

COM Report to the 8.26.23 Presbytery Assembly.

The Committee on Ministry has met four times since the last Assembly on Zoom with the exception of a hybrid option in July to meet Lead Presbyter Ann Schwartz.

September 9th, Petersburg Central is hosting an in person Communion Training for REs from 9 to noon. Look for full details of how Sessions can register elders by sending an email to greatriverscom@gmail.com by September 3rd. Through the generosity of the Synod, we are offering two identical sessions of the **required annual boundaries training for all ministers, lay pastors and Christian Educators on the rolls of the presbytery** on Zoom August 29-30 and October 31-November 1. The registration link is in the Good News.

On August 31st, the transition to the new CLC should be complete. Our congregations seeking new pastoral leaders either had new Ministry Discernment Profiles (MDP) in the updated Church Leadership Connection (CLC) by 8.1.23 or were close to entering them. The basic new forms (MDPs and PDPs) and basic introductory materials are on the PGR website under COM Forms. CLC continues to routinely add new instructions, so the most up to date information is always available to you at oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/ Questions? Email greatriverscom@gmail.com with questions or seeking assistance. CLC staff will be attending our 9/7 COM meeting to orient all COM members to the new system.

We congratulate Third Presbyterian Church of Springfield on becoming a Matthew 25 church in May.

The 2023-2025 Book of Order went into effect on 7.9.23. After the action items today, TE Christian Choi will make a presentation on the change to G-2.0804, Terms of Call, on the provision for a minimum of twelve weeks paid family medical leave.

Actions taken since the 4.29.23 Assembly

The committee has approved all Terms of Call and Contracts submitted by 7.27.23.

The annual report on effective salaries provided each August appears at the end of this report.

Transitions

Granted the status of honorably retired to:

TE Kathryn Daniel, effective 3.1.2023

TE Denise Clark-Jones, effective 6.11.2023

We have welcomed to the presbytery:

TE Ann Schwartz from Southeastern Illinois Presbytery to serve as PGR Lead Presbyter

TE Edward P. Wegele from Des Moines Presbytery to serve at Peoria FFC.

TE Nicole Wegele from Des Moines Presbytery as a member at large

We have transferred to other presbyteries:

TE Cathy Allen to the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois
TE Denise Clark-Jones to the Presbytery of Western Reserve
TE Richard L. Johnson to the Presbytery of East Iowa

Granted permission to labor outside the bounds to:

TE Cheyanna Losey to labor in Blackhawk Presbytery effective 9/1/2023

Noted the death of TE Henry Hein, HR on 7.30.23

We have trained and certified the following ruling elders to serve communion in worship within their own congregations under G-3.0301b and W-3.0410

Congregation	Elder	Term
Reynolds, Hamlet Perryton	Faye Eckhardt	5.22.23-5.22.26
	Scott Jenkins	5.22.23-5.22.26
	Pam Krantz	5.22.23-5.22.26
Danvers First	Jo Samara	7.1.23-6.3.26

Administrative Commission report

RE Diane Ludington was commissioned to serve as the Commissioned Pastor at Carthage First on July 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm

Other updates

Bloomington New Covenant Community (PCUSA/DOC/UCC) installed Rev. Lori Kyle, a Unitarian Universalist minister, as their pastor on 7.2.23.

Action items for the Assembly:

1. To recommend to the Presbytery that Rev. Lori Kyle (UU) be granted voice at Assemblies for the time she is pastor at Bloomington NCC.

Rationale:

The Plan of Union/Constitution and By-laws of New Covenant Community, Part IX. Minister(s), Section D, Ministerial Standing says: "The pastor(s) shall seek appropriate ministerial standing in each denomination with which New Covenant Community is affiliated." COM recommends granting voice during her tenure as the way to recognize Rev. Kyle's role within one of our congregations.

2. To request the Presbytery modify the requirements for the Rev. Dr. Scott Carnes in previous action (November, 2022) to be received as a member of the PC(USA) and to be installed as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Galesburg.

By replacing the Theology Standard Ordination exam with an oral theology exam by a team of 4 members of the Presbytery.

By crediting his vast Biblical knowledge from his years in ministry in place of an acceptable result on the Bible Content exam. (This motion was approved July 6, 2023 by COM)

Background:

On 11.19.22, PGR Assembly examined and approved the Rev. Dr. Scott Carnes to be received as a PC(USA) pastor and to be installed as pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Galesburg upon completion of a Qualification Plan.

