

STATED MEETING OF ALBANY PRESBYTERY

PRE-MEETING PACKET



Saturday, June 11, 2011

Registration and Fellowship begin at 8:30am

Call to Worship and Business Meeting begin at 9:30am

Meal Tickets for Lunch are \$6 per person

Please make checks payable to: United Church of Cohoes

Lunch will be served at 12:30 PM

Presbyters with dietary restrictions are invited to bring their own lunch

Hosted by The United Church of Cohoes

123 Mohawk Street, Cohoes, NY 12047

Telephone: 237-0278

website: www.uccpcusa.org

DIRECTIONS:

From South: (Albany) Take 787N to Cohoes, turn left onto Ontario Street, left onto Mohawk Street.

From North: (Glens Falls, Clifton Park, Saratoga) Take 87S toward Albany, take NY7E via Exit 7, merge onto 787N toward Cohoes, turn left onto Ontario Street, left onto Mohawk Street.

From East: (Troy, Vermont) Take NY Route 7 follow 7-W merge onto NY 787N toward Green Island/Cohoes, turn left onto Ontario Street, left onto Mohawk Street.

From West: (Schenectady) Take NY7E merge onto NY 787N toward Cohoes, left onto Ontario Street, left onto Mohawk Street.

PARKING:

There is street parking, and volunteers will be available to direct presbyters to parking lots near by

PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM ON THE NEXT PAGE AND EMAIL IT BACK TO THE PRESBYTERY OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

What would you like to do for **Mission Project June 11?**

Name _____ Church _____
 Phone # _____ (Please print clearly)

Agency

Capital City Rescue Mission
 Need up to 10 people

FOCUS Churches of Albany
 Need 3-4 people

Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless
 1-5 people for meal, 5 for painting

Livingston Community Gardens
 Need from 10-15 people

Troy Area United Ministries
 4-6 people

United Church of Cohoes
 4-6 people for painting/sorting
 8 people for digging/cooking

I will go where I am needed:

Type of Work

Volunteering in kitchen
 or serve lunch

Gardening in a Bucket for Kids

Make a meal, serve lunch or
 painting

Planting, cultivating,
 or clearing brush

Yard prep work, then planting a garden

Painting, digging post holes, cooking, dining
 room prep, folding/sorting clothes

Please Check



Workshop

Bible Study
 with Kate Kotfila &
 Barbara Wheeler

**Implementing Sexual
 Misconduct Training**
 with Kathy Gorman-Coombs, Jerry McKinney
 & Laura Rogers

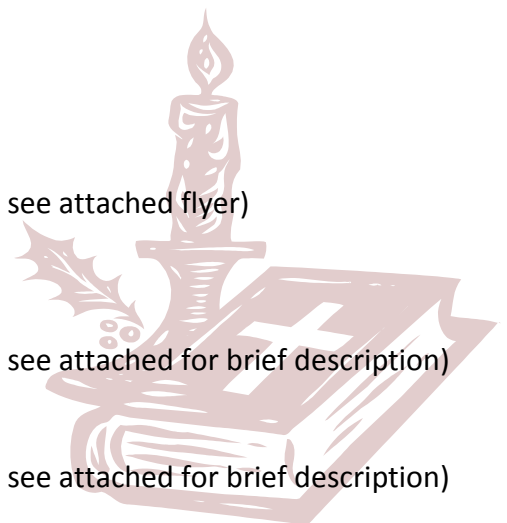
Peer Review Session
 with Dan Rogers

Workshop for Church Treasurers
 with Bill Ramage

Unbinding the Gospel
 with Tim Coombs

Please check

 _____ (Please see attached flyer)
 _____ (Please see attached for brief description)
 _____ (Please see attached for brief description)
 _____ (Please see attached for brief description)



Workshop Descriptions

Peer Review Session with Dan Rogers

Beginning at 10:00 a.m., there will be a make-up Orientation/Training for new clerks of session and a Peer Review of session minutes. As of June 1, 45 clerks of session from churches within Albany Presbytery have attended one of the four review sessions that were held in May. Hopefully many of the remaining 24 clerks of session will be able to attend this make-up review opportunity. Additional information on preparation for the review can be found in the April 12, 2011, letter from Stated Clerk Dan Rogers to all clerks of session.

Workshop for Church Treasurers with Bill Ramage

Are you a new Church Treasurer? Or have you been a Church Treasurer for a long time?

