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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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May 2021

From General Presbyter Roy Martin

This will be a “catch-all” article to talk about unrelated matters before the presbytery. First of all, Presbytery’s Coordinating and Planning Commission has reviewed the Covid-19 recommendations it sent out last fall. They recognize that each church session has had a year’s worth of experience in navigating closures, openings, and partial openings and, therefore, feels no need to insert itself beyond continuing to offer the same suggestions for protocols for in-person worship. (www.presbyteryofflorida.net/presbytery-committees/coordinating-planning/)

They encourage every session to log in to covidactnow.org on a regular basis, which is a risk and vaccine tracker, for the latest county-by-county updates on all things Covid.

They would like to encourage members of every congregation to be sensitive to the pressures and additional workload

that pastors and sessions have undergone during the Covid-19 crisis in trying to make the right decisions regarding in-person worship and meetings and providing electronic ways of meeting and worshipping. The challenges have been great, and we are not out of the woods yet. Please provide positive support to your leaders, even when you may not agree with their decisions, and let them know you understand and keep them in prayer.

For those congregations that have resumed some form of in-person gatherings, please don’t use the availability of your church’s worship video as an excuse to stay home. If you have been fully vaccinated, and if your church is using appropriate safety protocols, stay home only if you just don’t feel safe to do otherwise.



**The Rev. Dr.
Roy Martin**

Presbytery will meet on May 18th by Zoom. If you were at the last presbytery meeting, you heard about several policies being implemented by various committees to guide their work. There will be more policies presented at this meeting and it is exciting to see committees focusing on ways in which they can engage our member congregations in mission and ministry! We will also hear a presentation from David Staniunas, from the Presbyterian Historical Society about what they are able to provide for congregations. And the sermon will be given by the Rev. Sun Kim, the newly-installed pastor at Fort Walton Beach Korean Presbyterian Church.

Finally, as churches begin to open back up, please note that I am available to preach in your church. I have preached in every church in the

**Register for the May 18, 2021
Spring Stated
Presbytery Meeting at
[www.presbyteryofflorida.net/
presbytery-meetings/](http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/presbytery-meetings/)**

From the Committee on Mission and Outreach



*By Tim Crawford,
1st, Crestview Elder
and CMO*

Now is time to prepare for active upcoming hurricane season

You may have heard; this year is going to be an above-average hurricane season. While not expected to be another 2020 season with its 30 named storms, 2021's early predictions are 16-20 named storms, 7-10 of those becoming hurricanes, and 3-5 major Category 3 or higher storms.

For those native or longtime Florida residents, we have grown accustomed to these annual predictions. If you are new to the area and not had firsthand experience of a tropical event, early preparation is the most important thing you can do.

This year, May 9 through 15 is set as Hurricane Preparedness Week and is a reminder to evaluate your personal hurricane risk. Now is the time to review insurance policies, check emergency supplies, update plans and materials to prepare your home to prevent/minimize storm damage. The web site <https://www.floridadisaster.org> is an excellent source of information to help you with your preparations.

Another essential part of preparation is being prepared to help one another in a time of need

the result of a disaster. An excellent way to make yourself available to help is by registering to become a Commuter Volunteer. You can read more about being a Commuter Volunteer at www.FLAPDAN.org

Should you need assistance as the result of a disaster, contact your church office; your church will then get in

touch with the Presbytery of Florida office, and they, in turn, will contact FLAPDAN (Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network) to get the Commuter Volunteer process started for needed assistance.

Pray for a quiet hurricane season, but if it is not to be, working together we can overcome any challenge.

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As a member of our presbytery's Committee on Mission and Outreach, I ask you to share a little light and inspiration with our congregations by sharing a thumbnail sketch of some of your ongoing mission and/or service endeavors. I hope to compile your contributions in our CMO report to our May 18 meeting of presbytery.

Would you please email to me a simple listing of some of your mission endeavors or partnerships that are meaningful to your members? It need not be lengthy: simply include your church name and activity.

Please submit your write-up to me (Hugh@Trinitypcola.org) by Monday, May 3.

