



2024 WINTER STATED MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

**TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**

FEBRUARY 9 & 10, 2024

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THEME: Mission Strategy: Working on being the “Body of Christ.”

SCRIPTURE: For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 1 Corinthians 12:12–14

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2024

OPENING DEVOTIONAL

The winter meeting of the Presbytery of the Yukon opened at 9:00 a.m. at Trinity Presbyterian Church (PC), in Anchorage, Alaska, with a devotional service and singing.

CONVENE

Moderator, Elder Jan Burger called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. Trinity PC pastor Rev. Luke Jones extended a warm welcome to presbytery.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The session began with the land acknowledgment. As part of truth and reconciliation, the Presbytery of Yukon acknowledges that we gather on the traditional lands of the Dena’ina Athabascans. For thousands of years, the Dena’ina have been and continue to be the stewards of this land. It is with gratitude and respect that we recognize the contributions, innovations, and contemporary perspectives of the upper Cook Inlet Dena’ina.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The moderator declared a quorum. In accordance with G-3.0304 and Presbytery of Yukon bylaws, a quorum for a meeting of the Presbytery, shall be not be less than 10% of enrolled members and no fewer than three (3) teaching elders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament) and three ruling elders; the ruling elders representing three different congregations. For the purposes of parity, the number of eligible voting ruling elders shall be at least equal to or greater than the number of eligible voting teaching elders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament) on the current roll including only those honorably retired teaching elders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament) who have attended at least one stated meeting during the previous two years.

Current Presbytery membership (active ministers, enrolled elder commissioners, and commissioned pastors (CPs) whose commission includes voting at Presbytery:..... 59

Number of minister members present:..... 15

Number of Commissioned Pastors (CPs; Commissioned Ruling Elders) present..... 7

Number of elder commissioners enrolled and present (representing 13 churches) 13

Number of elders as organizational officers or Leadership Team members..... 5

Total members present 40

Percentage of members present68%

Roll

The roll consisted of individuals present at any of the plenary sessions in person.

Ministers of Word & Sacrament members present (15)

Erika Bergh – University Community PC	Leisa Carrick – United Protestant PC
Dean Knapp – Retired	Israel Nelson – Retired
Ellen Johnson-Price – Immanuel	Charles Brower, Utqiagvik PC
Kiyoung Seo – Member At Large	Luke Jones, Jewel Lake Parish & Trinity PC
Seongjin Ryu – Fairbanks Korean PC	Britt Johnston, Retired
Seung Hyun Yoo – First Korean PC, Anchorage	Blake Severson – Eagle River PC
Matt Schultz – First PC, Anchorage	Elizabeth Schultz – Executive Presbyterian
Tim Carrick – United Protestant PC	

Commissioned pastors (CPs) present (7)

Matt Tinkelenberg – New Hope PC	Lucy Apatiki – Gambell PC
June Walunga – Gambell PC	Virginia Kasak – Kuukpik PC
Mary Ellen Lucas – Delta PC	Marjorie Poggas – Jewel Lake Parish
Cora Akpik – Olgonik PC	

Churches represented by an elder commissioner (13 churches) *

Vera Lincoln – Chapel in the Mountains PC	Ida Angasan – Kaktovik PC
Kim Arlington – Eagle River PC	Cristina Welker – New Hope PC
Winnie Findley – First PC Anchorage	Sarah McCormick – Trinity PC
Sam Phillips – First PC Wasilla	Barb Brown – United Protestant PC
Deborah Apatiki – Gambell PC	Matthew Bierer – University Community PC
Elsie Eckman – Immanuel PC	Michael Jeffrey – Utqiagvik PC
Dennis Rogers – Jewel Lake Parish	

* When a church supplied two commissioners, only one commissioner had the right of vote in a particular session.

Other voting elder members present (5)

Elder Doreen McNeill – Stated Clerk	Elder Jan Burger – Moderator
Elder Danna Larson – Certified Christian Educator	Elder Ron Illingworth – Leadership Team
Elder Shirley Novak – moderator, Nominating Committee	

Minister members excused/absent (11)

Patrick Bracken – military/member-at-large	William Ng – retired
Piper Cartland – retired	Jennifer Pottinger – military/member-at-large
Sandy Faison –retired	Johan Shin – member-at-large
Curt Karns – retired	Joseph Reid – Utqiagvik PC
Britt Johnston –retired	Henry Woodall – retired
Richard Mauer – Delta Junction PC	

Churches not represented (1)

Atqasuk Chapel

Other voting members excused/absent (8)

CP Mark Ahsoak, – Utqiagvik	CP Joseph Brock – United Protestant
CP Merle Apassingok – Gambell	CP Leah Hathaway, – Jewel Lake Parish
CP Debbie Melton – United Protestant	CP Miranda Rexford-Brown – Utqiagvik
CP Maxine Nayakik – Olgonik	Bob Christensen – Leadership Team

