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# The Panhandle Presbyterian

*A monthly publication of the Presbytery of Florida*



Volume 5, Issue 9

September 2022

## From General Presbyter Roy Martin

**W**hat another great presbytery meeting! The creation of a new worshipping community (NWC) along the 30A/Hwy. 98 corridor was approved by presbytery, and the Committee on New Congregational Development will act as a Pastor Nominating Committee to secure pastoral leadership trained and/or experienced in new congregational development. That person will be funded for up to three years by money set aside from the sale of church properties closed by the presbytery in recent years.

The Committee on Congregational Redevelopment reported that they are in various stages of working with five congregations who have sought their help identifying where God might be pointing them next in ministry.

The Committee on Mission and Outreach reported on progress in

establishing a mission partnership with a presbyterian denomination in Guatemala. Their Anti-Racism Subcommittee presented the educational hour during the presbytery meeting. They arranged for Dr. Catherine Meeks, Director of Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, to speak via Zoom about her work and how we all might view our role in bringing about such healing.

Ben Powell spoke eloquently of his current medical condition and what Dogwood Acres has meant to his life and his call to ministry, as he formally announced his planned retirement beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. The presbytery honored him with a written Resolution of Thanks for his dedication and servant leadership over the camp and conference center for so many years. We also welcomed and congratulated Dr. Christy Williams, who will become the interim

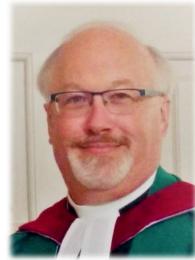
director beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> and will serve until a new director is secured.

We welcomed Erin Rugh, who will be ordained and installed as a new associate pastor for Faith Presbyterian Church in Tallahassee. She preached an inspiring sermon and spoke of her journey of faith, which has led to this moment in her life.

And we heard from the Committee on Educational Resources a reminder that DiscipleFest will be held on September 17<sup>th</sup> at Dogwood Acres, and you are encouraged to sign up for a couple of workshops.

Grace Presbyterian Church did a fantastic job hosting the meeting, and the lunch was absolutely delicious!

If you have not been to a presbytery meeting lately, I encourage you to come to the next one scheduled for October 25<sup>th</sup> at First Presbyterian Church, Quincy, Florida. Be there or be square!



**The Rev. Dr. Roy Martin**

### Save the Date!

Fall Stated Presbytery Meeting

Tuesday, October 25th

First Presbyterian Church of Quincy, FL

## Education, hospitality, NWC and more highlight Aug. 23rd presbytery meeting



Volunteers at Grace Presbyterian Church, Panama City, warmly greet attendees arriving at the Presbytery's Summer Stated Meeting, at left. Approximately 26 minister members, 18 elder commissioners, two Christian educators, six Presbytery officers or committee chairs, 1 Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE), three visiting ministers and 11 visitors signed in at registration.

Shown below, at left, Grace's gracious generosity extends to the delicious morning refreshments and baked spaghetti lunch prepared and served by the Presbyterian Women and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Shown below, from left, Committee on New Congregational Development (NCDC) Chair Rev. A. J. Mealor details his committee's exciting proposal to establish a New Worshipping Community in the 30-A corridor, near Seaside.

At lower right, presbytery members ask questions and share comments following the morning's educational time with on-screen guest speaker Dr. Catherine Meeks, presented by the Presbytery's Committee on Educational Resources (CER) and Racial Justice Subcommittee.



**PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

**Sept. 4 – Oct. 2**

## Consider applying to serve on a GA committee

**T**hanks to those who have submitted via the online form the report on ruling elder deaths from October 1, 2021 to date. The report for October 1, 2021 to Sept. 30, 2022 will be presented at the Oct. 25 presbytery meeting. Please submit any additional names no later than Friday, October 7, 2022. You may email to the stated clerk ([statedclerk@Presbytery](mailto:statedclerk@Presbytery)

[ofFlorida.com](http://ofFlorida.com)) or submit via the online form ([bit.ly/pofnecro](https://bit.ly/pofnecro)).

Please consider submitting your name for consideration to serve on a General Assembly committee. Go to <https://ganominations.pcusa.org/> to create your profile. There were several special committees/task forces/commissions created by the GA225. The co-moderators will appoint

these members using the nominations portal. The portal for applications for special entities (commission, committees, task forces and teams) created by the 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly for appointment by the GA Co-Moderators opened **Wednesday, August 31, 2022**. These are some special opportunities to serve the larger church!