Do you know the difference between shared and directed mission? Do clergy tax questions baffle you?

Do you have questions about Unemployment Insurance? Contractors versus Employees?

For these and all other financial topics, the Presbytery is offering this workshop.

Introducing Unbinding the Gospel: Presbytery Workshop with Tim Coombs

Evangelism books presume everyone wants to do evangelism, so they tell you how to do it. Six years of national research in nine denominations has demonstrated conclusively that most people would rather get a root canal than think about evangelism. You can tell people to “go be missional” until the cows come home. They just won’t do it until they want to.

If we answer the “WHY share my faith?” question, we’ll start wanting to know “HOW can God use me to help people move into faith?” Churches can’t share their faith until they’re loving, relational communities where people (1) pray, and (2) talk comfortably with each other about their own faith experiences. Once our churches make this shift, we’ll want to know HOW to share our faith. The Unbinding the Gospel Series addresses both the Why and the How.

NOT IN OUR CHURCH

A Sexual Misconduct Prevention Workshop

The Committee on Ministry is sponsoring this workshop to assist congregations and sessions in creating and implementing effective policies and practices for preventing sexual misconduct and for responding to incidences of sexual misconduct.

As part of the ministry of hospitality we are called to provide safe & welcoming places for God's children of all ages. This workshop—designed for congregational responders & session members—will assist participants in responding to this calling.

The workshop will have two one-hour sessions:

SESSION ONE: Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policies

- Adopting & implementing an effective policy
- Definitions & Requirements—legal & ecclesiastical
- Examples & resources for effective policies

SESSION TWO: Practicing Prevention

- Education & Training for the Congregation
- Responding to an incident
- Getting the help you need

Session One is intended to address the concerns of session members. Session Two is intended to address the concerns of congregational responders. Participants may choose to attend one or both hours of the workshop. Participants are asked to bring a copy of their church's sexual misconduct prevention policy (if there is one) to the workshop.

The leaders of the workshop are Kathy Gorman-Coombs, Jerry McKinney, & Laura Rogers.

DATE: June 11, 2011

TIME: 10:00 AM Session One
11:00 AM Session Two

LOCATION: Cohoes Church (Presbytery Meeting)

THE PRESBYTERY OF ALBANY Stated Meeting – June 11, 2011
Presbytery Telephone 273-4991
United Presbyterian Church of Cohoes - Church Telephone 237-0278

DOCKET

Notes: New Business must be presented in writing to the Moderator prior to the meal.
Standing Rules & Basic Parliamentary Procedures are available at the Clerk's desk.

8:30 a.m. Gathering and Registration

9:30 a.m. Call to Order and Opening Worship with Hymn – Kirianne Riehl, Moderator
Sermon – Lynn Hasselbarth

9:45 a.m. DISPERSE TO WORK ON MISSION PROJECTS OR ATTEND WORKSHOPS

Mission Projects:

Capital City Rescue Mission - up to 10 people - kitchen work and serving lunch
Focus Churches of Albany - up to 4 people - "gardening in a bucket" for kids
Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless - up to 10 people - making a meal or painting
Livingston Community Gardens - up to 15 people - planting, cultivating, clearing brush
Troy Area United Ministries - up to 6 people - yard prep work, planting a garden
United Church of Cohoes - up to 14 people - painting, cooking, folding/sorting clothes
and digging post holes

Workshops:

Bible Study - led by Kate Kotfila and Barbara Wheeler
Implementing Sexual Misconduct Policies - led by Kathy Gorman-Coombs, Jerry
McKinney, Laura Rogers
Peer Review for Clerks of Session - led by Dan Rogers
Church Treasurers Workshop - led by Bill Ramage
Unbinding the Gospel - led by Tim Coombs (on evangelism and sharing your faith)

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Hymn
Speak Out (opportunity to express views in 1 minute or less).

1:45 p.m. Announcements and Greetings from Host Church
Compile Roll, Seat Corresponding Members, Welcome First Time Attendees
Approval of Meeting Docket as distributed
Approval of Minutes of April 12, 2011, stated meeting as distributed
Report of the Stated Clerk - Dan Rogers
Act on Consent Agenda – Consent items found in the following reports: Stated Clerk [p.8]; COM [p.9]; CPM [p.10];
and Council [p.12].

