

Care Team Report

Pat Handlson attended the April COM meeting hoping to be restored to ordered ministry. He was given the opportunity to share about his experience counseling and attending the Pastoral Institute, which he found to be a helpful process in developing better self-awareness. Rather than approve Pat at its April meeting to come before Presbytery, the COM recommended he continue the rest of his counseling that would end in November of 2017. They also approved another Care Team, so Pat would not be alone (Stephen Yates, Michael Davis, and Ann Roberts).

This second care team met with Pat monthly to walk with him through this journey, starting in June. We also emailed him in-between those meetings. We clarified expectations and communicated Pat's questions to COM and COM responses back to Pat. The COM members also had the opportunity to send Pat written questions regarding the reasons for his censure, which Pat then replied to in writing and also orally during a second meeting with the COM on September 12th. It was at the September 12th meeting that COM approved Pat coming to the February Presbytery meeting upon completion of his counseling sessions in November. A final written report from his counselor for the COM's review was also required.

During the Care Team's time with Pat, we got to know him much better and observed his growth. Over time, Pat was willing to discuss and acknowledge his inability to maintain appropriate boundaries. He was also able to clearly discuss the events and behaviors that led to the violations occurring. He acknowledged responsibility for hurting others, including the church. We believe he understands the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries in the future, as well as the need to engage in practices and disciplines that will promote his well-being and self-care in order to prevent any further violations.