



3218 Chamberlayne Ave. Richmond, VA 23227
804-262-2074 presbyteryofthejames.com

From: Janet James, Moderator of Mission Council
Barry Parks, Temporary Stated Clerk

Dear Friends,

Last evening the Presbytery of the James met to hear and vote on the Strategic Planning Task Force recommendations. The meeting was long and tense. It was held at the end of a workday and the decisions we made were the conclusion of an arduous task.

Thank you to the Task Force, friends and colleagues in our work. We created a team of our peers and asked them to save us from our collective decisions that are failing to work. They have struggled to provide solutions and over-extended themselves in order to develop a way forward.

Thank you to Flo and Leigh Anne for helping us with our ministry and for your efforts to guide us to a new way of being the church. Your efforts have not been in vain. You have walked with us and opened our eyes to our ministry's inadequacies and our possibilities. We ask for God's forgiveness and for your forgiveness for our mistakes and decisions, our actions and inactions that have caused pain and disruption in your lives.

We have a lot to do going forward. The Mission Council will keep you apprised of our work during these challenging times.

We desperately need the Spirit's movement in our life together. Please extend the love and grace that God has given you to others.

All three of the Task Force's recommendations were passed. They are listed below:

1. The Presbytery of the James replace our current staffing model with the following staffing model to fulfill our strategic plan in light of current financial realities:

- General Presbyter for Christ-Centered Spiritual Growth (full-time, head of staff); replacing the current three-presbyter model.
- Stated Clerk (full-time), replacing the current part-time Stated Clerk role with the addition of responsibilities for communications and coordination as per the strategic plan's Vision statement.
- Maintain the current Associate for Administration (full-time).
- Continue to contract financial work.
- Contract for communications and technology support as needed and as budget allows.

2. The Presbytery of the James directs the Mission Council to implement the action adopted by:

- a) creating appropriate job descriptions for the new positions which are to be approved at a meeting of the presbytery prior to any release to prospective candidates;
- b) working with the appropriate committees (Nominating and/or Personnel) to begin the search process for these positions following job description approval by the presbytery;
- c) developing the appropriate timing of the transition from the existing model to the newly adopted model in order to provide little to no loss of continuity for the presbytery and the needs within the office, all while keeping current staff informed as to exactly how the transition is progressing and obtaining their feedback for consideration. Reports to the presbytery should be made on at least a monthly basis via the best means possible.

3. The Presbytery of the James shall create a special committee of 5 individuals who do not currently hold position in any POJ committee, council, or commission and shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved at a presbytery meeting no later than the February 2025 Stated Meeting for the purpose of establishing a financial sustainability policy that explores ways to create a balanced budget by: suggesting revenue enhancements, cost reductions, and/or other combinations of ways by which the presbytery becomes financially stable. This policy should provide clear and concise guidelines for budgeting, investments, and the use of all presbytery designated funds that are held in reserves.

In Christ,

Janet James

Barry Parks