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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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From General Presbyter Roy Martin

The General Assembly of our denomination has been meeting over the last several days in June. It will continue to be meeting in July. To say the way in which our General Assembly gathering is unusual this year is an understatement!

In pre-pandemic years, the Assembly met over a period of eight to ten days in a city convention center somewhere in the United States in June every other year (although I remember when it used to meet every year!). But because of the uncertainties of Covid, a hybrid model was developed that has committees meeting mostly in person in Louisville, Kentucky, at our denominational headquarters at 100 Witherspoon Street. But plenaries are being held online.

One of our commissioners and our young adult advisory delegate (YAAD) have already attended their in-person committee meetings. Another of our commissioners is attending his committee meetings in July. There have already been at least

one plenary online, but there will be more later in July.

Let's just say I am so glad I don't work for the Office of the General Assembly nor serve on the Committee on the General Assembly. I cannot imagine the headaches they have suffered putting all this together!

One of the issues commissioners are being asked to address is to vote on how they would like to see future assemblies handled. I must admit I am old-school on this point. If I were in a position to vote, I would most certainly be voting to return to total in-person assemblies. Many of you know I am of the opinion that there are limits to the effectiveness of Zoom meetings. For me, the ability to get together in person to talk in the halls about what is happening, to make new friends, to experience all the kiosks for learning about what's out there in Presbyterian world, to sing hymns with 1,000 other people and a beautiful choir made up of choirs from area churches, are all muted with online meetings.

Yes, online meetings

save money and time but I believe so much more is lost. But I don't get to vote.

Although there are those at the Assembly who are aware of my view, some of them don't get to vote, either. And I am not sure the ones who do agree with me.

But we are Presbyterian, and we trust in God to use our penultimate decisions in ways that will serve God's purposes or move us in directions that do. At the end of the day, I am a loyal Presbyterian whether or not I always agree because, Lord knows, I have been wrong before!

Please join me in praying daily for our sisters and brothers serving as commissioners and advisory delegates and, in particular, our very own elder Jeannie Dixon, the Rev. Brad Clayton, and YAAD Ryan Obay, who are giving of their time and energy to seek God's calling for the future of our Church.



**The Rev. Dr.
Roy Martin**



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Dr. Michael Bos
Pastor and Author
Marble Collegiate Church

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CCR helps congregations in transition or reshaping process

The Committee on Congregational Revitalization continues to provide assistance to congregations seeking to assess their current modes and models of ministry as we all move into the unknown and sometimes uncertain future of “doing church” in our ever-changing times.

During the past three years or so, ten congregations have availed themselves or are preparing to avail themselves of the Holy Cow! Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) – either on their own or with the help of CCR’s trained consultants.

Whether a congregation is in the

midst of a pastoral transition or seeking to reshape or revitalize its ministry, CCR is able and willing to help with that process. The CAT holds up a mirror before the congregation to reflect what the congregation says about itself.

A demographic study of the area surrounding the church done through MissionInsite provides detailed information about who are the congregation’s neighbors and the joys and challenges they face.

The questions that then get answered are: What areas of ministry do we need to continue? What areas need to be let go? What needs to be strengthened? How can

we reach out to the community and be the Church to them?

And an important question asked by those in pastoral transition: What gifts and abilities do we need in our next pastor to help lead us into the kind of future God is unfolding before us?

This exciting adventure can all begin with your congregation by sending an email to Rev. Mark Broadhead, chair of CCR, at minister@fpc-crestview.org. Be sure to let us know how we can be of assistance to you as you seek God’s unfolding ministry in your congregation.

From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)



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

Save the Date!

Evangelism:

Addressing Harm, Embracing Hope

October 30 - November 1

\$70 Registration

This event will be held online and in-person at Montreat Conference Center in partnership with Theology, Formation & Evangelism in the Presbyterian Mission Agency

montreat.org/evangelism

From the Committee on Nominations (CN)



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

Presbytery Committee corner: Committee on Educational Resources (CER)

This month, we continue our series on presbytery committees by featuring the Committee on Educational Resources, which is chaired by Ms. Esther Moring.

Membership on the CER includes the chair, vice chair, and five members-at-large. This committee provides education and resources in the areas of stewardship, children's ministry, youth and young adult ministry, evangelism, social justice issues, and other areas related to congregational ministry through the use of specialized teams and regional and presbytery-wide training events.

Ms. Moring highlighted a few recent examples of the committee's work. The CER offered a very successful educational workshop on the opioid crisis with Dr. Jacquelyn McMillan of the Capital City Youth Services in Tallahassee. "The groups in brainstorming sessions created a multilevel plan of action for each church to take home to share," said Ms. Moring. "We are also working hard to make the fall DiscipleFest the best ever." Stay tuned!

The CER's annual

budget also includes funds to support the work of the UKirk campus ministry at FSU. "We still have old buildings on college campuses that need to be brought up to code for disabled access," said Ms. Moring. This year's CER budget will help UKirk Tallahassee make its restrooms and building entranceways ADA compliant. By doing so, UKirk will be able to better minister to all students.

