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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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From General Presbyter Roy Martin

It is with very mixed emotions that I tell you I will be retiring from fulltime ministry as your General Presbyter beginning March 1, 2024. Your presbytery voted to approve my retirement at its meeting on October 24th.

I chose March 1 as my retirement date, in part, because I want to be helpful working with committees and the Implementation Task Force responsible for managing the changes that will be coming to our presbytery (more on the actions of presbytery later in this newsletter), and because that date will mark 10 years as a

General Presbyter – four years in Shenandoah Presbytery in Virginia and six years in our wonderful presbytery. Before that, I was a pastor in three different churches over the course of 30 years.

I'm sure I will have more to say at my last presbytery meeting as your General Presbyter in February. For now, I want you to know what an honor and a privilege it has been to serve you. But please know, I'm not going anywhere. I will still be a member of presbytery, and I will be open to serving in other ways as God may call.

As we approach the season of Thanksgiving,

I give thanks to God for all of you, your service to your church and to the presbytery.



The Rev. Dr. Roy Martin

Oh, one more thing – I'm not retired yet, so please sign up to attend either in person or by Zoom my training for church officers on Nov 5th. I would love to have you join us!

Roy

You're invited!

2023-25 Book of Order Workshop With the Rev. Dr. Roy Martin

Purpose: To prepare new and continuing elders, deacons, and trustees for their ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA) through study of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Form of Government in the PCUSA Book of Order.



Attend in person or via Zoom!

Sunday, November 5 • 3 pm CT/4 pm ET

1st Presbyterian Church of Lynn Haven

Register now!

Task Force proposals a primary part of October 24's presbytery meeting



Approximately 70 attendees at the Presbytery's October 24, 2023 Fall Stated Meeting at First Presbyterian Church of Lynn Haven enjoy beautiful, breezy weather and strains of bagpipes played by Church member Kathy McCurdy, shown above at right, upon their arrival.

During the morning worship, First, Lynn Haven pastor the Rev. Lisa Martin, shown below at left, delivers a sermon entitled "The Glimpse", based on Exodus 33:12-23 (*photo courtesy of Jeannie Dixon*). Below at center, Rev. Martin and husband and General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Roy Martin lead the Declaration of Faith. Below at right, the Chancel Choir, led and accompanied by Music Director Brad Thoreson, sings "Shall We Gather at the River."



<https://nextchurch.net/2024-national-gathering/>

NEXT CHURCH NATIONAL GATHERING
ON THE GROUND
 FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA
 APRIL 8-11, 2024



During the meeting’s hour-long Educational Time, the meeting’s participants gather in breakout groups, shown above, to discuss proposals presented by the Strategic Planning Task Force. A summary of their subsequent actions on these proposals can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

At right, Committee on Ministry Chair Rev. Dr. Joan Wooten asks the presbytery to grant Retired status, effective October 15, 2023, to the Rev. Mark Broadhead, who then expresses his appreciation to his devoted wife, Celia, for her support throughout his 43 years of ministry. The presbytery also granted Retired Status to General Presbyterian Roy Martin, effective March 1, 2024.



Register at
seasonofrebuilding.pensions.org

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8
 1-2:30 P.M. ET

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9
 10-11:30 A.M. ET



THE BOARD OF PENSIONS
 OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

From the Racial Justice Subcommittee



By Rev. Harvey
Jenkins (HR),
Subcommittee

Resources available for churches to teach black history

Some years ago, a history textbook was published titled *The American Experience*. A more accurate title would be *An American Experience*. African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans experience history differently than White Americans.

For White Presbyterians seeking racial justice, it is critical to understand American history as experienced by people of color – walking a mile in their shoes, moccasins, sandals, or bare feet. For, justice begins with understanding.

Next, history as understood by all God's children could be taught at church. Telling history like it has been experienced by our sisters and brothers of color is important not only to them, but also to all people of conscience.

