

Temporary Presbyter's Report – November 2020

The last two months have been busy for our pastors and churches. It is stewardship season and trying to do that successfully in the midst of the pandemic has been a challenge. We are all learning together what it truly means to be the Church, even when things are no longer normal (as we used to measure 'normal')

Ministers Zoom Calls

Our serving ministers continue to meet weekly via Zoom. This has provided opportunities to discuss a diverse, but important, range of topics. Topics have included: the Synod of the Northeast meeting in October, the bankruptcy of the national Boy Scouts of America corporation, the impact of COVID 'hotspots' and school closings on in-person church services, the election and the division in our society (and local communities), and how to prepare for Advent and Christmas services this year.

Support of Ministers and Congregations

As of October 31, the Trustees had given out \$26,000 in grants to churches in the presbytery to help support technological upgrades that will enable them to reach out to their members and their community through their on-line worship services. The matching grants are up to \$5,000 in funds that match the congregation's investment. To date nine churches have benefitted from the grants. We expect the grant application to remain open through the end of 2020.

Our chaplain Rev. Beth Illingworth led a weekly series of centering prayer time for our ministers in October to help them be refreshed in the quiet of prayer.

Boy Scouts of America

As you are likely aware the BSA national organization goes into bankruptcy November 16, 2020. At the very least your session should be aware of this fact and possible impacts on your congregation. Two information sheets are attached to help you in reviewing this matter.

Appreciation for our Office Manager Jennifer Schoenfisch

For the last five years Jennifer has served us and our congregations with her friendly personality and always helpful support. She has been the voice of the presbytery on the phone and was always present at our meetings. After Kim Deal took a new job, Jennifer picked up many of the communications responsibilities for the presbytery – from Mailchimp to our website. Jennifer decided to resign from her position on October 31 with the presbytery to seek other opportunities. We want Jennifer to know as she leaves us how much we all appreciate the work she has done, how she will be missed and how much we wish her well!

Respectfully submitted,

RE Bill Henderson
Temporary Presbyter
Albany Presbytery