MINUTES

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

Synod of Living Waters

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Stated Meeting

August 17, 2017

**GOD CALLS US TOGETHER**

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley of the Synod of Living Waters of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met in the Stated Meeting on August 17, 2017 at Shades Valley Presbyterian Church, Birmingham Alabama.

Throughout these minutes, Teaching Elders are indicated by an asterisk (\*).

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Moderator Shannon Webster\*, who opened the meeting with prayer.

# ORGANIZATION

On advice of the Stated Clerk, a quorum was declared by the Moderator.

**Adoption of the Docket**

The docket was adopted as amended by common consent.

**Seating of Corresponding Members**

Rev. John Bankson, Presbytery of Mississippi

**Recognition of First Time Commissioners and Visitors**

**Teaching Elders**

Ministers Present (55) Excused (56) Absent (15)

Abernethy, Barrett P

Acton, Ben P

Adams, Nan E

Alexander, Frank HR E

Anderson, Mike A

Angelini, Betty P

Atkerson, Rick P

Bailey, Michael P

Bang, Yo Chang P

Becker, Lindsay P

Bird, Shelaine P

Booth, Ben HR E

Brock, John A

Brown, Taylor, HR E

Broyles, Vernon, HR E

Bruchey, Wayne HR E

Burgess, Sid, HR P

Carl, Bill P

Carleton, Rhon HR E

Carter, Clyde HR P

Casey, Lydia P

Chandler, Doris E

Chaney, Patsy HR P

Chinula, Donald A

Cho, Timothy A

Choomack, Jim HR E

Clark, Molly HR E

Clayton, Susan P

Clendenin, Monty HR E

Coker, Jeff HR E

Crutchfield, Bob HR E

Dantzler, Bill HR E

Davis, Becky HR E

Davis, Lant P

Dippenaer, Vic P

Duke, Mickey HR E

Durham, Charles HR E

Durham, Erica E

Edwards, Robert A

Ephraim, James A

Epting, Bobbie HR E

Feagin, Debbie P

Frease, Matthew E

Free, Zana P

Genau, Joe P

Goodlet James P

Goodrich, Cat E

Goodrich, Elizabeth P

Hanna, Richard E

Harley, Patrick P

Harmon, Dawson, HR P

Hay, Robert, HR E

Hayes, Jeff A

Hibbard, Norman HR E

Homer, John HR E

Hoop, Cathy P

Hurley, Ed P

Hurst, Clyce HR P

Inman, Robert F. HR E

Japhet, Catherine A

Jeong, Junmo P

Jones, Steve P

Kang, JC P

Kelso, Hugh, HR E

Kesler, Randy A

Kim, Sung Woong A

Kim, Young A

Laney, Susan, HR E

Lays, Brian A

Mann, Becky E

McCarter, Neil HR P

McClendon, Bruce P

McClure, John A

McCormick, Mark P

McElrath, Pete HR E

McElveen, William HR E

McLaughlin, Wayne, HR P

McKean, Mac HR E

McLeod, James P

Moon, Hak Bae A

Mylalsingh, Emerson HR E

Newland, Terry P

Northen, Margaret HR E

O’Neill, Elizabeth P

Oh, Jyung, Ho P

Oliver, Catherine P

Patton, Finley HR E

Patton, Roger HR E

Pearce-Reed, Leanne P

Penson, Gozie HR E

Pope, Sam HR E

Porter, Mary HR E

Price, Sandra HR E

Pyburn, Richard, HR E

Rains, Tom HR E

Reed, Kathy E

Reed, Nick E

Rentz-Lane, Neely P

Scarbrough, Leeann P

Scrivner, Joe E

Scott, Christopher P

Seitz, Craig, HR E

Sellers, Lou Ann P

Shelton, Jack HR E

Sherwood, Paul P

Shin, Dongouk P

Sims, Charles HR P

Slane, Joe, HR P

Speaker, Cary P

Stanford, Jim HR E

Stephens, Dan P

Stephens, Gerald HR E

Thompson, Ben HR E

Tingle, Terry, HR E

Truesdell, Jim A

Turner, Lucy E

Wade, Lindsey P

Waters, Dana HR P

Watson, Cody E

Webster, J. Shannon P

Wells, Jim, HR E

Wilkins, Jay P

Wills, Bill HR E

Winter, Rachel P

Winter, Tom HR P

Winton, Carlton, HR E

Yarboro, Jonathan P

**Commission Ruling Elders with Vote**

Present (5) Excused (1) Absent (3)

