

To: Clergy serving PSNE congregations, Moderators of Sessions, Clerks of Session and Church Finance volunteers

We are writing as the co-chairs of the Commission on Ministry to share with you information and also process for the new Board of Pensions medical plan information for 2025. All information regarding this from the Board of Pensions can be accessed at this link: <https://seasonofrebuilding.pensions.org/2025-plan-changes/dues-packages>

While the Board of Pensions is responsible for negotiating and creating a medical plan for the whole of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), it is up to each individual Presbytery to set minimum terms of call and standards within each Presbytery. In years past, our Commission on Ministry has provided this guidance in early fall, usually waiting for full cost of living adjustment (COLA) numbers from the Social Security Administration.

However, with these significant changes to the medical plan and how they will impact our clergy, their families, and congregational budgets, we recognize the need to get our minimum terms of call and standards document approved far earlier this year. While the final COLA numbers will not be known until the fall, early research suggests that will be about 2.4% for 2025.

Please read the information below carefully. It includes how we will arrive, as a Commission on Ministry, at decision-making related to the medical part of the Board of Pensions plan for the congregations and clergy serving them in our Presbytery. We will present our decisions at a special meeting of the Presbytery in mid-June 2025 for a vote. This 4-phase process was discussed and approved at our regular commission meeting on April 10, 2024. There are multiple entry points for all interested parties to interact with this 4-phase process and provide feedback to us, all of which will be taken into consideration. Our #1 goal is to create an open and inclusive process so that we can make the best decisions possible for the Presbytery.

Please hold those working on this plan and our Commission on Ministry in your prayers as we engage this new and challenging work on behalf of the whole Presbytery. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out at any time.

Grace and Peace,

The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr
Co-chair, COM

The Rev. John Merz
Co-chair, COM

Phase 1

- COM to meet with the Rev. Dr. Carrie Mitchell, our regional representative from the Board of Pensions, to fully understand the new plan on April 23, 2024.
- COM and staff leadership to attend training with the Board of Pensions in Philadelphia April 20-May 1, 2024.
- Convene a team to work on recommendations for COM. *Membership of Team:* Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, ex officio; Rev. Shelley Donaldson - previous COM member who attended the 2023 meetings with the Board of Pensions as we anticipated these medical changes, Rev. Lindley DeGarmo - serving as an interim pastor in our Presbytery, has previously served as a Director with the Board of Pensions, Rev. Stacy Smith - current COM member, Elder Janet Wade-Utay - current COM member

Phase 2

The COM has requested data from the Board of Pensions related to impact for every plan member in PSNE congregations. This data will show the percentage of effective salary for all scenarios: plan participant, plan participant + partner/spouse, and plan participant + partner/spouse + dependent(s). We will then add our own data to this related to congregational size, race, age and gender identity of plan participants so that we can see how the data bears out with a justice and equity lens.

Phase 3

All Presbytery meeting opportunities with the Board of Pensions. On May 16, 2024, the Rev. Dr. Carrie Mitchell, our regional representative from the Board of Pensions will be with us in person/via zoom at our smartroom at Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, CT. COM members and our team will also join us for the day to listen to feedback and conversations. The entire day is both in-person or via Zoom.

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| 1PM | Presentation to Whole Presbytery |
| 2-4PM | Individual Appointments with Carrie |
| 4PM | Listening Session with PSNE Clergy |
| 5PM | Listening Session with Congregational Leaders |

Register here for May 16 events with the Board of Pensions and COM Leaders:

<https://psne.breezechms.com/form/249449>

Phase 4

Recommendations created and presented to the June 12, 2024 COM meeting. Hold a Special Meeting in June 2024 for the Presbytery, the date of which will be announced at the May 4, 2024 regularly called meeting of the Presbytery.

