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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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From General Presbyter Roy Martin

After reviewing the most recent new Covid-19 infection rates for the counties in our presbytery, the Coordinating and Planning Commission of Presbytery has concluded that our October 23rd presbytery meeting can be held in person as scheduled at Dogwood Acres.

All commissioners and guests will be required to be fully vaccinated and to wear masks indoors except while eating.

There is an added bonus for this meeting! For those who would like to arrange to come the night before, both lodging and supper will be available.

Arrangements can be

made by calling Ben Powell at Dogwood Acres. For those who come the night before the meeting, there will be a bonfire and other fun activities which are currently being planned. Stay tuned for more information!

A large focus of the presbytery meeting will be on mission. There will be opportunities to share best practices, explore new ideas and directions, and engage one another across congregations in mission development. The Committee on Mission and Outreach will be presenting all of that plus bringing for a vote the opportunity for the

presbytery as a whole and its member congregations individually to partner with a wonderful Presbyterian mission effort in Guatemala.

We have not been able to gather together in person in quite awhile so, if you are fully vaccinated, I do hope you will plan on attending all or part of this presbytery gathering. I look forward to seeing you there!

Roy



The Rev. Dr. Roy Martin

Let's gather under the tent!

Fall Stated Presbytery Meeting

Saturday, October 23

Dogwood Acres Camp & Conference Center

Registration at 8 a.m. CDT/9 a.m. EDT

Meeting at 9 a.m. CDT/10 a.m. EDT

All attendees must be fully vaccinated and wear masks indoors when not eating

Pre-Meeting Overnight Gathering Friday, October 22

For accommodations:

Contact Dogwood Acres Director Ben Powell at ben@dogwoodacres.org

From Our Stated Clerk



By Jeannie Dixon,
Fellowship,
Tallahassee Elder

Start preparing your church's annual statistical data NOW

Now is the time to begin planning for completion of the Statistics of the Church. This annual program gathers information on various aspects of the congregation. This year, the program will open on Friday, **December 3** and close for the churches on Thursday, **February 17**.

Last year, 100% of our congregations at least submitted membership numbers. Let's do that again, and even better! For those unable to enter the data on a device, Melissa in the presbytery office or I can enter that information for you. Either of us can also provide the username and password for you.

In some congregations, the clerk completes this process. In others, an office administrator does. In any case, the session must approve it before it is submitted.

Give your treasurer plenty of advance notice for the financial section, as end of year may be very busy for them. The financial information is also a broad overview. Information in these categories is requested: Annual income, annual expenses, mission, personnel, and facilities. The online form provides guidance for what to include for every item in the survey.

The good news is that this year's form is the same as last year's. Take

time now to gather the various reports you will need to complete this – average worship attendance – count of participants in Christian Education (Sunday School plus Presbyterian Women plus any Bible Studies or classes held in 2020). I also ask that churches complete more of the form than just an ending number of members.

Providing the age distribution and disability groupings of your congregation, along with the racial/ethnic distribution, provides valuable information to the presbytery for better understanding of our presbytery's diversity. This is information the Committee on Representation can use to help the Committee on Nominations fill committee appointments that are representative and conform to the PC(USA) commitment to unity in diversity.

If your church uses ACS or a similar program, it can provide statistical reports for this information – that is, if your church has entered member birth dates and genders. If not, maybe now is the time to start.

Now, a word about those categories! Gather your numbers, remembering that this is a



very broad overview of your congregation, not scientific data. Think of it this way – You have moved to a new town and are looking for a church. You pull up the 10-year statistics and look at all the churches in the area you select. The congregation nearest you has blanks for most statistics. What would that say to someone looking? (Be aware that pastors DO look at these numbers when considering a call).

Try using your church directory to begin the categories. Counts of total numbers of members and of female members can easily be determined here.

If you know your congregation well, the categories for disability can also be done. Again, these are not a scientific/medical survey, but how many hearing impaired (use hearing aids), sight impaired (wear glasses), mobility impaired (uses a cane or walker or wheelchair), or otherwise impaired are in your congregation?