2:00 p.m. General Presbyter's Report - Cass Shaw

2:10 p.m. Congregational Health and Transformation Report – Tim Coombs

2:40 p.m. Committee on Ministry Report [pp.8] – Tom Gregg

Examination of Candidate Drew Paton for Ordination (Pastor for Spencertown)
Possible examination of another pastor for transfer of membership
Honorable Retirement Recognitions – Larry Deyss and Earl Johnson
Other business as needed.

3:30 p.m. CLP Recognition of Darren Gundrum – Terry Diggory

3:35 p.m. Council Report (Peacemaking Task Force – second reading and action) – Paul Randall

3:50 p.m. Board of Trustees Report (if anything) – Don Stake or Gale Bury

3:55 p.m. Mission Review Committee Report (if anything) – David Moore

4:00 p.m. Nominating Committee Report (if anything) – Diane Calvanese

4:05 p.m. Unfinished / New / Miscellaneous Business

4:15 p.m. Closing Worship with Celebration of Lord's Supper by Bonnie Orth and another celebrant yet to be named.

4:30 p.m. Adjournment

Stated Clerk Report – Pre-Meeting Packet for June 11, 2011

The following is presented for information:

1. The next stated presbytery meeting will be held on Monday and Tuesday, September 19 and 20, 2011, at the Silver Bay Conference Center on Lake George beginning at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, September 19, 2011. There will be a pre-meeting opportunity for worship and informal conversation beginning on Sunday, September 18. See the Council Report for additional information on cost related to attending this meeting. Registration information will be sent separately as it becomes available.
2. The following are the Presbytery stated meeting dates for the remainder of 2011 and the proposed dates for 2012 (see Council Report):

Saturday - November 12, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.

Saturday – January 28, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday – April 17, 2012, at 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday - June 19, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

Monday and Tuesday – September 17 and 18, 2012, (Meeting/Retreat)

Saturday - November 17, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

Host churches with certain program-related facilities are being recruited by Council for these meetings.

3. **PLEASE NOTE:** By affirmative vote of a majority of presbyteries in the PC(USA), the following amendment to the Book of Order will become effective on July 10, 2011: ***“All governing bodies shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy.”***

Copies of a suggested **Sexual Misconduct Policy Template for Churches** were distributed to all attendees at the June 8, 2010, stated meeting of Albany Presbytery. This template is available in .pdf form under “Church Resources / Manuals and Policies” on the Albany Presbytery web site, and the template can be supplied in .doc or .docx format upon request to the Presbytery Office. The **Sexual Misconduct Policy of Albany Presbytery** may also be found at the same location on the web site for reference. All sessions which do not have a sexual misconduct policy in place will need to adopt and implement one as soon as possible after July 10, 2011, and so note in the minutes of a session meeting. All sessions which do have a sexual misconduct policy in place should review the policy; update it as appropriate; and note in the minutes of a session meeting that said review and updating was done on a certain date.

The Committee on Ministry is sponsoring a workshop beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the June 11 Stated Meeting to assist congregations and sessions in creating and implementing effective policies and practices for preventing sexual misconduct and for responding to incidences of sexual misconduct. See separate flier for additional information on this workshop.

4. The 2010 minutes of Albany Presbytery were peer-reviewed at the May 11-12, 2011, gathering of stated clerks from other presbyteries in the Synod of the Northeast at Stony Point. The 2010 minutes were approved with no exceptions!!!

The following commendations were made: minutes are concise and include all the required information; a shared ministry covenant between the Canaan Congregational Church and St. Peter's Presbyterian Church in Spencertown was explored; two members from the Guatemala Partnership Task Force made a trip to the Mam Presbytery in Guatemala; and the Committee on Representation report includes members with origins in Ghana, Pakistan, and Korea as well as Hispanic and African-American members.

5. A total of four Orientation/Training and Peer Review Reading sessions were held on May 14, May 21, and May 25, 2011, with Clerks of Session of churches in Albany Presbytery. The Peer Review Readings were of church meeting minutes for 2010. As of May 25, 2011, the minutes of 45 churches have been reviewed. A make-up session is scheduled for June 11, 2011.

a.) The Session and Congregational Meeting Minutes of the following 30 churches were approved without exception:

Albany, New Covenant	Gloversville	Schaghticoke
Albany, West End	Granville	Schenectady, Christ Church
Albany, Westminster	Greenwich	Schenectady, Union
Brunswick	Guilderland	Shushan
Cambridge	Hudson Falls	Spencertown
Corinth	Jewett	Stillwater
Delmar	Malta	Troy, First United
East Hebron	Mayfield	Troy, Third
Glens Falls, First	Northville	West Charlton
Glens Falls, Community Chapel	Rensselaer	West Hebron

b.) The Session and Congregational Meeting Minutes of the following 12 churches were approved without exceptions but with notes to the clerk of session:

