

Committee on Ministry
Narrative of Actions Pursuant to the September 29, 2016 Decision and Censure
Related to Patrick Handlson

October 11, 2016

COM commissioned a team of three persons (Steve Douse, Guy Griffith, and Shirley Puckett) to serve as a Care Team to walk alongside Pat Handlson during the period of temporary exclusion from the exercise of ordered ministry and to serve as liaison and interpreter of the COM's decisions regarding the exclusion, the former pastor policy (especially restrictions on interactions with members of his former congregation), an appropriate course of counseling, and the like. The Care Team met with Pat on a monthly basis.

January 31, 2017

Received report of the Clergy-in-Kairos week-long residency program conducted by the Pastoral Institute (Samaritan Center), Columbus, GA. The report included a follow-up care plan.

April 11, 2017

COM received the report of the Care Team and the team's recommendation that Pat Handlson be restored to ordered ministry. As part of its discernment process, the COM also interviewed Mr. Handlson. The COM decided not to recommend Mr. Handlson for restoration at this time by a vote of two for restoration and 14 against restoration, the COM chair registering an abstention. The COM informed Pat of the decision and formed a new Care Team (Michael Davis, Ann Roberts, Stephen Yates) to continue walking alongside Pat during the period of temporary exclusion.

September 12, 2017

The care team reported and moved that Pat Handlson be recommended for restoration at the October 19 Presbytery meeting. COM reviewed Handlson's responses to questions posed in advance by COM members, as well as the report of Handlson's counselor. Again COM conducted an extensive interview with Handlson, with ample time for questions and discussion. The COM amended the Care Team's motion to recommend that Pat Handlson come to the February 2018 presbytery meeting to request restoration and the status of Honorably Retired. The recommendation was contingent upon a satisfactory continuation of Handlson's counseling with Rev. Tom Knowles-Bagwell through the end of calendar year 2017. The vote was 6 for, 1 no, and 5 abstentions. Absent a majority vote, the COM continued their discussion. The care team has indicated a willingness to continue to meet with Mr. Handlson for at least the next year (2018). The COM voted again on the recommendation, and it was approved by a vote of 8 yes, 2 no, and 2 absentions.

January 23, 2018

COM received the final counselor's report indicating successful continuation of counseling through the end of calendar year 2017.

February 3, 2018

The Committee on Ministry recommends to Presbytery that Pat Handlson be restored to the active roll with the classification of Honorably Retired.