



**PRESBYTERY OF  
NORTH CENTRAL IOWA**

**Meeting Packet  
for the Called Meeting of the  
Presbytery of North Central Iowa**



**March 22, 2022  
11:00 a.m.**

**ZOOM Meeting**

**PROPOSED DOCKET  
CALLED PRESBYTERY MEETING  
PRESBYTERY OF NORTH CENTRAL IOWA**

March 22, 2022

11:00 a.m.

Zoom

- I. Call to Order
  - A. Call to Order and Opening Prayer RE Marcia Rich
  - B. Introductions – New Commissioners, Clergy, Corresponding Members RE Marcia Rich
  - C. Declaration of Quorum TE Annika Lister Stroope
  - D. Approve Excused Absences TE Annika Lister Stroope
  - E. Approval of Proposed Docket for Called Presbytery Meeting RE Marcia Rich
  
- II. Discussion of overture to the General Assembly from Pittsburgh Presbytery regarding domestic abuse. A draft of the Minutes of the March 1, 2022, Presbytery Meeting in which the Overture is discussed, and the full text of the overture follow this Proposed Docket.
  
- III. ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER RE Marcia Rich

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa will be held on Sunday, November 6, 2022, at 2:30 p.m.

Presbytery of North Central Iowa  
Stated Meeting  
March 1, 2022  
ZOOM Meeting

The 228<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa was held via ZOOM on March 1, 2022. Vice Moderator TE Christine Kaplunas called the meeting to order with prayer at 11:04 a.m.

Abbreviations:

TE=Teaching Elder (Minister of the Word and Sacrament)

RE=Ruling Elder

CRE=Commissioned Ruling Elder

FORMATION OF THE ROLL:

The following commissioners and members were registered for this meeting (Present, Absent, Excused):

The meeting began with a Call to Worship led by RE Jane Ryan.

Stated Clerk TE Annika Lister Stroope led an orientation to the Zoom videoconferencing process.

RE Jane Ryan led the Presbytery in prayer.

New commissioners were introduced.

It was Moved, Seconded, and Carried (M/S/C) to seat the following as corresponding members:

- TE Richard Francis, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, serving as Recording Clerk
- TE Ken Green, Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Stated Clerk declared a quorum to be present.

M/S/C to approve the docket for the 228<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting.

M/S/C to approve the minutes of the 227<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting, November 7, 2021.

TE Sara Hill presented the report of the Nominating Committee. The names of the nominees are included in an appendix at the end of these minutes.

The Moderator called for nominations from the floor. No nominations were made. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, TE Sara Hill moved that the slate be elected. The motion passed.

Sara also called the Presbytery's attention to an interest sheet that the Nominating Committee provided to help them with their work. It is included as an appendix to these minutes.

Vice Moderator TE Christine Kaplunas led the Presbytery in a service of installation for RE Marcia Rich as Moderator of the Presbytery.

Moderator RE Marcia Rich assumed the chair.

TE Le Anne Clausen de Montes led the Presbytery in a Prayer of Confession and Assurance of God's Pardon.

The Presbytery Executives presented their reports:

1. TE Ian McMullen, Pastor to the Presbyteries  
Ian gave an oral report on his work with leadership development in local churches. He asked the churches to invite him to visit and share the resources of the Presbytery. Ian also promoted the four-part class, "The Re-Formation of the Congregation," being offered by the three presbyteries together. The Cohorts for TEs and REs continue, and a Cohort for CREs is being developed. Ian asked that the Presbytery support the Lakeshore Center and use the resources available there.
2. RE Amgad Beblawi, Mission Executive  
Amgad gave an oral report highlighting the nature of mission. The Israel/Palestine Mission Trip will leave soon with 19 participants. Amgad reported on the two videoconferences he organized regarding the Ukraine-Russia conflict. Presbyterian World Mission is working on ways to help the people of Ukraine, and when information is available, it will be shared with the Presbytery. Amgad would like to be invited to meet with sessions and mission committees.
3. TE Annika Lister Stroope, Stated Clerk and Administrative Executive  
Annika reported that this is the 12<sup>th</sup> presbytery meeting that the shared staff has been part of between the three presbyteries of North Central Iowa, Prospect Hill, and Des Moines. She has met with clerks of session via Zoom and individual phone calls. She hopes to hold session records review in the late spring/early summer. Annika noted that an insurance review is being done. She lifted up the work of the Nominating Committee. Lisa Frangenberg is a new employee with the Lakeshore Center and is also serving the presbyteries and as a temporary staff person.

