

**PRESBYTERY OF BLACKHAWK
STATED MEETING VIA ZOOM
APRIL 14, 2020**

The Presbytery of Blackhawk convened on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 in a Stated Meeting held via Zoom. This was a joint meeting of the ecclesial body, the Presbytery of Blackhawk and the corporate body, the Presbytery of Blackhawk, Inc.

WELCOME/OVERVIEW OF ZOOM MEETING PROCESS

Interim Stated Clerk Rev. Eric Heinekamp welcomed participants to the meeting and provided instructions for speaking and voting using Zoom during the meeting.

OPENING PRAYER AND LITURGY

Moderator Chuck Johnson called the meeting to order with a prayer at 9:35 AM and led participants in a liturgy inspired by Zephaniah 3:14-20.

STATED CLERK REPORT, PART 1

Interim Stated Clerk Rev. Eric Heinekamp declared that a quorum was present as indicated by the electronic sign in process. He presented the proposed docket for the meeting. It was moved, seconded, and **Voted** to approve the following docket.

9:00	First opportunity to sign in to meeting	
9:30	Welcome and overview of Zoom meeting process	Eric Heinekamp
9:35	Opening Prayer	Chuck Johnson
	Opening liturgy	Chuck Johnson
9:40	Stated Clerk Report, Part 1	Eric Heinekamp
	Declaration of quorum / approval of docket / approval of minutes	
9:45	Executive Bridge Presbyter Report	Nancy Dolan
10:00	Council Report	Bob Kopp
	Overtures to 224 th General Assembly:	
	To Concur: Overture from Seattle Presbytery	
	To Concur: Overture from John Calvin Presbytery	
10:10	Committees of Council	
	Assembly Planning Committee	Chuck Johnson
	Mission/Kenya Partnership	Laurie Walker
	Personnel	Anita Stuart-Steve
	Stronghold	Terry Mohaupt
10:20	Committee on Preparation for Ministry	Jan Chandler
	Examination for Ordination: Art Blegen	
10:35	Commission on Ministry	Catherine Martin
	Commissioning two Commissioned Pastors	
10:50	Other Presbytery Entities	
	Nominating	Doug Forsberg
	Nomination to Personnel	
	Transformational Presbyter Nominating Committee	Deb Swets
11:00	Stated Clerk Report, Part 2 - PJC Report	Eric Heinekamp
11:10	Synod Report	Sara Dingman

<p>11:15 Corporation/Trustees Administrative Commission Report for Freeport Treasurer Report</p> <p>11:20 New and Unfinished Business</p> <p>11:30 Adjourn with Prayer</p>	<p>Eric Heinekamp Frank Finch</p>
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A motion was made, seconded, and **Voted** to approve the minutes of the February 11,2020 Stated Meeting as presented.

Rev. Heinekamp presented a motion on behalf of the Personnel Committee to seat and approve Pat Wakeley as Recording Clerk. Motion was **Voted** to approve.

Rev. Heinekamp moved to seat corresponding members Rev. Nancy Dolan, Presbytery of Chicago and Blackhawk’s Executive Bridge Presbyter, and Rev. Sara Dingman, Synod Executive, Synod of Lincoln Trails. Motion was seconded and **Voted** to approve.

The Interim Stated Clerk presented his report of activity since the last Stated Meeting:

Official Actions

- Changed format of April Assembly meeting from in-person to Zoom meeting and coordinated docket and format for meeting.
- Coordinated and served on Permanent Judicial Commission pre-trial, deliberations, and censure of James Tilley.
- Additional session minutes approved: Harvard First Presbyterian Church.

Other Activity

- Worked with former Stated Clerk to transfer files and records
- Participated in meetings of Council, COM, Presbytery Assembly Planning, PLOET, and COVID-19 Task Force
- Moderated session meeting of Federated Church of Sandwich
- Met with session of First Presbyterian Church of Rochelle
- Participated in Synod of Lincoln Trails COM/CPM training in Champaign
- Participated in SOLT and LeaderWise Shelter in Place video calls
- Participated in weekly Association of Mid-Council Leader Zoom calls
- Participated in weekly pastor care and share Zoom calls
- Initiated process for the Presbytery to apply for a Paycheck Protection Program loan through the recently approved CARES Act
- Setting up Commissioner training for 2020 General Assembly
- Held many meetings with the Executive Bridge Presbyter and attended staff meetings

