

PRE-MEETING INFORMATION FOR November 17, 2020 STATED PRESBYTERY MEETING

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK

The following are presented for information:

1. The next stated meeting of Albany Presbytery will be held on **Saturday, January 23, 2020**. This meeting will happen on Zoom. The meeting will convene for business at 10:00 a.m. and will adjourn around 1:00 p.m. This meeting will focus primarily on business with worship.

The meeting dates for the rest of 2021 are as follows: March 16, June 5, September 18, and November 3, 2021. The locations, times, and content of the meetings is TBD. It is very likely the March meeting will happen on Zoom.

2. **As required by G-3.0109, the Board of Trustees and the Committee on Ministers and Congregations report to the Stated Clerk if they exercise some of the commission powers that have been granted to them and actions they have taken on behalf of the Presbytery. Those actions are duly reported to the Presbytery for information and inclusion in the minutes of the Presbytery. Neither the Board of Trustees nor COMAC have exercised any of their commission powers since the last Presbytery meeting.**

TEMPORARY PRESBYTERY REPORT

See separate report document posted to the website.

COORDINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The following are presented to the Presbytery for information:

1. The Coordination Committee met by video conference call using Zoom Video Conferencing on October 8, 2020. The Coordination Committee will meet next by video conference call on Thursday, November 12, 2020.
2. Discussions during the conference calls have centered primarily on communicating relevant information between committees and to Presbytery members in a timely fashion; coordination with those working on plans for future convocations and retreats; how to coordinate and support our churches during

this pandemic period; and planning for the implementation of the Anti-Racism Task Force.

3. The Coordination Committee discussed when to resume in-person Presbytery meetings and whether or not all winter meetings in the future should be held virtually. The January meeting of 2021 will be held on Zoom, and it is probable that the March 2021 will be as well.
4. The Koinonia team hosted a workshop on October 3, in which the Rev. Dr. James Calvin Davis led a presentation and a discussion about his book *Forbearance: A Theological Ethic for a Disagreeable Church*. Extra copies of the book are still available for purchase. Please contact RE Judy Hartley, Vice Moderator, to get a copy. If you missed it, the keynote address from the Rev. Dr. Davis is still available here: <https://albanypresbytery.org/forbearance-a-theological-ethic-for-a-disagreeable-church-video-lecture-page/>. This 45-minute lecture is highly recommended for all church leaders, regardless of whether or not you have read the book.
5. Due to the timing of the premeeting packet being released on November 7 and the meeting of the Coordination Committee scheduled on the November 12, it is likely that a supplemental report will be posted to the Presbytery website after November 12.
6. The officers including Temporary Presbyter Bill Henderson and Immediate Past-Moderator Kate Kotfila meet as the Executive Committee of the Presbytery about 1 week before each Coordination Committee conference call to discuss matters of concern; to plan for Coordination Committee meetings; and to help with the coordination and implementation of the vision, ministry, and mission of the Presbytery as authorized by the Coordination Committee and provided by Standing Rule III.B.

The following are presented to Presbytery for consideration:

1. The New England Congregational Presbyterian Church (Saratoga) asked the Presbytery to consider endorsing the International Sanctuary Principles Statement. The document is available on the Presbytery website. It will be presented at this meeting for a second reading.

REPORT ON THE 2020 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

The Rev. Kukjin An, one of the Presbytery's minister commissioners, will share an oral report on the Synod Assembly held on Zoom on October 23 and 24.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTERS AND CONGREGATIONS (COMAC) **REPORT**

The following items are presented to the Presbytery for information:

1. COMAC on Zoom video conference on October 8. The committee will meet next on November 12 and December 10, 2020.
2. Recognizing this has been a difficult year for both congregations and ministers, **COMAC will not recommend the Presbytery ACT to raise minimum terms of call for 2021 but is asking congregations to consider a minimum of a 1.5%, but preferably 3%, cost of living adjustment**, if possible. Next year, assuming a return to more normal conditions, COMAC will raise minimum terms of call and recommend at cost of living increase for the two years. If an adjustment, increase, or raise is difficult, COMAC requests congregations consider creative ways to help their pastor, such as a healthcare fund, childcare assistance, etc.
3. **Trustee/COMAC Task Force for Churches in Need:** COMAC is assisting in the creation of this task force. It has become clear that it is an ongoing necessity to do a church assessment every three years to evaluate the health of the congregation. This process has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. COMAC edited the **COM Manual**, which is currently only accessible to COMAC members as a document in the committee's Dropbox, to change "COM" to "COMAC". A more substantial revision is currently in process. Once the editing is completed, it will be posted to the Presbytery web site.
5. **Listening teams:** COMAC has two continuing listening teams: one in Washington County and one for the Brunswick Presbyterian Church.
6. Due to the timing of the premeeting packet being released on November 7 and the meeting of the COMAC scheduled on the November 12, it is possible that a supplemental report will be posted to the Presbytery website after November 12.