Guests and staff granted voice

Phil Reynolds – Jewel Lake Parish
Kent Reynolds – Jewel Lake Parish
Muffie Durst – Bingle Camp Ministries
Ralph Duerre – First PC, Anchorage
Karleen Jackson – First PC, Anchorage
Jenny Rogers – Jewel Lake Parish

Jennifer Perri – Insurance Board
Joanne Bennett – Jewel Lake Parish
Joshua Park – Office of General Assembly
Kiho Kwon – Fairbanks Korean PC
Margaret Pfeiffer – Trinity PC
Tom Kron – Jewel Lake Parish

ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET

It was moved and seconded to approved the docket. Motion was **APPROVED** with no objections. Per the standing rules, the moderator has authority to adjust the docket as needed.

ORIENTATION AND INTRODUCTIONS

First-time elder commissioners, new ministers, and guests were introduced.

MINISTRY COMMISSION (MC) REPORT

Elder Ron Illingworth, co-chair of the Ministry Commission introduced the written MC report (Appendix A) and answered questions.

Motions and Actions:

- The MC moved to **allow the MC to approve, on behalf of the presbytery, the examination of and to receive Ministers of the Word and Sacrament transferring from other Presbyteries. Motion was APPROVED 29 yes; 3 no.**
- The MC moved to **allow the MC to authorize ruling elders to administer the sacraments when requested by the local session. Motion was APPROVED by unanimous consent.**
- The MC moved to **allow the MC appoint session moderators if there is no installed pastor or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, or if session is without a moderator for reasons of vacancy or inconvenience. Motion was APPROVED by unanimous consent.**

Examination of Rev. Charley Brower

United Methodist pastor, Rev. Charley Brower presented his statement of faith and was examined by Presbytery membership. **It was moved and seconded to approve Rev. Brower as a temporary member of Presbytery of Yukon, for as long as he is a pastor at Utqiagvik PC.** The church seeks an installed pastor. Rev. Brower was excused from the room and the motion was debated. **Motion was APPROVED by unanimous consent.** Rev. Brower returned to the room amid applause.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The finance team (Financial Secretary, Dr. Rachel Graham; Stewardship Moderator, Bob Christensen; Leadership Team Co-moderator, Leisa Carrick; and Executive Presbyter, Elizabeth Schultz) is working to clean up the financial document flow and to make the finance reporting clearer and more transparent. The office has updated the Presbytery's website, specifically Gambell Church and Presbytery of Yukon funding links. Emergency building repairs at Gambell PC were costly and are being reviewed by the finance and property committees.

Rev. Luke Jones highlighted the Presbytery of Yukon's 50/50 club, which is in its 32nd year. This fund provides the opportunity to pledge part of an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend check, with 50% of that amount going to the Presbytery of Yukon Endowment to support mission of the Presbytery (including support of mission churches, prison ministry, campus ministries, Bingle Camp, youth education/events).

The other 50% goes to the local church. To make a pledge, go to [Presbytery of Yukon Donations](#), download and complete the [50/50 Club Pledge Form](#), and mail it to the Presbytery office.

Dr. Graham wishes to step out of her position as Financial Secretary, so the Presbytery is looking for a replacement.

ELDER COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Jewel Lake Parish, elder Dennis Rogers. Joys include the food bank they host, yoking with Trinity PC to share resources, children. Struggles include new people. Prayers are asked for guidance in recruiting a youth pastor to share with Trinity PC, and increasing members.

First Korean Anchorage PC, Rev. Seung Hyun Yoo. Joys include Isaiah 43:19 “*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*” God is doing the new thing. We have daily morning prayers at 6 am. Fellowship hall changes, so that we see each other, bible study, donations to Missions. Struggles include their finances and building maintenance. Prayers are asked for God to do a new thing, God’s guidance, for one heart in being led in the same direction.

Kuukpik PC, CP Virgie Kasak. Joys include a whole family coming to church, that they can tune in to the Utqiagvik PC service, when people come to church, food bank that elder Olivia Cabinboy takes care of. Prayers are asked for the struggles of bringing people to church, for a leader for young people to come to Christ, leaders in the church besides us old people, to be a light like Jesus.

Gambell PC, elder Debbie Apatiki. Joys include church services each Sunday, your prayers, God who blesses us, that the Holy Spirit comes with great power. Struggles include the heating system and having someone to call about problems. Prayers are asked for a new treasurer and finances.

Rev. Tim Carrick led the prayers for these churches.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Representation. Rev. Ellen Johnson-Price from the Committee on Representation noted a lack of Native Ministries (NM) members in the nominees. Many NM members are elderly, making travel to meetings difficult. The committee also noted that the NM and Road System (RS) ministries have not functioned since the pandemic began, but should to do so in order for effective diversity in nominees. Many committee members are nominated by the NM and RS ministries, respectively.

