

LEADERSHIP POD REPORT

PRESBYTERY MEETING

October 29th, 2022

The Leadership Pod is comprised of leaders from the Mission, Care for Pastoral Leaders and Care for Congregation Pods, the Presbytery's Moderator and Vice Moderator, Task Leaders for Personnel, Records, and Finance, the Chairs for the Nominating and Representation Committees, the Treasurer, and the Stated Clerk.

The Leadership Pod works to foster working relationships between all leadership within the Presbytery and relays important communication throughout the Presbytery. They handle and consider administrative and programmatic business, including, but not limited to financial review, reading records and overseeing personnel issues.

Note from Moderator Paul Campbell

The Presbytery is still deeply saddened by the loss of Michael Lochow. Michael was the person with the knowledge of what we needed to continue as a presbytery.

On top of that we have just come through a two-year pandemic.

The last year has been especially difficult for us. Of all the committee and pods in the presbytery, there are only 3 that have moderators for them now; Mission Pod, CPM Pod, and the Leadership Pod.

Almost all the work of the presbytery in the last year has gone through the approval of the Leadership Pod. Then presented to Presbytery.

Pastoral Care Pod has only 2 members, Nominating Committee has only 2 members, Finance Committee has 2 members. Congregational Care Pod has only 1 member, Personnel Committee has only 1 member.

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MAY LEADERSHIP POD MEETING

At the April Presbytery meeting Deb DeMeester presented a workshop to the body with breakout groups afterwards. Deb DeMeester joined the Leadership Pod meeting and provided a written summary report of information gathered from Presbytery Meeting ([see Attachment Input from April 3 Presbytery meeting](#))

Pod group discussed that Presbytery did not know what the churches needed and voted to create a part-time Designated Pastoral Care position for 2 years to meet with churches and form a leader position for supporting churches going forward.

Heard Presentation from Omaha Presbytery Foundation Pastoral Leadership Revitalization program. Voted to proceed going forward and offering it for pastors in the Presbytery.

[APPENDIX A Omaha Presbytery Foundation Pastoral Leadership Revitalization Program \(Attached\)](#)

JUNE LEADERSHIP POD MEETING

Met over Zoom with Deb DeMeester again. Finalized Job Descriptions for 3 positions.

[Director of Communications Positions](#) (Attachment)

[Designated Connectional Care Pastor](#) (Attachment)

[Stated Clerk](#) (Attachment)

July Leadership Pod Meeting

Did Not meet in lieu of Michael Lochow's death

August Leadership Pod Meeting

[Revamped Job Descriptions](#)

[Stated Clerk Replacement](#) – Campbell and Holtey will work on appointing a temporary Stated Clerk from a list of retired clerks, given to us from the denomination.

[Steele Church Closing](#) – There is a \$1200 (approx.) mortgage outstanding (a PLIP loan) on the church. Typically, in these situations, 2/3, or, in this case, \$807.07 is to be paid back by the closing church. The congregation has had a closing service. PNP is waiting to receive proof of a congregational meeting and vote to close the church. Then a closing commission will be formed. Interest in purchasing the church building has been made by a neighbor to the church. Norstog will contact the person making this inquiry.

[Grant proposal](#) – Kristi Serumgard, on behalf of WPC in Devils Lake requests a grant for enhancements in technology. **Upon MOTION by Preston, \$2000 from the Congregational Development Grant was approved.**

[Crookston church](#) proposes to move from a solo pastor position to co-pastors. Pastoral candidate Ruth Sanders would be offered the co-pastor position (along with Michael Ozaki as the other co-pastor). **Upon a MOTION by Campbell, the Leadership Pod gives their blessing to the Crookston Church to pursue their plans to create co-pastor positions.** Ruth Sanders has completed all her requirements and stands ready to receive a call. She will be examined by Presbytery at the October meeting.

[Prepare for Presbytery Meeting](#)

Grant proposal – Kristi Serumgard, on behalf of WPC in Devils Lake requests a grant for enhancements in technology. **Upon MOTION by Preston, \$2000 from the Congregational Development Grant was approved.**

September Leadership Pod Meeting

Approved the change of Terms of call for Rev. Michael Ozaki First Presbyterian Church of Crookston from pastor to Co-Pastor.

