

Minutes Presbytery of Boston Council
January 23, 2020

The council met via Adobe Connect.

Attendance:

David Dorer (Moderator), Sarah Hathaway, Katie Cole, Su Young Kim, Katie Cole, Kristin Rinehimer, Mark Wells, Thatcher Freeborn

Non-voting: T. J. DeMarco (Stated Clerk), Andy Parmelee (Treasurer),
Guest: Eric Markman to speak to Grant Request

Convene

The meeting opened with prayer at 7:05 PM. The council approved the minutes from its previous meeting on November 21, 2019. The Council approved the agenda submitted in advance of the meeting by the moderator.

Review of Grant Request from Mandarin Bible Study Fellowship

This grant request located in Appendix A of these minutes were submitted to the council in advance of the meeting for review. Eric Markman joined the council for this portion of the meeting to explain the nature of the Bible Study and answer questions.

The council **approved** the request to disburse \$23,000 to the Mandarin Bible Study fellowship to be disbursed from funds managed by the Presbytery Trustees at the discretion of the Presbytery trustees.

The council **endorsed** the grant request from the Mandarin Bible Study to the Synod of the Northeast.

Treasurer Report

By: Andy Parmelee

The treasurer submitted financial reports in advance of the meeting.

Budget Task Force

At its previous meeting, the council asked members to speak with congregations about their experience of the Presbytery. Members were charged with asking two questions:

What are your expectations of Presbytery?

What do you wish your congregation could outsource?

Katie Cole reported that she spoke to the session of Fourth Presbyterian Church and they feel grateful to the Presbytery for past support but are unclear about what the relationship should look now.

The moderator invited members to consider potential follow-up questions if sessions are unsure about how to answer either of these questions.

Follow-up Discussion on Meeting with Paul Grier of the Presbyterian Foundation

The council reviewed the conversation with Paul Grier and discussed the following possibilities:

- How can the communications coordinator help support communicating how Presbytery supports congregations and ministers?
- We could try an exercise where we review our mission statement and think about specific ways in which we fulfill it.

Nominating Committee

Council directed the moderator to ask several Presbytery members to consider serving on the Nominating Committee

Stated Clerk

By: T. J. DeMarco

The Stated Clerk submitted the draft agenda for the next Presbytery meeting and the council provided input.

The Stated Clerk reported that the Needham Administrative Commission has begun its work. The Commission needs one more member at this time.

Resource Presbyter

By: Cindy Kohlmann

The Resource Presbyter was unable to attend, but submitted the following report in writing:

**Report to Council
Resource Presbyter
January 22, 2020**

December Presbytery Meeting

Many thanks to KCB for hosting an incredible meeting. It was great having both Diane and Vilmarie present, and the response to the Matthew 25 invitation has been strong. I'll say more about that below.

March Presbytery Meeting

Looking ahead to March, I've invited Bryce Wiebe from the Office of Mission Engagement to come to the Presbytery meeting to talk about the Special Offerings of the PC(USA) and help connect more of our churches to the mission we're doing nationally and internationally. Ellie Johns-Kelley from the Presbyterian Foundation will also join us. If we can work it into the agenda, I'd love for them both to have up to half an hour each, in a chunk of time that will focus on generosity and gratitude.

Bryce is also interested in doing a pre-presbytery program. I'll get more details from him on the content and contact the host church, if there are no reservations.

Another special guest for the March meeting will be coming from the E.P.O.C.A. Group in Worcester, who has received a Self Development of People Grant from the PC(USA). TJ knows more about their ministry, but since we as a denomination support it, I thought it would be good to hear a "mission report" from our neighbors.

Matthew 25

The response to the Matthew 25 invitation has been strong. I'm working with Ben to make sure that resources are regularly highlighted in the e-connections. As of today, January 22, four congregations in the Presbytery have signed up as Matthew 25 churches: KCB, Roxbury, Burlington, and Church of the Covenant. I know other congregations are in the process of discussing it. There's a free Lenten study resource connected with this initiative, and I've heard good feedback about it as well.

Pastors' Retreat

I won't have time to really work on this until after June, but I have a growing sense that the pastors of our congregations, and many of those in validated ministry as well, could use an opportunity for encouragement and renewal. I'd like to start laying the groundwork for such an event, probably in the summer, perhaps to include both Presbytery's.

Poor People's Campaign

The Poor People's Campaign, a movement supported by the Presbyterian Church, has announced a march on Washington D.C. to call for a moral revival and Poor People's Assembly. The march will be on June 20, 2020 with the assembly to follow that week. That is the same day as the opening of our 224th General Assembly in Baltimore, and plans are being discussed to find ways to connect our work together as the PC(USA) with the march and assembly in DC. You can learn more here: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org>
There is a meeting February 5 in Greenfield, MA at 7 pm.

Service as Co-Moderator

With about five months to go, I'm continuing to enjoy the opportunities to travel and see the church at work across the country and around the world. Thank you so much for your support and encouragement in this time. I truly could not do this without all the ways you have been cheering me on. Here is my travel schedule from now until our March Presbytery meeting:

January 23-26: Presbyteries of de Cristo and Grand Canyon, AZ
January 27-28: Presbytery of Genesee Valley, NY
January 29-30: Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators, AR
January 31-February 5: Synod of Cuba
February 7-10: Presbytery of Miami Valley, OH
February 12-14: Presbyterian Mission Agency Board/Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, Baltimore
February 19-23: Presbytery of Tampa Bay
March 2-5: General Assembly 224 Leadership Selection, Louisville

Personal

March 5 marks one year since we moved my Mom into memory care in Oak Harbor, Washington. In addition to my travel as co-moderator, I've also traveled several times over the past year to spend time with my Mom and Dad. The situation has mostly normalized, and so I've been going out less frequently, but will probably continue to visit and work remotely about once a quarter. The next time I do so will be the last week of February, the 24th-28th. Thank you again for keeping my family in your prayers.

