

Tri-Presbyteries Search Committee  
Report to the Presbyteries  
September 15, 2020

**Action Item A:** The Tri-Presbyteries Search Committee unanimously nominates the following person to be called and elected with the proposed Terms of Call by the presbyteries of Prospect Hill, North Central Iowa, and Des Moines:

For the position of Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk – Teaching Elder Annika Lister Stroope.

**Action Item B:** The Tri-Presbyteries Search Committee unanimously nominates the following person to be called with the proposed Terms of Call by the presbyteries of Prospect Hill, North Central Iowa, and Des Moines:

For the position of Mission Executive - Ruling Elder Amgad Beblawi

**Action Item C:** The Tri-Presbyteries Search Committee unanimously nominates the following person to be called with the proposed Terms of Call by the presbyteries of Prospect Hill, North Central Iowa, and Des Moines:

For the position of Pastor to the Presbyteries – Teaching Elder Ian McMullen

Note: Installation information will be presented at the Fall presbytery meetings.

**Supporting Information:**

- A. Candidate Introductions (page 2)
- B. Position Descriptions (pages 3-4)
- C. Terms of Call (pages 5-7)
- D. Search Committee Members (page 8)
- E. Process and work of the Search Committee (pages 8-9)
- F. The Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan – approved by the presbyteries last fall (pages 9-11)



**A. Candidate Introductions**

<p><b>Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk</b> <b><i>Annika Lister Stroope</i></b></p> 	<p>Ordained in 2001, Annika’s first call was as a chaplain, followed by 18 years as a pastor in congregations in Minnesota and Nebraska. A native of Iowa, Annika was baptized as a child at First Presbyterian Church on Des Moines’ east side. She moved back to Des Moines last year and currently serves as Interim Mission Co-Worker for Our Sister Parish, the Iowa-El Salvador partnership, as well as Parish Associate for Adult Education and Mission at Central Presbyterian Church and Moderator of First Presbyterian Church’s Session. “I seek to use my gifts in collaborative ways for the construction of God’s reign and justice in the here and now. I am a people person as well as a strong administrator.” Annika has worked in team ministry in all of her calls and looks forward to the strong collaboration and team model that are inherent in the Tri-Presbyteries design.</p> <p>Annika lives with her family in Des Moines. During her free time she loves to do the “trinity” of sports a.k.a. triathlons and to travel around the U.S. and abroad.</p>
<p><b>Mission Executive</b> <b><i>Amgad Beblawi</i></b></p> 	<p>Amgad describes himself as a “product of Presbyterian mission,” having been born and raised in Egypt where his Orthodox Christian grandparents joined the Presbyterian church. He graduated from Fuller Seminary and embraced his call to serve God as a ruling elder. He served at the PCUSA national offices from 2005-2016, including six years in Presbyterian World Mission when he traveled to 19 countries as a mission coordinator and representative of the PCUSA. He currently serves as the Interim Executive for the Presbytery of Des Moines. Amgad looks forward to working with congregations to become more faithful disciples in their Christian journey and witness. He notes, “Mission is about who we are in Christ and as Christ’s ambassadors in the world.” He is excited about the connectional and team aspect of this ministry as he believes, “The wisdom of a group is much more than the wisdom of any wise individual.” Amgad and his wife, Susan, enjoy sharing meals with friends, doing puzzles, and watching good movies. Their son, Justin, is a college student in California.</p>
<p><b>Pastor to the Presbyteries</b> <b><i>Ian McMullen</i></b></p> 	<p>Ian has spent most of his life in Iowa. He embraced his call as a Minister of Word and Sacrament after a career as a mechanical engineer and account manager, serving First Presbyterian Church in Maxwell, IA, until he was called to be the Transitional Executive for the presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill. He describes himself as a pastoral visionary, team builder and ministry enabler. “I love people. I love meeting new people, walking with people, engaging in their lives. My ministry is about loving neighbor and loving God. I always make time to visit with people as I travel. We are built for relationships and I love that I get to engage people on a daily basis.” He recognizes the power of leadership cohorts and continuing education opportunities to keep connections in the presbytery strong and vibrant. Ian was a part of the Iowa task force that ultimately brought the vision for a shared staff to the presbyteries. Ian has three grown daughters and loves tinkering with cars to relax.</p>

## **B. Position Descriptions**

### **Position: Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk**

Full Time. Year-Round. Salaried Position. Location: To be determined

**Purpose:** To provide administrative expertise and support to each presbytery as Stated Clerk and staff resource to administrative committees/teams.