Since the Florida legislature passed HB7, the factual teaching of African American history in Florida's public schools has been criminalized. The Racial Justice Subcommittee suggests that churches can be places where American history can be taught without ideological or racist preconceptions.

In response to HB7, "Faith in Florida," an African American organization, developed a



Black History Toolkit for use by churches in the teaching of African American history. The toolkit explores African American history in four segments: "From Africa to America," "Personal Accounts and Fighting for Freedom," "Setting the Captives Free", and "Racial Terrorism and Civil Unrest."

There are resources for children and teens. Black pastors are pledging to teach African American history in their congregations. The toolkit, available to all congregations, is not a curriculum but a guide to resources that can be used in teaching. An overview is available at faithinflorida.org. To

obtain the toolkit, use the link bit.ly/FIFBHT.

Another resource for teaching African American history was produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center. "Teaching Hard History," is a podcast hosted Dr. Hasan Kwame Jeffries. It includes presentations on four aspects of American History – "American Slavery," Reconstruction and Its Aftermath," The Civil Rights Movement," and "The Jim Crow Era."

A resource illustrating the value of African American history in pursuit of racial justice is Rev. Terrance Lester's, *All God's Children: How Confronting Buried History Can Build Racial Solidarity*. This study fills in the historical gaps in the white cultural context by demonstrating how White Christians can ally with sisters and brothers who face racism daily.

Exploring the Legacies and Lessons of the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. South

A Pilgrimage to Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma,
Jackson, the Mississippi Delta and Memphis

May 28 - June 6, 2024



<https://hubs.ly/O02619mH0>

Application Deadline: Feb. 23, 2024



Presbytery approves slate of Task Force motions

At the presbytery's October 24 meeting, the Strategic Planning Taskforce presented its final report and recommendations for presbytery approval. The report and recommendations were the culmination of nine months of deep prayer, careful discernment, and hard work.

Following the Education Hour, during which presbyters were divided into three groups to discuss the report and recommendations, the motions presented were approved with minor changes. The motions approved were:

- That the Vision Statement be approved.
- ◇ What is the ultimate goal of the presbytery's work and ministry? "To be a presbytery of strong, healthy, energetic congregations advancing the ministries of Jesus Christ."
- That the Mission Statement be approved.
- ◇ How will the ultimate goal be attained? The presbytery's mission is: "To provide guidance, training, and assistance to our congregations." This is a restatement of the main focus of the presbytery when it was established in 1841 "to provide nurture and resources to assist the charter churches in carrying out their mission" (*150 Years: Frontiers in Faith*).
- That the recommended

structure of the presbytery be approved for further refinement and implementation by the Implementation Taskforce.

- ◇ The new structure reduces the 12 "Committees" to 9 "Ministries" and reduces the scope of work in some for the time being. The new structure also reduces the minimum number of persons to serve from about 75 to 46. The name change from "committee" to "ministry" was intentional in an attempt to change a mindset from doing "work" to serving our Lord by furthering our Lord's ministries.
- That a period of discernment be entered to review the process of Dogwood Acres becoming a 501(c)(3); that the Coordinating and Planning Commission (CPC) appoint presbyters to work with the Dogwood Acres Committee in this process; and that recommendations be given at the presbytery's Fall 2024 Stated Meeting.
- That the recommended staffing configuration be approved.
- ◇ The new configuration calls for a part-time General Presbyter, part-time Stated Clerk, full-time Administrator, and a part-time Treasurer.
- That the proposed budget adjustments be forwarded to the current Committee on Presbytery Administration for consideration.
- ◇ The provisional budget of \$451,000 adopted in August was reduced to \$320,000 based on a more realistic amount anticipated from our member congregations. A balanced budget was part of the report.

- That the Strategic Planning Taskforce be dissolved with the thanks and gratitude of the presbytery.
- That an Implementation Taskforce of seven (7) members be presented by the Nominating Committee and approved by the CPC as soon as possible, but no later than January 15, 2024 to facilitate the initiation of the new structure for the Presbytery of Florida effective March 1, 2024, and that it compose the necessary modifications to the Bylaws and Manual of Operations.

