

**Minutes of Summer Stated Presbytery Meeting  
at Grace Presbyterian Church, Panama City  
August 23, 2022**

The Presbytery of Florida, Inc., of the Synod of South Atlantic of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met at Grace Presbyterian Church, Panama City, FL, for a Stated Meeting on Tuesday, August 23, 2022.

	Present	Absent	Total
Ruling Elders:			
- Session Commissioners	19	21	40
- Other Continuing Members (RE committee chairs {4}; RE officers {2}; RE educators {1})	7	3	10
- CLP/CRE	1	3	4
Total Ruling Elders	27	27	54
Ministers of Word and Sacrament	27	15	42
Total Present and Absent	54	42	96
Congregations Represented	17	20	37

**MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT PRESENT (27):**

*Michael Askew*, Mark Broadhead, Brad Clayton, *Brant Copeland*, Chris Erde, Stephen Graves, Hugh Hamilton, *Gene Harris*, *James Huffaker*, Sun Kim, William Lamont, Lisa Martin, Roy Martin, A.J. Mealor, Linda Pitts, Emily Proctor, Robert Quiring, *Greta Reed*, *Steve Rhodes*, Erin Rosica, Eric Spoon, *James Stansbury*, Sheldon Steen, John Stringer, Rob Sugg, *Carol Wood*, Joan Wooten  
(italics = HR)

**MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT ABSENT (6/9):**

**Excused Ministers:** Mathew Frease, Raymond Guterman, John Kelsay, Taylor Phillips, Kim Stavenau, Trinity Whitley  
**Unexcused Ministers:** Casey Aldridge, Mel Baars O'Malley, Robert Bohnsack, Tae Ho Cheong, John Cole, Tai Cole, Jordan Goodwin, Luis Ocasio Torres, Pamela Phillips

**RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (19):**

**Blountstown, First – unexcused**  
**Chipley, First – Kevin Russell**  
**Crestview, First – James Gaylord, Jr.**  
**Defuniak Springs, Bethel – unexcused**  
**Defuniak Springs, Euchee Valley – Tommy Yates**  
**Defuniak Springs, First – Vivian Powell**  
**Destin, First – unexcused**  
**Fort Walton Beach, First – Fran Goodall**  
**Fort Walton Beach, Korean - unexcused**  
**Freeport, Freeport – unexcused**  
**Gretna, Gretna – excused**  
**Gulf Breeze, Gulf Breeze – excused**  
**Havana, First – unexcused**  
**Laurel Hill, Laurel Hill – excused**  
**Lynn Haven, First – Kathy Welsh**  
**Marianna, First – unexcused**

34 **Milton, First – unexcused**  
35 **Monticello, First - unexcused**  
36 **Navarre, Navarre – unexcused**  
37 **Panama City Beach, Gulf Beach – David Balmer**  
38 **Panama City, Grace – Linda Lee Fraser**  
39 **Panama City, Parkway – Linda Banacasa**  
40 **Panama City, St. Andrews – unexcused**  
41 **Pensacola, First – Susan Byram (signed in; no form)**  
42 **Pensacola, Korean – unexcused**  
43 **Pensacola, Northminster – Pam Nulty**  
44 **Pensacola, Trinity – excused, excused**  
45 **Quincy, First – Bennett Chesser, Lisa Wilder**  
46 **Red Bay, Red Bay – excused**  
47 **Sawdust, Woodland – Mary Jo Butler**  
48 **Tallahassee, Christ – Jack Frazee**  
49 **Tallahassee, Faith – Lew Shelley, Chip Jennings**  
50 **Tallahassee, Fellowship – excused**  
51 **Tallahassee, First – Norma Meier**  
52 **Tallahassee, Lafayette – Sandra Herrington**  
53 **Tallahassee, Trinity United – unexcused**  
54 **Wewahitchka, First – excused**

55 **Sessions not represented:**

56 **Excused Churches (7):**

57 Gretna; Gulf Breeze; Laurel Hill; Pensacola Trinity; Red Bay; Tallahassee, Fellowship; Wewahitchka

58 **Unexcused Churches (13):**

59 Blountstown, First; DeFuniak Springs, Bethel; Destin, First; Korean First, Fort Walton Beach; Freeport;  
60 Havana, First; Marianna, First; Milton, First; Monticello, First; Navarre; Panama City, St. Andrews;  
61 Pensacola, Korean; Tallahassee, Trinity United.

62 **CONTINUING MEMBERS:**

63 **CREs present (1):**

64 Joanne Kublik

65 **CREs absent (4):**

66 Tonya Fernandes; Alan House (excused); Larry Plank; Greg Seltzer (excused)

67 **Christian Educators with voice and vote present (1):**

68 Lisa Wilder

69 **Christian Educators with voice present (1):** Christy Williams

70 **Presbytery Staff Members:** Melissa Willis – Administrator; Ben Powell – Dogwood Acres Director;

71 Denise Vandiver (RE) – Accountant/Treasurer

72 **Officers/Team Chairs:** Vicki Bell – Presbyterian Women; Jeannie Dixon – Stated Clerk (RE); Don Mowat

73 (RE) – Vice-Moderator; Glenn Hodges (RE) – Committee on Representation; Leslie Yandle (RE) –

74 Committee on Nominations; Esther Moring (RE) – Committee on Educational Resources

75 **Visitors:** Erin Rugh, Tallahassee, Faith; Pat Farrell; Tallahassee, Faith; Ruth Reynolds, Tallahassee, Faith;

76 Rich Kangas, Lynn Haven, First; Bradley Thoreson, Lynn Haven, First; Russell Nulty, Pensacola,

77 Northminster; Chris Rollins, Fort Walton Beach; Sherl Morden, Panama City, Parkway; Rich Clubb,

78 Panama City, Gulf Beach; Kathy Powell, Quincy, First; Gerry Yandle, Pensacola, First; Clark Simmons,

79 Board of Pensions.

80 **Visiting Teaching Elders:** Joyce Lieberman, Synod of South Atlantic Executive/Stated Clerk

81 **OPENING PRAYER, QUORUM, DOCKET**

82 Vice-Moderator Don Mowat called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM CDT/10:00 AM EDT. A quorum (ten  
83 Ministers of Word and Sacrament and ten elders, representing at least ten member congregations) was  
84 present, and General Presbyter Roy Martin opened the meeting with prayer. Presbytery approved the docket  
85 as presented by Stated Clerk Jeannie Dixon.