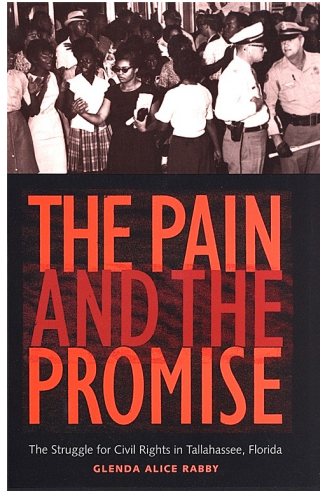
The age distribution is a bit more challenging, but do your best. This is not the U.S. Census. *Thanks for doing your part!*

Book Review: *The Pain and the Promise: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Tallahassee, Florida*, by Glenda Alice Rabby (University of Georgia Press, 1999; re-issued in paperback in 2016)

Here's a book of interest to all Floridians, and others, to refresh our memories regarding the long struggle for basic civil rights waged here in our Capital, and across the State, since most local resistance was ultimately fought by the State against the Supreme Court of the United States of America. This carefully-researched book – 50 pages devoted to footnotes alone – is ultimately a microcosm, not just for both the State of Florida and its cities, but for communities all across the South.

It is good for those of us, like me, who may have forgotten a lot of the details, and those of us who are too young to remember, to be put in mind of the extended drama – the pain, borne mostly by blacks – and the promise that is a long time coming. Our author, Glenda Rabby, still living in Tallahassee, is a remarkable researcher and writer, able to bring multiple details and story lines together in an engaging and reliable and narrative, keeping a reporter's distance to let the main characters' actions speak for themselves.

Her story begins with Tallahassee's



homegrown bus boycott – no national, or even local organizations instigated it – but rather, three daring young women students at Florida A and M University. One day in May 1956 they decided to ride the bus downtown, and refused to move to the back, as custom and law mandated, when the driver asked them. They were promptly arrested and charged and held at the jail, pending bail.

Finally, the Dean of Students at FAMU was contacted and came and paid up. That evening a cross was burned in the front yard of two of the students. Word got out quickly, and before long, with only impromptu organizational planning, the boycott was on.

The time had come. Rev. C.K. Steele and the pastor at then Trinity Presbyterian Church,

Rev. Metz Rollins, quickly became visible leaders of the boycott. I would invite curious readers to discover the details about how Tallahassee's ultimately successful bus boycott unfolded, over years, and to follow Rabby's account of how lunch counters and restaurants, places of employment, and ultimately public schools became integrated – but not without an extended struggle that threatened the lives, careers, and futures of the participants and leaders.

Rabby had the good fortune to be doing research for her book in the 1990's when many of the key participants were still living. Among those was C.K. Steele who had recently given a retrospective talk at FSU. In it, he said he believed that God had given the activists of his day this opportunity to participate in bringing forth the Kingdom of God on earth, and to help the United States fulfill its promise of fairness and justice for all. Sadly, he reflected, this has not yet happened, but despite "hell and high water" the day would come: "This is the pain. This is the promise."

**From
"I Stand With
You" Racism
Task Force**



*By Rev. Greta
Reed, HR*

From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization



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

Diligence, thought and prayer guide work of CCR

The Committee on Congregational Revitalization continues to work diligently, thoughtfully, and prayerfully for the congregations of Florida Presbytery.

Diligently: We meet monthly to coordinate our work and make sure that we have the process pieces in the right place to meet the needs of congregations that desire to go through our Revitalization Process. We also do independent work outside of our regular meeting time. We write process pieces, make presentations to CPC, tag-team with other committees, and we take our role as CCR members very seriously!

Thoughtfully: We talk a lot about how best to accomplish the mission of our committee. What can we do to make things easier, lighter, more



understandable, more accessible, etc, for congregations? We listen to each other, and we listen to the congregations with which we are privileged to work. We read books and participate in conferences related to revitalization, and we try to keep abreast of changing trends, especially during this time of Covid.

Prayerfully: We “can do all things through Christ who strengthens us” (Philippians 4:13), and we know that our strength, our initiative, and our passion to serve Florida Presbytery come through prayer. We begin and end every meeting with prayer. We pray for all the congregations of the presbytery, and especially for those

engaging with our Revitalization Process. We pray for our consultants who give (often sacrificially) of their time and energy to work with congregations.

CCR is a committee of and for Florida Presbytery. Serving as chair is a privilege, and I’m honored to work with a great group of creative individuals: The Rev. Mark Broadhead, vice-chair; The Rev. Sun Kim; Elder Karen Weaver, Elder Shelia Clark-Askew, Elder Jo Kublik, Elder Jean Mourey, and Rev. Harvey Jenkins.

You may contact any one of us to learn more about the Revitalization Process, the Revitalization Toolbox, or any other matter pertaining to creating healthy, vibrant congregations that are centers for mission and ministry in this part of God’s wonderful kingdom!