## From Our Stated Clerk



**By Jeannie Dixon,  
Fellowship,  
Tallahassee Elder**

### Aug. 23rd presbytery meeting, continued

At right, from right, Rev. Brant Copeland presents a resolution of thanks to Dogwood Acres Director Ben Powell on the presbytery's behalf, as Presbytery Recording Clerk Rev. Hugh Hamilton looks on.

At far right, presbytery members further express love and gratitude to Ben and wife, Kathy, as Ben prepares to leave his post Oct. 1 for health reasons. (*Far right photo courtesy of Rev. Lisa Martin*)

Below, Erin Rugh, Faith Presbyterian of Tallahassee's new Associate Pastor for Youth and College Ministry, is introduced to the presbytery, having preached during the morning worship.



Above, from left, General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Roy Martin presents a resolution of thanks to Synod of South Atlantic Executive/Stated Clerk Rev. Joyce Lieberman, who will retire in October.

## From the Committee on Ministry (COM)



*By Rev. Dr.  
Joan Wooten, Chair,  
And 1st, Pensacola  
Parish Associate*

### All about pulpit supply

If your congregation needed pulpit supply, would you know where to go to find someone? If not, I encourage you to check out our Presbytery's Pulpit Supply List posted on the Presbytery's website ([www.presbyteryofflorida.net](http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net)).

Once you're at the home page, click on "Presbytery Committees" at the top, then on "Ministry" along the right side. You will then see another link, "Pulpit Supply," just below "Ministry." Clicking on that will bring you to four documents, one of which is the list itself that provides preachers' names, contact information, and any geographical or availability limitations they may have. Also posted is our Presbytery's Pulpit Supply Policy, which outlines qualifications and requirements for inclusion on the Pulpit Supply List. The Committee on Ministry (COM) meets with and screens those who are interested in offering worship and preaching leadership to our congregations. The Pulpit Supply List includes only those individuals whom COM has approved, based on their ability to research the Biblical text and plan a sermon, and on their understanding of Reformed theology.

Equally important as the first two documents are the other two, Pulpit Supply Expectations and Ethics, and Honoraria Guidelines.

Congregations and preachers are encouraged to review them periodically. If I am asked to fill a pulpit, I go back and review them just to make sure I am serving that congregation in the best way possible. I encourage all congregations and pulpit supply preachers to do the same.

Our Presbytery limits supply preachers on the list to four consecutive Sundays at a specific congregation. Why do we do that? In part, we want to free up preachers to serve other congregations, as needed. But we also want to make sure that congregations and preachers don't end up in a *de facto* temporary pastor supply arrangement. Since some of our smaller congregations do not have consistent pastoral

leadership, it is tempting to want to set up an open-ended agreement with a good preacher and, over time, claim that person as "ours."

If a congregation lacks consistent pastoral leadership, it should contact COM to discuss ways to find such a person and to develop a temporary pastor supply contract. In that way, COM can provide better support to the congregation and the pastor through the contract's parameters.

If you are a ruling elder who feels called to preach, or if you are a teaching elder not currently serving a congregation who would like to be placed on the Pulpit Supply List, please contact me via email ([joanwooten@fpcpenscola.com](mailto:joanwooten@fpcpenscola.com)) or phone (850-341-9984). Other questions? I am available anytime to discuss ways to support our congregations. I look forward to talking with you!

### DISCIPLEFEST 2022 Saturday, September 17 *Rooted and built up in Christ (Colossians 2:7)*

**Register by September 9**  
[www.presbyteryofflorida.net/  
presbytery-committees/educational-  
resources/disciplefest/](http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/presbytery-committees/educational-resources/disciplefest/)

## CCR works with congregations in all stages of revitalization

The Committee on Congregational Revitalization continues its exciting journey and ministry.

Congregations continuing their revitalization process are: Panama City-Grace, Pensacola-Northminster, Crestview-First, and Milton-First continue to make their way through the revitalization process.

As extremely helpful as the Holy Cow! Congregational Assessment Tool is, (and we strongly encourage its use), not all congregations are at the point of wanting or being situated to utilize it yet. But! CCR is still able to help out.

