

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY ROUNDTABLE
January 16, 2020**

The Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England met in the Smart Room of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order with prayer and opening devotions at 9:45 a.m. by the Co-Chair of the Roundtable, the Rev. Jinny Smanik, and Elder Lisa Baker.

A **QUORUM** was present.

Present were: Julie Emery, Virginia Smanik, J. C. Cadwallader, Barbara Riihimaki, Lisa Baker.

Present via Zoom teleconference were: Dick Hasbany, Ruth Herron Smalt, Chris Tate, and Kevin White.

Also present were: ex-officio members Shannan Vance-Ocampo, General Presbyter; David Baer, Stated Clerk (via Zoom teleconference).

Excused were: Steve Hart; John Merz; Phillip Phiri, Treasurer of the Presbytery; and John Sweet.

Absent was: Sean Miller.

A **QUORUM** of the Roundtable was present.

The agenda for the meeting was **ADOPTED** as presented.

The minutes of the December 12, 2019, meeting of the Roundtable were **APPROVED** with corrections.

The General Presbyter presented her report. She suggested that the review of the Moderator and Vice Moderator job descriptions be postponed until the February meeting. She noted that the Emerging Ministries Team has not been staffed yet. Ms. Vance-Ocampo reported that she had heard from Katia Dacunha, at the Brazilian Presbyterian Church (fellowship) in Hyannis, which is planning on launching a new English-language worshiping community focused on art therapy. Ms. Vance-Ocampo asked for authorization to present the grant application for this new community on behalf of the Presbytery.

Upon a motion properly made and seconded, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **AUTHORIZE** the General Presbyter to attest to the grant request.

Ms. Vance-Ocampo provided an update on her efforts to pursue a grant from the Synod of the Northeast. She expressed her disappointment at the synod's lack of response, though noted that one of the synod staff members is experiencing significant health challenges.

Upon a motion properly made and seconded, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **AUTHORIZE** the use of the Cranston Fund to replace the portion of the support for the MLK church that was to come from the Synod of the Northeast, while the synod grant request is still in process.

Ms. Vance-Ocampo presented a proposal for a mandate for a new Anti-Racism Equity Committee, which emerged from the anti-racism training event on Saturday, January 4. Upon a motion properly made and seconded, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **ADOPT** the following:

Draft Mandate to the Committee:

You are mandated to work towards the creation of an inclusive, equitable, antiracist culture within the PSNE that will be attractive to all people in particular those who have been systematically excluded from full participation in the presbytery as we seek to be co-creators with Christ of a just, peaceful and healed world/creation.

NOTE: Originally “antiracist” was not in this draft and there was discussion about where/if it should be added. I added it above.

Working groups conclusions:

- Size: 9 – 11 people
- Composition:
 - 3 people who have been a part of this conversation
 - 3 early adopters
 - 3 respected stakeholders of the presbytery
 - Gender, age, reason, ordained, not ordained, white, and not-white
 - Aim for 50/50, 40/60 white, non-white – give the nominating committee a recommendation
 - Classes
- Year One – Work with Jessica; after a year, will reassess where they will need to go
- 30% of 9-11 people will shift in 3 years. That way it doesn’t become a club.
- 2 year, 3, year, 4 year term with a maximum of 6 years
- Don’t want the tendency for this to become a club. This will seem like the club of the people that “figured it out.” And pushes the group to think about what are we building, because in two years these folks will have to step out

This is more of a transition about grief than it is about conflict. Awakening people to the fact that they are in a club---and that can cause grief when realizing the not as good impacts. Transition of becoming.

Ms. Vance-Ocampo noted that she and the Stated Clerk, the Rev. David Baer, have begun monthly coaching with Jessica Vasquez-Torres of Crossroads Anti-Racism. She is working to visit the Presbytery's churches, with a view toward emphasizing these themes in her preaching.

The Rev. Chris Tate reported on the work of the Nominating Committee. They have identified a potential nominee to serve on the Board of Trustees, and as President of the Corporation. He requested that those who chair committees fill out an online survey, which he said would assist the Nominating Committee in connecting individuals in our Presbytery with roles on the various committees of the Presbytery.

Mr. Tate reported that Ashley Aronson, the Presbytery's alternate Young Adult Advisory Delegate to the General Assembly, asked to be released from that responsibility, as she can no longer guarantee her availability on the week of General Assembly. The Committee could nominate another alternate YAAD.

