

The Pastor Nominating Committee  
presents

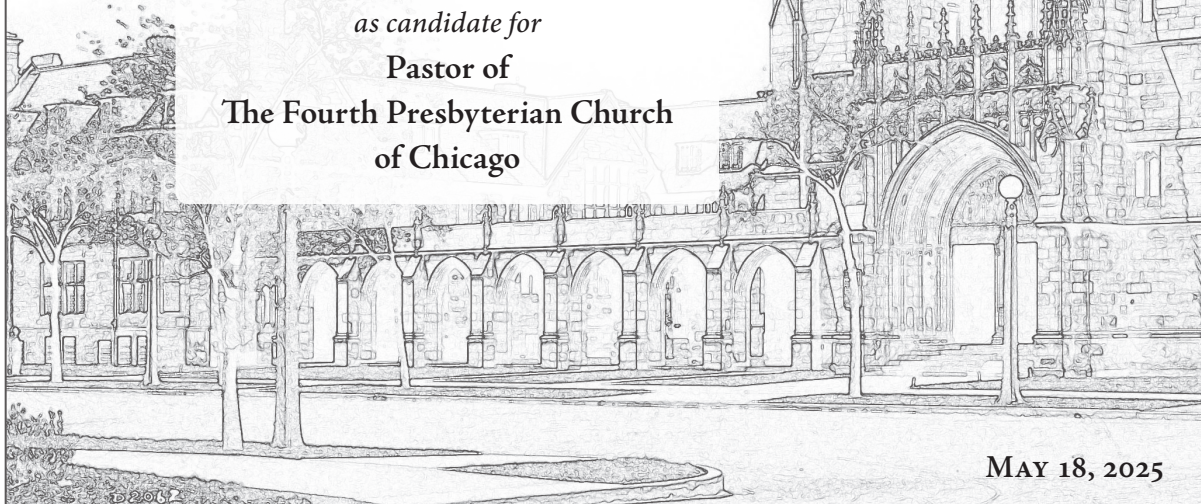


**Camille Cook Howe**

*as candidate for*

**Pastor of**

**The Fourth Presbyterian Church  
of Chicago**



**MAY 18, 2025**

*“Behold, I am doing a new thing.  
Now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?”*

ISAIAH 43:19

.....

“Pastors shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith in word and deed and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12). ... They shall preach and teach the faith of the church, so that the people are shaped by the pattern of the gospel and strengthened for witness and service. When they serve at font and table, they shall interpret and ‘show forth’ the mysteries of grace in word and action, lifting the people’s vision toward the hope of God’s new creation. They shall support the people in the disciplines of the faith amid the struggles of daily life.”

BOOK OF ORDER, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

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# Camille Cook Howe

A biography  
written by  
friends and family

## From the PNC:

“Camille embodies  
a rare blend of  
approachable warmth  
and deep wisdom.

Throughout our  
conversations it  
was evident that  
she is not interested  
in quick fixes or  
canned responses  
but rather wants to  
engage challenges  
thoughtfully and  
discern the Spirit’s  
direction boldly.

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The Reverend Dr. Camille Cook Howe is the Senior Pastor and Head of Staff at Georgetown Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., where she has served since 2010.

A native of Minnesota, Camille grew up in a family rooted in both Catholic and Presbyterian traditions. She earned her Bachelor of Arts with honors from Vanderbilt University, majoring in religious studies and psychology and competing on the university’s rowing team. She pursued theological education at Princeton Theological Seminary, where she was awarded the Parish Pulpit Fellowship—one of the seminary’s highest honors—as well as the Jagow Preaching Prize. The fellowship took her to study and serve in the United Kingdom, where she earned a Master of Theology in Applied Theology at Oxford University and began serving in congregational ministry abroad.

Camille’s pastoral experience spans three countries and a wide range of settings. She has served congregations in Oxford and London, England; Johannesburg, South Africa; New York City, and St. Paul, Minnesota. She served as Associate Pastor at St. Columba’s Church of Scotland in London, where, due to unexpected circumstances, she found herself as Acting Pastor and Head of Staff at the age of twenty-six. From early on, Camille has been committed to bridging tradition and innovation, parish ministry and global engagement.

