

**Presbytery of Yellowstone – Special Meeting
December 8, 2022**

22-129. Opening of the Meeting

The Presbytery of Yellowstone met on Thursday, December 8, 2022, via Zoom format beginning at 12:30 noon.

The meeting was opened with prayer and reading of Acts 20: 32-38 by the Moderator, MWS Dave Thompson.

This special meeting was called by 2022 Presbytery Moderator Dave Thompson at the request of the Pastoral Ministry Team for the following reasons:

1. To examine Karolee Larson of Butte and approve her call as a Commissioned Ruling Elder to 1st Presbyterian Church of Butte.
2. To approve the terms for Karolee Larson to serve as Commissioned Ruling Elder to 1st Presbyterian Church of Butte.
3. To celebrate the ministry of Debbie Funke and thank her for her years of service to Manhattan Presbyterian Church and to Yellowstone Presbytery.
4. To celebrate the ministry of David Bierschwale and thank him for his years of service and pastoral care at Billings Clinic in Billings, MT.

Any action the Presbytery might wish to take must be related to items 1 through 4.

22-130. Present at the meeting:

Ruling Elders with vote attending:

1. RE Ric Tieman, Bozeman & member LC
2. CRE Chuck Wright, Manhattan
3. RE Russ Kline, Billings & member LC
4. RE Nancy Pehl, Terry
5. RE Debbie Blackburn, Manhattan
6. RE Suzanne Bratsky, Bozeman & member of LC
7. RE Julie Boksich, Big Hope
8. RE Debbie Ernst, Bozeman
9. RE Traci Ruschetti, Butte
10. Marilyn Thomas, Deer Lodge
11. Bev Harbaugh, Jordan
12. Linda Jo Smith, Anaconda

Ministers of Word and Sacrament Members Present: (Note absences and excused absences are not, reported for Special Meetings of this Presbytery)

Dave Thompson (Moderator), Dick Davis, Mary Davis, Debbie Funke, Teresa Kendall, Jamie Schmeling, Jody McDevitt, JP Carlson, Neva Rathbun, Chuck Carlson, Rusty Craig, Kimmy Briggs, Charley Blom, Kathy Goodrich, George Goodrich, Ashley Birk, Daniel Triller, Harlan Rounds, Freeman McCall. Mary Grace Reynolds.

Others Present: RE Caroline Fleming, Stated Clerk, RE Teresa _____, Manhattan, guest, RE Karolee Larson, Butte, guest, James Tarr, St Andrew, guest.

22.131. A Quorum was declared present by the Moderator, Dave Thompson based on attendance visible on ZOOM.

22.132 Interview with Karolee Larson: (Attachments A & B) Karolee Larson came before the presbytery to be interviewed for a call to the position of Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) for 1st Presbyterian Church in Butte, MT. Karolee introduced herself explaining her sense of call to Butte and the fact that the Butte PNC will remain active during her service as CRE. Presbyters questioned Karolee concerning her faith journey and how or if it has changed since she first heard God's call to ministry, what is precious to her in the Reformed Faith tradition, how long she sees herself in the pastoral position at Butte, what gifts she feels she brings to the Butte church, what tools will help her with the administrative side of church operations, and what she sees as the shifting needs of the church and its people.

Karolee's gifts, her pastoral heart and her deep sense of call were lauded by Traci Ruschetti, Harlan Rounds, and Chuck Carlson of Butte who know and have worked with Karolee during her journey in discerning her call and her time in seminary. Karolee left the meeting temporarily.

***Action:** The Pastoral ministry Team (PMT) recommends Yellowstone Presbytery approve Karolee Larson as Commissioned Ruling Elder at First Presbyterian Church of Butte beginning January 1, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

***Action:** PMT recommends Yellowstone Presbytery approve the terms of call for Karolee Larson to serve as CRE at First Presbyterian Church of Butte for $\frac{3}{4}$ time from January 1 through December 31, 2023 with two months leave allowed following completion of seminary. The motion passed unanimously.

***Action:** PMT recommends Yellowstone Presbytery authorize PMT to elect a commission to install Karolee Larson as CRE at First Presbyterian Church of Butte and choose a date for her commissioning service. The motion passed unanimously.

Karolee returned to the meeting and was welcomed into the position of CRE at Butte. PMT will work with Karolee concerning her commissioning. Chuck Carlson offered a prayer of blessing for Karolee and the Butte Church

22.133. Retirement celebrations:

Debbie Funke retired effective October 31, 2022 after serving the Manhattan Presbyterian Church for 29 years. Her work with and love for that church, and particularly the youth, was celebrated as was the many ways in which she has participated in and served Yellowstone Presbytery over the years. For the gifts she shared and the friendship she has given, people of the presbytery thank her very, very much.

David Bierschwale retired effective October 31, 2023 from chaplaincy at the Billings Clinic where he served for several years. He took on the chaplaincy call as the COVID pandemic was rising, and we thank him for his service through that challenging time. Presbytery looks forward to David's continuing participation in the presbytery in his retirement.

Kimmy Briggs, Moderator of PMT, closed our retirement celebrations with prayer that included thanks for the seeds Debbie and David planted during their ministries and will continue to plant in their retirements.

22.133. Closing:

Kathy Goodrich thanked the presbytery for the support and love she and George have felt since the death of both her and George's mothers.

