

**Presbytery of Yellowstone – Stated Meeting
March 6,7, 2020**

20-000. Opening of the Meeting

The Presbytery of Yellowstone met on Friday and Saturday, March 6, 7, 2020, at First Presbyterian Church in Billings, Montana. Moderator, MWS Susi Ennis convened the meeting at 10:10 AM on Friday with prayer. The theme for this meeting was “The Adventure God Has for You” Centered and Soaring, Part 2. There was a morning workshop “Packing for the Journey” which was led by Rev. Susi Ennis. Topic of the morning session was “How do we empower people to take their spiritual gifts, experiences, talents, and abilities to use them for the kingdom”. This session was one of the three work session conducted during this meeting.

20-001. Roll Call: (as taken from the registration forms and not as taken verbally)

Ruling Elder Commissioner

Anaconda	A
Billings First	Sandi Schoenberger
Billings St Andrew	Sandy Welch, visitors—Virginia Allen, Curt Kochner, Gail Kimball, Betty Whiting, Patty Johnson
Big Hole	Sandy Cleary, Julie Boksich (LC)—visitor, Larry Boksich
Bozeman First	John Patterson, Donna Beck (Clerk of Session), Suzanne Bratsky (LC)—visitors Frank Schurz, Chuck Beck
Butte First	Chuck Wright (Seeker)
Colstrip	Gail Beckham
Deer Lodge	Lisa Cole
Dillon First	A
Ennis	A
Forsyth Federated	A
Harlowton	A
Hysham Community	Waine Milmine—Visitors Sharon Milmine, Dana Cunningham (Session Clerk)
Jordan	Bev Harbaugh (Session Clerk)
Lewistown First	CRE Margee Smith
Manhattan	Debbie Blackburn (PMT Co-Moderator)
Miles City First	A
Phillipsburg St Paul’s	A
Poplar First	Wanda Kirn (Session Clerk)
Stanford First	A
Terry Community	Nancy Pehl
White Sulphur Springs	Pam Jackson (Session Clerk)
Wolf Point First	A

Minister Members

David Andrew (absent), Jim Bell (absent), Priscilla Bell (absent), J P Carlson(present), Paul Cannon (absent), Dick Davis (present), Jed Cauffman (excused), Paul Cousins (absent), John Dyce (absent), Brent Long (present), Jody McDevitt (present), Warren (Rusty) Craig (absent), Sherwood McKay (absent), Cathy McLean (excused), Mary Davis (absent), Steven A Hundley (excused), Marcia Muir (absent), Sally Ralston (absent), Susi Ennis (present), Garrett Mostowski (present), Neva Rathbun (present), Debbie Funke (present), Harlan L Rounds (excused), Jamie Schmeling (present)George Goodrich (present), Bill

Swanson (absent), Kathy Goodrich (excused), Susan Thomas (present), Doug Johnson (excused), Sarah Logemann (present), David Thompson (present), Larry Vandecreek (absent), Lowell Johnson (absent), Vicki Waddington (absent), Teresa Kendall (present), Kim Woeste (Present), Dan Krebill(present), Paul Krebill (absent), Freeman McCall (absent), Diane White (absent), Daniel Triller (present), Wenda Fry (absent), Deborah Schmidt(absent)

Commissioned Ruling Elder Members:

CRE Margaret Smith, Veva Larson (excused),

RE Moderators 2020, Voting Members:

Russ Kline (present), Debbie Blackburn (PMT Co Moderator)

RE Leadership Cabinet Voting Members:

Julie Boksich (present), Ric Tieman, Treasurer (present)

Corresponding member for meeting seated:

Rev. Dwight Welch, Rev. Stan Ott (Guest Speaker via Zoom), RE Mark Frey (Board of Pensions) (Cascade Presbytery), RE Lynn Smit (Synod Stated Clerk) (Plains and Peaks Presbytery), RE, Chaplan, Jeff Harada FPC Wolf Point.