Albany, First	Charlton Freehold	Putnam Station
Albany, Roessleville	Esperance	Schenectady, State Street
Amsterdam	Lake George, Bay Road	Waterford
Broadalbin	New Scotland	West Galway

c.) The Session and Congregational Meeting minutes of the following three churches were approved with exceptions (number of exception notes in parentheses):

Johnstown (4)
Schoharie (3)
Tribes Hill (6)

6. The following is reported In accordance with Presbytery policy to authorize the Stated Clerk to approve one-time requests from ministers for permission to either labor within the bounds or to labor outside the bounds of Albany Presbytery and to report these to Presbytery: Permission was granted to the Rev. Dr. Betsey Crimmins (Presbytery of Geneva) to labor within the bounds to co-officiate at a wedding in Saratoga Springs, NY, on April 9, 2011.

7. A letter dated May 5, 2011, was received from the Rev. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly extending a special word of appreciation to the Presbytery of Albany for faithful stewardship in 2010 that included full support of the 2010 per capita apportionment.

8. The part-time Designated Associate Pastor contract between the Union Presbyterian Church in Schenectady and the Rev. Dr. Hwa Sung Ryu ended on April 30, 2011, and will not be renewed. By action of the congregation of the Union Presbyterian Church, the Designated Associate Pastor position has been dissolved. The Rev. Ryu is now enrolled as a Member At Large of the Presbytery. He has taken a position with the Korean Church of Albany as a Youth Worker. He has been given the documents to request validation of that ministry.

9. In accordance with D-5.0206b, the following is the roster of the current members of the Albany Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission and the roster of those members of the Albany Presbytery PJC whose terms have expired within the past six years:

Current PJC:

Class of 2015: Elder Larry Hamilton and Elder Terry Nieman

Class of 2013: Rev. David McMillan and Rev. Pamela Woodman

Class of 2011: Elder Barbara Cervenka, Rev. Earl Johnson, Elder Ron Pedersen
Previous members whose terms have expired within the past six years:
Class of 2009: Rev. Jay Ekman and Elder Carolyn Snyder Lemmon
Class of 2007: Rev. Robert Duncan, Rev. Barbara Floryshak; Rev. Harry Heintz
Class of 2005: Rev. Kenneth Applegate, Elder Robert Stone; Elder Robert Wright

The following is presented for action by Presbytery under the Consent Agenda:

1. RECOMMEND that the Rev. Robert Goodin be dismissed to the Presbytery of Northern New England at his request so that he may serve as $\frac{3}{4}$ -time Interim Pastor to the following three-point parish in Maine beginning on May 17, 2011, for a 12-month term: Fairbanks Union Church in Farmington; New Portland Community Church in New Portland; and North New Portland Community Church in North New Portland. The Presbytery of Northern New England ACTED to receive the Rev. Goodin on April 16, 2011, contingent upon dismissal by Albany Presbytery.
2. RECOMMEND that the Rev. Douglas Holmes be dismissed to the Presbytery of Genesee Valley at his request so that he may accept the call of the First Presbyterian Church of Albion, NY, to serve as its full-time pastor effective August 1, 2011. The congregation of the church ACTED to extend the call on May 22, 2011, at a meeting moderated by the Rev. Bob Kaiser. The Rev. Holmes has accepted the call. The Presbytery of Genesee Valley ACTED to approve the call, to appoint the Rev. Holmes as moderator of the session, and to request that the Presbytery of Albany transfer the Rev. Holmes effective August 1, 2011, at its meeting on May 24, 2011.

