

Stated Clerk Report, May-Oct 2018

May 4, 5, 2018 attended Presbytery meeting in Harlowton MT, and was commissioned to serve as stated clerk and introduced Melissa as Assistant to the Stated Clerk. Meeting was well attended and a good balance of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments and ruling elders were there. The Harlowton Federated church did a great job hosting this event and deserves everyone's thanks for doing such a good job of making all feel welcomed and comfortable during the meeting.

May 8, 2018 the Leadership cabinet met in Billings where we approved dispersing \$6,000.00 to assist 3 programs including Presbycats (\$3,000.00), Rock Mountain College mission trip to Guatemala (\$1,500.00), and MSU Billings for bible study, coffees, and help for international students (\$1,500.00). The Child Protective Policy(CPP) was reviewed and sent back to the committee for minor alterations as approved for an email vote of the Presbytery. Any negative vote would generate a need for a special meeting of the Presbytery.

On May 10, 2018 the PMT Met in Bozeman and myself and Bonnie Soulsby had to resign from the committee leaving 2 vacancies to be filled by the Rec/Nom committee. They were released with appreciation expressed for time served. A draft policy on membership for non PCUSA ordained pastors was approved for a vote of the presbytery at its next regular meeting. The PMT will be making a recommendation to the LC on some changes to the Standing Rules so some of the minor functions of the presbytery can be handled by the PMT. A review of the book of order provisions regarding at large members was discussed and the Stated Clerk was instructed to make those in that status of what will be required of them when the PMT conducts an annual review of their status. Veva's contract with the Anaconda church was approved for another year. As a testament to her good work the church has not formed a PNC to look for an installed pastor.

CoGP Kathy Goodrich reminded all that the Spiritual Cohort Track will be on July 23 to 27 at Whitworth College Institute of Ministry. Pastors are to contact them for information registration and consideration of their continuing education. The Goodrich's were off on vacation and sabbatical respite the rest of the month of May and until June 11th.

From May 13 to May 16 the Stated Clerk was in Louisville, KY at the office of the General Assembly to receive training for Stated Clerks of the Presbyteries. All new clerks are invited at a cost to the GA to attend this training. There was a new GP and a couple of assistant clerks there at their own expense to get the training along about 6 other new Stated Clerks. This was a small class which was good because we could ask questions and hold discussions on how each of the presbyteries were functioning and adjusting to all the changes taking place. There is no question we who are a part of the Yellowstone Presbytery are different in many ways from how other presbyteries are doing things. For example, many had active PJC caseloads and active PJC investigative committees due to poor policies on gracious separation not being in effect or for violating such policies. Many Presbyteries are engaged in developing and or putting together rational statements to present to the GA on pending overtures and it has been awhile since Yellowstone Presbytery has done this. All employees of the church need to sign an anti-harassment policy and have appropriate back ground checks made and kept on file. Time commitments, reporting deadlines and general duties all should be a part of the job descriptions. Some volunteer workers also need to be informed of duties to be performed including session clerks and church treasurers and financial secretaries.

During training many of the GA Assistant stated clerks gave briefings on their areas of assistance to the councils of the church. Our trainer was a lawyer so a lot of the discussions were on issues of liabilities we are exposed to as staff people doing interpretive and reporting work.

A trip was made May 26 to the Bozeman office of the presbytery so I could complete a mailing to all at large members of the presbytery and to review mail box input and work with the secretary on misc. administrative issues. We are blessed to have such competent help in the office of the presbytery. Thank you Susan for all you do.

June 12, 2018 meeting of the Leadership cabinet was held at George and Kathy's home in Bozeman. We were able to hold informing conversations with out Whitworth Fellows and enjoy some social time with some outstanding barbecue. The important result of this meeting was the provisional approval of our new child and youth protection policy. This new policy was the result of many hours of research and review of other policies by a hard working subcommittee headed up by Curt Kochner.

We have begun a process to review and inform the at large members of the presbytery what is required of them to maintain that status.

June 28th I attended a teleconference task group meeting of the PMT to interview with Daniel Triller a prospect being considered by the PNC of the Dillon church.

July 12 attended meeting of PMT in Billings. Recorded notes of the meeting and met with Mellissa for consultation and prayer afterwards.

The way for ordaining Garrett Mostowski was not clear yet and so I spent some time after the PMT meeting getting his presbytery of care to send us documents needed to verify his readiness to be ordained.

July 20, Provided advise to the Rec/Nom committee on positions that will need to be filled and voted on at our November meeting.

Participated in the ordination and installation commission for the service of ordination and installation of Garrett Mostowski at the Miles City church on August 11,2018. Report of that meeting and event was prepared as secretary to the commission.

August. Attended by phone meetings of the nominating committee and provided clarifications when requested.

Have reviewed and attested several PIF's of Pastors who have a form on file with the CLC. All current searches are up to date. The clerk has reviewed many opportunities for events and programs being presented by the GA and note that this presbytery is unable to participate due to a lack of financial support and or resources being available. Some training such as the generosity seminars seem like they might be helpful to the fellowship but we lack capacity to benefit. Most of the events have scholarship money to help pay for about half the cost but we can't even support or help with the other half. We face a crisis of being able to maintain staffing and support of the Presbytery by the team that works hard to do all the functions we see needed and because of time limits cannot be done as we see should be done.

