

Session Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2011

Stated Meeting of Session	The September 13, 2011 stated meeting of the Ogden Dunes Community Church was called to order by Moderator, William Hudson at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall
Quorum Present	Moderator Rev. William Hudson, Ruth Dyerly, Bruce Klimek, Judy Selund, Julia Hoham, David Harbaugh, Mark Lecy, Ken Engel, John Skafish, Paul Rake, Jane Dickey and Jayne Mann. Also present Rev. Laura Reason and approximately six members from the Congregation
Absent and Excused	Dave Larson
Prayer	Rev. Hudson opened the meeting with a scripture reading and prayer and Ruth Dyerly read from the second chapter of Colossians, verses 12-14, 17.
Approval of the Agenda	Motion made to approve the proposed agenda as amended to give Monica Hoham the privilege of voice to read her letter; seconded and passed . A motion to adjourn at 9:00 made; seconded and passed .
Approval of the Minutes	Motion made to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2011 stated session meeting; seconded and passed . Motion made to approve the minutes of the Special Called Meeting by the Committee on Ministry (COM); seconded but amended to include that the motion to request that COM reconsider its decision to not approve the extension of Rev. Derek Morrison's interim contract was passed unanimously. Amended motion passed .
Clerk of the Session Report	The following items read into the record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building usage e-mail votes – Sandpiper orientation meeting, August 15 at 7 PM; Town of OD meeting on Lyme's disease, August 17 at 2 PM; Tri Kappa Sorority, September 12 and every Monday thereafter from 6:30-9 PM. All motions approved. • Other approved e-mail votes – July 7, cancel regular August Session meeting, hold special called meeting on August 30 to finish Church Survey, conduct other necessary business via e-mail votes; August 4, amend May 10, 2011 motion by changing annual expenditure for Youth Director from \$6,000 to \$12,000; August 19, extension of Rev. Morrison's interim contract 18 months with certain other changes (motion attached); August 21, amend August 19 motion from 18 months to 12 months. • August 26, motion to cancel August 30 special called meeting tabled when COM called a special meeting for the same time. • Letters and e-mails from Presbytery (Attached) – July 15, e-mail on specific defects in ODCC interim plan: August 18, letter that COM will have representative at future Session meeting and postponement of Self Study Plan; August 24, letter received via e-mail reporting COM's decision to not approve Rev. Morrison's interim contract extension and the purported reasons why; August 26, e-mail calling a special COM meeting for August 30 at 7 PM; and September 6, letter received via e-mail that COM denied Session's appeal of COM's decision regarding Rev. Morrison's contract. • Letters and e-mails to the Presbytery (Attached) – July 19, e-mail responding to July 15 Presbytery e-mail on Plan defects; August 23, e-mail transmission

	<p>of Rev. Morrison contract extension executed on behalf of Session; and August 26, letter sent via e-mail responding to COM's August 24 letter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to Congregation – September 10, Clerk of Session Letter to Congregation conveying COM decision regarding Rev. Morrison's contract and the time line surrounding the decision • Congregant's letters to Session (Attached) – August 27, Susan MiHalo; September 4, Mike Falk; and September 12, Carolyn Saxton and Bill Gregory.
Board of Deacons	No Report
Moderator's Report	No Report
Old Business	2011 Nominating Committee – Mark Lecy to contact Dave Larson to determine Dave's status as Moderator of the committee. If Dave is unable to act as Moderator for the remainder of the year, Mark, as Vice Moderator, will lead the process. Rev. Hudson advised that Committee needs at least 3 functioning members to develop the slate of officers for 2012 which slate should be established by the end of November.
New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim pastor search – Rev. Reason advised that normally the search can not commence until the end of Rev. Morrison's contract and that the selection process and decision is a Session function. Session noted that the current situation is not normal and that the process needs to be expedited. Rev. Reason will consult with COM and report back on process. • Monica Hoham, exercising her privilege of voice, read her letter (attached) questioning Session's extension of Rev. Morrison's contact and criticizing Clerk of Session September 10 letter to the Congregation. A discussion of the letter followed. • Motion made to request appointment of a new transitional care consultant in order to start with a fresh slate; seconded. Discussion led to tabling the motion with agreement to vote on the issue at the October session meeting. Rev. Reason said she would like to meet with representatives from Session to discuss the issue before the next meeting and would coordinate with Bruce Klimek
<u>Committee Reports/Actions</u>	
Property (Dave Harbaugh)	<p>Building Usage Motions: October 15, baby shower for family of Julia Klingensmith. Tabled until more information is obtained by Dave Harbaugh</p> <p>Information items: Delivery of office furniture is pending and remodeling of the office is being planned.</p>
Stewardship (Ken Engle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consecration Sunday program has been planned including 3 sermons prior to and including Consecration Sunday • Financial report attached..
Worship (Jayne Mann)	<p>Informational items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79 people received Communion in July • 65 people received Communion in August • Rev. Morrison will be out of the office from October 16 – 23. • Hanging of the Greens is scheduled for November 30th.

Mission/Evangelism/ Hospitality (Ruth Dyerly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of mission budget has been dispersed; final disbursements will be made in November
Personnel (John Skafish)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to approve Rev. Morrison's vacation plans for October; passed. • The staff job description project is being held in abeyance until interim pastor selection process is completed.
Christian Education (Jane Dickey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to authorize a prayer and devotional meeting at 7:00 PM Wednesday evenings to be lead by Chuck Smothermon; passed. • Motion to approve September 23rd Youth Group trip to a White Sox game; passed. • Ken Easton, Youth Director, will be providing activities for youth from 12:30 up to Bell practice on Thursdays.
Technology (Julia Hoham)	Audio visual big screen TV for Sanctuary has been previewed and found workable. Bids are pending.
Prayer and Adjournment	By Motion the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 with prayer. The next Stated Meeting of Session is scheduled for Tuesday, October 11, 2011 @ 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall
Respectfully Submitted: Bruce Klimek	See Attachments below

Financial Report

INCOME	Aug. Actual	Aug. Budget	Over/Under	YTD. Actual	YTD. Budget	Over/Under
Pledges Curr. Yr.	10314	13954	-3640	99076	111632	-12556
General Offering	1071	1667	-596	18447	13333	5113
Reg. Income	13042	16157	-3115	127578	129258	-1680
Total						
EXPENSES						
Committee						
Christian Ed.	14	256	243	1973	2050	77
Worship	722	512	-210	4722	4100	-622
Mission	0	1317	1317	3250	10535	7285
Evangelism/Fell.	188	125	-63	675	1000	325
Property	4143	3348	-795	30998	26787	-4212
Assets						
Corporate Account						163561
Endowment Account						133018
Total Assets						296580

Motion to Extend Interim Contract

XFINITY Connect

baklimek@comcast.net

± Font Size ±

E-Mail Contract Extension Vote

From : baklimek@comcast.net

Fri, Aug 19, 2011 04:14 PM

Subject : E-Mail Contract Extension Vote

To : Derek Morrison <PastorDerek@ogdenduneschurch.org>, Jayne Mann <jaynem@laseript.com>, Paul Rake <Prake@eichhorn-law.com>, Julia Hoham <jhoham@aol.com>, Dave Harbaugh <dgharbaugh@aol.com>, Judy Selund <jselund@gmail.com>, John Skafish <jc31skafish@yahoo.com>, Dave Larson <ogden4dunes@aol.com>, Ruth Dyerty <r2d2scuba@aol.com>, Jane Dickey <jmdickey109@yahoo.com>, Ken Cheryl <kcplus2@msn.com>, Mark Lecy <MLecy@fleetsg.com>

Cc : Brenda <office@ogdenduneschurch.org>, baklimek <baklimek@comcast.net>

Dear Session Members:

Our July Session agenda included an item for the renewal of Rev. Morrison's contract. We did not conclude the item, but agreed to finish it up at the August meeting. See below from the July minutes:

The committee to commence consideration of contract renewal with Rev. Morrison with plans for a recommendation and vote at the next Session meeting. A new contract has to be approved by COM and executed by the end of September; otherwise, Rev. Morrison's services will terminate at that time.

