

Committee on Ministers and Congregations

Report to New Castle Presbytery

Tuesday September 20, 2022

COMC Action Items:

The Session of West Nottingham Presbyterian Church and the Committee on Ministers and Congregations (COMC) requests that the Presbytery form an Administrative Commission with the following charge and responsibilities to work with the West Nottingham session and congregation.

Given the quick departure of the last two installed pastors and the request of the session for assistance, COMC recommends that the Presbytery form an Administrative Commission to inquire into the life of the congregation, recommend changes, and, if necessary, take authority in order to implement changes. The AC shall consist of no fewer than 3 and no more than 7 members divided as equally as possible between ruling elders and teaching elders with the Stated Clerk serving ex officio. The Presbytery Moderator is authorized to appoint members of this AC. The AC shall submit a report to the Presbytery on its work at each stated Presbytery meeting and will be subject to an annual review of their charge and work until Presbytery dissolves this commission. The AC shall have the following charge and the authority to fulfill these functions on behalf of the Presbytery:

1. Inquire into the reasons for departure of the last 2 installed pastors and recent staff.
2. Engage the congregation in conversation about their concerns regarding pastoral leadership and congregational culture.
3. Establish appropriate lines of power and authority between pastor, session, committees, deacons, and congregation.
4. Assist the session and congregation in discerning and implementing a process that supports long term congregational vitality.
5. Assist the session in securing pastoral leadership.
6. Conduct a review of the congregation's finances, including the finances of the Cemetery and Child Care Center.
7. Inquire into staff employment agreements and regularize those agreements.
8. Ensure that an appropriate building use agreement between the session and the Child Care Center is in place.
9. Discern with the session whether the Child Care Center should be separately incorporated with its own board and structure.
10. Review the congregation's current personnel policy and recommend changes as necessary.
11. Assume original jurisdiction if deemed necessary in order to accomplish the scope of this charge as provided for in G-3.0303e.

COMC recommends

THAT, Presbytery approve Presbytery Manual Revisions as posted in the Connectional Presbyter/Stated Clerk's Report.

THAT, Presbytery approve an increase in the minimum total effective salary for full time pastors by 8% for 2023. This is required for pastors at the minimum level and recommended for those who are above minimum.

In 2022 the minimum is \$56,372

In 2023 the minimum would become \$60,882

(8% of \$56,372 is \$4509.76—rounded to \$4510)

THAT, Presbytery commission CRE Anne Gunn to New Castle Presbytery.

Introductions of new members:

The Rev Laura Viau, pastor at First & Central Church

The Rev. Chris Scott, member at large

Actions taken by COMC:

June 9, 2022 – approved a new Transitional Checklist for churches in transition

June 9, 2022 – approved a request from the Session of First Church Newark to support healing and reconciliation work up to \$2,990.

June 9, 2022 – if the way be clear, pending congregational action, approved dissolution of the pastoral relationship between the Rev. Andy Jacob and Hanover Presbyterian Church effective June 19, 2022. COMC also approved permission for Mr. Jacob to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery as Executive Director of Chester Eastside, Inc., in the bounds of Philadelphia Presbytery effective August 1, 2022.

June 9, 2022 – if the way be clear, pending presbytery action, approved the request of the Rev. Steve Brundage to transfer his membership to Northwest Coast Presbytery.

June 9, 2022 – approved the request of the Rev. James Kay to be honorably retired.

August 18, 2022 – approved the request of Jefferson Street Center for the Rev. Andy Jacob to participate in their Grand Opening Event.

August 18, 2022 – if the way be clear, pending congregational action, approved the call of the Rev. Rick Upchurch to be pastor of First Presbyterian Church Milford and that he be received into New Castle Presbytery and that the Moderator appoint an administrative commission to install him.

August 18, 2022 – approved the reception of the Rev. Chris Scott as a member at large in New Castle Presbytery on transfer from Sheppards and Lapsley Presbytery. Rev. Scott's spouse is a wing chaplain at Dover Air Force Base and following usual protocol, she will maintain her membership in Sheppards and Lapsley Presbytery.

August 18, 2022 – approved the transfer of the Rev. Duke Dixon to Trinity Presbytery.

August 18, 2022 – approved the interim agreement between the Session of Church of the Covenant and the Rev. Kate Morgan.

August 18, 2022 – approved the interim agreement between the Session of Makemie Memorial and the Rev. Barb Hedges-Goettl.

August 18, 2022 – approved the request of the Session of St. Andrew Church to grant Pastor Emeritus to the Rev. John Paderson.

August 18, 2022 – if the way be clear, pending congregational action, approved the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between the West Nottingham Church and the Rev. Kristin Reinhold effective September 11, 2022.

September 8, 2022 – COMC approved new guidelines for ordination/installation of ministers in the presbytery.

September 8, 2022 – COMC placed the Rev. Kristin Reinhold on the roll as member-at-large pending the dissolution of her pastoral relationship with West Nottingham.

September 8, 2022 – COMC approved, that if the way be clear, pending action by Albany Presbytery to honorably retire the Rev. Debbie Johnson, that Ms. Johnson be received as an honorably retired member of New Castle Presbytery and that she be placed on the pulpit supply list.

September 8, 2022 – COMC approved placing the Rev. Chris Scott on the pulpit supply list.