The following are presented to Presbytery for consideration and action:

1. **Honorarium Level for Approved Preaching List:** COMAC recommends that the Presbytery ACT to raise the minimum honorarium for temporary supply preachers be from \$150 to \$175 plus mileage.

COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION AND NOMINATIONS

The Committee presents the following nominations for the positions noted:

1. Committee on Leadership Development – Rev. Christine Dungan, class of 2023
2. Due to the timing of the premeeting packet being released on November 7 and the meeting of the Committee on Representations and Nominations scheduled on the November 12, it is possible that a supplemental report will be posted to the Presbytery website after November 11.

COMMITTEE ON CHURCH MISSION REPORT

See separate report document posted to the website.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The following are presented to the Presbytery for information:

1. The Personnel Committee has been accepting application for the Communications Manager position. The committee is close to finalizing a new hire and may be able to announce the person at this meeting.
2. Jennifer Schoenfisch has announced her resignation effective at the end of October. The Personnel Committee thanks her for 5 years of excellent service. She will be greatly missed. Plans are being made to celebrate her.

COMMITTEE ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

See separate report document to be posted to the website, if available.

COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT

The 2021 budget will be presented for a second reading, consideration, and action. See separate report document to be posted to the website.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The following are presented to the Presbytery for information:

1. The Board met on October 7 and November 4 via Zoom.

2. The Board continues to meet regularly with representatives from the Budget and Finance Committee to discuss financial and accounting.
3. The Board continues to deal with property related matters and the significant financial losses incurred when trying to sell the vacant church properties that become their responsibility to maintain and insure when congregations are dissolved.
4. Trustee Don Drew expressed a willingness to be the trustee representative for the discussion of how to advise and deal with churches who no longer can afford their church buildings nor are able to sustain growth in their church.
5. **Carlisle Property Sale:** On October 31, 2020 this property was sold, with the presbytery holding a \$39,000 mortgage for seven years.
6. **Waterford Church:** The trustees have received purchase offers on both the church building and the church manse. In addition, the presbytery was given permission to sell the property by the New York Council of the American Baptist Church. The Waterford Church was a union church, so the proceeds from any sale of property will be split between Albany Presbytery and the ABC.
7. **Technology Grant Program:** The Board is offering a grant to pay 50% of a congregation's cost up to \$5000 for equipment and software to provide hybrid streaming and online worship services. **As of the November meeting, the Temporary Presbyter reported that thus far the trustees have issued grants totaling \$26,000 given to 9 churches thus far.** The Rev. John McAuley will work with the Temporary Presbyter to review the grant applications requested by churches.
8. **Schaghticoke United Church:** The trustees approved a grant/loan request from the Schaghticoke United Church to replace their furnace.
9. **Bequest:** The Presbytery received a bequest amount from the estate of Georgia Hutchinson, who was a member of the former Gloversville Presbyterian Church, in the amount of \$8,333.
10. **Important information for all congregations:** Churches should be aware that several insurance carriers are requiring that a church install a water monitoring unit in the church to prevent flooding due to a burst pipe, leaking furnace system, etc. Be sure to check with your insurer.

COMMITTEE ON CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND VITALITY

See separate report document to be posted to the website, if available.

WORSHIP

Worship will occur during this meeting. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated, so please log in to the Zoom meeting prepared with something bread-like to eat (such as bread, roll, cracker, tortilla, etc.) and something to drink (such as wine, grape juice, or other fruit juice). RE Darren Gundrum will be preaching. The installation of RE Judy Hartley (Albany, Westminster) as moderator and the Rev. Kathryn Bielke will take place. The offering will help fund the Presbytery's Anti-Racism Task Force. Contributions can be made online at <https://albanypresbytery.org/donate/>. Include Anti-Racism Task Force in the memo field.