Subsequently, by a duly authorized vote (see my July 27 e-mail to you) we agreed to conduct a special called session meeting in August limited to completion of the Survey and to conduct other necessary business by e-mail or additional special session meetings. In this context, I am circulating the following motion from the personnel committee:

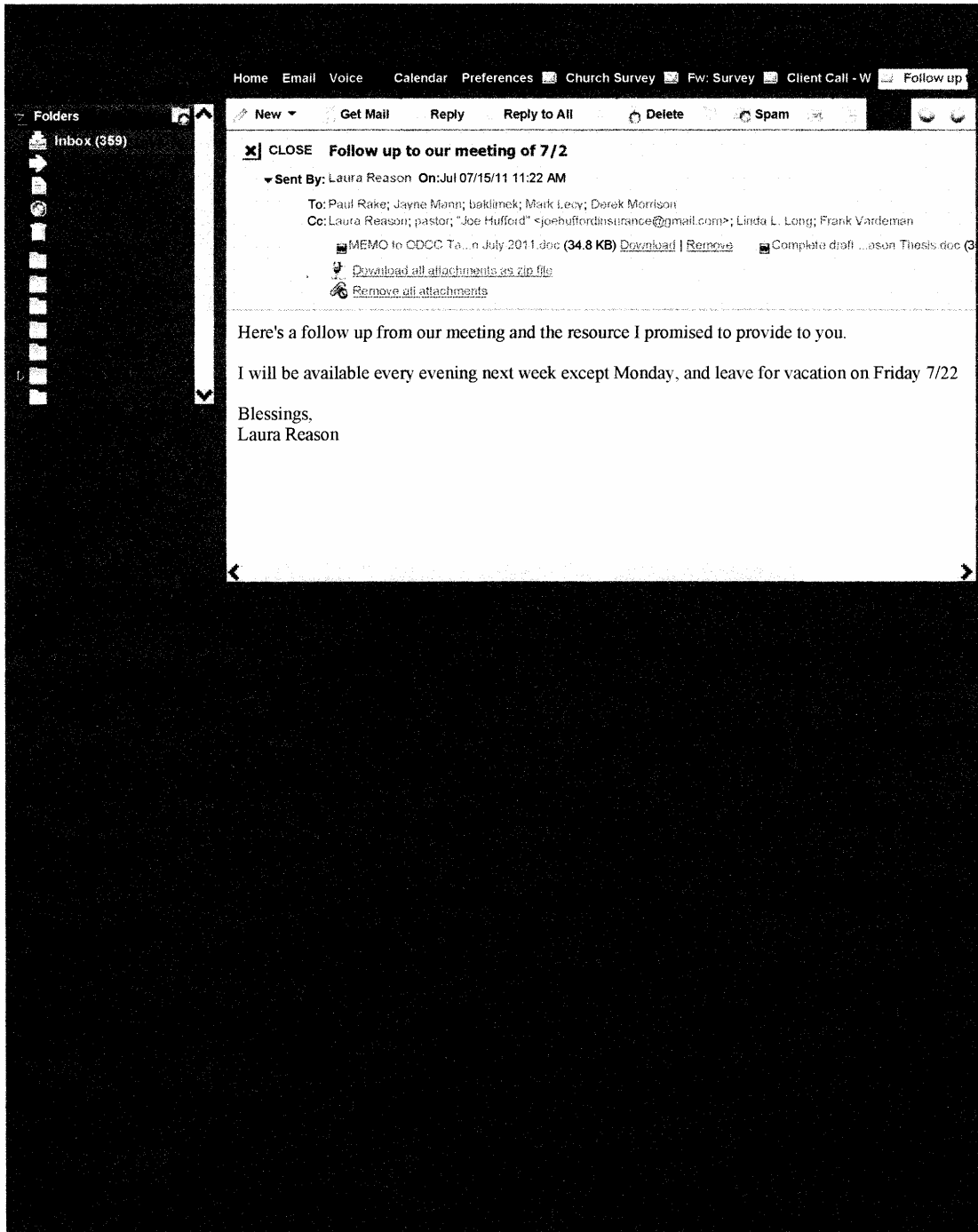
Motion to approve an eighteen (18) month extension to the contract with Rev. Morrison with the following changes:

1. Page 3: Change "To work a normal workweek of approximately 50 hours, with monthly reports to Session of activities and tasks done in past month." to "To work a normal workweek of approximately 40 hours with a target of normal office hours at least three days per week, with monthly reports to Session of activities and tasks done in the past month."
2. Page 4: Change Cash Salary from \$25,000 to \$35,000
3. Page 4: Change Housing Allowance from \$20,000 to \$25,000
4. Page 4: Change Effective Salary from \$48,442 to \$62,442
5. Page 4: Make appropriate adjustments to Health/Pension amount.

Please respond to me with your yea or nay.

Thanks

Letters and e-mails from Presbytery



Rev. Reason notes from July 22 meeting:

ODCC: Self Study Plan conversation

July 22, 2011

These notes reflect points of clarification about the ODCC Self Study plan, from a conversation between Clerk Bruce Klimek and Rev. Dr. Laura Reason, TCC. These notes from Rev. Reason have been reviewed by Mr. Klimek and are to be submitted to COM as an addendum to the ODCC Self Study plan.

2. a. Strategic Review

Significant work has been done by the ODCC over a two year span from mid 2008 to mid 2010, which led to development of the current mission statement. The summary of this work will be provided to COM as an addendum to the self study plan.

4. Congregational survey

Recognizing the broad spectrum of perspectives within the congregation on three key topics: theology, worship (styles, times) and ministry foci, the task force is developing a congregational survey that covers these 3 areas. Through intensive publicity in the newsletter, bulletins and announcements, as well as face to face invitations for participation, the task force has set a target of at least 100 returned surveys (rolls: 280).

With a summary of the survey data in hand, small group leaders will be trained, provided with a summary and a set of questions and facilitate small group gatherings. These gatherings will occur in homes and at the church. Again, the effort will be made to get the largest spectrum of participation possible. The groups will tend to be more homogeneous in nature (seniors, youth, friends, etc) to provide a comfort level for honest conversation. Although we did not discuss this, I assume that part of the leadership training will include norms about confidentiality and standards for reporting back. These small group conversations will be summarized and reviewed by the task force. As always, the task force's work is reported at each Session meeting.

The results of the surveys and the small group gatherings will be used to help determine what needs to be addressed in the interim time, as well as setting direction for ministry foci.

Example: the congregation currently has two identical worship services nine months of the year. The survey will help measure whether to continue this practice or explore alternatives such as one service, two services in two styles, etc.

Example: the congregation is part of the Confessing Church movement. The congregation also contains people with a broad spectrum of theological perspectives. The survey can help get at key questions such as:
What are the core values that all can agree to?
How do we agree to disagree (how is civility maintained)?
What skills can the Interim help us learn to help us be in relationship?

Congregational communication:

At every step of this process, the task force reports to the Session.

Session minutes are published in the newsletter.

The congregation is encouraged to be in constant conversation with active elders.

The next to the last paragraph of the ODCC Self Study plan reads:

On completion of the gathering of data, both surveys, review of the mission statement and other comments gathered in the small group process, a special one day seminar will be called to include session members, deacons, and committee chairs not on either of these bodies, to gain a better understanding of the congregation and its vision for future ministry. The goal will be to arrive at a consensus for future ministry, a clear understandable mission statement, that truly reflects that vision and the skills and qualities required of a future pastor who shares the congregation's vision for future ministry.

It is the intention of the task force, following the one day seminar, to give a complete report to the congregation, including a time of comments and feedback.

Letter Received August 23rd



PRESBYTERY OF WABASH VALLEY

August 18, 2011

To: Rev. Derek Morrison and the Session
Of Ogden Dunes Community Church

This is an excerpt from the Commission on Ministry minutes of its meeting on August 4, 2011:

COM agreed by consensus:

- That a COM representative will be present at every Session meeting of Ogden Dunes Community Church during this time of transition.
- That action on the proposed self-study plan will be postponed until COM has an opportunity to review the content and process for the planned congregational survey.

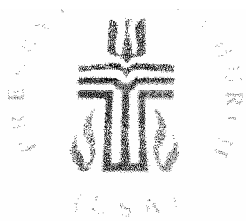
Rev. Bill McLean, COM moderator, will name that liaison and let you know who to notify for Session meetings.

With prayers for your congregation during this time of transition,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Linda L. Long".

Linda L. Long, Stated Clerk
Linda.L.Long@gmail.com
219-926-7098

5288 North Old US Highway 31 Rochester, IN 46975-7382



PRESBYTERY OF WABASH VALLEY

August 24, 2011

Session of Ogden Dunes Community Church
c/o Ruling Elder Bruce Klimek
116 Hillcrest Road
Ogden Dunes, IN 46368

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Our Commission on Ministry met on August 4, 2011, and after extended deliberations and prayer, decided unanimously not to extend the contract of Rev. Derek Morrison beyond its termination date of November 13, 2011. Because this is a personnel matter, we agreed that as a courtesy to Rev. Morrison, two representatives from COM would meet with him privately to communicate this decision, in hopes that this would allow a collaborative transition supported by his initiative in shaping how this termination would be handled, and prior to notifying the Session of the COM decision. Rev. Frank Vardeman and Rev. Ted Lester were finally able to schedule a mutually agreeable time to meet in person privately with Rev. Morrison on Thursday, August 18th. On Friday, August 19th, it appears that Rev. Morrison moderated a Session meeting that voted to extend his contract, in spite of notice to him previously that COM will not approve that extension as well as notice to him and Clerk of Session that a COM liaison was to be present for all Session meetings. Honoring this requirement of COM means that it is necessary that you inform the COM Moderator of each session meeting sufficiently in advance of the meeting that the liaison can arrange to attend. On Tuesday, August 23rd, you sent notice of the Session approval of the extension of Rev. Morrison's contract to Rev. Laura Reason, signed August 19th by your Clerk of Session.

Some representatives of COM will join your specially called Session meeting on Tuesday, August 30, at 7 pm CDT to consult with you about the temporary ministry relationship with Rev. Morrison. Because this is a personnel matter, COM will moderate the meeting.

