

Docket
Meeting of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska
Saturday, April 29, 2023
First Presbyterian Church, Lexington, Nebraska

As approved by the Presbytery at the December 5, 2000, meeting, the meetings of Presbytery shall be set in the worshipful context of thanksgiving. We ask that cell phones be turned either to off or vibrate during the meeting and that people receive their calls outside of the meeting.

THE PRESBYTERY GATHERS

8:30 a.m.	Registration	
9:00 a.m.	The Call to Order	Jill Boyd
	Welcome	Jill Boyd
	Announcements	
	Enrollment/Quorum	
	The Presentation of the Docket and Seating of Corresponding Members	
	Introduction of First Time Commissioners	
	Approval of the Minutes from 2/4/2023 meeting	pages 3-7

THE PRESBYTERY HEARS GOD'S WORD

Worship

- Our preacher this morning is Jill Boyd
- Our offering will go to Living Waters for the World

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

10am – Living Waters for the World

- Introduction by Greg Allen-Pickett
- Zoom by the Executive Director Steve Young
- Discussion led by Greg Allen-Pickett

Report of the Executive Presbyter	Polly Deppen-Williams pages 8-9
Report from Hastings College	Doodle Harris
Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation	Audrey Richert
Presbyterian Women	page 10
Council Report	Sharon Rees pages 11-13
Business and Budget	Don Anthony pages 14-15

Personnel	Eddie Mariel
Nominating Committee	Sharon Rees
Committee on Preparation	Greg Allen-Pickett pages 16-18
Youth Committee	Logan Ellis
Committee on Ministry	Joyce Dean page 19
New Business	
Prayers of the People	Jill Boyd
THE PRESBYTERY IS SENT FORTH IN GOD'S NAME	
Adjourn with Prayer	Jill Boyd

2023-2024 Presbytery Dates & locations:

- October 28, 2023 – Hastings College
- February 3, 2024 – Zoom
- April 27, 2024 –
- October 26, 2024 – FPC North Platte

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF CENTRAL NEBRASKA
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2023
ZOOM

PRESBYTERY ATTENDANCE

Church	Ruling Elder Commissioner
Atkinson, First	
Aurora, Presbyterian UCC	
Axtell, First	
Beaver City, First	
Benkelman, First	
Broken Bow, First	
Campbell, Westminster United	
Central City, United	
Cozad First	Susan Cornelius
Danbury, First	
Edgar, Church of the Plains	
Ewing, Bethany	
Ewing, UMPC (USA)	
Fairfield, Community	Jan Brodrick
Fullerton, First	
Gothenburg, First	Bruce Clymer
Grand Island, First	
Hastings, First	Dan Deffenbaugh
Hastings, Second	
Holdrege, First	
Kearney, First	Bob Scriven
Kenesaw, First	
Keystone	
Lebanon, Community	
Lexington, First	Jeanne Burns
Lexington, Buffalo Grove	
Minden, Westminster United	Lisa Clapper
North Platte, First	Ned Mach
O'Neill, First	Melanie Banks
Orleans, First	
St. Paul, First	
Stuart, Community	
Superior, First	
Sutherland, First	
Valentine	
Wood River, First	

Minister of Word & Sacrament	Attendance
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	

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

Gary Smith	Excused
Penny Schulz (Disciples of Christ)	
Janene Reynolds (UMC)	Present

CHAIRPERSON OF COMMITTEES

Don Anthony, Business & Budget; Jill Boyd, Moderator; Joyce Dean, Committee on Ministry; Sharon Rees, Council

VISITORS

Brian Johnson, Janet Rasmussen, Linda Anthony, Erin Ellis, Judy Rothenberger

The stated meeting of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska convened at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, February 4, 2023, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order and opened with prayer by Moderator Jill Boyd.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Stated Clerk Polly Deppen-Williams established that there was a quorum present.

The docket was presented and approved.

Corresponding members Alyson Janke, the Stated Clerk from John Knox Presbytery and Elissa Bailey, the Stated Clerk from Eastern Iowa and Great Rivers Presbyteries were seated at 9:45 A.M.

First-time Commissioners Susan Cornelius, Cozad, Bruce Clymer, Gothenburg, Jeanne Burns, Lexington, and Dan Deffenbaugh, Hastings were introduced.

The Minutes of the October 29, 2022, meeting were approved as presented.

WORSHIP

The Worship service was led by the Reverend Logan Ellis with assistance by the Reverend Jill Boyd. The Reverend Logan Ellis gave the message. Communion was led by the Reverends Logan Ellis and Jill Boyd. The offering was given to the ministry of commissioner's choice.

EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER'S REPORT

The Reverend Polly Deppen-Williams gave the report on her position as Executive Presbyter. She has had many, many meetings with Pastors, attended Presbytery related meetings and Synod and Denomination meetings. Polly had left knee replacement surgery on December 16, 2022, and is recovering well. She plans to have surgery on her right knee in August 2023.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY REPORT

Joyce Dean, Chair, presented the report of the Committee on Ministry. She reported that COM validated the ministry of the Reverend Lisa Ewald who is the Chaplain at Mary Lanning Hospital in Hastings, NE. In addition, COM has approved the request of Emily McCreery to have a PMA Recognition Service at First Presbyterian Church, North Platte, NE on February 19, 2023, at 4 P.M. All members of Central Nebraska Presbytery are invited to attend.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

No report.

COUNCIL REPORT

The Reverend Sharon Rees, Council Chair, presented the report for Council.

BUSINESS AND BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

The report of the Business and Budget Committee was presented by Don Anthony, Chair. He was pleased to report that the Presbytery stayed well within their allotted budget for 2022.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Reverend Eddie Mariel, Chair, presented the Personnel Committee report. The Presbytery staff continues to function well; therefore, the committee has not met.

NOMINATING

Sharon Rees, on behalf of the Council, nominated the following individuals:

- Gary Smith – Vice Moderator of Presbytery
- Don Anthony – 3-year term, Business and Budget Committee
- Greg Allen-Pickett – 1 year-term, Committee on Preparation
- Doodle Harris – 3-year term, Youth Committee
- Eddie Mariel – 3-year term, Personnel Committee
- David Boyd – 3-year term, Committee on Ministry
- Kirwin Stewart, 2-year term, Permanent Judicial Commission

Presbytery voted to approve these nominations.

Additional nominations were made from the floor, including the following individuals:

- Bob Butz – 3-year term, Business and Budget Committee
- Sharon Rees – Chair of Council

Presbytery voted to approve these nominations.

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT

In the absence of Greg Allen-Pickett, Logan Ellis reported that the committee will be meeting on February 14, 2023.

YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT

The Reverend Logan Ellis, Chair, presented the report of the Youth Committee. Several youth events are currently being planned for 2023.

NEW BUSINESS

The Reverend Becky Dobitsch, First Presbyterian Church, Broken Bow requested an extension of term for one year for the Elder who chairs their Finance Committee. This will enable the individual who will assume this position to have a year of training, which will be beneficial to the committee.

Presbytery voted to approve this extension.

VOTING ON THE BOOK OF ORDER AMENDMENTS

Voting on the amendments began promptly at 10 AM. 90 minutes was allotted to the voting and discussion. The voting was done in 4 sections:

- Foundations of Presbyterian Polity
- Form of Government
- Directory for Worship
- Rules of Discipline

Opportunity was given to pull out amendments for discussion. If an amendment was removed from the block, discussion followed, and the amendment was voted on as a separate item. Presbytery preceded as follows:

- Foundations of Presbyterian Polity
 - 22-A passed.
 - 22-B was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment passed.
- Form of Government
 - 22-C, 22-D, 22-F, 22-G, 22-H, 22-J, 22-L, 22-M, 22-N, 22-O, 22-R, 22-S passed.
 - 22-E was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment failed.
 - 22-I was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment passed.
 - 22-K was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment passed.
 - 22-P was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment failed.
 - 22-Q was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment failed.
- Directory of Worship
 - 22-V, 22-W, 22-X, 22-Y, 22-Z, 22-AA, 22-BB passed.
 - 22-T was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment failed.
 - 22-U was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment failed.
- Rules of Discipline
 - 22-CC, 22-EE, 22-FF, 22-GG passed.
 - 22-DD was pulled out. Following discussion, the amendment passed.

The Presbytery thanked Elissa and Alyson for their guidance and understanding of the Proposed Amendments.

The next meeting of Presbytery will be at First Presbyterian Church, Lexington, NE on April 29, 2023.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Moderator Jill Boyd led the prayers of the people.

ADJOURNMENT

Moderator Jill Boyd received a motion and second, and affirmative vote, to adjourn the meeting. She adjourned the meeting at 11:25 P.M.

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 28th 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

CENTRAL NEBRASKA PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team met by zoom on Tuesday evening, April 4. Because of family obligations, Moderator Stephanie Sinsel regrettably resigned. We are exploring and considering new ways we can stay connected and continue to support the mission of the PC(USA). PW groups are encouraged to extend invitations to other PW as they fellowship together, plan mission projects, or have special programs. Sue Medsker will publish "The Windmill" twice a year. Please contact her with news and event schedules.

Linda Anthony

Secretary/Treasurer

Council Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2023

Council Attendance

Council Chair	Sharon Rees	Present
Moderator	Jill Boyd	Present
Vice Moderator	Gary Smith	Excused
COM Chair	Joyce Dean	Present
CPM Chair	Greg Allen-Pickett	Present
NOM Chair	Council	Present
Personnel Chair	Eddie Mariel	Present
Business & Budget Chair	Don Anthony	Absent
PYC Chair	Logan Ellis	Present
Synod Commissioner	Sue Medsker	Present
Presbytery Women Chair	Stephanie Sinsel	Absent
Member-at-Large	Bob Scriven	Present
Member-at-Large	Jon Beggs	Present
Executive Presbyter	Polly Deppen-Williams	Present

Sharon Rees opened the zoom meeting at 1 PM with devotion and prayer.

