

Draft 10/2/22



Presbytery of Genesee Valley

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WEBSITE: www.pbygenval.org

A Special Meeting of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley was held electronically via Zoom on Thursday, September 15, 2022.

CONSTITUTION

Moderator Michelle Sumption (York) called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm with prayer. She declared a quorum was present.

CONGREGATIONS: MINISTERS & COMMISSIONERS (CM = Corresponding Member; CP = Commissioned Pastor)

CONGREGATION	MINISTER	COMMISSIONER(S)	CONGREGATION	MINISTER	COMMISSIONER(S)
Albion, First			Lyndonville	CP Martha Mitchell	Elizabeth Smith
Attica, First	EX CP Brad Smith		Medina, First	William Wilkinson	
Avon, Central	EX Carin Farmer		Mt. Morris, United		
Barre Center	CP John Goehle	Bruce Landis	Mumford, First		Susan Csizmadia
Batavia, First	Roula Alkhouri		North Bergen		
Bethany			Nunda, Trinity	EX Ron Duttweiler	
Brockport, First	---	Kristen Gerling	Ogden		Pat Everett
Byron, First	---	Ruth Andes	Ossian, First	---	
Caledonia, First		Lisa Morrill	Parkminster	---	
Chili, First	Brandi Wooten		Penfield	Twyla Boyer	Melinda Shaffer
Christ Clarion	EX CP Mark McDaniel		Perinton		
Corfu United	EX Evan Wildhack		Perry, Brick		
Covington United	Christine James	Patricia Lockwood	Pike Community		
Dansville	Marcia Reiff		Pittsford, First (2)	Aaron Neff Erin Jacobson	Barbara Smith
Downtown	EX Laurie Tiberi		Roch. Korean (2)	Young Kim	Hai Seo
East Avon, First	Michelle Allen	Jess White	Scottsville, Union	Keven Hershey	Donald Tubman
East Bethany	CP John Goehle		South		
Elba, First	EX Barbara Tipton		Sparta, First		
Gates	EX Laura Bachmann		Stone, Bergen		Deborah Godlove
Geneseo, Central	Nancy Lowmaster	Tom Matthews	Summerville	Elaine Loggi	Mary Haverfield
Groveland Fed.			Third (3)	Rebecca Segers Tedd Pullano	Mary Cowden Ralph Carter
Holley, First	---		Trinity Emmanuel (2)		
Honeoye Falls			Tuscarora, First		
Irondequoit			Twelve Corners		Katherine Iuli
John Calvin		Ellen Best	Victor, First		
John Knox		Priscilla Thomas	Warsaw United		
LeRoy, First	EX David Pepper		Webster	CM Philip Davis	
Lima	EX David Kilgore		York, United	Michelle Sumption	
Livonia	---				

John Goehle

**MINISTERS IN VALIDATED MINISTRIES / MINISTERS AT LARGE / MINISTERS HONORABLY RETIRED
 (VM = Validated AL = At-large HR = Honorably Retired IA =Inactive)**

Present:

Louise Armstrong (HR)	Robert Heppenstall (HR)	James Renfrew (HR)
Philip Benier (AL)	Erne st Krug (HR)	Charles Roberts (HR)
Viktoria Berlik (AL)	Lisa Lancaster (HR)	Carol Anne Strawbridge (HR)
Carolyn Grohman (HR)	Ray Lindquist (HR)	Jim Widboom (HR)
Judy Hay (HR)	Nathan Mochizuki (AL)	

Excused:

Elizabeth Beckhusen (HR)	Laurel Nelson (VM)	Jane Watt (HR)
Jeff Falter (AL)	Rachel Reid (AL)	Pat Youngdahl (HR)
Rod Frohman (HR)	Stephanie Sauve (HR)	
Nadia Mullin (AL)	Anne Waasdorp (HR)	

ADDITIONAL ELDER COMMISSIONERS / CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS (Appointed by Presbytery to correct elder-clergy imbalance)