Our *Book of Order* that we are mutually committed to uphold states:

G-2.0504b. Temporary Pastoral Relationships

Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a teaching elder, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place.

Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.

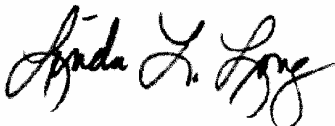
Presbytery of Wabash Valley
Commission on Ministry
Letter to Ogden Dunes Community Church
August 24, 2011

COM has provided many opportunities for collaboration with Rev. Morrison. Rev. Morrison first met with COM on October 21, 2010, and it approved him provisionally as a minister member of presbytery on November 4th. Rev. Frank Vardeman met with Rev. Morrison on April 13th. Rev. Morrison was invited to meet personally with COM at its May 5th meeting, and he brought three elders with him. Rev. Vardeman and Rev. Reason met with session on June 14th. COM met with Rev. Morrison July 7th and followed up that meeting with a detailed letter concerning the interim process on July 21.st Rev. Reason, transitional consultant to Ogden Dunes on behalf of COM, has provided fulsome resources and several consultations on the leadership expected of an interim pastor by COM during the transitional process. The congregational reflection piece of the interim process has been conspicuously lacking full and open invitation for congregational participation, even after repeated consultations with the transitional consultant and COM. COM continues to have concerns about the flawed interim process Rev. Morrison is leading with the support of the Session. Rev. Morrison has said multiple times to several people that if he had known the interim process expected by Wabash Valley, he would not have accepted the call and covenant. For these many and varied factors, COM is declining to approve an extension of his contract.

The letter sent on August 18th also informed you that COM has not yet given final approval to your self-study and plan for congregational reflection because the proposed congregational survey and the Strategic Review have not been received by COM for its consultation and approval. This significant piece of congregational participation is integral to the interim process and congregational preparation for new ministry leadership as a PC(U.S.A.) congregation. COM next meets on Thursday, September 1, 10 am EDT at Geneva Center and will gladly review them if provided in advance.

Session members are welcome to talk with anyone on COM or with Presbytery leadership. You will find email addresses in the headings and phone information below.

As ordained teaching elders and ruling elders, we have all promised before our God and our colleagues in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that we will "seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love" and to "seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors...[and] further the peace, unity and purity of the church." Let it be so for us.



Linda L. Long, Stated Clerk
Linda.L.Long@gmail.com
219-926-7098



Rev. William McLean, Moderator
Commission on Ministry
765-490-9643 pastor@delphipres.org

Copies to: Commission on Ministry
Rev. Derek Morrison
Ruling Elder Pam Camren, Presbytery Assembly Moderator; 574-231-8379
Rev. Laura Reason, Transitional Consultant; 219-838-6850
Rev. John Ritchie, Presbytery Council Moderator; 260-356-8680
Rev. Frank Vardeman, General Presbyter; 574-653-1003

5288 North Old US Highway 31 Rochester, IN 46975-7382

To the Clerk and Session members of Ogden Dunes Community Church:

Aug 26

On August 25th, there was a called meeting of the Commission on Ministry by conference call. A quorum was present (Bill McLean, Linda Fox, Jim Yackel, Lester, Mary Ann Banning, Joe Hufford and Bobbi Tobin); Stated Clerk Linda and Transitional Care Consultant Laura Reason were also on the call. After and deliberation, COM voted unanimously to approve the following resolution:

- That the COM on behalf of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley is call meeting of the Ogden Dune Community Church Session for Tuesday, August 30, 2011, at 7:00 pm at the church and COM will moderate the meeting for the purpose of discussing the temporary pastoral relations with Rev. Morrison and related issues. G-2.0504b; G-3.0201; G-3.021



PRESBYTERY OF WABASH VALLEY

September 6, 2011

Rev. Derek Morrison and
Session of Ogden Dunes Community Church
c/o Ruling Elder Bruce Klimek
116 Hillcrest Road
Ogden Dunes, IN 46368

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Our Commission on Ministry met last week on Thursday, September 1, for its regularly stated meeting with a quorum present, and reconvened today, again with quorum present. The whole COM respectfully received your request that it reconsider its August 4th decision not to approve any extension of Rev. Morrison's contract. Once again, after prayer and extended deliberation, COM unanimously reaffirmed its previous decision not to extend the contract of Rev. Derek Morrison beyond its termination date of November 13, 2011, if one were so tendered. COM's previous decisions also stand: that a COM liaison is to be present at each meeting of session, and that a new moderator appointed by COM will moderate all session meetings of Ogden Dunes Community Church. Rev. William Hudson, pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Merrillville, has agreed to appointment as your moderator during this transitional period. You may reach him at revwmhudson@gmail.com, (219) 736-0707.

As difficult as this decision is for the members of the Commission on Ministry and for your congregation and Rev. Morrison, our discernment is that your ministry will benefit from a well-structured interim process to prepare you for your next called Teaching Elder to be installed by presbytery as your pastor. This conclusion is based upon many conversations and experiences over several months and several meetings with both Rev. Morrison and your session, and not upon any single factor. Collegial collaboration between the Ogden Dunes church and the presbytery is essential for transitional periods and discerning with the congregation the kind of leadership essential for your unique mission and ministry. At this point, laying blame and continuing hostility is not likely to benefit your congregation and it will delay the hard work of letting go and moving forward.

Today there are 937 PIFs of pastors seeking interim positions. Our COM is committed to work expeditiously with you to find those candidates with the unique and particular skills and experience to lead a congregation in partnership with the presbytery through – not a transitional holding period – but the challenging interim tasks:

1. Coming to terms with the history of the church.
2. Discovering a new congregational identity.
3. Facilitating shifts in lay leadership and changes in congregational power structures.
4. Rethinking and renewing denominational links.
5. Preparing for new pastoral leadership and a new future.

Presbytery of Wabash Valley
Commission on Ministry
Letter to Ogden Dunes Community Church
September 6, 2011

Working together in a new relationship on your search for the one to provide effective interim leadership is most likely to result in a cordial, three-way calling among the pastor, the congregation through its Session and the Presbytery through its COM. COM on behalf of our Presbytery will never impose a particular candidate on a congregation, but by the same token, we must share in the mutual discernment that a particular candidate is a fit for the congregation as we come to know it, and will be accepted as a minister member of the presbytery among our congregations as together we seek to build the peace and unity of Christ's Church as we are committed to do as Presbyterian Church (USA).

G-2.0502 Presbytery and the Teaching Elder

As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be teaching elders, so the church confirms that call through the action of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work may be helpful to the church in mission and is a call to validated ministry requiring ordination as a teaching elder. In the performance of that ministry, the teaching elder shall be accountable to the presbytery. Teaching elders have membership in the presbytery by action of the presbytery itself, and no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery.

Among the vows we have all taken at our ordination as ministers – Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders and Deacons – are (W-4.4003):

- e. Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
- f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
- h. Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

We remain committed to work in partnership with you for Christ's Church,



Linda L. Long, Stated Clerk
Linda.L.Long@gmail.com
219-926-7098



Rev. William McLean, Moderator
Commission on Ministry
765-490-9643
pastor@delhipres.org

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Rev. Laura Reason, Transitional Consultant; 219-838-6850
Rev. John Ritchie, Presbytery Council Moderator; 260-356-8680
Rev. Frank Vardeman, General Presbyter; 574-653-1003

5288 North Old US Highway 31 Rochester, IN 46975-7382

Your critique of the First Draft "Congregational Self Study Plan (CSSP)"

From : baklimek@comcast.net

Tue, Jul 19, 2011 05:50 PM

Subject : Your critique of the First Draft "Congregational Self Study Plan (CSSP)"

To : Laura Reason <lbreason@hotmail.com>

Cc : vishal vardhan <vishal.vardhan@arcelormittal.com>, Jayne Mann <jaynem@laserlpt.com>, Derek Morrison <PastorDerek@ogdenduneschurch.org>, Paul Rake <Prake@eichhorn-law.com>, pastor@delphipres.org

Dear Laura:

We appreciate your follow-up from our July 2, 2011 meeting wherein you agreed to provide us a comprehensive list of deficiencies in our CSSP. Your July 15 critique has three bullet point specifics and an item labeled "Concrete example". Our response to these items follow:

Bullet point one: We believe we have been clear that the Congregational Survey we are preparing is targeting a participation percentage well in excess of the 30% minimum requirement of all active members and frequent visitors. Moreover survey participation is planned for Ogden Dunes non-congregational members, also.

Bullet point two: As to "reflection/study sessions that occur at multiple events, etc." we believe we have been equally expansive about the planned follow-up to the survey to include small group sessions to discuss the outcome of the survey and other issues relevant to Church life and the calling of a new pastor. Of course these small group sessions shall include a facilitator who will insure open dialog, present the work done to date and collect feed back for further evaluation and inclusion in the process. If we have not been clear on the anticipated level of participation, please be assured that we are targeting levels substantially higher than 30% that shall include every constituency in the Congregation. Moreover, continuing communication with the Congregation as a whole on the status of the process and planned next steps is currently occurring. We are using our monthly news letter, the Dunes News to keep people abreast of progress, with plans to utilize additional communication and dialog venues as more specific developments occur.

