

**APPROVED**  
**Minutes of the Leadership Team**  
**Presbytery of Lake Michigan via Zoom**  
**1511 Helen Avenue, Portage, MI 49002**  
**February 6, 2025 12:30 p.m.**

**Attendance Roll:** Beth Dyer (RE-Kalamazoo First/B&F Moderator), Troy Hauser-Brydon (TE-Grand Haven/PLM Moderator), Stan Jenkins (TE-Lansing First/LT MAL), Jeanette Holton (RE-Benton Harbor First/AST), Nick Marlatt (TE-Hastings/LT MAL), Gail Monsma (TE-Paw Paw/ LT Moderator), Lisa Schrott (TE-/N&R Moderator), Lynette Sparks (TE-Westminster GR/M&O)

**Staff:** Fran Lane-Lawrence (Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk), Annamarie Groenenboom (Assoc. Clerk), Cal Bremer (Asst. to Exec), Kristin Stroble (COM Resource Staff)

**Excused:** Chris Dorn (TE-Ionia/DST)

**Call to Order**

Rev. Gail Monsma, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m. and opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was present.

**Adoption of the Agenda**

**A motion prevailed** to adopt the agenda.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda**

**A motion prevailed** to approve the consent agenda, including the following items:

- A. **To approve** the Leadership Team Meeting Minutes of December 5, 2024

**Welcome and Introductions**

There was a time of introductions, and several new members were welcomed.

**Presbytery Structure and Mission**

Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence reviewed the structure of the Presbytery and how it relates to the Presbytery's mission of supporting congregations. Rev. Lane-Lawrence shared that she is supporting pastors and church leaders as they identify what they are called to do in this time and place in their communities.

**Unfinished Business**

- A. Administrative Commission (AC) Updates

First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI:

The financial review for 2023 was completed. Elder Beth Dyer (Kalamazoo First) assisted the AC members in this work and met with the Marshall Session on January 05,

2025, to provide context and answer questions. The AC approved a Stated Supply contract extension for Rev. Charlotte Ellison through February 28, 2025. Members of the AC continue to resource the congregation's leadership by providing polity training and assisting them in producing a mission study. The Marshall Session suggested postponing work on a mission study, citing other perceived priorities. The AC has communicated its concern that a delay in working on the mission study might foreclose some opportunities to share a pastor with neighboring congregations. The AC indicated that the deadline for beginning the work on the mission study is no later than March 1, 2025.

First Presbyterian Churches of Paw Paw, MI, and Decatur, MI:

The AC continues its work and is interacting with the Transition Team comprised of members from each congregation, the Decatur and Paw Paw Sessions, and Rev. Gail Monsma. The Transition Team has identified multiple committees needed to address distinct aspects related to how a possible merger would function. A timeline has been created to identify actions to be taken prior to a scheduled May 2025 vote by each congregation. The timeline also identifies steps to be taken depending on the outcome of the vote by each congregation.

First Presbyterian Church of Richland, MI:

The AC continues its work. AC representatives met with the Richland Session on December 11, 2024, and on January 8, 2025. Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer (Kalamazoo First) served as moderator for these meetings. The Congregational Meeting was held on January 26, 2025, and Rev. Kathleen Robertson King (MAL) served as moderator for the meeting. Elder Stuart Deming (Kalamazoo First) and Rev. Cal Bremer were present at the meeting. Elder Deming presented an overview of the AC's work and goals. Elder Jill Steele (Richland First) and Elder Rick Foster (Richland First) met with Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence to create by-law revisions that would conform to PCUSA and Presbytery of Lake Michigan polity changes that occurred since the last revision over 25 years ago. There was unanimous congregational approval of changes to the Richland By-Laws. Rev. Kristin Stroble continues to assist with COM-related issues with special emphasis on the process of moving toward staffing in the interim following the previous three-decade pastorate. Rev. Stroble consults with and coordinates her work with the AC. The next meeting of the Richland Session is scheduled for February 12, 2025; AC members plan to be present either in person or by Zoom.

Fairplain Presbyterian Church, Benton Harbor, MI:

The AC continues its work. The congregation voted, with no dissenting votes, on November 17, 2024, to request the Presbytery to dissolve the congregation. The congregation's final worship took place on December 29, 2024, followed by a time of fellowship. The AC and session continue their work to conclude Fairplain's financial and contractual obligations. Ron Lemmon/Patriot Realty listed the building. The listing elicited interest, including three parties who have viewed the building on multiple occasions. Discussions with these parties will take place at the end of this week.

