

SYNOD OF LAKES AND PRAIRIES
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT
March 1, 2021

MEMBERS

Members of the Administrative Review Committee are as follows: Rev. Dr. Matthew L Sauer (Winnebago); Elder Kathy Terpstra (Minnesota Valley); Rev. Dr. Candace Adams (Northern Plains); Rev. David Feltman, HR (North Central Iowa); Elder Diane Wilson, CRE (North Central Iowa); Rev. Dr. April Davis Campbell (Twin Cities); and Elder Pat Shipley (Missouri River Valley).

INTRODUCTION

This report reflects our desire to have the members of First Presbyterian Church of Davenport, Iowa and the Presbytery of East Iowa fulfill their calling to be the church. This vision is described in the Book of Order.

The mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God's love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God's mission. F-1.01

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, unity in Christ is possible. Christ calls the Church to be one. Oneness is best achieved by living out the great commandments "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind...and "Love others as much as you love yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39 *CEV*).

Because in Christ the Church is one, it strives to be one. To be one with Christ is to be joined with all those whom Christ calls into relationship with him. To be thus joined with one another is to become priests for one another, praying for the world and for one another and sharing the various gifts God has given to each Christian for the benefit of the whole community. F-1.0302a

Unfortunately, there are times when brokenness makes it challenging to live as one. Nevertheless, we are called to reconciliation. The Church acknowledges our sinfulness, yet calls us to a new way of life. It is through Christ's redemptive work that the mission is fulfilled.

Because in Christ the Church is holy, the Church, its members, and those in its ordered ministries strive to lead lives worthy of the Gospel we proclaim. In gratitude for Christ's work of redemption, we rely upon the work of God's Spirit through Scripture and the

means of grace (W-1.0106) to form every believer and every community for this holy living. We confess the persistence of sin in our corporate and individual lives. At the same time, we also confess that we are forgiven by Christ and called again and yet again to strive for the purity, righteousness, and truth revealed to us in Jesus Christ and promised to all people in God's new creation. F-1.0302b

If individuals choose to remain in a state of brokenness and separated from one another the mission of the Church will be weakened. It is our prayer that everyone involved in this situation will make a conscious decision to move forward and seek to corporately unite to embody the Great Ends of the Church.

The Great Ends of the Church are: the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world. F-1.0304

PROCESS

The organizational meeting of the Synod Administrative Review Committee was convened on Zoom by Synod Moderator John McKay on June 12, 2020 with prayer at 9:40 a.m. Those present included: Matt Sauer, MWS, Kathy Terpstra, RE, Candace Adams, MWS, David Feltman, MWS, Diane Wilson, CRE, April Davis Campbell, MWS and Pat Shipley, RE. In addition to Synod Moderator John McKay, Synod Executive Elona Street Stewart and Synod Stated Clerk Pamela Prouty.

The charge of the Committee was explained by representatives of Synod:

Duties and Responsibilities of the Synod Administrative Review Committee:

- Facilitate reconciliation between all parties;
- Identify sources of conflict, distrust, and confusion, making sure all parties involved have an opportunity to speak;
- Facilitate conversations through an open forum, one-on-one and group interviews, review relevant Session and Presbytery records;
- Make recommendations to the Presbytery and the Session
- Report to each stated meeting of the Synod and Presbytery plenary

Co-Moderators for the Committee are Matt Sauer and Kathy Terpstra. Pat Shipley will serve as Clerk. All business of the Committee will be conducted on Zoom.

Since the organizational meeting on June 12, 2020 the Committee has met on the following dates: July 13, 26, 30; August 13, 20, 27; September 3, 14, 21, 28, October 5, 12, 19, 25, November 9, 16, 23, 30, Dec 7, 2020, January 11, 25, February 1, 8, 15, 2021. Documents and records requested by the Committee from the parties have been reviewed and discussed. Thirteen individual interviews have been conducted as well as two meetings with the full Session. Data

collected continues to be reviewed to determine relevance to the charge given the Committee. On November 19, 2020, the Committee met with CG&P and Harry Hoyt at 5:30 p.m. and the First Presbyterian Church—Davenport Session at 8 p.m. to share its observations related to interviews. On November 23, 2020, the Committee met with currently serving representatives of East Iowa Presbytery Coordinating Council to share observations related to interviews. The Committee convened on November 30, 2020 to debrief meetings held on November 16 and 23 and to work on preliminary recommendations for the parties involved. It was decided that parties receive preliminary recommendations would be sent to Clerk of Session, First Presbyterian Church, Davenport, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of East Iowa, PPC and the Stated Clerk of Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