Budget Task Force

The budget task force will need to present a motion at the March meeting on how to cover the budget from March through September for 2020 budget.

The budget task force should meet between now and the next council meeting and report at the next council meeting.

Committee on Ministry

No report.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Kristin Rinehimer reported that CPM has received Nathan Leach as an Inquirer. He is a member at Hyde Park. They plan to meet with JY Lee from Fourth Presbyterian in February.

The committee has an email address:

bostonprescpm@gmail.com

Mission and Congregations

Katie Cole reported that the committee is working toward creating a gathering for each month when there is not a Presbytery meeting.

Trustees

The trustees submitted their minutes to the council. The investment sub-committee continues to work on divestment from fossil fuels and have been in dialogue with Rob Mark on this. The trustees as well as the investment sub-committee are considering how to create an endowment fund and will have a report on this work soon.

Nominating Committee

Meagan Manas has accepted a nomination to the trustees. There are currently 5 vacancies on COM and the committee is working to staff this committee. There is 1 vacancy on the Permanent Judicial Commission.

Adjourn

Katie Cole closed the meeting with prayer at 8:30 PM.

Appendix A: Grant Request from Mandarin Bible Study Fellowship

The Presbytery of Boston
Committee on Congregation Support and Development
Application for Congregation Support & Development Funds

Today' date: December 17, 2019

Name of Applicant: Yan Wang

Address: 126 Atlantic Street, Quincy, 02171

Phone: 617 283 0456

Email: yanclar@gmail.com

Church Name: N/A

Church Phone: N/A

Name of Project: Mandarin Bible Study Fellowship

Has your church endorsed it?

The Presbytery of Boston has commissioned Yan Wang to the ministry and to serve as its leader.

If yes, date? September 23, 2019

Briefly describe the project, its goals and how your anticipation in this event meets the priorities listed above (if applicable).

The Mandarin Bible Study Fellowship is an emerging gospel community in North Quincy, MA. Among the growing Mandarin-speaking Chinese population in this area, Yan Wang taps the tremendous potential for connection and ministry among them. Since the ministry started on July 5, Yan is gathering Chinese immigrants, students, and scholars to his home weekly for shared meals, Bible study, and fellowship. On September 23, 2019, the Presbytery of Boston commissioned Yan Wang to serve as its ministry leader, with the local First Presbyterian Church Quincy as his ministry sponsor.

The goal of the ministry is for this Bible study fellowship to grow into a Mandarin-speaking Presbyterian church. As the group grows, when 5-6 families regularly attend, the fellowship will start to worship at the local First Presbyterian Church Quincy and prepare itself to join PCUSA.

Describe in as specific a way as possible how these grant funds will be used to support the project.

Ministry leader's salary \$26,000 annually

Sharing rental of housing: \$10,800 annually

Groceries for Friday meals: \$4,680 annually

Aids to travels to Bible study: \$1,000 annually

Chinese Bibles and study materials: \$400 annually

Fees on coffee, tea, and dim sum: \$1,200

Annual outdoor activity for the fellowship: \$300

Two-day annual retreat for key families and participants in New Hampshire: \$3,000

Office Supplies: \$300

Annual sum total: \$47,380

Please indicate plans for continued funding if this project is to continue beyond the scope of this funding.

The requested funding of \$2,3000 is to cover the ministry expenses for 2020. During the year, as Mandarin Bible study fellowship gradually incorporates more worshipping into its weekly gatherings on Fridays, it will apply for the New Worshiping Communities Seed Grant. When the ministry continues into the year of 2021, it will be eligible to apply for the New Worshiping Communities Investment Grant and Growth Grant to fund its future development.

Describe briefly the process that will be employed to evaluate the use of the funds being requested, and to assure the proper accountability.

The First United Presbyterian Church in Cambridge will receive the funds and deposit them into a separate account for the Mandarin Bible Study Fellowship. Any withdrawal from the account will be first reviewed by Elder John Shus. Only with his approval, the Treasurer of the church will issue checks to compensate the ministry expenses.

With the ministry leader Yan Wang, Pastor Drew Hanson of the First Presbyterian Church Quincy reviews the Bible study's financial report monthly. He will go through all the ministry expenditures covered by the funds to ensure they are properly used.

Financial Information

Total costs of Project (Registration fees, transportation, room & board, if applicable, etc.):	\$47,380
Amount Requested (cannot exceed 50% of total cost):	\$23,000
Other Sources of Funding available to you (please describe)	
1. The Synod of the Northeast has awarded the ministry Emerging Gospel Community Grant of \$16500 for the year of 2019. The ministry is eligible to apply for the funding of \$20,000 for 2020.	
2. New Worshiping Communities Seed Grant: \$7500	
3.	

How will you proceed if this funding request is denied?

The ministry leader's home church and other church communities have been supportive of the Mandarin Bible Study Fellowship even since it started in July 2019. If denied of this funding, the ministry leader will do fundraising among the churches and his Chinese community in Boston.

To whom should the funds be directed?

The funds should be directed to the ministry leader's home church: First United Presbyterian Church in Cambridge.