Approved terms of Call for Co-Pastor candidate Ruth Sanders [\(Attached Below\)](#)

Approved Rev Sarah Bigwood Administrative Commission Installation

October Leadership Pod Meeting

Finalized Presbytery Meeting Agenda

Approved for payment of Steele Church Insurance Payment

Input from April 3 Presbytery meeting

Potential Directions and Steps

CARE

1. **Invest in current pastoral leaders:**
 - a. Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation has a Lilley Grant beginning July 1 and are looking for another presbytery or two to join this program. It is a matching grant so there is some financial commitment. The Pastoral Leaders Revitalization Program is for pastoral leaders who are isolated geographically, socially, or culturally. The ultimate aim of the PLR program is to foster self-sufficiency and vitality in communities of faith in the rural congregations of the Midwest. The purposes of PLR are to increase pastoral resilience and adaptive leadership; to stem the attrition rate of pastors and commissioned pastors; and to create a network of pastoral leadership within the presbyteries served by the program. The heart of the program is monthly coaching and periodic retreats. See Appendix A.
 - b. Another option is to develop your own retreat/get-away for the pastoral leaders.
2. **Invest in leadership for small congregations:**
 - a. Intentionally build a cohort to be trained as Commissioned Pastors (can be done through the Synod's Academy) OR
 - b. Train and commission a small group of ruling elders to serve the presbytery with the ability to moderate Sessions, preach, and connect on behalf of the presbytery. OR
 - c. Engage coaches to work with Sessions to explore their futures in an ever-changing world. Perhaps a blend of learning, reading, and looking forward.
 - d. The Board of Pensions has a program they have been piloting called Project Regeneration to help congregations assess finances, how their buildings are being used, and future ministry through spiritual discernment, using Joan Gray's book. Perhaps a cluster of congregations could do this together.

CONNECT

1. **Build connections with ruling elders:** Our Presbyterian system has been built on the connections between pastoral leaders and the Presbytery. Clerks of Session have a unique relationship, too. Empowering ruling elders, building a sense of connectedness with them, can add to a sense of belonging when pastoral relations aren't present. Can we help build better connections between congregations through their ruling elders? For example, designate 2023 as the Year of the Ruling Elder and ask each Session to select at least one person to be a part of a presbytery initiative. Entice them with a sense of fun! Hold a retreat for the Ruling Elders to get to know each other, a community building day. AND/OR Offer them a particular study as a group that meets on Zoom and is facilitated by others for the sake of learning and fellowship. Introduce resources for congregation to explore. As the Director of Leadership Development for the Synod, I would be willing to partner in designing something for engagement of ruling elders as I think something like this would be beneficial to other presbyteries. We could experiment and learn together, developing some "good practices" that could be shared.

2. **Build community through presbytery events:** Recommendations of gatherings of different groups of people were suggested on April 2.
3. **Build connections with Clerks of Session:** The Stated Clerks of the Synod are developing a series of training videos. A final decision and schedule will be determined by them next week. This could happen by invitations to participate from Michael, and an initial meeting facilitated with one or two videos and questions.

CHALLENGE

1. **Develop a structure that energizes and serves all members and congregations of the presbytery.** I have attached what I found in the files shared with me. There are a couple of different ways to proceed with this: one is to dig deep into the docs. The other is to focus on the caring and connection components and tweak the docs for now, more fully addressing them in a couple of years. I have thought about meeting with each pod to talk about how their work might be more oriented toward the desires expressed at the presbytery meeting.
2. **Determine staffing.** Again, I see at least three alternative paths depending on what you want to prioritize:
 - a. Do nothing right now. Implement a couple of programs. See if priorities shift as some immediate needs are addressed.
 - b. Begin a search for a generalist to be executive.
 - c. Hire one or two part time people to address the technology and/or connection priorities:
 - i. An IT professional to create online space that can be shared (small churches don't have social capital to have robust media presence). A space that can include broadcasts, announcements, information about collaborative work with others. Training and setting up congregations so that we can share worship on a regular basis. A Designated Communications person (more than what you have now).
 - ii. A person to build community within the presbytery: compassionate, good listener and point person to meet with Sessions, care for pastoral leaders, and help with community building events. A Designated Community Care person.