TERMS

TE - Teaching Elder

RE - Ruling Elder

MWS - Minister of Word and Sacrament

The Committee - Synod Administrative Review Committee

The Presbytery - Presbytery of East Iowa

PCC – Presbytery Coordinating Council

The Session - Session of First Presbyterian Church, Davenport

CG&P – Congregation, Government & Personnel Committee of First Presbyterian Church, Davenport

OBSERVATIONS & IRREGULARITIES

Observations Regarding Congregation, Government and Personnel Committee and Harry Hoyt

1. All parties believed they had the best interest of the church in mind. All were cooperative in the process.
2. CG&P operated with minimal Session oversight for more than 20 years.
3. CG&P contained two active Session members.
4. Harry Hoyt, RE was the longest-serving member and drafted policy documents.
5. CG&P has a process for assisting in the resignation of staff/pastors that have been used at least four times before Rev. Dr. Richard Miller. This process includes confidential discussions with the Pastor and a predetermined outcome before discussing it with Session.
6. CG&P's assumed its process for dissolving pastoral calls was known by the Presbytery and given tacit approval though cannot be confirmed.
7. Harry Hoyt was an employee of the Presbytery from 2003-September 30, 2018 as a Committee on Ministry resource person.
8. Rev. Dr. Richard Miller had been apprised by CG&P in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 of performance concerns. No known performance improvement plans were shared with us by First Presbyterian Church, Davenport.
9. Allegations of Rev. Dr. Richard Miller's plagiarism by the CG&P surfaced in February 2017. Additional concerns about Rev. Dr. Miller's "behavior" surfaced in September 2017.
10. CG&P members met several times for confidential meetings with Rev. Dr. Richard Miller in September-November 2017 at Harry Hoyt's home.
11. CG&P requested that Rev. Dr. Richard Miller attend Midwest Ministry Development.
12. The Presbytery, through staff Harry Hoyt and Rebecca Blair, informed CG&P that there was one more "presbytery spot" available at Midwest Ministry Development to pay for Rev. Dr. Richard Miller's consultation.
13. CG&P sent a letter to Midwest Ministry Development requesting certain issues be evaluated.
14. Rev. Dr. Richard Miller went to Midwest Ministry Development in December 2017. The Presbytery paid for the consultation.
15. Harry Hoyt expressed that he did not see a conflict of interest with his Presbytery position and CG&P participation since he believed their goal was the same.
16. On December 5th Rev. Dr. Richard Miller signed a Midwest Ministry Development "Statement of Consent and Release of Information" giving the Presbytery staff member Harry Hoyt, Committee on Ministry Associate, sole permission to receive and view the report. The address for mailing the report was changed from the Presbytery office to Harry Hoyt's home address.
17. Louise Hales stated that she, Harry Hoyt, Rev. Dr. Richard Miller, and a staff member from Midwest Ministry Development participated in a phone call on December 7, 2017.

18. The confidential report from Midwest Ministry Development was sent to the Presbytery staff member Harry Hoyt, Commission on Ministry Associate, to his home address on December 14, 2017.
19. Harry Hoyt electronically forwarded the confidential report intended for the Presbytery from Midwest Ministry Development to Louise Hales who then distributed it to CG&P members.
20. CG&P documents noted that Rev. Dr. Richard Miller was going to make a statement to Session in February 2018 though it is not in the Session Minutes.
21. Rev. Dr. Richard Miller engaged Presbytery representatives in July and August 2018 with his concerns about the CG&P process happening at First Presbyterian Church, Davenport.
22. Harry Hoyt was notified in September that his employment with the Presbytery would officially end on Sept. 30, 2018. Harry Hoyt contested the terms of the ending of this position.
23. In a letter dated October 1, 2018, the Presbytery Ministries and Congregations Committee representatives directed Session to not talk about issues related to Rev. Dr. Richard Miller and CG&P. Members of CG&P were removed from active service to the church.
24. CG&P members want to “speak their truth” to the congregation.