Bullet point three: We fail to see the distinction between this bullet point and bullet point number two. If there is a meaningful difference, you will have to explain it to us.

Concrete example: We may not have provided enough information on this step, but hope to correct this with the following: One individual will be responsible for developing the preliminary document. However, this document will be reviewed, and changed as necessary by a number of groups and individuals in the Church including, but not limited to the Session, the Deacons and several senior members of the Congregation who have personal knowledge of the background of the Church in earlier periods. However much is developed at the time of the small group sessions specified in **Bullet point two** will be included in those meetings.

We are confident the above addresses your issues and look forward to COM's prompt approval of the plan.


Executed Interim Contract Extension sent to Presbytery

Rev Morrison Contract Extension

From : baklimek@comcast.net

Tue, Aug 23, 2011 05:24 AM

Subject : Rev Morrison Contract Extension

 2 attachments

To : Laura Reason <lbreason@hotmail.com>


Cc : Derek Morrison <PastorDerek@ogdenduneschurch.org>, Jayne Mann <jaynem@laserlpt.com>, Paul Rake <Prake@eichhorn-law.com>, Julia Hoham <jhoham@aol.com>, Dave Harbaugh <dgharbaugh@aol.com>, Judy Selund <jselund@gmail.com>, John Skafish <jc31skafish@yahoo.com>, Dave Larson <ogden4dunes@aol.com>, Ruth Dyerly <r2d2scuba@aol.com>, Jane Dickey <jmdickey109@yahoo.com>, Ken Cheryl <kcplus2@msn.com>, Mark Lecy <MLecy@fleetsig.com>, pastor@delphipres.org


Dear Laura:

As our liaison with the Committee on Ministry, the ODCC Session is pleased to submit to you the attached contract extension with Rev. Morrison which has been executed by me on behalf of the Session. For your convenience, a copy of our current contract with Rev. Morrison is also attached (labeled MorrisonK_New.pdf).

Our understanding is that the COM will meet before ODCC's next regular Session meeting scheduled for September 13 at 7:00 PM. We look forward to COM's approval and the return of its executed signature in time to report it at this meeting.

Rev. Morrison has clearly performed well beyond our expectations. His leadership has been superb. This includes preparing us for the call process, leading the church staff and the spiritual and pastoral care he has provided to this Congregation. We are anticipating another strong year of Church life preparing for and calling a permanent pastor under his interim leadership.

 **ODCKEXT_NEW.pdf**
759 KB

 **MorrisonK_NEW.pdf**
2 MB

INTERIM PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT EXTENSION

This Covenant/Contract Extension between the Session of Ogden Dunes Community Church (Presbyterian) of Ogden Dunes, IN, the Reverend Derek M. Morrison and the Presbytery of Wabash Valley is for the purpose of providing transitional pastoral leadership to the Ogden Dunes Community Church (Presbyterian) for a period of twelve (12) months beginning November 14, 2011 and ending November 13, 2012.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

All terms and conditions of "INTERIM PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT" with a term of November 14, 2010 through November 13, 2011 and signed by the parties November 11, 2010 and November 22, 2010, respectively are incorporated into this INTERIM PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT EXTENSION except as are specifically changed or altered herein, or which are inconsistent or conflicting with the terms and conditions herein. In the event of a conflict the terms and conditions of this INTERIM PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT EXTENSION shall govern.

EXPECTED HOURS

Interim Pastor shall be expected to work a normal workweek of approximately 40 hours with a target of normal office hours at least three days per week, with monthly reports to Session of activities and tasks done in the past month.

COMPENSATION

1. Cash Salary shall be \$35,000 per annum.
2. Housing Allowance shall be \$25,000 per annum.
3. Effective Salary shall be \$62,442 per annum.
4. Health/Pension shall be determined by the relevant rate schedule.

TERMINATION PROVISIONS

This agreement may be terminated by the Session with sixty (60) days notice. The church shall pay full salary, housing and pension to the Interim Pastor for a maximum of three (3) months from termination of this contract, until succeeding full-time church employment is secured by the stated supply pastor, or adjusted if part-time work is secured. Failure to negotiate a new contract prior to sixty (60) days from its expiration or notice of non-negotiation of a new contract shall be considered notice of termination.

This agreement may be terminated by the Interim Pastor with (30) days notice, in which case payment beyond the thirty (30) day period will be forfeited.

Vacation and study leave, if accrued, is to be paid in full at time of termination.

SIGNATURES

The Session, being satisfied with the Reverend Derek M. Morrison's qualifications and trusting that his ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, hereby commits our Congregation to this Covenant/Contract and invites him to accept this temporary position.

Clerk of Session Bruce Kline Date 8/19/2011

Interim Pastor _____ Date _____

Response to COM Aug 24 Letter

From : baklimek@comcast.net

Fri, Aug 26, 2011 04:58 PM

Subject : Response to COM Aug 24 Letter

 1 attachment

To : linda l long <linda.l.long@gmail.com>, pastor <pastor@delphipres.org>

Cc : Brenda <office@ogdenduneschurch.org>, Derek Morrison <PastorDerek@ogdenduneschurch.org>, Jayne Mann <jaynem@laseript.com>, Paul Rake <Prake@eichhorn-law.com>, Julia Hoham <jhoham@aol.com>, Dave Harbaugh <dgharbaugh@aol.com>, Judy Selund <jselund@gmail.com>, John Skafish <jc31skafish@yahoo.com>, Dave Larson <ogden4dunes@aol.com>, Ruth Dyerly <r2d2scuba@aol.com>, Jane Dickey <jmdickey109@yahoo.com>, Ken Cheryl <kcplus2@msn.com>, Mark Lecy <MLecy@fleetsig.com>

Dear Ms. Long and Pastor Mclean:

Please see the attached letter from the ODCC Session responding to yours of August 24. At this point there is significant sentiment to cancel the August 30 Special Called Session meeting unless you plan to be responsive to our requests in the attached at or before the meeting. I will follow-up with confirmation of cancellation of the meeting after Session has made a firm decision. Of course, if you advise that you will be responsive to the attached at or before the meeting, we would not cancel it.

Please let me know.

 **COMRES_NEW.pdf**
4 MB



OGDEN DUNES COMMUNITY CHURCH

116 HILLCREST ROAD
OGDEN DUNES, INDIANA 46368
Church: 219/762-1184 • Fax: 219/763-1189

1

August 26, 2011

Linda L. Long
Stated Clerk
Presbytery of Wabash Valley
5288 N. Old U.S. Highway 31
Rochester, IN 46975-7382

Send via E-Mail and First Class USPS

Rev. William McLean II
Moderator, Commission on Ministry
213 S Indiana St
Delphi IN 46923

Dear Ms. Long and Rev. McLean:

Your letter of August 24, 2011 to the Session of Ogden Dunes Community Church (Session) in c/o me as Clerk of Session was extremely disappointing to me and the session members who have worked hard to avoid miscommunication and the problems it can foster. There are a number of things to which Session wants to respond, but let me start with your letter's most serious implicit charge. That is, Rev. Morrison acted in bad faith in moderating a meeting; wherein, Session voted to extend his contract after he had been advised by COM that his contract would not be extended.

Please see the following excerpts from our records:

Stated Meeting of the Session
Fellowship Hall - ODCC

July 12, 2011
7:00 P.M.

Proposed Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Approval of Agenda and Adjourn Time
5. Committee Reports
 - g. Personnel
 - i. Interim Pastors contract renewal

Session Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2011

Stated Meeting of Session	The July 12, 2011 stated meeting of the Ogden Dunes Community Church was called to order by Moderator, Reverend Derek Morrison at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall
Quorum Present	Moderator Rev. Derek Morrison, Ruth Dyerly, Bruce Klimek, Judy Selund, Julia Hoham, David Harbaugh, Mark Lecy, Ken Engel, John Skafish, Paul Rake, Jane Dickey, Jayne Mann and David Larson
Absent and Excused	None
Approval of the Agenda	Motion made to approve the proposed agenda subject to moving New Business into Moderator's report and elimination of secretary's vacation as an item and an adjournment time of 9:00 PM, seconded and passed.
Personnel (John Skafish)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to approve August 19-26 vacation for Rev. Morrison made and passed. • The committee to commence consideration of contract renewal with Rev. Morrison with plans for a recommendation and vote at the next Session meeting. A new contract has to be approved by COM and executed by the end of September; otherwise, Rev. Morrison's services will terminate at that time.