The Stated Clerk, the Rev. David Baer, gave his report, reminding the Roundtable about the active disciplinary investigations that are continuing. He reviewed the schedule of stated meetings of the Presbytery and the Roundtable established by the Roundtable for the current year, and he presented a proposed docket for the next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery, to be held at the First Presbyterian Church of New Haven on March 11. Members of the Roundtable provided feedback on the proposed docket, which will be taken up again at the Roundtable's next meeting on February 6.

Elder Barbara Riihimaki provided a report on the work of the Committee on Ministry. The Committee anticipates bringing a minister before the Presbytery in March, to be received as a member. She noted that the Rev. Rich Reifsnyder had agreed to serve as acting co-chair, while the Rev. Sean Miller is on leave.

The Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo gave the report of the Personnel Committee, on behalf of the Rev. John Merz, who was excused from this meeting. The search committee for a Presbytery Communicator is nearing completion, with three very promising finalists. The search team has requested an opinion from the Roundtable as to whether the search committee should consider a candidate who does not reside within the bounds of the Presbytery, as is the case with one of the three finalists. The members of the Roundtable expressed the need to weigh skills and proximity, and to take into consideration the impact of recent staffing changes on the emotional system of the Presbytery.

The Roundtable turned to a discussion of the use of time set aside for Open Space for anti-racism work during the coming year. Perhaps there could be a panel discussion featuring those who had participated in anti-racism training over the past year. The Presbytery might also

engage in the “Blanket Exercise,” which demonstrates the dispossession of indigenous peoples’ land by European-descended settlers in North America. Upon a motion properly made and seconded, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **REPLACE** Open Space with a time focused on anti-racism to be named “Connecting Our Conversations,” for Presbytery meetings held in 2020.

The Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo spoke briefly about the work of the Mission/Vision Team formed in response to the Landscape survey. The team has suffered the attrition of a few of its members. She hopes to convene the team before the next Roundtable meeting, and thereafter to provide a fuller assessment about where they are.

The Rev. Virginia Smanik shared with the Roundtable a thank-you note from Pam Garner, the former Presbytery Administrator. Ms. Garner expressed her gratitude for the celebration of her years of service at the November Stated Meeting of the Presbytery, and for the farewell gift she received.

Elder Lisa Baker reminded the Roundtable the Ms. Garner had been designated for a special role in the Presbytery’s Disaster Preparedness Plan, and needs to be replaced in that role. The Roundtable will examine the plan at the next meeting.

The Roundtable adjourned at 11:40 a.m., led in closing prayer by the Rev. Julie Emery.

Respectfully submitted,

-signed-

Rev. David A. Baer, Stated Clerk

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY ROUNDTABLE
January 30, 2020**

The Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England met via Zoom teleconference. The meeting was called to order with prayer at 4:05 p.m. by the Co-Chair of the Roundtable, the Rev. Julie Emery.

A **QUORUM** was present.

Present were: Julie Emery, Virginia Smanik, John Merz, Barbara Riihimaki, Ruth Herron Smalt, and Chris Tate.

Also present were: *ex-officio* members Shannan Vance-Ocampo, General Presbyter; David Baer, Stated Clerk; and Phillip Phiri, Treasurer of the Presbytery. In addition, the Roundtable welcomed Steve Crocco, Chair of the Presbytery Communicator Search Team.

Excused were: Kevin White, J.C. Cadwallader, and Dick Hasbany.

Absent were: Lisa Baker, Sean Miller, and John Sweet.

A **QUORUM** of the Roundtable was present.

The purpose of the Special Meeting, as communicated in the call, was to act on the joint recommendation of the Communications Manager Search Team and the Personnel Committee, who

The Rev. John Merz, the chair of the Personnel Committee, reported that the Communications Manager Search Team had concluded its search, and was recommending as a finalist for the position Ms. Erika Plank Hagan, whose materials are attached to these minutes (Attachment 1). Upon a motion on behalf of the Personnel Committee, and with the recommendation of the search team, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **ENGAGE** Ms. Hagan as the Communications Manager of the Presbytery, according to the terms in the attached position description (Attachment 2), which was adopted at the Roundtable's Stated Meeting on October 10, 2019.

The Roundtable adjourned with prayer at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

-signed-

Rev. David A. Baer, Stated Clerk

Attachment 1

November 20, 2019

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in application for the Communications Manager job for the Presbytery of Southern New England. Please see my attached resume and marketing campaign examples for your review.