86 **WELCOME: Pastor Eric Spoon** welcomed the presbytery to the host church, Grace Presbyterian Church,  
87 and gave instructions for the day's activity, meals, and facilities.

88 **INTRODUCTIONS:** First-time ruling elders, teaching elders, corresponding members, and visitors were  
89 introduced.

90 **MORNING WORSHIP** The Rev. Erin Rugh, newly-called Associate Pastor for Youth and families at  
91 Faith Presbyterian Church – Tallahassee, led worship assisted by The Rev Mark Broadhead and Mr. Brad  
92 Thoreson.

93 The worship and Ms. Rugh's sermon, "I Am Your neighbor," focused on Luke 10:25-37, The Good  
94 Samaritan.

95 Using humorous yet poignant illustrations of people discovering their connections with others by church  
96 membership or shared communities, Ms. Rugh explored how literal geographic neighbors come to realize  
97 their shared needs and mutual understanding. Expanding your circle to include unfamiliar people expands  
98 your understanding of "neighbor." Speaking of a Tennessee potter whose coffee mugs grace the homes of  
99 30,000 customers, Ms. Rugh shared how the bond of coffee klatch neighbors sharing a cup of coffee invites  
100 time to share my porch, share my story, my life, my community, which by God's grace become invitations  
101 to share my Christ, ...i.e., OUR Christ, OUR lives, OUR faith, OUR hope....our SHARED hope and  
102 community.

103 **MINISTRY REPORTS**

104 **Partner Reports:**

105 **Clark Simmons, Board of Pensions Senior Consultant for Southeastern United States:**

106 Medical dues have increased, and annual enrollments October – November for start January 2023 will  
107 increase for pastors from 27% to 29% of effective salary, for pension and medical dues total 39%. The "Call  
108 to Health" program reduces co-pay for those employees qualifying with 1000 points earned. The Pension  
109 plan is doing well, with \$1.42 in hand for every \$1.00 needed to fully cover participants. The Board of  
110 Pensions beats or matches any investment plan entity in America. BOP has two years cash on hand. BOP  
111 has survived the COVID pandemic well, both fiscally and in retaining personnel.

112 **Rev. Joyce Lieberman, Synod of South Atlantic Executive/Stated Clerk:** Joyce is retiring October 2022.  
113 General Presbyter Roy Martin celebrated Rev. Lieberman's service with a humorous but sincere resolution  
114 of thanks recognizing her service to the PC(USA), the General Assembly, and the Synod. Presbytery  
115 appreciated her with a standing ovation. Rev. Lieberman then thanked the presbytery and highlighted  
116 leadership initiatives in the Synod and the upcoming February 24-25 leadership conference at Epworth by  
117 The Sea, St. Simon's Island, GA.

118 **STAFF REPORTS:**

119 **REPORT FROM STATED CLERK: Jeannie Dixon**

120 Annual Necrology Reminder: To facilitate the submission of names for the annual Necrology report, an  
121 online form has been created. Information may be submitted throughout the year for deaths between  
122 October 1 and September 30. Please go to the form <http://bit.ly/pofnecro> to complete the information. A  
123 reminder will be sent in October. This is for reporting the death of ruling elders and teaching elders. The  
124 receipt of the information via email in October will be requested for those not submitting via the form.

125 **Meetings/Activities**

126 Ms. Dixon attended the Synod Presbytery Leader Forum at Epworth-by-the-sea with colleagues from the  
127 Synod. Please “save the date” for the Association of Small Congregation gathering at Epworth on March 2-  
128 5, 2023.

129 In addition to attending presbytery committee and staff meetings, Ms. Dixon also completed all first-of-the-  
130 year record activities for GA and attended a Synod GA Commissioner meet-and-greet on Zoom.

131 Ms. Dixon attended “The Story of Trinity United” meeting held at Faith and recommends the video, to  
132 which she will send the online link.

133 As our General Assembly Commissioner, Ms. Dixon attended in person 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Committee  
134 Meetings (assigned to Theology, Worship, and Education, observed several other committees, and fully  
135 participated in the online 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly July 5-9.

136 As information for the CPC committee Ms. Dixon has compiled a presbytery attendance chart of minister  
137 members and churches for 2020, 2021, and 2022.

138 Host for the Oct. 25, 2022 presbytery meetings is First, Quincy. Dates for 2023 presbytery meetings have  
139 not yet been set by the CPC.

140 Ms. Dixon is working with the Relational Ministry Team of the Committee on Ministry to schedule the  
141 review of session minutes.

142 **REPORT FROM GENERAL PRESBYTER: Roy Martin**

143 To-date in 2022, Rev. Dr. Martin has worshipped with most of the congregations of the presbytery and  
144 preached at several of them. Presbytery committees are working well, and most are back to in-person  
145 meetings at the Presbytery Office at Dogwood Acres. Rev. Dr. Martin acknowledged and appreciated the  
146 behind-the scenes work of pastors, elders, and volunteers that allow the work of the presbytery to thrive.

147 **REPORT FROM PRESBYTREY TREASURES: Denise Vandiver**

148 Ms. Vandiver reviewed the chart of churches’ shared support and pledges. To-date we are doing well. We  
149 have \$33,000 of reserves to cover expenditures; we expect expenses to end over budget. Insurance costs  
150 have exceeded budget.