Committee on Ministry Report – Pre-Meeting Packet for June 11, 2011

The following items are presented to the Presbytery for information:

1. COM met on April 13 and May 11, 2011. COM will also be meeting on June 8, 2011.
2. COM ACTED to endorse a funding request from the FAB 5 Presbytery Partnership Group for \$20,000 for each of the next 3 years to fund a part-time COM Advisor position to work with and assist the Committees on Ministry in the five Presbyteries in the FAB 5.
3. COM ACTED to endorse a funding request from the FAB 5 Presbytery Partnership Group for \$10,000 for each of the next 3 years to fund stipends for COM Chairs at \$2,000 per presbytery. It was agreed that if the funding request is granted, a few members of COM would be charged with coming up with a process for distributing the stipend within Albany Presbytery.
4. COM ACTED TO approve a grant of \$2,500 to help fund a sabbatical leave for the Rev. David Bennett from July through October 2011. \$2,000 will be taken from COM Pastoral Care Carry-Over Funds and \$500 will be taken from Item 5059, Pastoral Care Incentives. David will be asked to suggest to COM how he might share his sabbatical experience with the Presbytery.
5. COM ACTED to validate the Rev. Rob Rose to attend interim pastor training.
6. COM ACTED to add the names of minister member the Rev. Mary Lynn Morrison and the Rev. Ken Heckeler (Four Cs) to the Approved Preaching List.
7. COM acknowledged that the Rev. Mary Lynn Morrison missed taking Boundary Awareness training in 2010 and agreed to waive this requirement for 2010 with the understanding that she will take it in 2011.
8. COM ACTED to approve the Rev. Chuck Stratton's request for a postponement until fall for Boundary Awareness training. (Skin cancer surgery has meant the cancellation of his participation in the Rome training event)
9. COM noted that Darren Gundrum has completed the CLP program. The CLP task force will recognize this formally at the June Presbytery meeting. COM is aware that Darren is now commissionable as a lay pastor.

10. COM received a request from the Mission Review Committee (MRC) for a joint meeting with CLP and COM representatives to discuss financial concerns with the CLP program; potential future opportunities for CLPs in churches in Albany Presbytery; and how COM will seek to use available CLPs. Tom Gregg, Helen King, and Marguerite Stanley will represent COM at this meeting.
11. The MRC was invited to attend COM's meeting on June 29, 2011 (fifth Wednesday) to discuss how the surplus in mission funds of approximately \$100,000 from previous years might be used to provide a "stimulus package" for some churches within the Presbytery.
12. COM received reflections from Rich Patterson on the process that was used in the dismissal of the Argyle Church. The sense of the committee was that each case will be different. The consensus was that in order for COM to design a framework of proposed changes in the process for presbytery action, several COM members need to solicit additional feedback from members of the Listening Team and the Resolution Team. Lucy Harris and Chris Garrison agreed to develop a process for COM to use to proceed and will report back to the committee. Tom Gregg will reach out to the other groups in the Presbytery who also had thoughts/concerns about the process as it was being implemented. Lynn Brown agreed to participate in the conversation. The impact on some churches of the potential passage of Amendment 10-A is a concern.
13. Chris Garrison and Allen Day will represent COM in follow-up conversations with the Trustees. Cass Shaw will facilitate the scheduling of a meeting or conference call with this group.
14. COM ACTED to grant permission to the Session of the Hudson church to search for new pastoral leadership while the Rev. David McMillan is there. They are likely searching for a part time stated supply.

The following recommendations are presented as part of the Presbytery Consent Agenda:

1. RECOMMENDS that the Rev. Jerry McKinney be appointed retroactively to serve as moderator of the Stillwater church effective April 26, 2011.
2. RECOMMENDS that the Rev. Richard Otty be appointed to serve as moderator of St. Peter's PC in Spencertown for the months of July and August 2011.
3. RECOMMENDS that Presbytery change the current "Pastoral Support Fund Policy" found on page A-21 of the COM Manual to "Pastoral Support Fund Guidelines." Rationale: enforcement of these guidelines as a policy has become problematic and they may not be constitutionally enforceable.
4. RECOMMENDS that the Rev. Thomas Gregg be appointed to serve as moderator of the First Presbyterian Church of Johnstown effective July 1, 2011.
5. RECOMMENDS that Presbytery approve for one year, until May 11, 2011, a request from the Brunswick Church to continue the use of elders to administer the Lord's Supper. (The congregation celebrates communion at three services weekly).
6. RECOMMENDS that Presbytery approve permission for one year, until May 11, 2012 for Elder Bob Kendall to administer the Lord's Supper at Breakabeen /NorthBlenheim.