B. Presbytery Meeting Schedule

Members of the Leadership Team discussed a new potential schedule for stated Presbytery meetings. Presbytery staff will complete a questionnaire and have a discussion regarding options for a new meeting schedule.

## **New Business**

### **A. Anti-Harassment Policy**

Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence reminded the members that an Anti-Harassment Policy is needed according to the Book of Order (G-3.0106). Rev. Lane-Lawrence requested that the LT members review the policy. After discussion at the March LT meeting, Rev. Lane-Lawrence will send the draft policy to the PLM attorneys.

### **B. Grants Reports and Recommendations**

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MI: The congregation requested a grant for continued work with a consultant. After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** to approve Westminster Presbyterian Church's request for a \$2,000 Merger/Join Witness Grant. Rev. Kristin Stroble will communicate the decision to Westminster on behalf of the leadership team.

North Park Presbyterian Church, Grand Rapids, MI: The congregation requested a general grant for repairs on the church building's elevator. After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** to decline the \$10,000 grant request and encourage the congregation to explore other capital funding options. Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence will communicate the decision on behalf of the Leadership Team.

United Presbyterian Church, Cassopolis, MI: The congregation requested a general grant to support a "Guns to Gardens" event hosted by a congregation in Wabash Valley Presbytery. **A motion prevailed** to decline the request for the \$3,000 grant due for the following reasons: 1) The presbytery leader of Wabash Valley confirmed with FPC-South Bend, IN, that no person trained in firearms safety would be present during the entirety of the program; 2) the presbytery leader of Wabash Valley was unable to confirm the level of liability insurance for the event was adequate; 3) that the level of liability insurance held by FPC-Cassopolis, MI was adequate; 4) implications of liability in participating across state lines; 5) liabilities that might fall to the presbytery. Further, though the application indicated that FPC-Cassopolis, MI, was a co-sponsor, they were not listed on the flyer for the event as such, and the request seemed to be supporting a program of a congregation located in a different presbytery and synod..

North Kent Presbyterian Church, Rockford, MI: The congregation requested a Creative Ministry Grant to support the congregation's participation in worship/communion services at a local nursing care facility and transportation of care facility members to congregational worship and fellowship activities. **A motion prevailed** to decline the request for the following reasons: 1) the description of the grant clearly indicates that funds cannot be used for a pastor's salary; 2) the request for mileage/transportation was figured on the IRS business reimbursement of \$.70 per mile rather than the charity reimbursement of \$.14 per mile; 3) the ministry was not considered creative as the ministries described are part of the regular responsibilities designated to congregations per the Book of Order, and many

churches within the presbytery regularly provide this ministry to care facilities in their communities.

**C. Mediation Committee Request**

The Mediation Committee proposed that the Presbytery engage Dr. Lynn Horan, dissertation completed at Antioch University 2024, for a virtual presentation/discussion during a presbytery meeting in 2025. The leadership team declined to approve the proposal because the interaction would be virtual. Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence has been tasked with gathering information and providing names of those who could provide a keynote presentation/training focused on appropriate boundaries and interactions between women clergy and congregations.

**D. Discernment of Future Presbytery Staffing Needs**

Rev. Lynette Sparks, Rev. Troy Hauser-Brydon, and Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence were appointed as a task force to discern future staffing needs of the Presbytery to present recommendation to the Leadership Team.

**Discussion of the Business and Worship at Stated Meetings of the Presbytery**

**A. Saturday, March 8, 2025 - East Lansing Eastminster**

1. The Theme: Care of Creation
2. Offering: PCUSA Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice
3. Preacher: Rev. Dr. Tricia Tull
4. Celebration of the Lord's Supper
5. Report of EP - Fran Lane-Lawrence (5 minutes)
6. Synod of the Covenant Report (10 minutes)
7. B&F - Beth Dyer (10 minutes)
8. Nominating Committee Report - Lisa Schrott (10 minutes)
9. Amendments to the Book of Order - Fran Lane-Lawrence

**B. Tuesday, June 10, 2025 - Cadillac First**

1. The Theme:
2. Offering:
3. Preacher:
4. Celebration of the Lord's Supper
5. Synod of the Covenant Report (10 minutes)
6. Report of B&F
7. Report of EP - Fran Lane-Lawrence (5 minutes)
8. Nominating Committee Report - Lisa Schrott (10 minutes)

**Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 p.m. Rev. Gail Monsma closed the meeting with prayer.

**Next meeting:** March 6, 2024, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom

**Devotion:**