

**Presbytery of Yellowstone - Special Meeting
May 23, 2023**

23-019. Opening of the Meeting

The Presbytery of Yellowstone met on Tuesday, May 23, via Zoom, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was called to order and opened with prayer and reading of I Peter 4: 1, 7-11 by the Moderator, RE Melissa Bell. Attendees dwelt in the Word, listened to a second reading, and shared ideas on the meaning of the passage for us today.

This special meeting was called by 2023 Presbytery Moderator Melissa Bell at the request of the Pastoral Ministry Team for the following reasons:

1. To examine Karolee Larson of Butte and, at the unanimous recommendation of Yellowstone Presbytery's Pastoral Ministry Team, to approve her certified ready to receive a call.

Any action the Presbytery might wish to take must be related to item 1.

23-020. Present at the meeting:

Ruling Elders with vote attending:

1. RE Sandy Schoenberger, Billings 1st
2. RE Jim Tarr, Billings St. Andrew
3. CRE Karolee Larson, Butte
4. RE Julie Boksich, Church of the Bog Hole
5. RE Lisa Cole, Deer Lodge
6. CRE Margee Smith, Lewistown
7. RE Stephanie Bergstrom, Manhattan
8. RE Nancy Pehl, Terry

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

Ashley Birk, Kimmy Briggs, Warren (Rusty) Craig, Dick Davis, Mary Davis, Kathy Goodrich, Teresa Kendall, Freeman McCall, Neva Rathbun, Harlan (Lanny) Rounds, Jamie Schmeling, Dave Thompson, Daniel Triller.

Others Present: RE Caroline Fleming, Stated Clerk, RE Andy Pehl, Terry, guest.

23-021. A Quorum was declared present by the Moderator, Melissa Bell based on attendance visible on ZOOM.

23-022 Interview with Karolee Larson: (Attachments A)

MWS Teresa Kendall, Co-Moderator of the Pastoral Ministry Team (PMT) stated the reason for the meeting, and MWS Kimmy Briggs shared Karolee's journey as a candidate, seminarian and CRE currently serving the congregation at Butte, MT.

The floor was opened to questions for Karolee. Having examined Karolee recently when she accepted a commission to serve as a CLC, questions focused less on theology and more on hopes and gifts. Members and commissioners asked questions concerning Karolee's beliefs about the importance of the local church, what gifts she feels she has for ministry and what gifts she sees herself growing into, what hope she has for the church, what hope she has in Jesus Christ, and how she will discern what work is hers to do in the church and what is the congregation's work. Melissa Bell congratulated Karolee on all she has achieved to date.

***ACTION: A motion was made to arrest the examination and proceed to a vote on the recommendation from PMT. The motion was seconded, and it passed.**

23-023 Karolee was dismissed to a waiting room as commissioners discussed the recommended action. All felt Karolee is a great candidate and certainly ready to proceed to her next step in the process.

***ACTION: Yellowstone Presbytery's Pastoral Ministry Team recommends Yellowstone Presbytery examine Karolee Larson and approve her certified ready to receive a call. The motion passed unanimously.**

23-024 Karolee was welcomed back into the meeting. Teresa led everyone in rejoicing, praising Karolee and commenting on how grateful we are to have her with us in Yellowstone Presbytery. Commissioners raised hands in a symbolic laying-on-of-hands while MWS Ashley Birk prayed for Karolee.

23-025 Announcements:

- The next meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery is June 16 via Zoom and in-person in Lewistown. Please register via email with Melissa Bell.
- Teresa Kendall reported she will be leaving the Deer Lodge Church and Yellowstone Presbytery this summer. She is moving east to be close to children and grandchildren.

23-026 Closing: With no further business, the meeting was closed with prayer by CRE Margee Smith at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Caroline Fleming Stated Clerk

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.

I believe in the Triune God - Father, Son, Holy Spirit.
One in substance, yet three distinct persons.
Always together in one accord as God works through redemption and reconciliation.

I believe in the Father, creator of Heaven and earth.
I believe humans are created in God's image,
Commissioned to care for God's creation.

I believe sin entered creation
When humans believed they could make themselves equal to God.
I believe sin affected the ability for humans to be in a relationship with God.
I believe God mediated a plan of redemption through the particular nation of Israel As
God gave them language and practices through their worship and sacrifices.

I believe God's self-revelation is through the
Incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.
I believe Jesus, fully God and fully human, is the perfect priest and sacrifice for our sins.
I believe Christ's sacrifice brings us into a relationship with the Father As daughters and
sons, co-heirs to the Kingdom of God.

I believe the Holy Spirit is fully God and one in being with the Father and the Son.
I believe the Holy Spirit seals us into the Covenantal Family Through the waters of
baptism.
I believe the Holy Spirit strengthens our faith through the sacrament of Communion.
I believe the Holy Spirit illumines us as we encounter Scripture, read and proclaimed.
I believe the Holy Spirit guides and comforts us as we walk in the tension of the Now,
but Not Yet.

I believe that Jesus will return to redeem creation and set up his Kingdom on earth.
I believe we are called to work as people who believe in the hope of the resurrection.
I believe we are to share the love of God with our neighbors.
For the Glory of God. Amen