151 **REPORT FROM DOGWOOD ACRES: Ben Powell**

152 DWA had an abbreviated camp season, with only two children and youth camp weeks. Attendance was  
153 down considerably in 2022; we hope for better attendance in 2023. Fall 2022 retreat bookings are above  
154 past years, with both repeat and new clients. DWA is financially sound now. Christy Williams, Tallahassee  
155 – First, is now the Interim Director of Dogwood Acres.

156 Ben Powell then spoke of his battle with pancreatic cancer and his need to retire September 30. Ben thanks  
157 the presbytery for the love, support, and outreach to Ben and his wife by members of presbytery and  
158 witnessed his faith in God’s power to sustain us in all times and experiences. Sharing his faith journey, Ben  
159 shared how his roundabout way of coming to Dogwood Acres opened up the camp as a mission field in  
160 which he was privileged to share God’s love and the value of the church and the camp partnership as  
161 ministry opportunities.

162 Ben then affirmed the value of the ministries of Dogwood Acres and thanked people in the presbytery who  
163 have blessed Ben and his wife. Brant Copeland then presented the following “Resolution of Thanks for the  
164 Life and Service of Ben Powell”, which was adopted by the presbytery:

165 **Resolution of Thanks for the Ministry of Benjamin Wayne Powell**

166 **Whereas** in the year of our Lord 2011 a forester named Benjamin Wayne Powell visited Dogwood Acres  
167 Retreat Center and Summer Camp to examine the laurel oak trees which were at the time both numerous  
168 and treacherous; and

169 **Whereas** that same Ben Powell surveyed the property and discovered a goldmine of 120 acres of planted  
170 pines ready for harvest; and

171 **Whereas** in his calling as a forester Ben Powell has provided invaluable counsel and advice regarding the  
172 stewardship of Dogwood Acres; and

173 **Whereas** in his calling as a presbyter Ben Powell has poured out his servant’s heart for the ministry that  
174 takes place at Dogwood Acres; and

175 **Whereas** Ben Powell joined the Committee on Dogwood Acres in the fall of 2011, and was made Chair six  
176 months later; and

177 **Whereas** Ben Powell was called to be Director of Dogwood acres in January of 2016; and

178 **Whereas** Ben Powell’s outgoing personality and unpretentious ways have won friends for Dogwood Acres  
179 throughout the Florida panhandle and beyond; and

180 **Whereas** Ben Powell’s unrelenting dedication has brought Dogwood Acres through two existential crises:  
181 Hurricane Michael and the Covid 19 pandemic; and

182 **Whereas** certain “Ben-isms” are unforgettable, such as *“The view of the valley depends on which*  
183 *mountaintop you’re standing on,”* and *“More simple, more better;”* and

184 **Whereas** there are Ben Powell stories to go with every Ben-ism, none of which is brief and all of which are  
185 worth hearing on some other occasion; and

186 **Whereas** Ben Powell’s love for Dogwood Acres and vision for its ministry have touched countless lives and  
187 granted us a foretaste of the Kingdom of God,

188 **Therefore, be it resolved** that the Presbytery of Florida declares its gratitude to the Triune God for the life  
189 and ministry of God’s servant Benjamin Wayne Powell; and

190 **Be it further resolved** that the Presbytery of Florida seeks God’s gifts of wholeness, strength, and joy for  
191 God’s servant Ben both now and throughout all his days; and

192 **Be it further resolved** that this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Presbytery of Florida at its  
193 regular meeting on August 23, 2022.

194 **General Assembly Commissioner Reports:** Jeannie Dixon, Ruling Elder Commissioner; Brad Clayton,  
195 Teaching Elder Commissioner; and Ryan Obray, Young Adult Advisory Delegate.  
196 Jeannie Dixon: Ruling Elder Commissioner Report

197 **Elder Commissioner Report: Jeannie Dixon:**

198 I was assigned to the Theology, Worship, and Education committee (TWE). That committee’s role was  
199 “To prepare recommendations for consideration by the plenary General Assembly for items of business  
200 relating to amendments to the Book of Order section W, theological education, higher education, and  
201 published materials (including Presbyterian Publishing Corporation).”

202 Prior to traveling to Louisville there was extensive training on various topics that needed to be 8 completed  
203 prior to arriving in Louisville. There were 4 modules for the training:

- 204 • Welcome to the 225th General Assembly!
  - 205 o This provided a general overview of GA plenary and an introduction to the technology
  - 206 to be used
- 207 • Preparing for the Business of the GA
  - 208 o This provided an overview of the shared values guiding the GA
  - 209 o an introduction to Special Committee and Task Force reports
  - 210 o an introduction to Advisory and Advocacy Committees
  - 211 o parliamentary procedure basics
  - 212 o introduction to GA agencies
  - 213 o introduction to PC-Biz. (There was further training on this tool)
- 214 • Leader Training

- 215 o This provided information about the "Public Hearing" and "Commissioner Resolution"  
216 processes for this hybrid assembly, how various advisory and advocacy committees 22 support  
217 deliberations and discernment, and more.
- 218 o It also provided information on how 'Choice points and equity prime' would be used in  
219 committee meetings and in plenary. (See last page of this report)
- 220 • Getting Ready
- 221 o This included information on the Travel Expense policy
- 222 o It also provided information on the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

223 Our Synod had 2 separate Zoom "meet and greets" for us to meet other commissioners from our Synod  
224 who would be attending GA. In both meetings we had break out groups by "meeting week". This 30 would  
225 help us as we travel to recognize one another. It was very valuable!

226 TWE was scheduled for the first week, meaning we arrived on Friday, June 17. On Saturday June 18,  
227 we had opening worship (with half of the group in the chapel and the other half in the main assembly  
228 room), followed by 3 plenary meetings. For the first few items of the first meeting, only those present  
229 in Louisville were able to constitute the quorum and vote. A vote to validate actions taken at the 224<sup>th</sup>  
230 GA and to allow Hybrid/online meetings was taken. Once approved, the commissioners not present in  
231 Louisville were "unfenced" and allowed to vote. The 3<sup>rd</sup> plenary of the day was election of the co-  
232 moderators. There were 2 teams running for election, and the new co-moderators were elected on the first  
233 ballot. The Rev. Ruth Santana-Grace (Executive Presbyter from the Presbytery of Philadelphia) and Rev.  
234 Shavon Starling-Louis (senior pastor at Memorial Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC) were elected co-  
235 moderators of the 225th General Assembly.

