

## Report/Update of the Transitional Task Force

Early this year, at the recommendation of the presbyteries' transitional leaders, a task force to address the "nitty-gritty" of living into the vision of shared staff was formed. This group has explored matters related to offices, phones, insurance, and finances.

The task force is composed of:

- a. Des Moines: Polk Davison, Ron Grohe, Kiley Sherwood, Amgad Beblawi
- b. North Central Iowa: Larry Jahn, Angie Jewett, Karen Kaiser, Ian McMullen
- c. Prospect Hill: Karen Kaiser, John Mayne, Ian McMullen
- d. The Synod Staff provided support and leadership without vote. Deb DeMeester served as moderator of the task force at their request.

We began to meet in April and have met about every three weeks to address the nitty-gritty issues of how this shared staffing will happen.

Our recommendations are:

### Office:

We will maintain both current offices until the new staff, in collaboration with the Personnel Commission, has best determined where it would be most helpful and useful to have the "main" office. Current offices are at Lakeshore Center and in Urbandale.

### Phones:

- i. There will be a single phone number beginning January 1 for the three presbyteries that will be answered by the Office Administrator from wherever they are. They will be able to forward calls to each staff member as needed.
- ii. We will most likely use an app for a shared calling network. There is another option for Voice Over IP Software that has been explored. Conversation with the newly called staff about these options is the next step.

### Finances/Operational Covenant:

- i. This took weeks to figure out a recommendation. In the process we explored several options from each presbytery paying their portion of each bill, to having the Synod serve as the financial agent to forming a new non-profit. In the end, our recommendations are detailed in the attached Operational Covenant, naming the Presbytery of North Central Iowa as "Common Paymaster" for the first three years of this partnership and how that will work.
- ii. This operational covenant restates some of the matters already approved by the presbyteries but brings them into a single working document to provide the administrative/operational covenant among the presbyteries. It also adds a couple of responsibilities to the previously approved Personnel Commission as these items came up in the course of our conversations.
- iii. This covenant will be/has been officially approved by the Leadership Councils/Moderator's Council of each participating presbytery.

Name for the purposes of finances

- i. We needed to come up with a name for this group that would be used in opening the bank account and on the checks.
- ii. The task force came to consensus on United Presbyteries of the Plains (UPP) as the name to use.

Email addresses:

We will determine and set up a common email address so that each staff employee doesn't have multiple emails to use. This is still being finalized and all will be well informed of the phone and email addresses before January 1.

# United Presbyteries of the Plains

## Operational Covenant

### 1. Purpose

- a. The following Presbyteries covenant to faithfully share staff as set forth in the separate document titled ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report***:
  - Presbytery of Des Moines, as approved Nov 12, 2019*
  - Presbytery of North Central Iowa, as approved Nov 3, 2019*
  - Presbytery of Prospect Hill, as approved Oct 26, 2019*
- b. This covenant is a supplement to the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*** and serves as a guide to operational matters and responsibilities of the Personnel Commission. If the need arises to modify provisions contained in this covenant, then the matter shall be referred to the leadership councils of all member presbyteries for review, revision, and final approval.
- c. The presbyteries have agreed to share staff for a period of seven years through 2027.
- d. The five shared staff positions consist of the following:
  - Mission Executive*
  - Pastor to the Presbyteries*
  - Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk*
  - Office Administrator*
  - Program and Communications Administrator*

### 2. Finances

- a. Banking
  - i. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa will establish a separate bank account under the name of United Presbyteries of the Plains.
  - ii. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa agrees to serve as the custodian of the funds for a period of three years (2021-2023). After that time, this arrangement can be renewed by each presbytery's leadership council or moved to another of the member presbyteries.
  - iii. Each presbytery contributing to the financial activities under this covenant will own their share of the account balance in proportion to their contributions.
- b. Budgeting
  - i. *The Personnel Commission will manage the shared budget as follows:*
    1. *Adjusting line items, as needed, without exceeding the budget as approved in the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*** (See Appendix).*
    2. *Develop procedures for approval of financial transactions per financial policies.*
    3. *Act, jointly with executive staff, regarding office locations and related matters.*
  - ii. Each member presbytery will manage their own budgets for their non-shared ministries.
- c. Shared staff compensation
  - i. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa agrees to serve as the common paymaster for all five shared employees who will be concurrently employed by the Presbytery of Des Moines, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and Presbytery of North Central Iowa.
  - ii. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa shall serve as common paymaster for a period of three years (2021-2023). After that time, this arrangement can be renewed by each presbytery's leadership council or moved to another of the member presbyteries.
  - iii. Details of the common paymaster arrangement are as follows:
    1. *Relevant law:* Internal Revenue Code Sections 3121(s) and 3306(p) enable a related corporation (the "common paymaster") to be treated as a single employer solely for purposes of certain payroll tax provisions if the common paymaster (1) employs the same employees concurrently with one or more related corporations, and (2) disburses compensation on behalf of itself and the other related corporations that concurrently employ the employees.



