

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
IGREJA PRESBITERIANA BRASILEIRA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING

Call to Order

The meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira (IPB) Administrative Commission (Commission) was held on a video teleconference via the Zoom platform on April 6, 2022. Commission Moderator, Rev. Gregory Keosaian, called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. He then led the Commission 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: None

It was noted both General Presbyter, Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo and Stated Clerk, Rev. David Baer were invited to our meeting. Neither person was able to attend. It has been communicated that they are welcome at any of our meetings.

Approval of the Minutes

The Commission discussed the minutes from March 30, 2022 meeting.

There was a motion made that was seconded and voted upon (MSV) to approve the minutes of the March 30, 2022 Commission meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

MSV to approve the agenda.

Review of the March 30, 2022 Meeting

The Committee spent some time reviewing the last meeting. There was a general consensus that our meetings in the future should be about an hour long.

Budget

The Committee considered the budget that will be needed in 2022 to do the work called upon by the Presbytery. At the last meeting, General Presbyter, Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo told the Committee that they should be reimbursed for things such as mileage and translation services. A Google search indicated the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.58. The Committee identified three areas in which we might need reimbursement: mileage, translation services and meals with IPB.

MSV to submit a 2022 budget request to the Presbytery for \$1,500. The Administrative Commission Clerk agreed to communicate this request to the Presbytery's Stated Clerk.

Cultural Differences Between the IPB, Committee & Region

General Observations - Gerson Roca provided some generalizations about Brazilian Presbyterians with the caveat that in the end we will have to get to know the IPB

congregation and forget the generalizations. He provided the following experience for consideration:

- Many in the congregation may be very conservative theologically;
- Should there be any undocumented members of the congregation, this will affect this part of the Body of Christ. It will create an atmosphere where members search for safety, feel fear and experience lots of stress. It can also create volatility in the congregation as members leave the area.

Barnstable County Sheriff's Office – Anne Weirich informed the Committee that the Barnstable County Sheriff's Office is the only county in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that has an arrangement with ICE that allows the sheriff deputies to round up undocumented immigrants.

Translation – As there are members of the IPB congregation that have trouble communicating in English, translation will be a necessary part of the work of this committee. Translation will be necessary when meeting with IPB and with documents that are a part of PSNE membership process.

Gerson Roca has unique gifts in translating between the Brazilian and English languages. The other three committee members made it clear to Gerson he should not feel any obligation to be a translator for the Committee. We are prepared to use outside resources to accomplish our translation tasks. Gerson made it clear he wants to use his translation gifts as a part of his committee work. He said he does the type of translation we will need often in other parts of his life. He is glad to do it.

The Committee thanked Gerson and agreed we would ask him to use his translation skills. We will need, in particular, translation of the *Book of Order* provisions having to do with the organizing covenant (G-1.0201) and the constitutional questions when ordaining Ruling Elders and Deacons (W-4.0404).

Anti-racism Resources – The General Presbyter provided the Committee with information to allow us to make use of the PSNE anti-racism consultant, Jessica Vazquez-Torres.

General consent was given to have Anne Weirich schedule a Committee Zoom session with Jessica Vazquez-Torres on April 27, 2022 at 6:00pm.

Next Meetings

General consent was given to holding the next Committee meetings via Zoom as follows:

- Wednesday, April 27, 2022 at 6:00pm (to meet with Jessica Vazquez-Torres) and
- Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

MSV to adjourn with prayer led by Gregory Keosaian at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Cameron
Administrative Commission Clerk

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
IGREJA PRESBITERIANA BRASILEIRA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING

Call to Order

The meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira (IPB) Administrative Commission (Commission) was held on a video teleconference via the Zoom platform on May 18, 2022. Commission Moderator, Rev. Gregory Keosaian, called the meeting to order at 7:10pm. He then led the Commission 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: None

It was noted both General Presbyter, Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo and Stated Clerk, Rev. David Baer were invited to our meeting. Neither person was able to attend. It has been communicated that they are welcome at any of our meetings.

Approval of the Minutes

The Commission discussed the minutes from their April 6, 2022 meeting.

There was a motion made that was seconded and voted upon (MSV) to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2022 Commission meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

MSV to approve the agenda.

Anti-racism Training

The committee was unable to discuss the anti-racism materials assigned to us during the April 27, 2022 anti-racism training with Jessica Vazquez-Torres. This is because she has not yet provided them to us. We were informed during the meeting that the General Presbyter will be following up with Jessica for the materials.

Anti-Racism Next Steps

1. Review assigned anti-racism materials; then
2. Schedule a meeting date with Jessica on her website.

Discussion on Meeting with Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira of Hyannis

Ordination Questions – It was noted Gerson has translated the constitutional questions into Portuguese.

Committee Philosophy on Process – There was a general discussion on what the critical issues were that would enable the commissioning of the congregation into the PSNE and those issues that would point to a better fit elsewhere. Some of the items discussed included:

- The need to understand jointly and severally the positions of the congregation and the leadership team.
- Polity – Understanding of PCUSA polity and acceptance of the differences that this polity allows in theology and style.
- Finances – It was agreed there needs to be a discussion about the leadership team’s thoughts on how their finances will work and the need to adopt PSNE financial practices. The committee discussed everything from how we can be problem solvers to help the congregation address financial issues to discussing those issues that create challenges.
- Cultural Differences – We discussed in several different ways the care we need to take to ensure good communication with the cultural differences between the congregation and the committee.

Question - There was general agreement that a good way to get at many of the issues we discussed was to ask the leadership team and the congregation the question:

“Why do you want to be Presbyterian?”

This question and variations of it will allow us to delve into many of the issues that must be explored.