For example, DeFuniak Springs-Bethel is very enthusiastic about their revitalization work. The congregation isn't quite ready to do the Holy Cow! Assessment yet. However, in consultation with one of our committee members, the congregation has been at work reconnecting with the community, working on needed repairs, and rejuvenating worship. Members who have been absent from worship for some time have started to return. Excitement is being generated.

CCR is ready to meet a congregation where it is now, consider the best route to take, and engage

in the first essential steps toward revitalization.

On another note: Pastors, mark your calendar. CCR is attempting to organize a one-day seminar at Dogwood Acres on Wednesday, October 5, 2022. The day will cover the topic of exploring ways to do ministry in our congregations in this rapidly changing societal setting. We also anticipate having a representative from the Presbyterian Foundation to speak about new ways of receiving offerings and managing well the offerings that are given. Watch for further details.

**From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)**



*By Rev. Mark Broadhead, Chair, and 1st, Crestview/ Laurel Hill Pastor*

## EVANGELISM: ADDRESSING HARM, EMBRACING HOPE

OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 1



**Rev. Shanea D. Leonard**  
Keynote Speaker



**Rev. Gregory J. Bentley**  
Preacher



**Phillip Morgan**  
Music Leader



**Rev. Pepa Paniagua**  
Workshop Leader



**Rev. Dr. Cheni Khonje**  
Workshop Leader



**Rev. Dr. Robyn Byrd Michalove**  
Workshop Leader



**Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow**  
Workshop Leader

Online and in person at Montreat Conference Center • <https://montreat.org/>

## From the Committee on Nominations (CN)



*By Ruth Bedell,  
CN member and  
Faith, Tallahassee,  
elder*

## Presbytery Committee Corner: Committee on New Congregational Development (CNCD)

This month, we continue our series on presbytery committees by featuring the Committee on New Congregational Development (CNCD), which is chaired by Rev. A. J. Mealor from Fellowship Presbyterian Church in Tallahassee. This committee formulates and implements a comprehensive plan for location, funding, and development of new congregations and new worshipping communities within the bounds of the presbytery.

**What are your committee's priorities for the rest of this year?**  
 "Our first priority is/was to have presbytery approve a new worshipping community for the Seaside, 30A area. After that, the committee will begin the process of developing a MIF (Ministry Information Form) and begin the call process to find a pastor to lead a new worshipping community in the Seaside area.

We are taking a 'parachute' approach to this new position, which means a pastor coming into an area without being called by a group in the community. We understand that there are risks involved with this approach, but we hope that by walking alongside the new pastor, offering

mentoring programs to assist them in their efforts, and a long runway to get the church off the ground, they can be successful in this opportunity. We feel that the Seaside area with its growing community, and current low number of churches provides a great place to launch a new worshipping community."

### What are your committee's top two accomplishments?

"Our top two accomplishments at this point are developing a handbook for new worshipping communities in our presbytery and researching a possible area for launching a new worshipping community.

The handbook allows for presbytery members and churches who are interested in forming new worshipping communities a path to launch them. It also allows for our committee to identify opportunities in our presbytery as they present themselves to launch new worshipping communities in previously underserved areas or peoples.

Over the last two years, we have been researching our presbytery to determine the best possible place to launch a new worshipping community. After consultation with representatives throughout our denomination, reviewing

data about our presbytery, and visiting the area, we believe we have found the right place in the Seaside, 30A area. The presbytery approved our recommendation in August, and now we are moving forward with this new community of faith."

### What qualities are you looking for in potential committee volunteers?

"First and foremost, we are looking for people who have served on pastoral nominating committees in the past, who know the process, and can assist in calling a new pastor. We are looking for people who like to think outside of the box in terms of what it means to be a church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and post-COVID world and are willing to travel to Seaside for the occasional in-person meeting. It wouldn't hurt for volunteers to have a heart for mission and evangelism, either."

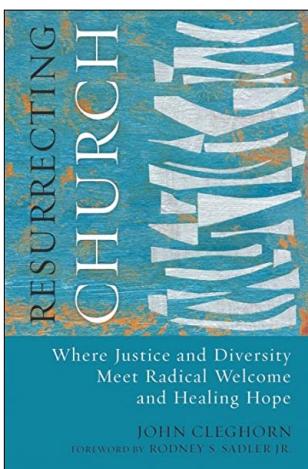
The CNCD has one vacancy on the committee to fill. If you are a church member from the west district and are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Committee on Representation Chair Glenn Hodges at [ghodges37@comcast.net](mailto:ghodges37@comcast.net). See you at the corner next month!