Ms. Moring is very passionate about the CER's mission. "I believe that Christian education in churches today is the backbone for how people incorporate the Christian teaching in their daily lives," said Ms. Moring. "Sunday School is where children and youth learn about God, develop their relationship with God, and begin helping people in need. The CER provides resources that are relevant to children and youth and interesting to adults." Overall, the CER makes resources available to all churches, especially to smaller churches that do not have the funds to obtain digital and print educational materials.

The CER currently has

two vacancies to fill on the committee. Given the committee's current representation, the CER is looking for men from the Presbytery's West and Central districts. "We need individuals who are very interested in Christian education, whether or not they have experience in educational materials," added Ms. Moring.

If you are interested in serving on the Committee on Educational Resources or on any other presbytery committee, please contact Committee on Representation Chair Glenn Hodges at ghodges37@comcast.net. Members who may be interested in serving on the Committee of Representation or on the Committee on Nominations must be vetted and presented to the presbytery by the Coordinating and Planning Commission.

Please share this article with your congregation and encourage your members to consider serving on a presbytery committee. Thank you. Next month's issue will highlight another committee. See you at the corner!

Pre-Order 2022-23 Presbyterian Planning Calendars Now

Order through the Presbytery office as part of a discounted bulk order or order directly from the PC(USA) Store at <https://www.pcusasastore.com/Products/9781732846722/presbyterian-planning-calendar-20222023.aspx> (Regular price: \$16.95 each + S&H)

Presbytery bulk rate: \$11 per calendar without shipping, or \$13 per calendar with shipping from the Presbytery to your address. **Bulk order deadline: July 30, 2022.** To order through the Presbytery office, email office@presbyteryofflora.com or call 850-535-2335.

CER seeks survey input on churches' educational programs

The Committee on Educational Resources needs your help. The CER wants to better understand how the churches of the presbytery determine what study curricula to use. With the help of our member Tai Cole, the CER has compiled a study curriculum survey that should take about five minutes to complete. The purpose of this survey is to see what each congregation is using for their

educational ministry. The CER will collect and share this information and use the findings to help us collaborate future curricula throughout the presbytery.

We hope this survey will capture a good snapshot of the educational work going on in our churches. Take a few minutes now, especially if you are a Bible study or Sunday school class leader, a Director of Education, or the educational resource

point person in your church. Complete the survey at https://fsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1KOR8bTdbqAg8hE?jfe=new

Reminder: Save the date for the Fall 2022 DiscipleFest on September 17th at Dogwood Acres. Many people will be camping the night before, so reserve your spot today! Email ben@dogwoodacres.org to hold a cabin.

From the Committee on Educational Resources



By Rev. Erin Rosica, CER member

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From the “I Stand With You” Anti-Racism Team



*By Ruth Rynolds,
Team member and
Faith, Tallahassee
member*

Tallahassee Presbyterians celebrate Trinity United’s origins

On April 29, all Tallahassee Presbyterians and clergy were invited to a community-wide event to foster a loving space to hear *The Story of Trinity United Presbyterian Church*. During a powerful evening of storytelling and fellowship, the members of Trinity United Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee’s only African-American Presbyterian church, joined with other local Presbyterian churches at Faith Presbyterian Church to reflect on the history of the Presbyterian church in Tallahassee. Seventy-three people attended, coming from First, Fellowship, Lafayette, Faith, Trinity United, and Westminster Oaks.

The program’s centerpiece was *Blessed Trinity: The Birth of a Church*, a video-recorded, live-action play about how the church began. The play was written, produced, and performed by Trinity United members on the 50th anniversary of the church’s founding in 2004. Trinity United was founded in 1954 near Florida A&M University’s campus.

The play recounts the founding of the church and begins with Ms. Irene Mandexter’s attempts in 1949 to attend a local Presbyterian church in Tallahassee, only to be

denied because of her race. Ms. Mandexter had recently moved from Pennsylvania to Tallahassee to serve as an accounting instructor at FAMU. Ms. Mandexter, however, would not be denied, and her positive, “can-do” outlook led to the establishment of Trinity United, which has continued more than half-century later to this day.

The evening was hosted by Faith Presbyterian’s Antiracism Task Force and its Black Dog Sunday School Class. The Black Dog Class began meeting in 1999 at the Black Dog Café before eventually relocating to a classroom at Faith. It was formed by Rev. Taylor Phillips, who serves as the Presbytery’s clerical liaison for Trinity United Presbyterian.

Following Rev. Phillips’ remarks and the presentation of the video, the group heard memories of growing up as a child of Trinity United by Lori Gordon, a lifetime member. Then Faith Associate Pastor Rev. Trinity Whitley moderated responses from those gathered. The attendees concluded their conversation, fellowship, and community building need to continue.



After the community response, a poem titled *The Cold Within*, by James Patrick Kinney, was co-read by Faith member Bob Apgar and Trinity United former pastor Rev. Ted Houston, shown above, from left.

A dramatic reenactment of this poignant poem can be found at <https://youtu.be/P8nyBiX5jU4>.