236 Sunday included a "Juneteenth" worship to be the ending to the city of Louisville's Juneteenth celebration  
237 weekend.

238 Monday, bright and early, committee meetings began in the Presbyterian Center. The 4 committees had  
239 staggered start times, staggered break times, staggered lunch times, and staggered ending times. This was to  
240 help promote social distancing and Covid protocol. Masks were worn at all times in the building. Even  
241 though we were all physically in the same room, some advisors or overture advocates were not.

242 We used Zoom, which had translations for English, Spanish and Korean for all, and used PC-Biz for voting.  
243 Some committee members were not native English speakers; thus the translation was available from their  
244 language to English. Committee days ended by 5:00 each day so the building could be cleaned and  
245 sanitized for the next day.

246 The schedule continued on Tuesday with Wednesday ending shortly after lunch, when we completed all of  
247 our business.

248 I returned home on Thursday and, using the livestream and PC-Biz, observed committee meetings for the  
249 rest of the week and the following week. All committees ended by July 2.

250 Plenary meetings started at 11:00 am (Eastern) with worship at 10:00 each day July 5-9. Lunch break was  
251 around 2:30 (Eastern) with dinner break around 7:00 each night. However, the meetings went until 11:00  
252 pm (with one lasting until 11:45). That made for very long days! But the schedule was attempting to  
253 accommodate those connecting in the western time zones.

254 Some of the highlights of the TWE business was approving a committee to write a new confession for the  
255 denomination. Another item from this committee was approval of the creation of worship resources for the  
256 military and for first responders.

257 There are some 30 items that will be coming to the presbyteries for vote this fall to make changes to the  
258 Book of Order. As soon as we get that information, we will send it right out.

259 A summary of GA actions is available at <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2022/7/12/summary-general65>  
260 [assembly-actions/](#)

261 • An overture calling for the divestment from 5 oil and gas companies (Chevron, ExxonMobil, Marathon  
262 Petroleum, Phillips and Valero Energy) was approved. Item <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3000939>  
263 included a “Metrics Guideline” for scoring energy companies. The Rationale provides interesting  
264 information on this.

265 • Approved a per capita rate of \$9.85/member for 2023 and \$9.80/member for 2024.

266 • Approved an overture allowing the church to declare itself a “sanctuary and accompaniment church”.

267 • Much discussion on Gun Violence was held, with approval of a motion to renew its commitment to end  
268 gun violence by developing a 10-year campaign “The decade to end gun violence, 2022-2032)”

269 • There was also a lot of discussion on race and gender justice concerns.

270 o “A Resolution Addressing the Lack of Installed Pastoral Leadership in People of Color Congregations in  
271 the PC(USA) — From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee” was approved.

272 o Also approved was “On Offering an Apology to African Americans for the Sin of Slavery and Its  
273 Legacy.”

274 o Approval was given to formation of a new special committee to expose white supremacy with the  
275 denomination and make recommendations for improvement.

276 The assembly voted to change the format for the 226<sup>th</sup> GA (2024). The committee meetings will be held  
277 online with in-person plenaries in Salt Lake City, Utah. The plenary dates are 06/29/2024 – 86 07/06/2024.  
278 The committee meeting dates have not yet been finalized.

279 A number of items were approved in changing the Standing Rules of the Assembly. The General Assembly  
280 approved changes to the Standing Rules (STAN22) that alter requirements for those serving as Young Adult  
281 Advisory Delegates to the assembly. YAADs must be:

282 • An active member of a PC(USA) congregation or participant in a new worshipping community or  
283 immigrant fellowship that has a relationship with a presbytery

284 • Between 18 and 23 years of age on the day the assembly convenes.

285 A couple of changes were made to the Annual Church Statistical report.

286 • There is a change in the age groupings. The new groups are:

287 17 and under

288 18-25

289 26-50

290 41-55

291 56-70

292 71 and over

293 When it asks about youth, the groups are:

294 Age 4 and under

295 Elementary School (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

296 Middle School (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

297 High School (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

298 • Changes to how financial questions are asked. These are:

299 o Budget figures

300  Budgeted income

301  Budgeted expense

302 o Receipts

303  Regular Contributions

304  Investment Income

305  Capital Building Funds

306  Bequests

307  Subsidy or Aid

308  Other Income

- 309 o Expenditures
- 310 □ Local Program
- 311 □ Local Mission
- 312 □ Capital Expenditure
- 313 □ Investment Expense
- 314 □ Per Capita Apportionments
- 315 □ Other Mission

316 I will plan Zoom sessions again for completing the survey. Those will probably be in January 2023 (just  
317 before the survey opens) and then just before it closes, probably in February.

318 There are a number of new committees to be formed along with the existing ones. I would urge each of you  
319 to prayerfully consider volunteering to serve. More information can be found at:

320 <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/committees/nominations/Info-faq/#:~:text=A%3A%20The%20General%20Assembly%20Nominating%20Committee%20%28GANC%29%20makes,elder%2Fminister%20can%20apply%20and%20be%20considered%20for%20service.>

323 You should also visit <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/committees/nominations/> and fill out the form in the  
324 nominations portal: <https://ganominations.pcusa.org/> The current vacancies are listed there. The  
325 committees to be nominated by the co-moderators will be posted by August 31. Watch for more  
326 information on this!

327 Read more news of the 225th General Assembly here (<https://www.pcusa.org/>)

328 If you wish to view the worship services, plenary meetings or committee meetings, visit [https://ga-](https://ga-pcusa.org/video/)  
329 [pcusa.org/video/](https://ga-pcusa.org/video/)

330 I found it very helpful to observe several other committees after my committee week was complete. This  
331 process helped me understand some of the issues discussed by the committees in preparation for the vote in  
332 plenary.