- a. He has successfully completed the Qualification Plan with two exceptions (see above)
- b. Members of COM and CPM conducted an oral alternative Theological exam 7.25.23. The results were satisfactory.
- c. Rev. Dr. Scott Carnes has met the standard equivalent to the Senior Standard Ordination Exam in Theology through the oral alternative exam.
- d. The proposed modifications of the original Qualification plan are due to external factors beyond his control when he took the two exams and the time delay for when the exams are offered again.

The motion requires a three fourths majority vote.

3. To recommend to the Assembly approval of the following actions with Rev. Bryan Burris, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
 - Examine, arrest and sustain the examination of the pastor (see his Statement of Faith after this COM report)
 - And enroll him as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA). Upon enrollment, Rev. Burris shall furnish to the Presbytery evidence of having surrendered membership in any and all other Christian churches with which he has previously been associated. (G-0205.b)

Rationale and Background:

Book of Order

A minister of another Reformed church who has been ordained for five or more years may be granted an exemption for some or all of the examinations required of candidates for ordination by a two-thirds vote of the presbytery (G-0205.a(2))

Rev. Burris' previous membership in the Presbytery

Rev. Burris served as the interim pastor of NCC (then in Normal) and was a temporary member of the presbytery during that time of service (temporary members complete a course in worship and the sacraments and polity conducted by COM)

Recommended unanimously by CPM and COM

Rev. Burris met with Committee on Preparation (CPM) on 2.14.23 as reported to the 4.29.23 Assembly for an assessment of his qualifications to transfer. CPM is satisfied with his qualifications to transfer his ordination to the PC(USA) and recommended that to the Committee on Ministry. The decision was unanimous.

Rev. Burris met with the Committee on Ministry (COM) on 7.6.23 and his Theological exam was approved. COM granted Rev. Burris permission to prepare his Personal Discernment Profile (PDP) and enter it into the Church

Leadership Connection (CLC). The decision was unanimous.

The motion requires a two thirds majority vote

4. Recommend to the Assembly an increase of 3% in the minimum salaries for 2024.

Rationale:

From the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Bls.gov April 2023 Economic News Release): Food prices increased 8.5 percent over the last 12 months. Prices for food at home rose 8.4 percent. Prices for major grocery store foods increased, ranging from 2.5 percent (fruits and vegetables) to 13.6 percent (cereals and bakery products). Prices for food away from home rose 8.8 percent over the last year.

Within the energy category, gasoline prices decreased 17.4 percent over the past 12 months. In contrast, electricity prices rose 10.2 percent over the last year. Prices for all items not including food and energy rose 5.6 percent over the 12 months ended March 2023. Shelter prices increased 8.2 percent over the last year, accounting for over 60 percent of the total increase in all items less food and energy.

Since March 2021, consumer prices were up 14.0 percent, overall. Food prices increased 18.0 percent, and energy prices, 23.6 percent. Prices for all items not including food and energy were 12.4 higher in March 2023 compared with 2 years ago.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic 3 years ago in March 2020 consumer prices increased 16.9, overall. Food prices increased 22.1 percent, while energy prices were 39.8 percent higher. Prices for all items less food and energy increased 14.3 percent over the past 3 years.

By way of contrast, recognizing the restraints of congregations, in the past two years, Pastor’s Salary minimums have increased 5%, and some pastors have not seen any increase.

In light of this, COM not only recommends the increases in the minimums, COM invites all congregations to consider the same increase for persons currently serving at above the minimum.

2023 Level 1 (<4 years exp.)	2023 Level 2 (4+ years exp.)	2023 Full Time CLP
47,892.00	51,565.00	38,311.00
3% increase +1,437.00	3% increase +1,547.00	3% increase +1,150.00
2024 Level 1 49329.00	2024 Level 2 53,112.00	2024 FT CLP 39,461.00
Monthly increase +119.75	Monthly increase +129.00	Monthly increase +96.00

Note: Effective salary for a call or contract with an ordained pastor must meet current presbytery minimums.

Reported by TE Laura B. Reason, Moderator of Committee on Ministry

STATEMENT OF FAITH – BRYAN BURRIS

I believe in a triune God as creator, sustainer, and redeemer of our world. Through the revelation of God in scripture, in the life and ministry of Jesus, and in the work of the Holy Spirit, we see that God is continually seeking the movement of the world toward justice and love as we are bound to one another in God.

I believe that Jesus is the fullest manifestation of the divine in human form. In his ministry, Jesus taught and demonstrated what it means to live in the kingdom of God, a kingdom that is both here and to come, a kingdom which proclaims good news to the poor, justice for the oppressed, and the power of self-giving love for the healing of the world.