Staff with Voice:

RE Jim Tarr (Stated Clerk),

Visiting recognized with voice:

RE Ben Larson (Session Clerk), RE Ric Tieman (Treasurer), RE Susan Gibb, RE Janet Kline, Alan Smit,

Balance check: Voting RE's 19, Voting MWS 16.

20- 002. Session 1. "Packing for the Journey" was led by MWS Susi Ennis who was snubbing for Co GP Kathy Goodrich who was excused as ill.

This session was a review of the spiritual gifts presentation a few years back and adding a current review of the importance of identifying those gifts within our fellowships. The focus was ("How do we empower people to take their spiritual gifts, experiences, talents, and abilities to use them for the Kingdom?)

The session included sharing and personal attention to the process and importance of the gift's analysis process.

20-003. A quorum was declared after the roll call was verified.

20-004. The moderator Susi Ennis had opened the business section of the meeting with prayer and gave floor to Rev. Dave Thompson to give a welcoming message, facility directions, and food service arrangements. He specifically called attention to a banner hanging on the chancellery rear wall that was given to the church by MWS Susan Barnes, former pastor at St Andrew Presbyterian Church, Billings, MT.

20-005. The docket was approved, and the following procedural motion was approved:

Procedural Motion - The Stated Clerk moved the following Procedural Motion:

1. That the roll for this meeting be established by completed Registration Sheets.
2. That written and oral requests for absences received by the Stated Clerk be approved.
3. That any Corresponding members present be seated.
4. That the Presbytery grant the Moderator the authority to give privilege of the floor to persons, other than Members or Commissioners, for the purpose of reporting to this meeting.
5. That the Moderator and the Stated Clerk be empowered to make adjustments to the Agenda during the meeting, as may be necessary, to provide for efficiency in reporting, and
6. presbytery office in advance an electronic copy shall supplied to the office of the stated clerk and the presbytery office immediately following the meeting.

20-006. Co General Presbyter George Goodrich gave the charge and oath of office to RE Russ Kline as moderator and RE Julie Boksich as vice moderator of the Presbytery, who were then recognized and prayed for with a laying on of hands. Russ then offered a prayer for the work of the meeting that followed. Julie led the gathering in a dwelling in the word and word/prayer/share time over the scripture John 21: 1-12

Session 2.

Rev. Ott presented a complete written outline of his presentation in advance of the presentation, but his talk was focused on reviewing certain key points from our Meeting in Lewistown

- a. Friends off the road.
- b. Friends of the heart.

And the three commitments a church must make.

- c. A commitment to Christ
- d. A Commitment to the Body of Christ
- e. A commitment to the work of Christ in the world.

Our Commitment to the Body, was presented in more detail in this session and after hearing his explanations the participants spent time in word/share/prayer breakout groups which covered all three of the commitments.

20-007. MWS George Goodrich resented the Co-GP report (**Exhibit A.**) and gave particular emphasis on the following:

1. We are all connected to each other.
2. What does God expect of us when we meet?
3. Please pray for each other and an appeal to use the prayer list on the website that was created by RE Curt Kochner.

20-008. RE Dr John Patterson gave a talk on what churches might consider as a response to the CoVid Virus threat we now face. Many good suggestions were explained to help our fellowships navigate this threat. He also pointed out the PCUSA Website is posting a lot of good information on how to deal with this virus while we fellowship and worship.

20-009. MWS J.P. Carlson presented a report of the PMT. Exhibit B. He indicated Lanny Rounds will be recognized as Honorably Retired at the meeting at the Church of the Big Hole. The floor was given to RE Chuck Wright who explained how he came to the conclude he needed to seek a commission as a CRE. He also explained to educational training in which he is now engaged.