In 2015 Camille completed her Doctor of Ministry degree at Wesley Theological Seminary. Her dissertation, “Waging War on One’s Knees,” explored the power of prayer as a leadership tool in the ministry of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., reflecting her long-standing interest in the intersection of personal faith and the common good.

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Camille’s influence reaches beyond the local church. She is the chair-elect of the Board of Trustees of Princeton Theological Seminary, beginning in 2025. She also serves on the board of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership and was President of the Reformed Institute of Washington, D.C. Within the Presbyterian Church (USA), she has contributed through national committees and is widely respected for her collaborative leadership and strategic insight.

A gifted communicator, Camille is a sought-after preacher, teacher, and retreat leader. She has preached at Harvard's Memorial Church, Montreat Conference Center, Day1 Radio, and St. Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh. In 2015 she served as a guest chaplain to the U.S. Senate. She is a member of the Moveable Feast, a national cohort of prominent homiletics who gather regularly for theological dialogue and preaching enrichment.

At the heart of her ministry is a deep love for the local church. She believes in the powerful impact of the institution of the church both on individual lives of faith and on the community it seeks to love and serve. She believes it is a huge honor and blessing to be a pastor and walk with people through baptisms, weddings, and funerals—the most joyful and painful moments of their lives.

During her time in Washington, Camille met her amazing husband, David, and his children, William, Christopher, and Noushin, while raising her two children, Maisie and Finlay. David's career has straddled both public service and business. He spent time in the Navy and worked at the White House on Homeland Security. Currently he is a consultant and travels frequently to help businesses generate sustainable performance improvements from within their organizations.

David and Camille enjoy trying new restaurants, hiking and playing sports, enthusiastically recording youth sporting events, and trying to squeeze in country music concerts from time to time. William, Christopher, and Noushin are all away at school but look forward to visiting Chicago and cheering for the local sports teams. Maisie and Finlay are on the lookout for new basketball and soccer teams to join. The Howe family is looking forward to making Chicago their home and getting to know the people of Fourth Church.

“Camille is also genuinely passionate about our youngest members and will ensure that children and youth are meaningful contributors to our worship and communal life. The thought of my kids growing up with Camille as a role model fills me with pride and inspiration.”

—Michael Mirza





## From the Candidate: “Why Fourth Church?”

### From the PNC:

“The PNC reveled in the richness of possible candidates.

However, there was only one who stopped us in our collective tracks.

Employing her undeniable intellect, compassion, wit, and grace, we knew that Camille Cook Howe was the one to lead our beloved Fourth Church.”

—Beth Davis

I have long admired Fourth Presbyterian Church—from its historic role in shaping American Protestant life to its present-day witness as a bold, compassionate, and faithful community. Fourth Church holds a significant place in our denomination—not only because of its history and presence in Chicago, but also because of its forward-thinking ministry that reflects God’s light with clarity and conviction. To be considered for leadership among you is both humbling and deeply meaningful.

From my first interactions with the members of the Pastoral Nominating Committee I felt their genuine love for their congregation and their hopes for its future. Getting to hear some of their stories about the role of faith throughout their lives was powerful and inspiring. Through the members of the PNC I have come to know and appreciate Fourth Church in new ways. You are a church rooted in tradition and also flourishing with creativity. You are a church that honors its Reformed heritage while leaning into the complexity of today’s world. You are a church that seeks to bring people into meaningful conversations about faith and Christian life. You are a church that warmly welcomes people and strives to be a “big tent” for all who seek to follow Jesus.

It might sound surprising, but I was truly moved when reading your long-range plan and seeing how closely your vision mirrors my own passions and commitments as a faith leader. Growing in belonging and connections, deepening faith, engaging and serving the community, and ensuring our faithful stewardship of the church for today and for future generations—yes! I am eager to come alongside you and live into that vision together.

Lastly, I was especially impressed by the committee’s affection for Chicago—not just as a setting, but as a partner in ministry. You love and care about this city, and that love is infectious. Your identity as a light in the city is an embodiment of God’s love in a visible and meaningful way for the place you call home. My family and I are eager to explore this city, put down roots, make new friends, and serve among you.

If called to serve, I hope to be a faithful presence to you—as one who will listen, one who will lead, and one who will walk through all seasons

of life with you. I would feel honored to enter into the sacred traditions of this place and to be your pastor.