Nominations. Shirley Novak, Nominating Committee moderator presented the following nominees.

- Moderator – Rev. Luke Jones (RS) – Jewel Lake – Class of 2024
- Moderator Elec – Dennis Rogers (RS) – Jewel Lake – Class of 2024
- Leadership Team Co-Chair (Minister) – Rev. Leisa Carrick (RS) – United Protestant Presbyterian Church – Class of 2026
- Ministry Commission Minister member – Rev. Blake Severson (RS) – Eagle River Presbyterian Church - Class of 2027
- Ministry Commission Minister member – Rev. Seung Hyun Yoo (RS) – Anchorage Korean Presbyterian Church - Class of 2027
- Ministry Commission Minister member – Rev. Matt Schultz – Class of 2027
- Ministry Commission Elder member – Matthew Hobbie (RS) – Eagle River Presbyterian Church - Class of 2027
- Investment member – Neil Jones (RS) – Jewel Lake – Class of 2024 to replace Israel Nelson

- Principle Synod Representative – Jan Burger (RS) – United Protestant Presbyterian Church – Class of 2026
- Alternate Synod Representative – Bob Christensen (RS) – First Presbyterian Church Wasilla – Class 2026
- Minister Commissioner to 226th General Assembly Summer 2024 – Rev. Kiyong Seo (RS) – Member-At-Large (to replace Rev. Joseph Reid, who is unable to attend)

INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. Rev. Joshua Park, from the Office of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (PC(U.S.A.)) is the Manager for Korean-Speaking Council Support. He spoke about diversity, intercultural development, competency and maturity and how improving intercultural skills can help us navigate within our own and other cultures, understand each other, and get along. He stated that this is how we grow to love each other and show the love that Jesus has for us all. His office has materials to assist the Presbytery of Yukon in nurturing Intercultural Development and Competency.

ELDER COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Delta Junction Presbyterian–Lutheran Church, CP Mary Ellen Lucas. Joys include the marriage of Rev. Mauer, Wednesday bible study and soup, project backpack for schools, Matthew 25 community service projects, new members, ecumenical Christmas gift projects. Struggles include the deaths of young members, and grief. Prayers are asked for the congregation who grieve over members who passed or moved.

Fairbanks Korean PC, Rev. Seongjin Ryu. Joys include the beauty of winter, increasing prayer time, getting to know members, young members. Struggles include the cold, that young members are military who move away. Please pray for repairs to the old building, older members, that we become one in heart, and that young members remain.

Eagle River PC, elder Kim Arlington. Joys include Pastor Blake’s new perspective and guidance, that we have the people, space, and an outdoor pavilion to support the food bank, gathering elementary schools supplies, Easter sunrise service, and that the renovations from the 2018 earthquake damage are completed. Struggles include Megan’s cancer and chemotherapy, and prayers are asked for her health and healing.

Kaktovik PC, elder Ida Angasan. Joys are that prayers are powerful, a North Slope Borough employee is checking on how to make the church’s Toyo heater work, medical appointments made coming to this meeting possible, children that come to us with love, healing, that we are together to celebrate what we can, whale harvest. Struggles include not having church, deaths in the community, alcoholism. Prayers were asked for help in the village to counter alcoholism, prayers for the people, no school due to many blizzards, healing for those in the hospital.

University Community PC, elder Matthew Bierer. Joys include Rev. Erika Bergh recruiting younger people. Struggles include an aging congregation. Prayers were asked for discernment in the church’s transition and possible search for its next pastor.

Rev. Ellen Johnson-Price led the prayer for these churches and blessed the noon meal.

Recess

The meeting recessed for lunch and fellowship at 12:30 pm and reconvened with singing of hymns at 1:40 pm.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Stated Clerk, Doreen McNeill, presented the written report, as follows:

Actions and information from October 11, 2023 through February 1, 2024

Recommendations for Action by the Stated Clerk

1. Approve the minutes of the October 9–10 fall stated presbytery meeting.
2. Approve the minutes of the December 2, 2023 special presbytery meeting.

Information provided for inclusion in the minutes

Leadership Team actions/key talking points:

The Leadership Team (LT) serves as the presbytery's Board of Directors and Board of Trustees. A record of annual proceedings will be posted on the Presbytery of Yukon's website as minutes become available.