- **It was voted** to recognize that Rev. Harland Rounds will be recognized as Honorably Retired.
- **It was voted** to install RE Chuck Wright as a seeker in the CRE training program of the Yellowstone Presbytery.
- **It was Voted** to dissolve the pastoral relationship between the Rev. Cathy Mclean and the Forsyth Church, by vote of their session March 31 and with an effective date of December 31, 2019.
- **It was voted** to dissolve the commission of CRE Margee Smith at the Lewistown Church Home care ministry. (A voice indicated the PMT and Church in Lewistown will possibly need to evaluate how the impact of the loss of Margee will affect this ministry.)
- **It was voted** to commission CRE Margee Smith to be installed as pastor of the Stanford Church and to share her ministry with the Methodist church in Denton, MT. (The Methodist DS having previously approved this agreement).
- **It was voted to** create an administrative commission to install CRE Margee Smith as pastor of the Stanford Church on March 21, 2020 at 1:30 PM, as follows:

MWS Susi Ennis

MWS Kathy Goodrich

MWS Susan Thomas

MWS Jody McDevitt

RE Charlie Brown (Lewistown)

RE Ray Soulsby (Stanford)

RE Debbie Blackburn (Manhattan)

RE Russ Kline (Moderator of Presbytery)

RE Jim Tarr (Stated Clerk of Presbytery)

RE Melissa Bell (Assistant Stated Clerk of Presbytery)

RE Linda Bradley (Lewistown)

20-010. MWS Danial Triller presented the camping and youth report. (**Exhibit C.**) he announced the success of the winter ski retreat in Bozeman and made an appeal to the churches to get more youth interested in the summer camping program.

20-011. LC Moderator MWS Teresa Kendall gave the meeting a first reading of the nomination of MWS Jodi McDevitt to a 3-year term on the Representation/Nominating Committee.

20-012. Mark Frey of the Board of Pensions was recognized, and he gave a brief talk on the Healthy Pastor Healthy Congregation Program of the Board of Pensions. He explained how to get information

and help if interested in getting access to this funding. \$10,000 grants are still available. (FYI, the Lewistown Church is participating now in this Presbytery)

20-013. We recessed for dinner fellowship and worship with communion. During the worship the necrology report was presented by George Goodrich. Special remembrance was made of the Rev. Jean Johnson who served the church in Madison Valley for many years and CRE Jack Bell who was pastor at the Stanford Church. Our Presbytery was blessed to have their ministry among us, and they will be missed. The Rev. Susi Ennis gave the sermon.

During the service two mission teams were commissioned, recognized and prayed for their serving God in this manner. A Presbycat team was recognized by Rev. Dan Krebill and a youth group team from FPC Billings was recognized as heading to Zambia Africa. (After the meeting the Presbytery was notified these mission trips needed to be cancelled due to the CoVid Virus threat and travel restrictions.)

A special offering for the Spires Camp Scholarship Funds was collected in the amount of \$1,738.00

20-014. The Saturday morning session was opened with Prayer by Moderator RE Russ Kline

The morning session was focused on “Our Commitment to and Love of Jesus Christ”. There were 3 break out sessions led by Rev. Jamie Schmeling, Rev George Goodrich, and Rev Susi Ennis

20-015. LC Moderator Teresa Kendall offered a second reading of the motion to elect Rev. Jodi McDevitt to the ep/Nom Committee for a term of 3 years.

- **It was voted that a unanimous ballot be cast** to elect the Rev McDevitt to a 3-year term on the Rep/ Nom Committee.

The planning team was recognized for their work in planning for this meeting. The team recognized with applause and thanks consisted of Kathy Goodrich, Julie Boksich, Jamie Schmeling, Teresa Kendall and Susi Ennis.

20-016. RE Ric Tieman Treasurer presented the financial report of the presbytery as of the end of 2019 and the report is attached as **Exhibit E**. Ric reported a trust from the estate of RE John Clark of the Butte Church came to the presbytery as one of the beneficiaries in the gross amount of \$120,671.64. Conditions on distribution will apply and will be reported as they occur. Initially the Presbytery received \$90,911.14. John was recognized by George Goodrich, Dan Krebill, and Dick Davis for his dedication and service to this Presbytery.