I believe the Holy Spirit works in us to draw us closer to God, empowers us to continue the ministry of Jesus, binds us to one another in God, reveals God's purposes for our lives, illuminates the presence of God in our world and in one another, inspires, encourages, and strengthens us in our spiritual journeys.

I believe the Bible authoritatively witnesses to God's self-revelation. Through the Scriptures, we learn of the interplay between God and humanity in history, the purposes to which God is moving the world, and the nature of who God is. Through the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures continue to speak God's words to us today.

I believe the Church is the body of Christ charged with continuing the ministry of Jesus, bringing healing, hope, love, and justice to a hurting world. The church is connected to one another and to God in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In gratitude for God's grace, the church responds with service. In worship, we confess our faith, engage with the Word, and encounter Christ anew in the Sacraments. In our congregations, we seek to be the hands and feet of Christ, support one another in growing as disciples, and provide sanctuary to those in need of refuge.

I believe that through the cross, Jesus demonstrated the power of God's love to bring new life, that through the power of that love our hearts can be changed and we can be reconciled to God. I believe that through the cross and the grace of God we can experience salvation from the sin which separates us from living into the fullness of God's desire for our lives.

I believe heaven is a union with God's presence, a union that we will experience most fully in the life to come. I believe hell is a separation from God, a rejection of the love that God offers, an experience that can begin in this life and continue in the next.

I believe that communion is a means of remembering the life and ministry of Jesus through experiencing the presence of Jesus in the elements, a means of empowering those who take it to continue the work Jesus began, a reminder of our need to follow in the example of Jesus, and a demonstration of the connection which exists between Christ, the church and one another.

I believe baptism is an expression of our intention to live a life of commitment to God's purposes, a reminder of God's grace, an expression of commitment to a community of faith, the emergence of new life in Christ, and an expression of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the person baptized.

COM 2023 Report of Terms of Call and Contracts for Presbytery of Great Rivers

City	Church	Pastor	TOC/Contract	% Time	Effective Salary
Aledo	College Ave.	Fisher, Harry, RE	Contract	weekly	\$ 210.00
Aledo	College Ave.	Furr, Wayne – Cumberland	Contract	50	\$ 26,776.00
Aledo	Sunbeam	TE - McGrath Nagle, Maura	Contract	25	\$ 19,100.00
Athens	Indian Point	CLP-Woodward, Sandi	Contract	40	\$ 15,685.00
Bartonville	Trinity	Stephen Barch - UCC	Contract	50	\$ 26,767.00
Bloomington	Second	TE - Haddon, Treighton	TOC	FT	\$ 85,000.00
Bloomington	St. Luke Union	TE - Gifford, Dr. Andrew	TOC	FT	\$ 92,014.00
Canton	First	TE - Brinklow, Edwin	TOC	FT	\$ 56,779.00
Carlinville	Federated	Mitchell, William - ABC	Contract	50	\$ 30,300.00
Carthage	First United	CLP - Ludington, Diane	Contract	30	\$ 17,500.00
Clinton	Clinton	TE - Stroup, Paul	TOC	FT	\$ 74,243.00
Coal Valley	First	TE - Snart, Tim	TOC	70	\$ 55,565.00
East Moline	First	TE - Sherwood, Rebecca	TOC	FT	On Leave
Elmwood	First	TE - Bauler, Marla	TOC	FT	\$ 52,812.00
Eureka	Eureka	CLP - Montgomery, Robert	Contract	60	\$ 22,536.00
Farmington	First	TE - Bean, Cindy	Contract	50	\$ 46,800.00
Galesburg	First	Carnes, Scott – UMC	Contract	FT	\$ 70,000.00
Geneseo	First	Wynveen, Barry - RCA	Contract	70	\$ 40,000.00
Ipava	Ipava United	TE - Walden, Charles	TOC	30	\$ 15,470.00
Jacksonville	First	TE - Warren, Jonathan	TOC	FT	\$ 75,362.76
Kirkwood	Westminster	CLP - Moore, Pamela	Contract	33	\$ 17,280.00
Knoxville	First United	TE - Shedenhelm, Kenn	Contract	27	\$ 15,250.00
LeRoy	First United	TE - McLean, William (Bill)	Contract	FT	\$ 51,565.00
Lincoln	First	TE - Quine, Adam	TOC	FT	\$ 64,823.00
Macomb	First	TE - Whitaker, A. Rene'	Contract	FT	\$ 53,207.90
Macomb	Scotland Trinity	TE - Walden, Charles	TOC	70	\$ 36,036.00
Mason City	United	TE - Poetschner, Charlotte	Contract	15	\$ 9,450.00
Milan	First	TE - Styrt, Katie	TOC	FT	\$ 53,837.36
Monmouth	Faith United	TE - Ouellette, Brandon	TOC	FT	\$ 52,515.80
Morton	First	CLP - Claver, Michael	Contract	50	\$ 31,584.00
Mt Sterling	Pres Ch of Christ	CLP - Young, Richard	Contract	25	\$ 12,000.00
NewWindsor	New Windsor	TE - Ryu, Hwa Sung	Contract	FT	\$ 51,610.00
Normal	First	TE - Wilcox, Matt	TOC	FT	\$ 80,953.00
Normal	First	Schilling, Christopher - DOC	Contract	50	\$ 35,192.00
Normal	First	TE - Karol Farris Schilling	Contract	50	\$ 37,899.00
Normal	New Covenant	Burris, Bryan – DOC	Contract	FT	\$ 55,900.00
Orion	Beulah	TE - Snart, Tim	TOC	30	\$ 18,643.77
Peoria	First Federated	TE - Wegele, Edward	TOC	FT	\$ 85,000.00
Peoria	United	TE - Avery, Debra	TOC	FT	\$ 90,513.00
Peoria	Westminster	TE - Clark-Jones, Denise	TOC	FT	\$ 82,911.00