In this next chapter, I feel hopeful for the work we will do together, grateful for the gifts of this congregation, and excited to grow with you in faith, love, and service. I believe God is doing a new thing in our midst, and I am excited about how this church will grow and be transformed by the movements of the Holy Spirit in our midst!

*With gratitude and anticipation,*  
Camille Cook Howe

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“I believe in the Triune God revealed to us as God, the one Jesus called Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

“Christ is the head of the church, which is sustained through the work of the Holy Spirit. The church is commissioned by Christ to serve the world and witness to the gospel. The church serves as a witness to God’s continuing activity; in that, we acknowledge God as a living, moving presence in our lives, denomination, and world. But continually in need of reformation, the church seeks to be reformed according to the Word of God.

“Through the Holy Spirit, we pray the church is being refined and transformed. Refusing to be complacent, we look to the future as a place where Christ’s Word will be fully embodied. As a church we are called to foster true community, where despite our differences we embrace one another and work towards peace, justice, freedom, and faithfulness for all people. This community is called to trust God’s provision and to act boldly to embody and live out God’s reign.

“We live by faith and hope—faith that God’s love for us is steadfast and hope that we might live into the fullness of God’s grace. Nonetheless, the church prays for the day when Christ will return and usher in a new heaven and a new earth.”

—Camille Cook Howe

## Excerpt from the Candidate’s Statement of Faith

### **From the PNC:**

“In the years to come, our staff and our congregation will relish Camille’s wisdom and discernment. That thirst for understanding also shows in her dynamic preaching, in the way she delves into scripture to discern what God is saying to us today. In Camille we have found someone who can fill our historic pulpit, lead our congregation, and touch our hearts.”

—Gretchen Wahl

# What the PNC Was Looking For

**From the PNC:**

“We knew Camille was the one for Fourth Church because in our discussions of her, with her, and for her she united the PNC in ways we didn’t think possible. We are all on the same page in all ways with her call. She is the spiritual medicine we didn’t know we needed, and Fourth Church is so lucky, honored, and inspired to have her. Welcome, Camille!”  
—Jessica Wang

As the Fourth Church Pastor Nominating Committee began its work in May 2024, we were conscious of our faith community’s long history of bold witness, deep theology, and national leadership within the PC(USA). We approached our work with humility, seeking a pastor to love and lead our diverse “big tent” congregation with spiritual maturity and a dynamic worship leader of intellectual depth to continue the tradition of outstanding preaching that calls us forward with grace.

As a large and complex church, we sought an experienced head of staff who can lead Fourth Church without losing sight of its heart. An innovative leader who can reimagine how to engage a congregation of which 20 percent live out of state. A leader who is adept at all aspects of ministry, including pastoral care; children, families, and youth; educational and spiritual formation; and ensuring our financial and operational sustainability. And one who will foster a culture of inclusion and unity amongst the staff and congregation to empower us all to live out the church’s mission.

And, finally, we considered our beloved Chicago. As an urban church devoted to serving the city through Chicago Lights and our own mission programs, we sought a pastor with real curiosity about our home and a pastor who will come to love and be invested in this community. The thirteen members of your Pastor Nominating Committee are unanimous in our belief that the Holy Spirit is calling us to Camille Cook Howe.

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## The Pastor Nominating Committee

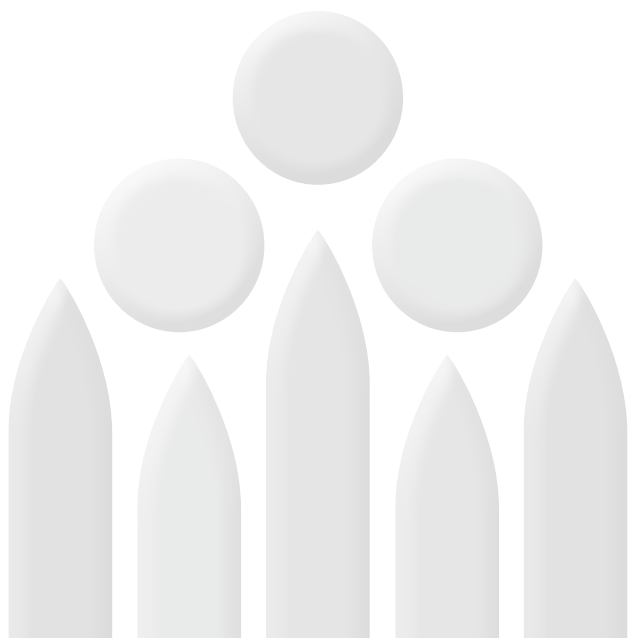
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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Liz Adams                      | Jared Light   |
| Jeanne Bishop, <i>Co-Chair</i> | Michael Mirza |
| Lloyd Culbertson               | Kash Morgan   |
| Beth Davis                     | Kent Stevens  |
| Heather Gallenbeck             | Gretchen Wahl |
| Kerry Grady, <i>Co-Chair</i>   | Jessica Wang  |
| Elizabeth Hurley               |               |
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## **The Pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago will**