Arellano, Ben P Harrison, John A

Bonner, Jeff P Sauser, Bill E

Dodson, Beverly P Thomas, Roger P

Eich, Sharon A. A Veasey, Lin P

Emerick, Robert A

**Executive Council Members/Presbytery Officers w/Vote**

**Present (5) Excused (3)** Carter, Eva P Rick Reed E

Jane Clayton P Judy Rogers P

Frennea, Rick E Jean Russell P

Debbie Hamrick P Toomey, Jim E

**Christian Educators, Presbyterian Women and Trustees Moderator w/Vote**

Jenny Thagard P Bill Stribling P Dotty Lessley P

**Elders**

Number in parenthesis by church name indicates the number of commissioners authorized. “NR” indicates that the church did not have elder representation. There are seventy-three churches in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Forty-three Commissioners were present.

Alexander City First (1) Nancy Coley

Annemanie Arlington (1) NR

Anniston Church of the Good Shepherd (1) Bobbie Clark

Anniston First (1) NR

Anniston First United (1) Debbie Miller

Anniston Korean (1) NR

Auburn First (2) Jim Parker

Carolyn Williams

Bessemer Good Hope (1) NR

Birmingham Bold Springs (1) Chuck Kukal

Birmingham Center Point (1) Elizabeth McKean

Birmingham Chapel in the Pines (1) Bonnnie Stephens

Birmingham Edgewood (1) Don Charles Hagen

Birmingham Fairfield Highlands (1) NR

Birmingham First (1) Mark Aldridge

Birmingham First United of Forestdale (1) NR

Birmingham Five Mile (1) NR

Birmingham Independent (5) Caryl Privett

Lee Walthall

Jimmy Holloway

Beverly Krannich

Kathy Thomas

Birmingham Korean (1) NR

Birmingham Mountain Brook (1) NR

Birmingham Oakmont (1) Virginia Buryn

Birmingham Riverchase (1) Catherine Rodenhauser

Birmingham Shades Valley (1) Laura McDonald

Birmingham South Highland (2) Mark Garner

Cathie Bonner

Birmingham Southminster (1) David L. Stephens

Birmingham Westminster (1) Lorino Hendricks

Cuba Cuba (1) NR

Camden New Trinity (1) NR

Carbon Hill First (1) NR

Dadeville First (1) Evelyn Pangburn

Dadeville Woods (1) NR

Eufaula First (1) NR

Gardendale Gardendale (1) Rodney Mewbourne

Goodwater First (1) NR

Green Pond Green Pond (1) NR

Jacksonville First (1) Carolyn Padgett

Lafayette Lebanon (1) NR

Leeds Leeds (1) Charles Gabbert

Livingston First (1) Molly Dorman

Magnolia Rock Springs (1) NR

Marion Junction Marion Junction (1) NR

McCalla Shepherd of the Valley (1) NR

Montevallo Montevallo (1) Jane Clayton

Montgomery Calvary NR

Montgomery Immanuel (1) NR

Montgomery Korean (1) Dujong Lee

Montgomery Memorial (1) Kathy Sweezey

Montgomery Westminster (1) Susan Samuel

Moundville Saint James (1) NR

Northport Bethel (1) NR

Odenville Odenville (1) NR

Opelika Korean Suhyun Suh

Oxford Dodson Memorial (1) Nancy Whitley

Phenix City First (1) NR

Piedmont First (1) NR

Plantersville Mount Pleasant (1) NR

Reform First (1) NR

Selma Northern Heights (1) Barbara Fears

Selma Pisgah (1) NR

Selma Valley Creek (1) NR

Springville Springville (1) NR

Sylacauga First (1) Patsy Shuttlesworth

Talladega First (1) NR

Troy Williams Memorial (1) NR

Trussville Cahaba Springs (1) Lynda McLean

Tuscaloosa Brown Memorial (1) Ben Winston

Tuscaloosa First (3) Lynn Johnson

Lisa Underwood

Ellen Potts

Tuscaloosa Grace (1) Rebecca Evans

Tuskegee Ramsay Memorial (1) NR

Tuskegee Institute Westminster (1) Judith Baldwin

Union Springs Union Springs (1) NR

Wetumpka First (1) Jon Lambert

We were warmly welcomed by Leanne Pearce Reed\*, pastor of Shades Valley. We were called to worship by Olympia McCrackin, praising God for all God’s wonders. The body joined in singing *Praise God for This Holy Ground*. The Rev. Barrett Abernethy called us to confess our sins then assured us of God’s pardon. The Rev. Betty Angelini prayed the Prayer for Illumination.