The following recommendations are presented for Presbytery discussion and action:

PLEASE NOTE: The "appendix" of the presbytery policy on examinations, along with the statement of faith and biographical information for Candidate Drew Paton are included at the end of this Committee on Ministry report. PLEASE ALSO NOTE: There may be two examinations at this Presbytery meeting. One of these examinations will definitely be the examination of Candidate Drew Paton for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. **If the way be clear, there may be another examination of a minister for transfer of membership. The statement of faith and biographical information for this minister will be posted to the web site if and when the way is made clear. Hard copies of these will also be provided to presbyters at the meeting.**

The Committee on Ministry strongly encourages all presbyters to read each candidate's statement of faith carefully as the statements WILL NOT BE READ aloud during the examination. The candidates may appear together, and there will be questions posed by COM as well as an opportunity for questions from the floor. The candidate being examined for ordination and membership will answer these questions:
How did the process of inquiry and candidacy challenge and/or strengthen your sense of call to the pastoral ministry?

The candidates being examined for membership will answer these questions:

What have been the highlights of your ministry to date, and what are the particular challenges and joys you anticipate in your ministry in Albany Presbytery?

1. Following a Clearance Interview by COM, clearance from CPM, and action by the congregation of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church in Spencertown, NY, on May 22, 2011, at a duly called meeting moderated by COM member Elder Bill Morris to issue a call to Candidate Drew Paton, COM RECOMMENDS that Presbytery examine Candidate Drew Paton (Presbytery of Care – Hudson River Presbytery) for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament so that he may accept the call of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church of Spencertown to be its Pastor effective September 1, 2011, with the following terms: : 3/4-time (36 hours per week); cash salary \$25,700 (which includes medical reimbursement and \$1,500 to offset lack of access to BoP seminary debt assistance program); manse value \$7,710; effective salary \$33,410; social security offset \$2,556; medical/pension/death benefits \$10,714; professional expenses \$470 (to be paid as incurred and vouchered); continuing education expenses \$1,193 (to be paid as incurred and vouchered); travel reimbursement estimate (mileage) \$1,836 (to be paid as incurred and vouchered); total effective salary plus benefits and reimbursements \$50,179 (annual amount to be prorated for 2011.) Moving expenses to be paid by church as incurred and vouchered by pastor. Vacation – 30 days to include 4 Sundays (annual amount to be prorated for 2011 with 1 week to be taken in either late September or October because he will be getting married.) Continuing education – 2 weeks to include 2 Sundays (annual amount to be prorated for 2011). Enrollment in Early Ministry Institute.

If Drew's examination is sustained, COM RECOMMENDS that Presbytery act to request that he be ordained by the Hudson River Presbytery and transferred to Albany Presbytery so that he may accept the call of the St. Peter's congregation.

COM recognizes that appropriate EEO/Affirmative Action procedures were followed by the PNC at St. Peter's.

COM RECOMMENDS that Presbytery authorize COM to approve the Administrative Commission recruited by Drew Paton to install him at St. Peter's Church and that Presbytery appoint him to serve as moderator of St. Peter's PC when the way be clear following his ordination by his home church.

2. RECOMMENDS that Presbytery act to approve Honorable Retirements for the Rev. Dr. Earl S. Johnson and the Rev. Larry Deyss effective July 1, 2011.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report – Pre-Meeting Packet for June 11, 2011

The following recommendations are presented as part of the Presbytery Consent Agenda:

1. CPM RECOMMENDS that Presbytery elect the following to serve as Principal Exam Readers for senior ordination exams for the coming year: The Rev. Lois Wolff and the Rev. Jerry McKinney. And elect Elder Helen Dickens as an Alternate Exam Reader.
2. At his request, CPM RECOMMENDS that Presbytery remove Elder Sam Ostrowski's name from the list of Inquirers for Albany Presbytery.

EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines govern examinations in Albany Presbytery:

- 1) Examinations are to be conducted respectfully and prayerfully. Examinations are intended to give the prospective member an opportunity to demonstrate the qualities of mind and spirit that qualify him or her for membership and service in the Presbytery.
- 2) It is the right and duty of the Presbytery to determine whether the prospective member adheres to basic Christian doctrines as interpreted by Reformed traditions in the Confessions and whether he or she has sufficient preparation and ability to carry out the functions of office in a particular setting. At the same time, the Presbytery values theological diversity within Reformed bounds among its members and does not apply theological litmus tests for membership.
- 3) Questions should focus on the prospective member's faith, as expressed in the statement of faith, and on the ways the prospective member lives out that faith.
- 4) Because the Church trusts the Holy Spirit to guide, form, inform and renew the body each time it meets, Presbyterians have no single written list of fundamental doctrines or essential tenets to which all ministers must subscribe. Key themes of Reformed theology, however, occur regularly in the Confessions and are noted in the *Book of Order* in G-2.0500. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God, who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to the central affirmation of God's sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

(1) The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation; (2) Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God; (3) A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation; (4) The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God."