333 The process of online plenary was very isolating as we did not gather as a group. Some presbyteries  
334 (generally larger than we are) did do this and found it helpful.

335 I appreciate the opportunity to serve as ruling elder commissioner to the 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

336 Respectfully submitted,  
337 Jeannie Dixon

338

## **We each have a choice... to be a voice for equity and inclusion.**

When I see or hear someone being treated in a manner contrary to our values and rights as members of this committee, I can...

- Send a private message to the speaker
- Ask for recognition to pause and address the issue in the moment
- Speak with the moderator at the break to address later

Am I using the meeting tools to maintain my own power?

Provisional List of Rights of Members of a GA committee underlying the equity primes card:

- Right to be recognized by moderator
- Right to disagree and voice disagreement
- Right not to be interrupted and finish a thought
- Right to vote, depending on status
- Right to speak in all of our various accents and dialects
- Right to request an interpreter
- Right to feel equal to others at the table
- Right not to be a cradle Presbyterian and have zero connection to the historical church

## **GROUP/COMMITTEE EQUITY PRIME: QUESTIONS BEFORE DISCUSSION/DECISIONS**

- Why are we trying to make the decision now?
- Do we have enough information to make an equitable/inclusive decision?
  - Have we heard directly from those who will be most impacted?
  - Have we thought through the impact to the whole church?
- What additional voices/information do we need to make an equitable/inclusive decision?
- What information would lead to more equity?
- Have we honored what's on our cards to honor each others' rights and check our own use of power?
- Is this decision being made with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

### **339 Minister Commissioner Report: Brad Clayton**

340 Thank you for the opportunity to serve as a commissioner for the 225 General Assembly. The Assembly  
341 tackled a tremendous amount of work over the course of three weeks. For the first time in the history of the  
342 church the General Assembly adopted a hybrid model for the meeting. The committees met for three weeks  
343 in person, followed by the plenary sessions that were completely online. For a summary of the actions of  
344 the GA please see <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2022/7/12/summary-general-assembly-actions/>

345 **Willing to Face Conflict:** The General Assembly did not avoid controversial topics of the day, but  
346 received motions involving Israel and Palestine, abortion, fossil fuel divestment, gun control, racial justice,  
347 gender identity justice, war in Ukraine, immigration and sanctuary churches. While some of the  
348 amendments to these issues faced close votes, the motions themselves, amended or not, passed with broad  
349 agreement from the body.

350 **Commissions, task forces, and special committees:** The Assembly created several new committees and  
351 task forces to research and explore on-going issues to be addressed at the next general assembly. A few of  
352 the new task forces include

353 \*Task Force to rewrite the Standing Rules of the GA

354 A special committee to write new confession to propose to next assembly

355 Task Force to form a new non-geographic presbytery of Korean churches on the West Coast \*Task Force to  
356 explore theology and practice of ordination to ordered ministry for Ruling Elders

357 \*Commission to merge PMA and OGA.

358 These special committees will make a report to the 226 General Assembly and nearly all of them had 23  
359 budget implications.

360 **Restructure:** The Assembly voted to merge the Office of the General Assembly with the Presbyterian  
361 Mission Agency. A special commission was formed to oversee this merger. Funding was a major factor in  
362 this decision. While the OGA only has one mainstream of funding (per capita), PMA has several streams of  
363 funding that will hopefully help with financial concerns for the future.

364 **Future Meetings:** The Assembly voted that the GA 226 would also be a hybrid model, with the  
365 committees meeting on-line and the plenary meeting in person in Salt Lake City. While there was  
366 considerable agreement that meeting in-person was preferred, budget implications may require some portion  
367 of online meetings in the future.

368 **Personal Reflection:** I found the plenary work online to be difficult, especially considering the gravity of  
369 the motions that we discussed. I find it fascinating that the online platforms used to hold us together during  
370 Covid, can now keep us isolated.

371 Respectfully submitted: Dr. Brad Clayton

372 **Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) Report: Ryan Obray**

373 This is my second time serving as a Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD), once online and now  
374 once in person. I attended the first week of the General Assembly in Louisville, KY, to witness the  
375 opening of the GA. During the first week, I was able to participate in person in the state of the church report,  
376 the co-moderator election, and a beautiful Juneteenth service at the Presbyterian Center.

377 The first night was our longest night as we began the work of GA. During one of the first sessions, we  
378 watched a lot, and I mean a lot, of videos that describe some of the partnerships and organizations the  
379 Presbyterian church has. These videos were eye-opening to see all that we do as a denomination.

380 I served on the Polity committee, which dealt with amendments concerning the Book of Order. While  
381 some of the conversations were confusing, overwhelming, and felt unnecessarily long, I enjoyed seeing  
382 people's passion for the Book of Order and the Presbyterian Church. The in-person experience proved  
383 to be much more engaging as we could serve on committees, have discussions, break bread together,  
384 rekindle old friendships, and make new connections, all while serving the greater Presbyterian church and  
385 God's Kingdom.

386 Respectfully submitted,

387 Ryan Obray

388 **EDUCATIONAL TIME: Racial Justice Subcommittee and Committee on Educational Resources**  
389 **(CER)**

390 **ENGAGING YOUR SHADOW: RACIAL HEALING IN THIS PRESENT MOMENT:**

391 **Dr. Catherine Meeks, Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, Atlanta,**  
392 **GA**

393 Ruth Reynolds, Racial Justice Subcommittee member, introduced Dr. Catherine Meeks, who spoke of her  
394 50 years of teaching, speaking, reflecting on racial healing. Drawing on Romans 7:15, *the good I want to do*  
395 *I do not do, and the wrong I don't want to do, I do*, Dr. Meeks asked us to consider times when we find  
396 ourselves in conflict with our best intentions. What is the source of the problem, and what is the desired  
397 outcome? Fixing race is not about fixing something “out there,” external, other people; rather you must  
398 interrogate yourself and ask, “WHY do I think that, act like that, react like that?”

