

CHARGE TO ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION TO RATON, FIRST

BACKGROUND

At the request of the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry, the Presbytery's Coordinating Team (CT), acting on behalf of the Presbytery, appointed a Special Administrative Review Committee (SARC) on June 7, 2018 to investigate certain irregularities and delinquencies of session and session moderator related to finances, personnel and property, including potential excessive use of church cash reserves for congregation operating expenses. The SARC provided a final report to CT in April 2019 recommending that an Administrative Commission be appointed for Raton, First with the full power and authority of the Presbytery of Santa Fe to take necessary action to inquire into and settle the difficulties uncovered by the SARC, including an excessive use of reserve funds each year resulting in the depletion of those funds of over \$147,000 with no plan in place or contemplation to reduce the use of those reserve funds; the failure of complete financial reports, including the full information regarding the extent to which reserve funds were being depleted, being regularly provided to the Session or the congregation; and no justification for a full-time pastoral position for this congregation.

The CT at a meeting conducted on April 6, 2019 moved for the appointment of an Administrative Commission at the June Presbytery meeting.

Motion to Authorize and Charge to Administrative Commission

Motion

The Presbytery of Santa Fe authorizes an Administrative Commission of 5 members, to be appointed by the Moderator in consultation with the Stated Clerk, to investigate, negotiate and take action, on behalf of the Presbytery, pursuant to G-3.0109b of the Book of Order, involving Raton, First in the following areas:

- A. the alleged excessive use of reserve funds each year resulting in the depletion of those funds of over \$147,000 with no plan in place or contemplation to reduce the use of those reserve funds;
- B. the failure of complete financial reports, including full information regarding the extent to which reserve funds were being depleted, being regularly provided to the Session or the congregation; and,
- C. any potential justification for a full-time pastoral position to continue for this congregation.

Charge and Authority

1. The Administrative Commission has the power to interview any person, including the pastor, involved with Raton, First, either in the past or the present time.
2. The Administrative Commission is instructed by the Presbytery to start the process with attempts at open communication and neutral conversation with the Session, the pastor and the congregation of Raton, First seeking a negotiated resolution of these issues.
3. The Administrative Commission has the power to participate in session meetings, including any executive session of the Session.
4. The Administrative Commission has the power to order full and complete financial reports of assets and liabilities and income and expenses for the present and past years for Raton, First and provide such full and complete financial reports to the Session and congregation.
5. The Administrative Commission has the power to exercise original jurisdiction, or full power and responsibility, over Raton, First, pursuant to G-3.0303e of the Book of Order, with the full power of session in order to call for a congregational meeting to discuss and decide the continuing pastoral position for the congregation or any other action that the Administrative Commission feels is appropriate, including the power to approve or deny future operating expenses and expenditures or changes to the terms of call for the pastor position from full-time to part-time or other pastoral expense concessions.
6. The Administrative Commission has the power to initiate proceedings for dissolution of the installed pastoral relationship (but not for dissolution of the congregation), only after meeting with the congregation for the congregation to consider the matter and to consent, or decline to consent, to dissolution of the installed pastoral relationship, pursuant to G-2.0901 of the Book of Order, but SHALL NOT have the power to dissolve the installed pastoral relationship but only RECOMMEND such dissolution to the full Presbytery for deliberation and action.
7. The Administrative Commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings and decisions of the Administrative Commission shall be reported to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, pursuant to G-3.0109b of the Book of Order, and the Administrative Commission shall report as to its progress at each stated meeting of the Presbytery.
8. After a period of discernment with the pastor, Session and the congregation, the Administrative Commission may recommend any other next steps to the Presbytery, including any recommendation to dissolve the congregation.