Lew Becker (Pittsford)	Barbara James (Summerville)	Karen Pryor (Third)
Kathy Coons (Gates)	Peter Judd (Perinton)	Sue Tedesco (COTW)
George Gotcsik (Third)	Lea Kone (Downtown)	Kay VanNostrand (Lyndonville)
Janette Henderson (Pittsford)	Bob Mecredy (Pittsford)	
Betty Iwan (Third)	Susan Orr (Trinity Emmanuel)	

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS ENROLLED FOR THIS MEETING (others noted under “Congregations”):

Rev. Josh Park (Cherokee Presbytery)

REGISTERED VISITORS including PRESBYTERY STAFF and COMMISSIONED PASTORS Not Serving Churches:

Lisa Bennett (Staff)	Chong Kim (RKPC)
Cheryl Battaglia (Staff)	Eun Hui Loss (Pittsford)
Young Kang (RKPC)	Rev. Isaac Nam, Korean translator

SUMMARIES OF 2022 MEETING	Jan 25	Mar 29	Apr 26	July 26	Sept 15
Total Minister Members of Presbytery	108	110	110	110	108
Total Minister Commissioners Present	48	47	49	38	30
Total Elder Commissioners Present	52	49	57	52	36
Parity (expressed in terms of Elders, + or -)	+4	+2	+8	+14	+6
Total Churches Unrepresented by Elders	29	32	23	27	38
Total Churches Unrepresented by Elders & Pastors	18	18	15	12	26
Total Registered Visitors	11	5	24	14	8
TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDANCE - 2022	111	101	130	104	74

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Rev. Aaron Neff (Pittsford) read the Land Acknowledgement statement in which we pay respects to the indigenous people on whose traditional land this meeting was collectively being held tonight. This was then read in Korean by Rev. Josh Park.

INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS

The Moderator welcomed Rev. Isaac Nam who, during the meeting, translated all reports and discussions into Korean.

Enrollment of Corresponding Members

Rev. Josh Park (Cherokee Presbytery) was enrolled as Corresponding Member for this meeting with voice, no vote.

Privilege of the Floor

A motion was approved by poll vote to grant privilege of voice to non-commissioners for the purpose of participating in reports.

Approval of Docket

A motion was approved by poll vote to adopt the following docket for the meeting:

Special Presbytery Meeting		Thursday, September 15, 2022	Electronic Meeting via Zoom
5:55 p.m.		Announcements	Michelle Sumption
6 p.m.		Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Prayer • Land Acknowledgement 	
6:05 p.m.		Introductory Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of a Quorum • Enrollment of Corresponding Members • Approval of Docket • Privilege of the Floor 	Michelle Sumption
6:10 p.m.		Big Picture Team Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to form an Administrative Commission 	Elaine Loggi Jim Widboom Hai Seo
7:30 p.m.		Adjourn with Prayer	

PURPOSE AND CONDUCT OF THE MEETING

The purpose of this meeting was to consider a recommendation from the Big Picture Team and the Committee on Ministry to form an Administrative Commission to assume original jurisdiction of the Session of Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church (the “Church”) (see Appendix A for details). Because this is a special meeting of Presbytery, no other business could be transacted.

The Moderator outlined the order of business and guidelines for how this meeting would be conducted. She requested that all be in the spirit of Micah 6:8. The order of business would be: (a) Rev. Elaine Loggi (Summerville) to present the report on behalf of both the Big Picture Team and Committee on Ministry; (b) Elder Hai Seo (Rochester Korean) to present a report on behalf of the Session and congregation of the Church; (c) time to be allotted for any questions for clarification.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY AND BIG PICTURE TEAM

Rev. Loggi provided background on the conversations the Committee on Ministry (“COM”) has had with the pastor and elders of the Church over the past few months (see Appendix B for details). The COM Leadership Team conveyed COM’s concerns to the Big Picture Team (“BPT”). Included are the lack of a duly constituted Session of the Church and the Church’s failure to honor the contract with the current pastor. Rev. Jim Widboom (HR), COM representative to the Church, provided background on the situation at the Church. He and OGA Managers for Korean speaking congregations (Rev. Luke Choi and Rev. Rev. Josh Park), have been working with the Session and the pastor for the past year in an attempt to resolve some of the leadership problems at the Church. Due to the lack of resolution of the issues outlined by Rev. Loggi and Rev. Widboom, COM and Big Picture Team believe the best solution is to form an Administrative Commission to assume original jurisdiction of the Session of the Church.