Council minutes from January 10 were **APPROVED** as presented.

Communications: None

Polly presented the EP and Stated Clerk's Report for the April 29, 2023 meeting.

Reports of Council Committees:

Personnel – Eddie reported that the committee has not met.

- Committee needs to select a Recording Clerk to fill the position vacated by Judy Howard.
- Judy Rothenberger will serve as Recording Clerk at the April 29 meeting.

Business and Budget – no report.

Nominating – Sue Medsker reported that a concern has been voiced from Synod of Lakes and Prairies that Berke Landrum has not been fulfilling responsibilities as an elected commissioner for Presbytery of Central Nebraska.

Reports of Presbytery Committees:

COM Committee – no report.

CPM Committee – Greg reported that the committee has met with candidates under care.

- Janet Rasmussen has completed coursework. The committee has asked that she complete additional steps prior to being commissioned.
- Sara Babcock has accepted a position as fulltime Director of Admissions for Louisville Seminary. She is continuing to complete coursework while being employed.

Youth Committee – Logan reported that the committee would like to have youth involved in Presbytery meetings. They are also exploring some small mission and fun events.

PW – no report

Synod – Sue reported that the spring meeting will be held in person in Minneapolis.

Council reviewed the proposed April 29, 2023 Presbytery Docket and was **APPROVED**.

- Council **APPROVED** inviting Rev. Kevin Guerink to preach. Jill will contact him.
- Education topic for the meeting will be Living Waters of the World. Council **APPROVED**. Greg Allen-Pickett will handle presentation details.
- Offering will be given to Living Waters of the World.

- Motion to reconsider preacher for April Presbytery meeting was made. Jill Boyd was **APPROVED** to preach using “woman at the well” text.
- Kevin will be asked to preach at a future Presbytery meeting.

Other business –

- Polly reported that PLR programming and cost will be changing. She shared a handout with more information to follow.
- Polly reported that voting continues to occur on the PCUSA amendments. No results are yet available.
- Polly reported that an Administrative Commission may need to be appointed for Ewing UMC & PCUSA.
- General Assembly will be held in Salt Lake City, June 30-July 4, 2024.
- Council **APPROVED** the following 2024 Presbytery meeting dates:
 - February 3, 2024 – Zoom
 - April 27, 2024
 - October 26, 2024

A request was made for Council minutes to be sent out soon after they have been assembled. Judy will make this happen.

Future Council meeting dates are:

- June 13, 2023, Zoom, at 1 PM.
- September 12, 2023. In person. Lunch at noon, followed by the meeting in the Conference Room.

Future Presbytery meeting dates are:

- April 29, 2023 at First Presbyterian Church, Lexington
- October 28, 2023 at Hastings College. Moderator visit has been requested.

Sharon closed with prayer at 2:20.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Rothenberger

Minutes from Email Vote
Presbytery of Central Nebraska Council
March 15,2023

On March 15, 2023, the following items were emailed to the Presbytery Council by the Business & Budget Committee for vote by email:

1. \$3000 is budgeted for Leadership Development Grants however, there has not been a set amount for each grant. The Business & Budget Committee moves that the Leadership Development Grants be for a minimum of 3 grants at \$1000 each. This will allow other grants at less than \$1000 with the grants given during the year not to exceed \$3000.
2. \$2000 is budgeted for the 2023 year for "Equipment Purchase". New computers are needed for the office and the Business & Budget Committee moves that up to \$1500 additional be allowed to cover the cost for the computers, docks, and installation. (This \$1500 will be taken from the \$20,000 bequest the Presbytery received from the Bruce Hendrickson estate.)

Vote Tally:

Greg Allen-Pickett	Yes to both items
Don Anthony	Yes to both items
Jon Beggs	Yes to both items
Jill Boyd	Yes to both items
Joyce Dean	Yes to both items
Logan Ellis	Yes to both items
Eddie Mariel	Yes to both items
Sue Medsker	Yes to both items
Sharon Rees	Yes to both items
Bob Scriven	Yes to both items
Gary Smith	Yes to both items

Both motions are approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Polly Deppen-Williams
EP & Stated Clerk

Report of Business and Budget for April 2023 Presbytery meeting

The Presbytery is the recipient of an unrestricted gift of \$25,000.00 from the Bruce Hendrickson Administration Trust.

Council agreed to exceed the Equipment Purchase line item to allow full upgrades of the office computers and docks including installation costs this year.

Council approved guidelines for Leadership Development Grants. They may be up to \$1,000.00 each. We are budgeted for \$3,000.00 total for this year.

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>	<i>750</i>	<i>3658</i>	<i>(2908)</i>	<i>3%</i>
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)