The Rev. Leanne Pearce Reed read from Psalm 133 and Matthew 15:21-28 then shared a message titled, *Making Room*. Leanne shared a bit about her family vacation in the Great Smoky Mountains of seeing a bear and wondered at the fierce protective nature of a mother, whether they be bear or woman. The Matthew passage speaks of a mother who beseeches Jesus to heal her child. The woman is considered “outside the fold” but she is desperate to help her daughter who likely had exhausted all other options to try to find healing for her daughter. She would not have been allowed to speak to a man in public. Jesus’ response is silence. Yet Jesus’ mission is to the Jewish people. She knelt before Jesus begging for Jesus to heal her daughter. His response was that he had come only for people of Israel. The dogs represent the Gentiles. His harsh response of “but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off the Master’s table” and her daughter was healed.

The mother would not give up on her daughter or on Jesus. Jesus saw the fierce love of this Canaanite woman, a love that embraces all and does not give up. Perhaps Jesus saw in this woman God’s love for this world. God’s love welcomes all. There is room for all at the Table. Once we realize that, we understand the Church that we are supposed to be. We embody God’s love but often we fail to welcome others who are not like us. Are we willing to risk it all in order to welcome those who do not look, act or worship like us?

Leanne spoke of being a commissioner to the 222nd General Assembly and the debate on the Belhar Confession, a confession written to address the issues that many in the world face in

terms of discrimination against people who don’t look like us. It has been said that we make this Confession as *a cry from out heart*.

The body joined in reading from the Belhar Confession the Affirmation of Faith proclaiming what we believe.

The offering that was collected will be given to breast cancer research in memory of Rebecca Foust Jenkins, who passed away last week and was the wife of the former Treasurer of this presbytery.

The Rev. Leanne Pearce Reed and the Rev. Ben Acton invited us to the Lord’s Table. Those gathered received communion by intinction. As all were served, the assembled joined in singing *Come to the Table of Grace.* Prayers of thanksgiving were offered by Rev. Barrett Abernethy followed by singing *Spirit Open My Heart.*

**Commissioning for Young Adult Volunteers** – Elizabeth O’Neill

Mary Frances Yielding, Clare Forrister, Cammie Coulter and Bryan Bergman

The charge and the blessing were offered to these four and prayers of blessings were said as they begin their year of service. They publically confirmed their willingness to serve God by serving as a Young Adult Volunteer in 2017/2018.

**Stated Clerk and Omnibus Motion**

**Omnibus Motion**

* \* To approve the minutes of the May 12, 2017, minutes of presbytery.
* \* To approve requests for absences for today’s meeting.
* \* To record the receipt of minutes for the installations of Patrick Harley, UKirk, Birmingham, and Leanne Pearce Reed as pastor of Shades Valley Church.
* Approved

**For Action**

* • To approve the final report of the Administrative Commission for Shepherd of the Valley.

**Administrative Commission**

The Presbytery received a letter dated October 4, 2016 from the session of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church informing us that the church was seeking membership in the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO). They gave two reasons for this action:

* 1. PCUSA’s departure from sound Christian Reformed Presbyterian Doctrine
* 2. PCUSA’s view on the authoritative nature of Scripture.

The letter further stated that they had met with legal counsel and were on sound footing and lovingly declared that they were no longer under the jurisdiction of the PCUSA.

Our Stated Clerk wrote the Moderator of Session, Reverend Randy Kessler stating that our polity makes no provision for a particular church to “separate” or “disaffiliate” from the Presbytery or the PCUSA. Further that our process was to work with congregations who wish to leave and that a Response/Review Team had been appointed by the Commission on Ministry to do so. A member of that team received no response when a call was made to set up a meeting.

At the May 11, 2017 Presbytery meeting, an Administrative Commission was elected. Those elected were: Beverly Dodson, Lant Davis, and Peter Finley, The Commission met May 16, 2017 with the Stated Clerk and Transitional Executive in attendance. It was agreed that a title search be conducted. This has been completed. According to probate records of Jefferson County, Alabama, all deeds and mortgages of the property are listed in the name of First Presbyterian Church of Bessemer including that now located on Eastern Valley Road. The original property located at 1723 - 3rd Avenue North in Bessemer was sold to the Perfecting

Reconciliation Church International and Shepherd of the Valley holds that mortgage.