Please keep in mind our Co General Presbyters need to find from outside the presbytery a large portion of their salaries so they can help us do the work. When we overload them with working for us overtime each month this distracts them from getting the word out to their benefactors and getting the funding they need to continue the work. Please be considerate enough to avoid abusing their time commitments to us.

The clerk attended meeting of The Leadership Cabinet on September 11 at FPC Billings and recorded minutes of the meeting. Minutes of LC meeting are posted on the Website as approved and in the LC meeting packet when pending approval.

The clerk attended the PMT meeting on September 13th at FPC Billings and took notes of the meeting and took some follow-up actions as directed by the committee. Sub committees were set up to do some special tasks. Minutes of PMT meetings are kept confidential to protect privacy of all who are affected by potential recommendations from the committee.

Participated as stated clerk in the special meeting of the presbytery on September 14th and in the examination of Daniel Triller to become an installed Pastor in the Dillon Church. A commission was established to perform the installation service on October 14, 2018 at 4:00PM. Minutes of this meeting were prepared.

Attended the Synod Assembly of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains in Denver September 23 to 25, 2018. The budget for Synod operations was approved and per capita set at \$3.50. The per capita for 2019 remained the same as the 2018 amount. A report of assembly matters is a separate document. It needs to be noted the Synod no longer provides funding for the Presbyteries and only a small number of funds remain available for special project funding. As a reduced function Synod it will only meet once per year in order to keep costs within the number of available funds.

A staff meeting was held on September 26th at the presbytery office and was attended by The Assistant Stated Clerk Melissa Perrault-Baumann, our Co General Presbyters George and Kathy Goodrich, Debbie Blackburn (Past Stated Clerk) and Susan Seibert (office administrator). The Stated Clerk attended via Skype. Each member of the staff brought forth issues which needed to be addressed and it was a productive meeting. Some matters will be reviewed with the personnel committee. When committee meetings are held in Bozeman the Clerks staff will meet in the office the day after the meeting to check mail and coordinate tasks which will be pending. After meeting the clerks task list was reviewed.

Prepared a statement of decisions of the Stated Clerk regarding at large members of the presbytery based on findings from the clerk's letter sent to at large members in May. As of the end of September, 3 at large members of the Presbytery were working out of the bounds of Yellowstone Presbytery in various positions. Responded to a phone interview on September 28th to render opinions requested from the special sub task committee of the PMT dealing with at large members.

Completed the updated filing for employers on the Board of Pensions Benefits connect website so that presbytery beneficiaries will be able to enroll on the plans benefits for 2019. Advised the treasurers. The clerk thanks Debbie Blackburn for her advice in performing this task. The finance representative was advised of the projected 2019 cost to the presbytery of the employee plans.

Reviewed the proposed votes required of presbyteries from GA 223. Sent documents to LC for suggesting committees to review each proposed change.

Attended the Leadership Cabinet meeting in Bozeman on October 9th, Minutes of the meeting were drafted. After the meeting the Clerk met with the Personnel committee and a 6months review was completed. The job description for the assistant clerk was reviewed by the committee as directed by the cabinet.

As staff meeting was held October 10 in the Presbytery office with Mellissa attending by phone call, Kathy, Susan, myself and Debbie Blackburn in attendance. These meetings have proven helpful to the office and to the Stated Clerk as by being face to face we can coordinate our tasks and make sure work that needs to get done is tracked and initiated. Our former Stated Clerk has been very helpful in keeping this Clerk on track and we owe her many thanks for her continued service to this church.

On October 14th Daniel Triller was installed as Pastor in the Dillon Church. Steve Weber will be headed back to Driggs, Idaho and for a while we might find him on the slopes of Grand Targee Ski Resort. During the period of this report new pastors have been installed in Phillipsburg, Miles City, Dillon and White Sulphur Springs. We should look forward to meeting these new pastors at the Meeting in November. While many new people are joining us in ministry some will also be leaving. Paul Cannon has moved to Southwest Virginia to a small church there. Susan Barnes will be leaving St Andrew on November 4th and moving to Louisville KY where Mike Ferguson her Husband has accepted the job as editor of the Presbyterian News Service under the Board of Missions. Robert Shy is retiring and leaving the supply of Colstrip up to the PCUSA to fill this next pastoral call. Katie Emery has resigned from the church in in Terry and the responsibility to place a pastor there will be up to the PCUSA. The directory is a fluid document and requires constant updating. Many thanks to Susan for keeping all the changes up to date and posted on the website.

The work of preparation for the November Presbytery Meeting required more preparation than expected. Vacations and needed travel of staff and moderators required close attention to time lines and gathering reports to be posted by the October 24th deadline.

Notification to all installed Pastors and Session Clerks: **the reports of the churches** will be due soon and the Stated Clerk will appreciate attention be paid to all the report deadlines.

The GA has sent to the presbyteries several proposed **changes to the Book of Order** and committees need to review these changes and recommend a vote of the presbytery before the March meeting. Committees have been assigned by the Leadership Cabinet to do these reviews. If you are interested in input on the votes, please make your comments known to the assigned committee moderator. These votes are important and an update on progress of the voting will be posted on the website from time to time as information becomes available.

This report ended October 24th.

Jim Tarr

Stated Clerk