REPORT OF ELDER HAI SEO

Elder Hai Seo, Clerk of Session and Treasurer of the Church, provided a timetable of what has occurred at the Church. He noted that in August 2022 the elders and pastor participated in a training session led by Rev. Josh Park from the OGA which was mandated by COM. He indicated the elders did not believe that training was appropriate or necessary, so they declined to participate in further training sessions. He offered proposals to COM on how the Church could proceed, including terminating the pastor’s contract as of September 1, 2022. He asked that the newly elected Session be given the opportunity to govern and build a future for the Church.

QUESTIONS

The Moderator opened the meeting for clarification questions. Upon motion approved by hand vote, it was **VOTED** to extend the meeting time by thirty minutes to allow sufficient time for questions. Rev. Loggi, Rev. Widboom, Elder Susan Orr (Stated Clerk), Rev. Park and members of the COM Leadership Team responded to questions. They confirmed that:

- The relationship between the pastor and the Session is estranged, but as of this date, the pastor has not resigned.
- The congregation does not want an Administrative Commission but since there is no duly constituted Session, a commission is needed to govern.
- It appears that Session is not following Presbyterian polity. They may not be aware of requirements, so training is essential. Elders have resisted further training.

ACTION TO FORM AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

After a thorough investigation and upon recommendation of the Committee on Ministry, the Big Picture Team has determined that the Session of the Church is unable or unwilling to wisely manage its affairs. Upon motion made, Presbytery **VOTED** by poll vote to approve the following recommendation (94% approval vote):

To form an Administrative Commission to assume original jurisdiction of the Session of Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church, Rush, NY (the “Church”). Members of the Administrative Commission shall be appointed by the Presbytery Moderator in consultation with the Leadership Team of the Committee on Ministry and shall be comprised of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The Administrative Commission shall appoint a chair and a clerk and shall keep records of all proceedings in accordance with G-3.0109b. The quorum for the Administrative Commission shall be a majority of the members and no less than three.

A recommendation was made to the Administrative Commission to provide training to the Church on Presbyterian polity.

ADJOURNMENT WITH BENEDICTION

The meeting adjourned with a prayer led by the Moderator at 7:40 pm.

ATTEST: _____

Susan Orr, Stated Clerk

Kathleen L Coons, Journal Clerk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Administrative Commission for Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church

Appendix B: Background Information re: Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church

Appendix A

Administrative Commission for RKPC

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley affirms the basic principle that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) strives to be a church modeled on the body of Christ as described in 1 Corinthians 12: a church made up of many different parts, all of which are “...necessary for its mission to the world, for its sanctification, and for its service to God...” (Book of Order, F-1.0202). The congregation’s responsibility must be seen in light of its call to fulfill its responsibilities as the local unit of mission for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the Glory of God (G-4.0104). Unity in Christ and the relational nature of our polity are fundamental to Presbyterianism and to a gracious witness to Scripture and the Holy Spirit.

A presbytery, being composed of the teaching elders and commissioners elected by the session of congregations within its district, has a particular responsibility to coordinate, guide, encourage, support, and resource the work of its congregations for the most effective witness to the broader community. Presbyteries may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church. To this end, a presbytery has the authority to assume original jurisdiction, or full power and responsibility, over a session. In applicable cases and to accomplish its responsibility towards the session, a presbytery may assume original jurisdiction in any situation in which it determines that a session cannot exercise its authority. After a thorough investigation, and after full opportunity to be heard has been accorded to the session, the presbytery may conclude that the session of a congregation is unable or unwilling to manage wisely its affairs and may appoint an administrative commission with the full power of session. This commission shall assume original jurisdiction of the existing session, if any, which shall cease to act until such time as the presbytery shall otherwise direct.

