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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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From General Presbyter Roy Martin

Recently, I came across the following piece written in verse but not in rhyme, entitled, "I Am the New Year." The author is unknown, and perhaps you are familiar with it, but I think it appropriate for the start of the year 2021:

"Life, I am the new year.
I am an unspoiled page in
your book of time.
I am your next chance at
the art of living.

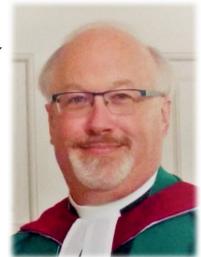
I am your opportunity
to practice
What you have learned
about life
During the last
twelve months.

All that you sought
and didn't find
is hidden in me,
waiting for you
to search it out
with more determination.

All the good that you
tried for
And didn't achieve
Is mine to grant
when you have fewer
conflicting desires.

All that you dreamed but
didn't dare to do,
All that you hoped but did
not will,
All the faith that you
claimed but did not have –
These slumber lightly,
Waiting to be awakened
By the touch of a
strong purpose.

I am your
opportunity
To renew
your
allegiance
to Him
who said,
'behold,
I make all
things new.'



**The Rev. Dr.
Roy Martin**

I am the new year."

In this new year, may God
grant you the grace of
new beginnings!

Roy

ATTENTION: SCAM ALERT

If you receive, or have received, an email or emails claiming to be from General Presbyter Roy Martin or any other Presbytery or Dogwood Acres staff member or officer, asking you about performing "a task", "a favor", or "a request I need you to handle discreetly", or soliciting gift cards or money, **PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND** and, if possible, block the sender. **These messages are fraudulent.** Presbytery/DWA staff will **NEVER** make these types of requests. For email verification, please call the Presbytery office at (850)535-2335.

From the Committee on Preparation for Ministry



By Rev. Trinity Whitley, Chair; Presbytery Vice Moderator and Faith, Tallahassee Associate Pastor

“Under Care” Spotlight: Lauren Scott, Candidate for Ministry

Hi! My name is Lauren Scott! Trinity Presbyterian Church (Pensacola) is my home congregation, and I continue to be, nourished by them.

I graduated from Florida State University with a degree in Family and Child Sciences, as well as minors in Biology and Religion. During my college experience is when I really began to discern my call to ministry.

I became involved at UKirk (FSU’s PC(USA) campus ministry), had the joy of serving the people at First Presbyterian in Quincy, FL, as an intern (and am grateful for the ways they continue to support me), attended the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) conference, and spent my summers working with kids and youth at Montreat. Through these experiences, opportunities, and relationships, I discerned and continue to respond to the call of going to seminary.

I am currently a third-year student in the Dual-Degree Program at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. This means that I am pursuing a Master of Divinity, as well as a Master of Arts of

Practical Theology (with a concentration in Christian Education). I plan to graduate in May 2022. I have loved my time at Columbia, including the people I have met, the classes I have taken, and the experiences and opportunities I have had.

I am now serving as the Youth Director at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, GA, and I currently have leadership responsibilities for the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) and the Presbyterian Youth Worker’s Association (PYWA). I am registered to take three ordination exams at the end of January (Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Bible Exegesis).

In the Spring semester, I am taking New Testament, Polity, Spirituality and the Arts, MDiv Capstone, and I am auditing a class called "Back to the Test: Brave New Scripture". I am really looking forward to continuing my studies at Columbia, although we will continue to be online.

When I am not doing



ministry things, you can find me sipping cups of coffee at local coffee shops, traveling to and exploring new places with people I love, playing board and card games with friends, and spending time outside with my puppy, Georgia.

Just as I cannot describe one particular moment to define my faith journey, I cannot find one moment to describe my call story either. It was through various experiences, many conversations (with others, myself, and the Divine), lots of prayer, abundant external affirmations, and the still, but powerful internal nudge that has guided and continues to nourish my sense of call. I am grateful for this Presbytery’s support and love!

CPA thankful for 2020 support, shares positive 2021 outlook

The Committee on Presbytery Administration sends a huge “thank you” to all the churches in Florida Presbytery for your generosity and tremendous response to our program needs in 2020. We have much to celebrate at the end of this highly unusual year.

Covid effects have been devastating to our country; however, the leadership of the many programs of our

Presbytery found a new creative normal and, thanks to your continued support, these programs have adjusted and survived. Florida Presbytery is in the midst of our stewardship campaign for 2021 and look forward to your generous support for the continuation and addition of new ministry opportunities.

We go into 2021 with a positive financial picture and are reminded each

day we are privileged to be members of this generous and loving community. It is an honor to serve with you. You stepped up during this unprecedented time and continue to make a difference in the work and ministry of Florida Presbytery.