APPENDIX A

The Pastoral Leadership Revitalization program is designed to increase pastoral resilience and stem the attrition rate of ordained and lay pastors. The Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation is aware that pastors in isolated communities, whether rural or urban communities, and first call pastors, are especially susceptible to feeling isolated, and therefore, is eager to support and encourage such pastors in their ministry. A vital way to support pastors is through a coaching mentor, a fellow pastor who can offer wisdom, guidance, and encouragement on your journey as a pastor. We are inviting pastors with great potential to partner with a coaching mentor, that they may be even more successful in their ministry. What will you receive by participating in this program?

- You will be part of a cohort of pastors and commissioned pastors, engaged in revitalizing ministry in their congregations.
- You will be energized for ministry by attending the retreats for pastors and CPs.
- Your congregation will benefit from the ways in which you are growing from working with a mentor and attending retreats.
- The coaching you receive is valued at \$1,000/year. The retreats would cost about \$500/retreat. You will receive these benefits at a small cost to you.
- Becky Balestri, PLR Program Manager, is a phone call or email away from you for all your questions, concerns, and ideas. Her contact is office: 402-397-5138, cell: 402-709-0568, or email: becky@opsf-omaha.org.

What will be expected of you?

- Attend at least one retreat each year, offered by PLR.
- Meet with your coaching mentor at least once a month, either face-to-face, by phone, or virtually (such as through Zoom).
- Be willing to be coachable and teachable.
- Be open to participating in spiritual direction.
- Be willing to make this program a priority in your ministry.

Newsletter that had several articles on the Pastor Leadership Revitalization Program:

<https://omahapresbyterianseminaryfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Spring-2020-News.pdf>

<https://omahapresbyterianseminaryfoundation.org/news/>

The Presbytery of Northern Plains

Designated Director of Communications Position Description

Purpose of the position:

The Designated Director of Communications will further the caring and connections of the presbytery through technology both for the Presbytery and for its congregation.

Accountability and Relationships:

Called and employed by the Presbytery of Northern Plains, the Designated Director of Communications is accountable to the presbytery through the Leadership Pod for fulfilling the expectations of the position and sharing insights.

This person is expected to collaborate closely with the Designated Connectional Care Pastor.

This designated position is for an initial period of two years. The Designated Director of Communications would be eligible to apply for future positions to serve the presbytery.

Qualifications:

- A passion for small-church and rural ministry
- Ability to build trusting relationships within the presbytery
- Knowledge of communications and technology

Responsibilities of the Designated Director of Communications:

- To develop a communications plan that serves to connect congregations with the presbytery and each other. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Website (maintain, update, improve)
 - Adding items to the website that reflect the resources requested by congregations.
 - Adding a collaborative area for worship resources including sermons that could be used.
 - Newsletter via Mail Chimp.
 - Training (local leaders to maintain websites and social media)
- To consult with congregations about technology needs.
 - To encourage the use of Congregational Development Grant and other grants for congregations with technology needs.
- To systematize and centralize the database.
- To set up technology for presbytery meetings and distribution of materials.
 - Consult with hosting congregation about technology needs.
 - Set up deadlines for materials to be into the office.
 - Share materials with commissioners.

This employee is not expected to:

- Function as chief administrative officer of the presbytery;
- Oversee the presbytery's daily operations;

- Represent the interests and welfare of the presbytery with the Synod and other entities in any official capacity; or
- Serve as head of staff for employees of the presbytery or to do annual reviews of other employees.

The Designated Communications Director position is half-time (20 hours/week).

- Salary:
- Vacation: four weeks
- Continuing Education: two weeks and \$_____
- Pension:
- Health Insurance:

In addition, the Designated Director of Communications will be given a Zoom account and travel allowance. This person will also have an allowance for a work cell phone, technology (computer, printer, camera, etc.) and supplies (paper, ink, stationary, stamps, business cards).

The Presbytery of Northern Plains

Designated Connectional Care Pastor Position Description

Purpose of the position:

The Designated Connectional Care Pastor will provide visits, nurture, and encouragement to promote the caring and connections of the presbytery with its congregations and members.

Accountability and Relationships:

The Designated Connectional Care Pastor shall be called and employed by the Presbytery of Northern Plains, the Designated Connectional Care Pastor is accountable to the presbytery through the Leadership Pod for fulfilling the expectations of the position and sharing insights.

This person is expected to collaborate closely with the Designated Director of Communications.

This designated position is for an initial period of two years. The Designated Connectional Care Pastor would be eligible to apply for future positions to serve the presbytery.