EXECUTIVE BRIDGE PRESBYTER REPORT

Executive Bridge Presbyter Rev. Nancy Dolan introduced herself to the assembly. She is filling the Executive Presbyter role and Rev. Eric Heinekamp is filling the Stated Clerk’s role. Both she and Eric are part-time, providing 7-10 hours each per week to support the Presbytery of Blackhawk. This period will provide insights about organizational roles and needs going forward. Nancy has already been working with staff and leadership. She encouraged the assembly in this time of transition and

world-wide pandemic, noting “an amazing connectional network” in Blackhawk Presbytery. Using the metaphor of a sand bar at low tide, she spoke of the hidden treasures you can see when the sea recedes and you walk through the muck—buried treasure, new life, new possibilities. She reminded the assembly that God is with us in our witness.

COUNCIL REPORT

Council Moderator Rev. Dr. Robert Kopp thanked Rev. Eric Heinekamp, Rev. Nancy Dolan, and Loreen Stravers for their work and introduced the Council report and two motions.

Council recommended that the Presbytery of Blackhawk concur on an Overture to the 224th General Assembly submitted by Seattle Presbytery: “Promoting peace with justice with the Presbyterian Church of Colombia.” The motion from Council to concur with this overture to the General Assembly was made and **Voted** to approve.

Council recommended that the Presbytery of Blackhawk concur on Overture OVT-038 to the 224th General Assembly submitted by John Calvin Presbytery: “On Benefit Equity Among Mid Council Executive Staff.” The motion from Council to concur with this overture to the General Assembly was made and **Voted** to approve.

Rev. Dr. Kopp reported the following actions by Council:

- Council unanimously voted to hire Rev. Nancy Dolan to serve as Executive Bridge Presbyter Bridge. She will serve part-time (7-10 hours per week) from April 1-July 31, 2020, with potential for monthly extensions. Her focus will be on helping the Presbytery (pastors and churches) respond to COVID-19, supporting COM, helping the Council lead and preparing the way for the Transformational Presbyter.
- Council voted to hold the April stated Assembly meeting as planned, via Zoom. Instructions and link to be provided on the website.
- Council approved the formation of a COVID-19 Response Team to: Gather information, communicate regularly with churches and pastors, provide guidance for facing new technology/situations, connect people with others.

The COVID-19 Response Team is not a standing committee but a task force that would dissolve once the impact of the virus is ended. It has the following members: Chuck Johnson (Presbytery Moderator), Catherine Martin (COM Moderator), Alex Regets (Mission Committee), Barb D'Souza (Rockford Westminster Commissioned Pastor), Ron Barkby (Elgin First Elder), Nancy Dolan (Executive Bridge Presbyter) and Eric Heinekamp (Stated Clerk).

Authority and responsibility: This group was formed by council and reports to council. The Presbytery assembly could give the Team greater authority, perhaps as an administrative commission to act on behalf of the presbytery as it relates to church matters such as real est ate.

ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Moderator Chuck Johnson reported that the presbytery meeting learning opportunity series on Transitional Ministry with Rev. Beth Wagner will resume at such time as the assembly is able to convene in person.

MISSION COMMITTEE/KENYA PARTNERSHIP

Committee Moderator Laurie Walker presented the report from the committee:

Kenya Partnership: The special Coins for Kenya collection of \$5,100 was wired to Imenti partners to purchase seed for people in Rwarera, Kenya who after surviving a recent draught were unable to afford seed to plant. The recent trip to Kenya also created more interest and requests for church partners. If your church is interested in forming a partnership with a church in the Imenti presbyteries, contact Pastor Claire Brennecka.

Mission Grants & Peacemaking Grants: The committee approved \$750 to fund Dekalb Westminster Presbyterian Church's Summer Lunch grant proposal, with further consideration of the application tabled. Consideration of grant applications from Sterling First Presbyterian Church and Geneva Fox Valley Presbyterian Church was also tabled. The committee reminds all churches that local funding for Mission Grants and Peacemaking Grants is available for partial start-up funding for new initiatives. Applications are available on Blackhawk's website. Further grant Applications & resources may be obtained from the Mission Program Grants website at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/1001-2/mission-program-grants/>.