Again, thank you for all you do for our Presbytery and its many programs. May we all realize the best of 2021.

From the Committee on Presbytery Administration



*By W. O. Bell, III,
Outgoing Chair and
Faith, Tallahassee
Ruling Elder*



PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSICIANS
2021 WORSHIP & MUSIC CONFERENCES AT MONTREAT

———— JUNE 20-25 & JUNE 27-JULY 2 ————

CONFERENCE DATES:

In-person:

Week 1:

June 20 - 25, 2021

Week 2:

June 27 - July 2, 2021

Online:

June 27 -

July 2, 2021

This intergenerational conference is for children, youth, adults, pastors, directors, organists, pianists, guitarists, percussionists, ringers, worship leaders, choir members, and anyone who loves and takes part in the worship and music of the church.

<https://www.presbysmusic.org/2021conference>

From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization



By Rev. Lisa Martin, Chair, and 1st, Lynn Haven Pastor

CCR continues assessment work during in-person hiatus

Happy New Year from the Committee on Congregational Revitalization! At our December meeting, we discussed the reality that our ministry with congregations seeking revitalization resources (MissionInsite, Holy Cow!, etc) is a bit stymied for the duration of the pandemic. Face-to-face conversations with sessions and congregations are important for presenting our revitalizations tools, so it's frustrating for us to be in perpetual waiting mode for that



time when we can visit in person.

But – while we wait, we are active on your behalf, formulating policies and procedures for assessing congregational health and vitality. Additionally, we are reading Tim Soerens' terrific book on what it means to be the church where we are

(Everywhere You Look: Discovering the Church Right Where You Are).

And just across our CCR desk came an advert for the FREE Next Church virtual national gathering! Next Church originates in the PCUSA but ventures within and beyond our denomination for resources that propel us to ask *what next!*

Where is the Spirit of God leading the church?

The 2021 national gathering takes place March 5-7 and is free to all who register! Check it out at <https://nextchurch.net/gathering/>

JESUS KNEW THE BREAKING OF BODIES, PEOPLE DRIVE OUT OF THE TOMBS, PEOPLE LIFTED ON CROSSES JESUS KNEW THE BREAKING OF TRADITIONS AND THE TURNING OF TABLES, SABBATHS RE-IMAGINED AND DESECRATED TEMPLES RE-CLAIMED. JESUS KNEW THE BREAKING OF BREAD OFFERED FOR MANY, THE BROKEN PART OF US ELD ON WARM GRACE, JESUS KNEW THE BREAKING, BUT JESUS KNEW THE BLESSING OF BUILDING TOO. THE HOUSE BUILT ON ROCK WILL NOT BE SHAKEN, BUT JESUS KNEW THE BLESSING OF BEING BLESSED IN HIS BODY THE STONE ONCE REJECTED NOW THE CORNERSTONE, BREATHING WITH SPIRIT AND PROMISES AND THE BROKEN AND MESSY PEOPLE WHO FOLLOWED HIM, WHO WENT TO BELONGING TO US AND SEXISM AND HOMOPHOBIA THE BREAKING OF ABUSE, WEAPONS AND BARRIERS, THE MOST VULNERABLE WHO ARE LEFT FOR THE FLOUR, BLESSING OTHERS WE BLESSING OF ALL OF US, SHARING OUR BREAD, TO OUR CHURCHES AND INSTITUTIONS, WRITING OUR BLESSING, AND ESSENTIAL TO OUR COMMUNITIES, AT BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR, THE BLESSING OF WHAT WE HAVE BEEN BUILT IN AMERICA, THE OPPOSITE OF JESUS' VISION OF BELONGING TO ALL, BLESSING OUR COMMUNITY THIS YEAR AT NEXT CHURCH, BREAKING, GRACIOUSLY, FULLY, OPPRESSIVELY CRAFTED, WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO DISCOVER WHEN AND HOW AND WHY WE ARE BLESSED TO ONLY BLESS GOD AND GOD'S CREATIVITY, LOVE AND HOPE IN OUR ROCK, WE BLESS OURSELVES, WILL WE BREAK WHAT WE BLESS, WE ARE CALLED WITH WISDOM TO BLESS? AND WILL WE BUILD WITH OUR LORD, THE CARPENTER OF ABUNDANT LIFE, THE CORNERSTONE OF HEALTHY COMMUNION? WILL WE BUILD CHURCHES, COMMUNITIES, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, LAWS, HOUSING CODES AND A GENERATION OF BELIEVERS THAT HONOR THE GOD OF JUSTICE AND MERCY AND LOVE AS WE STRIVE TOGETHER TOWARD THE COMMON GOOD?

