

**JOHN CALVIN PRESBYERY**  
**Administrative Commission Reports for**  
**Stockton Presbyterian Church**

Thursday, January 11, 2024

The Administrative Commission appointed for the Stockton Missouri Presbyterian Church met at the church with members of the Stockton Session on Thursday, January 11, 2024. Present were Administrative Commission members Jack Cormack (Chair), Christine Iannucilli, Bill Martin, Jane Huffstetler, and Stephanie O'Neal, and Session members Jim Behan (Clerk of Session), Judy Christie, and Dale Hill (Pastor.)

Chairman Jack Cormack opened the meeting with prayer. He stated that the purpose of the Commission was to journey with the Stockton church as they worked toward selling their building. In the discussion that followed, Clerk of Session Jim Behan provided answers to the factual questions posed by the Commission. He noted that financial considerations prompted the decision to sell the property.

Information concerning the sale of the church is as follows:

Physical address: Stockton Presbyterian Church  
13900 E. Highway 32  
Stockton. MO 65785

Contact: Jim Behan (Clerk of Session)  
(417)208-7272  
[jimbehan@outlook.com](mailto:jimbehan@outlook.com)

The property includes a 6,300 square-foot building on 6 acres, though 2 acres are unusable due to an electric company easement. It was valued at \$600,000 by the Century 21 real estate agent, and is presently listed at \$500,000.

The Congregation unanimously approved listing the property for sale at its meeting November 19, 2022. The current listing will expire in February, 2024.

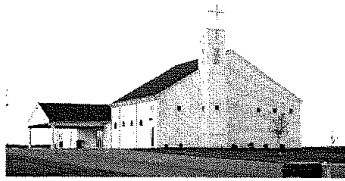
No serious offers have been received, though the property has been viewed a large number of times online.

Stockton representatives relayed the congregation's desire to continue as a body of the church. They are continuing their contributions to the church and community. They have investigated local opportunities to buy a smaller building once the present facility is sold, but without success to date. Rental property is scarce and not well-maintained. They may investigate "nesting" with another Stockton church to share facilities and expenses. They do have hopes for growth of the congregation in the next few years. The meeting closed with prayer.

Following the joint meeting, the Commission members shared their thoughts, and by consensus approved Stockton's relisting of the property.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie O'Neal, secretary



Stockton Presbyterian Church  
P.O. Box 128  
13900 E Hwy 32  
Stockton, MO 65785

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

A short in the car wiring will slowly drain the battery. Our inner spiritual energy supplied by the Holy Spirit likewise can be diminished by the parasitic draw of distractions and idols, difficult news, social media, pride, grudges, greed, self sufficiency, desire for recognition and success may all, like that faulty wire, steal our spiritual energy. This can lead us away from our relationship with God. Revelation 3:8 states "I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name".

Over the past five plus years we as a congregation in the Stockton church have watched PCUSA turn its back on scripture and the values we cherish, the acceptance of alternative life choices and styles that God is against, the abuse of the covenant and command God has given us, love God and your neighbor, while PCUSA has issued a anti Israel resolution that is at odd's with God's word "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you" Gen 12:3. We could provide more examples but we feel we have mentioned some of the most recent.

Therefore, our congregation has decided to depart from PCUSA and has voted one and all to leave. Let it be so. We understand there is a John Calvin Presbytery Policy for congregational dismissal. We have reviewed this policy and respectfully request these steps be waived to allow our departure with building and property so we can reform as an independent church.

Signed and submitted this day of our Lord the 3rd day of March, 2024. Our signatures below attest to our decision.

Ernie Rucke  
Grace Hill  
Elizabeth Grouster  
Judy Christie

Kathleen A Miller  
Elizabeth Berry  
James Beaman

John Calvin Presbytery Administrative Commission for the Stockton Presbyterian Church  
(USA) - April 30th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

**A. BACKGROUND**

The Stockton Presbyterian Church sent a letter, signed by all seven members, to the Stated Clerk asking that the church be dissolved with “building and property so we can reform as an independent church.”

JCP has a policy and procedure entitled “John Calvin Presbytery Policy for Congregations seeking Dismissal.” According to the policy section II-L, “ If a church refuses to participate in the process outlined by the presbytery or cuts off the process prematurely or It is reasonable to assume that a congregational meeting was held of the Stockton Presbyterian Church’s, as all church members name’s are signed by their own hand. Therefore, it is determined that the Stockton PC has chosen to ignore and thus not recognize the Policy for Congregations Seeking Dismissal. It is further determined that the existing Administrative Commission established to oversee the sell of the property be tasked to administrate the dissolution process of the Stockton PC and determine appropriate next steps in accordance with the ministry and mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

**B. NEXT STEPS - DISMISSAL POLICY**

- According to the the Dismissal Policy section II-I, “all loans and grants made through PC(USA) entities must be paid in full before final disaffiliation.” For the Stockton Church these amount to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Do we require this amount to be repaid in full or in part? If in part, how much?

- Section II-H. Have all record books been turned over to the Stated Clerk or sent to the Presbyterian Historical Foundations?

- Section III-1, “The 501(c)3 status of the church will have to be applied for under the new denomination.”

Has the new organization made application? Can/Should they be dissolved without it?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section III-2. “New insurance policy(s) will need to be written.”

- Has a new insurance policy been written? \_\_\_\_\_
- Can/Should they be dissolved without it? \_\_\_\_\_

Section III-3. “The congregation will need new by-laws.”

