

Presbytery of Great Rivers
Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report
February 25, 2023

We met on Friday, January 27th, having rescheduled our meeting from January 18th due to lack of quorum. We welcomed new committee members, John Turnbull and Wayne Wrage.

Our first item of business was to approve the Committee on Preparation for Ministry portion of the updated “Commissioned Pastor’s Handbook.” After a brief discussion it was unanimously approved to be sent on to the Committee on Ministry for work on their portion of the handbook. Once that is accomplished, we will work on the forms needed to complete the handbook. When it has final committee approval it will be brought to an assembly for approval.

Updates were given on all individuals under care with a review on next steps in their journeys to ordination. It was noted that Sam La Mere has withdrawn from the care of the presbytery. Lorna Blackford continues as a student at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and was approved to register for the senior ordination exams during the Fall 2023 exam cycle. Mackenzie Jager is scheduled to take the Polity and Exegesis Exams this week and next. The next step in Mackenzie’s journey will be to schedule an in person meeting with the committee for her final assessment with the committee, presuming she has completed the two exams taken in January satisfactorily. Exam results for the winter 2023 cycle are expected on February 13th. A possible date and location for this assessment have been identified by the committee and will be confirmed with all parties involved as the results of exams become known.

Bryan Burris, a Disciples of Christ pastor who has been talking to Committee on Ministry chair, Laura Reason since January 2021 about the possibility of becoming a PCUSA minister of word and sacrament has made a formal request to enter the process on January 11, 2023. The Committee on Ministry has asked that we assess his qualifications and give our recommendation of next steps in the process. We have set Tuesday, February 14th as a possible date to meet with him in response to the outcome of the Committee on Ministry discussion at their meeting of Thursday, February 2, 2023.

In other Business, we reviewed the meeting dates scheduled for the committee as our regularly scheduled meetings. There are no changes in the schedule of regular meetings and our next regularly scheduled meeting date is Wednesday, April 19th at 9:30 a.m. The remaining dates for regularly scheduled meetings in 2023 are Wednesday, June 21 and Wednesday, October 18 at 9:30 a.m.