Irregularities Regarding Congregation, Government and Personnel Committee and Harry Hoyt

1. Session does not have an evaluation process for pastors, which includes a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).
2. Session structure did not provide for appropriate oversight of the CG&P nor did it receive appropriate personnel reports, even with members of Session on the CG&P.
3. The Congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Davenport by their practice understood pastors as employees, not as mutually called and installed by the Presbytery and Congregation as a Teaching Elder in their midst. Thus, the CG&P had a “process” that had been used multiple times to remove pastors.
4. Harry Hoyt had a conflict of interest between his work at the Presbytery and CG&P participation.
5. There was little oversight of Harry Hoyt by the Presbytery in his capacity as an employee.
6. Distribution of a psychological evaluation to any individual not **authorized in writing** to view it is a breach in confidentiality which could expose both church and presbytery to legal action.
7. An address change was hand-written on the release from Midwest Ministry Development altering the authorized recipient’s mailing address from the Presbytery office to Harry Hoyt’s home address.

Observations Regarding First Presbyterian Church of Davenport

1. The Session was cooperative with the Committee in this process. It is clear that the Session has a strong love for their church and wants what is best for the ministry and mission of the congregation.
2. The Session and Congregation have a profound sense of loss, hurt, frustration and some anger over the departure of Rev. Dr. Richard Miller. Much of the anger and frustration is directed at the Presbytery for circumstances surrounding the pastoral transition and they felt they received little or no pastoral care from the Presbytery through this difficult situation and ignored by the Presbytery after the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies case was filed.
3. Harry Hoyt, as a member of the Congregation and CG&P, worked in simultaneous dual roles of CG&P leader and Presbytery employee during the time of the departure of Rev. Dr. Richard Miller. For a time, Rev. Dr. Richard Miller served on the Presbytery's Personnel Committee and even as Chairperson – with oversight responsibilities for Harry Hoyt, while Harry Hoyt served on the CG&P, also as chairperson for a time - with oversight of Rev. Dr. Richard Miller.
4. The Session and members did not feel privy to the basic facts of the departure of Rev. Dr. Richard Miller and experienced confusion in the inability to get the “full story.”
5. Members of the Session and CG&P did not feel the Presbytery heard their “side” of the story, they mainly heard Rev. Dr. Richard Miller's concerns and acted.
6. The Session felt that they were treated in a legalistic manner by the Presbytery.
7. The Session does not seem to grasp the seriousness of the breach of protocol that Harry Hoyt provided confidential information, which he received as an employee of the Presbytery, and made available to the CG&P.
8. The Presbytery, the Session, nor Harry Hoyt addressed the conflict of interest, that Harry Hoyt was serving in both Presbytery and church roles.
9. There is a question of the fairness of the “settlement” that First Presbyterian Church, Davenport paid Rev. Dr. Richard Miller. The church feels this was forced by the Presbytery.
10. The Members of CG&P feel separated and ostracized by the actions of the Presbytery.
11. The Session and Congregation wish to move forward in rebuilding their Church yet have felt stymied by obstacles placed on them by the Presbytery.
12. Some elders question the effectiveness of the current work of the Presbytery with the session and congregation.
13. The members of the Session are hopeful that there is a future relationship with the Presbytery that is pastoral and caring for the members of their congregation.

Irregularities Regarding First Presbyterian Church of Davenport

1. The CG&P had too much authority in regard to personnel matters. The pastors who served as moderators over the last decade or two, or the Clerks of Session should have helped the Session address this serious flaw. If the Session cannot be trusted with personnel matters, that is a Session issue and should be addressed with training and/or downsizing the Session.
2. Members of the Presbytery serving on committees and especially Presbytery staff members should never be involved in Presbytery conversations pertaining to their own congregations.
3. The Committee heard that four pastors have been removed or asked to leave within the last decade or so. This is a pattern of serious failure for the Presbytery, Church and Pastors and points to systemic issues.
4. The CG&P met regularly outside of the church building, in Harry Hoyt's home, which fostered a sense of independence.
5. There is no mention in Session minutes as to the subject of concerns over Rev. Dr. Richard Miller's performance until Fall of 2018 and there is an absence of minutes of the CG&P regarding Rev. Dr. Richard Miller (none were provided to the Committee).
6. There seems to be a lack of training from the Presbytery, over a long period of time, offering church officers resources for proper oversight of clergy.