I believe my skill set is an excellent match for your needs. I am an experienced telecommuter, with strong time-management and task-management skills. I am comfortable with church organization and structure and have experience with Presbyterian church administration specifically. I have helped organizations as varied as theatres, fitness franchises, health and wellness sales, and churches put their ideas and information out into the world and have given them the tools to assess how the message is being received.

As a passion project, I have created an online presence, Eating Liturgically, to explore my own interest in mindful meal planning around the Episcopal Liturgical calendar. This gives me an opportunity to not only do my Eating Liturgically rituals, but to share it with others, and to practice and learn the tools used to communicate spiritual and Christian content. I can see in real time how the same content works in a blog, in a Facebook post, in an Instagram post, and in a newsletter – subtle differences that inform my communications work – professional, personal, and volunteer – moving forward.

The task of creating a communications plan is exciting. It involves not only knowing how to communicate, but awareness of who you are communicating to and what key points you want to get across. I do have experience in communications across the spectrum from traditional print media to social media, but more importantly, I have experience in audience development from my time in non-profit arts management through my volunteer work with the Southwestern Region Leadership Team with the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.

I was especially pleased to read that quarterly assessment of the new communication plan was built into this job description. Thoughtful discernment is essential to creating a relationship, and that is at its core what a communication and marketing plan is – it's building a relationship between an organization and its audience. That assessment and changes are expected as part of the process, and not feared as signs of failure, speaks to an environment where I can do my very best work.

My current supervisor, the Reverend Kathryn Kibbie Laird at First Presbyterian Church in New Canaan, is aware of my application and is happy to be a reference for me. I enjoy my work at FPCNC a great deal; my application to you isn't a desire to quit my current job but is a response to my genuine interest and excitement at the work the Communications Manager for the Presbytery of Southern New England would need to do.

I look forward to speaking with you about this opportunity.

Peace,

Erika Plank Hagan

Attachment 1

Erika Plank Hagan

I help big-picture people and projects with the small, organized, details it takes to get the job done.

15 Lakeside Drive Extension
Ridgefield, CT 06877
(203) 295-1375
erikaplankhagan@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Kenyon College, Gambier, OH — B.A., May 2001, Magna Cum Laude
Major: Drama - theatre and dance production, arts management.

Hartford Seminary, Hartford, CT — pursuing M.A. in Religious Studies.
Anticipated completion Summer 2022.

RECENT WORK EXPERIENCE

First Presbyterian Church, New Canaan, CT — Administrative Assistant

October 2015 - present

Administration of the weekly "Tidings" e-newsletter: solicit and proofread content from church staff, hyperlinks to church website content, weekly MailChimp campaign, cross-post across church social media accounts

Annual Lenten Meditations administration – take content from Pastors, design templates for e-mail and social media distribution, schedule daily e-mails and social media posts, follow up with responses and engagements from community.

Planning and administration of Youth Group Mission Trips: travel tickets and itineraries, purchasing supplies for mission projects and shipping to international destinations, coordinating registrations and payments of participants, managing Mission Trip fundraising "Stock Sale" campaign.

Administration of Youth Group Mission and Fellowship Events: marketing to youth in the congregation and surrounding community, promotion of events to local media, ordering and managing supplies, tracking Youth Group budgeting, administration of Youth Group social media accounts.

Church School Administration – managing volunteer teachers scheduling and training, assigning Spark Lesson plans for each Sunday to coordinate with liturgical calendar, ordering and organizing supplies for each lesson, creating monthly "Church School Newsletter" MailChimp campaign.

Monthly Expense Reports for Associate Rector, Youth Groups, and Church School expenses.

SKILLS

Administrative:

Office Management, Mass Mailing, Proofreading, Facilities Management, Accounting, Online and Library research, Data entry, Front Desk Reception, Cold Calling, Multi-line and PBX Systems; Emergency Dispatch

Marketing:

Promotional Campaigns, Print Advertisements, Press Releases, Social Media (Facebook, twitter, Instagram), Grassroots Marketing

Information Technology:

Microsoft Word, Outlook, Excel, Access/SQL Database, WordPress, Google Docs, HTML Website Design, Quicken/QuickBooks, PayPal

Theatrical:

Stage Management, Box Office, Tour Booking, Audience Development, Production Management

Attachment 1

Jazzercise, Inc, Carlsbad, CA — Jazzercise Franchisee

November 2003-present

As sole proprietor of a Connecticut Jazzercise fitness franchise:

- Fitness Educator: learn and teach continually updated Jazzercise choreography and class formats to all skill levels.
- Management: volunteer and contract workers (associate instructors, customer service representatives, and childcare).
- Marketing: plan and implement multi-platform marketing with awareness of the local community and to tie into national Jazzercise promotional campaigns.
- Accounting: sales, franchise fees, taxes, insurance, music royalties, and contracting invoices.