Thank you,
Hugh Hamilton
Pastor
Trinity Presbyterian Church-
Pensacola, FL

Synod offers further webinar topic study opportunities

Several participants from the Presbytery of Florida joined the Synod of South Atlantic's Tuesday, April 27, webinar via Zoom, "Leading the Church into the Post-Covid World" with widely-read author the Rev. Dr. Tod Bolsinger. However, for those who missed it, a link to a recording is available at https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/NhZ27m316hN9zvn_RFqA4IWbSkVDzV6MmCVyN6kJgNm4tqM5elLuHfH8zfjehpli.dXSOqlufoQLNI8fO

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The chat messages from the event may be viewed at <https://www.dropbox.com/s/c5hl3c73fenk20z/Bolsinger%20webinar%20chat.txt?dl=0>.

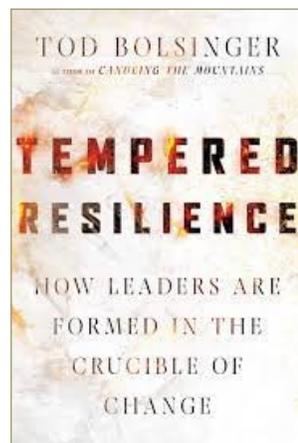
For those interested in further study, conversation and engagement around this topic, the Synod offers two upcoming opportunities:

Tempered Resilience Book Discussion:

Join with a small group of others for eight sessions, via Zoom, to read Tod Bolsinger's latest book, *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders are Formed in the Crucible of Change*. Using the book's *Tempered Resilience Study Guide*, groups will review the readings together, be encouraged to reflect on individual leadership practices and beliefs, and focus on spiritual and leadership practices.

Ministry Collaborative Cohort:

In August, the Synod will be launching six-month cohorts in partnership with the Ministry Collaborative (www.mministry.org). Much was changing for the Church prior to COVID. Much has changed this past year.



**The Rev. Dr.
Tod Bolsinger**

Much more will change going forward. As we move into new uncharted space and time, we'll be exploring together critical questions:

- What will we care most about as we move forward?
- What will be the consequences of that caring?
- Do you believe it's God's heartfelt wish to get everything back to normal?

Cohort members will participate in pairs of one pastor and one ruling elder per congregation, and it is hoped to have one congregation selected from each of the Synod's 16 presbyteries. Cost will be \$500 per clergy-elder pair.

If you like to participate

From the Synod
of South Atlantic
**Synod of
South Atlantic**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization



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

Revitalization Toolbox offers resources for congregations

The Committee on Congregational Revitalization is pleased to announce that a strong group of committed volunteers has been “refreshed” in our Holy Cow! training and is now ready to assist congregations! If you would like a session presentation on Holy Cow! and its Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT), please contact me at revlwmartin@gmail.com.

My hunch is that all congregations can use a boost in morale and mission after a year + of Covid-19. Everyone



is weary and eager to resume a level of normalcy. From everything I’ve read, however, the reality is that the church as we knew it pre-pandemic is no longer. Rather, we are changed; churches will need to become familiar with a “new” normal.

This is where engaging the CAT can be helpful. With a solid grounding in theology and congregational life through the years, the CAT has proven

effective in allowing congregations to learn about themselves and grow in mission and ministry. Perhaps your congregation can use this kind of *jumpstart* now or in the near future.

In other news, members of CCR attended (via Zoom) the Synod of the South Atlantic’s Smaller Congregation Conference in March. A highlight of the conference was Christen Kinard’s presentation about using technology to enhance and revitalize our ministries. I encourage you to explore her web site:

From the Committee on Ministry

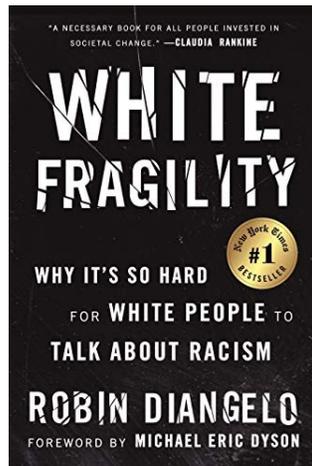


Erin Rosica, shown above, kneeling, was ordained Friday, April 23, as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U. S. A.). Ordinarily, Erin’s ordination would have taken place in her home church, First Presbyterian of Tallahassee. But, since Erin is a chaplain at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital, the service was held in the TMH auditorium so her colleagues there could participate in person, along with her church and presbytery family members via Zoom.