Petersburg	Central	Edgecombe, Ryan – Ind. DOC	Contract	50	\$	36,000.00
Pleas.Plains	Farmingdale	Smith, J. Steven – UMC	Contract	50	\$	30,000.00
Quincy	Ellington	CLP - Ron Cox	Contract	50	\$	33,547.00
Reynolds	Hamlet Perryton	TE - Losey, Harold	Contract	47.5	\$	30,000.00
Rio	Rio	TE - McGrath Nagle, Maura	Contract	50	\$	25,782.50
Springfield	First	TE - Phillips, Susan	TOC	FT	\$	142,210.66
Springfield	Hope	TE - Goodman, Chuck	TOC	FT	\$	70,604.00
Springfield	Third	Smith, J. Steven - UMC	Contract	62	\$	31,971.00
Springfield	Westminster	TE - Choi, Christian	TOC	FT	\$	72,522.00
Springfield	Westminster	TE - Kieffer, Dr. Blythe	TOC	FT	\$	112,682.00
Tallula	Rock Creek	TE - Hinds, Joanne	Contract	48	\$	37,000.00
Viola	Viola United	TE - Downey, Matthew	Contract	50	\$	30,900.00
Virginia	First	Elmore, David – Am. Baptist	Contract	31	\$	15,600.00
Virginia	SangamonValley	TE - Bauler, Dr Timothy	Contract	25	\$	18,000.00
Warsaw	First	CLP - Ludington, Diane	Contract	50	\$	24,690.00
Washington	Washington	TE - Napoli, John Joseph	TOC	FT	\$	59,850.00
White Hall	First	CLP - Ballard, Kirby	Contract	26	\$	10,000.00
Woodhull	United	TE - Losey, Cheyanna	TOC	FT	\$	51,735.00
Yates City	Faith United	TE - Bauler, Marla	Contract	15	\$	18,000.00

Churches without current Contract on file with the COM/Presbytery of Great Rivers

Adair	West Prairie	Westlake, Jeremy, Ch. Brethren
Alexis	Norwood	CLP Pullen, Gary
Biggsville -	United	open
Bushnell	First	open
Carrollton	First	CLP – Ballard, Kirby
Carthage	Fountain Green	open
Chatham	Chatham	TE - Daniel, Kay as Supply
Clayton	Federated	rotating supply speakers
Danvers	First	open
Delevan	First	open
Divernon	First	open
Edwards	Korean	TE - Kim, Hyaekwang (Dan)
Greenview	United	open
Hamilton	Bethel	CLP - Hanson, Mark
Lewiston	First	CLP – Frame, Penny
Media	Community	open
Middletown	Middletown	TE - Quine, Adam as Supply
Monmouth	Sugar Tree Gr	open
Niota	AppanooseFaith	Poland, David
Oneida	United	TE - Baldwin, Linda
Pekin	First	pulpit supply
Perry	Perry	open

Rushville	First	open
Seaton	Center	open
Springfield	Korean	TE - Kim, Jaechul
Stronghurst	Stronghurst	open
Virden	First	open
Woodson	Unity	Kerr, Robert