399 Speaking of our nation’s polarity, and division by race, gender, class, creed, we must admit we don’t know  
400 how to talk about it, or resist talking about it. As people of faith do we believe, truly BELIEVE, that God  
401 created all people, loves all people the same? Corrects, calls, claims, cherishes all people the same? Then  
402 why do we not reflect that in our treatment of others?  
403 We must interrogate ourselves: “What are MY conflicts? Why? What can I change? How? Am I willing to  
404 change?” Looking for wellness, health of our world, begins with self-interrogation. What is in your heart?  
405 Who lives in your head? Do we want to live in community or in chaos? If in community, are we willing to  
406 give people the benefit of the doubt? Do not project onto others your expectations, your ignorance, your  
407 imagination, your prejudice. Stop! Learn and reflect.

408 Research and reflect on “projection.” Alert yourself to your tendency to project . Be open to entertain new  
409 information, and to adjust to the new reality, new understanding. Don’t be afraid of the truth. You may  
410 experience some pain before the truth sets you free, but the truth WILL set your free.

411 “The SHADOW” is the unknown part of ourselves, where projections, bias, ignorance, fear , lives. In  
412 projection and fear we make up stories to handle, to hide, or even to sustain our fears and prejudices. To  
413 face our fears, to face our projections, is to learn what and who taught us that fear, that anger, that  
414 resentment, that resistance, that...(name your poison).... Then we must ask, “why? Why me? Why NOT  
415 me? What now?”

416 We must learn that “difference does not mean lack of value.” We give value to celebrity and devalue  
417 poverty, lack of education. We must learn to be curious about people. What makes them tick? Lack of  
418 understanding leads to assumptions, bullying, prejudice. Fear of change is fear of loss...of control, of  
419 privilege, of position, of status. Where will we all end up? It is OK to say, “I don’t know.” Change requires  
420 humility and vulnerability, and risk of rejection. But CHANGE can, and must, make things better than  
421 where we are now.

422 **For more information:** explore *Engaging Your Shadow: Racial Healing in This Present Moment*  
423 with Dr. Catherine Meeks, Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing  
424 (<https://www.centerforracialhealing.org/>)

425 Prior to the center's opening, Dr. Meeks chaired its  
426 precursor, Beloved Community: Commission for  
427 Dismantling Racism for the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta.  
428 A sought-after teacher and workshop leader, Catherine  
429 brings four decades of experience to the work of  
430 transforming the dismantling racism work in Atlanta. The  
431 core of her work has been with people who have been  
432 marginalized because of economic status, race, gender or  
433 physical ability as they pursue liberation, justice and  
434 access to resources that can help lead them to health,  
435 wellness and a more abundant life. This work grows out of  
436 her understanding of her call to the vocation of teacher as  
437 well as her realization that all of humanity is one family  
438 which God desires to unite.

439 Catherine is the retired Clara Carter Acree Distinguished



440 Professor of Socio-Cultural Studies from Wesleyan College and Founding Executive Director of the Lane  
441 Center for Community Engagement and Service. She characterizes herself as a midwife to the soul of her  
442 students and workshop participants. She has spent many years sharing the insights that she gained from her  
443 pursuit of the truth. She has had many great teachers including her sons, the Bible, Jungian psychology,  
444 cross cultural stories and other books of wisdom. But her greatest teacher is rheumatoid arthritis because it  
445 has forced her to learn many new ways to listen to her body and to pay attention to the messages from her  
446 heart.

447 She is frequently asked to present commentaries on Georgia Public Radio and other radio and television  
448 programs. She is the author of six books and one inspirational CD and is the editor of the bestselling book,  
449 *Living Into God's Dream: Dismantling Racism in America* and co-author of *Passionate for Justice: Ida B  
450 Wells as Prophet for Our Times*. She holds a Masters Degree in Social Work from Clark Atlanta University  
451 and PhD from Emory University.

#### 452 **COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION REPORTS:**

##### 453 **COORDINATING AND PLANNING COMMISSION (CPC): Michael Askew**

454 Upon the CPC recommendation, presbytery approved The Rev. Dr. Ted Land, minister (HR), First  
455 Presbyterian Church of Chipley, to the Committee on Nominations (CN Class of 2024-25).

#### 456 **COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR ACTION/UPDATES**

##### 457 **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM): Joan Wooten**

458 As information the COM reported their approval of

- 459 1. Transfer of Rev. Dan Mitchell (HR) to Flint River Presbytery
- 460 2. Interim Ministry Information Form for Fort Walton Beach-First
- 461 3. Temporary Pulpit Supply Contract for Fort Walton Beach-First (Rev. Jim Rollins-HR)
- 462 4. Temporary Supply Contract for DeFuniak Springs-First (Rev. Steve Rhodes-HR)
- 463 5. The "Restoring Creation" loan application from Tallahassee-Lafayette to the Presbyterian Investment and  
464 Loan Program (PILP) to install solar panels.
- 465 6. The 2022 Terms of Call for Rev. Brad Clayton and Rev. Trinity Whitley (Tallahassee-Faith).
- 466 7. The Request from Rev. Erin Rosica to transfer status to Member-At-Large.
- 467 8. The Ordination examination of Erin Rugh to serve as Associate Pastor for Youth and College Ministry  
468 (Tallahassee-Faith).
- 469 9. Rev. Kwonsoo Cho of the Presbyterian Church of Korea to serve as pulpit supply at Pensacola Korean  
470 Community, and Rev. Sun Kim (Fort Walton Beach, Korean First) to serve as Rev. Cho's mentor.

471 The Committee is introduced Erin Rugh, whose ordination examination was approved on July 26. Erin  
472 presented will present her autobiography, personal faith journey, and her statement of faith, and answered  
473 questions from the floor. She was then welcomed by the presbytery.