Will this new structure and plan work? It is in God's hands. Equally important is that it is also in the hands of every person that is a part of our member congregations. All persons are needed to further the ministries of our Lord – not just a few, but all. Discern your gifts. How will you help advance the work and ministries of Jesus Christ?

Special thanks go to the Strategic Planning Taskforce members: Rev. Mark Broadhead – (Retired), Elder Susan Coleman (Trinity-Pensacola), Rev. Hugh Hamilton (Trinity-Pensacola), Elder Mary Hodges (First-Tallahassee), Elder Don Mowat (First-Lynn Haven), Rev. Eric Spoon (Grace-Panama City), and Elder Karen Weaver (First-Monticello).

From the Strategic Planning Task Force



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

Pause



A Yoga & Mindfulness
Retreat for Women
January 20-22, 2023



Who: Any women interested
When: Evening January 20th
Afternoon January 22nd
Where: Dogwood Acres Camp and
Retreat Center
Cost: \$200 (Includes all activities,
lodging, and meals)

[www.dogwoodacres.org/dogwood-retreats/
pause-yoga-and-mindfulness-retreat/](http://www.dogwoodacres.org/dogwood-retreats/pause-yoga-and-mindfulness-retreat/)

For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb. I
praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Psalm 139: 13-14

The perfect gift.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

DECEMBER 3 - DECEMBER 24

CREATION CARE

Seeking Faithful Justice in a Climate Crisis

NOVEMBER 5

No Faith in Fossil Fuels w. Rev. Fletcher Harper
Executive Director of GreenFaith and Episcopal Priest



NOVEMBER 12

Voices from the Frontlines w. Dr. Bruce Strouble
Executive Director for Citizens for a Sustainable Future &
Senior Manager for Equitable Resilience Programs at
Groundwork USA

NOVEMBER 19

Panel Discussion on Next Steps, moderated by Debbie Gibson
Panelists: Dr. Strouble, Steve Urse, Emily Bruno, Steven Specht

All sessions begin at 9:30 am
First Presbyterian Church, 110 N. Adams Street (Westminster Room)
Zoom link available on request: bruno.emilyanne@gmail.com

Meet me in



"Do everything in love"



2024 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women
August 8-11, 2024 • St. Louis, Missouri

presbyterianwomen.org/gathering

Laudate Deum: To “All People of Goodwill” on the Climate Crisis

October 4, the Vatican released a new Apostolic Exhortation, a teaching document, by Pope Francis, called [Laudate Deum](#), that is not just for Catholics, but for “all people of good will” on the climate crisis. It is a followup to his 2015 *Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home*.

Laudate Deum is Latin for “Praise God” and was chosen by the Pope because, in his own words, “...when human beings claim to take God’s place, they become their own worst enemies.” By this, he means that, when we seek power for its own sake, we damage both ourselves and the planet. Power should be used to create a better world for all. This exhortation is an urgent call to tackle the climate crisis, in recognition that time is running out, and irreversible damage has already been done.

It brought me joy and relief to read that Pope Francis understands the science behind the climate crisis and the economic premise that is the reason for our collective failure to address the climate crisis. He wrote, “...economic powers are not interested in solving the problem because they want the greatest profit possible at minimum cost”. Further, he said, “This pursuit of the greatest profit possible at minimum cost makes



Source: National Capital Reporter, October 4, 2023

caring for our common home impossible.”

He asks us to rethink our use of power, stating, “Not every increase in power represents progress for humanity” and that our “immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience”. He states, “...we cannot claim to have a sound ethics, a culture and spirituality genuinely capable of setting limits and teaching clear-minded self-restraint”. He reminds us, “The world is not an object of exploitation, unbridled use and unlimited ambition and...we are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.”