20-017. Rev Kim Woeste gave a report on the relationship and importance of the covenant relationship the College has with the PCUSA and this Presbytery. She quoted some of the history of the relationship and recognized George Goodrich as currently serving on the college’s board. She made note that the chaplaincy function welcomes mission gifts from the member churches in the Presbytery as well as being grateful for support received in the past.

20-018. The Stated Clerk Report is attached as **Exhibit D**. The minutes of the November 1, 2, 2019 meeting where approved as recorded and the Minutes of the December 13 phone call meeting were approved with a correction proposed adding “at this time” by the Rev, Jamie Schmeling regarding her installation service.

20-019. Suzanne Bratsky gave a report on the Presbyterian Women function of the church. She made note of the gathering planned for August 5-8, 2021 in St Louis, MO. Theme of “Rejoice in Hope”.

20-020. RE and Stated Clerk of the Synod advised the presbytery on the work of the Synod and that the overture regarding the Boundary between Glacier and Yellowstone Presbytery has been recorded and is on PC Biz as overture 27.

20-021. It was announced the May 14,15 Presbytery Meeting at the Church in the Big Hole will have a pre – gathering May 13 in the evening when we can have some fun activity.

RE Ben Larson announced the opportunity to gather following this meeting at St Andrew Presbyterian Church to hear a talk on the “Stations of the Cross” being held at the Labyrinth outside.

The meeting adjourned with prayer by Moderator Russ Kline .at 11:30 AM.

The session clerks from FPC Billings, FPC Bozeman, The Church in the Big Hole, White Sulphur and Jordan attended the church record review meeting.

19-075. The next meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery will be held at the Church in the Big Hole, Melrose MT May 14, 15, 2020.

Jim Tarr

Stated Clerk

Attached: Exhibits A, B, C, D, E.

Exhibit A. CO GP Report.

George & Kathy Goodrich General Presbyters’ Report Yellowstone Presbytery March 2020

How are we as Jesus’ disciples to LIVE and LEAD in times of rapid seismic shifts and polarization, in times of fear and fragmentation? Such challenges are, and have always been, God’s opportunities, just as the Chinese character for *crisis* is made up of their 2 characters for *danger* and *opportunity*! Historically, God’s people HAVE been in such times before. But it is a first for most of us. As the Holy Spirit applies Scripture, the lessons of those who have gone before us, and insights from listening in our contexts, we have hope that God will lead and transform us in the times and places where we are called and sent.

God has always been the present, powerful “Way-Maker and Promise-Keeper” * for God’s people in the past. Will we pray for and cultivate the trusting faith that God will be and do the same for us? (*Stephy Nobles-Beans, Assoc. Chaplain for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Ministry, Whitworth Univ.)

1. Keeping the main thing the main thing-The main thing, our center of reality, is **Jesus Christ (1)**

2. Listening well, with God's mind and heart, is essential to leadership in these times. (2)

3. Staying rooted AND adapting/shifting, responsive to the Holy Spirit in changing contexts.

Our March 6 & 7 mini conference *Taking the Adventure God Has for Us* themes and workshops continue to address this and better equip you and your congregation. Please share the flyer & invite ANY interested in your church.

We and the Leadership Cabinet continue to see the vision statement of the presbytery as offering clear guidance and priorities for the presbytery, leading us to focus on helping equip and strengthen pastors and churches in their discipleship and joining in Christ's mission in such times... Toward that end, we see...

a. The continued focus on offering Stan Ott's training and materials at presbytery meetings as imperative, foundational and transforming.