Observations Regarding the Presbytery of East Iowa

1. All parties believed they had the best interest of Rev. Dr. Richard Miller, the Presbytery and First Presbyterian Church, Davenport in mind. All were cooperative in the process.
2. Representatives of the Presbytery believed the actions of the CG&P were egregious and could result in the congregation and/or Presbytery being sued.
3. Representatives of the Presbytery are hopeful for the future of First Presbyterian Church, Davenport. They have witnessed growth in the Session (i.e., in Presbyterian polity and roles).
4. There is animosity toward Harry Hoyt from Presbytery individuals who spoke to us.
5. The Presbytery acknowledged it was in the midst of structural transition when Rev. Dr. Richard Miller reached out to them for assistance.
6. The Presbytery has supported the Session since October 1, 2018 by attending meetings and retreats and providing resources.
7. Representatives of the Presbytery have been unwilling to meet with the former CG&P members due to the judicial case that was filed and in process.
8. The representatives of the Presbytery, who this committee interviewed, did not find fault with how they handled this situation.
9. The Presbytery was aware, and had paid for, the Midwest Ministry Development Leadership Assessment of the Rev. Dr. Richard Miller.
10. The Presbytery presented documentation of the polity and the Iowa Code that they believed were broken by Harry Hoyt and members of the CG&P.
11. Representatives of the Presbytery communicated that they told the Session that they were not to discuss any of the confidential and legally protected details regarding Rev. Dr. Richard Miller's resignation with anyone.
12. Representatives of the Presbytery recognize that there are individuals within the congregation who desire to receive additional information about this situation.
13. Members of First Presbyterian Church, Davenport have been nominally engaged in presbytery work.
14. Content of a letter dated October 1, 2018 letter has impacted First Presbyterian Church, Davenport and the relationship with the Presbytery.
15. Members of the Presbytery Personnel Committee met with CG&P members on October 16, 2018 regarding the issues at First Presbyterian Church, Davenport.
16. Drafted questions to Dr. Blair and Ms. Prouty were not addressed by the Presbytery. Presbytery representatives helped draft questions with the Session which the Presbytery failed to answer. See attachment A.

Irregularities Regarding the Presbytery of East Iowa

1. Harry Hoyt worked for the Presbytery from home and he kept confidential files in his possession even after employment ceased.
2. Harry Hoyt was not directly supervised, nor did he have regular reviews by the Presbytery Personnel Committee.
3. Representatives of the Presbytery indicated that they were unaware of Harry Hoyt's role with CG&P.
4. Harry Hoyt's dual roles demonstrated a conflict of interest.
5. The Presbytery was aware that First Presbyterian Church, Davenport had operated in the current structural manner for decades.
6. The Presbytery brought in an interim pastor that was not a PCUSA pastor; thus he needed to learn Presbyterian polity.
7. It has been communicated that representatives of the Presbytery delivered and retained a letter dated Oct 1, 2018, which was not recorded in Session Minutes.
8. Communication between the Presbytery and the Session were deficient or non-existent.
9. The Presbytery leadership and staff functions were not defined.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Session Recommendations

1. Organizational Chart that describes the interrelationship between the Session, Committees, Staff, and Pastors.
2. Training on Presbyterian understanding of Call. Especially the role of Presbytery, Pastor, and Congregation in calling of pastors, caring for pastors, and dissolving pastoral calls.
3. Review Personnel Handbook and ensure it includes:
 - a. Position description of how Head of Staff relates to staff and committees.
 - b. Role of Personnel Committee
 - c. Process for progressive discipline (including removal of staff)
 - d. Process for approval and dissolution of a Pastor's Call
 - e. Process for staff (including pastor) yearly evaluation, goal setting, and Performance Improvement Plan
4. Committee descriptions should clearly delineate responsibilities. All discussions/actions are subject to the review and approval of the Session, methods for reporting to the Session, requirement for written minutes to be submitted to Session.
5. The Clerk of Session should review best practices for what is included in the Session minutes, and public access to the Session minutes.
6. Communication and transparency are crucial for the Session and congregational health. The Session should present monthly updates, written, and orally, to the congregation regarding its meetings and actions.
7. All Session members should be provided and grounded in the Bible and the Constitution of the PC(USA) which includes the Book of Confession and the Book of Order.

