

**The Progressive Christian Alliance Leadership Council Meeting Minutes  
October 28, 2016 at 3 PM Central Daylight Time**

The meeting was held and recorded on Google Hangout.

The meeting was called to order by Leadership Council Chair, The Rev. Lawton Higgs, Sr.; other attendees were The Rev. Beth Abbott, The Rev. Gina Pond, The Rev. J. T. Ramelis, and The Rev. Fred-Allen Self.

Rev. Fred-Alan Self led the opening prayer and reflection. He reminded us that life is not about avoiding the storm but learning how to dance in the rain. He shared his witness that small gestures of love are the life changing events when life is hard and that the Progressive Christian Alliance should strive to become beacons of life and hope by our simple gestures of love and care to keep the world dancing in the rain.

The agenda was approved with the addition of two items.

The first item was to discuss the promotional use of our email and Facebook networks under new business.

The second item was to make implementation of the "Proposal for Membership Definitions and Yearly Dues" a goal for 2017.

J.T. Ramelis made the Treasures Report.

The current checking account balance is \$378.80.

Expenditures since our last meeting were a \$400 filing fee for the 501 C3 Application. It was noted that donations are reducing and that we need to solicit contribution.

The Leadership Council approved by consensus for Fred Allen the post request for donations on our website and Facebook groups and pages in order to maintain a \$500 minimum balance to avoid fees and penalties in our checking account.

A discussion was held to initiate the development of a budget for the Progressive Christian Alliance so that our members will know what contributions will be used to accomplish.

Beth Abbott agreed to prepare an estimate of the annual cost of preparing and mailing ordination certificates to be included and the budget.

The document Gina Pond prepared entitled "Proposal for Membership Definition and Yearly Dues" was presented, discussed and revised in a discussion at length and in detail.

The following is the latest edit of the document:

**Proposal for Membership Definitions and Yearly Dues**

This document outlines a proposal for membership levels and responsibilities as well as proposed yearly fees for membership.

Having a clear definition of who is a member, who is affiliated, and who is ordained has been lacking in the PCA and a point of confusion, especially when it comes to voting rights in the organization and being able to accept already ordained clergy without having to go through a second ordination process. We have also not charged yearly dues for our ordained ministers, affiliates, and members, which is standard practice for most organizations of our type. Clarifying our membership levels will help us in overall organizations of the PCA, and yearly membership fees will allow for the PCA to have a consistent stream of income, offset ordination costs (background checks, printing and mailing of certificates, etc.), and give members a bigger sense of investment into the organization.

I've tried to keep the dues as modest as possible. For affiliation and ordination, I'm assuming that we will find a reasonable background check website where the ordination and affiliate fee will cover the cost. When put into practice, the fees should be reviewed every year to balance the PCA's needs with the ability of our members and clergy to pay. It should also be stressed that no one should be turned down for ordination or affiliation for lack of funds, and hopefully the fact that others *can* pay yearly dues will help offset the costs for those who can't.

Definitions:

### **Lay Membership**

- Fills out online form and agrees to PCA covenant.
- Submits \$10 via PayPal or by mail yearly.
- Has organizational voting rights.
- Is put on "progca" mailing list to receive news and information.
- Qualifies person for possibility of being on governing bodies of PCA

**Clergy Affiliation** (This is clergy who are already ordained in another organization who wish to also be known as clergy in the PCA. Those who are in denominations that don't allow for dual affiliation should go through the regular PCA ordination process if they are willing to give up their prior affiliation.)

- Discusses needs and goals with local RSL.
- Fills out Affiliation form (not sure if we'll have this all online or via PDF) and checks "Affiliation" (this makes them members in discernment until the background check is complete).
- Agrees to PCA Covenant.
- Submits a one-time fee of \$50 (to cover background check). Pays annual credential fee of \$10. Pays for and submits background check bi-annually to receive "clergy in good standing" card and letter.
- Has organizational voting rights.
- Has all privileges that ordained PCA clergy (ie: chaplaincy stuff, etc.).
- Is put on "progca" mailing list to receive news and information.
- Is listed on PCA website as PCA clergy.

- (Optional: maybe have a separate clergy mailing list?)
- Qualifies person for possibility of being on governing bodies of PCA

**Church/Group Affiliation** (These are groups led by ordained or affiliated PCA clergy that would like to be known as a PCA congregation.)

- Fills out Affiliation form.
- Congregation agrees to PCA Covenant
- Submits one-time membership fee, depending on size of organization (<25 members: \$25; >25 members: \$50?), members of a church should become Lay Members in order to have voting rights (**need to check constitution**).
- Is listed on PCA website as an Affiliated Church/Group
- Must inform PCA ASAP of any change of email, address, etc.
- Church groups have autonomy. Ministers of the church can ordain members as lay clergy to work within a congregation, but for those ministers to act with authority of the PCA, they must go through the PCA ordination process.

### **Ordained Clergy**

- Fills out Affiliation Form, checks that they wish to be ordained, and agrees to PCA covenant (this makes them members who are in discernment for ordination).
- Goes through discernment with RSL to determine needs and goals.
- Fills out Ordination Form and pays one-time fee of \$50 (to cover background check, ordination certificate, and other costs).
- Pays annual credential fee of \$10. Pays for and submits background check bi-annually to receive “clergy in good standing” card and letter.
- Ordination Form goes to LC for approval with RSL’s recommendation letter.
- Once approved, clergy receives certificate and plans for their own ordination ceremony.
- **Stole? (Need to check cost and add to fee.)**
- Has organizational voting rights.
- Has all privileges that ordained PCA clergy (ie: chaplaincy stuff, etc.).
- Is put on “progca” mailing list to receive news and information.
- Is listed on PCA website as PCA clergy.
- (Optional: maybe have a separate clergy mailing list?)
- Qualifies person for possibility of being on governing bodies of PCA
- Must inform PCA ASAP of any change of email, address, etc.

Beth Abbott volunteered to research PCA logo designs for stoles and the cost of stoles for providing them for clergy.

The Leadership Council approved by consensus that a proposed process for implementation of this proposal be prepared by Gina Pond for our consideration at the next LC meeting.

Marie Ba'tel was approved to serve as the Regional Servant Leader for the Pacific Region.

The Regional Servant Leaders are encouraged to use the servant[leader@pca.org](mailto:leader@pca.org) email list to discuss RSL needs. The use of Facebook does not always reach everyone because of the process Facebook uses to distribute post.

Gina Pond volunteered to send out a notice once a month for PCA leaders to check their spam folders for PCA emails. She also volunteered to contact PCA leaders and offer setting up bundle delivery system for emails for their convenience.

A consensus decision was reached not to develop a delegation process for RSLs to delegate mentoring within their region but to ask the RSLs to review the volume of ordination applications and to request the LC to establish new RSL regions meet the heavier demand for ordination mentoring.

The Leadership Council began a discussion about the use of our website, Facebook pages, groups and email list for the sale of books and other items. The general consensus was that it should not be allowed.

The possibility of developing a section on our website to promote local PCA related events will be considered.

The next meeting date was set for November 15, 2016 at 3 PM Central Standard Time. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Lawton Higgs, Sr.  
01/07/17