474 The Committee recommended and the presbytery approved: **That the Presbytery of Florida approve the  
475 donation of the 150' by 150' lot owned by Gretna Presbyterian Church at Third and Church Streets,  
476 which is adjacent to Gretna Baptist Church and identified as Parcel 2-32-3N4W-0430-00045-0020, to  
477 Gretna Baptist Church, with the condition that the property be limited to church use, and that if at  
478 some point it is not used for church purposes it will revert to Gretna Presbyterian Church.**

479 Background and rationale: In November 2020, the congregation of Gretna Presbyterian Church  
480 approved the recommendation of the session that the above-described parcel be given to Gretna Baptist  
481 Church. The lot is vacant and is not being used by Gretna Presbyterian Church. It sits adjacent to  
482 Gretna Baptist Church at the corner of Third and Church Streets in Gretna. In its discussion on July 12  
483 the Committee on Ministry requested that CRE Alan House contact Gretna Baptist's pastor, David  
484 Warr, to ensure the church's willingness to accept a reversionary clause. Gretna Baptist has agreed that,  
485 if at some point the parcel ceases to be used for church purposes, it will revert to Gretna Presbyterian  
486 Church. At the present time Gretna Baptist plans to use the lot for parking.

487 The Committee reviewed the status of congregations within the Presbytery and the work of the subteams  
488 (Pastor Transition, Relational Ministry, and Temporary Pastoral Leadership).

489 **COMMITTEE ON NEW CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CNCD): A. J. Mealor**

490 Upon motion by CNCD, the presbytery approved that CNCD move forward in establishing a new  
491 worshipping community in the 30A/Hwy. 98 corridor and that the members of CNCD be elected as the PNC  
492 for securing pastoral leadership for this new worshipping community, and that this PNC be trained by and  
493 responsible to the Committee on Ministry as the COM search process requires.

494 **COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS (CN): Leslie Yandle**

495 Upon recommendation of the CN presbytery approved as members of the Committee on Ministry, Class of  
496 2025: Richard Clubb, RE, Panama City Beach – Gulf Beach and RE Pam Nulty, Pensacola – Northminster.

497 **COMMITTEE ON PRESBYTERY ADMINISTRATION (CPA): Brad Clayton**

498 *For information:*

499 Finances: The 2022 Shared Support is slightly below budget for this time of year. We have continued to  
500 balance our expenses with reserves, and it is possible that we will need more reserves than anticipated to  
501 cover our budget for the year. Please see the Treasurer’s Report for details.

502 Personnel: We have instituted a new personnel review program by creating teams of presbyters to support  
503 and 9 evaluate staff members throughout the year. We are continuing to adapt and perfect this process.

504 Property: We have received plans for a new presbytery office building to be built at Dogwood Acres. We  
505 are currently receiving bids. Once the bids are in place, we will make presentations to the presbytery for  
506 review. This project will have to be approved by presbytery before we move forward.

507 *For action:*

508 Upon motion from CPA, presbytery approved the preliminary budget for 2023. This is a working budget  
509 that will allow us to send Shared Support requests to our churches immediately.

510 **COMMITTEE ON CONGREGATIONAL REVITALIZATION (CCR): Mark Broadhead**

511 *For information:*

512 Panama City-Grace, Pensacola-Northminster, Crestview-First, and Milton-First continue to make their way  
513 through the revitalization process. Several more congregations are interested in exploring what the  
514 revitalization process is about.

515 Tallahassee-Lafayette will engage in revitalization perhaps in October of this year.

516 DeFuniak Springs-Bethel is very enthusiastic about their revitalization work thus far. The physical property  
517 is being updated (electric and air conditioning at this point). Members who have been absent from worship  
518 for some time have started to return. Excitement is being generated.

519 **Pastor Seminar:** On Wednesday, October 5, 2022 CCR is hosting a one-day seminar at Dogwood Acres  
520 with Mark Tidsworth, author on church revitalization, exploring ways to do ministry in our congregations in  
521 this rapidly-changing, post-Covid-9 societal setting. Staff from the Presbyterian Foundation will speak about  
522 new ways of receiving and managing offerings.

523 **COMMITTEE ON DOGWOOD ACRES (CDWA): Bill Lamont**

524 Summer camp resumed this summer after being disrupted for two summers because of Covid. This  
525 disruption has impacted camper registration, so we streamlined the number of weeks of summer camp down  
526 to two without a dedicated Einstein camp for special needs campers. We were able to accommodate some of  
527 the special needs campers into our two-week camp program, but we look forward to being able to provide a  
528 dedicated camp for them in the future. Seven counselors were hired this summer, with chaplains and nurses  
529 for both weeks of summer camp. About 70 campers enjoyed a week at Dogwood as a result.

530 The committee was grieved to learn that our director, Ben Powell, was diagnosed with serious health issues  
531 just before the camping season was to begin. Unable to attend to his duties, the committee and others in  
532 presbytery stepped up to help us provide a summer camp program nonetheless. Our thanks to Christy  
533 Williams, who stepped in as interim camp director for the first week, and to Eric Hearn, who took charge

534 during the second week. Ben and his wife, Kathy, play an integral part in the running of Dogwood Acres,  
535 so the committee must move with speed to put leadership in place for the interim. We ask for presbytery's  
536 prayers for Ben and Kathy and for their support as we navigate through the coming months together.

537 Dogwood Acres has a new building on its premises now, close to the main dining hall. This building will be  
538 dedicated storage facility and has been on Ben's wish list for over a decade. There is still some minor  
539 carpentry work to be done. Anyone with building experience who would like to volunteer to help complete  
540 it can contact the chair.

541 The committee remains dedicated to its mission and is moving forward together, trusting in God.

542 **COMMITTEE ON MISSION AND OUTREACH (CMO): Hugh Hamilton**

543 The Anti-Racism *I Stand With You Task Force* has been renamed the Racial Justice Subcommittee and has  
544 come under the CMO for reporting and accountability purposes. Their motto remains, "I Stand with You."  
545 The Anti-Racism Task Force has been tied to both CMO and CER, but the subcommittee feels that, to avoid  
546 confusion, they should come solely under CMO for reporting purposes. The *Racial Justice Subcommittee*  
547 has requested funding in the 2023 CMO budget to provide workshops and events to raise awareness of  
548 racism across the Presbytery. The Rev. Dr. Michael Askew has joined the Racial Justice Subcommittee.