Presbytery Recommendations

1. Organizational Chart that describes the interrelationship between staff, leadership and committees.
2. Review Personnel Handbook and ensure it includes:
 - a. Functions and responsibilities of Head of Staff
 - b. Functions and responsibilities of Personnel Committee
 - c. Process for progressive discipline (including removal of staff)
 - d. Process for staff and Stated Clerk yearly evaluation, goal setting, and Performance Improvement Plan
 - e. Develop, implement, and annually sign Conflict of Interest policy.
3. Review and develop policy on maintaining and keeping Presbytery records.
4. Review and ensure that the staffing model meets the needs of the Presbytery, its members, and its congregations.
5. Review and develop procedures for Presbytery Committees/Commissions and how they journey with both congregations and pastors, providing support and guidance, stressing pastoral approaches over technical Book of Order responses.
6. Develop training opportunities for congregation Personnel Committees.
7. Review, revise, develop communication strategy within the staff, Presbytery, members and congregations.

CLOSING

Recommendations from the Synod Review Committee are a starting point for the work of reconciliation as the Body of Christ.

The Administrative Review Committee recommends that the Synod of Lakes and Prairies appoint the Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Vice Moderator of Synod to create a timeline for commencing work on recommendations stated within this report and for the next 24 months related to addressing irregularities stated in the report. It will be the responsibility of the Synod to determine appropriate response in the event that the parties fail to move toward reconciliation.

Respectfully submitted by the Administrative Review Committee:

Rev. Dr. Matthew Sauer
Kathy Terpstra, Ruling Elder
Rev. Dr. April Davis Campbell
Pat Shipley, Ruling Elder

Rev. Dr. Candace Adams
Rev. David Feltman
Diane Wilson, Ruling Elder

Attachment A

Dear Dr. Blair and Ms. Prouty,

The Session of First Presbyterian Davenport formally requests an Administrative Review from the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, to be conducted into the recent conduct of the Presbytery of East Iowa. After meeting with the Presbytery's co-moderators to discuss the need for an Administrative Review, the Session and the Presbytery have each agreed to send questions which an Administrative Review would be able to answer. This letter is meant to accompany the Presbytery's own formal request for an Administrative Review into the events of the past year regarding the Presbytery's work with First Presbyterian Davenport.

The Session would strongly encourage the Synod to examine both the questions we have written and the questions asked by the Presbytery leadership, and notify us when an Administrative Review may be able to begin. We eagerly await your response, and look forward to the significant benefits of a neutral third party's investigation into these questions.

1. Was Davenport's CG&P committee structure out of order?
2. After October 2017, were protocols and policies followed concerning the use of the Track III Assessment by Midwest Ministry Development for Richard Miller?
3. Given all the options available to Presbytery, did the recommendations given by MCC during a special Session meeting on Oct. 1 represent a truly measured response — both as written and as so forcefully delivered?
4. When did the Presbytery become aware that there was a conflict of interest for Harry Hoyt to serve as both COM associate and on the CG&P at his home church when addressing concerns with his own pastors? Is there a procedure to address similar conflicts in the future?
5. What was the process that COM/MCC followed from the time they were informed by Richard of a concern until Oct 1, 2018? Was that process in order and consistent with Presbytery policies? Were all parties allowed due process before decisions were made?
6. Why did Presbytery allow Jim Claypool to undertake so many roles: advocate for Richard Miller, presbytery legal counsel, negotiator and author of the settlement agreements for both sides, partial author of the Presbytery's response to the Synod, and an assigned member of the Administrative Commission, over a letter of protest from members of the Session?
7. When and how explicitly was CG&P told by Presbytery representatives that their proposed process was out of order?
8. Should the Presbytery (whether MCC or PCC) have contacted the Session much earlier than Oct. 1 to inform the Session about Presbytery's concerns about CG&P? And, if so, why didn't Presbytery officials contact the Session?
9. Was pertinent, appropriate information improperly withheld and/or was misinformation given to Session during the settlement negotiation process?