The Administrative Commission recommends approval of the following actions:

* 1. That the Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church (formerly known as First Presbyterian Church, Bessemer, Alabama) be dissolved in accordance with G-3.0301a of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U. S.A.).
* 2. That the Presbytery at this time make no current disposition of any interest it has in the

real and personal property of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, including, but not limited to: (a) the current location of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, situated at 5081 Eastern Valley Road, McCalla, Alabama; (b) any reversionary interest that may exist in the property currently used by the Good Hope Presbyterian Church (which it acquired from First Presbyterian Church, Bessemer, Alabama, the predecessor of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church); (c) any mineral property legally titled in the name of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church or any of its predecessors; and (d) Any interest Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, or any of its predecessors, may have – by mortgage, note, or otherwise in the property formerly occupied by the First Presbyterian Church, Bessemer, Alabama, situated at 1723 – 3rd Avenue North, Bessemer, Alabama.

* 3. That the Presbytery, in accordance with Section G-3.0107 of the Book of Order of the
* Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), shall take efforts to obtain the minutes and all other official records of the Session of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church and its predecessors prior to the date of dissolution or, if the originals cannot be obtained, copies thereof, which minutes and official records (or copies thereof) would be archived with the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

4. That the Administrative Commission be dismissed.

The motion came from the Stated Clerk requiring no second and was approved.

* • Approve the loan for Edgewood Church from the PC(USA) Investment and Loan Program. The loan is $75,000 for 15 years.

The motion came from the Stated Clerk requiring no second and was approved.

**For Information**

* \* To record the review of 2016 minutes for the following churches: Gardendale,
* Edgewood, First-Livingston, Center Point, Mountain Brook, Second, Chapel-in-the-
* Pines, Cahaba Springs, Oakmont (2015 & 2016), Southminster, First United Forestdale,
* Riverchase, Green Pond, Independent, Grace and Bethel.
* \* There will be a final reading of the minutes at First-Wetumpka on Saturday, Aug. 26 from 10:00 a.m. until Noon. If you will not be able to make that meeting, please call me so we can set up a time for your church to have their minutes read.
* \* The 2016 Presbytery minutes were approved without exception, thanks to Debbie
* Hamrick and Linda Burrowes.
* \* The following churches have not paid any of their per capita for 2017: Church of the
* Good Shepherd, Grace, Cuba, First-Phenix City, First-Reform, Good Hope,

Independent, Korean-Birmingham, Korean-Montgomery, Mount Pleasant, Ramsay

* Memorial, Rock Springs, Springville, and Westminster-Montgomery,

Recognition of Debbie Hamrick for her 12 years of service as presbytery’s Recording Clerk.

**Transitional Presbyter Report** – Jay Wilkins\*

Jay spoke of the role of the Transitional Presbyter

*Role of the TP:*

1. *to assist and oversee maintaining current on-going programs and services of the PSL;*
2. *to assist and guide the study and evaluation of current programs and services and development of long range goals and priorities;*
3. *to assist and guide creation of a proposed permanent staffing structure;*
4. *to serve as the leader/coordinator of the present staff team;*
5. *to fulfill all constitutional responsibilities of the chief administrative position in the PSL.*

Full report appears in Appendix A.

**MOTION** by Leanne Pearce Reed, a second was heard that by the November 2017 Presbytery meeting, the Executive Council will appoint an Anti-Racism Team that will provide for anti-racism education and action within our presbytery in 2018. The motion was Approved.

**Mission Coordinator Report** – Ralls Coston

* Habitat house starts building September 5 and currently there are twelve churches participating but we could use more. The house will be in Ensley.
* SDOP (Self-Development of People) was certified last spring.
* The Pentecost CANpaign: 22,017 cans were collected.

**Stillman College Report** – Mark McCormick\*

Mark shared that he moved here as an academic scholar but felt called to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament thanks to Stillman College. He relayed that students were moving in on campus. Stillman has a new President, Dr. Cynthia Warrick, who was present today. She is the seventh president of the college but the first woman. There is a new graduate program that is ready to receive applications. There are all kinds of new opportunities on campus. Dr. Warrick wants to strengthen the relationship between Stillman and the Presbytery, delving into Stillman’s Presbyterian roots. We endeavor to witness the love of Christ through education.

Dr. Warrick thanked the presbytery for the support received. Many churches have provided vital support. She hopes to develop an even stronger relationship with churches here.