POWER TO THE PEOPLE
BLACK LIVES MATTER
MMIW! NO MORE STOLEN SISTERS
ISANG BAGSAK
BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL
(BROWN IS BEAUTIFUL)
INDIGENOUS VOICES
SAY HER NAME
WE SHALL OVERCOME
NO ONE OF US ARE FREE
UNTIL ALL OF US ARE FREE
NIVAN RAZAN!

Breaking Blessing Building
A CALL FOR THE COMMON GOOD

NEXT CHURCH VIRTUAL NATIONAL GATHERING | MARCH 5-7, 2021

BREAKING, BLESSING, BUILDING
A Call For The Common Good
A FREE Live-Streamed Gathering for ALL Church Leaders
March 5-7, 2021
<https://nextchurch.net/gathering/2021-national-gathering/>

**CER recommends ... *After Evangelicalism: The Path to a New Christianity*,
by David P. Gushee (Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY), 2020**

Our perspectives on race were formed in childhood, reflecting the beliefs of our families, peers, and communities. Many of us white Americans grew up as evangelical Christians -- although we might not claim the label. Whether we grew up Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Holiness, or some other brand of Christianity, our faith journeys began with the ABCs – Accept Jesus, Believe that Jesus saves, and Confess Jesus as Lord and Savior.

That's all good; however, in Ephesians 4:15, we are admonished to grow up in every way into Christ. David Gushee contends that evangelicalism has failed to do that, and a majority of white evangelical Christians

have never moved from believing in Jesus to following him. Jesus calls us to seek God's kingdom and righteousness. That means, among other things, accepting every human being, regardless of skin color, as created in "the imago dei," and thus rejecting the heresy of white supremacy.

Gushee contends that part of what is so deeply wrong with white American evangelicalism is that by failing to move beyond the ABCs to embrace the social nature of our discipleship, evangelicalism has been both silent and complicit in the European/American heritage of racism. His book begins with an historical and evocative analysis of an evangelicalism that most mainline churches have come to see as both

simplistic and lacking in obedience to Jesus. In Parts I and II, Gushee draws from Scripture and the movement of God's Spirit as he delineates where mid-20th Century evangelicalism lost its way. In Part III, he focuses on racism. Chapter 9 (pages 151-168) is titled "Race: Unveiling and Ending White-Supremacist Christianity,"

As a member of the "I Stand with You Task Force," I call your attention to those 18 pages. They contain an analysis of how we white Christians have made God in our own image. However, those pages will be far less poignant without the context provided in the first 150 pages.

**From the
Committee on
Educational
Resources**



*By Rev. Harvey
Jenkins (HR),
"I Stand with You"
Racism Task Force
member*

FARM TO ABLE

sustainABLE development

Livestock can provide families with the means to develop ongoing sources of income, nutrition, and meaningful livelihoods.



Small Gifts. Big Impact.



Give today at presbyteriangifts.org/livestock

**From the
Committee on
Dogwood Acres**



*By Ben Powell,
DWA Director
and 1st, Quincy
Ruling Elder*

DWA Wishlist offers pandemic-safe way to make a difference

Many people ask us how they might help support Dogwood Acres, and our quick answer is usually, “How about spending a day at Dogwood helping with our volunteer team?” – There are always projects going on for just about every skill level. However, during the pandemic we have not had as many group activities and we understand many folks are hunkering down, waiting for safer times. Dogwood Acres’ Wishlist is for you! And, if you are having a hard time finding a special gift for a special person, a donation to Dogwood’s Wishlist in their name is the perfect gift!

All the items on our list, big and small, are essential to keeping your

camp in tip-top shape and will eventually be purchased using funds from our annual budget (which never seems to go quite far enough). Any item you donate money for is a direct savings that helps us get through the year, and more importantly, ensures the needed items are purchased immediately, rather than waiting (sometimes years) for them to work their way through our prioritizing budget process.

Our Wishlist is kept up-to-date on our website, and the items include a range of things, from butterfly bushes to benches to trail markers to hummingbird feeders. Find Dogwood Acres’ Wishlist at <https://www.dogwoodacres.org/support-dwa/wishlist/>.

So, if you see something you would like to help out with, please send a donation along with the item description, and we’ll take it from there. You can do this online **or** by sending a check to **Dogwood Acres, 3320 Harmony Road, Chipley, FL 32428**. Sometimes the item (usually the larger ones) requires more than one donation to reach the total needed. That’s ok – we track and reserve all donations until we receive enough to make the purchase.

Thank you so much for considering matching your interests with Dogwood Acres’ needs! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (850) 528-3575 or ben@dogwoodacres.org.