#### **Accountable to:**

- The presbyteries through the joint Personnel Commission; an annual review of performance and compensation will be conducted by the Personnel Commission.
- The Leadership Team of each presbytery as colleagues and partners in ministry.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Serves as Team Leader. This includes overseeing team building, staff communication, and ensuring strategic presence where needed in the presbyteries.
- Serves as Stated Clerk of the presbyteries of Des Moines, North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill.
- Serves as staff resource to the Finance and Property Committees of each presbytery.
- Serves as staff resource to the Nominating Committees and ensure accurate records of committee members are maintained for each presbytery.
- Coordinates the stated meetings of each presbytery, including at least one shared meeting/year.
- Provides guidance as requested by Leadership Councils and Committees on Ministry (or their equivalent) for their ministry, in collaboration with the other executives.
- Maintains official policies for the presbyteries.
- Encourages, uplifts and supports each member of the Leadership Team and Administrative Staff of the Presbyteries.
- Supervises the Office Administrator.
- Serves as co-resource to the Personnel Committee with other executives.

### **Position: Mission Executive**

Full Time. Year-Round. Salaried Position. Location: To be determined

**Purpose:** The focus of this position is to further mission engagement in the state, presbyteries, congregations and communities.

#### **Accountable to:**

- The presbyteries through the joint Personnel Commission; an annual review of performance and compensation will be conducted by the Personnel Commission.
- The Leadership Team of each presbytery as colleagues and partners in ministry.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Furthers mission engagement in the state, presbyteries, congregations, and communities by coordinating shared mission initiatives in Iowa (such as mental health, rural concerns, environmental issues) as well as identifying and coordinating mission opportunities.

- Provides encouragement and support of congregational mission through visits to congregations, sharing of resources, telling the stories of what is happening, and encouraging the leaders.
- Serves as staff resource to the Mission Committees of each presbytery if they have one.
- Encourages, uplifts and supports each member of the Leadership Team and Administrative Staff of the presbyteries.
- Serves as co-resource to the Personnel Committee with other executives.
- Supervises the work of the Program and Communications Administrator in collaboration with the Pastor to the Presbyteries.

**Position: Pastor to the Presbyteries**

Full Time. Year-Round. Salaried Position. Location: To be determined

**Purpose:** This position will provide support to pastors and congregations. The focus is on building the health and vitality of the presbyteries', congregations and leaders.

**Accountable to:**

- The presbyteries through the joint Personnel Commission; an annual review of performance and compensation will be conducted by the Personnel Commission.
- The Leadership Team of each presbytery as colleagues and partners in ministry.

**Responsibilities:**

- Supports pastors in their ministries through conversation, sharing of resources, pastoral care and prayer. This may include developing and supporting peer cohorts, coordinating shared emergency grants for pastors with the synod and Board of Pensions, and more.
- Supports congregations as they face the challenges of a changing world and find ways of faithfully serve God in their contexts. This may include educational events for congregational leaders and committees and more.
- Supports upcoming leaders in the church as staff resource for those committees who work with people who are preparing for ministry as a Teaching Elder or Commissioned Pastor.
- Supports congregations in times of transition by working with transitional pastors and being the primary staff resource for Pastor Nominating Committees in collaboration with other executives.
- Encourages, uplifts and supports each member of the Leadership Team and Administrative Staff of the presbyteries.
- Does executive to executive reference checks.
- Serves as primary staff resource to committees with Committee on Ministry functions.
- Serves as co-resource to the Personnel Committee with other executives.
- Collaborates with the Mission Executive who supervises the work of the Program and Communications Administrator.

### C. Terms of Call

**2021 Terms of Call for Annika Lister Stroope** to serve as Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of Des Moines, the Presbytery of North Central Iowa, and the Presbytery of Prospect Hill upon approval of call by each of the presbyteries.

