



**Meeting Packet  
for the 508<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting  
of the Presbytery of Des Moines**



**June 3, 2017**

***Hosted by  
Collegiate Presbyterian Church  
Ames, Iowa  
as part of the  
All-Iowa Presbyterians Gathering***

## **A-4 – CONGREGATIONAL TRANSITION TASK FORCE REPORT**

**June 3, 2017**

The task force reports the following:

- Approved the MIF for First Presbyterian Church of Corning, Iowa.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joyce Rash, moderator

## **C – COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT**

**June 3, 2017**

### **Statement of Faith Chad Schwickerath**

#### **The Bible**

I believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God and central text of the Christian faith. Within the two testaments is a collection of canonized books representing a variety of authors, genres, and historical contexts. I believe that this diversity alone problematizes any “literal” or “inerrant” reading of the text. Instead, the text must be considered under the appropriate hermeneutic which considers at the very least: author, context/audience, and genre. Within this framework, I believe that scripture must be compassionately read, compassionately challenged, and compassionately considered for impact within our own present contexts. Above all, “the Fulfillment and end of scripture is the love of God and our neighbor,” (Augustine, On Christian Doctrine). That is, I believe interpretation of scripture should reflect a loving God and compassion for others.

While the Bible serves as a central and important text for me, I do not view it as end-all, be-all. I believe it is possible to find truth in theological as well as social-political commentary of the Bible and on belief. My faith and belief will continue to be formed through prose and poetry—even when “non-religious” in nature. If God is Creator, the Holy Spirit move through us, and Christ is redeemer; it is fair to suggest Truth can be discerned elsewhere as well.

#### **The Trinity**

I believe in the Trinity—God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Though I also believe God the Father is also Mother and Creator.

#### **God the Father/Mother/Creator**

I believe God chooses to be God with us and for us. That is, all of creation is created within the image of God. I believe God loves creation and desires for creation to live most fully into its potential—into who and what we are created to be. In this, I believe God is relational. That is, we—humanity—seeks to understand more of who God is and God reveals God’s self to us.

#### **Jesus the Redeemer**

I believe Jesus lived, died, and was resurrected. For me, these events compose the Revelation of God to creation. We should seek to understand each of these events in relationship to the others. As the Revelation of God, I believe Jesus demonstrates the ultimate choosing of humanity and of creation, and the ultimate choosing to be in relationship with us.

For me, Jesus’ life demonstrates and provides guidance on how humanity might truly live as creation. Consistently, Jesus challenges the status quo and provides alternative mindsets and ways of living. Through this, I believe we better understand how to live into our humanity, to live in community with all creation, and truly live as we were created to be.

I believe Jesus’ death on a cross exposes the corruptness (sin) of our world. I struggle to say “Jesus died FOR our sin” in sacrificial atonement, suggesting God to be some fiend which hungers for compensation and sacrifice. Instead, I gravitate towards Jesus’ death exposes the meaninglessness of our fear of dying. And this fear of dying is what gradually and ultimately fuels our obsession with competition and NOT dying—with having more than the other, with being better than the other, with seeking revenge against the other, and so on. I believe it is these obsessions—personal sin—that have created social and political systems which intentionally and unintentionally oppress—communal sin.

The resurrection, then, provides hope in re-orienting the way I live in this world with humanity. The living-dying-resurrected Jesus demonstrates to me once that there is hope in living into the Kingdom of God on Earth.

### **The Holy Spirit**

I believe the Holy Spirit descends on and moves through each person. The Holy Spirit affirms the gifts, and abilities, and talents, and uniqueness of each individual. Through the Holy Spirit we are each invited to experience the divine and explore our faith alone and in community. I believe the Holy Spirit in my life and the lives of others helps me more fully understand the Revelation of God.

### **The Church**

I believe that the Church is the congregation of people who believe there might be something particular or something compelling about the Triune God. Within these groupings, I believe a good Word should be preached and heard, and sacraments are celebrated. For me, it is important that space is made for disbelief, for question, and for formation. We should be able to be vulnerable while also held accountable. From these communities, I believe people must go out and bring hope to the world through word and action.

### **The Sacraments**

I believe sacraments are signs and symbols which connect separate communities and contexts and histories to one universal Church and one common narrative. I believe in the importance of the sacraments of Baptism and Communion.

### **Baptism**

I believe Baptism to be a public proclamation in which an individual is publicly named as a member in the community. I believe that in infant baptism, we celebrate God's grace which is extended to each person even before it is recognized. I believe that by living into our call and our created-ness, we live into our Baptism.

### **Communion**

I believe that the bread and the wine of Communion symbolize the body and blood of Christ, calling us to remember the life-death-resurrection of Jesus. I believe that in the invitation to the table we are shown the abundant grace of God and expansive invitation to all.

Respectfully Submitted,  
TE Roger Todd, moderator

## E – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT

**June 3, 2017**

The Council presents the following item of information to the presbytery:

- Leadership Council VOTED to elect Shamaine Chambers King as moderator of the Council and Jan Scott as the vice moderator.
- A meeting of Presbytery Leaders was held March 4, 2017 at Trinity United Presbyterian Church in Indianola that included members of the Leadership council and moderators of Presbytery committees and task forces.
- Individual council members have been assigned to serve as liaisons with committees and task forces of Presbytery to improve communication and provide support.
- A joint meeting was held on May 24 between Leadership Council, Personnel Committee, and the Budget and Finance Committee. As a result, members of Leadership Council are beginning work with the chairs of key administrative committees to seek ways to most effectively, cooperatively and responsively serve the needs of the Presbytery.
- Leadership Council continues to work with the stated clerk to review descriptions of Presbytery committees and task forces in the Manual of Operations. The council's **goal is to bring an updated Manual of Operations to the August Presbytery meeting** which accurately reflects decisions made by our Presbytery and will better facilitate the work and ministry of our Presbytery by clarifying roles, relationships and responsibilities.
- Leadership Council continues to seek a female Ruling Elder to fill the vacancy on the nominating committee, Class of 2019. Emphasis is to find someone from the SW, SE, or W portion of the Presbytery. Please share any suggestions with a member of the Leadership Council.

The council RECOMMENDS the following:

- That the TABLED motion (from February) concerning Our Sister Parish be Postponed Indefinitely to permit needed details to be addressed.
- That the proposal by the Sudanese Support Team that the First Arabic Worshipping Community be formally designated as a new organized congregation of the Presbytery of Des Moines be APPROVED. In addition, the congregation will be designated as an Arabic Speaking Community Center. This will make them eligible for grants that would help support their mission and ministry. Possible grants include \$25,000 from PC(USA) and grants from Synod of Lakes and Prairies. The Support Team is also exploring the possibility of applying for other grants.

**Leadership Council Members:**

TE Hans Cornelder (Gibson, First)  
RE Maurice Dyer (Indianola, Trinity United)  
RE Robert Finney (Clive, Heartland)  
RE Jonathan Kimple (Dallas Center, First)  
TE David Kincaide (Dexter, First & Greenfield, First)  
TE David Madsen (HR)  
RE Jack Ratekin (Des Moines, Westminster)  
TE Jan Scott (West Des Moines, Covenant)  
RE Midge Slater (Des Moines, First)  
TE Alex Thornburg (Clive, Heartland)

**Ex Officio:**

RE David Hamilton, stated clerk  
TE Jim Koopman, interim general presbyter

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shamaine Chambers King, moderator