Qualifications:

- A passion for small-church and rural ministry
- A desire to build the sense of connection within the presbytery
- Ability to build trusting relationships within the presbytery
- Willingness to visit with congregations and leaders

Responsibilities of the Designated Connectional Care Pastor:

- To build relationships with and among congregations, ruling elders, and teaching elders;
- To meet with each Session to hear their story, their excitements and concerns (can be by zoom or in person) and be a resource person for them, connecting them with resources and programs that could address their interests;
- To gather and share information with the Leadership Pod on the needs of the presbytery as well as its strengths and challenges;
- To present a written report at each regularly scheduled presbytery meeting, sharing the churches visited since the last meeting and some of the interesting stories heard; and
- To coordinate community building activities within the presbytery (such as ruling elder gatherings or retreats/events for pastoral leaders).

This employee is not expected to:

- Function as chief administrative officer of the presbytery;
- Oversee the presbytery's daily operations;

- Represent the interests and welfare of the presbytery with the Synod and other entities in any official capacity; or
- Serve as head of staff for employees of the presbytery or to do annual reviews of other employees.

The Designated Connectional Care Pastor position is half-time.

- Salary:
- Vacation: four weeks
- Continuing Education: two weeks and \$_____
- Pension:
- Health Insurance:

In addition, the Designated Connectional Care Pastor will be given a Zoom account and travel allowance. This person will also have an allowance for a work cell phone, technology and supplies (paper, ink, stationary, stamps, business cards). There will also be a professional expense to cover meals, etc.

The Presbytery of Northern Plains

Stated Clerk Position Description

Purpose of the position:

To serve in the constitutional office of Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of Northern Plains.

Accountability and Relationships:

The Stated Clerk is accountable to the Presbytery of Northern Plains, the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The term of office shall be three years. Presbytery may re-elect the Stated Clerk to additional terms if it so desires. The election will take place at the annual meeting of the Presbytery. A newly elected Stated Clerk shall assume the duties of that office on March 1 following the election, in order to give the previous Stated Clerk time to complete the annual reports.

A review and evaluation of the Stated Clerk's performance shall be made annually by Presbytery Leadership Pod.

Qualifications:

- Knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order (current edition);
- Knowledge of the Book of Order;
- Ability to take clear and accurate minutes;

Responsibilities of the Stated Clerk:

- The Stated Clerk shall function in accordance with the Book of Order, G-3.0104, these Bylaws, and this Presbytery-approved position description.
- Between meetings of Presbytery the Stated Clerk shall be authorized to transfer members from the closed church membership rolls of the Presbytery to the rolls of another church at the request of the member and shall report such actions to the next meeting of Presbytery.
- Serve as a voting member and secretary of the Leadership Pod and, in conjunction with the Leadership Pod, the Stated Clerk shall ensure the Presbytery has adequate insurance coverage and that the session records are annually reviewed.
- Participate in training and record reviews with the other Stated Clerks in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.
- Represent the interests and welfare of the presbytery with the Synod (monthly meetings of the Executive Forum) and other entities in any official capacity.

Salary and Benefits

The Leadership Pod shall make a recommendation concerning the Stated Clerk's salary to the Treasurer. The Presbytery shall determine this salary upon recommendation from the Leadership Pod at the fall stated meeting.

In addition, the Stated Clerk will be given a Zoom account and travel allowance.

Expanded Ministry Collaboration Vision
Northern Lights Ministry Collaboration

Trinity Lutheran Church (TLC)
First Presbyterian Church (FPC)
Wesley United Methodist Church (WUMC)

Position Description

Pastor of Congregational Care

August 2022

Purpose: Provide for Word and Sacrament ministry and leadership in the area of congregational care and visitation for the Northern Lights Ministry Collaboration (NLMC).

Skills and Abilities:

Master of Divinity degree from PCUSA, ELCA, or UMC accredited seminary.
Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal.
Ability to work with staff and volunteers.
Ability to recruit and support volunteers.
Ability to practice confidentiality.
Lives a life that reflects a Christian faith.

Responsibilities:

Pastoral Care

Develop and support a lay visitation program for the collaboration.
Visitation as needed.
Funerals.
Weddings.
Emergencies, occasional on-call with NLMC pastors.

Preaching

Shared in rotation with collaboration participants.
At least two Sundays/month at WUMC.
First option for pulpit supply in collaboration.

