

Commission on Ministry Report

June 4, 2022

The Commission on Ministry met three times as a whole Commission and once as a subcommittee via zoom since our last Regional Board Meeting.

February 16, 2022

The Commission met with two commissioned ministers for renewal of their commissions. We heard about their unique challenges in ministry during a pandemic and the ways they have been able to continue to connect with their congregations in imaginative and meaningful ways. As always, our time together consisted of not only ministry sharing, but time for offering support and prayer.

We also had the opportunity to meet with a new candidate for commissioned ministry and entry into the process for recognition of ordination. The candidate has found a home church within the Disciples that has agreed to sponsor their recognition of ordination process and is finding ways to participate in the life of the local church. We offered support and encouragement in the beginning of a new ministry and ended our time in prayer.

Our business included discussion of the Ministry Training Program (MTP) offered by Phillips Theological Seminary and its implications for ministry education options for commissioned ministers and those pursuing ordination through paths other than the traditional seminary track. David DeBow provided some preliminary research and information. We agreed that he would continue to investigate the program and its comparison to an M.Div. degree for our next meeting.

Our business concluded with discussion of the upcoming Clergy Boundary Training event on Sept. 23rd, to be led by Bruce Burkauer, Director of the Disciples Office of Faith and Giving. Further discussion for this event will involve potential options for virtual and in-person attendance.

March 30, 2022

The commission met with one commissioned minister and one commissioned theological student preparing for graduation and recognition of ordination early this summer. The commission offered continuing support and encouragement in ministry as the ministers shared about their contexts for ministry, the challenges they face and joys they receive, their hopes and plans for the future including plans for self-care and where they sense God may be calling them. We, as usual, ended our time with prayer support.

Our business included further report from David DeBow about the MTP program at Phillips Seminary. We learned that the program is one with seemingly less direct contact hours with

professors and some questions regarding the difference between credit hours and contact hours arose. The questions surrounding the MTP program have direct application to the COM as there is at least one commissioned minister participating in it currently and it could be an educational resource for others.

April 5, 2022

We met with two commissioned ministers as they shared updates on their ministries amidst the pandemic, including new challenges and ways their ministries have grown. The COM shared some wisdom regarding self-care and establishing good boundaries with church leadership, especially surrounding hours spent vs. contract agreements. Many ministers struggle with managing the felt needs of the church vs. their own health (physical, mental, and spiritual). The COM also provided some resources of the general church to help with potential capital campaigns for growing churches.

The COM received updates on two commissioned ministers/theological students and their graduations and ordination expectations. We continue to support and guide them through this process.

We agreed to reach out to the head of the MTP program, Leslie LeSieur, and arrange a ZOOM meeting to learn more. Doug, Shari, and Erik agreed to attend said meeting.

April 28, 2022

Doug, Shari, and Erik met with the head of the MTP program at Phillips Theological Seminary, Leslie LeSieur and will report back to the COM and concerned candidates at our next meeting.

As always, our most important work is supporting, guiding, and praying for the people who are under our care.

The next meeting of COM is scheduled to be an in person session at the Interchurch Center in Portland on June 8.

Respectfully submitted,

COM Co-chair Shari Eggleston

&

COM Co-chair Erik Free