1. Stewardship
 - a. Affirmed the Presbytery's previous decision to provide \$25,000 to Bingle Camp Ministries in the 2024 budget.
 - b. By email, and without input from staff, the Leadership Team approved a Christmas Bonus for presbytery staff. Email vote was ratified [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
2. Winter 2024 Stated Meeting [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - a. Theme: *Yukon Presbytery Mission Strategy: Working on being the "Body of Christ."* [Jan 3, 2024]
 - b. *Scripture: For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.* 1 Corinthians 12:12–14 [Jan 3, 2024]
 - c. Worship will be before dinner on Friday [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - d. The meeting will include discussions and refinement of the presbytery's mission and goals. [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - a. Designated the elder commissioner focus questions: *'Since the October Presbytery meeting, what are your church's joys and struggles?'* [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - b. The meeting will be adjourned on Saturday at noon [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - c. Training will be on Saturday afternoon after adjournment [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - Will include PCUSA-required boundary training, if possible. [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - d. Thursday meetings will include:
 - Native Ministries [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - Ministry Commission [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - Leadership Team [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - Polity Training in Korean [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - e. Flight change fees will not be covered by the presbytery and we will be unable to accommodate changes during the meeting. If flights need to be changed for personal reasons, the traveler will be responsible for any costs, unless it is an emergency. [Jan 3, 2024 LT meeting]
 - f. Approved an Overture written by Rev. Joseph Reid and approved by the Utqiagvik Presbyterian Church's session to be discussed and voted on by the presbytery [Jan 16, 2024 LT meeting].
3. Miscellaneous
 - a. Created a task force composed of Luke Jones, Matt Tinkelenberg, Joseph Brock, Bob

- Christensen, Kent Reynolds, and Phillip Reynolds to review expenses for repairs to Gambell church in order to get substantial bills for repairs paid [Nov 28, 2023 LT meeting]
- b. Tasked the Personnel Committee with helping Executive Presbyter, Rev. Elizabeth Schultz identify inconsistencies and gaps between the Bylaws, the Standing Rules, and the Manual for Administrative Procedures and Operations in order to move forward in filling positions and discerning which positions need to be filled and by which committee. [Nov. 28, 2023 LT meeting]
 - c. Disbanded and thanked the Executive Presbyter search committee. [Nov. 28, 2023 LT meeting]

INTERGENERATIONAL ARCTIC MINISTRIES (IAM)

The IAM report was presented by Co-Executive Director, Rev. Charley Brower. IAM was created as an ecumenical ministry in 2017, when the Presbytery of Yukon initiated this faith-based social ministry in the Arctic, in response to PCUSA's call for ministries to address intergenerational trauma due to the collision of Western American culture with Indigenous American culture. IAM enjoys support from the North Slope Borough, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and (especially for Saint Lawrence Island) the Presbytery of Yukon, and others. Our focus is on faith-based recovery from intergenerational trauma, and is currently aimed at the communities in the North Slope Borough and on St. Lawrence Island. Their faith-based recovery project engages people in local communities to develop local networks capable of supporting people seeking personal healing. It invites communities to collaborate in designing the needed work. The project is based on four key programs: listening way, healing and renewal, 12-step facilitation, and collective impact. IAM hopes to engage more community leaders to understand how each community needs to heal. They have a curriculum to help people learn to care for one another, based on the Stephen Ministry Caregiving curriculum. Other training opportunities include:

- Effective and Healing Prayer training – March, 2024
- United Methodist Church's Native course of study for people interesting in becoming pastors – October 2024:

NATIVE MINISTRIES (NM) REPORT

The NM report was presented by Elder Vera Kalik Lincoln. She quoted Psalm 46:1, 10 and Isaiah 30:15 as pertaining to Iñupiat values. The NM region would like to see support for Native language and clothing in services, caucus sessions for discussion time on topics could be done in Native languages, mentoring of commissioned pastors in the villages. IAM training would also be helpful.

DRAFT MISSION STATEMENTS – BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS

Elizabeth Schultz introduced the activity to discuss the following draft mission statements for the Presbytery of Yukon. This draft is organized to fit with the Book of Order 2023-2025. As stated in the Book of Order (G-3.03), *"The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness."* People were assigned to 1 of 5 groups to discuss different parts of the draft Mission Strategy Statements and dismissed for an hour of discussion.

Mission Strategy Suggestions

The meeting reconvened at 3:40 with singing of hymns and moderator Jan Burger called the meeting to order.

Book of Order G-3.0301(a), the presbytery has the responsibility and power to provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard

Group One discussed Book of Order G-3.0301(a), and the following draft mission statements:

- Presbytery will make it a priority that every church has a minister of Word and sacrament or a CP to provide spiritual leadership.
- Presbytery will equip and empower churches to serve their communities with creativity, supported technologies, and cultural respect.

Group One Suggestions:

- Provide financial support for CP training.
- Provide mentors to CP candidates
- Have a clearinghouse of good classes and an education advisor within the Presbytery.
- Educational advisors to help choose which courses to take for continuing education and for CP training.
- Cohort groups to support each other
- Create toolkit of resources and have lived in shared space (website)

Book of Order G-3.0301(b), the presbytery has the responsibility and power to provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received

Group Two discussed the statement from the Book of Order G-3.0301(b), and the following draft mission statements:

- Presbytery will develop a strategic plan for leadership development across the presbytery, particularly in the native/village church communities, that is consistent and contextual, addressing the needs for pastoral leadership, ruling elders training, and faith formation for youth. (from Eliana Maxim Report)
- Presbytery will develop and implement continued, frequent training sessions designed to increase the knowledge and understanding of all members of our historical and contemporary theology, beliefs, and practices.