- Has this happened? \_\_\_\_\_
- Can/Should they be dissolved without them? \_\_\_\_\_

**C. BOOK OF ORDER AND PROPERTY**

G-4.0203 Church Property Held in Trust

All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a

higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

#### G-4.0205 Property of a Dissolved or Extinct Congregation

Whenever a congregation is formally dissolved by the presbytery, or has become extinct by reason of the dispersal of its members, the abandonment of its work, or other cause, such property as it may have shall be held, used, and applied for such uses, purposes, and trusts as the presbytery may direct, limit, and appoint, or such property may be sold or disposed of as the presbytery may direct, in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

- According to the above Book of Order citations, all property is held in trust for the PC(USA) and JCP has the right to sell the property after the dissolution of the Stockton Presbyterian Church, Should the former members and pastor of the Stockton Church be asked to vacate the property?
- Should the John Calvin Presbytery offer to lease the building to the new occupants for an equitable amount?
- If the former members and pastor of the Stockton Church refuse to vacate the property, should a legal eviction process be pursued?  
Should JCP seek to take legal possession of the Stockton Church property? Is "Property" also defined to include "All Assets", financial and otherwise?
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#### **D. ECCLESIASTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### W-4.0404 Constitutional Questions

The moderator of the council of those to be ordained, installed, or commissioned shall ask them to face the body of membership and to answer the following questions:

- a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
- c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
- d. Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- 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?

(1.) (For ruling elder) Will you be a faithful ruling elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

(2.) (For deacon) Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people's help to the friendless and those in need, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

(3.) (For minister of the Word and Sacrament†) Will you be a faithful minister of the Word and Sacrament, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the councils of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

Commission Ruling Elder, Dale Hill, and the session of the Stockton Church, have violated their ordination vows by:

- 1) placing the church property for sell prior to JCP approval.
- 2) refusing to follow the Policy for Congregations seeking Dismissal.
- 3) the Stockton Church seeking not to be a Reformed congregation but rather an independent organization.
- 4) not committing to or seeking reconciliation with the presbytery or denomination
- 5) created dis-unity in the church by not submitting to the authority and correction of the Committee On Ministry when confronted with the irregularity of placing church property for sale without prior presbytery approval.

As cited by above behaviors and actions, the Commissioned Ruling Elder, Dale Hill, is in violation of his ordination vows: W-4.0404c, d, e, f and g.

• Should a Disciplinary Complaint be filed with the Stated Clerk?

• At what point is it appropriate to recommend the removal of commission of

Dale Hill to the Stockton Church? And recommend that he is unfit for further commissioning?

The individual elders who signed the congregational letter are also in equal violation of their ordination vows, yet disciplinary actions are first addressed by the church's session, therefore, are currently outside the purview of this Administrative Commission.

• A Remedial Case could be filed against session of the Stockton Church for actions of Irregularity regarding the sell of the church property and choosing not to engage with the presbytery regarding the Policy for Congregations Seeking Dismissal. Would filing a Remedial Complaint be helpful?

### July 25th, 2024 Meeting Minutes and Recommendations

The Administrative Commission to the Stockton Presbyterian Church met with the session and moderator of the Stockton Presbyterian Church (USA) on Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 3:15pm to discuss the terms of dissolution. The following are the agreed upon terms which were guided by the "John Calvin Presbytery Policy for Congregations Seeking Dismissal." The meeting was called to order and opened with prayer by the Rev. Jack Cormack. With the Acknowledgement that the current members of the Stockton Presbyterian Church(USA), founded in 1901, are enjoying the benefits from the labor of the faithful disciple of Jesus Christ who have gone before them; the John Calvin Presbytery's Administration Commission (AC) to the Stockton Presbyterian Church (USA) recommends that the Stockton Presbyterian Church (USA) be dissolved, at the request of all seven members, so that they can reconstitute as an independent church. The following conditions have been met or are in process of being met.

1. For the purpose of preserving the history of the Stockton Presbyterian Church (USA), all church records and all items with the Presbyterian name and or logo be turn over to the Stated Clerk of the John Calvin Presbytery following the final congregational meeting to be held on August 4, 2024.
2. New insurance policy has been written in the name of the new church.
3. New By-Laws have been written in the name of the new church.
4. Whatever action necessary to change the Deed to remove the Stockton Presbyterian Church (USA) name and be re-written with the new church name.
5. 501(c)3 status has been applied for under the new church name. A Pro Forma Decree has been granted by the Cedar County Circuit Court, naming the "Saved By Grace Church" as non-profit.
6. Remuneration of \$7,563.00 for past grants. This dollar amount was calculated by \$4,000 given by John Calvin Presbytery when the building was destroyed by tornado. \$3,000 given by John Calvin Presbytery for air condition repair. \$563.00 for two years of per capita.
  - The AC recommends the Presbyterian Disaster Relief funds given as a result of the Stockton building be destroyed by a tornado not be repaid.
  - The AC furthers recommends that the thousands of dollars given by the JC Presbytery and the PC(USA) to fund a full-time pastor position for one year not be repaid.
  - This payment will be made in the form of a check at the time the records are received by the Stated Clerk or agent of the Clerk's choosing.

John Calvin Presbytery  
August 1st, 2024

Two Hundred and Fourteenth Stated Meeting  
St. Andrew at Hideaway Presbyterian Church  
Galena, Missouri via Zoom

7. Following the congregational meeting on August 4, 2024, Commission Ruling Elder, Dale Hill will write a letter to the Stated Clerk resigning his commission as he will no longer be the pastor of a Presbyterian Church, but will continue as the pastor of the new church.
8. The Stated Clerk of the John Calvin Presbytery will provide the minutes to the presbytery's action dissolution to the new church for its records.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Ruling Elder Dale Hill at approximately 4:10p.m.

The AC moves the above recommendations as a WAY-BE-CLEAR motion as some of the agreed upon actions are in process and may take several weeks to be completed including the 501(c)3 application (application has already been made, waiting for response from the IRS) and the process of having a new deed written.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Reverend Jack Cormack  
Stockton Administrative Commission Moderator