

Commission re Call to Rafael Vallejo
St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Guelph
September 20, 2012

DATE AND PLACE:

The Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington appointed a Commission for the purpose of receiving the Call from East Toronto Presbytery to Rafael Vallejo for one half time to Queen Street East Presbyterian Church, Toronto. The Commission met on Thursday, September 20th, 2012 at 11:00 a.m., at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Guelph.

ATTENDANCE:

Ministers: Rev. Linda Ashfield (Moderator), Rev. Johan Olivier, Rev. John Borthwick

Representative Elders: Marion Hunter, Bob Renton, Wilma Welsh (Clerk)

Regrets: Rev. Jeff L. Smith, Andrew Foster

East Toronto Presbytery – at a stated time the Rev. Dr. Robert Faris, Interim Moderator joined the meeting by conference call.

OPENING PRAYER – Rev. Linda Ashfield, Moderator opening the meeting with prayer.

CALL TO RAFAEL VALLEJO

The Call was presented by the Clerk.

Call to a minister of Word and Sacraments and guarantee to presbytery of stipend.

We, the professing members of **Queen Street East Presbyterian Church**, being well satisfied with your faithfulness to the Gospel and your qualifications for the ministry of Word and Sacraments and confident that the Holy Spirit has led us to you, earnestly and solemnly call you **Rafael Vallejo** to become the minister of this congregation. In calling you we promise you all due respect, encouragement, and allegiance in the Lord as, together, we seek to use our gifts in the church and in the world to the glory of God.

In order that you Rafael Vallejo may be free to devote yourself to ministry of Word and Sacraments among us, we the congregation of Queen Street East Presbyterian Church hereby guarantee to the Presbytery of East Toronto, of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, that out of our estimated annual revenue of \$96,538 we promise and obligate ourselves to provide you, as a first charge thereon, the following annually:

Annual Stipend

Option A (inclusive of travel allowance) \$23,605.50

Option B (exclusive of travel allowance) \$_____

With travel reimbursed at \$____./km up to annual maximum of \$_____

Wilma Welsh, Clerk – watwell@rogers.com

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Manse (or Housing/rental allowance) \$9,250.00
Utilities allowance \$1,500.00
Total \$34,355.50

We agree to make payments of the above amounts on the first day of each month and agree to review the stipend and allowances annually in view of any changes in the cost of living or the needs of our minister.

We agree further:

1. To provide two weeks for continuing education annually and at least the minimum allowance as set by the General Assembly.
2. That the benefits of number 1 above shall be cumulative up to five years.
3. To provide five weeks holiday annually
4. To pay supply during the periods of continuing education and holidays.
5. In case of disability or extended illness, to continue to provide stipend, accommodation and allowances for a period not less than that set by the General Assembly, and to pay the cost of pulpit supply.
6. To pay for Medical and Dental Insurance as provided through the Pensions and Benefits Board of the General Assembly and to make contributions to the Pension Plan in compliance with the terms of the plan.
7. To pay necessary moving expenses.
8. Optional (none)

City of Toronto, June 24, 2012

Rev. Dr. Bob Faris, Presiding Minister
Michael Lamoureux, Meeting Secretary.

At 10:30 The Rev. Bob Faris joined the Commission by telephone and shared the following narrative, explaining the Steps relating to the Call from Queen Street East Presbyterian Church to Rafael Vallejo.

On October 6, 2009, the Presbytery of East Toronto agreed to dissolve the pastoral tie between QSE and the Rev. Pamela Emms. The Rev. Dr. Robert Faris was appointed Interim Moderator and exit interviews were undertaken by the Pastoral Relations Committee with the Session of QSE and the Rev. Pam Emms.

At the same time that the dissolution of the pastoral tie happened, a process of considering the viability of the QSE congregation was underway. Following a Presbytery visit to the

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congregation, a special committee was named at the February 3, 2009 meeting. At that same meeting, Mr. Ken Craigie and Mr. Bill Herridge were appointed assessor elders. This special committee was dissolved at the June 16, 2009 meeting after making its report and a new committee was established which was tasked with working with QSE to pursue either amalgamation with another congregation or closure.

Because of this process being in place no steps were taken by the Interim Moderator and congregation to begin a call process. The Session agreed to hire the Rev. Fairlie Ritchie to provide pastoral care and some pulpit supply in this period of transition. At the January 5, 2010 meeting of Presbytery it was agreed that Presbytery would supplement the stipend of Rev. Ritchie to provide a more adequate level of remuneration.