Matthew 25: The committee reminded all presbyters that Blackhawk Presbytery is committed to be a Matthew 25 Mid-Council. All churches are encouraged to consider making the same commitment. Information is available at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>. These churches are Matthew 25 churches: Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church, Elgin First Presbyterian Church, Elwood Community Church, Gardner New Hope Presbyterian Church, Gibson City First Presbyterian Church, Joliet Westminster Presbyterian Church, Kankakee First Presbyterian Church, and Sterling First Presbyterian Church.

Rev. John Dillon, Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church, noted that the time frame for the Fishing Expedition for One Great Hour of Sharing has been extended due to COVID-19.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Committee Moderator Rev. Dr. Anita Stuart-Steva thanked the assembly for prayers for her recovery, welcomed Pat Wakeley as Recording Clerk, and asked for candidates for the Treasurer position.

STRONGHOLD COMMITTEE

Committee Moderator Terry Mohaupt, reported for the committee. On March 31, the Board of Directors of Stronghold Center, Inc., took the following actions:

- Accepted the Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Policy
- Decided Annual meeting date to be March 31
- Approved new Board member, Lolly Dominski of Chicago Presbytery
- Decided the Fiscal Year will be Calendar Year
- Elected the following as officers:
 - Chair - Terry Mohaupt
 - Vice Chair - Ray Lantz
 - Secretary - Howard Strong
 - Treasurer - Lolly Dominski

Stronghold is greatly impacted by COVID-19. As of March 20, the campus has been closed to the public. Summer Camp: recruitment of summer camp staff is continuing, although limits on international travel may affect potential international staff. Staff are looking at three possible models for presenting summer

camp: camp as usual with the first camp opening on June 12; modified camp schedule based on available summer staff and federal and state COVID-19 guidelines; or no camp this summer.

Economic Impact of COVID-19: Stronghold has experienced more than \$42,000 in cancelations. This is a major challenge to the sustainability of Stronghold. Director Danny Pierce is exploring options to survive this event, Church Mutual Loss of Income Insurance for Disasters, US Small Business Administration Assistance in Response to the Coronavirus, assistance from the Presbytery of Chicago, assistance from Presbytery of Blackhawk, a fund-raising campaign, and inquiry with Stronghold's bank for a loan/line-of-credit. Director Pierce has been having weekly Zoom sessions with a fund development coach. He has established a plan & goal for an annual fund development program of \$150,000. Chicago Presbytery will donate \$25,000. An additional \$20,000 donation will arrive the first full week of April, along with a \$2,000 annual pledge.

Infrastructure: A contract has been awarded to Martin & Company for the Stronghold paving project in the amount of \$144,000, with a \$5,000 donation back to Stronghold upon completion. Work is planned for August. Donor thank you/tax letters for end-of-the-year giving were mailed in mid-February. A new website designed by *Northwest Quarterly* of Rockford is in the process.

Stronghold intends to request through the Presbytery Council that the Stronghold Endowment be amended to allow access to more of its money during this trying time. Provisions could be negotiated. With the loss of business due to COVID-19, it is reasonable to anticipate that Stronghold might request an extension beyond the original December 31, 2020, deadline for the separation of Stronghold Center, Inc. from Blackhawk Presbytery.

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

Committee Moderator Rev. Jan Chandler gave the report for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

CPM recommends the Presbytery examine Art Blegen for ordination. He comes to Blackhawk Presbytery from East Iowa Presbytery and has met all the requirements for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Art Blegen introduced himself and was examined by the Presbytery. After questions, a motion was made to rest the examination. Motion was seconded and **Voted** to approve. Art Blegen was asked to leave the virtual meeting space. A motion was made to sustain the examination and move to ordination to serve as pastor of the Kewanee/Elmira churches. The motion was seconded and **Voted** to approve. Art Blegen returned to the meeting as was welcomed with prayer.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

Commission Moderator Rev. Catherine Martin presented the Commission report.

The commission moved to commission Mary Lynn Keir to serve as part time Interim Commissioned Pastor to Elwood Community Church, effective March 17, 2020 - March 17, 2021. Responsibilities include leading worship every Sunday, administering sacraments and moderating session. Contract terms: \$150/Sunday worship service, \$20/hour office time -12 hours per week plus additional as needed for outlined duties and responsibilities. Continuing education: 2 weeks including 1 Sunday. Vacation time: 4 weeks including 2 Sundays. Mileage reimbursement at IRS rate.

The commission moved to commission Laurel A. Walker to serve as part time Commissioned Pastor to Sandwich Federated Church until July 31, 2020. Responsibilities include leading worship three Sundays per month (4 in June), administering sacraments and moderating session.