Interplay Health, Norwalk, CT — Freelance Administrative/Social Marketing Support

January 2015 – February 2018

Self-regulated time management as work-from-home contract employee.

Put Interplay Health classes and events on appropriate online calendars, ranging from specific facilities formats, the Interplay Health website (WordPress html), and social media.

Monitor activity and create content for Interplay Health Facebook social media events and newsfeed posts to communicate information and to entice engagement from audience through likes, shares, and comments.

Data entry and updating of multiple e-mail contact lists through MailChimp.

Census Bureau, Bridgeport, CT — Crew Leader

March 2009 - June 2009

Assigned and directed the work of 18–20 enumerators engaged in field data collection for Ridgefield and Danbury, CT.

Conducted group training sessions using verbatim training guides to teach codified data collection procedure for the 2010 Census.

Approved payroll; authorized overtime and reimbursements.

Collected and filed field reports for the Bridgeport, CT, central office, using detailed government forms and processes.

CERTIFICATIONS

CPR Certified —
ProCPR.com

Certified Jazzercise Instructor -
Jazzercise, Inc

Safe Church Certified —
Episcopal Diocese of CT

VOLUNTEER WORK

Southwestern Region
Leadership Team — Episcopal
Church in CT
May 2019 – present

Member of committee composed of
lay and ordained church leaders
which meets monthly.

The Team facilitates communication
between churches in the
Southwestern Region and the
Episcopal Diocese of CT.

Individual tasks within the team:

1. Co-administrator for Team social media accounts.
2. Team Convener: schedule meetings, create agendas for approval, follow up with communication of tasks to Team members.

Attachment 2

Job Description

Communications Manager

Title: Communications Manager

Purpose: To equip, support and articulate the mission of the Presbytery of Southern New England internally and externally through audience-appropriate and innovative communication.

Accountability: Accountable to the Personnel Committee through the General Presbyter.

Responsibilities:

- At the end of the first quarter of work, develop an overall communications plan for the Presbytery with input from the General Presbyter and Stated Clerk. Manage and modify communications plan and key audiences quarterly as needed to reach a wide audience in Presbytery and our partner ministries.
- Manage all media content and communications channels of the Presbytery, including but not limited to: social media, e-mail marketing and newsletters, website content, phone, video and relationships with outside technical vendors on behalf of the Presbytery.
- Monitor and share as appropriate: denominational, local, ecumenical, interfaith and other partner media content
- Provide support in planning, directing and coordinating online activities designed to increase the visibility of events and programs
- Manage scheduling of the Presbytery Zoom video-conferencing account.
- Manage online registration for quarterly meetings of the Presbytery and other events as directed by the General Presbyter.

Attachment 2

- Manage Presbytery online database and directory, updating regularly in collaboration with the Stated Clerk.
- Manage the main PSNE email address and serve as co-administrator for the Google Drive
- Share best practices with other communicators in the Presbytery including staff and volunteers.
- Collaborate with staff to utilize the website, e-mail list service and social media for communications purposes:
 - Draft/publish/recommend/review contents of website as needed.
 - Contribute marketing content E-News as needed.
- Manage yearly social media and web-based contracts on behalf of the Presbytery
- To perform such other duties as assigned by the General Presbyter which are consistent with the responsibilities of this position.

Term:

The workweek shall be 15 hours on a flexible schedule at \$25/hour and is reviewed annually. This person will work remotely and will be required to have their own phone and internet connection. There is a \$40/month technology stipend for all PSNE staff.

Evaluation:

Performance evaluations will be conducted at least annually, or more frequently as needed.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY ROUNDTABLE
February 6, 2020**

The Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England met via Zoom teleconference, owing to inclement weather. The meeting was called to order with prayer at 9:40 a.m. by the Co-Chair of the Roundtable, the Rev. Julie Emery.

A **QUORUM** was present.