- Lead our worship life and continue the dynamic preaching tradition, inspiring the congregation and lay leaders to grow in faith.
- Serve as Head of Staff, supervising, building, and developing a collegial team of ordained and non-ordained staff members, encouraging a culture of service, joy, and friendship with our colleagues in ministry.
- Moderate the Session with attention to organizational effectiveness, intentionality of ministry shaped by our long-range plan, and the spiritual experience of officers and lay leaders.
- Be our pastor, serving with a spiritual maturity. Walk with us through difficult times. Celebrate with us in joyful times. Love us at all times.
- Champion the work of stewardship and resource development. Lead the congregation through a capital campaign, which is in an early stage.
- Be an advocate and interpreter of Chicago Lights, Fourth Church's primary means of serving the city.

## **From the PNC:**

"Your PNC considered and met dozens of candidates. In Camille we found the highest combination of scholarly intent, pastoral care, and the will to lead and love the large and diverse congregation that is Fourth Church. The Holy Spirit, which was with us throughout the search, made its presence vividly known at the moment we selected Camille."  
—Elizabeth Hurley





## Testimonials

“Camille is a dynamic, passionate, visionary leader who has the collegial aptitude that makes building ministry teams second nature. She possesses a leadership style that focuses forward and shapes consensus as it builds momentum, while drawing everyone into the fold. Most importantly, she is a powerful, engaging preacher whose sermons are inspiring, informative, and challenging.

“After considering more than 200 candidates from a deep, nationwide pool of talented and experienced pastors, the fact that all thirteen members of the PNC rose to the same Spirit-led conclusion—that Camille was the right person at this time to lead Fourth Church—is astonishing.

“Aligning Camille’s vast reservoir of talent and experience with Fourth Church’s vision, people, and resources is a true gift of the Holy Spirit, the blessing of a relationship that is most certainly the fruit of God’s call. This is a great and joyous day of celebration for Fourth Church and for the Presbyterian Church (USA).”

—KERRY GRADY, Co-Chair of the PNC



“Camille brings a dazzling array of gifts to Fourth Church, among them her exceptional academic credentials, long experience leading churches, deeply thoughtful sermons, respect and care for all, love of children, and empathetic listening. We are thrilled that she has accepted our call to lead this beloved church.”

—JEANNE BISHOP, Co-Chair of the PNC



“What a joy to celebrate the calling of the Reverend Dr. Camille Cook Howe as the next head pastor of Fourth Church! I’ve known Camille for years, and I know she will quickly become a good friend to many of you very soon—even as early as this afternoon.

“She is an extraordinary preacher, whose sermons are theologically rich, imaginative, and full of heart (and humor). Camille offers truly insightful interpretation of scripture—meaningful for the moment—and she communicates in a clear manner that prompts both compassionate

belief and action, in a most, most inviting way. She also possesses a proven track record for attracting young adults and young families with children and, as I trust you will soon see, an obviously strong connection with young children.

“I have every confidence that she will not only strengthen the life of the congregation in Christ but also contribute meaningfully to Fourth Church’s long legacy of leadership within the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the wider faith and interfaith community. This is indeed a Spirit-filled moment, and I celebrate with deep gratitude and hope for all that lies ahead.”

—KENT STEVENS, member of the PNC



“Meeting Camille gave me a renewed sense of hope. In a time when spiritual leadership can feel distant or performative, her presence was real, grounded, and deeply human. She didn’t preach at us; she shared herself with us. That vulnerability, wisdom, and warmth spoke volumes.