Group 2 Suggestions:

- Incorporate new ways to do sacraments, such as the agape feast,
- training, elders, to administer sacraments,
- CP training with minimal requirements, IAM directors, administer requirements,
- recruiting elders to train to do sacraments,
- recruiting new people to be elders, recruit trainers to train, utilize ecumenical partners to do sacraments,
- financial resources, to fly, willing, partners and people to villages,
- opening authority? Resource other organizations figuring it out.
- Be sure each church has the Lord's supper. Train elders to administer the Lord's supper
- 2. Recruit new people to train to be elders, member trainers. People don't want to be members these days. Rethink that model?
- CP task force to get Presbytery of Yukon's act together in that regard.
- What is the minimum required training?
- Change or increase IAM funding.
- Ecumenical partners to do sacraments.

- Opening the authority to administer Sacraments so it's not only pastors
- Refer all this to MC, incorporate new ways to do Sacraments
- Example, Agape feast Leisa attended at a Coptic church

Book of Order G-3.0301(c), the presbytery has the responsibility and power to nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ

Group Three discussed the statement from the Book of Order G-3.0301(c), and the following draft mission statements:

- Presbytery will help each church understand the connectional nature of our presbytery and denomination in order to increase participation and engagement in order to thrive in ministry together.
- Presbytery will have a defined support structure to encourage and facilitate increased and frequent communication amongst churches within the Presbytery and our local congregations, as well as between congregations.
- Presbytery will have a defined structure in place to support our rural churches.

Group Three Suggestions:

- Face-to-face interaction beyond presbyterian meetings
- Self-determination of topics of committees (in reference to the Louisville guest who took up precious committee time)
- Language barriers addressed
- Public exchange and virtual home visits for close churches, offering prayer and the sacraments.
- Understanding of per capita and funds sent to Louisville
- Have a Presbytery party
- Nurture the connectional nature of the churches.
- Be more vibrant and nurturing; more face-to-face beyond the formal Presbytery of Yukon meeting, even if it's just for coffee
- Better understanding of what connects us to make us Presbyterian
- Pulpit Exchange and include interpreters if there is a language barrier.
- Self-determination of topics in committees.
- Home visits for closed churches.
- Have a Presbytery party: food, music, celebration of what it means to be human, Presbyterian

Group Four discussed the statement from the Book of Order G-3.0301(c), and the following draft mission statements:

- Presbytery will care for God's people by empowering local church leaders through training, education, moral support, and Christian fellowship.

Group Four Suggested Goals for this one statement:

- *Mentorship of new CPs is helpful — but not when it peters out. not just assign a mentor, but make sure the mentor follows through.*
- *record keeping and tracking trainings and moral support encounters*
- *Prayer Partners list for congregations to be praying for each other (Erika/ELCA example)*
- *job description of presbytery leaders, etc. who to go to for help — fill in paragraphs or so of the leader jobs on the leadership structure (apparently this is on the website!)*
- *history and information of the leadership title changes (like CP, CRE, etc.)*
- ***Who does it:*** *Ministry Commission is where some of this might happen?*

- Presbytery will recognize the cultural diversity within our churches and communities and seek to identify ways to reduce racism, paternalistic attitudes and intergenerational trauma through both structure and practice.

Group Four Suggested Goals for this one statement:

- *require/provide anti-racism training or IDI kinds of things*
- *give more respect to the land acknowledgement, not clump it in with other things, maybe have a representative from the local indigenous people come and do the land acknowledgement to make it more meaningful*
- *language caucuses break out groups before a big group vote about something like amendments or something so translation can happen*
- *speak English more **slowly** so people translating in their minds can keep up, and if asked to say it again - say it in a different way/**rephrase** it with different words.*
- *learn simple greeting words/phrases in other languages (i.e. Korean and Native languages)*
- Presbytery would create a contextually appropriate assessment to determine what is a viable congregation and how to walk alongside that church in its continuing service. (Eliana Maxim report suggestion)

Group Four Suggested Goals for this one statement:

- relationship building
- the presbytery walk alongside the church, not just tell them whether they should close or not
- There may be other assessment lists out there (i.e. 7 Marks of A Viable Church - from PC(USA) moderator training)
- requirements of a viable church will need to be adaptable or flexible because what's viable in one town may not be viable in another (i.e. what's viable in Gambell may not apply in Delta Junction or vice versa)

Book of Order G-3.0301(c), that the presbytery has the responsibility and power to nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ.

