

**New Castle Presbytery**  
**Administrative Commission for Church on Main, Middletown, Delaware**  
**January 12, 2019**

**What is a New Worshiping Community?**

New Worshiping Community (NWC) is a term used for a group of individuals who worship together or otherwise share Christian fellowship, but are not an organized congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The brief definition of a NWC is:

**New**

- Taking on varied forms of church for our changing culture
- Seeking to make and form new disciples of Jesus Christ

**Worshiping**

- Gathered by the Spirit to meet Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament
- Sent by the Spirit to join God's mission for the transformation of the world

**Community**

- Practicing mutual care and accountability
- Developing sustainability in leadership and finances

A presbytery has a responsibility to “develop strategy for the mission of the church in its district” (G-30303a). Such responsibility may lead a presbytery to create, launch, adopt, and/or support one or more NWCs. A presbytery might also partner with the session of a congregation to support a NWC.

**History of Church on Main New Worshiping Community**

At the 831<sup>st</sup> Stated Meeting (March 2016), The Administrative Commission of the Forest Presbyterian Church moved that New Castle Presbytery concur with their request that the Forest Presbyterian Church congregation be dissolved **effective April 30, 2016 in a service of celebration** and appreciation for its 266 years of ministry.

The AC decided that the best plan forward for ministry in southern New Castle County was to move towards forming a New Worshiping Community with a mission centered in the heart of town on Main Street. The AC interviewed and hired Rev. Fernando Rodríguez to lead this new initiative as the Organizing Pastor. Rev. Rodríguez began his work on January 1, 2016. This new initiative, called **Church on Main**, was to be a *community-driven, open and meaningful ministry* that experiences in word and act God's radical love, hospitality and reconciliation.

When Rev. Rodriguez left the presbytery for another call, a group of Church on Main worshippers re-formed and began weekly worship services with communion and guest preachers. Rev. Jim Mosely provided extensive support throughout the first quarter of 2018. The original Administrative Commission was dissolved and an ecumenical Administrative Board was formed in the spring of 2018. Subsequently, a request was made to the Trustees that the Forest manse be sold and some of the proceeds used for Church on Main.

The Trustees and Committee on Ministry and Congregations requested that the Presbytery Moderator appoint a review team, composed of the following individuals: Sara Holben (COMC Liaison) – Convener, Shannon Hanson – Trustees, Charlie Hawkins – Trustees, Fred Hanna - COMC and Pastor at Community, Jeff Howard - Moderator and Pastor of New Covenant. Sara Holben has since stepped down from her role due to retirement and Shannon Hanson is the new convener.

The review team seeks to work collaboratively with the Church on Main Administrative Board and for that purpose requests that the Presbytery approve a new Administrative Commission with duties outlined below.

### **Duties of the Administrative Commission for Church on Main**

- Authorize the administration of sacraments (Lord's Supper and Baptism).
- Maintain baptismal records for the NWC with the Stated Clerk of New Castle Presbytery until such time as the community becomes an organized congregation.
- Engage a New Worshipping Community coach for Church on Main.
- Develop a strategy for sustainability for Church on Main.
- Provide an annual report for the Presbytery on the activities of Church on Main, including a financial report, beginning March 2019.
- Make decisions on the use of funds in CHOM's bank account and apply for grants through the 1001 program of the denomination.
- Assist the community in becoming an organized congregation of the PCUSA if so desired.
- The Administrative Commission shall be made up of equal numbers of ruling elders and Ministers of Word and Sacrament (at least two of each) and may add to their number active leaders of Church on Main who are members of other denominations in order to remain true to the ecumenical nature of this ministry. Presbyterian Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Presbyterian elders shall constitute a majority of the AC at all times.