

**Committee on Ministry- Presbytery of Arkansas**  
**Report of Central Arkansas Examinations Subcommittee**  
**Examination of Jason Smith**  
**For Stated Supply- First Presbyterian Church- Arkadelphia**

**April 12, 2019**

Members of the Central Arkansas Examinations Subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Arkansas met on April 12, 2019 at the office of the Presbytery of Arkansas to conduct the examination of Jason Smith for Stated Supply- First Presbyterian Church- Arkadelphia.

Jason comes before the Subcommittee as an ordained minister of a denomination that is not in full communion with PCUSA.

Members in attendance were: MWS Don Campbell, MWS Fern Davis, Elder Wendell Phillips and Elder Don Eilbott, moderator. Elders Deborah Nowland and Clark Tennyson, members of the Session of FPC-Arkadelphia attended. MWS Chip Hatcher, liaison to First Presbyterian Church-Arkadelphia and General Presbyter Stewart Smith also attended. Fern opened the meeting with prayer.

The FPC- Arkadelphia Elders conferred with the Subcommittee first and explained their prior relationship of two years with Jason. Emphasis was noted by them to his sermons and prayers. Due to prevailing economic conditions they are no longer able to retain a called and installed full time pastor. They do not have any plans in place to have a Pulpit Nominating Committee and conduct a search for a full time MWS. The Contract of Employment previously prepared by their attorney was discussed at length. This will be addressed later herein.

The Subcommittee then met with Jason. He is an ordained minister in the Alliance of Baptists. The Alliance of Baptists, is in communion with the United Church of Christ (UCC), with whom the PC(USA) is also in communion. His faith journey was fully explored by the Subcommittee. Further Jason was fully examined by the Subcommittee on the various areas as previously outlined for examination. In addition, he was examined for fit to the position. His Resume and Statement of Faith are attached. Several members noted the Statement of Faith and its harmony with Presbyterian theology and polity.

It was apparent to the Subcommittee members that his chosen denomination, Alliance of Baptists, is substantially different than the usual concept of the Baptist denomination and has much in common with our denomination. In preparation for the Two-Step Process outlined in the Policy for Ministers of Other Denominations Seeking to Serve in an Installed or Temporary Pastoral Relationship Role (*approved by Presbytery February 11, 2017*), the Subcommittee discussed at length his personal views on baptism of infants and open communion. The Subcommittee believed his expressions to be generally in accordance with Presbyterian theology and polity, and the ethos of The Presbytery of Arkansas and the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Subcommittee unanimously sustained the examination of Jason Smith for Stated Supply- First Presbyterian Church- Arkadelphia.

In doing so, the Subcommittee made the following additional recommendations and determinations:

- The Subcommittee believes that Jason and the Session need to address multiple areas that are part of their understanding but not incorporated in the Contract of Employment. Specifically, these include, the specific number of hours of agreed time each week, the fact that Jason will not be head of staff, and specific elements of his required duties including hospital and other visits.
- In accordance with the Two- Step Process outlined in the Policy for Ministers of Other Denominations Seeking to Serve in an Installed or Temporary Pastoral Relationship Role, the Subcommittee requested that GP Stewart Smith designate required coursework for Jason in the following areas:
  - Reformed Theology (Book of Confessions)
  - Reformed Understanding of the Sacraments (Book of Confessions and “Directory for Worship”)
  - Presbyterian Polity (Book of Order)

As noted above, the Subcommittee discussed at length his personal views on baptism of infants and open communion and other Presbyterian theology and polity, and while this is referred to GP Stewart Smith, it is generally believed that the course of study required will not be extensive. MWS Chip Hatcher on behalf of himself and MWS Bill Bailey offered to assist GP Smith.

When that course of study is completed, the Subcommittee will examine Jason again, either in person or by telephone or designated representatives, and may specifically approve a request to the COM to authorize Jason to perform one or more of the following pastoral functions:

- a. Presiding at the Lord's Supper
- b. Celebrating a baptism
- c. Serving as the officiant for a session-authorized wedding of the congregation

Such authorization shall apply only as specified by the Committee on Ministry and if it judges the exercise by Jason to be desirable for the church's ongoing ministry

It was clearly explained to both Jason and the Session representatives that in no event could Jason moderate the Session unless and until he is enrolled as a Temporary Member of the Presbytery of Arkansas. MWS Chip Hatcher will continue to moderate the Session.

Jason executed the appropriate church forms and authorizations.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Jason.

Respectfully Submitted;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don A. Eilbott", enclosed within a circular flourish.

Don A. Eilbott, Moderator

See Attached Documents.