

The Presbytery of Elizabeth  
Special Meeting of Council  
Minutes  
February 24 mmix

**Attendance.**

Ministers

John Howard (Siloam-Hope), At-large, Worship and Theology Team  
Lawrence Finn, III (MaL), Evangelism and Church Vitality Unit, chair  
John Illian (Central), Outreach and Social Concerns Unit, co-chair  
Robert Martin (Crescent Ave.), Committee on Ministry  
Michael Granzen (Elizabeth Second), Former Moderator of Presbytery  
Howard Bryant (MaL), Vice-Moderator of Presbytery  
William Weaver (Linden), Personnel Committee, chair  
Victoria Ney (Springfield), Committee on Preparation for Ministry, chair-pro-tem

Elders

Barbara McLaughlan (Westfield), Moderator of Presbytery  
Lee Anne Lowman (Central), Chair of Council  
Judy Wussler (Fanwood), Committee on Representation, chair; Synod of the Northeast  
Alan Ford (Bethlehem), General Assembly Council  
Gerald Nelson (Liberty Corner), Trustees of Presbytery, chair  
Joanne Noblitt (Rahway First), Financial Development Committee, chair  
Helen Mosley (Siloam-Hope), Educational Ministries Unit, chair  
Betty Prezzy Bryant (Third-Westminster), Nominating Committee, chair  
Jack Paddon (Liberty Corner), Outreach and Social Concerns Unit, co-chair  
Elder Susan Gieser (Westminster), Vice-Chair of Council (arrived late)

Ex officio

Rev. Paul F. Rack (Bethlehem), Stated Clerk  
Elder Sara Burke (Westfield), Administrative Assistant  
Elder David Bomgaars (Central), Treasurer of Presbytery  
Rev. Robert Foltz-Morrison, Executive Presbyter

Not present or Excused

Elder Virginia Miller (), Presbyterian Women, chair  
Rev. Jeffrey Wildrick (Dunellen), At-large  
Elder David Bomgaars (Central), Treasurer of Presbytery

Also present

Elder Janet Bentley (Westfield), Member of the Personnel Committee  
Rev. Clint McCoy (Synod of the Northeast)

A special meeting of the Council of the Presbytery of Elizabeth was called to order at 4:06 pm (EST) on Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at the United church in Plainfield.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Council Chair, Lee Anne Lowman.

The Council **VOTED** to approve the call for the meeting, as follows, which had been distributed to the entire Council by electronic mail on Friday, February 19, 2009. (The meeting had been announced unofficially in two previous electronic mails.)

A Special Meeting of the Council of the Presbytery of Elizabeth is called for Tuesday February 24, 2009, at 4:00 pm at the offices of the Presbytery of Elizabeth, 525 E. Front Street, Plainfield, NJ. The purpose of the meeting is:

1. To receive the report of the Personnel Committee, and to act upon their recommendation concerning the request of the Rev. Robert Foltz-Morrison to conclude his service as Presbytery Executive as of March 31, 2009.
2. To hear from the Co-Executive of the Synod of the Northeast, Rev. Clint McCoy.
3. To discuss and take any action necessary at this time to provide for an orderly transition period.

(No other business may be brought before the Council at this meeting.)

Rev. Paul F. Rack  
Stated Clerk

The Council Chair introduced Rev. Clint McCoy.

### **Personnel Committee.**

1. The report of the Personnel Committee was presented by William Weaver. He reported that Robert Foltz-Morrison has extended his resignation to the presbytery, through the Personnel Committee, effective on March 28, 2009. He will be taking the position of Interim Pastor at the Church-on-the-Green in Bloomfield, NJ, in Newark Presbytery.

2. Robert Foltz-Morrison presented a report, by Powerpoint, covering the spiritual and vocational journey that led him to this decision, and distributing a bibliography.

He used his sabbatical time and Credo retreat to discern the Holy Spirit's call in his life. This time of discernment will continue, and he asked for our prayers.

Several members of the Council then gave testimonials to Bob regarding his work and ministry over the past 12 years in many and various ways. Bob then voluntarily left the meeting.

3. In its own further discussion the Council agreed that an annual report of staff reviews needs to be brought to the Council from Personnel. This will also require developing a more workable Personnel Manual.

The Council **VOTED** (with one abstention) to recommend to the presbytery that the service of Robert Foltz-Morrison as the Executive Presbyter of Elizabeth Presbytery be concluded on March 28, 2009.

4. There is being planned a "send-off" on March 22. Lee Anne, Helen, Rob, Gerald, and Barbara volunteered to work on it. The Council **VOTED** to spend up to \$1500 on this celebration.

5. The Personnel Committee announced that it is recommending moving back to the staffing model used during Bob's sabbatical. No other staff changes are contemplated at this time.

6. Clint McCoy, the Co-Executive of the Synod of the Northeast, addressed the Council. He suggested that Personnel's moving to annual reviews would be a good idea and appreciated by Bob.

How does the Council make and own any decision about a prospective interim executive? This transition time could be used to think about what kind of leadership the presbytery needs in moving into this next phase of ministry, reflecting on where we have been and where we need to go. One question might be concerning whether any interim can become the permanent staff

person. This needs clarity. Clint is available as a resource for this process. Margaret Wheatley's *Finding Our Way: Leadership for Uncertain Times*, might be a good resource to shed light on this process.

Council's role in the transition relative to presbytery needs to be discussed. The "manual for Middle Governing Bodies" would be a helpful resource.

**Discussion Item: Providing for an Orderly Transition Period.**

First, we need to address the interim period, then decide how we want to proceed in the future.

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Bill Weaver presented three options for the immediate future: A) a Transition Team to guide the presbytery through the process and perhaps become an Interim Executive Search Committee; B) an Interim Executive Search Committee and a separate Transition Team; C) the Personnel Committee becomes the Transition Team and Interim Executive Search Committee. The committee had no preference.

The Council **VOTED** to continue the current staffing model, as it looked during Bob's sabbatical last October through December, effective March 23, 1009, for the immediate future until an Interim Executive is secured or a different staffing model is adopted.

**Adjourn.**

The Council **VOTED** to adjourn with prayer by Bill Weaver at 6:03 pm (EST).

Attest:

Paul F. Rack  
Stated Clerk