The program concluded with a procession from Faith’s Fellowship Hall through the entrance of the Sanctuary for a closing prayer and charge to the community by Rev. Whitley. The symbolic act marked the difference between the racist actions of exclusion by historically white Presbyterian churches in the past and the inclusive community today of all of God’s children who desire to come together for Christian worship in the Presbyterian church. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in love and live out the Gospel in both word and deed.

Government-funded weatherization helps “the least of these”

Who would have thought that weatherizing homes would be an important issue other than for a homeowner? Turns out that it is a vitally important issue for our community.

First, it makes homes safer, healthier and more comfortable for the homeowner, but it also helps reduce our community’s energy usage. This, in turn, reduces our carbon emissions, which is critically important for addressing the climate crisis. From a faith perspective, it helps “the least of these” deal with our warming world.

Thanks to President Biden’s Infrastructure bill passed by Congress, \$3.5 billion will now be available to provide weatherization upgrades to low-income homeowners. Around \$98 million is coming to Florida and perhaps \$1-2 million to Leon and surrounding counties. This is about ten times more money than was previously available for weatherization.

This program is officially known as the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). Its purpose is to increase energy efficiency, protect health and safety and reduce energy costs for low-income households.

In Florida, the money

goes to the Department of Economic Opportunity’s Weatherization Office.

The state must apply for the money from the federal Department of Energy and show that it has adequate staffing and a plan for the money.

Once the state receives the money, local agencies, like our Capital Area Community Action Agency (CACAA) apply for the money from the state.

Locally, about two to three homes are weatherized monthly under this program. But with this new infusion of money, a lot more can be done, and this is important. Turns out, low-income residents spend more of their income on energy than median households in this country.

They spend about 7.2% of their income versus 3.5% for median households, with the burden as high as 30% for some low-income households. This forces them to choose between paying their energy bills or other necessities such as food or medicine.

The [State of Colorado](#) has expanded its weatherization program to include the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems for low-income households. This is unique because the growth of rooftop solar has primarily been confined to middle and

upper-income families. They appear to be doing it through their weatherization program, and it saves the homeowners more money and further reduces the community’s demand for energy. This study will hopefully serve as a model for Florida.

All of this is challenging and will take time, but it is encouraging that the federal, state and local governments are working together to reduce energy usage in our community for “the least of these”. More clean energy means less carbon and air pollution, which disproportionately harm lower-income communities, and especially communities of color. Greater clean energy capacity will offer these communities cleaner air, better health outcomes, and lower healthcare bills.

If you live in Leon County or surrounding counties and want to help your neighbors be a part of WAP, please contact Terry Mutch, Weatherization Program Manager with Capital Area Community Action Agency at 850-222-2043 x309. If you live outside this area, he can direct you to your local contact.

As always, please contact me with any questions or comments. pammcvety@hotmail.com.

Caring for Creation Notes



By
Pam McVety,
*Presbytery
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of Creation
Enabler*
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More clean energy means less carbon and air pollution, which disproportionately harm lower-income communities, and especially communities of color.

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

In July		Looking ahead	
Monday, July 4	Independence Day — Presbytery office closed	Thursday, August 4 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)
Tuesday, July 5 — Saturday, July 9	225th General Assembly resumes after July 4 holiday	Wednesday, August 10 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)
Thursday, July 7 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)	Saturday, August 13 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT	Committee on Representation (CR)
Saturday, July 9 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT	Committee on Representation (CR)	Monday, August 15 4 p.m. CDT/ 5 p.m. EDT	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)
Tuesday, July 12 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT	Committee on Ministry	Tuesday, August 16 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT	Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)
Wednesday, July 13 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)	Saturday, August 20	September Panhandle Presbyterian submissions deadline
Saturday, July 16 Noon CDT	"Christmas in July" Scottish Tea, 1st, Chipley	Tuesday, August 23 9 a.m. CDT/ 10 a.m. EDT	Summer Stated Presbytery Meeting, Grace, Panama City <i>Registration starts one hour before</i>
Sunday, July 17 — Friday, July 22	Dogwood Acres Summer Camp Week 4	Tuesday, August 30 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT	Committee on New Congregational Development (CNCD)
Sunday, July 24 — Friday, July 29	Dogwood Acres Summer Camp Week 5	Wednesday, August 31 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST	"I Stand With You" Anti-Racism Team
Monday, July 18 4 p.m. CDT/ 5 p.m. EDT	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)	Saturday, September 17	Disciplefest
Tuesday, July 19 10 a.m. CDT/ 11 a.m. EDT	Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)		
Wednesday, July 20 11:30 a.m. CDT	Central District Clergy/ Educators Gathering, Bogey's, DeFuniak Springs		
Wednesday, July 20	August Panhandle Presbyterian submissions deadline		
Thursday, July 21 9:30 a.m. CDT/ 10:30 a.m. EDT	Coordinating and Planning Commission (CPC)		
Tuesday, July 26 1 p.m. CDT/ 2 p.m. EDT	Committee on New Congregational Development (CNCD)		
Wednesday, July 27 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST	"I Stand With You" Anti-Racism Team		

weeKirk

CONFERENCE

October 17 — 19, 2022

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