**Report from Congo** – Belinda Dickinson

The mission is currently planning for a second school. There is a great deal of work to be done there. If churches have not become involved in the ministry and would like to be involved, please contact Belinda. On October 5th there will be a presentation on Congo at Shades Valley and all are encouraged to attend. Appendix G

**UKirk, Birmingham Report** – Patrick Harley\*

Patrick expressed his thanks for the support offered to him in his six months here. He thanked presbytery for all the value they place on young adults. On September 5 at 6:00 pm at the Clubhouse on Highland will kick off worship. They have gathered for coffee on Tuesday nights to discuss issues of concern.

**Executive Council** – Shannon Webster\*

In an effort to improve communication and effectiveness across the Presbytery, the Council continues to develop a plan to discern the describable difference made by each of our various committees and task teams. We have developed a simple set of questions for our committees and teams that should help them describe the difference that they make to our Presbytery and the world. Watch for more to come on this project.

**For Information**

1. We have reaffirmed the covenant relationship between the Presbyterian Home for Children

and the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Appendix B

2. Council received from the Commission on Ministry a document that describes responsibilities

of the COM members, as was requested by the Executive Council.

3. The Child and Protection Policy is in the process of being implemented. Conversations with

interested parties are trying to make the policy more effective and revise the forms.

4. We approved $8,787.50 to be sent for the Stillman College “Leadership Development

Program” to be held in November. (These are funds not used by the grant writer.)

5. Birmingham area churches are sponsoring a Habitat for Humanity house build for the Horne

family in Ensley. Construction will start Sept. 7, 2017. Twelve area churches have omitted to give money and/or volunteers for this project. Some of the churches have already given their funds. Presbytery has a Habitat House Fund/Birmingham Area. All donated monies are going to this fund, which will send the money to the Birmingham chapter of Habitat for Humanity. If anyone wants to make a donation or volunteer,

please contact your church's minister, mission committee chair, or Ralls Coston (email: [rcoston@pslpcusa.org](mailto:rcoston@pslpcusa.org)).

**Good News from the Churches**

Paul Sherwood, Oakmont, gave thanks for people who do work on the presbytery level and are members of Oakmont, Linda Burrowes, Ralls Coston, and Beverly Dodson.

James Goodlet shared that UPerk is now up and running after three years of dreaming, hoping, planning and doing. The ministry of UKIrk will be done based out of UPerk. They are empowering the students to be the church. Creating a business that has our theology in mind is the goal. Tuesday at 5pm will be the Grand Opening and Tuesday, the 29th they will hold the first worship service held at UPerk.

Ben Acton, Southminster, gave thanks for SVPC, the church he grew up in. Work on Youth Council continues. Southminster has been celebrating their 60th anniversary all summer but in October they will celebrate their anniversary.

Ed Hurley, South Highland, encouraged every to come hear Rev. Joseph Kassab at Southminster or at Kirkwood by the River. He is very well informed about the Presbyterian church in Syria and Lebanon. Presbytery will host a drop in Wednesday, Sept. 20 from

2:00 to 3:30 pm.

Neil McCarter spoke about the Small Church Task Force. He encouraged folks to participate in the Leadership Training session after this meeting.

The meeting was temporarily suspended for lunch.

The Moderator called the body to resume the work of the presbytery.

**Equip, Nurture and Connect** – James Goodlet

Fifty-six scholarships were given toward the cost of camp at Living River this summer. If you know of anyone in your church who are collage age students, please let James know. Main Event will be held in Tuscaloosa in February. Small Church Task Force, please contact Neil McCarter. See Appendix H and Appendix I.

**Nominating** - Cathy Hoop\*

The Nominating Committee brings forward the following actions for approval by the Presbytery:

* Proposed slate of individuals who have agreed to serve on a search committee for the General Presbyter:

Barrett Abernethy, teaching elder, First Presbyterian Church, Livingston

Terri Jones, ruling elder, First United Presbyterian Church Forestdale

Judy Rogers, ruling elder, Montevallo Presbyterian

Leeann Scarbrough, teaching elder, First Presbyterian Church, Talladega

Jonathan Yarboro, teaching elder, First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka

*The General Presbyter Search Committee will work in conjunction with a representative from the Synod of Living Waters.*

The nominations were approved.

Proposed PSL Youth Council, as submitted by Catherine Goudreau, Independent Presbyterian Church, chair:

Abigail Donovan, Independent

Sara Catherine Cook,  Independent

William Hereford,  Independent

Hopper Coley, Southminster

Anne Kearney Patton, South Highland

Rachel Ross-Davis, South Highland

Betsy Murphy, adult, Southminster

Daniel Killilea, adult, South Highland

The motion to approve members for the Youth Council was approved.