Online this year — and FREE!

**Festival of
HOMILETICS**

May 17 - 21, 2021

The 2021 Festival features all the learning and interaction you love — online. **2 ways to participate:** Attend for free and get 4-5 presentations each day. Buy the recording package and unlock interviews, live workshops, and more! **Learn more and register at <https://www.festivalofhomiletics.com>**

Sacred people, sacred earth

Happy New Year! We start this new year with hope and high expectations for a safer and healthier year than 2020. We have effective vaccines for COVID-19 and new leadership that will address the climate crisis and racial injustices. Faith communities are feeling invigorated and are calling for action to protect the planet and to right the injustices affecting the poor and people of color.

One organization, Greenfaith, a coalition of global faith groups, is asking people of faith, financial institutions and governments around the world to unite to address the triple dangers of climate change, COVID-19 and racial injustice. It should come as no surprise to you that we are failing to adequately address these threats and that people and God's creation are suffering. They believe that people who are united and guided by compassion, love and justice can deliver a powerful message to leaders and institutions on the changes needed to address these three crises. (Note: This organization has been very active with our denomination in the fossil fuel divestment movement, and two of its staff are Presbyterian ministers and friends.)

They have prepared a statement about these injustices entitled "Sacred People, Sacred Earth" which can be read at <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/sacred-people->



[sacred-earth?source=direct_link&](#). It is too long to print here in its entirety, but here is an inadequate summary of a powerful statement.

We live in a world of widespread poverty, racial and gender injustice, massive income inequality with widespread devastation of nature. This version of civilization is unsustainable. We need to work together with compassion, love and justice to create a safe future for everybody. Thus we affirm:

- ▶ Money and finance must serve morality and the common good, not exploit the vulnerable, destroy nature and increase income inequality.

- ▶ Governments must enact and enforce laws that protect people and planet alike, in keeping with the inherent dignity of every human being and the world's biodiversity.

- ▶ Religious institutions must be models of environmental leadership, utilizing our rituals, religious education, facilities and the public voices of our leaders, members and followers. Individuals carry a divine

spark, unique gifts and a moral responsibility to make one's life a blessing for the Earth and all the people.

You are asked, using the link above, to prayerfully consider the statement in its entirety; ask your session to affirm it and signal your affirmation by filling out a short [online form](#). Please let me know if you decide to do this.

On March 11, 2021, there will be a global call for action by faith groups. If interested, your church can participate by becoming a co-sponsor and holding an event. For more information go to www.greenfaith.org and click on the action tab.

All of us have had a difficult 2020, but let's kick off the new year with action. Action that can change lives and protect our families and the least of these. Standing up and speaking out for compassion, love and justice is something churches do especially well. United with faith groups around the world, our voices will be heard.

Please contact me at pammcvety@hotmail.com if you have any questions.

Caring for Creation Notes



By
Pam McVety,
*Presbytery
Stewardship
of Creation
Enabler*
(pammcvety@hotmail.com)

"All of us have had a difficult 2020, but let's kick off the new year with action."

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Anything But Ordinary Time

"Look! I'm making all things new."
Revelation 21:5a
(CEB)

APCE Virtual Event February 4-6, 2021
<https://apcenet.org/2021-annual-event/>



Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation

Opening Doors to Brighter Futures

The Soul Repair Center will be offering free monthly webinars in the months ahead of use to religious leaders and professional caregivers supporting veterans and their families

"Dementia Care for Aging Veterans affected by Moral Injury"

Wednesday, January 13, 2021 2:00 Eastern

There will be time for discussion among the presenters, and time for questions.

Speakers:



Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock, Founding Director of the Soul Repair Center, now Senior Vice President and Director of the Shay Moral Injury Center at Volunteers of America



Professor James Ellor, Kronzer Endowed Professor in Family Studies and Co-Director of the Ph.D. Program in Gerontology, Garland School of Social Work at Baylor University



Dr. Nancy Ramsay, Chair of the Soul Repair Center's Board 2012-2017 and current Director of the Center, as well as Emerita Professor at Brite Divinity School

Register at: https://voa.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_59wSTbWVQceTgoklQ2FoiA

The webinars are co-sponsored by the Shay Center of VOA.

Join us again February 4, 2021 at 2:00 Eastern for "Women, Military Sexual Trauma, and Moral Injury: Stand Up Speak Up"

Speakers:

Chaplain Judy Malana, Captain US Navy Regional Chaplain US Navy Washington District

Rev. Dr. Kristen Leslie Professor, Subject Matter Expert, Navy Chaplain Corps on Military Sexual Trauma

BriGette McCoy, CEO and Founder Women Veteran Social Justice Network