Proposed Revised Session Schedule

Sent By: baklimek **On:** Jul 07/25/11 4:42 PM

Dear Session Members:

Derek and I meet this morning, and one of the outcomes is that we would like to propose the following revised meeting schedule for August:

1. *Cancel the regularly scheduled August 9 Session meeting. There is no regular business that cannot wait until September, at least a few Session members will not be in town for the regular meeting, and the most critical current item is the "Congregational Survey" (CS).*
2. *Call a Special Session meeting for August 30 for the sole purpose of approving the CS and establishing the distribution, collection, analysis, communication, etc. plan for it.*
3. *Conduct any business that cannot wait until September 13 via e-mail or another special meeting if necessary.*
4. *Get back to the regular schedule in September with a meeting September 13.*

E-Mail Contract Extension Vote

Sent By: baklimek **On:** Aug 08/19/11 11:14 AM

Dear Session Members:

Our July Session agenda included an item for the renewal of Rev. Morrison's contract. We did not conclude the item, but agreed to finish it up at the August meeting. See below from the July minutes:

The committee to commence consideration of contract renewal with Rev. Morrison with plans for a recommendation and vote at the next Session meeting. A new contract has to be approved by COM and executed by the end of September; otherwise, Rev. Morrison's services will terminate at that time.

Subsequently, by a duly authorized vote (see my July 27 e-mail to you) we agreed to conduct a special called session meeting in August limited to completion of the Survey and to conduct other necessary business by e-mail or additional special session meetings. In this context, I am circulating the following motion from the personnel committee:

Motion to approve an eighteen (18) month extension to the contract with Rev. Morrison with the following changes:

- 1. Page 3: Change "To work a normal workweek of approximately 50 hours, with monthly reports to Session of activities and tasks done in past month." to "To work a normal workweek of approximately 40 hours with a target of normal office hours at least three days per week, with monthly reports to Session of activities and tasks done in the past month."*
- 2. Page 4: Change Cash Salary from \$25,000 to \$35,000*
- 3. Page 4: Change Housing Allowance from \$20,000 to \$25,000*
- 4. Page 4: Change Effective Salary from \$48,442 to \$62,442*
- 5. Page 4: Make appropriate adjustments to Health/Pension amount.*

Please respond to me with your yea or nay.

Thanks

*** By a follow-up approved motion, the motion was amended to provide for a 12 month term**

Both of the above motions were passed with no dissent.

While I have encumbered this letter at length with the record, the excerpts are important because, in conjunction with your time line, it is clear that Session did not know of your decision to not extend Rev. Morrison's contract at the time the motion to extend his contract was made and passed. No information was provided to the session members (me included) who Ted Lester and Frank Vardeman disinvited to the meeting. After the meeting, Rev. Morrison informed us that he was directed not to discuss anything said at the meeting with us other than a COM representative would be at the next Session meeting. I did not receive your letter dated August 18th informing us of the decision until August 23rd which I passed along to all Session members via e-mail that day.

Your disappointment in our extension of Rev. Morrison's contract stems directly from your failure to communicate in a timely fashion to Session coupled with your orders to Rev. Morrison to remain silent on the matter. I hope this settles this matter and a clear statement from you that no implication of bad faith on either the part of Session or Rev. Morrison was intended by COM would be welcome.

As to your second allegation, that "congregational reflection piece of the interim process has been conspicuously lacking . . . COM continues to have concerns about the flawed interim process Rev. Morrison is leading", we believe an examination of the record does not support this conclusion. Again, here are germane portions of the record:

- ODCC interim plan was submitted to COM by Rev. Morrison
- ODCC was advised that the plan was not approved
- Rev. Reason and Rev. Vardeman attended the June Session meeting and were specifically asked what the defects in the plan were. The following excerpt from the meeting minutes detail the response: *Rev. Vardeman and Rev. Reason discussed the interim pastoral search plan indicating that more detail concerning the self-study plan was required. The next COM meeting is scheduled July 7. The Session plans to have the self-study survey submitted for the COM's approval at this meeting. This was the extent of the direction we were given.*
- On July 2nd, Rev. Morrison and a task force from Session met with Rev. Reason to discuss among other things the defects in the plan. She committed to provide us with specific details so that we could implement the necessary changes.
- On July 15th she responded
- On July 19th we responded with the following:

Your critique of the First Draft "Congregational Self Study Plan (CSSP)"

Sent By: baklimek **On:** Jul 07/19/11 12:50 PM

To: Laura Reason

Dear Laura:

We appreciate your follow-up from our July 2, 2011 meeting wherein you agreed to provide us a *comprehensive list of deficiencies in our CSSP. Your July 15 critique has three bullet point specifics and an item labeled "Concrete example".* Our response to these items follow:

Bullet point one: We believe we have been clear that the Congregational Survey we are preparing is targeting a participation percentage well in excess of the 30% minimum requirement of all active members and frequent visitors. Moreover survey participation is planned for Ogden Dunes non-congregational members, also.

Bullet point two: As to "reflection/study sessions that occur at multiple events, etc." we believe we have been equally expansive about the planned follow-up to the survey to include small group sessions to discuss the outcome of the survey and other issues relevant to Church life and the calling of a new pastor. Of course these small group sessions shall include a facilitator who will insure open dialog, present the work done to date and collect feed back for further evaluation and inclusion in the process. If we have not been clear on the anticipated level of participation, please be assured that we are targeting levels substantially higher than 30% that shall includes every constituency in the Congregation. Moreover, continuing communication with the Congregation as a whole on the status of the process and planned next steps is currently occurring. We are using our monthly news letter, the Dunes News to keep people abreast of progress, with plans to utilize additional communication and dialog venues as more specific developments occur.

Bullet point three: We fail to see the distinction between this bullet point and bullet point number two. If there is a meaningful difference, you will have to explain it to us.

Concrete example: We may not have provided enough information on this step, but hope to correct this with the following: One individual will be responsible for developing the preliminary document. However, this document will be reviewed, and changed as necessary by a number of groups and individuals in the Church including, but not limited to the Session, the Deacons, and several senior members of the Congregation who have personal knowledge of the background of the Church in earlier periods. However

much is developed at the time of the small group sessions specified in **Bullet point two** will be included in those meetings.

We are confident the above addresses your issues and look forward to COM's prompt approval of the plan.

- On July 21st, Rev. Reason met with me to further discuss the above which resulted in the notes she published the next day and which I have attached to this letter.
- The only item I promised to provide her which remains in limbo is a summary of the pre-2010 focus group work, because I have been unable to locate the file.

The conclusion drawn from the above by Session is that the plan was going to be accepted; albeit, with some reservations that there were not enough meetings planned to talk about Church history. Plumbing the record reveals no specific flaws detailed by COM that we can find which have not been adequately addressed. If you insist on referring to the Church history meetings as a flaw, Session and most Congregants with whom we have discussed the matter believe them to be unnecessary. In any event, this decision is being driven by Session, not Rev. Morrison.

In conclusion, the record does not support the specific reasons you have cited for not approving an extension to Rev. Morrison's contract with ODCC. As such, we respectfully request that you reconsider the extension of Rev. Morrison's contract, or alternatively provide us with reasons that are supported by the record.

Sincerely,



Bruce Klimek
Clerk of the Ogden Dunes Session

Cc: ODCC Session

Letter to Congregation from Clerk



OGDEN DUNES COMMUNITY CHURCH

116 HILLCREST ROAD
OGDEN DUNES, INDIANA 46368
Church: 219/762-1184 • Fax: 219/763-1189

September 10, 2011

Dear Member of Ogden Dunes Community Church,

As Clerk of the Session, it is my duty to report to you that Rev. Derek Morrison's interim pastoral relationship with the Ogden Dunes Community Church will end in seven weeks when his contract expires. Although the Session sought to extend his contract an additional twelve months and Reverend Morrison had expressed his desire to continue to serve as our interim pastor, the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) has declined to give its approval. The Session unanimously appealed to the COM to reconsider its position, but that request was denied.

There have been many questions that have arisen, and many more which will arise, from this situation. Session members are willing to answer any and all that you may have to the best of their ability. To help in this effort, I am providing the attachment. It provides a brief description of the sequence of events and facts leading up to today. As members of this congregation, you are entitled to know what has transpired. I have tried to avoid any editorializing. To the extent that I did not succeed, I apologize in advance.

I am confident that I speak for many, if not all, members of this church when I say that we have been enriched by Reverend Morrison's tenure as our interim pastor. Moreover, even though his tenure as pastor may end soon, our friendship in Christ with him and Loraine will not. We wish them the very best in everything as they leave us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bruce Klimek".