From the Committee on Ministry

Shelby Baxter-Andrews ordained September 5

Rev. Shelby Baxter-Andrews is a graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA, with a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Practical Theology. She grew up in the Presbytery of Florida at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Pensacola, before joining and volunteering with First Presbyterian Church in Pensacola during her college years at University of the West Florida.

Shelby and her spouse, Rev. Patrick Baxter-Andrews, live in Akron, Ohio, with their dog and four cats. Shelby is currently the Associate Pastor and Director of Youth Ministries at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Wadsworth, OH, and is excited to get involved in the local Presbytery there. She was ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament at First Presbyterian Church in Pensacola on September 5.



Medieval writings offer wisdom in a time of pandemic

“All will be well,” says the medieval mystic and anchoress, Julian of Norwich. “And all will be well,” and then she repeats it again with increasing fervor, “and every kind of thing shall be well.”

Declarations such as this run the risk of becoming a theological cliché, words that once had great meaning, unfortunately, have been overused to the point of being trite and seemingly superficial. Julian's mantra is not meant to be a spiritual rabbit's foot. Rather, her words come as hope and affirmation in her own pandemic, the bubonic plague, which first appeared in 1349 when Julian was seven years old.

Julian was an anchoress, cloistered for life in a monastery with one window that opened onto a busy street of Norwich. From her perch in the window, she offered spiritual guidance to the community,

interacted with the residents and provided pastoral care.

Julian's response to the pandemic was grounded in a love of life and gratitude. One theologian has referred to Julian's theology as a "radically optimistic theology" in a time of a pandemic. The plague of Julian's day killed almost 25 million people in Europe. With no science to understand or fight the pandemic, life after death became more important than life before death. Julian focused clearly on life before death, continually offering words of gratitude and love for life itself. Julian reminded us to never forget the goodness of life and that from life we should always draw joy, awe, and profound wonder.

Julian was also obsessed with "participating in the sufferings of Jesus," and she herself experienced more than one near-death experience. She focused

on the need to face the darkness and uncertainty produced by her pandemic. It was clearly, for her, and millions of others, their dark night of the soul. Only in understanding and embracing our darkness can we find joy. We can only appreciate light because of the darkness.

Again, while insisting that we embrace our sufferings, Julian also insisted that we embrace the goodness. She pleaded for a balance, rather than succumbing to the pain and not experiencing the joy, or embracing the joy alone without acknowledging the pain. In all of her writings, she proposes an acceptance of both as the true way to achieve a healthy spirituality.

I find Julian of Norwich's writings to be of significant guidance in our pandemic. We are a people in grief. Whether the loss is a high school prom, a cancelled trip, or a death, we are all in grief. Julian would urge us to dive deeply into our joy and our pain. Only when one understands the depth of her writing can one say “all will be well,” and “all will be well, and every kind of thing shall be well.”

Suggested reading:
Julian of Norwich: Wisdom in a Time of Pandemic – and Beyond,
by Matthew Fox

From the Committee on Educational Resources



By
Don Winslett,
*Center for Clergy
Care (Pensacola)*
Director and
1st, Pensacola Elder

Virtual Event!

REvangelism:

8 Habits of Evangelism

November 1-3, 2021

\$100 Registration fee

Montreat Conference Center in partnership with
Theology, Formation & Evangelism in the
Presbyterian Mission Agency

montreat.org/revangelism

The Florida Presbytery
invites you to a

CHURCH WORKDAY

**Bethel Presbyterian Church
Defuniak Springs**

WHEN

Saturday, October 30th 9 am CT

WHERE

**118 Roosevelt Ave.,
Defuniak Springs, FL**

If you have a church T-shirt, please wear your shirt to take pictures of our Presbytery at work. The members of Bethel will provide snacks and lunch for this gathering. We will do yard work and paint the outside of the church.

**For additional information, please contact:
Sandra Macon, Clerk of Session-850-305-9575 or
Sherree Campbell, Church Treasurer-850-307-2316*

Please bring the following items if you are able:

- White paint (Exterior paint)
- Royal Blue paint (Exterior paint) for trim
- Red (Exterior paint) for trim
- Paint dropcloths
- paint tape
- paint scrapers
- paint pans
- paintbrushes and rollers for high areas
- paint cleaner
- ladders
- items to cut yard, branches, limbs, and other items
- hedge cutter
- garbage bags
- blowers
- window cleaner
- paper towels
- plastic and work gloves
- water hose
- buckets
- cleaning supplies & brushes

Extreme heat threatens outdoor workers

Can we talk? I want to talk about heat, deadly heat. Heat that is so hot it can prevent you from doing your job, if you work outdoors. The Union of Concerned Scientists released a report in August, entitled “Too Hot to Work”. We know it is hot in Florida in the summer, but how many of us think about having to choose between a paycheck or staying healthy?