Present were: Julie Emery, Virginia Smanik, J. C. Cadwallader, Barbara Riihimaki, Lisa Baker, John Merz, Ruth Herron Smalt, Chris Tate, and Kevin White.

Also present were: *ex-officio* members Shannan Vance-Ocampo, General Presbyter; David Baer, Stated Clerk; and Erika Plank Hagan, the Presbytery Communications Manager.

Excused were: Dick Hasbany; Phillip Phiri, Treasurer of the Presbytery; and John Sweet.

Absent was: Sean Miller.

A **QUORUM** of the Roundtable was present.

The agenda for the meeting was **ADOPTED** as presented.

The minutes of the January 16, 2020, meeting of the Roundtable, and the minutes of the January 30, 2020, special meeting were **APPROVED** as presented.

The General Presbyter presented her report. She invited the Rev. Julie Emery to report on the recent Mission and Ministry Commission meeting of the Synod of the Northeast. The leadership of the Roundtable met with the administration and mission committees of the Commission during its meeting in Albany, and succeeded in obtaining the approval of a grant for the Springfield: MLK congregation—\$30,000 per year for three years, as well as \$10,000 for PSNE's anti-racism work. The Commission was eager to hear from us about the conduct of this work, which can serve as a model for other presbyteries in the synod. They requested an update for the May meeting of the Commission.

Erika Plank Hagan, the new Communications Manager for the Presbytery, began work February 1, in accordance with the Roundtable's action at the recent special meeting. She is familiarizing herself with the Presbytery's communications infrastructure and is preparing this week's Getting Connected.

The leaders of the Brazilian Presbyterian Church of Hyannis, a fellowship of the Presbytery, is excited to be hosting the September meeting of the Presbytery, and advises that they will be serving Brazilian barbecue.

The rebuilding of the Woodbury Union Church in Warwick is continuing, and they hope to be back in the building soon.

The Rev. Chris Tate, the chair of the Presbytery Nominating Committee, provided an update on their work. With the help of the Rev. John Merz and the General Presbyter, the Committee has successfully identified a nominee for the Board of Trustees who would be willing to serve as Chair of the Board of and President of the Corporation. They are continuing to seek nominees for the Anti-Racism Team and the Emerging Ministries Team. The Committee is reviewing responses to their Gifts and Talents Survey, which may help to identify those suited to elected positions within the Presbytery.

The Stated Clerk gave his report. He expressed his gratitude for those churches that have submitted their annual statistical reports to the Office of the General Assembly. He advised the Roundtable of the resignation of Elder Peter Benner (West Hartford: Westminster) from the Permanent Judicial Commission. The Clerk presented a proposed docket for the March Stated Meeting of the Presbytery, and members of the Roundtable provided suggestions.

The General Presbyter introduced Ms. Erika Plan Hagan, the new Presbytery Communications Manager, to the Roundtable. Members of the Roundtable introduced themselves and expressed their appreciation for Ms. Hagan's work in her new role. One of Ms. Hagan's first tasks is creating a communications plan for the Presbytery, and Ms. Vance-Ocampo advised Roundtable members that they may be hearing from her in connection with the development of this plan.

The Rev. John Merz, the chair of the Personnel Committee, drew attention to the 2020 goals for both the General Presbyter and the Stated Clerk, and invited members of the Roundtable to review them and offer feedback and questions apart from the meeting. He also asked for feedback on the 360-Review process used for the General Presbyter this year, in which committee chairs and other leaders in the Presbytery were invited to participate in the evaluation. The Committee would like to evaluate this process, in order to determine whether they will continue to use it.

The Personnel Committee has sought to make clear that the General Presbyter is the Presbytery's head of staff, and that all staff—with the exception of the Stated Clerk, who is a constitutional officer of the Presbytery—report to her.

The General Presbyter informed the Roundtable that she had been approached about being nominated to serve as Chair of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. She sought the Roundtable's counsel as to how to balance the responsibilities that would be involved with this commitment with her responsibilities in the Presbytery. Members of the Roundtable expressed their confidence that she would be able to manage both roles, and also their appreciation for the resources her denominational service has made available to the Presbytery.

The Roundtable again reviewed the results of the Landscape survey conducted several years ago in the Presbytery, with an eye toward finding areas of focus for the Roundtable's work in the current year.

The Roundtable adjourned at 11:00 a.m., led in closing prayer by the Rev. J. C. Cadwallader.

Respectfully submitted,

-signed-

Rev. David A. Baer, Stated Clerk

DRAFT