Book Review: *White Fragility*, by Robin Diangelo (Boston, Beacon Press), 2018

Responding to a recent sermon, a longtime friend sent a message that said, in part, “The most egregious example of gaslighting is the concept of ‘white fragility’. You spend your life trying to be a good person, trying to treat people fairly and with respect.... But you are told you are a racist ...solely because of the color of your skin.”

Robin Diangelo makes it clear that this perception of ‘white fragility’ is based on a simplistic understanding of racism as intentional acts of discrimination committed by bad people. However, as she explains, racism is a culturally engrained



system “anchored in the phenomenon of white superiority,” and white fragility is the difficulty white people have in accepting that reality.

Diangelo reminds us that being raised in Western society, we are conditioned into a white supremacist worldview which forms the cultural bedrock of society and its

institutions. Contrary to popular notions, racism is not personal prejudice; it has little to do with intentions, awareness, or agreement; it is not about good and bad people. It is the situation into which we were born, and white fragility is “the anxious denial and defensiveness” that occurs when we are confronted with our racism.

As I read this book, I became more cognizant of the fact that I neither chose my socialization nor could I have avoided it, but I am responsible for where I go from here. Diangelo also put me in touch with my fragility as I struggle with my racism.

From the “I Stand With You” Task Force



By Rev. Harvey
Jenkins, HR

**Online this year — and
FREE!** May 17 - 21, 2021

**Festival of
HOMILETICS**

The 2021 Festival features all the learning and interaction you love — online.

Learn more and register at <https://www.festivalofhomiletics.com>

From the Committee on Dogwood Acres



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

DWA ministry moves forward in new, but different, day

About this time last year, we were trying to figure out how we could safely open DWA Summer Camp in the middle of what became clear was a devastating COVID pandemic. As you know, the ultimate decision was there was no safe way to open in the summer of 2020. We also went almost nine months with the gate closed to all events except small groups or individuals that did volunteer work on our campus.

But it is a new day, yet still a very different day, at Dogwood. We have safely opened for retreats. In a 30 day

period, we will host three retreat events. And the ministry moves forward!

Summer Camp 2021 plans also are fully underway. The decision to safely open DWA for summer camp was made last January under the new model we call “Bubble Camp.” The idea is to invite groups of kids that are normally around one another to stay in a cabin along with a chaperone that comes with them.

Our summer camp staff will help with both traditional and new programming we are excited about. This is a concept that many summer camps across

the nation are following as we try to reopen in what appears to be a time when the virus seems a little more manageable. I encourage you to visit our website (dogwoodacres.org) for the details. We have a chance to make this a great summer of fun and faith for our youth.

PLEASE REGISTER YOUR KIDS ASAP! It’s easy and all done online using our website.

Remember, we have partial scholarship money available, and pledge no kid will be denied a great week at Dogwood because of money. If you have any questions about Summer Camp 2021, or “anything Dogwood



Board University
THE BOARD OF PENSIONS

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Noon — 3 p.m. CT/1— 4 p.m. ET

Registration closes 7 p.m. CT/8 p.m. ET

Well-Being Respite
May 18

[Dr. Jessica Young Brown](#), Assistant Professor of Counseling and Practical Theology at the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and organizational health consultant, will focus on how ministers and others in ministry can attend to their mental health. She will examine various self-care practices that support our mental health, explore signs that mental health support is needed, and discuss strategies for seeking mental health services, acknowledging the particular pressures associated with being a member of the clergy.

