

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY ROUNDTABLE
October 13, 2022**

The Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England met via Zoom teleconference. The meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m. by the chair, Elder Mildred McNeill, who led the Roundtable in its opening devotion.

A **QUORUM** was present.

Present were: Mildred McNeill (chair), Nicole Aronson, Lisa Baker, Rachelle Lee, Deborah Packard, Jenny Peek, Chris Tate, Lauren Tate, and Kevin White.

Also present were: *ex-officio* members Shannan Vance-Ocampo, the General Presbyter; and David Baer, Stated Clerk.

Excused was: Stephen Scovell.

The agenda for the meeting was **APPROVED** as distributed.

The Stated Clerk, David Baer, gave his report. He offered a correction to the minutes that were distributed with the meeting materials, and another correction was offered by a member of the Roundtable. Upon a motion properly made and seconded, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as amended.

The November stated meeting of the Presbytery will be held at the Woodbury Union Presbyterian Church of Warwick. Upon consultation with the host pastor, Mr. Baer discovered that the church is not able to host on November 5, and the Presbytery moderator and vice-moderator will be at the national moderators' conference on November 12. By **CONSENT** the Roundtable agreed to hold the stated meeting on November 19.

Mr. Baer informed the Roundtable that the Permanent Judicial Commission had issued a decision in the matter of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) vs. Jeffrey Weenink, and that the *Book of Order* requires that such a decision be read before the presbytery at a stated meeting, or a special meeting called for the purpose. Upon a motion properly made and seconded the Roundtable **VOTED** to **CALL** a special meeting to be held on October 25 at 7:30 via Zoom, for the purpose of reading the disciplinary decision and order.

The General Presbyter gave her report, noting that she and Mr. Baer will be attending Synod Assembly in Albany next week. She expressed enthusiasm for the ability to gather in person after such a long time of Zoom-only meetings.

The Moderator, Nicole Aronson, gave her report, noting that she had visited a number of churches in the presbytery. She will be attending Synod Assembly as one of the presbytery's commissioners. Ms. Aronson shared her impressions about her visits with congregations, where she spoke about the presbytery's anti-racism work.

The Anti-Racism and Equity Team co-chairs, Jenny Peek and Kevin White, reflected on the first webinar for the presbytery led by Crossroads Anti-Racism on October 5. Feedback about the webinar included a desire for more time to reflect on the content being presented. Perhaps the Anti-Racism and Equity Team might offer a separate time for discussion a few days after each of the webinars, so that participants might bring questions that arise.

Mildred McNeill led a discussion regarding presbytery meetings in the post-COVID era. She noted that very few people had pre-registered to attend the September meeting in person at the First Presbyterian Church in Hartford. Members of the Roundtable discussed how to encourage more in-person participation, though some noted that they were still cautious about the health risks entailed by in-person gatherings. Other ideas included: alternating between online and in-person meetings, creating more opportunities for fellowship around stated meetings, and creating spaces for ruling elders to form community.

The Roundtable adjourned with a prayer led by Mildred McNeill at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

-signed-

Rev. David A. Baer, Stated Clerk

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY ROUNDTABLE
November 3, 2022**

The Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England met via Zoom teleconference. The chair, Elder Mildred McNeill opened a time of informal consultation with devotions at 4:37 p.m., in the anticipation of the arrival of more members to constitute a quorum.

A **QUORUM** was **NOT** present. Those who were present constituted themselves as a committee, which proceeded to make *recommendations* to be ratified by the full Roundtable.

Present were: Mildred McNeill (chair), Nicole Aronson (early departure), Lisa Baker, Shelley Donaldson (late arrival), Deborah Packard, Jenny Peek, and Kevin White.

Also present was: *ex-officio* member and David Baer, Stated Clerk.

Excused was: *ex-officio* member Shannan Vance-Ocampo, the General Presbyter.

The agenda for the meeting was **APPROVED** as distributed.

The committee **RECOMMENDS** that the minutes of the October 13 Stated Meeting of the Roundtable be **APPROVED** as distributed.

Nicole Aronson, who served as one of the commissioners to last month's meeting of Synod Assembly, gave a report on this gathering. Lisa Baker, one of the other commissioners, who has also been elected Vice Moderator of the Synod, and David Baer added their observations.

The committee spent some time discussing the implications of the Presbytery's action to become a Matthew 25 presbytery, at the September meeting. would like to resume the conversation about appointing a Matthew 25 team at a later date.

The Stated Clerk presented the report of the General Presbyter in her absence. He noted the two documents that had been prepared—one containing guidelines for churches hosting presbytery meetings, and the other providing guidance for committee chairs. Shannan noted in her written report that the Emerging Ministries Task Force has ceased meeting, and so the Roundtable will need to consider how to relate to and support the new worshipping communities and immigrant fellowships of the Presbytery. Kevin White volunteered to communicate with the remaining members of the Task Force to assess their willingness to continue this work.

The Stated Clerk noted that there are a large number of proposed amendments to the Book of Order for the presbytery to consider before July 9 next year. He suggested that the amendments be reported for a first reading in November, and that a portion of them be presented for a vote in February, and the remaining proposed amendments presented at the May meeting. It was the consensus of the committee that dividing the proposed amendments in this way would be wise.

The Stated Clerk reviewed the schedule of presbytery meetings for 2023. Kevin White, the Vice Moderator, noted a schedule conflict with the proposed meeting on May 20, at which he would expect to be installed as Moderator. The committee **RECOMMENDS** that the May meeting be moved to Saturday, May 13.

The Clerk reviewed a proposed docket for the November Stated Meeting of the Presbytery. The committee **RECOMMENDS** that the Roundtable **APPROVE** the proposed docket and **AUTHORIZE** the Clerk to make adjustments as needed, in consultation with the Moderator and Vice Moderator.

Nicole Aronson departed, and Shelley Donaldson joined the meeting. The number of members still fell short of a quorum.

Mildred McNeill led a conversation about the format (hybrid vs. in-person vs. online-only) and timing of Presbytery meetings, noting that very few people are registering to attend in person. Jenny Peek volunteered to draft a Google form survey for members of the presbytery community, for distribution following the November Stated Meeting.

The committee adjourned with a prayer led by Mildred McNeill at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

-signed-

Rev. David A. Baer, Stated Clerk

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