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The Panhandle Presbyterian

A monthly publication of the Presbytery of Florida



Volume 4, Issue 3

March 2021

From General Presbyter Roy Martin

Your presbytery met last Tuesday, and the ruling elders, clergy, and others assembled there got to hear about the progress being made in several areas:

1. The New Congregational Development Committee is moving forward in their study of what it takes to start a new church and has begun discussion about possible locations for developing a Presbyterian presence.
2. The Committee on Mission and Outreach brought for a vote a new organization for our relationship with the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) and reported on developing new presbytery-wide mission opportunities.
3. The only thing holding back the Committee on Congregational Revitalization is the Covid-19 pandemic. Once the way be clear, they are ready and excited about working with congregations in considering where God

might be leading their ministry. At this meeting, they requested and received approval of the process they will utilize for helping congregations move forward in ministry.



The Rev. Dr. Roy Martin

4. The Committee on Ministry presented Erin Rosica for examination to be ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and to have her validated ministry as a hospital chaplain be approved. Erin has been a candidate under the care of our Committee on Preparation for Ministry. She was approved!
5. The Presbytery Administration Committee reported that, while we did not make our asking budget, many of our congregations stepped up to the challenge by pledging more than they ever have before. Several pledged more than they were asked!
6. It was with great

sadness but also with much gratitude for their ministry over many years that two Administrative Commissions requested and received permission to close two of our churches, First, Port St. Joe and Westminster Pensacola. We thank God for these two churches and their witness to the faith!

7. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry brought for approval their process for guiding ruling elders who have heard the call to the specialized ministry Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP). Once trained and approved, these dedicated elders can no longer afford called and installed pastors. The process, while not as rigorous is similar to the candidacy process used to prepare ministers of the Word and Sacrament.
8. We heard a report from the Planning and Coordinating Commission that they have voted to move the presbytery year (but not the budgetary year) of calendar. Beginning next year, the new presbytery year will open

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From our Stated Clerk



By Jeannie Dixon,
Fellowship,
Tallahassee,
Ruling Elder

About commissioners to presbytery for 2021

Article III of the By-Laws of the Presbytery of Florida provide for one ruling elder commissioner from each congregation. Churches with membership above 500 are entitled to additional commissioners. Our number of congregations is currently at 39. We have 4 congregations with membership between 501-1000 who are entitled to two ruling elder commissioners:

Pensacola, First;
Pensacola, Trinity;
Quincy, First;
Tallahassee, Faith.

This will provide for 43 ruling elder commissioners.

Article III further states:

...each ruling elder elected moderator or other officer of the presbytery, each ruling elder elected as a member of the leadership team of presbytery or as chairperson of the nominating committee, and each ruling elder elected as coordinating presbyter or associate presbyter (when applicable) and exempt staff (when applicable) shall be enrolled as a member of presbytery for the term of his or her office, whether or not commissioned by his or her session.

The ruling elders for 2021 service that would be included in this count are Roseanna Phillips,

Leslie Yandle, Don Mowat, Denise Vandiver (treasurer), Jeannie Dixon (Stated Clerk), Ben Powell (Director Dogwood Acres). There are 5 Commissioned Ruling Elders serving congregations.

That gives a total of 54 ruling elders.

The number of ministers of Word and Sacrament is 28 plus 9 ministers serving at-large plus 1 from other tradition enrolled as members.

There are 42 retired ministers of Word and Sacrament; 6 are active.

This results in 51 ministers of Word and Sacrament; there is no imbalance of ministers of Word and Sacrament to ruling elders.

Register now

Being Your Own Healthcare Advocate

Thursday, March 11
2-3 p.m. ET

Learn more and register at
<https://www.pensions.org/your-path-to-wholeness/lifelong-learning-through-board-university/webinars>

Join Lorie Henry, Director, Board of Pensions Member Advocate & Retirement and Financial Protection, to learn

- essential considerations in choosing a healthcare provider
- how to prepare for office visits
- key questions to ask your healthcare provider
- advocacy resources available through the Benefits Plan
- helpful suggestions for medical coverage.



Continued from page 1

March 1 and conclude on the last day of February in the following year. All committee members in current service are asked to serve an additional two months to make this transition possible.

Finally, the presbytery expressed its deep gratitude to ruling elder, Roseanna Phillips as she has now concluded her year as moderator of the presbytery and takes on the reins of the Coordinating and Planning Commission. After a brief service of

installation, we welcomed The Rev. Michael Askew as your new presbytery moderator and The Rev. Trinity Whitley as vice-moderator for the coming year. Congratulations to both!

