







<b>Minister of Word &amp; Sacrament</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Greg Allen–Pickett	Excused
David Boyd	Present
Jill Boyd	Present
Don Canady – HR	
Clint Cozier	Present
Joy Church	Excused
Ivan Dean	Present
Steve Deines – HR	
Polly Deppen-Williams	Present
Rebecca Dobitsch	Present
Logan Ellis	Present
Lisa Ewald	
Ethan Feistner	Present
John Gallentine	
Kevin Geurink	Present
Kristin Hamner	
Doodle Harris	
Lori Kitzing	Present
Cheryl Lamb	
Robert Thom – HR	
Berke Landrum	Present
Eddie Mariel	Present
David McCarthy	
Joan McCarthy	Present
Doug McHargue	Present
Frank Medsker – HR	
Roger Nelson – HR	
William Nottage–Tacey – HR	
Charles Olsen – HR	
Will Ratcliff	Excused
Sharon Rees	Present
Kirwin Stewart	Present
H. Eldin Wells – HR	
Karen Woo	Present
Gui–Jie Zhang	

<b>Commissioned Pastors</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Joyce Dean	Present
Mark Diehl	
Dave Irwin	
Brad Jepsen	
Linda Lambert	Present
Emily McCreery (ELCA PMA)	Present
Craig Mead	Present
Wayne Owens	







## **Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk Report to the Presbytery for the Meeting on April 29, 2023**

**Since our last meeting, I wanted to share some of what I have been doing as your Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk:**

### **Meetings with Pastors & Others:**

- 2-9-2023 Meeting with a pastor at Starbucks
- 2-23-2023 Presbytery Pastors' Lunch at The Crafty Dog in Kearney
- 3-7-2023 Call with Shelbea Gouldie, new Clerk of Session at FPC St. Paul
- 3-23-2023 Presbytery Pastors' Lunch at Good Evans
- 3-29-2023 Breakfast with Doodle Harris in Hastings
- 4-27-2023 Presbytery Pastors' Lunch

### **Churches Visited:**

- 2-12-2023 Worship at Aurora UCC/PCUSA
- 2-19-2023 Preach at Valentine Presbyterian Church
- 2-19-2023 Recognition service for Emily McCreery at FPC North Platte
- 2-21-2023 Moderate Session for FPC Sutherland
- 2-26-2023 Preach at FPC St. Paul and Ordain/Install Officers
- 3-12-2023 Ewing UMC & PCUSA Meeting with UMC District Superintendent
- 3-26-2023 Attempted to worship at The Church of the Plains in Edgar but stopped by weather
- 4-2-2023 Worship at The Church of the Plains in Edgar
- 4-16-2023 Preach at Benkelman

### **Presbytery Related Meetings:**

- 2-1-2023 Conversation with Brian Ellison, Covenant Network of Presbyterians, and others from Homestead and PMRV about a gathering in Lincoln
- 2-1-2023 Zoom with Stephen Earl & Pat Shipley re: presbyteries in Nebraska working together
- 2-14-2023 COM Meeting
- 2-15-2023 Business & Budget
- 3-14-2023 COM
- 3-14-2023 Council
- 4-11-2023 COM

### **Synod & Denomination Meetings:**

- 2-1-2023 Zoom meeting with Tricia Dillon Thomas and Deb Boucher-Payne re: PLF
- 2-6-2023 Zoom re: Ordination Exams
- 2-8-2023 Synod EP Monthly Zoom Call
- 2-8-2023 Zoom with Tricia Dillon Thomas re: possible leader for November PLF Retreat
- 2-8-2023 AMCL Zoom
- 2-9-2023 Call with Shelli Latham from OPSF
- 2-16-2023 PLR Steering Committee Zoom
- 2-21-2023 Zoom with Tricia Dillon Thomas re: PLR Budget
- 2-22-2023 AMCL Zoom
- 3-8-2023 Synod EP Monthly Zoom Call
- 3-8-2023 AMCL Zoom
- 3-9-2023 Zoom with Tricia Dillon Thomas re: PLR