Salary/Housing \$80,000

Split if eligible for a Housing Allowance: Salary\$50,000 Housing \$30,000

#### Benefits:

- Vacation 4 weeks (20 workdays)
- Continuing Education allowance \$2,000 per year, cumulative over 3 years to \$6,000
- Continuing Education leave 2 weeks, cumulative over 3 years to 6 weeks
- Pension, Medical, Death and Disability = Full
- Professional Expenses as budgeted = \$1,00 for Professional Expenses and \$5,000 for travel for 2021. A total of \$2,000 will be available to attend General Assembly every other year.
- Social Security Offset – No
- Medical/Dental Supplemental Insurance No – but employee can select and do payroll deduction
- Sabbatical: Yes. Length of leave = 3 months after 6 years of service. Plan for study and coverage required and approved by Personnel Commission at least 6 months in advance of leave.
- Parental leave: Yes. Length of leave 8 weeks with full salary and benefits, timing in relations to delivery date, adoption, or guardianship to be negotiated between employee, Leadership Team and Personnel Team. Extension of one (1) week may be negotiated as vacation time or leave without pay. Pension benefits to continue on regular salary basis.
- Other Expenses: Contract for up to a total of 120 hours @ \$40/hour (maximum of \$4,800), or approximately ten hours/week, plus mileage during October, November and December 2020 to “shadow” current stated clerks and participate in selection process for the two administrative positions.

#### Operational Matters

- A new laptop will be provided for work use upon start date.
- Reimbursement for a work cell phone plan = vouchered monthly.
- The thought of the visioning team is that this person will live in proximity to the “office” for the shared staff for the sake of working with and supervising the administrative professionals and coordinating presbytery meetings and records.

Start date: January 1, 2021. I accept this invitation to be and the terms for the candidate as Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk:

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Annika Lister Stroope, Candidate

Date

On behalf of the Search Committee, attesting to this candidate and terms,

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Ken Rummer, Committee Chair

Date



**2021 Terms of Call for Ian McMullen** to serve as Pastor to the Presbyteries for the Presbytery of Des Moines, the Presbytery of North Central Iowa and the Presbytery of Prospect Hill upon approval of call by each of the presbyteries.

Salary/Housing \$80,000

Split if eligible for a Housing Allowance: Salary \$51,200 Housing \$28,800

Benefits:

- Vacation 4 weeks (20 workdays)
- Continuing Education allowance \$2,000 per year, cumulative over 3 years to \$6,000
- Continuing Education leave 2 weeks, cumulative over 3 years to 6 weeks
- Pension, Medical, Death and Disability = Full
- Professional Expenses as budgeted = \$1,00 for Professional Expenses and \$15,000 for travel for 2021. A total of \$2,000 will be available to attend General Assembly every other year.
- Social Security Offset – No
- Medical/Dental Supplemental Insurance No – but employee can select and do payroll deduction
- Sabbatical: Yes. Length of leave = 3 months after 6 years of service. Plan for study and coverage required and approved by Personnel Commission at least 6 months in advance of leave. Calendar for eligibility for sabbatical began May 15, 2019 as negotiated with the Transitional Executive Search Committee.
- Parental leave: Yes. Length of leave 8 weeks with full salary and benefits, timing in relations to delivery date, adoption, or guardianship to be negotiated between employee, Leadership Team and Personnel Team. Extension of one (1) week may be negotiated as vacation time or leave without pay. Pension benefits to continue on regular salary basis.
- Moving Expenses: Vouchered reimbursement up to \$10,000

Operational Matters

- A new laptop will be provided for work use upon start date.
- Reimbursement for a work cell phone plan = vouchered monthly.
- The expectation is that this position will operate out of a home office.

Start date: January 1, 2021.

I accept this invitation to be and the terms for the candidate as Mission Executive:

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Ian McMullen, Candidate

Date

On behalf of the Search Committee, attesting to this candidate and terms,

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Ken Rummer, Committee Chair

Date

## D. Search Committee Members

Nancy Beenken (RE, Presbytery of North Central Iowa)  
Darca Boom (RE, Presbytery of Des Moines)  
Rebecca Brown\* (RE, Presbytery of Prospect Hill)  
Kerry Carson (TE, Presbytery of North Central Iowa)  
Lynne Hanna (TE, Presbytery of Des Moines)  
Judy Klepfer (RE, Presbytery of North Central Iowa)  
Ken Rummer \*\* (TE, Presbytery of Des Moines)  
Kendall Von Glan (RE, Presbytery of Prospect Hill)

\*Secretary

\*\*Moderator

## E. Process and Work of the Search Committee

The Search Committee was established by action of the three presbyteries when they approved the Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan (see section F). Each presbytery selected three members (see section D).

The committee's first meeting was January 10, 2020. Since then the committee has logged 14 meetings, all but two (pre-pandemic ones) by electronic video conferencing. Updates from the committee were provided to the presbyteries in March, May, June, and the end of July.

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies provided a search roadmap, and ongoing administrative support and guidance in the persons of Deb DeMeester, Director of Leadership Development, and Gretchen Milloy, Office Coordinator.