Worship

Lead at WUMC in cooperation with worship team.
Ability to preside over a variety of worship experiences.
Work cooperatively with worship staff within NLMC.
Share in rotation monthly communion worship at Crookston nursing homes.

Sacraments

Provide for instruction and performance of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

To speak for justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed.
Encourage candidates for ministry.

Administrative

Promote Healthy team/staff relations.

Attend TLC staff meetings once a month.

Provide written reports as required by FPC Session, TLC council, WUMC council, PCUSA, ELCA, and UMC.

Willingness to support NLMC mission.

Manage priorities to maintain healthy balance between responsibilities, work, and family.

Work in cooperation with the ELCA and the NW MN Synod, as well as the PCUSA, Presbytery of the Northern Plains, The United Methodist Church, the UMC Minnesota Conference, and the UMC North Star District.

Accountability:

Position is under the immediate supervision of the FPC Session and WUMC Council. TLC Executive Pastor will provide oversight and guidance as relates to NLMC. Position will work in cooperation with the ministry staff of FPC, WUMC, and TLC. An appointed team of two members from FPC Session and WUMC Council will make annual review of performance and will evaluate church needs and adjustments to the position in consultation with TLC Executive Pastor. This same team will also assist with the resolution of issues pertaining to call and employment.

Compensation:

Position is considered half-time clergy. Compensation negotiable according to education, experience, and informed by guidelines of the corresponding judicatory.

Termination:

Four weeks advance notice is requested for voluntary resignation.

Pastoral Compensation - Church Budget

Clergy Name:	Ruth Sanders	Years of Service:	1.00
Church(es) & District:	First Presbyterian Church / Wesley UMC - Crookston	Appointment increment if waived pension or retired →	
Appointment increment if pension participation (1, .75, .5 or .25)→	0.50	Eff. Date:	12/1/2022
1a. Enter pastor's salary (see 2022 Equitable Compensation Schedule)	1a	\$33,000.00	
1b. Parsonage Penalty Adjustment	1b		
1. Total Salary	1	\$22,000.00	
2. Housing Allowance in lieu of parsonage (IRC 107) (Form 8b required)	2	\$11,000.00	
Benefits: Church Budget Items			
Presbyterian Health Plan	1	3	\$8,910.00
3a. Non-HealthFlex Plan health insurance contribution (taxable). "X" here and enter amount→		3a	
4. Pension and Death & Disability Items			
Pension Compensation:			
Total salary (line 1) x 1.25 if parsonage, OR salary + housing allowance		\$26,000	
Presbyterian Pension			
Pension (CRSP) - Defined Contribution Pension compensation x 2% (.25 appointment increment not eligible)			
Disability (CPP): Fulltime and 3/4 time Appointment - Pension Comp x 1% If Pension Compensation exceeds 2 X DAC [151,140], use \$1,511.40			
Disability (UNUM): 1/2 time Eligible clergy status' (FE, PE, AM, FD, PD, OE, OD) Contact Benefits Officer at jean.edin@minnesotaumc.org for estimated premium		\$3,300.00	Contact Benefits Officer if clergy status listed
Pension and Disability Total - Presbyterian Plan		4	\$3,300.00
5. Total Salary, Housing and Benefits for this Position: Total of 1, 2, 3, 3a, and 4. (This figure is used for church budgeting purposes.) Do not use this amount on the W-2.		5	\$45,210.00
Reimbursable Items Budget			
6 Continuing Education: \$800 minimum, \$1,760.78 recommended (2.5% of CAC)		\$1,000.00	
7 Travel: IRS rate for 2021 is 56¢ per mile. Churches shall not pay less than the current IRS rate. Look for 2022 IRS rate in late fall.		\$1,000.00	
8 Other professional expenses: \$500 minimum		\$1,000.00	
9 Total budgeted for Reimbursable items	Sum of 6, 7, and 8	\$3,000.00	
Total budgeted for parsonage utilities. Include here parsonage utilities paid by church. This does not refer to the housing allowance.		10	
Total budget for Pastoral Support (Salary, Housing, Benefits, Accountable Reimbursable Items, and Parsonage Utilities)	Sum of 5, 9, and 10	11	\$48,210.00

Completed by: Laurie Kantonen NSDS

Date: 9/19/22