- 3-14-2023 Observe meeting of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations re: Ordination Exams
- 3-21-2023 Synod EP Zoom with LeaderWise (Continuing Education)
- 3-22-2023 AMCL Zoom
- 3-30-2023 Synod Communications Committee Zoom
- 4-12-2023 Synod EP Monthly Zoom Call
- 4-12-2023 OPSF Executive Committee Zoom
- 4-21-2023 OPSF Board Meeting
- 4-26-2023 PLR Steering Committee
- 4-26-2023 AMCL Zoom

**Other projects:**

I am working on updating the Presbytery Manual. The first reading will be at the October 28<sup>th</sup> presbytery meeting with the second reading and vote at the February 3, 2024, meeting.

**Continuing Education:**

I will be attending my third and final year of Presbytery Leader Formation from May 5-10 at Bon Secours Retreat & Conference Center in Marriotsville, MD, which is outside of Baltimore.

Grace & peace,

*Polly Deppen-Williams*

Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk











PCN Financial Summary as of Feb 28, 2023

	Ytd	YTD Budget	Variance	% Annual Budget
Presbytery Income				
UMS Presbytery	7869	12500	(4631)	10%
Per Capita	20618	19553	1065	18%
Synod support	1667	1667	0	17%
Investment Income	58	6621	(6563)	0%
Others	25115	0	25115	NA
Total Income	55327	40341	14986	23%
Presbytery Expenses				
Synod & GA Per Capita	8453	8576	(123)	16%
Operations	3945	5170	(1225)	13%
<i>Committees</i>				
Council	0	642	(642)	0%
B&B	0	533	(533)	0%
Personnel	250	92	158	45%
COM	500	842	(342)	10%
CPM	0	467	(467)	0%
Nominating	0	33	(33)	0%
Perm Judicial	0	17	(17)	0%
Youth	0	833	(833)	0%
Presby Mtg & Comm	0	200	(200)	0%
<i>Total Committees</i>	750	3658	(2908)	3%
Mission	3895	4745	(850)	14%
Staff Exp	20354	23438	(3084)	14%
Other operating	417	417	0	17%
Total Operating Exp	37814	46004	(8189)	14%
Total Operating Income minus Expenses	18172	(5663)	23835	

## April 2023 CPM report for Central Nebraska Presbytery

The CPM currently has two candidates under care:

- Janet Rasmussen is seeking to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) (formerly called Commissioned Lay Pastor).
- Sara Babcock is seeking ordination as a minister of word and sacrament.

We held consultations with both candidates in February.

Janet has completed all of her coursework to become a CRE through University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. The CPM met with her and prayerfully talked about her next steps. She was invited to continue in her discernment process and check back in with the CPM after she has completed some tasks like writing a faith statement and articulating her sense of call to ministry, along with reading and reflecting on some books that the CPM recommended to her. The CPM will meet with Janet when she has completed these tasks to ensure her readiness for ministry as a CRE.

Sara is completing her senior year at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (LPTS). In the midst of her senior year, she was hired as the Director of Admissions for LPTS. We celebrated this news with her! Sara continues as an inquirer for ministry (the first step in the ordination process) and will continue to discern when she is ready to become a candidate for ministry (the next step in the ordination process.) We asked Sara to write a letter to the CPM to be shared with the presbytery about her ordination process, which is attached to this report. Sara will meet with the CPM again in the Fall of 2023 to map out her next steps in her ordination process.



To the Committee for Preparation of Ministry of Presbytery of Central Nebraska:

I have been asked to write to you in order to better clarify my desire to seek ordination in the PC(USA). My three years in seminary have been a time of immense growth in my confidence to walk down the path God has set me on and I am grateful for the support of this body that got me here. I believe this has not been reflected in the formal PC(USA) process due to the extremely disruptive nature of the Covid-19 Pandemic and significant events of the life of the seminary, including the sale of our student housing. These intense times, however, have also contributed to my deep commitment to this community, to theological education, and ultimately my discernment towards my current position as Director of Admissions.