549 The Racial Justice Subcommittee will present at September 17, 2022 Disciplefest a workshop on the impact  
550 of racism on poverty, led by Greta Reed and Debbie Gibson, and at the August 23, 2022 presbytery meeting,  
551 an educational hour via Zoom featuring Dr. Catherine Meeks from the Absalom Jones Center in Atlanta.  
552 Dr. Meeks will present to the group for 45 minutes and allow questions for 15 minutes. The Team will be  
553 available during lunch for those who wish to continue the discussion on Dr. Meeks presentation.

554 Mission Grants. CMO continues to complete guidelines and applications for CHURCH AND  
555 COMMUNITY MISSION GRANTS in lieu of PC(USA) Self Development of People (SDOP) program  
556 applications, as per our conversations at the May 2022 Presbytery meeting at Dogwood Acres. These grants  
557 requests would be endorsed by CMO prior to submission for action/approval by Committee on Presbytery  
558 Administration, using funds from the 10% of the balance in Reserve Funds of presbytery above the  
559 \$650,000 threshold established by CPA and usable to fund "Unbudgeted Presbytery Projects" as approved  
560 the Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA). Source: Presbytery Stated Meeting Minutes - May  
561 21,2022 Report of the Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA).

562 Presbytery International Mission Partnership: Guatemala. CMO continues to seek people involved in  
563 existing Guatemala mission projects or interested in further connections in Guatemala who may join our  
564 CMO's Presbytery of Florida -Presbyterian Women of Guatemala initiative development. July presbytery  
565 newsletter featured article on work and needs of CMO. We especially seek a bilingual English/Spanish  
566 translator. Becky Rose (Freeport) has report on partnership agreement developments and possible  
567 Presbyterian Women and congregational involvements at the August 2022 presbytery meeting.

568 FLAPDAN: Tim Crawford (1<sup>st</sup>, Crestview) now serves on the FLAPDAN Executive Board.  
569 FLAPDAN approved two grants from remaining funds from hurricanes Michael and Irma relief: \$10,84.14  
570 to Peace River Presbytery for unmet needs for the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance and \$7,480.70 to the  
571 Presbytery of Florida for unmet needs for Dogwood Acres Retreat.

572 CMO/FLAPDAN Subcommittee: We have assembled the list of church contacts within the presbytery  
573 sorted by district. In the event of a disaster or other calamity, each church will be contacted by the  
574 presbytery's FLAPDAN board members; Ed Nickinson will contact the east district, Tim Crawford the  
575 central, and George Woodward the west.

576 FLAPDAN and Presbytery Leadership will now 1) create at least an annual event for mid-council  
577 communication, 2) Review, revise and standardize FLAPDAN's "ask" for financial contributions from  
578 presbyteries, 3) Standardize FLAPDAN's board selection and composition: Establish qualifications for

579 board candidates, establish standard process for board recruitment and appointments that establishes who  
580 recruits and who vets candidates, 4) Revise board composition to one rep per presbytery and three at-large  
581 members.

582 Hunger Action Grants. CMO approved a \$5,000.00 grant to First Presbyterian Church, Crestview, to be  
583 used to supply and operate their soup kitchen/food distribution activities. On some occasions, homeless and  
584 transient persons are provided a meal at their weekly Friday meal/food distribution. Hunger Grant  
585 application form and guidelines are on the presbytery website.

586 Vacancies/Needs/Nominations: We need two committee members from West District and two from Central  
587 District. Please suggest people with a passion for missions and service to the Nominating Committee (Leslie  
588 Yandle) and/or to CMO Chair Hugh Hamilton (Pensacola-Trinity).

589 Congregational Mission Liaisons: Forms were distributed and collected at the presbytery meeting to secure  
590 individuals at each congregation who will serve as a communication liaison/contact person to receive  
591 information FROM the CMO and report to the congregation and to report TO CMO stories and updates  
592 from congregations highlighting their mission and service endeavors.

593 **COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION (CR): Glenn Hodges**

594 Elder Yongwoon Shim is a new member of the CR. She replaced Reverend Tae Ho Cheong. She is a  
595 member of the Korean First Presbyterian Church of Fort Walton Beach.

596 Committee member Aracelis Fernandez, from First Presbyterian of Havana, in the Presbytery's East  
597 District, who served in the Class of 2024/25, has resigned, so a new CR member from the East District is  
598 needed.

599 The CR plans to lead the education hour for the October 25, 2022, Presbytery meeting, to encourage  
600 Presbytery members to achieve, accomplish, realize, endorse, and preserve our commitment to  
601 inclusiveness.

602 Elder Yongwoon Shim wrote an article about the history of the Korean First Presbyterian Church of Fort  
603 Walton Beach for the *Panhandle Presbyterian* newsletter. The article appeared in the August 2022 edition.

604 **NEW BUSINESS: Brant Copeland**

605 Upon motion from Brant Copeland, second from the floor, presbytery endorsed Tallahassee - Trinity United  
606 Presbyterian Church's application for a Black Heritage Witness grant. MOTION: That presbytery approve  
607 the request from Trinity United Presbyterian Church to approve their effort to seek a Preserving Black  
608 Churches grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

609 **ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER**

610 The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 1:55 PM CDT/2:55 PM EDT by The Rev. Dr. Roy Martin

611 NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 25, 2022, First, Quincy 9AM Central/10AM Eastern.

612 Minutes respectfully submitted,

613 Hugh Hamilton,  
614 Recording Clerk

615  
616  
617

Don Mowat, Vice Moderator  
Jeannie Dixon, Stated Clerk  
Hugh Hamilton, Recording Clerk