

**Presbytery of Southern New England
Roundtable
April 17, 2024
Minutes**

Present: John Merz (chair pro tem), Nicole Aronson Champagne, Rachelle Lee, Dean Lindsey, Mark Montgomery, Deb Packard, Kevin White (moderator), Dallas Bradel (vice moderator), Shannan Vance-Ocampo (ex officio, General Presbyter), Kate Carlisle (ex officio, Stated Clerk)

Excused: Mildred McNeill

Call to Order & Opening Devotion

Roundtable **elected** John Merz as chair pro tem.

The Stated Meeting of the Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England was called to order on Zoom by Mark Montgomery on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 4:02 pm, with prayer and a reading of “Gethsemane” by Mary Oliver.

A quorum was electronically present.

Roundtable **approved** the agenda without objection.

Roundtable voted to **approve** the minutes of its meeting on January 22, 2024.

Report of the Stated Clerk

Kate shared a variety of overtures for possible concurrence to GA, for Roundtable discussion prior to the Presbytery meeting. Two overtures regarding the ordination process were added to the list on recommendation of CPM. Kate will bring the concurrences for Presbytery consideration and vote in their report to the May Stated Meeting.

Report of the General Presbyter

Shannan reported. She and Kate are meeting with PNNE & Boston colleagues next week.

Documents for the Presbytery meeting packet should be sent to Katie Grosh by next Wednesday.

Presbytery Meeting Docket

Roundtable reviewed the proposed docket and made adjustments and amendments. Dallas, Nicole, and Shannan will work on worship planning. Rachelle and John will work on a land acknowledgement for the Springfield, MA area. Dallas, Kate, and Shannan will work on preparation for the examinations brought by COM.

Shannan offered an update about the Greenwood church, as we will either be appointing a *Discerning the Way* team or bringing a warrant for an Administrative Commission to the Presbytery meeting.

Roundtable Leadership Needs

Roundtable is only meeting three times this year; most Presbyteries have a leadership team that meets more often and handles bigger picture leadership, vision, and strategy for the Presbytery. Potentially we could plan to meet January, March, May, June (if needed), September, and November. Shannan and Kate will email about potential dates for May, June, September, and November.

Nominating Committee

Roundtable needs to nominate nominees to Nominating. Nicole has agreed to remain as chair.

Roundtable **voted to nominate** Elder Nicole Aronson Champagne as nominating chair

Budget Team

Discussion of the budget process **postponed** to the May meeting.

Trustees

Dean reported. We have not been receiving Treasurer's reports and may need to change the day/time of Trustees meetings to allow Phillip to attend.

The transfer of information and accounts from Andre to Dean is still in process.

We became aware that the Greenwood church has had communications equipment in the bell tower since 2008. This sort of encumbrance needs to be approved by Presbytery. Greenwood's recollection is that the Presbytery reviewed this in 2008, but we have not located those records.

In the course of these conversations, we learned that Providence also has a cell tower contract, and another church is in the process of considering such a contract. Trustees will remind congregations of the need to consult with Presbytery on any encumbrances, and seek to rectify in the next few months any issues which have not already been voted on by Presbytery.

There is a need within the Presbytery to take a deeper dive into property management strategy, and Trustees is interviewing teams about creative approaches to property stewardship.

Board of Pensions updates

Shannan offered some updates on the changes to the Board of Pensions medical plan. A four-phase plan to handle this new information has been distributed. The Rev. Carrie Mitchell

will be meeting with COM next week, and she will be in PSNE on May 16 to share additional information and to have one-on-one conversations with pastors and congregations as needed.

Motion approved: That the Roundtable plan to call a special meeting of Presbytery on Monday June 24 at 6pm to address the Board of Pensions changes and various other items of business; and to give itself permission as Roundtable to do any or all of the following via email: to officially call the special meeting at the appropriate time, to add or change items on the docket for the special meeting, and to change the date and time if necessary.

Watch parties/Zoom cluster gatherings

Roundtable discussed options for hosting cluster gatherings for fellowship and Zooming into meeting, for May and for future Presbytery meetings. The meeting owls will allow group participation in a Zoom meeting.

Other Business

We still need nominees for Roundtable co-chairs and a Vice Moderator.

Adjournment

Deb adjourned the meeting with prayer at 5:36 pm.

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery is May 4. The next stated meeting of Roundtable is October 2 at 4 pm, although we hope to schedule additional meetings sooner.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Kate Carlisle, stated clerk