## Review: *Resurrecting Church: Where Justice and Diversity Meet Radical Welcome and Healing Hope*, by John Cleghorn

The last year that mainstream Protestant churches saw a net growth in membership nationwide was in 1965. And a 2019 poll by the *Wall Street Journal* found that only 30 percent of Americans 18 to 38 said religion was very important to them.

Could God be trying to get our attention? The author, John Cleghorn, believes so, partly on the basis of his personal experience. After his first career as a vice-president of Bank of America, and shortly before completing seminary, he landed as an unpaid assistant at one of our dying PC(USA) churches. It was here, at Caldwell Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC that he witnessed *resurrection* firsthand.

In Caldwell's case, the remnant of a congregation that had "died" a few years before were re-united when their one-time gospel choir was called on to perform.



They were so overjoyed to be together again that they found a place to resume holding weekly Bible study – at Caldwell. After meeting for several weeks, some of them decided to try Sunday worship at their host church. There was a motley crew of informally-dressed and diverse followers of Jesus Christ, ranging from people whose housing was unstable, to folks in recovery, to blue collar workers, and all shades of color – black to brown, to tan and white – and from gay to straight.

When a few of these non-members arrived at the door for worship, they were surprised by the warm, embracing, no-questions-asked welcome they received from the few white-haired members there to receive them. The next Sunday, they had recruited a few dozen more folk, and suddenly, a church that the Presbytery had just agreed to close had a chance at life – but one very different from before.

Rev. Cleghorn describes the messy but joyful journey into new life as one filled with potholes and detours, requiring many accommodations about worship styles and music, and how leadership is distributed. Everyone had to give a

**Disciplefest 2022:  
LOOK FOR OUR  
INTERACTIVE  
WORKSHOP ON  
RACISM AND WEALTH  
INEQUALITY,  
OFFERED TWICE,  
MORNING AND  
AFTERNOON!**

From the  
Racial Justice  
Subcommittee



*By Rev.  
Greta Reed,  
Subcommittee  
member*

little. But when you are facing death, or have nearly died, these are no longer insurmountable obstacles, though they require mutual honesty, and often, confession, and reconciliation. An outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit enabled this part of the Body of Christ to surmount obstacles, learn from their mistakes, and be filled with new and palpable energy – the kind that makes visitors want to return.

This is the short version of Caldwell's rebirth. In the book, the author tells the story of this and the (only) ten other turnaround churches in the PC(USA) that he was able to discover and then research. The common thread for each is their willingness to embrace diversity, and their commitment to make God's love more visible in the world through the pursuit of justice.

For those churches facing a steady decline in membership, this book is a "must-read."

Florida State University College of Social Work  
Center for the Study and Promotion of Communities, Families, and Children

presents

**Pastoral Care Prospective on  
Psychosocial Medicine  
Research and Practice in Pediatrics**

*This lecture will focus on the intersection of faith supports and research. How does supporting one's spiritual life influence their healing and health outcomes? Join Rev. Schlageter, a PCUSA ordained pastor and chaplain at Child's National and Dr. Killian as they merge research and the application of pastoral care. . .*



Rev. Matthew Schlageter



Dr. Michael Killian

**Friday | 09.23.2022 | 10:30am – 12:00pm**

**| University Center C, Room 1703 |**

**Register**

**Free for all attendees.  
Registration is required.  
1.5 CEU hours provided.**



**Florida State University**  
Center for the Study and Promotion of  
Communities, Families, and Children



**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

## The humble bumblebee a victim

**D**id you know that we are in the midst of the sixth mass die-off or extinction of life on earth? The last mass extinction event was 65 million years ago, when an estimated 78% of all species died off. It most likely was caused by an asteroid hitting the Earth in what is now Mexico and may have been compounded by volcanism. This time the extinction is caused by us.

Scientists say that climate change, habitat destruction, pollution and industrial agriculture are contributing to the die-off. Most of us don't notice when a species disappears, especially the smaller ones like insects, unless it intersects with our lives in some helpful way, like the American bumblebee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*).