“She sees people not as problems to solve, but as stories to care for. Her theology is rich, her vision for the church is compelling, but what moved me most was her intentionality, especially when she spoke about weighing her family’s needs. She leads with her whole self, with care, clarity, and compassion.

“Camille understands that true ministry isn’t about pushing an agenda; it’s about walking together, even with those who are hard to love. That’s the kind of leadership we need. I believe she can help us become a church that not only worships, but truly grows, heals, and dreams together. She is the pastor we’ve been waiting for.”

—KASH MORGAN, member of the PNC



“Congratulations! I have been blessed to know the Reverend Dr. Camille Cook Howe well, both personally and professionally. She is intellectually smart, confident, caring, creative, upbeat, and spiritual.

#### **From the PNC:**

“The PNC prioritized two criteria above all else in the search for our next Senior Pastor: excellent preaching and executive leadership. Camille possesses outstanding gifts in both of these areas. She’s a proven leader in our denomination and her ministry, she exudes warmth with children (and adults), and her sermons are compelling. The Holy Spirit is truly at work at Fourth Church.”

—Heather Gallenbeck

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## Testimonials

“She gives deep and thoughtful sermons, is a superb writer and communicator, and is great with people of all ages and backgrounds, including youth and children. She possesses an intuitive sense of how to build a relationship with a congregation. She is willing to make tough decisions, has excellent management skills, and is technically competent. Camille was called to Georgetown Presbyterian Church when she was barely thirty years old and exhibited wisdom far beyond her years. What an outstanding leader she will be for Fourth Church!”

—Veronica (Roni) Haggart

Elder, Georgetown Presbyterian Church

Ruling Elder, First Presbyterian Church, Naples, Florida



“Camille Cook Howe and I have been colleagues in National Capital Presbytery for the past fifteen years. We each serve a church whose members are closely tied to the political and public service professions that—more than many realize—best characterize this city, especially among Presbyterians who take their faith and their life in the world seriously.

“Camille brings to that ministry not only ‘energy, intelligence, imagination, and love,’ but a patient yet bold leadership; an appreciation for what helps form people in their political viewpoints, coupled with her commitment to honoring those viewpoints and to helping people move beyond political concerns to more transcendent issues; a deep, theological, and biblical insight; an ability to lead a congregation in a way that affirms its past, looks to its future, and serves a variety of people of all ages and geographical backgrounds.

“She has been particularly instrumental in Georgetown Presbyterian Church growing among young adults, as well as seeking genuinely to welcome people across the political divides that have only grown more intense in her years in Washington. She is a terrific colleague and leader, with an understated sense of humor, especially when she allows herself to speak in her native Minnesotan accent!”

—DR. LARRY R. HAYWARD

Senior Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Virginia

“Congratulations, Fourth Pres, Chicago! I have known Camille since I was blessed to be her Princeton Seminary field-work supervisor for two years at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City (2004–2006).

“Since then I have been privileged to be a listening ear and support through her spectacular ministry, from organizing seminarians to volunteer to clean up after Katrina, her summer ministry at St. Columba’s Presbyterian Church in South Africa, to her ordination for graduate study at Oxford University—where she also served as Pastor of Summertown Reformed Church—to Associate Pastor, then Interim at the Church of Scotland’s Pont Street congregation in London, to her remarkable ministry at the Georgetown Presbyterian Church. Soon she will serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees at Princeton Theological Seminary.

“These have been years of enormous challenge, which she has met with grace, strength, integrity, and faithfulness. Camille is one of the finest pastor/theologians I have ever known, a gifted preacher and worship leader, wise and experienced beyond her years, an accomplished administrator and supervisor, and, most important, a faithful witness to and servant of Jesus Christ and his church.”

—THE REVEREND DR. FRED R. ANDERSON

Pastor Emeritus, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

Trustee Emeritus, Princeton Theological Seminary

Trustee, Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton



“Camille is an extraordinary choice for the next chapter of Fourth Church leadership. Years ago as her pastor at House of Hope in St. Paul, I was an early witness to Camille’s call to ministry, which she has lived into with deep faith, true strength, and great intellect. Camille’s exceptional leadership skills have drawn national attention for her intuitive ability to call forth creative collaboration and wisdom from staff and parishioners alike. She thrives as well on challenges and brings a tough “can do” spirit to grace-filled problem solving.