TE Brad Braley presented the report of the Personnel Commission. Annual reviews of the executives and support staff were done in November and December of 2021. Everyone received a good review. Some changes of responsibility were made among the executives as a result of experience with the needs within the presbyteries. TE Richard Francis has been recruited as Recording Clerk for all three presbyteries. The Personnel Commission has revised its job description, and this has been incorporated in the Manuals of Operations of all three presbyteries.

M/S/C to take a five minute recess.

Following the recess, TE Bryan Kunz led the Presbytery in a time of Centering in God's Word. His message, based on Luke 8:40-56, was entitled "Walking with Jesus."

New Business Consisted of the following motions:

- A. From the Council, presented by TE John Molacek:
  - 1. It is moved to authorize the Presbytery Council to set the 2023 per capita for the presbytery. The motion carried.
  - 2. It is moved to authorize the Presbytery Council to set the amounts for Unified Mission Giving for 2023. The motion carried.
  - 3. It is moved to authorize the Presbytery Council to set salary minimums for 2023. The motion carried.
- B. On behalf of the Council, TE John Molacek moved the approval of the new Manual of Operations. Stated Clerk TE Annika Lister Stroope emphasized that though the Manual of Operations contains a revised membership of the Presbytery Council, current members of the Council will continue to serve through the end of 2023. The motion carried.
- C. TE Le Anne Clausen de Montes moved that the Presbytery concur with an overture to the General Assembly from Pittsburgh Presbytery regarding domestic abuse. The full text of the overture is found at the end of these minutes as an appendix. M/S/C to table the motion until later in the meeting.

Rev. Dr. Ken Green of the Board of Pensions made a presentation on new and revised programs offered by the Board.

The Presbytery received an Offering of Solidarity to benefit the Lakeshore Center on Okoboji. TE Christine Kaplunas offered a Prayer of Dedication for the offering.

TE Sara Hill, on behalf of the Stewardship and Finance Committee, presented the year-end financial report for 2021. M/S/C to receive the report. The full report is found at the end of these minutes as an appendix.

The Presbytery returned to consideration of the Pittsburgh Presbytery Overture that was tabled earlier. The Moderator lifted the motion from the table. The motion received a second. Discussion followed. The motion failed.

It was moved and seconded to hold a special meeting of the Presbytery on March 15, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. to vote on the Pittsburgh Presbytery Overture. Following discussion, the motion was withdrawn. It was moved and seconded to hold a special meeting of the Presbytery on March 22, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. to discuss the overture. The motion passed.

Presentations were made by

- A. RE Marcia Rich, Presbytery Moderator
- B. TE Christine Kaplunas, Presbytery Vice Moderator

- C. TE John Molacek, Council Moderator
- D. TE Sara Sutter, Commission on Ministry, called attention to a written report which is attached as an appendix. She lifted up the process that has begun to establish a New Worshipping Community which will be organized online. The final worship service for the Dows congregation will be held this summer.
- E. RE Angie Stewart, Mission and Ministry, reported that they are working with Mission Executive Amgad Beblawi to expand their work. She asked churches who have received mission grants to make a video of their work that can be shared with other churches. The work trip originally scheduled has been cancelled due to low enrollment.
- F. TE Dan Voigt, Lakeshore Center at Okoboji, called attention to a written report of the Board, which is attached to these minutes as an appendix. He emphasized that the Center is hiring.
- G. TE Dan Voigt, Synod School.
- H. TE Dan Emmert, the Academy, called attention to a written report, which is attached to these minutes as an appendix.

TE Christine Kaplunas and Chaplain Scott Haile led the Presbytery in singing “You Shall Go Out with Joy.”

RE Marcia Rich offered a benediction.

M/S/C to adjourn at 1:25 p.m.

The 229<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa will be held November 6, 2022, 2:30 p.m., at a place to be determined.