In the fall of 2009, an approach was made to the Session of St. John's Church to consider amalgamation; although very happy to welcome members of QSE into their midst if the congregation was dissolved, they were not open to considering amalgamation for a number of reasons. At the November 3, 2009 meeting of Presbytery, on recommendation of the Congregational support Committee, it was agreed that the Presbytery should begin steps toward the dissolution of the congregation of QSE and the congregation was cited to appear at the January meeting of Presbytery. At the meeting on January 5, 2010, representatives of the congregation spoke, opposing the closure of QSE and presenting a plan that had been developed by a task group and approved by the congregation for future development of QSE. At the February 2, 2010 meeting of the Presbytery, it was agreed to dissolve QSE on June 15, 2010.

At its March 2, 2010 meeting, the Presbytery received a "Complaint in a Corrective Case" from the Session of QSE, stating that there was further information regarding the case which the Presbytery had not heard in relation to the decision to dissolve the congregation and a Special Committee recommended that the Presbytery reconsider the motion to dissolve on the grounds that there was further information which the Session could present in the case. It was agreed to reconsider, members of the Session and others were heard and it was agreed that the date of dissolution of the congregation should be deferred for a minimum of eight months and up to a year to allow for discernment of the possibilities for future Presbytery ministry/mission in the vicinity.

The Session was tasked with identifying needs in ministry and developing a job description for a one year contract person in ministry at QSE. This job description was vetted with the Pastoral Relations Committee and was approved by Presbytery. Over the summer of 2010 the Session interviewed several candidates and in September hired Mr. Rafael Vallejo in this role. Rev.

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Fairlie Ritchie ended her role in pastoral support for the congregation at that time. At the end of December, 2010, the last assessor elder, Mr. Bill Herridge, completed his role at QSE.

During this period, a process of revitalization of the life and ministry of QSE began. After several years without, a Clerk of Session was named as well as a new representative elder to presbytery, an equalizing elder and an alternate. While three older members of Session resigned, three new elders were elected and took on strong leadership roles. Until now, 13 people have become professing members of the congregation and the number of adherents has increased significantly. Worship has been revitalized and the number of people attending worship has increased significantly. Offerings have increased and rental income has remained constant. The congregation reflects more of the diversity of the community. A Monday evening Bible study has begun under the leadership of a new member of the congregation, the Church School has been reorganized and revitalized, several ministry teams have been established and a prayer group has begun. QSE has become a partner with the local health centre in a Good Food program which is held on the church lawn during spring, summer and fall. The Women's Association has continued its many activities and fundraising and several women have become actively involved in the East Toronto Presbytery of the WM as well as participating in the local World Day of Prayer. A number of groups rent space in the building and there has been an attempt to deepen relationships with them. Two other congregations worship in the building in addition to the QSE congregation and joint services have been held with the Vietnamese Victory Church. Mr. Vallejo has also been involved in the life of the wider community in issues of social justice and ecumenical cooperation. There is clear evidence of God's spirit at work in this community of faith. Although Mr. Vallejo was initially appointed for only a one year period, his contract has been extended several times and he continues to work as a lay minister in the congregation.

At the Presbytery meeting on June 14, 2011, it was agreed that the decision to dissolve the congregation of QSE should be rescinded. A congregational profile was prepared and on recommendation of the Pastoral Relations Committee was approved by Presbytery in November 2011 and the congregation was allowed to begin a process to call a minister at 50% time. The Session was formed as a Search Committee. The profile was circulated through Ministry and Church Vocations. Seven applications were received in addition to several suggested profiles from MCV. The Search Committee reviewed the applications and decided to hear several candidates lead worship. Although the Committee found strengths in these candidates, it was decided to interview Mr. Vallejo for the position because of his strong profile and because of his strong performance in the congregation. He was invited to preach for the call on Sunday, June 24. In a congregational meeting following it was agreed to extend a call to Mr. Vallejo in the terms presented here. The vote was unanimous among both members and adherents present at

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the meeting. It was subsequently signed by 34 members, representing 77% of the members. Several who have not signed live a distance or are infirm. It was affirmed by the signatures of 21 adherents. Representatives of the congregation were asked to speak at the meeting of Presbytery where the call would be presented.

Moved by John Borthwick/Marion Hunter that the call to Rafael Vallejo be received and considered. CARRIED

It was agreed on motion of John Borthwick/Marion Hunter that the Rev. Bob Faris be heard, representing the congregation of Queen Street East Presbyterian Church in Toronto. CARRIED

Moved by Bob Renton/John Borthwick that the Call be sustained as a gospel call and placed in the hands of Rafael Vallejo. CARRIED

Rafael Vallejo advised that he will accept the Call.

ORDINATION

Rafael Vallejo will be ordained on October 14th, 2012 at Knox's Galt Presbyterian Church. The Clerk will seek permission from the Presbytery of East Toronto for the service of Ordination to be held within the bounds of the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington.

ADJOURNMENT

This being a Commission meeting of the Presbytery no further business will be considered. The court adjourned on motion of John Borthwick. The meeting was closed with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Robert Faris at the request of the Moderator.

Moderator

Clerk