Bruce Klimek

Clerk of the Session

**Attachment to the ODCC Clerk of the Session's September 10, 2011 Letter to the
Congregation of ODCC**

(Documents from which excerpts are cited and other important documents are available)

- 1) April 12th, Rev. Morrison submitted a "call process proposed interim plan" (Plan), with time lines and requirements for a self study. It was approved by Session and Rev. Morrison, Mark Lecy, Jayne Mann, Paul Rake and Bruce Klimek were appointed by the Session to a Task Force to establish a self study survey (Survey).
- 2) May 5th, Rev. Morrison, Jayne Mann, Paul Rake and Bruce Klimek met with the COM in Rochester. The COM wanted assurances that the Ogden Dunes Church was committed to the PCUSA and the representatives of the Session wanted a commitment that the Presbytery would allow the Church to pick its own pastor. These mutual assurances were given.
- 3) The Plan approved by the Session is then submitted to the COM but rejected.
- 4) June 14th, General Presbyter, Frank Vardeman and Rev. Reason attended the session meeting. The following is a meeting minute excerpt: *"Rev. Vardeman and Rev. Reason discussed the interim pastoral search plan indicating that more detail concerning the self study plan was required."* However no specific areas of improvement were identified.
- 5) July 2nd, the session Task Force of Jayne Mann, Paul Rake, Bruce Klimek and Rev. Morrison met with Rev. Reason to discuss how best to achieve approval of the Plan and better communications to get criticisms resolved. Rev. Reason committed to provide a list of those items which caused the Plan's rejection.
- 6) July 12th, the session met. Relevant minutes read: *"The (Personnel) Committee to commence consideration of contract renewal with Rev. Morrison with plans for a recommendation and vote at the next Session meeting. A new contract has to be approved by COM and executed by the end of September; otherwise, Rev Morrison's services will terminate at that time."*
- 7) July 15th, Rev. Reason sent an email to Bruce Klimek with the specific criticisms of the Plan that she had committed to provide. These were a) Congregational participation needed to be at least 30% in any survey with reflection and study sessions occurring thereafter, b) the Plan needed to have more than one person involved in presenting the Church history.
- 8) July 19th, Bruce Klimek responded with the following to Rev. Reason: (1) *"We believe we have been clear that the Congregational Survey we are preparing is targeting a participation percentage well in excess of the 30% minimum requirement. Moreover survey participation is planned for Ogden Dunes non-congregational members, also. We believe we have been equally expansive about the planned follow-up to the survey to include small group sessions to discuss the outcome of the survey and other issues relevant to church life and the call of a new pastor. Of course these small group sessions shall include a facilitator who would insure open dialogue,*

present the work done to date and collect feed back for further evaluation and inclusion in the process. (2) We have not provided enough information on this step, but hope to correct this with the following: One individual will be responsible for developing the preliminary document. However, this document will be reviewed, and changed as necessary by a number of groups and individuals in the Church including, but not limited to the Session, the Deacons and several senior members of the Congregation who have personal knowledge of the background of the Church in earlier periods.”

- 9) July 21st, Rev. Reason met with Bruce Klimek to further discuss the above which resulted in the notes she published the next day. He provided the follow-ups with the exception of pre-2010 focus group work because the file could not be located. With these actions, Session expected approval of the plan by COM.
- 10) July 25th, because of expected absences at the August session meeting, Session voted to cancel the meeting, hold a special meeting August 30 to finalize the Survey, and to conduct other necessary business via e-mail votes.
- 11) The session task force planned to submit the preliminary proposed questions for the Survey to the entire session by August 5th, so that they could be studied and members would be ready with approvals, changes, revisions, amendments, etc. at the August 30 meeting. Rev. Morrison also gave these preliminary proposed questions to one outside the task force which resulted in these questions being forwarded to the Presbytery.
- 12) August 19th, Session votes to extend Rev. Morrison’s contract and sent a copy signed by Session to COM for its signature.
- 13) August 24th, Session receives letter from COM informing it that COM will not approve an extension of Rev. Morrison’s contract because the *“congregational reflection piece of the interim process has been conspicuously lacking . . . COM continues to have concerns about the flawed interim process Rev. Morrison is leading”*
- 14) August 26th, Session responds with a letter to COM that concludes: *“In conclusion, the record does not support the specific reasons you have cited for not approving an extension to Rev. Morrison’s contract with ODCC. As such, we respectfully request that you reconsider the extension of Rev. Morrison’s contract, or alternatively provide us with reasons that are supported by the record.”*
- 15) August 30th, COM holds a specially called meeting with Session. Following are relevant meeting minutes: *COM’s issues with Rev. Morrison are collegial and administrative. COM declared that its decision not to extend Rev. Morrison’s contract was based on the reasons given above and there is no malfeasance, misfeasance, misconduct or other conduct unbecoming of a Minister of the Word on the part of Rev. Morrison of which they are aware. The following motion was made by a session member – Recognizing that the relationships between Presbytery, Rev. Morrison and ODCC need improvement the Session requests that COM reconsider its decision and agree to a one year extension*

to Rev. Morrison's interim contract and that steps towards reconciliation among the three parties be undertaken. The motion was seconded and carried.

16) September 6th, COM sends letter to Session advising that it will not change its decision and will not allow Session to extend Rev. Morrison's contract.

Letters from Congregants to Session

8 Diana Rd.
Ogden Dunes, IN 46368

August 27, 2011

Bruce Klimek
Clerk of Session
Ogden Dunes Community Church
116 Hillcrest Rd.
Ogden Dunes, IN 46368

Dear Members of Session:

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I am writing to you to express some deep concerns I have for the life of our church and to let you know about the hurt I am feeling about our church right now. Having been a Deacon as well as an Elder on Session two times, and Clerk of Session during the past interim period, I have loved and served this church for more than 20 years.

As has been pointed out over the years, our Congregation comes from diverse backgrounds and may have diverse beliefs. Regardless of whether or not you agree with those beliefs, they exist. So, the question becomes, how do we go about building up our community of faith despite our differences? And how do we go about getting back to the ministry of our church, rather than focusing on power and polity issues?

While serving as Clerk of Session, I witnessed the strife and discord caused by disagreement with General Assembly and the Presbytery of the Wabash Valley, resulting at that time in the withholding of per capita. It was very painful and I think it was a huge distraction for our church during a very difficult time. I prayed that we would not go down that road again in our local church. However, some of you have a great passion for these issues, and we now find ourselves heading down that particular road again, taking our church away from its important task of calling a new Pastor.

I understand that it is within Session's discretion to respond to any issue in a manner you see fit based on the majority view and that the Congregation does not vote on all matters. At the same time, however, it is my opinion that exercising majority rule without prayerful consideration and discussion within the Congregation is not healthy for our church and suppresses diversity and inclusiveness – a basic tenet of the *Book of Order* (G-4.0400 4. Diversity and Inclusiveness). (Some of you may think that I am only referring to gays when I talk about inclusiveness, and that is not my point. Diversity can mean many things.)

I'm also concerned that the Session seems to be interested in determining how many conservatives vs. liberals, etc., we have in our church. The problem with that is that we might then expect everyone to have the same views and ideology because some may view diversity as undermining the church universal. And while profiling our membership might be helpful for prospective pastors, the information can also be used in the wrong way. I pray that it won't.

MiHalo, p. 2

Maybe putting this into the context of a lesson from Jesus to James and John will help drive my point home about being in power or holding a majority view. In Mark 10:35-45 James and John ask Jesus to grant their request to sit at his right and left hands. In my humble interpretation they were caught up in a will to power. Jesus called the disciples together. He said, *"You know this. The rulers of the Gentiles have great power. Their important officials give many orders to people. You must not behave like that. Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. Whoever wants to be important must be a slave of all."*

Rather than worrying about who holds a majority view or how many conservatives we have vs. liberals vs. moderates, it is instead our job as Elders to build up the Body of Christ. It is also the duty of Elders, individually and jointly, to strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the Congregation committed to our charge. While strengthening and nurturing, Elders learn about needs and concerns, giving leadership the ability to then "read the landscape." Only then are we prepared to discern what God has planned for the life of our church.

Speaking of reading the landscape, you are no doubt discussing at your Session meeting a survey that you would like to send to the membership. Several weeks ago Rev. Morrison sent a draft of this survey to me that I found to be extremely troubling for several reasons. As a matter-of-fact, I found the survey to be so troubling and disturbing that I told Monica Conrad about it, and she requested that I send it to her, which I did.

Some of you may not know that Monica was part of a team of people appointed by the Presbytery to facilitate discussions at First Presbyterian Church in Kokomo when that church was at odds with PCUSA. Monica witnessed first-hand the raw emotion exhibited, pain inflicted and long-time friendships ruined when that church embarked on its eventual departure from PCUSA and joined the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). I fear that our own church could never recover from such an attempt. And I also don't think people realize the implications of such a move. For instance, did you know that the EPC will not ordain women? Could you imagine a world where Nancy Becker could not be ordained? And does this mean that women could not serve as Deacons or Elders as well?

There were, and may still be, questions in that survey that clearly indicated to me that some members of Session at Ogden Dunes Community Church may be considering having our church leave PCUSA. For example, in the first draft there were several biased and potentially misleading questions about who holds the deed to the church. Regardless of whether or not these questions are kept in the survey, the anger that was expressed in some of the questions clearly shows to me that some people may be questioning our affiliation with PCUSA. While it may be okay to have such opinions, the point is that Presbytery policy requires transparency in such matters by the Elders.

Pursuing matters such as who holds the deed to our property would only be undertaken if some in this church were considering a split from PCUSA. Deeds have always been held in trust between the local church and Presbytery – this is nothing new, so why is it suddenly such a huge issue? Tell me, how does holding a deed to a church glorify God or affect how we minister in our community? And why are such matters more important than growing our faith and educating our children in the Christian faith?