Group Five discussed the statement from the Book of Order G-3.0301(c), and the following draft mission statement:

- Presbytery will encourage and support churches in the investment in ecumenical and secular partnerships, recognizing the need for some churches to be a community center or outpost, going beyond worship on Sundays and providing a “third place” for doing life together. (Eliana Maxim report suggestion)

Group 5 Suggestions:

- Hard to pull away from Sunday morning, so it's difficult to be creative
- Be connected in our communities. Get imaginations going: “They won't show up for us if we don't go out and connect with our community”
- What is your community?
- What do you need at your church to connect to your community?
- (1) Internet fundraiser through lower-48 connections
- Research 3rd places
- Pull away from always having worship on Sunday morning

Questions for reflection, were as follows:

- 1) *Where is connection to the national church and national advocacy efforts? Do we want to specify more in our Mission Strategy?*
- 2) *Do we have a committee structure that supports our Mission Strategy?*

ELDER COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Utqiagvik PC, elder Michael Jeffrey. Joys include the staff and shepherding needed to administer the food bank each month, and that the funeral ministry is meaningful. Struggles include the big task that the funeral ministry constitutes, raising money for new pews, that the Sunday school head passed and the need for new personnel to do this. Prayers were requested for these struggles and for their search for a new pastor, as Rev. Reid will retire in March.

First Anchorage PC, elder Winnie Findley. Joys include that the church is large enough to help with the food bank, that they are a Matthew 25 church, new members, study on racism and colonialism in Alaska. Prayers are also needed for these things, for outreach, and for peace.

First Wasilla PC, elder Sam Phillips. Joys include calling Rev. Andy Lemlyn who will begin preaching on March 11. Struggles include an aging congregation. Prayers were asked for more members and for safe travels for Pastor Andy.

Chapel in the Mountains, elder Vera Kalik Lincoln. Joys include a new moderator, I-messenger to keep in touch, and for 5 newly ordained elders. Struggles include the need for Sunday school supplies, that the church is a place for quarantined individuals with COVID, that the sacred place of the church and manse are occupied by homeless, frozen toilets, and the manse not working. Prayers are also asked for elder involvement, Sunday School, a new pastor, and for the many funerals.

New Hope PC, elder Cristina Welker. Joys include that CP Mathieu Tinkelenberg has committed to another year, the Family Fun and Food Fridays, Musical talent in the congregation, kids as liturgists, and new members. Prayers are asked for continued growth.

Rev. Erika Bergh led the prayer for these churches.

SERVICE PROJECT.

Rev. Luke Jones invited attendees to bless the host church by dusting baseboards and tidying the church and to use this activity as a time of fellowship while working alongside others.

RECESS

The meeting recessed for day followed by the service project, worship, and fellowship.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2024

CONVENE

Moderator, Elder Jan Burger called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

DEVOTIONAL:

Elizabeth Schultz began the meeting began with prayers which lifted up concerns close to the hearts of those gathered. Inupiat elders sang hymns in Iñupiat.

QUORUM

A quorum was declared.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

The moderator made house-keeping announcements and introduced new guests and members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the October 6 and 7, 2023 fall stated meeting/annual meeting of the corporation of the Presbytery of Yukon and the minutes of the December 2, 2023 Special Meeting of the Presbytery of Yukon be approved. Motion was APPROVED by unanimous consent.

INSURANCE BOARD INFORMATION

Jennifer Perri, of the Insurance Board provided useful information about addressing insurance needs in the Presbytery of Yukon, including the need for facility agreements and proof of insurance for other groups that use churches, emerging risks (including cybersecurity and impersonation), flood coverage, earthquakes, workers compensation. Many churches in the Presbytery have signed up for the water sensor program, which provides a free device to monitor temperature, humidity and presence of water in the building. Insurance Board has templates for building use forms, abuse policies, and others. Contact Jennifer Perri, or the Stated Clerk (Doreen McNeill) to obtain these templates.

OVERTURE TO 226TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (G.A.)

Utqiagvik PC forwarded an overture to be considered by the presbytery to be sent to GA. **It was moved and seconded to approve the overture “That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Utilize the Gospel of Love as a guiding principle in its advocacy and humanitarian efforts.** Elder Mike Jeffrey from Utqiagvik PC addressed the overture and answered questions. Ellen Johnson-Price addressed how the overture process works. **It was moved and seconded to amend the overture by striking the words “such as a two state solution.” Amendment was APPROVED by a vote of 18 yes, 6 no. The amended motion was APPROVED by a vote of 32 yes, 2 no.** Final Overture is in Appendix B.

ELECTIONS

Nominations were opened for available committee and commission positions. **It was moved and seconded to close nominations and accept the slate of nominees presented on Friday by the nominating committee. Motion was APPROVED by unanimous consent.**

It was moved and seconded to approve Rev. Matt Schultz as alternate minister commissioner to GA, subject to the approval of his church’s session. Motion was APPROVED by unanimous consent.

