



Supplemental Report to the Presbytery from The Transitional Presbyter Search Committee

The Presbytery Search Committee is comprised of six members, including Reverend Doctor Michael Askew, Gulf Beach, Panama City Beach; Elder Rick Club, Gulf Beach, Panama City Beach; Reverend Doctor Matt Frease, UKirk Tallahassee; Reverend Erin Rugh, Faith, Tallahassee; Elder Leslie Yandle, First Pensacola; and Chair, Elder Tim Crawford, First Crestview.

The committee began the process by receiving training from our Synod Executive, Valarie Young, on March 5, 2024. Valarie has stayed engaged throughout our search, providing relevant and valued recommendations for our processes and procedures. She also completed a number of executive reviews on potential candidates. As a result of this solid foundation, all members of the committee maintained a strong focus throughout the process, meeting nearly every week since the beginning of March.

As work began, there was a significant concern with the approved Transitional General Presbyter Position Description, developed during the Implementation Taskforce effort. The belief was this description was far too complex for a part-time 19-hour position. In conversation with the Ministry Coordinating Council, the description was rewritten to make the position more manageable while supporting the Strategic Plan. This correction also supports the strategic plan's goal for the Presbytery's Ministries to play increasing roles in the leadership and care of congregations. The requirement of interim training was also removed with the hope of broadening our candidate pool. Additionally, the position moved the duties of head of staff to MCC, who approved all changes. MCC unanimously approved the revised position description.

As the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) development began it was also recognized that it would be quite difficult finding someone qualified and willing to take on a part-time position to help our presbytery continue the transition process per our strategic plan. Gone are the days of connecting Florida with vacations and leisure. When the idea was presented from a member of the committee to consider advertising the position with the option of working remotely, we immediately recognized the potential this presented.

Valarie Young encouraged us to move forward open to remote candidates, emphasizing that while a remote General Presbyter is a departure from the norm, it is not without precedent, especially in part-time roles. This single idea increased the number of available candidates significantly and supports: 1. Someone working in another part-time role; 2. A person living in their preferred place of retirement; 3. Even someone in another full-time position available to give the presbytery 19 hours a week. The idea was presented to our Ministry Coordinating Council, approval for the option of a remote Transitional General Presbyter was granted. The Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) was written as a part-time position supporting the presbyter to work in-residence or remotely.

When the Ministry Discernment Profile was submitted, the committee continued its work. We put together an advertisement column for the *Presbyterian Outlook*; this proved to be successful, as we realized a number of responses from that ad. Our position was also shared through networking opportunities by our commissioners and by our synod executive at General Assembly. Members of the search committee also discussed the presbytery's needs at conferences and seminars they attended, broadening our search for candidates.

From these efforts, the committee received applications from several potential candidates using both the Church Leadership Connection system and through resumes sent to us directly. Interviews with the best candidates were completed in early July, with one candidate a clear standout.

A contract was written and submitted to MCC where changes were recommended. With those changes incorporated, MCC approved the contract.

45 In early August, we brought our finalist to the Presbytery Office/Dogwood Acres for a final interview and
46 opportunity to meet Presbytery staff and leadership. Our two days together confirmed to the search
47 committee that this candidate possesses the energy, intelligence, and imagination to lead our Presbytery in
48 and through this current transitional period. With joy and thanksgiving, the committee discerned that this is
49 the candidate we believe God is calling to our position. The committee offered the MCC-approved contract
50 to the candidate, who enthusiastically accepted it without negotiations.

51 A clause in this contract states the position is pending upon on a successful examination by the Presbytery
52 of Florida. The Ministry of Pastoral Transitions assembled an examination team. The chair of the search
53 committee also sent the candidate basic information from the Book of Order G-3.0306 and Committee on
54 Ministry Handbook (the MPT handbook is currently in work) concerning the examination.

55 The examination was conducted on August 16, where the result was a unanimous vote to not recommend
56 sustaining the examination. This result was primarily based on the examination team's perceived suitability
57 to do the work. During the search committee interviews, the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities
58 were found to be exceptional. The candidate also demonstrated a special understanding of advanced
59 communication skills absolutely needed for the work to move the presbytery forward. Based on the
60 candidate's previous experience and the information provided by the search committee, the candidate
61 believed the examination would be of limited scope, but the actual event proved not to be the case. Adding
62 to this disconnect, in my haste to complete our work before our Summer Presbytery Meeting, poor and
63 ineffective communication with the candidate to the content of the examination led to this unfortunate
64 outcome.

65 Through all of this, the candidate has remained steadfast in their conviction, which the search committee
66 shares: they are called to participate in the work of God, alive and active here in the Presbytery of Florida.

67 While the outcome of the examination was not expected, the Search Committee remains committed to this
68 candidate and the task which our presbytery has entrusted to us. We are currently working with MPT and
69 the candidate to fulfill the expectations of the examination team and the presbytery with a re-examination
70 pending. And most importantly, the search committee intends to move forward as we have from the start,
71 with Energy, Intelligence, Imagination, and especially Love.

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73 Respectfully Submitted,
74 Tim Crawford, Chair