When was the last time that you saw a fuzzy black and yellow bumblebee? I think it has been awhile since I last saw one, and I am not alone, because the American bumblebee is disappearing. In the last two decades, the insect's population has declined by nearly 90 percent, due to a combination of threats, including habitat loss, pesticides and diseases. It may have vanished from eight states. States with the most significant dip in bee numbers have the largest increase in the use



of pesticides like neonicotinoids, insecticides, and fungicides. Pesticides like neonicotinoids harm the bumblebee's natural homing system, disrupt their communication strategies, and weaken their immune systems, reports [Live Science](#).

Every schoolchild knows that bumblebees are important pollinators for our gardens and crops. The demand for their services is a big business for agriculture for pollinating berries, peppers and hothouse tomatoes.

They used to be everywhere, and because they were so slow-moving as they went about their business, they were easy and fun to watch. But now they are rapidly disappearing. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed a rule that says that they could qualify for the Endangered Species List and are spending a year reviewing their status. If listed there would be guidance and rules on what we need to do to save them.

The American Bumblebee is one of

many species that are in trouble because of us, and I include myself. We need to learn to live on this planet with all of God's creation. We have a bad habit of seeing ourselves separate and apart from nature, but we aren't. God asked us to care for his creation, and not doing this has put us on a dangerous path.

We are living in the sixth great mass extinction. The past five extinctions weren't caused by humans, but this one is solely because of our selfishness and short-term thinking. We are using up more than our share of resources. We are causing the extinction of thousands of living things. We are changing the climate in a way that is endangering our own survival.

Maybe it is time to think about why God asked us to take care of his creation.

## Caring for Creation Notes



By  
Pam McVety,  
Presbytery  
Stewardship  
of Creation  
Enabler  
(pammcvety  
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*"We have a bad habit of seeing ourselves separate and apart from nature, but we aren't."*

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## The Panhandle Presbyterian

**Save the date (or visit <http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/events-calendars/>)**

<u>This month</u>	<u>Looking ahead</u>
<i>Thursday, September 1 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT</i>	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)
<i>Monday, September 5</i>	Labor Day – Presbytery office closed
<i>Friday, September 9</i>	Disciplefest registration deadline
<i>Saturday, September 10 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT</i>	Committee on Representation (CR)
<i>Tuesday, September 13 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT</i>	Committee on Ministry
<i>Wednesday, September 14 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT</i>	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)
<i>Saturday, September 17</i>	<b>Disciplefest, Dogwood Acres Retreat Center and Summer Camp</b>
<i>Monday, September 19 4 p.m. CDT/ 5 p.m. EDT</i>	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)
<i>Tuesday, September 20 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT</i>	Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)
<i>Tuesday, September 20</i>	October Panhandle Presbyterian submissions deadline
<i>Monday – Wednesday, September 26 – 28</i>	<u><a href="#">Stewardship Kaleidoscope</a></u> , Savannah, GA/online
<i>Tuesday, September 27 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT</i>	Committee on New Congregational Development (CNCD)
<i>Wednesday, September 28 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	CMO Racial Justice Subcommittee
<i>Thursday, September 29 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT</i>	Coordinating and Planning Commission
	<i>Saturday, October 1 11 a.m. CDT/ Noon EDT</i> Lauren Scott's Ordination, Trinity, Pensacola
	<i>Wednesday, October 5</i> The Future of Ministry, Dogwood Acres
	<i>Thursday, October 6 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT</i> Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)
	<i>Saturday, September 10 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT</i> Committee on Representation (CR)
	<i>Wednesday, October 12 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT</i> Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)
	<i>Monday, October 17 4 p.m. CDT/ 5 p.m. EDT</i> Committee on Educational Resources (CER)
	<i>Tuesday, October 18 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT</i> Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)
	<i>Thursday, October 20</i> November Panhandle Presbyterian submissions deadline
	<i>Tuesday, October 23 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT</i> Fall Stated Presbytery Meeting, 1st, Quincy Registration begins at 8 a.m. CDT/9 a.m. EDT
	<i>Wednesday, October 26 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i> CMO Racial Justice Subcommittee
	<i>Sunday, October 30 – Monday, November 1</i> Evangelism Conference, Montreat Conference Center

**weeKirk**  
CONFERENCE

**"Bearing Much Fruit"**

October 17-19, 2022

<https://montreat.org/events/wee-kirk-22>