It is understood that an administrative commission (AC) may be given authority to assume original jurisdiction of the session (G-3.0109b, G-3.0301, G-3.0303e). A commission of a presbytery shall be comprised of “ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible and sufficient to accomplish their work”. A quorum of any commission shall be no less than a majority of its members. The AC is guided by the Presbytery-approved commission charge which outlines specific duties and authorities for this particular situation. The AC shall keep the Presbytery informed of actions taken and shall make recommendations directly to Presbytery for any actions that require Presbytery approval.

With love and encouragement for the people of the Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church, and appreciation for its faithfulness and commitment to the mission of God, the Presbytery of Genesee Valley offers the following:

Charge to the Administrative Commission for the Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church

1. Inquire into and seek to settle the difficulties within the Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church (G3.0109b(5)), including:
 - a. Inquire into the sources of congregational discord (G-3.0301c)
 - b. Request records of the session (G-3.0202f) (G-3.0108b) and other relevant documents (i.e. title to property, insurance documents, mortgages or other loan documents, corporate officers, corporate articles, bylaws, charters)
 - c. determine, after reviewing the proceedings of the Session or from any other information as may come to its attention, whether,
 - i. the proceedings have been faithful to the mission of the whole church [G-3.0108a];
 - ii. the lawful injunctions of a higher council have been obeyed [G-3.0108a];

- d. Review financial practices, the most recent audit and all financial information
 - e. Obtain an accurate membership list with contact information
 - f. Communicate with members of the congregation in whatever fashion that the commission deems appropriate.
 - g. Call and conduct town hall meetings to receive comments and feedback from current members, and former members
 - h. Exercise pastoral care for the congregation
 - i. determine which members represent the true church (G-4.0207);
2. Assume original jurisdiction because the Session is not duly constituted or able to manage wisely its affairs per G-3.0303e. Original Jurisdiction will include but not be limited to the powers:
 - a. To call for congregational meetings
 - b. To assume responsibility and control of all financial matters including all assets
 - c. To secure the building, grounds and other property of the church for the use and benefit of the true church
 - d. To assume the duties of the trustees in all items related to the corporate entity
 - e. To arrange for the pastoral care of all members
 - f. All other duties of the Session under G-3.02
 3. Determine whether to extend the contract with the current pastoral leader after notice and opportunity to be heard has been accorded the teaching elder, the former active session members, and the congregation (G-2.0904, G-3.0109).
 4. Propose recommendations to the Presbytery with supporting documentation regarding the continuation of the congregation including whether the congregation should be dissolved with special attention to G-3.0109 having given all persons affected by this recommendation fair notice and an opportunity to be heard.
 5. Propose recommendations to the Presbytery for the disposition of the property held by or for the church, and the assumption of the liabilities of the church, in the event there is no viable faction of the congregation that has been identified as the true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
 6. Keep a full record of the proceedings and submit that record to the Presbytery for incorporation into its records upon dissolution of the Administrative Commission.

Appendix B

Background Information regarding Rochester Korean Presbyterian Church (RKPC)

The one-year contract and Terms of Call for Rev. Young Jun Kim, RKPC's pastor, were due to expire at the end of December 2021. RKPC's Session renewed the contract for 6 months, which was approved by the Committee on Ministry (COM). COM members questioned why only a 6-month contract and not a full year. Susan Orr, Transitional Leader/Stated Clerk, Jim Widboom, RKPC COM liaison to the congregation, and Rev. Luke Choi, OGA Manager for Korean-speaking congregations met with Pastor Kim and asked if he would like COM to speak with Elder Hai Seo, RKPC clerk of session, about a one-year contract. Pastor Kim declined our offer. Pastor Kim's contract was to expire at the end of June 2022.

In the early spring, while perusing Korean religious news publications, Rev. Luke Choi came across an ad seeking a new pastor for RKPC, indicating any person interested was to contact Elder Hai Seo, RKPC Clerk of Session.