He calls for political change on a national and international level. And, sadly, he calls out the United States because our emissions per individual are about two times greater than those of individuals living in China and about seven

times greater than the average of the poorest countries. He calls the Western lifestyle irresponsible and points out the importance of political decisions that focus on “genuine care for one another”.

He even dives deeper, taking us to task, including Catholics for our collective resistance and deliberate misleading statements that sow confusion and doubt about the reality of the climate crisis, delaying a proper response. This includes those who choose silence and don’t speak out in order to be politically correct.

There is much more. I strongly urge you to read and study it, and perhaps even make it the subject of a sermon and a Sunday school class, because it is one of the most important and clear, faith-based calls for action to address the climate crisis that I have read. As always, if you have any comments or questions, please contact me at pammcvey@hotmail.com.

Caring for Creation Notes



By

Pam McVety,
*Presbytery
 Stewardship
 of Creation
 Enabler*
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 @hotmail.com](mailto:pammcvey@hotmail.com)

“This exhortation is an urgent call to tackle the climate crisis, in recognition that time is running out, and irreversible damage has already been done.”

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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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

In November		Looking ahead	
Friday – Sunday, November 3 – 5	Reading, Writing, Resting Retreat @ Dogwood Acres	Monday, December 4 10 a.m. CT/ 11 a.m. ET	Self Development of People (SDOP) Committee
Saturday, November 4 10 a.m. – noon ET	1st Presbyterian of Quincy Jacket Jamboree	Tuesday, December 5 12 p.m. CT/ 1 p.m. ET	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)
Sunday, November 5	Daylight Saving Time ends	Thursday, December 7 9 a.m. CT/ 10 a.m. ET	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)
Sunday, November 5	1st Presbyterian of Quincy Old Philadelphia Day	Monday, December 11 1 p.m. CT/2 p.m. ET	Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)
Sunday, November 5 3 p.m. CT/4 p.m. ET	Book of Order Workshop with General Presbyter Roy Martin @ 1st, Lynn Haven	Tuesday, December 12 3 p.m. CT/4 p.m. ET	Committee on Dogwood Acres (CDWA)
Sunday, November 5 9:30 am ET	1st, Tallahassee Creation Care Series Part 3, "No Faith in Fossil Fuels"	Thursday, December 14 2 p.m. CT/3 p.m. ET	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)
Monday, November 6 10 a.m. CT/ 11 a.m. ET	Self Development of People (SDOP) Committee	Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26	Presbytery office closed for Christmas
Tuesday, November 7	Election Day	Wednesday, December 27 10 a.m. CT/ 11 a.m. ET	Racial Justice Subcommittee
Tuesday, November 7 12 p.m. CT/ 1 p.m. ET	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)		
Thursday, November 9 2 p.m. CT/3 p.m. ET	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)		
Saturday, November 11	Veterans Day		
Monday, November 13 5:30 p.m. CT	Grace Presbyterian, Panama City, Spaghetti Dinner Preschool Curriculum Fundraiser		
Tuesday, November 14 9:30 a.m. CT/ 10:30 a.m. ET	Committee on Ministry (COM)		
Tuesday, November 14 3 p.m. CT/4 p.m. ET	Committee on Dogwood Acres (CDWA)		
Tuesday, November 21 10 a.m. CT/ 11 a.m. ET	Committee on Congregational Discernment (CCD)		
Wednesday, November 22 10 a.m. CT/ 11 a.m. ET	Racial Justice Subcommittee		
Thursday & Friday, November 23 & 24	Presbytery office closed for Thanksgiving		
Tuesday, November 28	Giving Tuesday		

**MISSION
POSSIBLE**
FOR THE SMALL CHURCH

SIMPLIFYING CHURCH
LEADERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

www.facebook.com/events/2029983947335280

FREE WEBINAR 11.9 @ 2PM

HELP US FIGHT
THE GLOBAL
**WATER
CRISIS**

PRESBYTERIAN
GIVING CATALOG

PAUL JEFFREY