing the solar contract(s) to ascertain if they are an asset or liability
- Reviewing the insurance policy to bring coverage up to date and reduce premiums
- Planning for the security of the grounds and buildings
- Solving a flooding issue caused by a beaver dam at the lake
- Resolving cash flow issues inasmuch as the total cash assets of the ECA as of April 17th 2020, per the Directors, was \$740.02.

Respectfully submitted,

Elder Bob Davenport
Elder Vic Jenkins

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 6 of 13

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT: elder Lynn Jacques, Chair

Since the last Presbytery meeting (February 15, 2020) the Leadership Team met three times. Our February 24, 2020 meeting was held at Robinson Elmwood United Church, 126 Terry Road, Syracuse NY 13219. There was no meeting held in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our April 27, 2020 and May 18, 2020 meetings were held via ZOOM in compliance with Standing Rule 4.01. A quorum was declared at each meeting.

February 24, 2020: **Present:** Elder Lynn Jacques (chair), Elder Linda Van Buskirk, (Vice Chair), Rev Diane Monger, Rev James Moore, Elder Mark Kasdor, Rev Patrick Heery (via phone until 7pm), Elder Neil Rotach, Elder Susun S. Smith, Rev Stephanie Weaver; **Ex-officio present:** Rev Tom Oak (Moderator), Rev Ben Fitzgerald-Fye (Stated Clerk, excused at 6:30pm), Rev Karen Chamis (Resource Presbyter), Elder Gordie Howard (Treasurer); **Excused** Elder Karen Fay, Elder Bob Davenport, Elder Jackie Murphy, Rev Monica Styron (Vice Moderator); **Absent** Elder Craig Williams.

April 27, 2020: **Present:** Elder Lynn Jacques (chair), Elder Linda Van Buskirk, (Vice Chair), Rev Diane Monger, Rev James Moore, Elder Bob Davenport, Elder Karen Fay, Elder Mark Kasdor, Elder Jackie Murphy, Elder Neil Rotach, Elder Susun S. Smith, Rev Stephanie Weaver; **Ex-officio present:** Rev Ben Fitzgerald-Fye (Stated Clerk), Elder Linda Russell (Associate Stated Clerk), Rev Karen Chamis (Resource Presbyter), Elder Gordie Howard (Treasurer); **Excused:** Rev Tom Oak (Moderator), Rev Patrick Heery; **Absent:** Rev Monica Styron (Vice Moderator), Elder Craig Williams.

May 18, 2020: **Present:** Elder Lynn Jacques (chair), Elder Linda Van Buskirk, (Vice Chair), Rev Diane Monger, Rev James Moore, Elder Bob Davenport, Elder Karen Fay, Elder Mark Kasdor, Rev Patrick Heery, Elder Neil Rotach, Elder Susun S. Smith, Rev Stephanie Weaver; **Ex-officio present:** Rev Tom Oak (Moderator), Rev Ben Fitzgerald-Fye (Stated Clerk), Elder Linda Russell (Associate Stated Clerk), Rev Karen Chamis (Resource Presbyter), Elder Gordie Howard (Treasurer); **Excused:** Rev Monica Styron (Vice Moderator), Elder Jackie Murphy; **Absent** Elder Craig Williams.

Actions taken by the Leadership Team on behalf of Presbytery

- 1) **Approved** the motion from Committee on Preparation of Ministry that Shavonn Lynch (Candidate under Care, Westminster-Auburn) be granted a \$2000 scholarship from the Fay Giddings fund.
- 2) **Approved** the motion from Committee on Preparation of Ministry that Dan Debrucker-Cota (Candidate under Care, Robinson Elmwood United) be granted a \$3500 scholarship from the Faye Giddings fund.
- 3) **Approved** the following motion via electronic vote on April 5, 2020

Motion: The Finance and Property Work Group moves:

