

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
IGREJA PRESBITERIANA BRASILEIRA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING

Call to Order

The organizing meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira (IPB) Administrative Commission was held on a video teleconference via the Zoom platform on March 30, 2022. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, Rev. David Baer, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Rev. Baer led the Session in an opening prayer.

Roll Call:

Commission Members Present:

Teaching Elder, Anne Weirich; Ruling Elder, Gerson Roca;
Teaching Elder, Gregory Keosaian; and Ruling Elder, Peter Cameron;

Commission Members Absent: None

Guests:

Rev. David Baer, PSNE Stated Clerk and
Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, PSNE General Presbyter

Introductions

The meeting started with those present introducing themselves.

Administrative Commission Purpose and Background

The Stated Clerk and the General Presbyter then outlined the tasks the Presbytery has charged this Administrative Commission (Commission) to accomplish and the background history associated with those tasks.

General Administrative Commission Responsibilities – It was stressed the actions of this Commission are regarded as actions of the PSNE. Commission decisions will be reported at the next Presbytery meeting and can be amended or rescinded. As such, the Commission shall keep records of its proceedings and shall submit them to the PSNE Stated Clerk.

Book of Order – The *Book of Order* (G-1.02) outlines the responsibilities of the Presbytery when organizing a new congregation into Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) membership. The Presbytery has charged the Commission to take on these organizing responsibilities.

Presbytery IPB Commission Charge – The Presbytery has voted to charge the Commission with the following responsibilities:

1. Application - Receive an application from IPB-Hyannis for membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be prepared in both Portuguese and English.
2. Organization Decision - At the discretion of the Commission, declare the IPB-Hyannis an organized congregation of the Presbytery.
 - a. Identify prospective members;
 - b. With leaders of community, explore meaning of commitments; and
 - c. Upon presentation of covenant, at the discretion of the committee, recognize IPB-Hyannis as a congregation of the PSNE.

3. Session - Assume the powers of the IPB-Hyannis session until such time as a duly elected session is installed. These powers shall include:
 - a. Authority to call meetings of the congregation to elect ruling elders, and if the congregation so decides...deacons.
 - b. Authority to train, examine, ordain and install those persons elected by the congregation.
4. Miscellaneous – Work closely with the congregation to:
 - a. Pastor - Formally call installed pastoral leadership;
 - b. Plan for the service and witness of the congregation;
 - c. Provide training and resources to officers, especially with respect to polity and finance (Current Treasurer is the brother of Pastor Dacunha);
 - d. Provide training and resources to the following items are properly created:
 - i. Church Bylaws,
 - ii. Pastor’s Terms of Call that includes in part:
 1. Salary that meets Presbytery standards;
 2. Continuing education reimbursements;
 3. Mandated health, death, disability coverage and pension benefits;
 4. Vacation allowance; and
 5. Family Leave.
 - iii. Sexual Misconduct Policy,
 - iv. Child Protection Plan and
 - v. Manual of Operations
 - e. Counsel concerning incorporation and bylaws for the congregation conforming to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);
 - f. 501(c)3 – Investigate the disposition of the 501(c)3 status previously formed by the congregation; and
 - g. Insurance – Act as a resource in the establishing insurance protection for the congregation.
5. Organization Worship Service – Conduct a service of organization in which the commission will install church officers, express thanksgiving to God on behalf of the Presbytery for the congregation’s ministry and ask for God’s blessing upon the new congregation. Invitations will be sent to the wider PSNE community and other appropriate individuals.

Organizing Pastor – The Rev. Alonso Dacunha was received by the PSNE as the organizing pastor of IPB-Hyannis in 2010 (relationship with PSNE established in 2008). Pastor Dacunha’s wife, Katia, has been very active in the congregation and in the ministries of the congregation. For example, she was visiting woman in Suffolk County Prison (not sure of the current status).

IPB-Hyannis Congregation

The General Presbyter provided background on the IPB-Hyannis congregation. Items mentioned included:

1. 2008 marked the beginning of the relationship of IPB with the Presbytery of Southern New England;
2. IPB carries out a “traditional” congregational ministry i.e. worship, pastoral care, Christian education, etcetera;

3. Community mission oriented
 - a. Latinx ministry for women, with the Pastor's wife providing leadership;
 - b. Serve as chaplains for ICE detention centers;
 - c. Take seriously a *Matthew 25* ministry;
4. Membership Demographics
 - a. Largely an immigrant congregation;
 - b. Many members are involved in "hospitality" work on the Cape;
 - c. There is an ESL ministry of some 60-80 persons via Zoom;
 - d. English Language - Open to establishing an English-speaking service of worship, particularly for the 2nd generation members and beyond...
5. Church Building
 - a. They were nesting in a small Church in Hyannis that abruptly *cancelled all rental contract indefinitely* during the pandemic;
 - b. Currently renting a small building owned by the Town of Yarmouth;
 - c. Eager to have their own space.

Cultural Considerations – There was discussion about the attention that must be given to the cultural differences of the IPB-Hyannis congregation. The Presbytery's anti-racism work was highlighted along with denominational resources for working with IPB-Hyannis. Resources discussed included:

1. Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, PSNE General Presbyter,
2. Rev. David Baer, PSNE Stated Clerk and
3. Rev. Jenny Peek (Jennifer.peek@yale.edu) and Kirk Louis (kirkandshavon@gmail.com), Chairpersons of the Anti-racism and Equity Committee.

There was extensive discussion about providing resources translated into Portuguese. The *Book of Order*, sample policies, bylaws and manuals of operation need to be available in Portuguese so that they are assessable to the congregation. The Stated Clerk discussed the status of General Assembly Portuguese language resources:

1. *Book of Order* - There is a need for a full translation.
2. *Book of Confessions* - It's fully translated, but *not yet* available in a single volume.
3. Rules of Discipline - only the *Preamble* is currently available in translation.

Much work remains in producing these resources. The Committee needs to seek help from Presbytery other congregations and General Assembly for this assistance.

A translator will be necessary for the Commission to carry out its work.

Administrative Commission Budget Question:

The Stated Clerk and the General Presbyter was asked budget questions. What is the budget for the work of the Commission? Is there reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses of Commission members (e.g. travel, meals together, etc.)? There was a general nod to paying for gas, but the Commission members were given no specifics. We will need to receive details on this from Presbytery.

Election of Commission Committee Positions:

There was discussion on who would take on the responsibilities of Administrative Commission Moderator and Administrative Commission Clerk.

General consent of the Committee was given to electing:

- Teaching Elder, Gregory Keosaian as Administrative Commission Moderator and
- Ruling Elder, Peter Cameron as Administrative Commission Clerk.

Next Meeting:

General consent was given to holding the next Committee meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Adjournment:

General consent was given to adjourn with prayer led by Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Cameron
Administrative Commission Clerk