Roy

The Sundays of Easter with children and families

This Lent, I am reading through the Jesus Storybook Bible with children and families at First Presbyterian Church of Pensacola. We are reminded daily that the Bible is one big story of God’s love for us and God’s rescue plan for us. After walking through this season together, we will **CELEBRATE!**

Each Sunday of Easter, we can focus on a

different way to joyfully express our gratitude for all the great things God has done for us. These are a few examples of how we have (and will again!) celebrated the Sundays of Easter:

- ▶ **Create a flower cross.** Flowers, brought from home or provided, are added to a cross made of chicken wire as everyone arrives to worship.
- ▶ **Partner with the Outreach and Service team.** We contributed to

their outreach focus for the month. In this case, it was personal hygiene items to help Loaves and Fishes restock supplies at their Emergency Family Shelters.

- ▶ **Create art.** We chose a multi-step project that could engage all ages and stages (painting, cutting, assembling). The final product was Pentecost flowers the children passed out to everyone during worship.

▶ **Cascarones!!!** Cascarones are eggshells filled with confetti. The tradition (from Mexico) is to crack the egg over someone’s head and shower them with celebratory confetti.

- ▶ **Serve together intergenerationally.** Pair up a grownup, not necessarily the parent, and a child or two for greeting, the offering, and helping lead worship.

From the Committee on Educational Resources



*By Sarah Middleton Uslan,
1st, Pensacola,
Director of
Family Ministries*



Cascarones!
The traditional Mexican confetti-filled eggshells shower celebratory confetti

BECAUSE WATER IS LIFE



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



—FOURBOUT BY LAUREN WRIGHT / ITMANIJE.A SANCTIFIED ART LLC

From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization



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

New Handbook outlines steps in partnering for renewal

CCR is pleased to report that our Handbook for Congregational Revitalization was approved at the February 23rd presbytery meeting! This Handbook outlines a process that we can use as we partner with congregations desiring a more formal approach to renewing congregational vitality.

This process involves the use of two instruments to help congregations gauge their “place”: MissionInsite, which surveys a congregation’s community demographics; and Holy



Cow! Assessment, which looks more deeply into the congregation itself. Both instruments are vital to understanding the lay of the land as our CCR consultants work to address the needs of a congregation.

If your congregation is at a point where you think some attention could be paid to revitalization of mission and ministry, please contact me! Don’t wait until you’re “desperate”

for help; oftentimes it’s almost too late at that point! Not saying it’s impossible, but the road to renewed vitality is a steeper climb! Here is a link to the Handbook for Congregational Revitalization: [https://presbyteryofflorida.com/resources/Attachment+\\$232+-+Committee+on+Revitalization+Handbook.pdf](https://presbyteryofflorida.com/resources/Attachment+$232+-+Committee+on+Revitalization+Handbook.pdf) CCR is here for the wonderful congregations of Florida Presbytery! Let us know how we may help you!



PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSICIANS
2021 WORSHIP & MUSIC CONFERENCES AT MONTREAT

— JUNE 20-25 & JUNE 27-JULY 2 —

CONFERENCE DATES:

In-person:

Week 1:

June 20 - 25, 2021

Week 2:

June 27 - July 2, 2021

Online:

June 27 -
July 2, 2021

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

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

SYNOD OF SOUTH ATLANTIC SAVE THE DATE



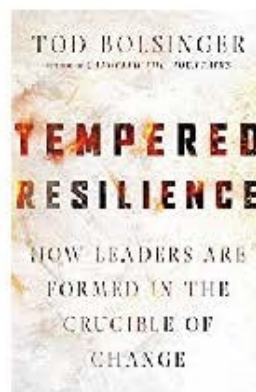
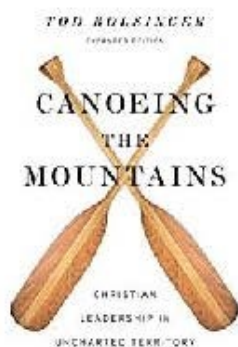
THE REVEREND TOD BOLSINGER

Pastors and church leaders of the *Synod of South Atlantic*, save the date for an upcoming Church Leaders' Forum:

Leading the Church into the Post COVID World

Tuesday, April 27, 2021, Eastern time, 3:00 - 4:30 pm via ZOOM

Presenter: Tod Bolsinger (M.Div., Ph.D.), Associate Professor of Leadership Formation at Fuller Theological Seminary, author of *Canoeing the Mountains* and *Tempered Resilience*.



From the Committee on Dogwood Acres



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

Plan to celebrate “Dogwood Acres Sunday” April 18

DWA is happy to announce the Presbytery has designated April 18, 2021 as “Dogwood Acres Sunday!” We know how powerful our presbytery’s outdoor ministry is, and we want to share that experience with the churches. We will offer suggestions to church leadership on how to present the message.