Contract terms: \$1200 / month. Mileage reimbursement at IRS rate, other ministry expenses reimbursed, and continuing education/ book allowance at approx.\$150/month.

These recommendations were voted on in one motion. The motion was made and **Voted** to approve. Mary Lynn and Laurel were commissioned to their respective services by Moderator Chuck Johnson.

REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN BY COM:

Approved. Pending successful examination by Presbytery, COM approved the call to Art Blegen by the yoked Elmira United Church and Kewanee First Presbyterian Church congregations to serve as their full-time minister. This is his first call and he will seek ordination in the Presbytery of Blackhawk, effective approximately May 15, 2020.

Cash salary:	\$18,902
Housing	\$19,600
SECA	\$ 2, 945
Full Board of Pensions	\$15,620
Professional Expenses	\$ 3,900
Study Leave	\$ 1,500
Health Reimburse . Arr.	\$ 2,310
TOTAL	\$64,777

Four weeks' vacation, 2 weeks continuing education.

Approved the contract extension for Rev. David Terrinoni to serve as Temporary Stated Supply Pastor with LaRose Crow Meadow from April 1-Sept. 30, 2020.

Granted permission to Anita Stuart-Steva to labor outside the bounds to perform a wedding in Pennsylvania on June 13.

Approved the transfer of Ernest Gardner, member at large of Presbytery of Blackhawk to Charlotte Presbytery, effective March 17, 2020.

Approved the Summary Terms of Call report for Blackhawk pastors (attached).

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP OPTIONS EXPLORATION TEAM

Team Moderator Rev. Mike Selberg reported that the team continues to meet and work on creating a resource that will be distributed by COM to churches in leadership transition. The team's work was initiated by the Mission Committee and will transition to the Commission on Ministry.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Committee Moderator Rev. Dr. Doug Forsberg recommended the following motion from the committee: Rev. Mike Selberg to serve a three-year term on the Personnel Committee. Moved and **Voted** to approve.

TRANSFORMATIONAL PRESBYTER NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Committee Co-Moderator Rev. Deb Swets reported for the committee. The deadline for PIFs was March 15. The committee has been reviewing PIFs and conducting interviews via Zoom and is on schedule to complete its work.

SYNOD OF LINCOLN TRAILS REPORT

Synod Executive Rev. Sara Dingman reported that the Synod held a COM/CPM gathering on Creating a Culture of Health and Well-Being in March and offered the LeaderWise webinar three times in the last month. She commended Blackhawk Presbytery, referring to the John 20 passage “He did many other signs that are not written in this book,” to recognize the Transition Team, the Council, Rev. Eric Heinekamp, Loreen Stravers, the Transformational Presbyter Nominating Committee, and all of the work of the presbytery and its churches at this time.

STATED CLERK REPORT PART 2- PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION REPORT

Interim Stated Clerk Rev. Eric Heinekamp presented the report of the Permanent Judicial Commission in the matter of Rev. James Tilley, associate pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Rochelle. In accordance with Book of Order D-11.0700, the Interim Stated Clerk read the decision of the PJC.

Investigative Committee

In response to allegations presented to the Presbytery of Blackhawk, an Investigative Committee investigated and identified eight charges against Rev. Dr. James Tilley:

- 1-4. In multiple counseling services between November 2016 and August 2019, you, Rev. James Tilley, did commit acts which are a misuse of ordered ministry or position in violation of D-10.0401c2 with your counselees. These acts are in violation of your ordination vows, particularly W-4.0404f and W-4.0404g, as well as the scriptural admonition against sexual sin rooted in the seventh commandment as seen in Exodus 20:14. This is also in violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy of First Presbyterian Church of Rochelle Illinois, which you signed in 2017. (Summary of complaints from 4 individuals)
5. In repeatedly demonstrating a lack of appropriate boundaries in counseling sessions and applying inappropriate rationales to your own sexualized behavior in counseling, you have engaged in a misuse of ordered ministry per D-10.0401c2. Pastors are called to both serve God and serve as a living example for God’s people. When this is violated, the Church is injured. The first qualification for the office includes a candidate’s wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute and sound judgment. This is in violation of your ordination vows, particularly W-4.0404f and W-4.0404g as well as scriptural admonitions for leaders found in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 and 2 Samuel 11-12.
6. The misuse of ordered ministry by you, Rev. James Tilley, through the violations of boundaries and misuse of counseling responsibilities for personal and sexual gratification led to your arrest on August 23, 2019. You were charged with a criminal offense, Battery, a Class A misdemeanor by the Ogle County States’ Attorney. Those charges were resolved in a plea agreement on February 6, 2020 requiring you to be under court supervision for a period of 24 months. This action has impacted First Presbyterian Church of Rochelle, the victims of your misconduct and your own ability to effectively function as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. This action is in violation of your ordination vows and is in contradiction to the description of a pastoral leader found in 1 Timothy 3:1.
7. By your own admission you, Rev. James Tilley, did lie to your colleague and head of staff Rev. Doug Forsberg regarding investigations into your behavior in counseling. In 2018, when questioned by Rev. Forsberg and members of the Session about your technique of holding or hugging women during a counseling session, you replied that you did not, which you now admit was a lie. This action was in direct contradiction to the Biblical admonitions against lying in Colossians 3:9-10, Exodus 20:16 and elsewhere. This is also in violation of your ordination vows and is unacceptable for a church leader,

