

**SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES
Thursday, November 8, 2018**

OPENING:

Moderator Helen Bessent- Byrd called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. with prayer.

ATTENDANCE:

Present were: Helen Bessent-Byrd (EVA), Ben Cahoon (NHO), Nam Hong Cho (AKAP), Miriam Dewhurst (NCP), and Ed Terry (BAL). Excused was Calvin Lewers (CHA). W.D. Hasty was absent.

APPROVAL OF DOCKET:

The docket was approved as presented.

APPOINTMENT OF RECORDING SECRETARY:

Miriam Dewhurst was appointed.

QUORUM:

The Moderator declared a quorum was present.

MINUTES:

The August 27, 2018 Minutes were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS:

SYNOD TREASURER:

Financial advisors and auditors have been consulted on the question of whether the Synod is required to have a designated treasurer position. The consensus is that the answer is no. Unless the Synod Executive or the Synod Administrator learn that the Commonwealth of Virginia requires the Synod to have such a position, the Administration Committee will not pursue the development of this position.

EXECUTIVE/STATED CLERK EVALUATION:

Calvin and Miriam will work with the Synod Executive to determine his objectives for the year. The committee would like this year's evaluation to be based on objectives for the year. Miriam will schedule a time to meet with Rev. Lesane, with Rev. Byrd if possible) before the committee's next meeting. Nam will give Calvin and Miriam information resulting from the GA PJC. We will also need objectives related to the Stated Clerk aspect of the position.

Ed suggested several issues for Synod consideration:

- Develop and promote and provide financial assistance to student interns to small churches (seminary students).
- Develop, promote and facilitate mission trips for young adults.
- Encourage the use of commissioned ruling elders.
- Encourage assimilation of immigrants and embrace different forms of worship.

EVALUATION OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY:

W. D. will ask the Synod office for the feedback from the last assembly and bring it to the next committee meeting.

CONTINUATION OF POLICIES REVIEW:

It was determined that the only change needed to the child and youth abuse prevention document was replacing the word "Program" to "Guidelines" in the title. **Moved that the title of the policy be hanged from "Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program" to "Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Guidelines." SC**

The remaining policies to be reviewed are the Sexual Misconduct Guide (Helen and Calvin) and the Operations Manual (Calvin and Nam). They will be reviewed at the next Administration Committee meeting. At that meeting the committee will also review the evaluations of the last Assembly and consider performance objectives for the Executive/Stated Clerk.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. with prayer by Ed Terry. The next meeting will be held via Zoom on January 10, 2019.

**SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES
Thursday, January 10, 2019**

OPENING:

Moderator Helen Bessent-Byrd called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. with prayer.

ATTENDANCE:

Present were: Helen Bessent-Byrd (EVA), Ben Cahoon (NHO), Nam Hong Cho (AKAP), Miriam Dewhurst (NCP), W.D. Hasty [Peaks], Calvin Lewers (CHA), and Ed Terry (BAL). Rev. Warren Lesane, Synod Executive was present for a portion of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF DOCKET:

The docket was approved as presented.

APPOINTMENT OF RECORDING SECRETARY:

Miriam Dewhurst was appointed.

QUORUM:

The Moderator declared a quorum was present.

MINUTES:

The November 8, 2018 Minutes were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS:

EXECUTIVE/STATED CLERK EVALUATION:

Calvin reported that he had sent Rev. Lesane a template for identifying objectives. Rev. Lesane responded by sending a "talking paper" that he presented to the Executive Committee, summarizing where he believes God is leading the Synod at this time and the work that he is currently engaged in. The paper is a good beginning to a discussion of the objectives that can be developed which will form the basis of the Executive's evaluation in 2019.

Rev. Lesane stated that he believes that his value to the Synod is using his spiritual, logical and intuitive skills to identify the urgent concerns that the Synod needs to address, one of which is the Synod's relationship to its member presbyteries and their leadership. The Synod needs support from the presbyteries. With new presbytery leadership coming on board, this is an important time to establish good relationships. Rev. Lesane believes he needs to be evaluated on his ability to establish these relationships.

In addition, the structures that existed 10-15 years ago do not respond to the ministry needs of today. Rev. Lesane would like the Synod to be more fluid and enabling. He suggested that a

specific goal be developed for each of the seven major areas he has identified, with one or two objectives listed under each goal. These objectives would be the basis for evaluation. Rev. Lesane appreciates this process. This is the first Administration Committee in his experience that has taken up the task of conducting an evaluation that is more than a discussion of how things are going. He suggests that there be six or seven goals for the next 12-15 months. He is happy to work with the committee on this subject.

There was a discussion about the Freedom Rising initiative and how it relates to the Synod's work. The Freedom Rising initiative came to the most recent General Assembly from Pittsburgh Presbytery. It is focused on African-American males. GA is trying to raise several millions of dollars through Peacemaking offerings and has identified five cities nationwide to focus on, including Charlotte and Baltimore in our synod.