ELDER COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Savoonga PC. Although no representative from the Savoonga church could attend, Rev. Elizabeth Schultz reported joys include that the congregation is holding church, and thanks to a connection that her son made with welcoming church members, she has an invitation to return to Savoonga. Struggles include the disrepair of the building and church services. Prayers are asked for this congregation and all their needs.

Immanuel PC, elder Elsie Eckman. Joys include building use by Alcoholics Anonymous and other churches, Christmas Eve service, and Sunday School. Struggles include low numbers in attendance. Prayers are asked for families who are grieving, a new treasurer.

Trinity PC, elder Sarah McCormick. Joys include movie and dance night, growing numbers of children, that children want to invite friends, fresh paint, renters, and rebuilding of in-person volunteering. Prayers

are asked for God's guidance as they search for a youth and outreach pastor to share with Jewel Lake Parish.

Olgonik PC, CP Cora Akpik. Joys include Thanksgiving and Christmas feasts, that the church is open each Sunday and is growing. Prayers are asked for the needs of this congregation.

Atqasuk Chapel PC had no representation or report. Prayers were asked for the needs of this congregation.

United Protestant PC, elder Barb Brown. Joys include that we continue to be good witnesses, dedicated pastors, deacons, and elders. Struggles include new volunteers to engage in mission. Prayers are asked for a member with broken pelvis, and for the music program post-COVID.

Other Reports. There is a need to understand how to use free PCUSA resources, Rev. Seo needs funding to attend the annual Presbyterian Women's Gathering in August, and Shirley Novak reported that Presbytery of Yukon Presbyterian Women needs more members. Rev. Ellen Johnson-Price asked for housing and transportation for a seminary student who will be interning at an Anchorage Hospital this summer.

Elder Dennis Rogers led the prayer for these churches.

THANKSGIVING

Moderator Jan Burger read the following written notes of thanksgiving to God written by attendees:

- ✓ Joy of reconnecting with friends
- ✓ Working to move the Yukon Presbytery into the future
- ✓ Blessing, like a wonderful family reunion
- ✓ Grateful for new ideas, energy, and joy!!!
- ✓ Thanks for visiting and singing with friends
- ✓ Thank you for inviting me
- ✓ Thankful for our new EP
- ✓ Renewal of friendships, meeting new people, work of host churches, God's love and caring
- ✓ Thank you for coming. Good to see you all.
- ✓ Good conversations with new and old friends
- ✓ Renewing friendships
- ✓ Thanks for Jan Burger for her excellent leadership as Presbytery Moderator.
- ✓ Thankful for Rev. Charley Brower as a new "temporary" member of our Presbytery.
- ✓ Reminders of the power of prayer and the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ So grateful for new faces!
- ✓ Renewed excitement for serving community
- ✓ Thanks for all your effort to make a relational church!
- ✓ Fellowship and sharing joys and concerns.
- ✓ Thankful for all God's faithful servants at Presbytery this February
- ✓ Grateful to be here with all who have answered the call to be here to serve
- ✓ Thanks be to God for answered prayers from prior Presbytery meetings as our churches have more families and children attending
- ✓ Thank you for a loving and warm environment and great conversations, while accomplishing our goals.
- ✓ Care and love for all of our members
- ✓ Fellowship
- ✓ My favorite parts were insurance presentation, small group discussion and sharing on Friday, Israel issue overture discussion. Other parts were fine, they just didn't stand out from what I expected.
- ✓ Sharing God's love and peace with fellow Christians.

RETIREE RECOGNITION

Rev. Britt Johnston and Rev. Piper Cartland who recently retired, and Rev. Joseph Reid, who will retire in March were thanked and recognized for their many years of service. Britt Johnston (who attended in person) was thanked by Ellen Johnson-Price who highlighted a small part of his tireless work and mentorship, and was presented with a small token of the Presbytery's appreciation by Elizabeth Schultz.

MODERATOR INSTALLATION

Elizabeth Schultz installed moderator-elect, Rev. Luke Jones, as the moderator.

NEXT MEETING

Moderator Rev. Luke Jones announced that the next meeting of the Presbytery of Yukon meeting will be October 11 and 12 at University Community PC in Fairbanks, with assistance from other Fairbanks churches.

ADJOURN

Moderator Luke Jones led a closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

The closing hymn was How Great Thou Art!, sung simultaneously in Korean, English, Iñupiaq and Siberian Yupik.

POST-MEETING HAPPENINGS

Lunch and Fellowship.

Attendees enjoyed a wonderful lunch and fellowship provided by Trinity PC volunteers. Commissioned Pastors met over lunch in a separate room to pray, share joys, concerns, and struggles.