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## Operational Covenant

2. *Application of the law:* A common paymaster relationship exists because (a) the Presbyteries of Des Moines, North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill are a “related” group of corporations since at least 30% of the employees of one presbytery are concurrently employed by the other presbyteries, (b) the employees receive their remuneration through one member of the related group – the common paymaster (i.e. the Presbytery of North Central Iowa), and (c) the employees are concurrently employed by all three presbyteries (including the common paymaster).

3. *Responsibilities:*

- a. The common paymaster will disburse remuneration to the shared staff on behalf of all three presbyteries.
- b. The common paymaster is responsible for keeping books & records for the payroll of the shared staff.
- c. The common paymaster will pay concurrently employed individuals by one combined paycheck, drawn on a single bank account.
- d. The common paymaster is treated as the only employer but only for purposes of FICA, FUTA and income tax withholding.
- e. The common paymaster is responsible for withholding, depositing, and paying FICA and FUTA taxes and filing and furnishing information returns associated with wages it disburses.
- f. If the common paymaster fails to remit payroll taxes, it remains liable for the full amount of the unpaid portion of these taxes. In addition, each of the other related corporations (i.e. presbyteries) using the common paymaster is jointly and severally liable for its appropriate share of these taxes.

d. Financial reporting and policies

- i. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa will utilize a cloud-based solution (QuickBooks Online or similar) showing each presbytery’s contributions and share of expenses.
- ii. Quarterly financial reports will be sent to each member presbytery’s finance committee and to the Personnel Commission.
- iii. *The Personnel Commission is authorized to adopt financial policies to clarify roles, authority, and responsibilities for essential financial management activities considering segregation of duties for internal control purposes where possible.*

3. **Liability of each presbytery**

- a. For purposes other than paying compensation, the shared staff are employed concurrently by the Presbytery of Des Moines, Presbytery of North Central Iowa, and Presbytery of Prospect Hill.
- b. All presbyteries are responsible for acquiring and maintaining separate or group liability insurance and worker’s compensation insurance policies for the shared staff.

4. **Personnel Commission**

- a. The oversight, evaluation and support of the shared staff is under the authority of a Personnel Commission as approved by the presbyteries in the *Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*.
- b. *Composition of the Personnel Commission:*
  - i. Three people from each presbytery will be elected and commissioned for this service.
  - ii. Members will serve in rotating three-year terms.
  - iii. Members can serve two terms or six years before being required to rotate off.
  - iv. Leadership of the Commission will rotate among the presbyteries annually.
  - v. The Commission will report to each presbyter’s leadership council.

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### c. *Authority and expectations of the Personnel Commission:*

- i. Develop a shared set of personnel policies.
- ii. Execute employment agreements, if desired or advised.
- iii. *The Personnel Commission is authorized to hire an accountant to perform banking and accounting activities including the receipt of funds and remittance of funds in accordance with the approved shared budget.*
- iv. *The Personnel Commission will manage the shared budget as set forth in this covenant in 2.b.i. and is authorized to adopt financial policies as set forth in this covenant in 2.d.iii.*
- v. Review and support the shared staff:
  1. Conduct initial six-month reviews of all staff (Jun 30, 2021).
  2. Conduct annual reviews of all staff for the first year (Dec 31, 2021).
  3. *Conduct annual reviews of all executive staff for the second and succeeding years.*
  4. Supervisors will conduct annual reviews of the full-time administrators and submit to the Personnel Commission.
  5. Mentor the staff, provide support, clarify responsibilities, and answer questions.
  6. Discharge staff members who do not meet performance and/or behavioral expectations using due process as set forth in the personnel policies. In the case of the Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk, the Commission shall recommend termination and an interim Stated Clerk candidate to each member presbytery for action.
  7. *In the case of vacancy in the Office Administrator or Program and Communications Administrator positions, the Personnel Commission and the three executives, shall jointly act to fill the vacancy.*
  8. *In the case of vacancy in the Mission Executive, Pastor to the Presbyteries or Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk positions, the Personnel Commission shall notify all member presbyteries and request activation of a search committee.*
  9. Note: Italicized wording in 2.b., 2.d., and 4.c. of this covenant represent changes to what was already approved by the presbyteries in the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report***.
- vi. If the Personnel Commission is unable to resolve a given matter, it shall be brought to a meeting of the moderators of the presbyteries' leadership councils.