- that the Leadership Team, as Trustees acting on behalf of Presbytery, waive Per Capita for one quarter for each church in the Presbytery in 2020;
- that Presbytery utilize monies in the "Mission Initiatives" fund, totaling \$52,767 as of February 29, 2020, to make up this 25% decrease in per capita giving by transferring up to \$33,543 from the "Mission Initiatives" fund to the Operating Fund and show an equal increase in the Per Capita income budget line in the 2020 Presbytery budget; and
- that those churches who are able to make their Per Capita payments in full are encouraged to do so with the understanding that their portion of the forgiven Per Capita obligation will be added to a new fund designated to assisting churches with special needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. ***Any church that has paid their Per Capita in full may request and will receive a refund of the 25% forgiveness portion of Per Capita referenced in this motion.***

Rationale: Given that the COVID-19 crisis will cause churches to possibly lose income from both congregational giving and a decrease in earnings from investments, the Finance and Property Work Group realize that our churches will be struggling financially. When the "Mission Initiatives" fund was developed following the sale of one of our churches, the purpose and parameters of its use were not specifically defined or restricted. The Finance and Property Work Group believes that using "Mission Initiatives" funds to provide some financial relief to our churches so that the mission of our churches might be sustained during this health and economic crises is an appropriate use of these funds.

4). **Approved** the motion to move the Presbytery meeting of May 12, 2020 to June 9th from 7-9 p.m. via Zoom."

5). Approved the motion that ***"the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse adopts the following addition [to] the Bylaws in order to allow for meetings via electronic means: The Presbytery may meet by electronic means if all members have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss and vote on business items."***

6). **Approved** the motion ***"The Finance and Property Work Group moves that the Leadership Team, acting as Trustees of the Presbytery, grant the F&P Work Group the authority through October 2020 to secure unencumbered loans to Presbytery which are intended to be converted into grants to the Presbytery, including but not limited to the CARES act Payroll Protection Program, and that Presbytery Treasurer Gordon Howard is hereby authorized to borrow in the name of the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse."***

7). **Approved** the motion ***"In consideration of the fact that Presbytery's current representatives on the Ecumenical Camp Association Board and the Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center Board have resigned effective April 17, 2020, the Finance and Property Work Group moves that the Leadership Team of the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse appoint elder Victor Jenkins and elder Robert Davenport to both the Ecumenical Camp Association Board and the Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center Board for three-year terms retroactively effective as of April 17, 2020."***

8) **Approved** the motion “to merge the position of Stated Clerk and Associate Stated Clerk back to one position.”

9). **Approved** the motion At Presbytery events/meetings, when an offering is collected that the host church donate one-half of the offering to the Care Fund.

Items of information from the Leadership Team:

New Worshipping Communities (NWC): Continue their work on the possibility of a Spanish-speaking NWC in Syracuse’s near Westside.

Committee on Representation: Rev James Moore, chairperson, has reached out to pastors and Clerks of Session requesting names of individuals who might be interested in serving presbytery, addressing certain categories for representation. Acknowledging the difficulty of diversity in the categories of ethnicity and probably age, others were listed: female-male, clergy-laity, marital status, LGBT, and theological perspective. No responses have been received. He also contributed an announcement in the Presbytery E-news.

Elder Rita Hooper (Fulton) attended the Mission and Ministries Commission, Synod of the Northeast Conference on January 31-February 1, 2020 as a guest observer (voice but no vote) in place of our elected representative who tendered his resignation with insufficient time to elect a voting replacement. Her full report has been submitted to the Leadership Team.

Respectfully submitted,
Elder Lynn Jacques
Chair, Leadership Team

REPORT OF THE RESOURCE PRESBYTER:

Friends – over the last few months I’ve learned that the Spirit was hard at work in you when you decided on calling my position the “Resource Presbyter”. I know I joked about it at first, suggesting that none of us knew exactly what that meant, but that title has become abundantly clear these last few months.

Since the beginning of the outbreak I’ve tried my best to put the very best of the available resources in the hands of church leadership – everything from deciphering the Payroll Protection Plan to interpreting guidelines for reopening. I’ve fielded calls on everything from how to set-up a Zoom meeting to simply praying with folks as they grieve.

The amazing thing is what you’ve done with the resources (either provided by me, or found amongst yourselves!) There are so many ways in which the congregations of this Presbytery and their leadership have continued to be the church in this world. From one end of this Presbytery to another folks have been fed physically as well as spiritually, folks have gathered regularly for worship and the church body has done the ministry of caring for those in their communities. In short? Our building may be temporarily shuttered... but the church continues to minister.