Luke Choi shared this information with Susan Orr and Jim Widboom, and together they learned from Elder Seo that this ad had been placed by himself without RKPC session approval or notification to Pastor Kim or COM. At this time, it was also learned that the last RKPC Administrative Commission held a congregational meeting on August 20, 2017 which adopted a change to the by-laws stating the session is to be comprised of no fewer than **four** elders (was six) which they elected at that same meeting. However, the written by-laws were never changed to reflect this action by the congregation. Elder Seo believed that the by-laws allowed for a two-member session which is not accurate. The Session has consisted of two members for some time. There was not time to research the length of time the session was only 2 members. NOTE: During this time, Rev. Josh Park took over the responsibilities as OGA's Manager for Korean-speaking congregations.

At its May 5, 2022 meeting, COM approved permitting an exception to allow the RKPC Session be comprised of two ruling elders through June 30, 2022 to allow time for a congregational meeting to amend the by-laws requiring a three-person Session. COM also appointed Pastor Kim and Rev. Jim Widboom as co-moderators for the temporary period. During this time and with guidance and interpretation provided by Rev. Park, a congregational meeting was called on June 19, 2022 to elect a nominating committee, update the bylaws, and ratify all actions taken by the Session that was not duly constituted.

The Nominating Committee included Elder Kim from the session, Deacon Jung Ae Seo, wife of Elder Seo, and a third member from the congregation, Deacon Sook Kyoung Choi. It was made clear to the congregation and nominating committee that the co-moderators, Pastor Kim, and COM liaison, Jim Widboom, were also members of the Nominating Committee with voice, but without vote.

The Nominating Committee (NC) met on July 10, 2022. There was some resistance from Elder Kim to Pastor Kim's participation in the Nominating Committee. This was resolved and Pastor Kim became a very important presence in the committee's deliberations. It was also discussed at the first NC meeting whether the brother-in-law of Elder Seo could be considered as a nominee for the session position. It was shared that it is unwise and perhaps unethical for family members of currently sitting elders to be nominated. The NC seemed to accept this and was able to find a willing candidate, Elder Chang. A congregational meeting was held on July 24, 2022 and Elder Chang was elected.

At the August 2, 2022 COM meeting, the Committee on Ministry approved the following

- (a) The newly elected elder participates in Session meetings with voice/no vote until he is installed.
- (b) Allow the Session to continue with two elders until the newly elected elder is installed.
- (c) That Rev. Kim remain as pastor through the transition time, as long as he is willing to serve.
- (d) Accept Rev. Park's offer to provide polity training to the Session and require all elders plus Pastor Kim to participate.

The first training session was held on August 19, 2022 with Pastor Kim and Elders Seo, Kim and Chang. Elders Seo, Kim and Chang became very belligerent during the training, disrespectful of Rev. Josh Park, and refusing to participate. The meeting ended poorly. Pastor Kim received a text from Elder Kim on August 23, 2022 stating that he is resigning from the session and also asked to remove his membership from the church. At the time, the COM liaison discovered that Elder Seo is also the Treasurer of the church.

On August 29, 2022, Susan Orr received an email from Elder Seo which he stated was on behalf of the congregation. He stated that Rev. Park "treated us as ignorant and uncooperative juveniles. He demanded we sign a Training Pledge and send him a photocopy. We felt embarrassed and like criminals because we were

under constant pressure.” Elder Seo included the following four suggestions, in his email to Susan Orr, and requested that COM approve them.

- 1) Elect and install a new elder in the next 2-3 weeks
- 2) Training should be optional and that promises before God are enough
- 3) All members should consider 1-2 session training with a different trainer
- 4) We will not honor Pastor’s Kim TOC as of September 1. Sunday services will be by pulpit supply.

Rev. Kim reports that Elder Seo asked for his immediate resignation as pastor which he refused to give. Rev. Kim received a two-week paycheck instead of the usual full month paycheck for September. Rev. Kim believes Elder Seo has spoken ill of him and the Presbytery and turned beloved members against him.

There were no members in attendance for worship on Sunday, August 28, 2022. Sunday worship on September 4 was Elder Seo and one other member of the congregation. There were four visitors also present, invited by a former member of the congregation.