### 5. Other matters

- a. If a dispute or disagreement occurs that is not covered in this covenant, it shall be referred to the Personnel Commission to resolve the matter. If the dispute requires revisions to this covenant, then the matter shall be referred to the leadership councils of all member presbyteries for review, revision, and final approval.



# United Presbyteries of the Plains

## Operational Covenant

Appendix – Detailed Shared Budget, as approved in the *Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*:

<b>Contributions:</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>
<b>DM</b>	272,000	278,800	284,376	290,064	295,865	301,782	307,818
<b>NCI</b>	204,000	208,080	212,242	216,486	220,816	225,232	229,737
<b>PH</b>	111,000	113,220	115,484	117,794	120,150	122,553	125,004
<b>Total</b>	<b>587,000</b>	<b>600,100</b>	<b>612,102</b>	<b>624,344</b>	<b>636,831</b>	<b>649,567</b>	<b>662,559</b>

<b>Expenses:</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>
<b>Salaries:</b>							
Executive: Mission	80,000.00	81,600.00	83,232.00	84,896.64	86,594.57	88,326.46	90,092.99
Executive: Pastor to the Presbyteries	80,000.00	81,600.00	83,232.00	84,896.64	86,594.57	88,326.46	90,092.99
Executive: Admin/Stated Clerk	80,000.00	81,600.00	83,232.00	84,896.64	86,594.57	88,326.46	90,092.99
Office administrator	45,000.00	45,900.00	46,818.00	47,754.36	48,709.45	49,683.64	50,677.31
Program & Comm administrator	45,000.00	45,900.00	46,818.00	47,754.36	48,709.45	49,683.64	50,677.31
<b>Total salaries</b>	<b>330,000.00</b>	<b>336,600.00</b>	<b>343,332.00</b>	<b>350,198.64</b>	<b>357,202.61</b>	<b>364,346.66</b>	<b>371,633.59</b>
<b>Benefits:</b>							
Medical	82,500.00	84,150.00	85,833.00	87,549.66	89,300.65	91,086.67	92,908.40
Pension	36,300.00	37,026.00	37,766.52	38,521.85	39,292.29	40,078.13	40,879.70
Death & disability	3,300.00	3,366.00	3,433.32	3,501.99	3,572.03	3,643.47	3,716.34
Cont educ: Execs	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Cont educ: Admins	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
FICA	25,245.00	25,749.90	26,264.90	26,790.20	27,326.00	27,872.52	28,429.97
Professional exp	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Travel: Execs	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00
Travel: GA	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Travel: Prog/Comm	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
<b>Total benefits</b>	<b>196,845.00</b>	<b>199,791.90</b>	<b>202,797.74</b>	<b>205,863.70</b>	<b>208,990.97</b>	<b>212,180.79</b>	<b>215,434.41</b>
<b>Office expense:</b>							
Rentals & utilities	11,000.00	11,275.00	11,556.88	11,845.80	12,141.94	12,445.49	12,756.63
Supplies	10,000.00	10,250.00	10,506.25	10,768.91	11,038.13	11,314.08	11,596.93
Phones	8,000.00	8,200.00	8,405.00	8,615.13	8,830.50	9,051.27	9,277.55
Postage	3,500.00	3,587.50	3,677.19	3,769.12	3,863.35	3,959.93	4,058.93
Zoom accounts	500.00	512.50	525.31	538.45	551.91	565.70	579.85
Equipment	8,000.00	8,200.00	8,405.00	8,615.13	8,830.50	9,051.27	9,277.55
Insurance	13,000.00	13,325.00	13,658.13	13,999.58	14,349.57	14,708.31	15,076.01
Janitorial	7,200.00	7,380.00	7,564.50	7,753.61	7,947.45	8,146.14	8,349.79
Laptops	2,000.00	2,050.00	2,101.24	2,153.75	2,207.62	2,262.81	2,319.38
<b>Total office</b>	<b>63,200.00</b>	<b>64,780.00</b>	<b>66,399.50</b>	<b>68,059.48</b>	<b>69,760.97</b>	<b>71,505.00</b>	<b>73,292.62</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>590,045.00</b>	<b>601,171.90</b>	<b>612,529.24</b>	<b>624,121.82</b>	<b>635,954.55</b>	<b>648,032.45</b>	<b>660,360.62</b>