Next Meeting

By acclamation the committee agreed the Rev. Alonso Dacunha and his wife, Katia, should be invited to the next committee meeting to discuss and receive their advice on how to speak to the Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira of Hyannis congregation. The moderator will offer an invitation both Alonso and Katia to attend the next meeting.

General consent was given to holding the next Committee meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

MSV to adjourn with prayer led by Peter Cameron at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Cameron
Administrative Commission Clerk

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
IGREJA PRESBITERIANA BRASILEIRA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING

Call to Order

The meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira (IPB) Administrative Commission (Commission) was held on a video teleconference via the Zoom platform on June 15, 2022. Commission Moderator, Rev. Gregory Keosaian, called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. Rev. Gregory Keosaian led the Commission 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. Alonso Dacunha (Pastor of Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira); Ms. Katia Dacunha (wife of Alonso and important leader in the IPB congregation); and General Presbyter, Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo.

It was noted our Presbytery's Stated Clerk, Rev. David Baer, was invited to our meeting. He was unable to attend.

Approval of the Minutes

The Commission discussed the minutes from their May 18, 2022 meeting.

There was a motion made that was seconded and voted upon (MSV) to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2022 Commission meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

MSV to approve the agenda.

Introductions

The meeting started with introductions by all attendees. The discussion then moved to Rev. Alonso Dacunha and Ms. Katia Dacunha educating the committee on who they are and providing information on the IPB congregation. Pastor Alonso and Katia stated on numerous occasions that both they and the congregation are Presbyterians. In fact, Pastor Alonso has been a Presbyterian since his birth.

Each Commission member asked questions to both Alonso and Katia. The following bullet points are a sampling of the information provided during this Q & A time:

- The congregation has a new home in South Yarmouth, MA. They are renting space from a Baptist church.
- Currently there are two weekly services 10:00am and 7:00pm along with various Bible studies, and outreach activities.

- The congregation currently serves Portuguese speaking members (most of the congregation) and Spanish speakers. It is leadership's goal to serve English speakers in the future. They want to be bilingual. They told us they have to be bilingual if they are to serve the children of the membership.
- The Cape Cod community is aware of the IPB congregation and what they are doing on the Cape.
- Alonso has identified about 50 retired pastors living on Cape Cod and has tried to create relationships with them. There has been very limited success.
- Congregation has experienced some racial animosity.
- Financial support is important. Their members provide very good support in the summer, but outside support is necessary in the winter months. (Presbytery currently has an annual budget line item for support of the IPB congregation of \$22,000.)
- IPB is working with Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary to create an intern opportunity for a seminary student to serve at IPB.
- Both the leadership of IPB and the IPB congregation are more conservative than PSNE as a whole. Woman in leadership roles and their positions on LGBTQ individuals in their congregation were specifically discussed. There will be further discussions on these topics.

It was agreed after Alonso and Katia Dacunha left the Zoom meeting that as a next step the Commission should meet in person with them.

Anti-racism Training

The committee has received the training materials from Jessica Vazquez-Torres. The next step is to set up a meeting with Jessica on her website. To this end, Anne Weirich will send Commission members a *Doodle* email so we can provide dates that we are available. Anne will use this information to schedule our next anti-racism training.

Next Meeting

General consent was given to holding the next Committee meeting in person on Cape Cod. To this end, Anne Weirich will send Commission members a *Doodle* email so we can provide dates that we are available for a Cape Cod meeting. Anne will use this information to schedule our time together in Hyannis.

Adjournment

MSV to adjourn with prayer led by Rev. Anne Weirich at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Cameron
Administrative Commission Clerk

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
IGREJA PRESBITERIANA BRASILEIRA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION
MEETING

Call to Order

The meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira (IPB) Administrative Commission (Commission) was held on a video teleconference via the Zoom platform on August 3, 2022. Commission Moderator, Rev. Gregory Keosaian, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Gregory Keosaian led the Commission in an opening prayer.

Roll Call

The Administrative Commission Clerk reported a quorum present.

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 Present: General Presbyter of the PSNE, Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo

It was noted our Presbytery's Stated Clerk, Rev. David Baer, was invited to our meeting. He was unable to attend.

Approval of the Minutes

The Commission discussed the minutes from their June 15, 2022 meeting.

There was a motion made that was seconded and voted upon (MSV) to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2022 Commission meeting as corrected.

Approval of the Agenda

MSV to approve the agenda.

Anti-racism Training

Shannan Vance-Ocampo moderated the anti-racism training. She started with a brief history of our Presbytery's anti-racism work. There followed a brief discussion on the anti-racism materials the commission read prior to this meeting. We then started a discussion of the IPB congregation as a case study in the practical use of anti-racism tools.

It was acknowledged the inclusion of the IPB congregation into PSNE could be a great benefit to both parties and to the holy catholic church. At the same time, it was acknowledged there are issues, that if not handled with love and wisdom could cause pain and injury to all parties. Some of the issues highlighted for discussion were:

- Authority of the pastor;
- The priesthood of all believers...pastor, elder and congregation;
- *Book of Order*;
- The role of LGBTQ individuals in the congregation;
- The role of women in the church; and
- The meaning and practical application of baptism.

There was a discussion on how to address these issues with love and wisdom.

Ideas – The group threw out different ideas for consideration to help facilitate our conversation with the IPB congregation. Ideas mentioned included:

- Commissioning of a lay pastor;
- Using a satellite ministry; and
- Leveraging wise outside third parties

Next Steps

The Rev. Vance-Ocampo will research options for help with our future communication. For example, she will look at the practicality of receiving help from the Rev. Jupiaci Carneiro (www.millenniumchurch.org).

Next Meeting

General consent was given to holding the next Committee meeting via Zoom on Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

MSV to adjourn with prayer led by Shannan Vance-Ocampo at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Cameron
Administrative Commission Clerk