The Synod approved \$6,000 for an exploratory committee regarding ways to impact the ministry of African-American males, the New Generation initiative. It is not clear how the Freedom Rising initiative will impact the Synod's New Generation initiative.

Calvin and Miriam will meet with Rev. Lesane before the next Administration Committee meeting to further develop goals and objectives for the Synod Executive's evaluation. Miriam will send the talking paper to the other members of the committee. Nam has information from the GA PJC that may be relevant to the Executive's evaluation and he will forward that information to Calvin and Miriam.

EVALUATION OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY:

W. D. asked the Synod office for the feedback from the last assembly and learned that the Synod Administrator did not have this information. Further discussion led to the conclusion that evaluation forms were not distributed at the last assembly, so feedback information does not exist. It was agreed that W.D. would re-send the evaluation form to the Synod Administrator and ask that copies be made available for the next assembly, in March.

REVIEW OF THE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY:

Helen reported that other than a few typographical errors, the substance of the document appeared to be satisfactory. It was agreed that the document would be re-titled "Policy of Synod Response to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct."

The policy mandates a response team for occasions when an allegation of sexual misconduct arises and a separate disciplinary committee if it is established that sexual misconduct has occurred. The policy provides specific direction regarding the demographics of the membership of these committees and requires that they receive training for this work. The policy was approved in 1994 when the number of Synod commissioners was much larger than it is today and the Synod had some oversight responsibilities for affiliated institutions such as camps colleges and nursing homes. No current member of the committee was aware of the existence of a response team or a disciplinary committee. It was noted that most, if not all, of our member presbyteries do have response teams and disciplinary committees composed of individuals who have been trained for their responsibilities. It was suggested that the Synod might reach out to member presbyteries for the names of individuals serving on these committees who would be willing to be on call should an

allegation of sexual misconduct be made against a Synod commissioner or staff member. Helen will bring the question to the Executive Committee and report back at the next Administration Committee meeting.

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS MANUAL:

Nam reported that he had reviewed the manual and found it to be satisfactory, but asked for assistance as English is not his first language. It was agreed that all committee members will review the manual before the next meeting and note any places that need revision. The manual was last reviewed in 2015.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m. with prayer by W.D. Hasty. The next meeting will be held via Zoom on February 4, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.

**SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES
Monday, February 18, 2019**

OPENING:

Moderator Helen Bessent-Byrd called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. with prayer.

ATTENDANCE:

Present were: Helen Bessent-Byrd (EVA), Ben Cahoon (NHO), Miriam Dewhurst (NCP), W.D. Hasty [Peaks], Calvin Lewers (CHA), and Rev. Warren Lesane, Synod Executive.

APPROVAL OF DOCKET:

The docket was approved as amended.

APPOINTMENT OF RECORDING SECRETARY:

Miriam Dewhurst was appointed.

QUORUM:

The Moderator declared a quorum was present.

MINUTES:

The January 10, 2019 Minutes were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS:

EVALUATION OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY:

W. D. has sent the evaluation form to the Synod Administrator and she will include it in the packet for the 243rd Synod Assembly in March. Ed Terry has agreed to collect the completed evaluations and give them to Tami, who will scan them and send them to the Committee. Hard copies will be available for those Commissioners who have not printed out a copy. Rev. Lesane reported that the Synod's webmaster has been asked to incorporate the form into the website in such a way that it can be filled out on-line.

EXECUTIVE/STATED CLERK EVALUATION:

Calvin and Miriam reported that Rev. Lesane had prepared a draft of goals and objectives for the next 12-18 months. The document was shared and reviewed with Committee members. Rev. Lesane noted that it is hard to complete a large number of goals 100%. Work has already begun on some of them. Some of them will require more than 12 months to complete. There is actually an eighth goal – national leadership in the denomination. Rev. Lesane is the Chair-elect of the Presbyterian Agency Mission Board. The eighth goal will be: Working with the Committee of the Office of the General Assembly.

The first goal concerns fostering good relationships with presbytery leadership. One of the associated objectives is ensuring that Presbytery leaders are enrolled in Presbytery Leadership Formation. This is a 3-year program for new general presbyters. They are assigned a coach and meet periodically with their peers. There are currently eight new GPs in the Synod and a ninth will be joining them when National Capital Presbytery selects its new GP. The Synod pays \$4,000 for each GP to participate in this program.

The second goal involves working with the Executive Committee to identify and address the structural changes needed to maintain the Synod's relevance. As an example, the Speer Trust is under the jurisdiction of New Castle Presbytery. New Castle is now more interested in emerging ministries such as the next generation initiative. Accordingly, the committee that has been administering the dissemination of Speer Trust funds will go out of business. The Synod will have to apply to New Castle for Speer funds.

Other examples are the Synod's Grants and Awards and Presbytery Initiatives Committees. Currently a staff person is doing the work that the Grants and Awards Committee members used to do. The Presbytery Initiatives Committee seldom has many, if any, applications for its funds, so that its members have little to do.