MiHalo, p. 3

Meanwhile, in our newsletter it has been written that meetings with Presbytery have been cordial, and some of us have been told that our church is not considering leaving PCUSA. And then these questions crop up on a draft survey that says otherwise. Honestly, I was very shocked I had even received a draft in such a state from our Pastor.

The first thing any survey writer learns is that badly written surveys do nothing but provide bad information. Furthermore, people will become frustrated, and maybe even angry, and simply will not respond. Are you willing to put out the effort required to elicit a fair response? Please make sure that every question has a specific objective in mind. Better yet, use a survey that has been tested before. Our church can't be that unique – there must be some surveys that have already been used by other churches that have great reliability.

Finally, I fear that results from the survey could potentially be used for the wrong reasons to lead this church in a direction that ignores its diversity. Meanwhile, we have missed great opportunities to bring the Good News of Christ to people who need it – people who live right in our community.

I also feel a need to relate the lack of concern that was afforded to me when I was obviously distraught over this survey. When I sent my survey input to Rev. Morrison via email, I would have expected some sort of response from either him or an Elder because I was very clear how personally upset I was. I am hurt that I received no phone call or email at the very least letting me know that my comments and concerns were passed on to the appropriate people for consideration.

I'm also troubled that Rev. Morrison doesn't seem to be concerned that people are leaving our church. I am saying this because when I recently mentioned my worries about people leaving, he expressed absolutely no concern that it was happening. To quote him: "I have seen it a thousand times. The church will go on." Although true, this kind of response is not what I would have expected from a Pastor!

I am praying that you will understand the concerns I have addressed here, even if you don't agree with them. I also prayerfully request that you consider including my concerns or a copy of this letter in any reports sent to the Committee on Ministry. Part of the process of healing is to recognize there is a problem. I would like to see this Session find ways to heal its relationships so that we can more effectively achieve our mission – and go about the business of recruiting the Pastor God already has in mind for us.

If anyone wishes to discuss this letter with me and to clarify Session's direction with me, I can be reached at 763-4871.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan MiHalo". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Susan MiHalo

Mike Falk
61 Ski Hill Road
Ogden Dunes, IN 46368

September 4, 2011

Bruce Klimek, Clerk of Session
Ogden Dunes Community Church
116 Hillcrest Rd.
Ogden Dunes, IN 46368

Dear Session Members:

May grace and peace be upon you in the name Jesus Christ. I pray that we might do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with the Lord.

I am writing to you to express my concerns for the future of the Ogden Dunes Community Church. Dorothy and I were drawn to the Ogden Dunes Community Church by Reverend Nancy Becker. And, we were drawn to Ogden Dunes by those we met and fellowshiped with at Church. Dorothy and I became Church members before we moved to Ogden Dunes.

I can recall working in the Church gardens with Margaret Benninger. Margaret was a founding member of Ogden Dunes Community Church. She told me early Ogden Dunes Community Church stories. She told me the church founders wanted a "Community Church" and how the local Catholic Diocese recommended that the church be formed as a Presbyterian Church, if the founders intended to have a "Community Church". And, that is how our Church came to be Ogden Dunes Community Church.

I eventually served on Session under Nancy Becker, Stephen Kolderup and Robert Leach. I am committed to the duty of an elder "*to strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the congregation committed to their charge.*" (G-4.0201). I am concerned that we have failed to *strengthen and nurture* Our Church. I recognize that many of us are in different stages of our walk with Christ; we should welcome people at all stations in their walk with Christ.

Much has changed at Ogden Dunes Community Church over the years. Membership and attendance is down in virtually every activity at Ogden Dunes Community Church; Children participation is drastically down in Kids of the Kingdom, God's Messengers, Ensemble, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School and Youth Group. Friends of the Church are down. Adult membership is graying. Christian Education levels are extremely low compared to the record high levels while John Rhoad led the program.

The one area that has unarguably grown in the last seven years is Sand Piper. It has grown because the Church re-engaged with the Ogden Dunes Community. The Session and the Ogden Dunes Community together breathed new life into Sand Piper.

Why is it then that we as a Church, continue to do things to disengage the Ogden Dunes Community? Why don't we engage the Community? Why do we do things to purposefully alienate the community? The Ogden Dunes Community has voted with their feet. Our Membership and attendance levels are the evidence.

What has caused this silent voting of the feet? Could it be less inviting ministers in the pulpit in the last six years? Could it be ministers that didn't visit members, let alone infirm or hospitalized members? Is it a coincidence attendance has steadily dropped since the Session signed on to the confessing church movement? Or, more recently could it be the March 18, 2011 letter to Wabash Valley Presbytery questioning the General Assembly Overture 10-A to change the ordination standards? Could it be the Session's closeted discussions on leaving PCUSA?

I question how these actions *strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the congregation*. I wonder if these actions exhibit *justice and compassion* or have these actions caused *discord and division*. (D-1.0101)

The book of order reminds us that part of the Communion of the Faithful is to remind the believing community *to actively seek reconciliation in every instance of conflict or division between them and their neighbors. AND to love and serve God, one another, and their neighbors in the world.* (W-2.4006)

Did I mention something as simple as the outreach of Nancy Becker's Minister's discretionary fund sponsorship of the Ogden Dunes Community Church softball team? The Church softball team was a community outreach for church members and non-church members to fellowship in a Christian Church softball league. It was a chance to show Christian men in everyday life. A chance to get non-church members to the door of the Ogden Dunes Community Church.

Some have said that we, as a Church, must believe in something. I agree. At the Falk household we believe in something. We believe in love.

We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us! But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love. (1 Cor 13:12-13 The Message)

I pray that as Ogden Dunes Community Church we will recruit a Pastor that will help *strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the congregation* and lead us in re-engaging the Ogden Dunes Community.

I pray that you will consider my concerns. I request that this letter be read into the minutes of the next Ogden Dunes Community Church Session meeting and forwarded to the Committee on Ministry.

If anyone wishes to discuss this with me and help me understand Session's intentions, I can be reached at 764-4676.

In Christ,
Mike Falk

September 12, 2011

Session Members of the Ogden Dunes Community Church,

A couple of weeks ago Bill and I were at a party where a Session member of the Ogden Dunes Church was attending. The Session member said that he had noticed that Bill and I had not been attending church services. I made a weak excuse to say that we had been busy and out of town a lot but, frankly, that is not the real reason we have been staying away. We feel disconnected from this Church and the direction it seems to be heading.

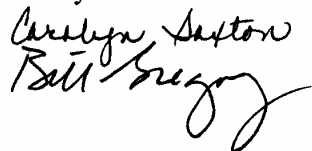
We feel sad about this disconnect because up until recently we have been very active. I was in attendance most Sunday mornings to sing in the choir, had been a member of the Deacons and Bill had been very active as an Elder. He served on the personnel committee for several years when Robert Leach was our pastor and also chaired the nominating committee for two years. Both of these committee responsibilities were arduous and time consuming. So it was not an easy decision for us to make in choosing to not attend services. However, it was a decision that we felt we had to make and one we continue to make each Sunday.

Our commitment to Jesus Christ has not waivered but we feel the Church's interim pastor and decisions made by its Session do not speak to or for us. We believe in Christ's teachings of inclusiveness but we don't see or hear that in the weekly message or in the path the Session continues to follow. We continue to take issue with this Church's ongoing lack of cohesion with the Presbytery and its membership with the Confessing Church Movement that the Session maintains. We continue to feel disengaged from the dogmatic exclusivity of the interim pastor's sermons. The few Sundays we have been to services we have felt that the message is permeated with intolerance which, in some other places around the country, has led to hate filled actions and an "us versus them" mentality. Bill and I do not believe this is the message of Christ.

We support the Presbytery's decision on inclusiveness. We believe that Christ would want us to have open arms welcoming everyone and we read of that in passages describing His journey. We support the Presbytery's decision that the interim pastor's contract should not be renewed. We are concerned that the Session has put so much effort portraying the Presbytery as the "bad guys". We believe the current leadership of the Church – both the interim pastor and the Session – has been headed in a direction that will harm our abilities to reach out to serve those that want to learn more about Christ.

This is a community church...one that should be open to everyone. Recent actions taken and words said negate the mission that was recently written for this Church. We would like to see the mission reignited through a renewal of respect for differences. We are willing to have a minister that challenges us to learn more, to understand our differences and seek common ground so that we can be better Christians and have a healthier Church life than what is currently offered. Until we see this change we cannot in Christ's name continue to support the Ogden Dunes Community Church.

In Christ,
Carolyn Saxton & Bill Gregory

Handwritten signatures of Carolyn Saxton and Bill Gregory. Carolyn's signature is in cursive and appears to read 'Carolyn Saxton'. Bill's signature is also in cursive and appears to read 'Bill Gregory'.

September 13, 2011

Dear Members of Session:

I came to church on 9/11/11 hoping to have worshipful experience. I give great thanks for Into Light to speaking to my soul about God's love and grace for all. Unfortunately, my experience of my worship was disrupted.

We likely all agree this is not one of the better times for us as a church. I recognize the Committee on Ministry (COM) on behalf of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley (PWV) informed our Session and Rev. Morrison and that his contract will not to be extended.

