

Pastoral Ministry Team's Report February 2022

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.

Information Items

PMT approved the contract between MWS Mary Davis and Church of the Big Hole.

PMT is working on policies and procedures around the preparation process for ordination, validated ministries, and boundaries training.

PMT received the following email communication between Esther Berg and Stated Clerk of the Rocky Mountain Synod, Lynn Smit. It is included for your information.

From Esther Berg

Greetings Ms. Smit,

I wanted to follow up before I file anything.

I was about to file, when I received an email from the Presbytery of the Yellowstone requesting a meeting with me. I accepted and put that filing on hold.

During that meeting, it was apparent that we had two very different interpretations of the Book of order. I certainly never intended to be "in violation" as the Presbytery claims, which is why I consulted two people who are considered constitutional experts to understand the actions of my Presbytery back in 2010 and 2017, and continued to follow the advice from the then stated clerk of YP - whom they are now saying "was wrong" - but they seem to be slightly compassionate that I couldn't have known anything else since they have blocked all 4 attempts I have made to transfer membership and haven't responded to any other texts, calls or emails until recently.

Since you are the Synod state Clerk, it seems to me that it would be easier to simply have your interpretation, rather than waste everyone's time on a remedial case. I will certainly abide by your interpretation (even if it is against me) because I am too tired to try to fight this on a GA level. If you would be willing to simply answer the bolded question.

Does being removed from the rolls mean - your name is off the list as a member or you have lost your ordination? They are interpreting G2-0508 as I am no longer ordained. My understanding was that of G-2.0509 that to be removed from ordination, there had to be a process that actually included me.

Since that did not happen, I assumed I was still ordained, just "off the rolls." which was the interpretation of the YP Clerk at the time of the action in 2009. I have an email from the then Stated Clerk Ron Hanson - the last communication I received from YP, BEFORE the action, where he lays out my options and says, "Keep in mind that even if Yellowstone Presbytery were to drop you from membership you would still have the option of seeking membership in this or another presbytery at a later date."

YP says if I want membership, I have to start the ordination process over again. (The heinous reason I was dropped from the rolls - continuing in a ministry that is not validated - is because I started a mission from scratch in the Philippines - we have an orphanage that rescues children being trafficked, and a mission center that works with the poor in health, disaster relief, job training, etc. as well as daily bible studies in two languages. YP felt they couldn't adequately supervise such an endeavor and it would be inappropriate for me to be my own boss.)

Again, I am just trying to save us all the trouble of a remedial case.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely
Esther Berg

Lynn Smit's Reply

Dear Ms. Berg

There are three ways a TE loses his/her ordination:

1. Renouncing jurisdiction
2. Requesting to be removed from the exercise of ordained ministry
3. Being removed by a presbytery after three years on the inactive roll

All three of these require that the former TE discontinue any ministry and the designation of MWS shall not be used. All this can be found in the current edition of the BOO G-2.0507, 0508, 0509. Also, in the 2007-2009 BOO (which would have been the edition at the time your name was deleted from membership) G-11.0406c says "If at the end of three years the minister has not been restored to active membership or member-at-large, the presbytery shall delete that person's name from the appropriate roll of the presbytery and may give that person a certificate of membership to a particular church. (G-6.0600)"

While a presbytery should be accurate in communicating what these situations mean, it is still incumbent upon the TE/MWS to know the BOO. and polity of the church.

The time to dispute the original decision of the Presbytery of Yellowstone to remove you from the rolls has passed. Your only recourse was to apply to be reinstated which the Presbytery of Yellowstone has sole discretion to approve. A presbytery "may" approve reinstatement but is not required to reinstate a former TE/MWS.

To be specific, you are not ordained in the PCUSA and may not use the designation of MWS as it applies to any ministry. The Presbytery of Yellowstone cannot transfer a nonmember to another presbytery or denomination as you are no longer under the jurisdiction of the PCUSA.

Items for Action

PMT recommends that Karolee Larson (Butte) be approved as a Candidate in the ordination process.

PMT recommends to Presbytery that Anaconda allow Cal Boyle to serve an additional term of one year on their Session.

Kimmy Briggs, Moderator
Pastoral Ministry Team, Yellowstone Presbytery

2022 Contract for Stated Supply Pastor

The Church of the Big Hole and The Reverend Mary Davis

The following contract between the session of the Church of the Big Hole Presbyterian Church and the Reverend Mary Davis is for the purpose of providing pastoral services as Stated Supply Pastor to the Church 60 hours per month (preaching 3 Sundays each month) for a period of 12 months. The contract is to begin on January 1, 2022.

This contract is based on the change of status approved by the Board of Pensions from disability to post-retirement service. The Board of Pensions will annually review the terms of the contract at the end of each year.

This agreement may be terminated by either party (session or pastor) upon 30 days written notice. This agreement will be renegotiated at the end of 2022 and may be extended in one to twelve month periods, upon written notice to, and the approval of the presbytery.

DUTIES

The pastor will be responsible to

- Moderate the session and congregational meetings
- Lead worship and preach at regular Sunday services 3 weeks per month
- Arrange for substitute preachers on any Sundays not present
- Facilitate the training of lay leaders in leading worship, calling on the sick and the home-bound, and any other training deemed necessary by the Pastor and session.
- Officiate at baptisms, weddings and funerals

The congregation and session will be responsible to:

- Support the pastor in her ministry
- Provide regular financial compensation according to the terms outlined below.
- Provide a performance review to the pastor at least annually
- Pray for the pastor during this contract period