The report said that, each summer, the nation’s roughly 32 million outdoor workers – from construction workers to farmworkers to emergency responders – regularly face a brutal choice: go to work and endure dangerous exposure to heat and risk their health, or risk their jobs. Today, outdoor workers have as much as 35 times the risk of dying from heat exposure as the general population. The number of days per year when the heat index – or “feels-like” temperature – exceeds 100°F is expected to double by midcentury with either slow action or no action to reduce heat-trapping emissions. By midcentury, with no action to reduce emissions, a collective \$55.4 billion in outdoor workers’ earnings would be at risk annually.

What does this mean to us in the Panhandle? In



Construction and extraction



Protective service



Farming, fishing, and forestry



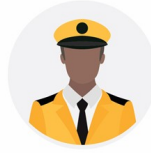
Materials moving



Installation, maintenance, and repair



Building and grounds cleaning/maintenance



Transportation

Escambia County, 21% of the workforce is employed in outdoor occupations. In Bay County, the number rises to 25%, and, in Leon County, the number drops to 14%, but these percentages represent thousands of our neighbors and friends.

In Florida, over 3 million of these workers are African Americans and Latino. These racial and ethnic groups comprise 45 percent of the outdoor workforce despite representing about 32 percent of the US population. These are the people after a disaster that we need the most. They are the frontline workers who keep civilization going.

In the Panhandle, by midcentury the number of annual workdays and earnings at risk due to extreme heat will rise from three days to nearly a month and the lost earnings are estimated to be nearly half a billion dollars per year.

Midcentury sounds like it is far off, but we are talking about this

happening over the next 30 years.

There is an answer, and you know what it is. To limit future extreme heat, we need to cut our carbon emissions by 50% by 2035 and get us to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Policies and investments to make this happen are starting, but not nearly fast enough to match the physics of our changing climate.

We have a rough road ahead, but failure to act now is costly and deadly, and not just for outdoor workers. Think of our children and elderly and how quickly they can overheat. Our denomination, our presbytery and most of our churches have not done enough. Let’s roll up our sleeves and start talking about what we can do to cut our carbon emissions.

With our faith guiding us, our love for our neighbors and God’s grace, let’s make this happen. Contact me to begin the journey to a safer world for all. pammcvety@hotmail.com

Caring for Creation Notes



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

*“... each summer,
the nation’s roughly
32 million outdoor
workers ... regularly
face a brutal choice”*

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

In October		Looking ahead	
Tuesday, October 5 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)	Monday, November 1 — Wednesday,	REvangelism Conference: 8 Habits of Evangelism
Wednesday, October 13 12 p.m. CDT/ 1 p.m. EDT	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)	Tuesday, November 2 10 a.m. CDT/	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)
Thursday, October 14	Board of Pensions "Nutrition Essentials for Lifelong Health: Happy Weight versus Healthy Weight" webinar	Sunday, November 7	Daylight Saving Time
Saturday, October 16	Northminster, Pensacola 30th Anniversary	Tuesday, November 9 9:30 a.m. CST/	Committee on Ministry (COM)
Tuesday, October 19 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:0 a.m. EDT	Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)	Wednesday, November 10 11 a.m. CST/	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)
Friday, October 22	Pre-Presbytery Overnight Gathering at Dogwood Acres	Thursday, November 11	Veterans Day
Saturday, October 23 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT	Fall Presbytery Meeting at Dogwood Acres Registration at 8 a.m. CDT/9 a.m. EDT	Tuesday, November 16 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST	Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)
Wednesday, October 27 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT	"I Stand With You" Task Force	Thursday, November 18 11 a.m. CST/	Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)
Saturday, October 30 9 a.m. CDT	Bethel, DeFuniak Springs Workday	Wednesday, November 24 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST	"I Stand With You" Task Force
		Thursday and Friday, November 25 & 26	Presbytery office closed for Thanksgiving
		Friday, December 3	Annual statistical reporting begins



**CHIPLEY FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH PRESENTS**

**2021 Scottish
Tea
Fundraiser**

**For the upcoming
Chipley Presbyterian
Scottish Festival**

**OCTOBER 9TH AT
12:00PM
\$20.00 PER PERSON
GET YOUR TICKETS AT
658 5TH STREET
CHIPLEY, FLORIDA**