To provide a one-click home for information about our presbyteries, ourselves, the vision for shared leadership, and descriptions of the positions, Deb DeMeester developed a web page and the committee gathered and edited content for it. (<https://engagingleaders.org/iowa-tri-presbytery-leadership-team/>)

Ministry Information Forms (MIFs) written by the committee featured key competencies for each position and made it possible to participate in our denomination's Church Leadership Connection (CLC) matching process.

Committed to a broad search, the committee purchased on-line ads in *Presbyterians Today* and *Presbyterian Outlook* and spread the word through our presbyteries and through our synod and stated clerk contacts.

Those matched through CLC and those responding by self-referral were sent supplemental questions prepared by the committee. From those returning answers, the

Seeking Candidates for a New Vision Ruling Elders or Teaching Elders	
<b>3 Iowa Presbyteries</b> Prospect Hill North-Central Iowa Des Moines	<b>1 Leadership Team</b> Mission Executive Pastor to the Presbyteries Administrative Presbyter/ Stated Clerk
Information on these positions and our presbyteries is available at <a href="http://www.engagingleaders.org/iowa-tri-presbytery-leadership-team/">www.engagingleaders.org/iowa-tri-presbytery-leadership-team/</a> Apply by May 22 with resume or CLC self-referral to Gretchen Milloy at <a href="mailto:gmilloy@lakesandprairies.org">gmilloy@lakesandprairies.org</a>	
	

committee selected some for reference calls, and after discussing the results of the reference checks, the committee invited some of those to interview.

For the three positions together, the initial pool of potential candidates (self-referrals and CLC matches) numbered 64. Of those, 21 returned supplemental questions (3 racial/ethnic, 9 women, 12 men). The committee did reference checks on 9 and interviewed 6 (1 racial/ethnic, 3 women, 3 men).

The committee utilized LeaderWise, a professional career coaching and candidate assessment service, to do psychological screening and provide an overview of the personality strengths of each candidate to be interviewed, as well as areas where support might be helpful.

After hearing those reports and completing the interviews, the committee discerned and deliberated, reaching a unanimous recommendation of the candidates presented here (see section A).

Next steps:

The Shared Staffing Model includes a full time Office Administrator and a full time Program and Communications Administrator (see section F). Following action by the presbyteries to call the three executives, the Search Committee will begin the search process for these remaining positions in consultation with the executives. The Tri-Presbyteries Search Committee is working toward having the full team of five assembled and ready to begin their work with us at the start of the new year.

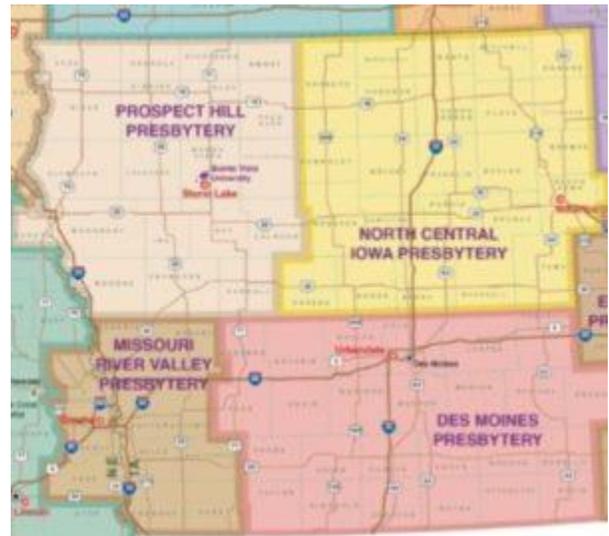
### **G. Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan**

Approved by the Presbyteries in their fall 2019 meetings.

(key excerpts)

#### **The Vision**

We can do more together than we can individually as faithful witnesses to God in Iowa, and we desire to find a way to share ministry in flexible, permission-giving ways while supporting, encouraging, and respecting each other as independent presbyteries. Each presbytery will continue to function independently with their own structures and meetings. Jesus did not send his disciples out one by one but rather two by two – in ministry teams. The three presbyteries, currently in conversation, bring great gifts to one another – people gifts, financial gifts, other assets, health, mission, policies. We each don't have to be all things to all people. With a diverse and energetic staff of five people, we will be able to address the ebb and flow of needs that happen in the presbyteries as well as develop efficiencies by having one person, rather than three, attending to certain tasks.



#### **The core values of this proposal**

A heart for furthering mission, a passion to see congregations and pastors thrive, the need for a clear administrative leader, and a desire to be good stewards with the resources we have been given.