Sexual Trauma Prevention and Response Training

The following sexual trauma prevention and response training by Alaskan nonprofit, S.T.A.R. (Standing Together Against Rape) <https://www.staralaska.com/prevention-education> was presented in the afternoon. All Pastors, CPs, Elders and active sessions members were encouraged to attend.

Preventing Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct
Responding/Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

APPENDIX A.

MINISTRY COMMISSION REPORT TO PRESBYTERY

For the February 9–10, 2024 Stated Presbytery Meeting

DELEGATED ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE MINISTRY COMMISSION (MC) ON BEHALF OF PRESBYTERY of YUKON

Pastors examined and recommended by the Ministry Commission to be approved as members of Presbytery of Yukon:

- Rev. Andrew Lemlyn from Mission Presbytery beginning March 10, 2024, if the way be clear, as interim pastor of First Wasilla Presbyterian Church (PC), provided he take one week of Interim/Transitional pastor training as soon as practical. [Jan. 8, 2024]
- Rev. Charles Brower, a United Methodist Church pastor beginning in December 2023 to act as a part time stated supply pastor of Utqiagvik PC while the church searches for an interim pastor.

Covenant agreements

The MC approved action of the **First Wasilla PC** session to contract with **Rev. Andrew Lemlyn** for one year as a request interim pastor, beginning in March 2024 (date to be determined at Andrew's discretion) [Jan 8, 2024]

Effective Salary

Salary \$80,000

Reimbursable Expenses (by voucher)

Milage Reimbursement \$1,500

Education Allowance \$1,500

Move to Wasilla \$4,000

Other

Vacation Leave 5 weeks/year

Study Leave 2 weeks/year

Worker's Compensation Required

The MC approved a request of the **Utqiagvik PC** session to contract with United Methodist Church pastor, **Rev. Charles Brower** as a part-time stated supply pastor. Final contract details will be reviewed by the MC before final approval. [Jan. 8, 2024].

Churches

University Community PC: Affirmed that the church does not need Ministry Commission permission to proceed with hiring a transitional consultant instead of an interim pastor.

Other Actions

Affirmed that the Polity training conducted at the October Presbytery meeting satisfies the MC requirement that elders take polity training in order to moderate their church's sessions. [Dec. 14, 2023]

Miscellaneous information

1. The stated clerk received word this that
 - a. Rev. Johan Shin will be interviewed in late February by the committee for Board of Chaplaincy Certification for his hospital chaplaincy certification.

DRAFT

APPENDIX B.

FINAL OVERTURE FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF YUKON TO THE 226TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2024)

That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Utilize the Gospel of Love as a guiding principle in its advocacy and humanitarian efforts

Recommendation:

The Presbytery of Yukon overtures the 226th General Assembly (2024) to utilize the Gospel of Love as a guiding principle in its advocacy and humanitarian efforts, particularly in addressing the conflict between Israel and Hamas, with the aim to foster peace, reconciliation, and justice in the region.

The proposition is thus: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should apply the Gospel of Love (Matthew 22:37-40) to its approach in dealing with this conflict by implementing this three-fold approach to a peaceful solution:

1. Advocate for Peace and Justice

- Advocate for policies that denounce violence from all sides, drawing from biblical imperatives of justice and peace (Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:21).
- Justification: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

2. Implement Humanitarian Action

- Increase support for humanitarian efforts to provide essential care to those affected by the conflict, reflecting Christ's compassion for the suffering (Matthew 25:35-40).
- Justification: "For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in." (Matthew 25:35)

3. Promote Dialogue and Understanding

- Create platforms for dialogue that includes diverse voices, fostering reconciliation in alignment with the Gospel (Romans 12:18, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19).
- Justification: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18)

Rationale:

By implementing this three-fold approach, the Church can act as an agent of transformation, using its resources and influence to promote a peaceful resolution to the conflict, thereby witnessing to the power of the Gospel of Love.

The Gospel of Love, as taught by Jesus Christ, calls for active engagement in the lives of others, extending beyond mere sentiment to tangible actions that demonstrate care and concern for the well-

being of all. This principle is deeply rooted in Christian Scripture and tradition, encapsulated in the Great Commandment to love God and our neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40). The current rule of engagement in the Israel-Hamas conflict has often been characterized by retaliatory violence and a cyclical nature that perpetuates suffering. A new approach, grounded in unconditional love and non-violent action, is needed to break the cycle of violence, and achieve lasting peace.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a history of global mission work that includes peace-making initiatives. By advocating for policies that promote peace and justice and providing humanitarian aid, the Church can embody the compassion of Christ. The Church's involvement in the conflict, guided by the Gospel of Love, can serve as a testament to the power of love to overcome hostility and build bridges of hope.

The crisis persists due to a lack of widespread, concerted efforts to address the underlying issues with a compassionate, creative, and principled approach informed by the Gospel. If unaddressed, the conflict threatens to continue the cycle of violence, leading to further loss of life, violations of human rights, and impediments to peace.

DRAFT