- a. Growing commitment to and love for:
Jesus Christ - the Body of Christ - the work of Christ in the world.
- b. Practicing the transferable concepts under each of these "4 Great's of Jesus".
- c. The Presbytery planning team of the LC, Russ, Julie, Susi, and Kathy, seeks to listen to churches and leaders to serve and equip! Thanks to them!
- d. It is even more essential in these times for leaders, as well as all disciples, to BE the people of God, like filled reservoirs, before we DO the work of the people of God. This adaptation of Stan Ott's admonition is also in the words of Bernard of Clairvaux":

The {one} who is wise, therefore, will see his {her} life as more like a reservoir than a canal. The canal simultaneously pours out what it receives; the reservoir retains the water until it is filled, then discharges the overflow without loss to itself... Today, there are many in the church who act like canals. The reservoirs are far too rare... You must learn to await this fullness before pouring out your gifts. Do not try to be more generous than God. - Bernard of Clairvaux, 1090-1153, French Abbot

b. Strengthening Pastors and Leaders

- a. The revamping of clusters, per Stan's suggestion, as something to be explored – using internet /Go to Meeting more as more cost efficient and time-friendlier. We have both attended clusters virtually in January/February. Thoughts?
 - b. Youth Ski Retreat, February 28-March 1 in Bozeman.
 - c. Offer more retreat-meetings like the January Leadership retreat in our home in Bozeman...
Discernable benefits?
Clergy and leader retreats?
 - d. Offering Spiritual Direction for pastors and lay leaders (George).
- c. Supporting the large number of our churches with no pastor or searching for a pastor by preaching, worshipping and being present and prayerful; equipping and supporting search committees, sessions, deacons...; possible internship in rural/small town ministry**

- d. Equipping elders to preach and lead and as potential CRE's.
- e. Encouraging networking and partnerships in outreach, mission and service; sharing ideas and questions, establishing a new worshipping community (we are still seeking God's leading)
- f. Exploring possible collaborations.
- g. Discerning together with you God's opportunities as to how we find Christ, adapt/shift, discern the way forward following Christ in the unsettled culture now: racism and violence; partisan politics and incivility; corona virus and the disruption it is likely to be in the economy and in our lives...

We believe in God's call and purpose for our disciple communities to be *thermostats* for the Way and Ways of Christ, not thermometers of our fallen natures, culture or past mistakes. Rather, we are intended to be contrast communities/lights/havens of understanding, respect and Christian love across differences both within ourselves and for our communities. Therefore, we are exploring, discussing various ways we can better focus on and equip ourselves to be salt and light, drawing upon gifts within and without our body. We both are following colleges and universities which, expecting a restless fall, are planning various training and responses.

- h. **Presbytery Staffing Restructuring and financial developments:**
 - a. LC & its Personnel subgroup, considering its response to the challenge for our May meeting.
 - b. Three questions: 1) What structure best serves the presbytery mission? 2) How are the Goodrich's and staff being led? 3) How pressing is the financial situation?

Personal – We are grateful for many blessings in the lives of family in MT, including Emerson Anne Goodrich born in December! George's mom recently fell and broke her hip and is very frail and fragile, ready for heaven. Prayers welcomed as our mothers' increasing challenges and needs take more time both in person and remotely.

1. *Resilient Faith: How the Early Christian 'Third Way' Changed the World*, Gerald Sittser, p. 173-4.
2. Excerpted in Scott Cormode's article A Share Story of Future Hope @ <https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/a-shared-story-of-future-hope/> from Cormode's *The Innovative Church: How Leaders and Their Congregations Can Adapt in an Ever-Changing World* to be published Sept. 2020

Exhibit B. PMT Report.

Pastoral Ministry Team's Presbytery Report March 6-7, 2020

The purpose of the Pastoral Ministry Team is to come alongside of churches, sessions, pastors, and CREs to provide encouragement, support, and training as we work together to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