The third goal involves working with the Executive Committee to develop a plan to align the Synod's mission with its structure and to align its mission to what the Synod funds. As an example, the Synod gives away about \$1.3 million/year through various funding sources. The largest part is the Reynolds Fund that distributes about \$1 million/year to retired ministers in North Carolina. The Synod has five committees that provide funding and scholarships with the remaining \$200,000. It should be possible to cut the cost of those committees through consolidation and do the funding in a different way. Monies freed up can be given to churches. There may be some push-back from the current committees.

The fourth goal involves working with presbyteries and presbytery leaders to develop and use interpretation tools to communicate the meaning of per capita and why it is important for churches and presbyteries to pay it. One of the objectives involves developing a video to share with each presbytery that interprets the mission of the Synod and how per capita funds are used. The Synod does not have the capacity to produce videos and will be reaching out to presbyteries for help on this project.

The fifth goal is to return the position of the Synod Administrator to full time status. The Administration Committee will be asked to develop a rationale for this action.

The sixth goal involves reestablishing relationships with groups, agencies and caucuses that have had a long history with the Synod. This would include, but not be limited to, Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Men, the Korean Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus, the Black Caucus, Women of Color, Westminster Presbyterian Homes, Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center and Presbyterian Homes of North Carolina. Chairpersons and representatives of each related group have been invited to the 243rd Synod Assembly and many are planning to attend. There are many of these groups and Synod Commissioners will be asked to help in this effort.

The seventh goal is to work with Synod leadership in launching the Next Generation Initiative. One of the objectives under this goal involves collaborating with groups such as the Presbyterian Foundation, the Fund for Theological Education, the Servant Leadership Institute, the United Methodist Church (which has set aside \$7 million over the next 3-5 years to attract young clergy to their denomination and we would like to learn from them), the Board of Pension, Duke Divinity School, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, Johnson C. Smith University, and New Brunswick Seminary. Many of the schools have money for African-American students that comes to them from the Presbyterian Foundation: old monies given long ago. Rev. Lesane has been talking with Union Theological Seminary already.

The Administration Committee will be helping Rev. Lesane to prioritize the goals. Some are easy and some are already under way.

Jubilee Fund

The Jubilee Fund Committee has asked that the Synod approve a change in its guidelines, adding a fifth area where the Fund might support mission projects. The new general description of the Fund would be as follows, with the proposed new language in italics.

“The Jubilee Fund is a Synod designated fund. It was created in 1982 from the proceeds of the sale of the Jubilee Health Center in Henderson, North Carolina. The income from the principal is to be used for mission projects in the areas of (1) African-American clergy recruitment; (2) African-American Christian Education; (3) African-American congregational leadership and development; and (4) African-American youth ministry; and (5) any New Initiatives, projects, monetary support for advocacy interest groups, and ministries that will preserve and increase the longevity and presence of African-American churches or congregations in the Mid-Atlantic Synod. Funding will be provided and disbursed at an equal amount that any other grantee would receive from the Jubilee committee, based on available funds during a given fund cycle.”

The Jubilee Fund Committee met last week and approved the addition of #5. Rev. Lesane suggested that the Administration Committee invite the chair of the Jubilee Fund to meet with the committee during the Synod Assembly in March. When we make the approval recommendation to the Assembly, the Jubilee chairperson can speak to it. This item will be on the Administration Committee’s agenda in March.

Per capita

From time to time, a presbytery will request a reduction in the per capita it is required to give to denominational support (Synod and GA). The Synod does not hear of these requests until the presbytery has gone to GA. We need a statement that requests/requires the presbytery to communicate with the Synod also.

Presbyteries pay per capita in any given year based on their membership at the end of the year two years previous – 2019 per capita is paid on the basis of membership at the end of 2017. Church closings or departures in the intervening year reduce per capita payments from member churches and some presbyteries ask permission to reduce their per capita commitment.

The Executive Committee has asked the Administration Committee to draft per capita guidelines so that presbyteries now how the Synod deals with changes in per capita that occur during the year. Helen will send committee members draft guidelines, to be discussed during the committee's meeting at the March Assembly. Committee-approved guidelines will be presented for a first reading to the Assembly in March.

Review of Operations Manual

The Committee reviewed the Operations Manual, noting several needed changes. Miriam will make the suggested changes and send the draft revised Manual to Committee members, for discussion and approval at the March meeting.

Agenda Items for March Meeting at Synod Assembly

- Jubilee Fund guidelines: Helen will contact the chair of the committee and invite him to our meeting.
- Operations Manual: review changes and recommend to Assembly for approval
- Per capita guidelines: review draft for possible sharing with Assembly as first read
- Synod Executive/Stated Clerk goals and objectives: report on these in summary fashion to Assembly. The Committee will work with Rev. Lesane to prioritize goals.

Rev. Lesane asked Ben if he would be willing to speak for about five minutes on the impact of last September's storm on his community. Ben will, if he does not have jury duty.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m. with prayer by W.D. Hasty. The next meeting will be held at the Synod Assembly, March 11, 2019.