### **How did this come to be?**

Conversations began about four years ago among Presbyterians in Iowa looking into the future and recognizing that we can't continue to keep doing things the way we have been. Membership numbers in our churches are declining and, when we compared 2006 to 2016 and projected into 2026, we didn't like what we saw. Doing nothing different, we projected that by 2026:

- Des Moines would be down by 35% to 4,256 members in 47 churches
- North Central Iowa would be down by 25% to 5,146 members in 40 churches: and
- Prospect Hill would be down by 39% to 3,149 members in 32 churches.

Key questions that guided our conversations were:

- Who is God calling us to be?
- How can we be most faithful with our resources?
- How can we best provide support & stability to congregations & leaders?
- How can we set ourselves up in a way that leads toward needed changes?

Scripture parables call us to put our gifts and resources to work rather than burying them so we can return them intact to the Master. Questions we continue to ponder include: Are we willing to "be a community of faith, entrusting (ourselves) to God alone, even at the risk of losing (our) life?" (F-1.0301) Are we about servant leadership or focused just on preserving our own corner of the world? Is God doing something new in our midst? Are we being Re-formed? Is this the "rainy day" for which our presbytery has been saving money? If we don't use it to benefit our congregations, their leaders and their mission, what will we use it for?

The trend in reducing presbytery staff is resulting in greater isolation, greater stress, more time, and resources spent on crises and less on the needs of pastors and congregations.

At a strategic planning retreat, the vision of shared staffing emerged rather unexpectedly and with a deep sense of inspiration. Since that retreat, significant time has been invested in sharing, discussing, and refining the model.

### **Where are we now?**

The Iowa Conversations Task Force presents this plan for a vote with the following key convictions:

- God is doing a new thing! And we want to be a part of it!
- Life as we know it has changed. A technical fix will not fully address the issues before us. This is an adaptive issue that requires risk, prayer, courage, and creativity as we seek to be faithful leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church.
- We believe that "for such a time as this" it is important to:
  - model partnership, rather than isolation;
  - prioritize congregational care and learning, rather than simply put out fires;
  - recognize that we are serving communities, not just churches; and
  - build collegiality and trust, for without them this will not work (Book of Order).

### **The proposed model: 3 executives and 2 full time administrators**

- **Mission Executive:** This person will focus on mission engagement in the state, presbyteries, and communities. This includes taking the lead in mission initiatives in Iowa (such as the mental health initiative, rural issues, environmental issues) and coordinating mission

opportunities (especially for smaller congregations who may not have enough to do such a trip on their own). Being a resource to Mission Committees of the presbyteries.

- **Pastor to the Presbyteries:** this person will provide support to pastors and congregations, and Pastor Nominating Committees. The focus is on health and vitality of congregations and leaders so will include peer cohort development and administration, educational events for congregational leaders, reference checks. Being a co-resource to Committees on Ministry (or equivalent), Committees on Preparation for Ministry (or equivalent), congregational Personnel Committees and a primary resource to Pastor Nominating Committees.
- **Administrative Executive:** this person will serve as Stated Clerk to all three presbyteries and as the Head of Staff. They will resource Finance and Property Committees, Nominating Committees, Permanent Judicial Committees, policy matters, and presbytery meetings. He or she will also co-resource Committees on Ministry (or equivalent), Committees on Preparation for Ministry (or equivalent) and congregational Personnel Committees.
- **Full time Office Administrator:** Supporting the work of committees, Stated Clerk office, and being point of contact for calls from congregations. Support for Administrative Executive.
- **Full time Program and Communications Administrator:** This position will be ½ time program support (support for events and programs from the work of the Pastor to the Presbyteries and Mission Executive plus support for them). The other half would be spent on communications that connect and communicate with the Iowa Presbyteries (websites, minute for mission pieces, newsletters, etc.). This person will make sure stories are shared from every presbytery.

#### **What do we expect of the staff?**

- We expect our staff to be leaders who will help congregations and congregational leaders lean and respond to the challenges of ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through transformation. There will be annual events that bring people together to be inspired and learn. The priority is that congregations be empowered to serve God in our communities and be faithful in this service. We hope a by-product will be congregational growth in spiritual formation and faithful engagement with people and communities.
- We expect all staff to support the priorities of the individual presbyteries.
- We expect each executive to take initiative and be proactive with the focus of their position description and not just reactive to crises.
- We expect each staff person to be committed to developing healthy communication and engaging support for each other.
- We expect all staff to seek professional support and prioritize wellness and wholeness in their own lives and ministries.