- A) Updates from the PMT since the last Presbytery meeting. (November 1,2, 2019)
The PMT voted to approve the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between First Presbyterian Church of Butte and MWS Harlan Rounds. The PMT approved the stated supply contract for another year between MWS Mary Davis and the Church of the Big Hole. The Stated Clerk has sent letters to MWS David Andrew and MWS Paul Cannon per the vote of Presbytery in November 2019, and those letters were received. The church in Butte is in the process of searching for an Interim pastor. The Lewistown Church has elected a Pastor Nominating Committee.
- B) Approving RE Chuck Wright (FPC Butte) as a seeker in the CRE Program.
PMT recommends to Presbytery to approve RE Chuck as a seeker in the CRE Program.
- C) Approving HR status for MWS Harlan Rounds. PMT recommends to Presbytery to approve Honorably Retired status for MWS Harlan Rounds.
- D) Dissolution of pastoral relationship between MWS Cathy McLean and the Federated Church of Forsyth (pending congregational vote on March 1, 2020). PMT requests that the Presbytery vote to approve the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between MWS Cathy McLean and the Federal Church of Forsyth effective December 31, 2019.
- E) CRE Margee Smith – approval of covenant (see attached) and commissioning to First Presbyterian Church of Stanford. Approval of Administrative Commission for commissioning service. PMT recommends to Presbytery to approve the covenant for pastoral service between CRE Margee Smith and the First Presbyterian Church of Stanford effective January 1, 2020. PMT requests that Presbytery approve the administrative commission for the commissioning service for CRE Margee Smith.

J P Carlson and Debbie Blackburn, Co-Moderators
Pastoral Ministry Team, Yellowstone Presbytery

02.19.20

Exhibit C.

Report to Presbytery from Camping and Youth presented at March 6-7, 2020 meeting

The Camping and Youth Committee met a couple months ago (January 12th) over the phone to meet and learn more about our camping ministry in general. Given that a handful of people on our committee are new and/or have never been to camp, this conversation allowed our committee to learn more and ask questions of Curt Kochner (camp director) and George Goodrich. Going forward we are trying to figure out how to best work together and support Curt

as Director. One of the primary ways we can do this is to simply get the word out to our youth, churches and greater communities. Westminster Spires is a special camp and with its highly relational intergenerational and Christ-centered focus, it has a lot to offer and we'd love to invite more students to be a part of it with us. As for how the larger Presbytery can help, we simply ask that you help us get the word out and promote it and share it with those in your churches.

Thanks,

Rev. Daniel Triller, Moderator of Camping and Youth

Exhibit D. Stated Clerk Report

Stated Clerk Report November 2019 to March 2020

Minutes of the November 1,2, 2019 Presbytery meeting were prepared, reviewed and posted.

Meeting of the PMT November 14 was attended and minutes recorded. Reviewed and later approved.

Meeting of the Presbytery December 13 was attended, minutes taken, reviewed and Posted to the website. The Stated Clerk prepares a draft docket for moderators of the presbytery for each meeting.

Work of the Stated Clerk is extensive in December as letters and invoices are mailed to each church pastor and session clerk to begin the process of getting the year end reports and statistics completed and reported to the PCUSA. New clerks get elected and contact information all need to be updated. The Stated Clerk also develops a per capita invoice for each church and helps them schedule a payment plan when the impact of this cost to the church is difficult for some to handle as a single payment. This function also tracks the necrology reports from each church so that at the March meeting we can recognize the elders who have passed away during the year 2019.

A retreat of new and former members of the LC and the PMT met at the Goodrich's home in Bozeman January 9 and 10 and the Stated Clerk attended and offered a report on the office function of the Stated Clerk and containing ideas for future goals and changes to this office. Minutes of the PMT portion of the meeting were taken and reported back to the PMT members. The Stated Clerk could not take minutes of the LC meeting because it was held simultaneously to the PMT meeting. Time was spent with the acting treasurer to get new signatures for bank accounts needing changed due to the resignation of the Presbytery treasurer.

The necrology report was worked on and churches contacted who had not yet reported.

Meetings of the LC February 11 meeting and PMT meeting February 13 were attended and a preliminary docket for the March 6,7 meeting was prepared. Minutes of the PMT meeting were prepared and sent to the Moderatos to review. Minutes of the LC meeting were prepared and sent too the Moderator for review.

Jim Tarr
Stated Clerk

Exhibit E. Treasurers Report.

Insert PDF copy of file here

End of Minutes March 6,7, 2020

Reviewed May 14,15, 2020 meeting

Approved _____

Jim Tarr

Stated Clerk