Our Committee Chair, Rev. Bill Lamont of the Gulf Breeze Church, will head up the effort to produce information that will be distributed to each church. You can expect a short video about DWA, information about the Retreat Center and Camp, facts about DWA and outdoor ministry in general, a list of “camp songs” that might be fun

to sing during the service, and liturgy you can use in total or pick the parts that best fit you congregation. We at DWA are excited and we hope your church will be, too!



Nikki Fried, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture



FL Rep. Anna Eskamani



Rev. Latricia Scriven

MAKE A SACRED SOUND!

SING IN PRAISE
BLOW THE SHOFAR
STRIKE THE GONG

RING THE BELLS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

FLORIDA INTERFAITH DAY OF ACTION
MARCH 11, 2021



Tallahassee Mayor John Dailey



FL Sen. Lori Berman



Charlotte Stuart-Tilley, GenCLEO

Online Climate Justice Event - 9:30 am
Sacred Sound Action - 11-11:15 am

Email Presbytery Caring for Creation Enabler Pam McVety at pammcvety@hotmail.com about how to participate via Zoom

Ring the bells for climate justice on March 11

In the last two columns, I have explained the Greenfaith, Sacred People, Sacred Earth campaign, calling people of faith around the world to address the climate crisis. I am pleased to report that, in response to their call for action, the Tallahassee faith community is holding a day of climate action, called “Ring the Bells for Climate Justice” on March 11, from 9:30 - 11:00 EST on Zoom.

Speakers will share what they are doing to address the crisis, and churches will ring their bells at 11:00. Commissioner of Agriculture Nikki Fried will talk about her heat illness prevention campaign to protect farm workers. Senator Lori Berman and Representative Anna Eskamani will discuss their bills requiring Florida to switch to renewable energy. Reverend Latricia Scriven with New Life UMC will share how black churches are responding to the crisis. Charlotte Stuart Tilley, a young climate

activist like Greta Thunberg, will discuss her Friday school strikes on the steps of the old Capitol for climate action.

The bells are ringing the alarm about the climate emergency that is already hurting so many Floridians, especially the poor and people of color, and the need for a fair energy transition that leaves no one behind.

Knowingly harming the “least of these” is contrary to the teachings of all religions. Our faiths ask us to protect our neighbors and creation, yet our actions are harming both. Florida is ground zero for the worse effects of climate change – sea level rise, hurricanes, and extreme heat – and most of us have already felt their impacts. Unfortunately, this crisis is only going to get worse without state action to cut our carbon emissions.

Please join us on March 11 by emailing me at pammcvety@hotmail.com for the Zoom link. If you have church bells, ring them loudly or make a sacred noise from 11:00-11:15. Tell all who

inquire that you are calling for climate justice for all Floridians, but especially for the “least of these” who are hurt first and worst by climate change. Together our voices are powerful.

Finally, pray for the people of Texas as they continue to recover from loss of power and water from the mid-February frigid weather which lead to burst pipes, damaged homes and infrastructure, avoidable deaths, and food and gas shortages.

Yes, this is related to climate change. The polar vortex which used to stay in the Arctic moved deep into Texas as the warmer weather at the north pole pushed it south. And no, their power system and grid did not fail because of reliance on renewable energy. It failed because of failure to adapt state infrastructure to meet the inevitability of climate change.

As always, please contact me at pammcvety@hotmail.com if you have any comments or questions. Hope to see your smiling faces on Zoom.

Caring for Creation Notes



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

“Our faiths ask us to protect our neighbors and creation, yet our actions are harming both.”



**Building strong families
across Florida, Georgia,
and South Carolina**

ASK ME HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!

Bonnie Thompson

Advancement Officer -
Florida

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bonnie.thompson@thornwell.org

www.Thornwell.org

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The Panhandle Presbyterian



**Online this year — and
FREE! Festival of
HOMILETICS**

May 17 - 21, 2021

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

2 ways to participate:

*Attend for free and get 4-5 presentations each day.
Buy the recording package and unlock interviews, live
workshops, and more!*

Learn more and register at

<https://www.festivalofhomiletics.com>

Association of Smaller Congregations

Upcoming Conference ~ March 19–20, 2021

The *Association of Smaller Congregations (ASC)* of the Synod of South Atlantic, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was organized in April 1987 by a group of visionaries led by the late Rev. Foster Edwards, a PC(USA) minister in the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. The ASC sought to create an organization which would:

- Encourage and support smaller congregations,
- Promote awareness of the unique strengths and needs of smaller congregations,
- Provide opportunities for fellowship, education, and creative thinking and sharing between smaller congregations, and facilitate communication between churches, presbyteries, and higher governing bodies.

All churches and their members within the ecclesiastical bounds of the Synod of South Atlantic, having 100 or fewer members are considered members of the ASC.

The Presbytery of Florida's Committee on Congregational Revitalization encourages smaller congregations to participate! Check out the conference and registration information at www.presbyasc.org