

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

June 16, 2020

The Committee on Preparation met on February 4, March 3, May 5, and June 2, 2020 and submits the following report:

FOR INFORMATION:

From its March 3 meeting:

CPM met with candidate, **Alexis Allum**, for a Final Assessment. Her assessment was sustained and she was granted permission to prepare and circulate her Personal Information Form.

CPM met with **Marijo Hockley**, an Inquirer, and **Joseph Chapman**, a Candidate and sustained their Annual Consultations.

From its May 5 meeting:

CPM received a request to attest the Personal Information Form of the Rev. Larry Hoxey, a minister in the United Church of Christ, who has submitted his resume to the P.C.U.S.A.'s Church Leadership Connection. The committee sought further research from presbytery staff who confirms that Rev. Hoxey was approved by the CPM in 2011 to submit his PIF; in a subsequent poll of members, permission to submit a PIF was approved.

Our Committee conducts a significant portion of its work in face-to-face consultations. The distancing policies since March 2020 have made it far more challenging to conduct consultations and has created a backlog that we will be working through for the remainder of the year.

From its June 2 meeting:

CPM met with candidate, **Joseph Sheeran**, for a Final Assessment. His assessment was sustained and he was granted permission to prepare and circulate his Personal Information Form.

The committee met with Commissioned Ruling Elder Candidate, **Tom Kostrzewa**, to conduct a Final Assessment. His examination was sustained and it was reported to the Committee on Ministry that he is an Eligible Commissioned Ruling Elder.

FOR ACTION:

1. The CPM places in nomination the following persons to serve as Ordination Examination Readers for Winter 2021: Teaching Elders, **Marjorie Wilhelmi** and **Paul Stunkel**; Ruling Elders, **Dave Bunch** and **Tom Kostrzewa**; and Teaching Elder **Judi McMillan**, alternate.
2. Presentation of a Candidate, Finally Assessed as Ready to Receive a Call by another presbytery, for Examination by this presbytery. An Autobiographical Statement and Statement of Faith are provided with our report.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Mary Bahr-Jones

Rev. Edward Dunn

Co-Moderators

Jenny Saperstein – Statement of Faith

I believe in the one triune God: Creator (whom Jesus called Father), Christ, and Holy Spirit. I believe that God is God and we are not and that we belong to God in life and in death. I believe that God is good, gracious, and loving, and that humankind is created in the image of God. We are called to love God and to love one another because we have been created to celebrate diversity and live in community, as modeled in the mystery of the triune God.

I believe God's true nature is revealed to humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, revealing how God loves us and calls us to live in community. We are inextricably tangled in complex networks of sin. However, this is not the final say, for in his death and resurrection Christ Jesus reconciled humankind to God so that we are no longer bound by sin and death but may have eternal life through Christ. This does not undo our sinful nature but gives us abiding faith that God loves us and is always ready to forgive us our sins and make us new. It is out of joy and gratitude at our forgiveness that we are compelled to serve God as Christ taught us, through ministries of social justice and by seeking reconciliation and shalom with our neighbors across the globe.

Our sacraments are extensions of God's grace. Through the waters of baptism, we publicly and communally recognize God's claim on us; baptism is a seal of the covenant between God and the Church giving us new life in Christ Jesus as we are born into the community of faith. When we partake in communion, in remembrance of Jesus' sacrificial love and celebrating the feast of Christ's victory over death, the covenant of baptism is sustained, and our faith nourished. We arrive at the table broken and in need of grace to receive the elements by which our corporeal bodies are fed with spiritual sustenance as we are connected to Christ, and through Christ to all those who have believed throughout time; we come away from the table reminded of our relationship to Christ, renewed in our connection to the church, and recommitted to the work of Christ in the world.

The Holy Spirit bears in us the fruit of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Gal. 5:22-23). By these gifts the Holy Spirit works in us, in the church, and in the world today as in biblical times -- inspiring prophets and moving people to follow God's way. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that we come to faith through Scripture so that we may know Christ and the Creator. However, Scripture is also a witness to the limitations of our human perspectives that are shaped by our finite experiences in history. So, we must wrestle with all of the biblical texts and venturing to the heart of Scripture, the crux of theology, to find how God is fully revealed there and in turn show how God is still fully present with us today, keeping the promise of our eternal hope in Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

A brief autobiography: Jenny Saperstein

I am a lifelong Presbyterian. Born into the world the daughter of a pastor, I was raised in the PC(USA). I grew up living far away from the families of my parents, so I naturally considered the local congregation my extended family. I have felt called to ministry since the age of 3 when I talked about going to seminary to be a minister like my dad. Along the way I have served the church as a deacon starting in high school, a youth advisory delegate to the 215th General Assembly in college, and as a Ruling Elder in my 20s prior to finally going to seminary.

I call Pullman, Washington my hometown. I attended school there from first grade through high school and returned there the first few summers of college. The region's rolling hills of grain have settled into the landscape of my heart along with the idealized child's vision of small town that is also deeply proud of its higher education (Washington State University) and the diversity that it brought to the community through the many international students and their families, whose children I grew up with. While I was in college in southern California, my family moved to Colorado and I joined them there after graduation.

My husband Patrick Saperstein and I met in Colorado. He took my last name when we married and we will be celebrating 10 years of marriage this year.

My parents, Dan and Liz Saperstein, moved to Saginaw in 2015 where Dan serves as executive presbyter for the Presbytery of Lake Huron. Being closer to family was one of the reasons why we decided to move to Michigan. My mother's family is originally from Michigan. She, my sister Bethany, and I are a tribal citizens of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians located in Harbor Springs, Michigan.

In 2018 I graduated from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. After my second year in seminary Patrick and added a little one to our family. Jake is 4 years old now. One of the many challenges of motherhood has been to hold on to a sense of identity apart from that. But as Jake gets older, I am finding more ways to carve out time for the things I enjoy like painting and drawing, cooking, and gardening. Being in Michigan I hope to spend time with my extended family and my tribe and also spend some time kayaking or canoeing. I am a big fan of the Harry Potter books and have two havanese dogs named Albus and Sirius.

I am thrilled and nourished to be living into my lifelong call to ministry in the church. I am energized by the work I am doing now and grateful for the community I am building here in Michigan at Northside Presbyterian Church. I look forward to continuing to grow into this calling into a ministry of word and sacrament.