The following written reports were also received and are included as Appendices:

## **Domestic Abuse Overture**

**Mark Roth, ruling elder, East Liberty Presbyterian Church**  
**Rev. Charissa Clark Howe, teaching elder, chaplaincy director, Foundation of HOPE**

### **Recommendation**

Based on God's call for us to live in healthy relationships free of violence and coercion, and bearing in mind the proven efficacy of gun relinquishment procedures, Pittsburgh Presbytery overtures the 225th General Assembly (2022) to:

- Endorse the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and Firearms' gun relinquishment protocol.<sup>6</sup>
- Educate congregations about this issue, and make them aware of the [resources](#) available through the Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network.<sup>7</sup>
- Encourage church members to advocate in their presbyteries for removal of guns from domestic abusers.

### **Rationale**

God's people are consistently called by God to be peacemakers and to stand for the wellbeing of the abused and oppressed. One of the most powerful stands the church can take is to protect those who have less power. Women and children are still at great risk of harm at the hands of patriarchal systems -- even in our own time and place. It is our duty to stand with them and to call for their protection and dignity.

One area where we can do much more is confronting the sin of domestic violence. Domestic violence harms not only the persons involved in it, but the covenant of marriage, parental relationships, and the community as a whole. It is also an affront to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The witness of the Gospels shows Jesus himself standing up for those who were abused, marginalized, and violated by unjust power dynamics in the patriarchal society of his time. (See John 8:1-11, the woman in adultery; John 4:4-30, 39-42, the woman at the well; Luke 8:40-48, the woman who touched his robe; Luke 7:36-50, the woman with the ointment.) Jesus also stood as a voice for children, commanding his disciples to treat them as a valuable part of God's Kingdom (See Luke 16:18).

Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, remains a stubbornly persistent problem in American society, one that has only grown worse during the confinement of the pandemic.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, [1 in 4 women](#) and 1 in 9 men will experience physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner during their lifetimes.<sup>1</sup>

Intimate partner homicides are rarer, but the numbers are still devastating. In 2015 alone, there were [1,352 intimate partner homicides](#) in the U.S. Almost all of the victims were women.<sup>2</sup>

More than two-thirds of intimate partner homicides are committed with guns. One landmark study showed that when an abuser has access to a gun, the risk of homicide [rises by 400 percent](#).<sup>3</sup>

It's not just women who are at risk. Of the 156 family mass murders in America between 2006 and 2016, [49 percent of victims were children](#).<sup>4</sup> Intimate partner homicides also cause the collateral killings of neighbors, other relatives and police officers.

Federal law and many state laws already prohibit people convicted of domestic violence from possessing guns. Federal law also prohibits those who have protection from abuse orders against them from possessing guns. But research has shown that most states do not have effective procedures to make sure domestic violence convicts relinquish their weapons.

As a result, many women [are killed](#) each year by partners or former partners who use guns that they should not have.<sup>5</sup>

In jurisdictions that do have stronger enforcement, overall intimate partner homicides go down, according to Michigan State University researcher Dr. April Zeoli. Her work shows that regions with stronger gun relinquishment provisions show an overall decrease in intimate partner homicides of 12 percent.

To improve the effectiveness of gun relinquishment provisions, The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and Firearms has created a [model protocol](#) for how to ensure that domestic abusers turn in their firearms.<sup>6</sup>

It recommends that judges address the issue of gun ownership at the time someone is convicted of domestic violence or becomes subject to a protection from abuse order. Importantly, it also recommends that if domestic abusers are honest about divulging what weapons they have, that information will not be used against them in criminal court, as long as they relinquish their firearms.

The adoption of such procedures would undoubtedly prevent the deaths and injuries of many women and children.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> <https://ncadv.org/STATISTICS>

<sup>2</sup>  Disarming Domestic Abusers.pdf

<sup>3</sup> <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdfplus/10.2105/AJPH.93.7.1089>

<sup>4</sup>  The frightening frequency of family mass shootings

<sup>5</sup>

[https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/oct/26/domestic-abuse-gun-violence-reveal?utm\\_term=308a1deb167b5b0581ba78959534a865&utm\\_campaign=GuardianTodayUS&utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&CMP=GTUS\\_email](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/oct/26/domestic-abuse-gun-violence-reveal?utm_term=308a1deb167b5b0581ba78959534a865&utm_campaign=GuardianTodayUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=GTUS_email)

<sup>6</sup>  firearms-report.pdf

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/phewa/padvn/>