It is appropriate to question the prospective member on these themes if they are not adequately treated in the statement of faith.

- 5) By decision of Presbyterian church courts, probing personal questions about a prospective member's health, finances or life arrangements are appropriate only if: (1) the prospective member invites them by offering written or spoken comments on personal matters; (2) the same questions are asked of all prospective members; or (3) there is "plain, palpable and obvious" evidence available to the Presbytery that some element of a prospective member's manner of life may be an obstacle to ministry.
- 6) Both Minister Members and Elder Commissioners to Presbytery are strongly urged to participate in the questioning.
- 7) The 217th General Assembly (2006) affirmed the constitutional right of prospective members of presbytery to identify ways in which their conscience, as formed by Scripture, compels them to depart from one or more ordination standards. It is then the right and duty of the presbytery to decide whether the departure involves an essential of Reformed faith and practice. If a prospective member of Albany Presbytery declares such a departure, the Council will seek to prepare the Presbytery to discern whether an essential of faith or practice is involved. There is no list of essentials, though there are guides, such as the list of themes cited above, that may help the Presbytery to discern them on a case-by-case basis.
- 8) If a departure is declared for the first time on the floor of Presbytery, without prior notice to the Committee on Ministry and the Council, the Moderator will ask the body whether it wishes to postpone further discussion until Council has had an opportunity to prepare resources for the discussion.
- 9) The Presbytery has the right to say "Yes," "No," or "Wait" to any prospective member. This includes those whose departure from ordination standards is deemed not to involve Reformed essentials.

Council Report – Pre-Meeting Packet for June 11, 2011

The following are presented to the Presbytery for information:

1. The Council met on May 10, 2011, at the West End PC in Albany and on June 1, 2010, at the Presbytery office. The next Council meeting will be at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 14, 2011, at the West End PC in Albany.

2. Paul Randall REPORTED that Kari Stiensén has been appointed to the “Flipping the Presbytery” Task Force.
3. Council ACTED TO APPROVE \$2,000 in funding for the Kitchen Garden New Initiative Funding Request from the United Presbyterian Church of Northville with the conditions that a “how-to-build” video be made of construction of the garden that can be shown to Presbytery and that the church make a report to Presbytery on how the Bridal Closet (another New Initiative funded project at the Northville Church) is progressing. Council recognized that the grant of \$2,000 is less than the \$3,823 requested, but expects there to be some financial support of the project by the congregation in addition to the in-kind labor support proposed.
4. Council ACTED TO DENY funding for a Western Presbytery Rural Ministry New Church Initiative pending provision of additional information related to the inclusion of periodic critical assessments of how things are going over the 3-year period of the requested grant. There was also concern that the six churches involved were not providing any funding for the first year. Council representatives will pursue conversations with the applicants. It will be suggested that the churches fund their summer activities this year as they see fit; see how it goes; and then come back with an amended application in the fall if it seems to make sense to hire a Regional Youth Leader at that point.
5. Council ACTED TO APPROVE \$1,000 from Item 5112 (Training Funds) to assist the Rev. Nadeem Sadiq and his wife to attend a national New Church Development conference on August 8-11, 2011, in Florida. Mrs. Sadiq provides lay leadership in the education program of the Pakistani-American Fellowship.
6. Council ACTED TO ENDORSE an application from the Pakistani-American Fellowship GA for Use of Restricted Funds.
7. Council ACTED TO APPROVE a request from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry for \$375 to be taken from Item 5112 (Training Funds) to pay for a 3-hour workshop to be led by Kelli Rugenstein of the Capital Region Samaritan Counseling Center to help the committee members better understand the assessment tools being given to Inquirers and better understand how to interpret them so that they can more effectively work with their Inquirers and Candidates.