Rumor has it that our churches are closed.
Evidence suggests otherwise!

What happens next will require us all to reevaluate our individual ministries as well as that of the Presbytery. This constant reevaluation is adaptive work, and it is exhausting, but God has put leaders in our churches for such a time as this. Folks from around this Presbytery continue to learn new skills and new ways of reaching out to others. We are discovering anew what it means to be the church!

What happens next is not random – we still have agency.
We still have work that needs to be done.

I know much of this is frightening. The unknown often is. Remember that we do not do this alone – we do this ministry with one another, and the Advocate is in our midst. This is not only a good time to be the church, but a good time to be a connectional church. Be that for one another? Pray for each other? Share resources with each other?

Friends, I urge you much in the same way as the author of Hebrews to not give up meeting together... but remind you that we've learned there are many ways that we can do this. Keep on, keeping on!

I'm grateful to be with you in this place, and even in this time.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Karen Chamis
Resource Presbyter

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK:

Siblings in Christ,

We find ourselves in unusual, challenging, and tragic times and churches, church leaders, mid-council leaders, as well as denominational leaders have been working to adapt to the demands of a time now defined by the Covid-19 virus. We are witnessing disease, suffering, and death in numbers that shock, human suffering and loss that is incomprehensible and overwhelming, and our souls ache for the sick, the dying, the dead, and those who mourn. It is in this moment that I write a "report" that simply cannot be business as usual. Of course, the daily work of the Stated Clerk goes on; but, it is expanded by the needs and the challenges of the moment. It is also newly defined by the call on the church to adapt and to faithfully remain present in the lives of our membership, our churches, our leaders, and our congregations. To that end, I submit the following updates and considerations:

- The church is not closed, the church never closes. The church is adapting to a moment in history, to the needs of that moment. As our PCUSA GA Stated Clerk reminds us, "We are not dying, we are reforming." We may not have chosen this moment or this method of reform; and yet, we are seeing churches adapt in ways that speak to the creativity, faithfulness, love, and energy of the church.
- We will continue to review both the state guidelines and CDC guidelines as they relate to places of worship and group gatherings. That said, our decisions related to returning to buildings cannot be guided by politics or pressure but by data, scientific reality, and a Christ-centered compassion for the most vulnerable among us. As your Stated Clerk, I have been and continue to be here to help you through these conversations and to offer guidance and recommendations as I am able.

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 10 of 13

- Mid-Council leadership has been actively discussing the current state of the church and we continue to talk and meet and engage in discussions aimed at doing what is both safe and securely anchored in the aims of the church and our constitutional documents.
- It has been my honor to work with our Resource Presbyter and our leaders, hopefully offering useful guidance and support, over the last weeks and I look forward to continuing that work as we move forward.
- Karen, myself, Tom, and others have been working to make sure our first online presbytery meeting is efficient, effective, and successful to all who participate.
- As work groups meet online, I have been happy to be a resource and to serve in my ex-officio capacity to offer guidance on the polity and policy concerns of the “new way.”
- As the challenges of pandemic shape our practices, we are also finding that new ways of doing business and new approaches to the work of the presbytery have offered us some opportunities to look closer at how we function now and in the future. That said, we all look forward to being present with one another in that same future.
- As your Stated Clerk, my covenant with you is that this moment will be met with a dedication to the principles of our foundations, to the ideal that polity is a source of liberation and creativity in times like these, and to the guiding example of Christ calling us to lead with purpose, compassion, humility, and faith. I hope, as we move through this time together, that I can be a voice of reform, restoration, and renewal anchored in the polity and the aims of the church.
- Finally, we will get through this! No matter how long this lasts, we will be the church no matter what!

