

Realignment Committee Report GLGP June Meeting 2022

As a committee, in our March meeting of Presbytery, we were charged with reviewing communications 22-2, 22-5, 22-6, 22-9, and to provide recommendations to Presbytery, on how to proceed. At that time, our recommendation was that communication 22-5, allow for Durham's transfer to the Presbytery of Alleghenies be approved and Presbytery agreed with our recommendation. Our second recommendation was that our realignment committee remain in place focusing on communications 22-2, 22-6, and 22-9, to interact with the broader presbytery to determine the next steps.

In regard to communications 22-6 & 22-9 dealing with the potential restructuring / dividing of our presbytery to reduce workload, we believe that this is not required at this time. Currently our Presbytery may see a reduction in the number of congregations, we believe there are other ways to immediately reduce the workload on our current clerk / assistant clerk, and finally we believe it would be better to work on improving relationships within the presbytery rather than separating churches due to relationship issues between the ruling / teaching elders of our presbytery. Based on this, it is our belief it would be in our presbytery's best interest to table recommendations 22-6 & 22-9 at this time and focus on communication 22.2.

In communication 22-2 Mr. Kuehner lays out the heavy workload we have in our presbytery. As stated in our previous report, this workload is partially the result of the number of students we have, the multitude of papers written (some due to the disagreements in our ranks), and the lateness of papers being submitted to presbytery. If we don't immediately address these issues, we can pose a real serious issue of not having men willing to serve as clerks within our presbytery.

With input from our committee and other men within presbytery, we believe there are some immediate actions that could be implemented to reduce the workload affecting our clerk, assistant clerk, and overall presbytery. These include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Immediately require all papers / reports / communications to be submitted 30 days prior to our Presbytery meeting date. The only exception would be a communication that is deemed critical by the AIC, this communication would be allowed to go forward.
- Implement the **position of a second assistant-clerk** to go along with the current clerk & assistant clerk roles. This would enable a sharing of responsibilities within the clerk's office and could also allow for an alternating of leadership from one meeting to another.
- Establish a **Shepherding Committee** that would be able to come along side congregations that express a need for shepherding due to unresolved issues within a congregation. The proposed Shepherding Committee would NOT function in any capacity as a judicial committee. The committee's work is solely advisory in nature to support the elders and sessions of the GLGP. The Shepherding Committee is to remain as a committee and not be transformed into a commission. Members would serve at length but have rotation to assure a cross-section for presbytery representation.

Session Advisory Committee Functions:

1. Serve as the first point of contact for emergency needs for elders and sessions that need counsel.
2. Handle informal issues with counsel before they go to the AIC.

- Look at a way to perform some of the Candidates & Credentials exams within committee and communicate the results with summaries to the broader Presbytery.

Considering our findings, we propose the following six recommendations to the Presbytery:

1. **Recommendation:** That communication 22-6 and 22-9 be laid on the table, believing that they are not required to be acted upon at this time.
2. **Recommendation:** That presbytery adopt as a standing policy that, apart from a special resolution (two-thirds majority vote), no written report, communication, student paper, or amendment thereto, shall be received by the court unless disseminated to the delegates (or submitted to the clerk) at least 30 full calendar days in advance of the meeting, with the sole exception of all clerical communications (e.g. clerk's report, proposed agenda, etc.).
3. **Recommendation:** That Presbytery allow for the election of a second assistant clerk of presbytery, and task the current clerk, assistant clerk, and the new assistant clerk to work out the division of workload amongst themselves.
4. **Recommendation:** Presbytery take our current "**shepherding**" committee which deals with those on the membership role of Presbytery and rename it the "**membership committee**", following which, appoint a new "**shepherding committee**", focused on dealing with shepherding needs within our presbytery.
5. **Recommendation:** Request the "**Candidates & Credentials**" committee develop a proposal that allows some exams to be performed within a committee structure communicating summary results to the Presbytery as a whole.
6. **Recommendation:** That the "**Realignment Committee**" be dismissed by Presbytery.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bob Bibby - Chairman
Kent Butterfield
James Faris
Adam Kuehner
Steven Work