especially a Minister of Word and Sacrament.

8. You, Rev. James Tilley, have repeatedly refused to be governed by our Church's polity and abide by its discipline in your failure to abide by appropriate boundaries in counseling sessions. This is in violation of your ordination vows, particularly W-4.0404b. By these offences, you have acted contrary to Scripture and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church USA.

Therefore, the Investigative Committee of the Presbytery of Blackhawk recommends a censure of removal from ordered ministry, including forfeiture of all rights, privileges and responsibilities of the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Permanent Judicial Commission

The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Blackhawk met once, and then with Rev. James Tilley in a pre-trial session on March 31, 2000. At that meeting, Rev. Tilley was presented with the eight charges and pleaded guilty to each one. He was then presented with the recommended censure. The PJC met again to deliberate and formalize the censure. On April 6, 2020 the censure was pronounced to James Tilley:

Whereas you, James Tilley, have been found guilty of eight offences and pled guilty to each, and by such offences you have acted contrary to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, USA,

Now, therefore, the Presbytery of Blackhawk, acting in the name of the Presbyterian Church USA, does censure you to removal from ordered ministry, including the forfeiture of all rights, privileges and responsibilities of the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

James Tilley responded that he understood and accepted this censure.

The Interim Stated Clerk reported that the Investigative Committee has been dismissed with thanks. The Stated Clerk notified the Stated Clerk of the PCUSA of the censure. He met with the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Rochelle. He and the Executive Bridge Presbyter sent a letter to the pastor and members of the Rochelle First congregation. The PJC and the Clerk will send letters to each named victim to update them on this matter.

Moderator Chuck Johnson offered prayer for healing and grace.

Moderator Chuck Johnson suspended the assembly meeting and called to order the meeting of the corporate body.

TREASURER REPORT

Written financial reports for the Presbytery of Blackhawk and Stronghold through February 29, 2020 were presented. A motion was made, seconded, and **Voted** to receive the report of the treasurer.

CORPORATION TRUSTEES

Assembly Moderator reported on the request from the Administrative Commission formed in November 2018 to assist the United Presbyterian Church of Freeport. The Administrative Commission requests it be given additional authority to work with the congregation to facilitate their dissolution, to approve the sale or disposal of all real and personal property, to approve the distribution of all financial assets, and to

assist in the retention of all historical, financial, membership, and ecclesiastical records. A motion was made, and **Voted** to approve.

Moderator Chuck Johnson closed the meeting of the corporate body and resumed the assembly meeting.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

In response to a question whether the assembly was ever informed of the formation of the Investigative Committee referred to in the PJC report, it was announced at the September 10, 2019 meeting by Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. John Rickard and appears in the minutes of that meeting.

ADJOURN WITH PRAYER

Moderator Chuck Johnson expressed gratitude to everyone who was involved in preparing for today's assembly meeting and preparing resources for this difficult time. He called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made, seconded, and **Voted** to adjourn the meeting of the day. Moderator Chuck Johnson closed the meeting with prayer at 11:29 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Eric Heinekamp, Interim Stated Clerk
Patricia J. Wakeley, Recording Clerk

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery is planned for June 2, 2020 at Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center, 1922 IL Route 2, Oregon, IL. Registration begins at 9:00 AM. Meeting at 9:30 AM. This is dependent on the COVID-19 situation.