

Presbytery of the Highlands
Stated Meeting
September 10, 2024
Committee on Ministry Report – Part 1

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

COM-1

The COM recommends the following:

That the Presbytery approve the call of the Rev. Tom Brown as the pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township. This requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Presbytery – G-2.0504 (c).

Background: In February 2024 the Session of the Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township (PCCT) requested that Rev. Tom Brown, Associate Pastor be called as the Pastor of the PCCT. The COM required the Session to provide a rationale for the change along with a description of the new position and changes to other staff positions. In the Spring the session, in consultation with COM, provided the required information. The COM set the requirement that all the Committee on Ministry, the Session, the PCCT congregation and the Presbytery of the Highlands had to approve the change and all votes had to be no less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the present voting members (G-2.0504 (c)). The Session approved with unanimous vote on May 13, 2024. The COM approved with unanimous vote on June 4, 2024. The Congregation approved unanimously on June 23, 2024. Rev. Jacqui Van Vliet, co-moderator of the COM, moderated the congregational meeting.

Items for Report:

From the June 4, 2024 meeting:

COM-2

Rev. Jean Holmes was appointed moderator for the congregational meeting of the Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood.

COM-3

Approved the request from the Presbytery of the Northeast to transfer Rev. Leslie Dobbs-Allsopp for membership in their presbytery to serve as Interim Pastor at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield.

COM-4

Approved the request of Rev. Jin Han to consider his Interim Pastor Ministry to West Dover UCC congregation (Connecticut) as a validated ministry.

COM-5

Reported that the exit interview with the Session of Lower Valley Presbyterian Church, Califon was conducted.

COM-6

Approved the following Terms of Call between:

- Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood and Rev. Arlene Romaine
- United Presbyterian Church in Belvidere and Rev. Dr. Pamela Szurek
- Bound Brook Presbyterian Church and Rev. Linda Owens
- Calvary Presbyterian Church, Florham Park and Rev. Ron de Groot
- Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley and Rev. Robin Palmer Burton
- Presbyterian Church of Milford and Rev. Dr. Linda Eckert-Bullock
- First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon and Rev. Bill Stone
- Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, Stewartsville and Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-Lecroy
- Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township and Rev. Tom Brown
- First Presbyterian Church of Ogdensburg and Rev. Alden Johnson
- First Presbyterian Church of Washington and Rev. Jim Scovell

COM-7

Approved the Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township staff position redistribution/structuring from a two pastor to a solo pastor model with Associate Pastor Rev. Tom Brown becoming Pastor. The COM approved the request unanimously.

COM-8

Approved the Ministry Discernment Profile for First Presbyterian Church of Newton.

COM-9

Approved the request to ACT to call a special meeting of the Presbytery to exam Pamela Osborne for ordination in order to serve as Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Stanhope and Andover Presbyterian Church congregations.

From the July 30, 2024 meeting:

COM-10

Rev. Peter Magnan was appointed as Moderator for July for Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood.

COM-11

Completed an exit interview with Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township Session.

COM-12

Approved October as the month for mandated boundary training.

COM-13

Approved the following Terms of Call between:

- First Presbyterian Church of Stanhope, Andover Presbyterian Church and Pamela Osborne
- Presbyterian Church in Morristown and Rev. Audrey Webber
- Frenchtown Presbyterian Church and Rev. Emily McCachren (12/1/2024)
- Presbyterian Church of Madison and Rev. Carol Howard (9/1/2024)
- Community Presbyterian Church, Chester and Rev. Chris Scrivens
- United Presbyterian Church, Flanders and Rev. Cliff Acklam
- First Presbyterian Church of Newton and Rev. Heather Morrison Yaden
- Oak Ridge Presbyterian Church and Rev. Dr. Chris Doyle
- Rockport Presbyterian Church, Port Murray and Rev. Bronc Radak

COM-14

Approved the revised Discernment Report for First Presbyterian Church of Berkshire Valley and approved the formation of a Pastor Nominating Committee for an installed pastor.

COM-15

Approved the request from the Hungarian Presbyterian Church of Wharton for waiver to allow a deacon to serve an additional term.

COM-16

The Presbytery Leader reported that after consultation between COM, ACT and the presbytery attorney, it was agreed that the Presbytery would appeal the Synod PJC decision in the case of Ryan Irmer vs. the Presbytery of the Highlands in two areas. The appeal requested clarity on Presbytery's authority requiring ministry evaluation and removal of coaching comments in the Synod report without being able to provide witnesses about the process used for coaching.

COM-17

The Presbytery Leader reported that a letter was sent reminding Scott Foster of his requirement to follow the decision and directive of the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of Scott Foster vs. Presbytery of the Highlands.

COM-18

The following will have ordination/installation services this Fall:

- Pamela Osborne, Andover/Stanhope – September 29 – Ordination and Installation at the First Presbyterian Church of Stanhope.
- Rev. Eric Lai – October 6, Taiwanese American Fellowship Presbyterian Church.
- Rev. Arlene Romaine – September 8- Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood.