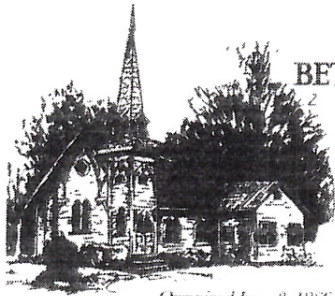


Appendix U



*Organized June 3, 1866
Sanctuary Dedicated December 7, 1884*

BETHLEHEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U.S.A.

16976 S.W. 137TH AVENUE
P.O. BOX 399
ARCHER, FLORIDA, 32618-0399
PHONE: (352) 495-9881

Dear Presbytery of St. Augustine:

Since early 2020 we have all lived through some tumultuous times. The members and Session of Bethlehem Presbyterian Church give thanks for the grace of God that has sustained us through recent challenges, and for the support of our Presbytery. One way that Presbytery could help us now would be by granting us a waiver on terms limits for our ruling elders, as spelled out in our Book of Order (G-2.0404).

With an active membership that hovers between 30 and 40 people, Bethlehem has always been one of the Presbytery's smaller churches. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to find members who are able to serve on the Session. This has only gotten harder since the start of the pandemic. In 2021, our average attendance at worship services was 18, a considerable drop from previous years. Some of our members, even though technically eligible to serve as ruling elders, have not been comfortable physically attending any events on the church campus due to health concerns. This would make attending in-person Session meetings difficult for them. A number of our members also have poor Internet connections, meaning that Zoom Session meetings would also not be an option.

After discussing the issue, the Session voted unanimously on December 19 to seek a waiver on term limits. At a congregational meeting on January 30, the congregation also voted to ask for a waiver.

Granting our church a waiver on term limits for ruling elders would simply give Bethlehem more options as we seek to fulfill our mission and ensure that dedicated and qualified leaders continue to guide our small congregation.

Thank you for your consideration.

In Christ,


Ms. Julianne Browning, Acting Clerk of Session

The Rev. Dr. Joshua B. Braley, Stated Supply Pastor

Congregational Meeting of the Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Archer, FL
January 30, 2022

On January 30, 2022, a called congregational meeting took place at Bethlehem Presbyterian Church. At 11:45 am Stated Supply Pastor Joshua Braley called the meeting to order and opened with a prayer. Julianne Browning, the acting Clerk of Session, determined that a quorum of members was present. Pastor Braley announced that the purpose of the meeting was to vote on asking the Presbytery of St. Augustine for a waiver on term limits for ruling elders, in keeping with provisions in the Book of Order G-2.0404. A motion to ask for a waiver was made and seconded. After members discussed the motion, it was approved by majority vote. The meeting adjourned by general consent at 12 noon and was closed with a prayer.

Respectfully:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julianne Browning". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

Ms. Julianne Browning, Acting Clerk of Session