***Action:** A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded, and it passed.

Moderator Dave Thompson Closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Caroline Fleming, Stated Clerk

Statement of Faith
Karolee Larson

The Triune God exists in a relationship of divine love. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three distinct persons within one substance, one reality, one God. The Triune God acts together, never apart, and always in love. In an act of divine love, God began to reveal the mystery of the Trinity to us as God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, and as the Holy Spirit hovered over the deep chaos and the Father created through the Word. God preeminently revealed the mystery to us through the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ and continues to reveal to us through Scripture through the work of the Holy Spirit. In an act of divine love, God created humans, male and female, in the image of God to be in a relationship with God and with each other. God made humans co-regents and caretakers of all creation, but in an act of disobedience, humans rebelled against God's sovereignty as they strove to become like God. Humans became enslaved to their sin, and the relationship between God and humanity was broken. But in God's divine love, grace and mercy, God began to work a plan of reconciliation and redemption throughout the broken and rebellious history of Israel as God shaped their customs, language, and worship. Throughout Israel's history, God provided escape from slavery, a Law to help conform their minds to the love of God, and continued grace and mercy as God kept covenantal promises even as Israel continued to rebel against God. In an act of divine suffering love, the Father sent the Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a human. Jesus Christ, as uniquely God-human, became the perfect priest and sacrifice to save all humans, regardless of race, social standing, and gender, from our sins, as a human was required to be the acceptable atonement or reparation for sin but only God could pay the great price of sin. Only through God's grace, and not by our efforts, do we become justified through faith and reconciled to God. In an act of love, God chooses to restore our broken humanity to a relationship with the Father through the Spirit in Christ's life, death, resurrection, and ascension and through Christ's continuing intercession for us at the right hand of the Father. We freely respond in faith to God's grace as we participate in Christ's salvation, ministry, and mission. In another act of divine love, the Father and the Son sent the Spirit to descend upon the believers at Pentecost. With Spirit-filled boldness, the newly justified became the body of Christ as his Church and witnesses of his grace and love to the nations. God continues to provide grace to us through Word and Sacrament as the Holy Spirit emboldens our faith. Through baptism, God's grace is imparted through the Holy Spirit to us, including infants, as the sign and seal of entering God's covenantal promise and family. At the Lord's Supper, God's grace is imparted as the Holy Spirit brings us into the presence of Christ to strengthen our faith as we partake of the bread and cup. Through the Word, read and proclaimed, God's grace is imparted through the Holy Spirit to us, as the Bible points us to Jesus Christ. The Church continues to bear witness of God's love. Within the tension of the now, but not yet, while awaiting the return of the King, we, as the members of the Church, continue to grow in faith and knowledge of Christ as we encourage, support, pray, and teach one another as we participate in Christ's mission to proclaim God's Good News to all of creation and to the nations of the earth through both Word and deed for the glory of God.

CONTRACT FOR COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER FOR PASTORAL SERVICES

The following contract between the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Butte and Karolee Larson CRE, is for the purpose of providing part-time/full-time Temporary Pastoral Services to the Church from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023.

DUTIES:

The pastor will be responsible for the following:

- Pray for the Church
- Equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12)
- Moderate the session and congregational meetings
- Serve as head of staff
- Lead worship and preach at regular Sunday services
- Emergency pastoral care, other pastoral care as time allows
- Provide administrative leadership
- Officiate weddings and funerals as needed
- Lead new membership classes
- Work with committee chairs
- Administration of sacraments
- Arrange for substitute preachers on Sundays when unable to preach
- Have regular open office hours at the church and/or stated location.

The Congregation and session will be responsible for the following:

- Pray for the pastor
- Pray for the congregation/church
- Support the pastor in our ministry
- Support pastor by honoring a weekly sabbath day of rest
- Provide regular financial compensation according to the terms outlined below
- Provide a performance review to the pastor annually
- Discuss goals for the contract period

During the length of this agreement, the pastor will be accountable to the session and presbytery. It is understood that the pastor will participate in presbytery, along with pastor/training events sponsored by the presbytery. Should the temporary pastor have serious differences or difficulties with any former pastor of the congregation, the matter will be referred to the presbytery. It is understood that the pastor will not be involved in any way with the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC), except for instances when specifically queried by the chairperson/persons of that committee. Any questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding the PNC's search process shall be fielded by the presbytery liaison.

This agreement may be terminated by either party (session or pastor) upon 30 days written notice. This agreement may be extended in one (1) to twelve (12) month increments, upon written notice to, and

the approval of, the presbytery. It is understood that the pastor will participate in an exit interview conducted by the presbytery.

Terms:

The pastor is employed on a part-time basis, serving approximately 20-30 hours weekly, as continuing studies/exams allow, from January 1, 2023 to May 31, 2023. Full-time from August 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. Compensation for the twelve months of this contract is shown in the following table:

Effective Salary:		Reimbursable Expenses:	
Cash Salary	3,018	Automobile (current IRS rate)	
Housing Allowance	26,000	Church/Presb. business only	
Effective total salary	29,018	Continuing Education (Cumulative to 3 years)	600
		Book Allowance	300
		Professional Expenses	300
		Total Reimbursable expense	1,200

- 2 weeks study leave, cumulative to 6 weeks, including 2 Sundays
- 4 weeks of vacation, including 4 Sundays
- Family Leave Policy
- Unpaid post-graduation sabbatical in June/July
- Social Security Offset 2,391
- Board of Pensions, pension only, 8.5% of effective Salary: 2,467

Total Package (Effective Salary + Reimbursable + Board of Pensions): \$35,075

Approvals:

The session approved this contract and its conditions on December X, 2022

Signed: (Clerk of Session) _____ Date: _____

I Agree to accept the terms of this contract:

Signed: (Pastor) _____ Date: _____

The presbytery approved this contract and its conditions on _____

Signed: (PMT) _____ Date: _____