**From the PNC:**

“We hope to welcome Camille and her family—husband David, children Maisie and Finlay—to the Fourth Church family, and we invite the congregation to embrace them with open arms!”

—Liz Adams

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## Testimonials

“While Camille is quick to see the big picture and the needs of a large organization, her genuine curiosity and kindness also allow her to personally connect with people of all ages and backgrounds.

“Camille’s outstanding preaching will ground this church and its many visitors in the hope and inspiration needed in these challenging times. Fourth Church, as a light in the city, will shine with the Good News in new and beautiful ways. I rejoice at the Spirit’s work in this call and the many blessings ahead for all.”

—THE REVEREND LINDA C. LOVING

Retired Head of Staff, House of Hope Presbyterian Church, St. Paul  
Former Associate Pastor, the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago



“Camille possesses the rare combination of being both thoughtful and action-oriented in the work that she does. The result is a powerful and impactful ministry that will bring out the best in a situation. She is a faithful and caring leader who has a commitment to excellence tempered by grace. Fourth Church is a big job, and I can think of no one better to walk with your wonderful congregation than my friend. May God bless you and her in this joyful season!”

—THE REVEREND RACHEL LANDERS VAAGENES

The Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church  
Former Associate Pastor, Georgetown Presbyterian Church



“I have had the joy of knowing the Reverend Camille Cook Howe for many years as a colleague, a confidante, and a cherished friend. We served together on the Board of Trustees at Princeton Theological Seminary, and today I could not be more delighted that she will soon step into the role of chair of that very board—a role for which she is perfectly suited.

“Camille is someone you want in the foxhole with you. She is fearless and thoughtful, playful and prayerful. Her courage is matched only by her compassion. She is an extraordinary preacher not simply because of



her eloquence, but because she listens with a holy attentiveness that makes others feel heard, seen, and held.

“Fourth Presbyterian Church, you are receiving a pastor of remarkable depth and devotion. I am thrilled to witness this next season of ministry unfold for Camille; her husband, David; and their beautiful children. Please know that you have my prayers as President of Princeton Seminary—and the full support of this institution—as you welcome my dear friend and esteemed colleague, Camille Cook Howe, into your midst.

“May this be a season of Spirit-led joy and flourishing.”

—DR. JONATHAN LEE WALTON

President, Princeton Theological Seminary



“I am absolutely delighted by the prospect of Camille being called to the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago. Fourth Church is one of the most significant Presbyterian churches in the U.S. and in the world.

“I have absolute confidence in Camille. She was an outstanding student at Princeton Theological Seminary while I was president. She has become a very distinguished pastor. She is a person of quiet courage, tact, awareness, and intelligence. She is a truly excellent preacher.

“The confidence and trust others have in her is reflected by the fact that she is now chair of the Board of Trustees of Princeton Seminary. She is a person I pray for every day as I pray for the seminary and its leadership. I cannot commend her more warmly.”

—SIR IAIN TORRANCE

President Emeritus of Princeton Theological Seminary

Former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

Former Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland

Former Dean of the Order of the Thistle

Pro-Chancellor (for Queen Camilla) of the University of Aberdeen

# Agenda of the Meeting of the Congregation

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**1. Convening Prayer and Call to Order**

*Tom Are Jr., Interim Pastor and Moderator*

**2. Declaration of a Quorum and Statement of Purpose**

*Allison Youngblood, Co-Clerk of Session*

**3. Pastor Nominating Committee Report**

*Kerry Grady and Jeanne Bishop, Pastor Nominating Committee Co-Chairs*

**4. Pastor Nominating Committee Remarks**

*Lloyd Culbertson and Gretchen Wahl, Pastor Nominating Committee Members*

**5. Introduction of the Candidate**

*Kerry Grady*

**6. Remarks from the Candidate**

*Camille Cooke Howe*

**7. Personnel Committee Remarks**

*Mark Hurley and Patsy Habicht, Personnel Committee Co-Chairs*

**8. Motion to Call the Candidate**

*Kerry Grady*

**9. Congregational Vote to Approve the Candidate**

*Tom Are Jr.*

**10. Announcement of the Vote**

*Tom Are Jr.*

**11. Motion to Dismiss the Pastor Nominating Committee**

*Allison Youngblood*

**12. Adjournment and Closing Prayer**

*Tom Are Jr.*



The Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago  
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