I began dreaming of attending seminary in 2018 as I deepened my understanding of the great need of the world around me, and the ways in which the church can serve as a remedy to those needs both materially and spiritually. By the time I prepared to move to Louisville to attend LPTS in the fall of 2020, that world had drastically changed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The first year of my seminary experience was entirely online: students, faculty, and staff were not to gather on campus or enter any building. I leased an apartment sight unseen, away from the seminary, and struggled to build connections in my new context. My cohort ultimately managed to make community together – we met outside and virtually, organized afternoon walks and late night Hebrew study sessions. By the spring of 2021 vaccines were becoming available and just as the common space of the student housing buildings became our new gathering area, we found out that was going to be sold and all of the students would need to move out by the fall.

It feels important to explain the ways in which the sale of student housing and resulting disruption affected my time at seminary. While I was not affected, I worked in my capacity as a student representative (and later as clerk of the student body) to coordinate moving efforts and organize students for community meetings with the seminary administration. During this process I grew in my skills for ministry – having one on one meetings with my peers, living into the power of invitation, and embracing a “ministry of data:” creating sign up sheets and spreadsheets and more spreadsheets as the student body president and I worked to keep track of everyone affected by this disruption to our already fractured seminary life.

Through these experiences I grew closer to my fellow students, professors, and the staff of Louisville Seminary. While I imagined myself as a future Minister of the Word and Sacrament, it felt more pressing to be with the community in front of me, and to follow the ways in which I felt the Holy Spirit moving through my peers and myself. It was also a fallow time in my relationship with the CPM – my first liaison and chair of the committee rotated off and I was told that my next consultation would be when I had fulfilled the steps to move to candidate.

My commitment to my seminary community deepened at the start of my third year, the fall of 2022, as I met the new incoming class. To my great delight, among these new students were a crop of young PC(USA) Inquirers who are determined to follow the gospel and affect change in this world. Getting to know these young(er) people and helping them navigate what they want out of seminary has been a highlight of my time here. Walking across campus one day, I was struck with a profound desire to stay at Louisville Seminary and continue working with burgeoning theological thinkers and church leaders. I am convinced that this feeling is a movement of the Spirit; the former Director of Admissions pulled me into her office less than a month later to encourage me in applying for her job.

I was offered the position earlier this year, and have been working in a part-time capacity since February 20th as I finish out my final semester. While this schedule is demanding I am managing with the aid of the whole seminary community: our Admissions Specialist who is helping me navigate this new position, a grace-filled faculty and administration who are willing to navigate my dual role, and my fellow students – including this new class – who make sure that I am drinking water and eating regularly. While this was not the life I imagined for myself at the start of my seminary journey, I feel God's embrace as I walk this path.

One of my favorite things about Presbyterian polity is our commitment to working in community. This commitment is clear in the explanation of the Inquiry process in the Book of Order: "to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called ... to *explore that call together*" (G-2.0603, emphasis added). I admit that looking back at my time in seminary, I wish I would have deepened my relationships with the CPM so that they could have better joined me in the winding path of discernment that got me to where I am today. Perhaps then my interest in staying in the ordination process would be better understood. But I am equally confident in my decisions thus far to commit to my seminary community in this particularly tumultuous and disruptive time.

I am hopeful to continue my path to candidacy this fall, once my time as a student is completed and I am more confident in my new professional responsibilities. I am also hopeful that I can work more closely with the CPM, returning to a more formal and structured process.

I thank the body for its time and attention, and am happy to continue this conversation as it sees fit.

In Christ,

Sara Babcock

**COM PRESBYTERY REPORT**  
**APRIL 29, 2023**

Church moderators remain as follows:

- Sutherland – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Keystone - Eddie Mariel
- Buffalo Grove – Eddie Mariel
- Benkelman – Polly Deppen-Williams
- St. Paul – Kevin Geurink

The Presbytery office has sent updated liaison contact information to all churches for their use.

Churches in Transition were discussed.

- Grand Island – MIF was **APPROVED** by COM. (The MIF is for an Associate Pastor position)