Even in the uncertainty of this moment, I cannot help but rejoice in the work of the church as a voice of reason, responsibility, and rationality in a chaotic time. I pray you are well, I pray you are safe, and I pray the presence and comfort of God’s Holy Spirit is with you always. As the work of the church goes on, let us commit ourselves to pray for all, to comfort all, to work for all, and to serve all to the absolute best of our abilities. Know that I am here for you in whatever way I can be of help. May the peace and love of Jesus Christ be with you all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Ben Fitzgerald-Fye
Stated Clerk

REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE STATED CLERK:

1. This meeting, as stipulated in Article V of the bylaws and standing rules, constitutes the **annual corporate meeting of the Presbytery**. There is no business of a strictly corporate nature that needs to come before us, but the minutes need to record that the annual meeting of the corporation was held as required.
2. There are several “annual things” to be reported to Presbytery at its annual stated meeting:
 - a. Location of stored Presbytery minutes
The Presbyterian Historical Society has the following minutes on deposit from the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse:
Middle Association (Presbytery) Records of Ministers and Churches on the Military Tract and its vicinity – 1 volume, from May 29, 1804 to September 5, 1810. (*Note: The Middle*

CONSENT AGENDA

Association united with the Presbytery of Geneva to form the Presbytery of Cayuga on October 4, 1810)

Presbytery of Cayuga – 16 volumes of minutes, from 1811-1955

Presbytery of Syracuse – 5 volumes of minutes, from 1887-1892, 1906-1909, 1927-1956

Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse – 4 volumes of minutes, from 1961-1968, 1989-2000

The Presbytery has bound books of copies of its minutes stored in the Presbytery's storage room at the offices of the Synod of the Northeast, as follows:

September 24, 1968 – April 30, 1974

June 10, 1974 – March 31, 1979

June 19, 1979 – January 28, 1984

March 20, 1984 – November 12, 1988

January 21, 1989 – November 16, 1993

January 22, 1994 – September 23, 1997

November 25, 1997 – November 28, 2000

The Presbytery has minutes in archival boxes stored in the Presbytery's storage room at the offices of the Synod of the Northeast, as follows:

January 27, 2001 – November 17, 2009

The Presbytery has a bound book of its minutes stored in the Presbytery's storage room at the offices of the Synod of the Northeast, as follows:

January 23, 2010 – January 21, 2012

The Presbytery has minutes in archival boxes stored in the Presbytery's storage room at the offices of the Synod of the Northeast, as follows:

March 27, 2012 – November 3, 2018.

The minutes of 2019 are currently available only in digital form from the Stated Clerk. Hard copies will be added to the archival boxes in the Presbytery's storage room at the offices of the Synod of the Northeast when COVID-19 restrictions allow access to that office.

b. Presbytery Policies:

- Child and Youth Protection Policy was adopted May 20, 2017.
- Policy Statement and Procedures on Ministerial Misconduct from 2009 are being updated.
- Sexual Harassment Policy, compliant with New York State Law, was adopted September 23, 2019.
- Most recent revision of Bylaws and Standing Rules is August 13, 2019.

c. Former members of the Permanent Judicial Commission whose terms have expired within the last six years (arranged alphabetically within classes, beginning with the most recent class):

Class of 2019: Elder Tina Casella (Fulton)

Class of 2017: Elder Fred Marty, Teaching elders Andrew McTyre (Park Central) and Kathleen Waters (at-large)

Class of 2015: Teaching elder Karen Dimon, ruling elder Edward Fauler (Liverpool)

Class of 2013: Teaching elder Harold Abram, ruling elder Norman Hatt (Fayetteville)

