

Stated Clerk Search Committee Report March 2018

We are pleased to nominate James (Jim) Tarr, ruling elder from St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Billings, for a three-year term as stated clerk of the Presbytery of Yellowstone. There are 2 actions by the presbytery needed to approve this recommendation.

Requested Action #1 – To set aside the first sentence of our presbytery standing rules regarding the election of the stated clerk.

Rationale: The wording of the first sentence of the standing rules assumes a different set of circumstances at the time of transition than we currently face. Debbie Blackburn is resigning prior to completion of her term. The sentence we propose to set aside is indicated by the ~~strikethrough~~ below.

Standing Rules of the Presbytery regarding the stated clerk

The stated clerk shall be elected by the presbytery at the last stated meeting at which the term of the incumbent expires, and shall assume office upon installation at the close of said meeting. The term of office shall be three years; the stated clerk shall not serve for consecutive terms, full or partial, for more than six years. The stated clerk shall possess the authority and carry out the responsibilities of that office set forth in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The presbytery may provide an assistant to the stated clerk, to be appointed by the stated clerk.

Requested Action #2- To elect James Tarr as stated clerk for a 3-year term, to be installed at the May 4-5, 2018 presbytery meeting.

Qualifications of the nominee

Jim Tarr is a charter member of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church (50 years). For many of those 50 years, he served on session, including 6 years as clerk of session. In addition, his investment in the church's ministry has included facilities, education, garden, Earth care, liturgist, pulpit supply, choir, and the peacemaking committee. It is hard to imagine St. Andrew Church without Jim Tarr.

He has frequently been St. Andrew's commissioner to presbytery, and he served on the presbytery's Vocations Committee (1 year as moderator). Currently he serves on the Pastoral Ministry Team. He has represented the presbytery as Synod commissioner for several years and in 2014, served as General Assembly commissioner. For 10 years, he has been a reader of standard ordination exams.

Professionally, Jim owned an engineering and construction company and as such, attended to many administrative details. What made the deepest impression on our committee, however, was Jim's genuine call to be a servant of Christ and his church. On his application, Jim wrote simply, "My life is to exhibit Christ to all I come in contact with."

We believe that God has provided our presbytery with a loyal and devoted servant in Jim. He will enthusiastically give his utmost to this important role in our presbytery.

Additional Information

The Leadership Cabinet heard the recommendation of the stated clerk nominating committee on March 13, 2018. At that meeting, **the Cabinet voted to appoint Jim Tarr as acting stated clerk effective April 1, 2018** (following Debbie Blackburn's resignation date of March 31, 2018).

In Jim's application process, he indicated his need for assistance with some aspects of the stated clerk position, specifically, note-taking during meetings. This is a pattern we have used in the presbytery previously, and the fourth sentence of the standing rules of the presbytery provides for this option.

Our search process identified an excellent candidate for this assistant role, and with the Leadership Cabinet's approval, developed a plan for formally hiring **Melissa Perrault-Baumann** for this position. It is Jim's intention to appoint Melissa to be **assistant stated clerk**.

Melissa Perrault-Baumann has been a member of First Presbyterian Church in Lewistown since 1990. She has served on the session for 6 years. Retired from a career as a clinical laboratory scientist at Central Montana Medical Center, she has been asked to consider three different positions in the church in the last two months, a sign that others recognize her gifts and a signal to her that she is being called to service. Her technical skills and her people skills are both high. She impressed our committee with her intelligence, professionalism, desire to learn, and even temperament. She told us that her desire is "to be that person who brings the light and shows Jesus to others."

Jim Tarr and Melissa Perrault-Baumann have complementary gifts and skills. What they share is a desire to serve Christ and his church. We see an opportunity to pair the "proven" with the "promising," and provide the presbytery with continuity in leadership for multiple years.

Both Jim and Melissa will be compensated for their service within the limitations of the previously approved 2018 budget for stated clerk.

From the Search Committee

Our process was extensive, beginning with advertising across the presbyteries of the region. We made many phone calls to enlist the entire presbytery in the search. Upon receipt of applications, we contacted primary and secondary references. As a committee, we held many conference calls, and we conducted face-to-face interviews.

We are grateful for the prayers, the searching eyes, the listening ears, and the many partners in discerning God's leading. We have felt very supported by the presbytery. We unanimously support this recommendation.

Jody McDevitt, chair
Debbie Funke
Paul Helland
Don Holland
Kathy Goodrich (staff)

Members of Yellowstone Presbytery:

At the March 13, 2018 meeting of the Leadership Cabinet we received a report from the Stated Clerk Search Committee.

During the report we were informed that Debbie Blackburn would be continuing her work as Stated Clerk through March 31, 2018 in order to ensure a smooth transition. As you will see in the accompanying report from the Stated Clerk Search Committee, the Leadership Cabinet appointed Jim Tarr to be acting Stated Clerk beginning April 1, 2018.

The Leadership Cabinet concurred with the report and the recommendation of the Stated Clerk Search committee and looks forward to working with Jim Tarr as the next Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

In addition, the Leadership Cabinet thanks all members of the Stated Clerk Search Committee for their diligence in this matter as they sought the will of God for our Presbytery.

Susi Ennis
Leadership Cabinet Moderator

Special Meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery

A special meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery has been called by Leadership Cabinet Moderator Susi Ennis for **Tuesday, April 3, 2018.**

The meeting will be held by conference call and will **convene at 2:00 p.m.**

The call-in number is 888-387-8686.

The room number is 406-586-7706 followed by the # sign.

The purpose of the meeting is to take actions on recommendations from the Stated Clerk Search Committee regarding the nomination of a new stated clerk. See attached report for the requested actions of the Stated Clerk Search Committee. No other Presbytery business shall be conducted at this meeting.

For those who participate in the conference call on April 3, 2018, please send an email indicating your participation to statedclerk@yellowstonepcusa.com after participating in the call. Ruling Elders should indicate if they are voting commissioners for their church or if they are members of the Presbytery based on leadership positions within the Presbytery.

Note: This is a conference call meeting. However, the Leadership Cabinet will be meeting at FPC in Billings that day if anyone would like to join them for the Presbytery conference call.

Debbie Blackburn
Stated Clerk
Presbytery of Yellowstone