In Christ,

Marty Bowles Edwards
Clerk of Session

Attachment B

Interim Report on Reconciliation prepared by the Administrative Review Committee for The Session of First Presbyterian Church-Davenport, East Iowa Presbytery PCC, and Synod of Lakes and Prairies

December 7, 2020

Introduction¹

This is written during the season of Advent and the members of the Administrative Review Committee deeply desire to cast a vision for reconciliation.

It is our prayer that as Presbyters and leaders in the Church all would be filled with **hope**, embarking on a journey of healing and wholeness. *“This hope doesn’t put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”* Romans 5:5.

Through the power of Jesus Christ, may all be filled with **peace as** reconciliation is sought. *“...the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.”* Philippians 4:7.

May **joy** be experience as unity in Jesus Christ our Lord brings glory to God. *“...complete my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, being united, and agreeing with each other.”* Philippians 2:2

May this process be covered with **love and** Christ’s compassion be demonstrated. *“Dear friends, let’s love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God.”* I John 4:7.

And the journey be filled with hope, peace, joy, and love. *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* Romans 15:13

¹ All Scripture references are from the Common English Bible (CEB) © 2011

Our Biblical Call

The witness of Scripture provides many models for how Christians could conduct themselves when there are disagreements within the community of faith.

Matthew 18:15-17

“If your brother or sister sins against you, go and correct them when you are alone together. If they listen to you, then you’ve won over your brother or sister. But if they won’t listen, take with you one or two others so that every word may be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses. But if they still won’t pay attention, report it to the church. If they won’t pay attention even to the church, treat them as you would a Gentile and tax collector.”

Matthew 18:15-17 provides a basic model for conflict resolution that is based on a mutual love for one another that respects the holy within the other. This model is reflected in the Book of Order processes for holding one another accountable through various councils of the church, the goal is not punishment but discipleship.

Reconciliation assumes that there is a broken relationship and a desire to have that relationship restored. Reconciliation is only possible if all are willing, committed and invested in this hard work.

The path to reconciliation begins with transforming ourselves. Here it is helpful to study Romans 12 which calls on believers to present themselves before God as a living sacrifice so that they may be transformed into seeing and treating one another the way God sees and treats humanity.

Romans 12 Common English Bible (CEB)

“¹So, brothers and sisters, because of God’s mercies, I encourage you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God. This is your appropriate priestly service. ²Don’t be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you can figure out what God’s will is—what is good and pleasing and mature.

³Because of the grace that God gave me, I can say to each one of you: don’t think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. Instead, be reasonable since God has measured out a portion of faith to each one of you. ⁴We have many parts in one body, but the parts don’t all have the same function. ⁵In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other. ⁶We have different gifts that are consistent with God’s grace that has been given to us. If your gift is prophecy, you should prophesy in proportion to your faith. ⁷If your gift is service, devote yourself to serving. If your gift is teaching, devote yourself to teaching. ⁸If your gift is encouragement, devote yourself to encouraging. The one giving should do it with no strings attached. The leader should lead with passion. The one showing mercy should be cheerful.

⁹ Love should be shown without pretending. Hate evil, and hold on to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other like the members of your family. Be the best at showing honor to each other. ¹¹ Don't hesitate to be enthusiastic—be on fire in the Spirit as you serve the Lord! ¹² Be happy in your hope, stand your ground when you're in trouble, and devote yourselves to prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of God's people, and welcome strangers into your home. ¹⁴ Bless people who harass you—bless and don't curse them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, and cry with those who are crying. ¹⁶ Consider everyone as equal, and don't think that you're better than anyone else. Instead, associate with people who have no status. Don't think that you're so smart. ¹⁷ Don't pay back anyone for their evil actions with evil actions, but show respect for what everyone else believes is good.

¹⁸ If possible, to the best of your ability, live at peace with all people. ¹⁹ Don't try to get revenge for yourselves, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. It is written, *Revenge belongs to me; I will pay it back, says the Lord.* ²⁰ Instead, If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. By doing this, you will pile burning coals of fire upon his head. ²¹ Don't be defeated by evil, but defeat evil with good.”

Our Confessional Call

The confessions of the PCUSA call the Church and its people to reconciliation not only with God but with one another. The Church is called to be God's reconciling community in the world. Reconciliation is not simply an act of the Church through its councils, but a calling for each officer and each member. Reconciliation is a sign of Baptism and a necessity for discipleship. Nowhere in our Book of Confessions are these themes better articulated than in the Confession of 1967².

The Confession of 1967²

9.10 *The risen Christ is the savior of all people. Those joined to him by faith are set right with God and commissioned to serve as God's reconciling community. Christ is head of this community, the church, which began with the apostles and continues through all generations*

9.31 *To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God's reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and shares God's labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call.*

9.38 *Each member is the church in the world, endowed by the Spirit with some gift of ministry and is responsible for the integrity of his or her witness in each particular situation. Each member is entitled to the guidance and support of the Christian community*

² The Confession of 1967— Inclusive Language Version ©2002 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation on behalf of the Office of Theology and Worship All rights reserved)

and is subject to its advice and correction. In turn, each member, in her or his own competence, helps to guide the church.

Recommendations

Understanding God's call to the Church, its officers, and its members, the Administrative Review Committee offer these recommendations as a path to reconciliation so that God's desires may be fulfilled, and a healthy Congregation, Presbytery, and Synod may once again emerge leading to effective mutual ministry.

1. Agree to a Covenant Relationship

All parties and individuals who have been involved in the conflict will be best served to reaffirm their Covenant relationship in the following manner:

Acknowledging that each person who is a part of this process is created in the image of God, we affirm:

- We are siblings in Christ. (Matthew 12:50)
- We all fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:24)
- We all sin. (1 John 1:8)
- We as Church Councils, Officers, and Members own our role and responsibility in the events that have led to this time. (Proverbs 28:13)
- We confess, in humility that we have not always exhibited the Fruits of the Spirit; ...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23).
- We covenant to work together to be reconciled in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:18)

2. Commitment

There are multiple stakeholders in the issue. This work will require a long-term commitment by all. It will require ownership of what happened in the past. The Session and Presbytery Council are the bodies responsible for moving the process forward. The Councils are responsible for all under their purview.

3. Facilitation for Reconciliation

The Administrative Review Committee recommends the establishment of a team to choose a facilitator(s) for reconciliation. The Administrative Review Committee suggests that the team include the 2020 Co-Moderators of Presbytery, three (3) members of the Session of First Presbyterian Church-Davenport, one from each class of the Session, the current Moderator of the First Presbyterian Church, Davenport, serving as the convener of the team, and one member of the Administrative Review Committee, Diane Wilson (ddwlaw@hotmail.com) as an advisor. The team would research the suggestions and discern a potential facilitator(s).

- Rev. Beth McCaw, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.
- Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, Lombard, IL. (www.lmpeacecenter.org)

- LeaderWise, New Brighton, MN (www.leaderwise.org)
*Note—East Iowa Presbytery is currently working with LeaderWise

The team will research, discern and report a potential facilitator(s) to the Administrative Review Committee by January 15, 2021.

4. Shared Expense

- The Administrative Review Committee recommends that the cost of a facilitator should be a shared expense between First Presbyterian Church-Davenport and the Presbytery.
- The Administrative Review Committee recommends that the Presbytery voluntarily bear more of the financial responsibility.

5. Reconciliation will require cooperation and collaboration.

Closing

Recommendations from the Synod Review Committee are a starting point for the work of reconciliation as the Body of Christ.

Respectfully submitted by the Administrative Review Committee:

Rev. Dr. Matthew Sauer
Kathy Terpstra, Ruling Elder
Rev. Dr. April Davis-Campbell
Rev. Dr. Candace Adams
Rev. David Feltman
Diane Wilson, Ruling Elder
Pat Shipley, Ruling Elder