Learn more and register:

<https://www.pensions.org/your-path-to-wholeness/lifelong-learning-through-board-university/well-being-respite>

Environmental racism: Latricia's story

As my church's Healing Racism Task Force looks at racism, it is clear that the breadth and depth of our country's racism is ongoing and tragic. It comes in all forms and not only affects people of color, but all God's children in a variety of hurtful ways. It is often ignored by many, including me.

Presbyterian Outlook recently posted a commentary that I wrote on one form of racism, "environmental racism", that is even less well-understood than other forms. It is a story about a neighbor and friend, Reverend Dr. Latricia Scriven, who is a minister for the Tallahassee New Life United Methodist church and director for Florida A&M University Wesley Foundation (a Methodist student ministry). The commentary "Environmental Racism, Latricia's Story" can be read at <https://pres->

outlook.org/2021/04/environmental-racism-latricias-story/.

Here is the back story. Reverend Scriven was a speaker at our recent event, "Ring the Bells for Climate Justice". On a pre-event phone call, she shared the story of where she grew up, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and all the cancer in her family and the birth problems with her son. Out of this phone call came the realization for Latricia that her life and that of her family had been tragically affected by environmental racism.

Prior to this call, she had never heard of Cancer Alley, where she grew up. She was not familiar with environmental racism. She was not aware that her son's birth defects could be related to all the chemicals that she was exposed to while pregnant. She was not familiar with the link between the burning of fossil fuels and the extreme February blizzard

that she had to drive through to take her mom to chemotherapy. This pre-event conversation led her to the realization that she needed to speak about her story at our event.

For a lot of reasons, It was a tough commentary to write about Latricia. Being involved, even peripherally, with environmental racism is stressful and painful. It's hard to imagine a lifetime of it. This distressing experience brought us together with phone calls, correspondence and an Earth Day talk at her church.

The General Assembly, the "Special Committee on Racism, Truth and Reconciliation" and the Presbytery "I Stand with You Task Force" have all written persuasively about racism in our churches, communities and in our denomination. I commend their writings to you. And, if there is any doubt about the presence and dangers of

Caring for Creation Notes



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

The commentary "Environmental Racism, Latricia's Story" can be read at <https://pres-outlook.org/2021/04/environmental-racism-latricias-story/>



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APRIL 5 – MAY 23, 2021



PENTECOST
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

**God, from my youth
you have taught me.**

— PSALM 71:17

Building a Life of Faith

 MATTHEW 25



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The Panhandle Presbyterian

Save the date (or visit <http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/events-calendars/>)
Presbytery and committee meetings are via Zoom unless otherwise noted.

In May

Throughout May Mental Health Awareness Month

Each Wednesday, 3 p.m. CDT/ 4 p.m. EDT Presbytery clergy gathering via Zoom

May 2 – 9 Older Adults Week

Thursday, May 6 2 p.m. CDT/ 3 p.m. EDT Zoom training for Presbytery meeting commissioners

Sunday, May 9 Mothers Day

Tuesday, May 11 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT Committee on Ministry

Wednesday, May 12 12 p.m. CDT/ 1 p.m. EDT Committee on Presbytery Administration

Tuesday, May 18 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT **Spring Stated Presbytery Meeting**

Sunday, May 23 Day of Pentecost

Tuesday, May 25 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT Committee on Congregational Revitalization

Wednesday, May 26 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT "I Stand With You" Task Force

Monday, May 31 Memorial Day – Presbytery office closed

Looking ahead

Each Wednesday, 3 p.m. CDT/ 4 p.m. EDT Presbytery clergy gathering via Zoom

Tuesday, June 1 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT Committee on Educational Resources

Tuesday, June 1 2 p.m. CDT/ 3 p.m. EDT Committee on Mission and Outreach

Wednesday, June 9 12 p.m. CDT/ 1 p.m. EDT Committee on Presbytery Administration

Saturday, June 19 Juneteenth

Tuesday, June 15 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT Committee on Congregational Revitalization

Sunday, June 20 Fathers Day

Sunday, June 27 – Thursday, July 1 Dogwood Acres "Bubble Camp" Week 1

Sunday, July 4 Independence Day

Monday, July 5 Presbytery office closed for Independence Day

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give a gift
that lasts.**

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