The following is presented for Presbytery action under the Consent Agenda:

1. Council RECOMMENDS the following schedule for Presbytery stated meetings in 2012:
 - Saturday – January 28 at 9:30 a.m.
 - Tuesday – April 17 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Tuesday - June 19 at 9:30 a.m.
 - Monday and Tuesday – September 17 and 18 (Meeting/Retreat)
 - Saturday - November 17 at 9:30 a.m.
2. For attendance at the September 19-20, 2011, Meeting/Retreat at the Silver Bay Conference Center, Council RECOMMENDS the following policy: All commissioners, elders and ministers alike, will be responsible to pay \$50 for a double occupancy room on the night of September 19 and four meals (lunch on September 19 through lunch on September 20) regardless of whether they are in a double occupancy room with a private bath (54 have been reserved) or in a double occupancy room with a shared bath (26 have been reserved). If single occupancy rooms are available depending upon the number of people who register to attend the meeting, the cost to commissioners will be \$101 for a single occupancy room with a

private bath or \$85 for a single occupancy room with a shared bath. (The remainder of costs for commissioners will be taken from Item 5126, "Flipping the Presbytery.")

Reservations will be on a first come, first served basis with commissioners having preference over visitors. All visitors will be expected to pay the full amounts charged by Silver Bay which are as follows for the night of September 19 and four meals: Single Occupancy (if available) - \$160 per person with a private bath or \$129 per person with a shared bath; Double Occupancy - \$109 per person with a private bath or \$94 per person with a shared bath. An overnight stay on Sunday, September 18 and any additional meals related to that overnight stay will be extra. Those costs will be available upon request from the Presbytery office.

The following is presented for Presbytery action:

Council RECOMMENDS that presentation of the PeaceMakers Task Force proposal for a second reading and action be POSTPONED until the September 19-20, 2011, Stated Meeting.

Rationale: Council thanks the members of the proposed task force for their sense of mission and their commitment to peacemaking in Albany Presbytery. Council requests this time to allow for a conversation with members of the proposed task force to ensure that the task force is structured to best accomplish their goals.

For reference, the following is the text of the Peacemakers Task Force proposal that was presented on April 12, 2011, for a first reading:

To: Albany Presbytery
Date: April 7, 2011
Re: PeaceMakers Task Force
From: Rev. Bebb Stone

On March 12, 2011 eight persons gathered at Union Presbyterian Church, Schenectady to discuss peacemaking in Albany Presbytery. We are:

Judy Hartley, Westminster Pres.
Sue Bramer, Schoharie Pres.
Barry Gustafson, Saratoga Springs
Linda LeTendre, Saratoga Springs
Rev. Earl Johnson, Johnstown Pres.
Rev. Larry Deyss, Delmar Pres.
Rev Ruth Kuo, Union Pres., Schenectady
Rev Bebb Stone, Schoharie

We voted unanimously at that meeting to apply for status within the Presbytery as a Task Force. While the budgeting application we submitted would take effect in 2012, we are ready to begin immediately. Therefore:

We respectfully request Albany Presbytery to authorize us as a task force, since there are 36 churches that have participated in the Peacemaking Offering over the past 3 years, demonstrating the intention to "seek peace and pursue it."

Goals:

To be a vehicle for Presbyterians and friends of Presbyterians* within Albany Presbytery to make a social witness on matters of peace and justice, after the manner of "The Commitment to Peacemaking: Through Christ Jesus, the world is reconciled to God, and all humanity is offered God's peace. God's peace (shalom) overcomes brokenness and despair and offers us the possibility of wholeness and peace in our own lives, our families, our communities, and in the international arena."

Our Work Plan:

- To identify Presbyterians and friends of Presbyterians within Albany Presbytery who feel called by a passion for constructing peace; and to invite them to participate in the conversations of the task force;
- To build trust as persons of shared faith while we resist fear in order to act.

- To connect the task force to the several aspects of the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry Unit of the P.C. (USA); the UN Office, the Washington Office, the Peacemaking Program; PHEWA: as well as Presbyterian Peace Fellowship and Voices of Justice, etc.;
- To share “input” (books, articles, studies) as well as possibilities for action (events, actions, statements, etc.) and
- To communicate regularly with Albany Presbytery in meetings.

Staff support

We would anticipate help from the Administrative Assistant in the Presbytery Office as we arrange conference calls, etc.; and some support from the Rev. Cass Shaw as General Presbyter.

Budget (Estimated)**

Travel expenses (reimbursement by voucher)	\$600
Food, infrequently	\$250.
Resources	\$100.
Connectionalism	
Peace Fellowship Membership	\$100.
PHEWA presbytery Membership	\$250.
Voices of Justice	\$50.
Miscellany	\$50.
Total	\$1400

*covers members of federated churches within the bounds of Albany Presbytery.

**It is our understanding that there are Peacemaking Funds currently in the budget.