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 12 of 13

3. **Presbytery Annual Reports to GA:** All required annual reports for 2019 were filed with the General Assembly within the prescribed time requirements. These include: Minister Summary, Church Summary, Miscellaneous, and Middle Governing Body Cost forms.
4. **Session Annual Statistical Reports:** At the close of the 2019 statistical reporting season, 37 of 37 sessions successfully completed their report to General Assembly for 2019, for a completion rate of 100% - for the second year in a row. I extend my gratitude to the clerks of session and pastors who contributed their time and attention to this successful project.
5. The **Presbytery's Annual Statistical Report** will be included as an **appendix** to the minutes. Recognizing that some entries in individual church reports are factually accurate while others are best guestimates, the following are a few observations from Presbytery's 2019 Statistical Report.
 - Total membership as of December 31 is recorded as 3222, a decrease of 8% from 2018.
 - Congregations reported 68 gains (certificate, youth/adult professions, reaffirmations) and 331 losses (death, transfer, adjusted rolls, other reasons).
 - 40 baptisms (infant-adult) were reported.
 - Average weekly worship attendance was approximately 50% of total membership.
 - Female members made up approximately 60% of total membership.
 - Members over age 55 made up approximately 64% of total membership.
 - Churches recorded 457 members with an impairment (hearing, sight, mobility, other).
 - 265 elders served on sessions/boards.
 - 22 of Presbytery's 37 churches have Deacons, 15 do not.
 - Christian education participation recorded approximately 41% adult and 59% all other ages.
 - Racial ethnic distribution was recorded as 92% white, 8% all other, including 108 Asian, 44 Black, 6 Middle Eastern, 3 Hispanic, 5 Native American, 105 multiracial.
 - Annual reported income of the 37 churches totaled \$6,306,065.
 - Annual reported expenses of the 37 churches totaled \$6,200,725, distributed as follows: Mission=6%, Personnel=62%, Facilities=22%, Other=10%.
6. **Synod Review of Presbytery Minutes:** I prepared for Synod review the presbytery's minutes for the six meetings held in 2019 (regular stated meetings in February, May, August, and November; and special called meetings in July and October) and participated in a three-way exchange of minutes with the presbyteries of Susquehanna Valley and Southern New England. I reviewed the minutes of Susquehanna Valley and the Stated Clerk of Southern New England reviewed the minutes of Cayuga-Syracuse. These peer reviews were done in preparation for a video meeting of presbytery stated clerks from throughout the Synod on April 29. During this meeting we shared our reviews with the large group, shared insights and best practices with one another, and offered support to one another during this difficult time of pandemic.

Our 2019 minutes were approved "without exception."

Comments in the written review include:

- "The minutes of the special meeting on October 5 [installation service of Resource Presbyter Karen Chamis] do not include the attestation of a quorum, though it may be inferred from the roll."
- "The annual review of reports of members engaged in ministry outside the church, required by the Book of Order, is not recorded. The reviewer does not find a specific Constitutional requirement that this annual review must be recorded in the minutes, but it would be helpful to show that it is taking place."

CONSENT AGENDA

Presbytery of Cayuga- Syracuse Stated Meeting - June 9, 2020

Page 13 of 13

- “Minutes are clear, concise, and give an encouraging picture of the Presbytery’s ongoing work and its community life.”

Things that the reviewer found “commendable that the Presbytery is doing” include:

- “The integration of the Matthew 25 Initiative with both the business and worship of the November Stated Meeting shows the Presbytery’s enthusiasm for embracing this invitation from the Presbyterian Mission Agency.”
- “The regular inclusion of the Lord’s Supper at Stated Meetings.”

7. **Vanderkamp:** I have been assisting, and have been asked to continue assisting, Bob Davenport and Victor Jenkins in their work as Presbytery representatives working on the status and next steps for Vanderkamp by participating in group conference/video calls, reviewing the history of the camp and the history of the ECA (Ecumenical Camp Association) and CNYPCC (Central New York Presbyterian Conference Center) boards, and researching presbytery records for recorded actions and other related information.

8. **Administrative Support:**

- a. Prepared minutes of the Leadership Team meetings for January, February and April 2020.
- b. Prepared minutes of the February 2020 presbytery meeting.
- c. Fielded a variety of phone calls and emails to Presbytery from folks seeking information and provided the information or redirected the inquirer to another source.
- d. Assisted Human Resources, Finance and Property, the treasurer, the bookkeeper and the Resource Presbyter with matters related to Paychex, Board of Pensions, automatic recurring credit card charges, the PPP loan application, and per capita among others.

9. **Overture:** The overture regarding a Peace Treaty for Korea [OVT #011] which this presbytery submitted to the 224th General Assembly (2020) has been referred to the 225th General Assembly due to the abbreviated docket resulting from COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

It has been my privilege to serve the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse as Associate Stated Clerk for Administration this past year. I will be forever grateful to God, and to you, my sisters and brothers in the Presbytery, for trusting me with this responsibility and for the “one-anothering” which made this service rewarding. Thank you. And may God continue to bless us in all that lies ahead.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda S. Russell