Because I was copied on Jayne Mann's letter to Susan MiHalo in response to Susan's letter to the Session, I spoke with Jayne directly about that email and my specific concerns relative to a discussion between us on May 24, 2011 about a critical PWV policy that did not appear to have been explored by the Task Force nor discussed with the COM liaison prior to completing the first draft. I believe it important for us to have these types of conversations for reconciliation to occur. I am further grateful to Jayne for welcoming me Sunday morning after worship. It meant a lot to me given how uncomfortable I felt after the service.

I understand that Jayne's letter to Susan expressed feelings that may likely be expressed by others in these times. Jayne's letter points out that there are people who feel like Rev. Morrison's career has been damaged, that there is currently a tenuous stability within our church, and that the Session and PWV have now been set into conflict about Rev. Morrison's contract.

It is within this context that I heard Rev. Morrison's sermon preached on Acts 4:1-22. His theme was pointing us as congregants to "stand firm against forces that are greater than you." There were illustrations made to Pharisees in the time of the early church and the power they yielded over the "uneducated upstart" followers of Christ's word. Those unfamiliar to the dynamics of our church may not have heard what I heard, yet within the context of our church, I heard parallels drawn to the PWV and Pharisees.

I am aware that Rev. Morrison has tended to tie sermons to the lectionary scripture. Knowing this, I checked on the lecture text that day. I found the sermon was not from the lectionary. If it had, one scripture we may have heard through the sermon message began with this verse: "Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions." Romans 14:1. Even though I was saddened to not have heard a sermon on this text, I was reminded and grateful to Jayne Mann for welcoming me after service despite our own differences of opinions. Jayne's extension also became a part of what I found to be worshipful and true to this particular verse.

Yet, it was not Rev. Morrison's sermon that causes me to write this letter, but the context is important. I am concerned with the way he decided to close the worship on Sunday 9/11. Instead of dismissing us, he explained all were to remain seated because Bruce Klimek had a very important message to provide to us as Clerk of Session. I understand that under our Book of Order, the Clerk of Session's role is to be the official transmitter

of information on behalf of Session. Rev. Morrison explained that he had to leave the sanctuary before Bruce started and that Bruce had something that he was going to hand out to the Congregation after his announcement. Given that I had not heard that there was any called meeting of the Congregation, I found this all to be very irregular under the Book of Order concerning Worship or concerning proper protocol for holding a called meeting of the Congregation. It is important to adhere to this process because it separates worship from the business of the church.

Rev. Morrison left the sanctuary exiting the side door. Bruce stood up and read the letter and with assistance passed it out. What I received was authored by the "Clerk of Session" as part of his "duty to report" to the Congregation on church letter head. I had the clear impression the letter was sent in the fulfillment of the Clerk of Session's duties. The letter further suggested that "Session members are willing to answer any and all [questions] that you may have to the best of their ability." An elder currently serving on Session happened to be sitting behind me. After the distribution, I asked whether this was authorized by the Session. I was told it was not. I expressed concern about the appropriateness of this occurrence. As I left the sanctuary, Rev. Morrison was again at the back of the sanctuary to greet everyone as they left the sanctuary. I am informed that during second service this occurred in a fairly similar pattern except that Paul Rake stepped in for Bruce Klimek.

I, too, am an elder of this church and out of that pledge we make as elders to uphold the polity of our church, I write this letter. It is our polity that informs us how we are to be in relationship with one another. When we disregard that polity, then we have nothing to guide our covenant relationships. Out of respect for our polity, I seek clarity from the Session about what happened on 9/11/11.

I find it highly unusual that a pastor would leave worship and not be in a room when there is an announcement being made at the end of his or her sermon. I find it unusual for two reasons: one of the reason concerns the church's responsibility to provide pastoral care and second, the Session's (and the church's) desire to be responsibly guided by our polity. It is within this context that I raise the following questions:

- What pastoral concern was exercised by Rev. Morrison to explore and know about what would be said after his sermon and his responsibility to lead the church into worshipful experience on 9/11? Where was his pastoral leadership to protect elders from disregarding the procedures of the Book of Order to ensure proper separation of congregants' worship time from the business of the church?
- Since folks may be expectantly upset by the information, how was it decided that pastoral guidance or support of Rev. Morrison's presence was unnecessary to congregants made upset by the announcement?
- Who was expected to be the pastoral presence with full information of the facts to address concerns? What pastoral concern was contemplated to visitors of our church?
- It is this Session's and the pastor's responsibility to ensure the maintenance of divine worship. Knowing this, how can it be possible that our polity was usurped and our

worship interrupted without permission from either the Session yet with the pastor's tacit approval?

As my questions likely communicate, I am very disturbed about how the events unfolded using the time congregants are gathered for worship, not allowing congregants opportunity to have proper notice or be excused as the church moved into a format of conducting the business of the church. This is particularly true, as noted within the sermon, on the day in which many of us need emotional healing from the events of 9/11/01. Where was attention given to the need for pastoral care within the context of this historical day?

Because the selection of what was and was not included has the effect of editorializing, I pose the following questions:

- Why did the timeline leave out that COM met with Rev. Morrison on July 7, 2011? Why did the timeline leave out that the Session was informed that the decision by COM to not renew Rev. Morrison's contract occurred on August 4, 2011? *See* PWV Letter to Session dated August 18, 2011.
- Why was felt important to inform the Congregation that "one outside the task force forwarded [these questions] to the Presbytery?" Why did the timeline fail to note that this occurrence of "forwarding to the Presbytery" did not occur until AFTER COM had made its decision? Was any thought given to what effect this might have that "one outside the task force" who is a member of our own congregation by listing this fact in the timeline? I ask these questions particularly knowing that *any process* of drafting a survey should have been transparent to COM.
- Why did the timeline omit facts that on August 18, members of the PWV met with Rev. Morrison and explained that his contract would not be renewed? Why does the timeline omit the fact that a few members of Session were at the church around the time of PWV meeting with Rev. Morrison? Was the Congregation intentionally led to believe that none of the Session members were informed by Rev. Morrison about what was told to him by PWV on that day either directly, indirectly, or even known through intelligent intuition by reading the situation of August 18, and prior to the Session taking action on Rev. Morrison's contract the following day?
- Why does the timeline fail to inform that the email vote itself makes no mention of informing current Session members of any of the known and/or relevant facts of August 18 before seeking their vote on Rev. Morrison's contract? Why does the timeline omit the fact that the Session voted to change Rev. Morrison's effective salary from \$48,442 to \$62,442?
- By raising these additional factual concerns, will the Session take any steps to ensure a more actual, unbiased and complete timeline is provided to the Congregation?

These questions illustrate the important work of Session operating as one body authorized by the Book of Order to lead the congregation of ODCC. Our polity is in place to ensure proper discernment by the Session elected by our Congregation so that congregational

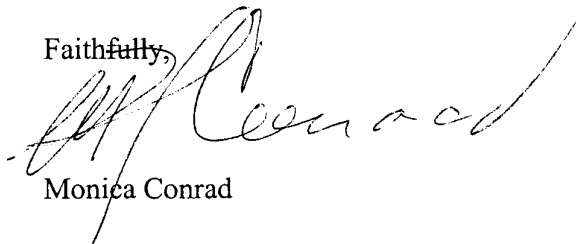
care is attended to by body entrusted with that responsibility. Had our polity been followed, communication would have been properly reviewed and authorized in advance of providing it to the Congregation. Most importantly, our polity is in place to ensure that we conduct ourselves in healthy ways as a leadership body and a congregation. Holding properly called congregation meetings ensures that persons who have concerns are a part of an invitation extended to all to be in an open conversation instead of encouraging members to have individualized conversations with respective Session members.

Because it seems natural to me that clarification is needed with the Congregation about Session's role in this communication, I pose the following questions:

- In being informed about concerns about how worship was handled and manner in which information was disseminated on 9/11, does the Session intend to adopt or ratify this communication? If so, how do you address concerns about those who were not in attendance on 9/11? Will that be left to word of mouth and parking lot meetings to be informed?
- If Session does not approve the actions of what occurred on 9/11, what actions will the Session take to clarify that one or some of its members acted unilaterally and without Session review, authority or approval?

It is through my own hurt about how worship was lead on 9/11 that I write this letter. In my own understanding of doing the work of reconciliation, I know I must first bring my hurts to those, the church leadership, whom I feel have responsibility and request dialogue. In this spirit, I plead with this Session to provide its exclusive focus on leadership that ushers the inclusive and reconciliatory love of Christ guided by the Holy Spirit. That begins by over-extending ourselves in love to those with who we work through PWV and individuals within this Congregation with whom we disagree as Jayne as shown to me. I plead with this Session to covenant to do future work in a manner that abides by our PCUSA polity in our dealings with one another. When unclear about our polity during this tenuous time, we should each be encouraged to consult with resource of the moderator of Session, alternatively, the Stated Clerk of PWV, before taking actions that can't be undone yet result in further hurt toward one another. These are small parts what it means to uphold our vows as elders and church leaders and to live out our covenants to be reformed Presbyterian Christians.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monica Conrad', written over a printed name.

Monica Conrad