Rescinding the action taken at the May meeting of Presbytery to elect a board for the Westminster Apartments in Anniston. While the boards of the other housing complexes are elected by an action of our Presbytery, the Westminster apartments, according to their by-laws, are an independent organization. Therefore, the nominating of a board for the Westminster Apartments should not have been brought forward by the Nominating Committee.

In addition, please see the attached letter of apology to their board members. Appendix C

Motion to rescind this action was approved.

The Nominating Committee continues to ask for your prayers as we seek to complete the process of preparing the slate for the Presbytery committees. We also are still seeking applicants for the position of Recording Clerk, and ask that you publicize this position with your congregations as this is an immediate need. We will be bringing a nomination for Stated Clerk to the November meeting.

We encourage you to talk with your Session Members about the opportunity to participate in either the 2018 or 2020 General Assembly. Adult and young adult advisory delegates are needed.

**Trustees** -- Bill Stribling

1.Approve the purchase of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Birmingham by Anointed &

Divine Ministry Christian Church for $650,000.  The sale is to close within 60 days.

**Commission on Ministry** – Ben Arellano

**Information Items:**

1. Approved Cahaba Springs and Southminster’s MIF.

2. Approved Heather Butler, candidate from South Alabama and living in Montgomery, to place

her name on the Supply List.

3. COM is working on clarifying responsibilities for members of COM and working on division of

labor.

4. Approved Robert S. Hay’s agreement with First-Auburn to serve as an Interim Associate

Pastor, effective August 1, 2017.

5. Presbytery has provided scholarship funds to be used in training needed for

Commissioned Pastors (formerly CRE’s). If you or someone in your church is interested,

please go to our webpage [www.pslpcusa.org](http://www.pslpcusa.org) and scroll down until you see “CRE candidates

needed” or contact Bev Dodson at bevdod@gmail.com.

**Action Items:**

1. Approve the dissolution of the relationship between Rachel Winter and First-Auburn. All

benefits would cease and her call would be dissolved when Rachel has obtained

Employment that offers health insurance or on May 31, 2018, whichever occurs first.

Approved

2. Examine and approve Rev. John Bankson (Presbytery of Mississippi) as Member-at-Large.

Statements attached. Appendix E

John was examined by presbytery and his examination was sustained.

3. Approve J. C. Kang as Associate Pastor at Auburn-Opelika Korean (He is already a member

of our Presbytery). Installation: Sept. 17, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. Terms of Call: Salary $33,600;

Housing $10,080; BOP dues $15,943; SECA $3,625; Con Ed $750. Total Package: $63,998.

Commission: Teaching Elders: Hakbae Moon, Yoo Chang Bang, and Nan Adams. Ruling

Elders: Ben Arellano, Memorial; and Suhyun Suh, Auburn-Opelika Korean Church.

The examination for J.C. Kang was sustained.

4. Approve the attached Presbytery Minimum Compensation Recommendation for 2018.

Motion was approved. Appendix D

5. Approve the retirement of Rev. Shannon Webster effective Oct. 31.

Motion approved.

**Commission on Preparation for Ministry** – Joe Genau\*

INQUIRERS CHURCH INSTITUTION

Emily Frandsen Independent, Birmingham Dubuque

Alexandra Hutson First, Tuscaloosa Columbia

Mary Sellers Shaw Independent, Birmingham Vanderbilt

Avery Smith Grace, Tuscaloosa Louisville

Samuel Turpen Edgewood, Birmingham Columbia

CANDIDATES

Bennett Alldredge First, Tuscaloosa Princeton

Courtney Bowen IPC, Birmingham Louisville Rachel

Rachel VanKirk Mathews First, Tuscaloosa Columbia

Leigh Ann Min First, Birmingham Graduate (Columbia)

FOR INFORMATION:

* The commission enrolled Emily Frandsen of Independent, Birmingham, as an inquirer.

The commission has appointed Susan Haskell (elder - Independent), Ben Acton (minister – Southminster), and Leeann Scarbrough (minister – First Talladega) to administer the Alternative Assessment of Theological Competence for Candidate Leigh Ann Min. The assessment will take place in September.

**Living River** – Betty Angelini

The full report from Living River appears as Appendix F.

**Presbyterian Home for Children** – Jacque Cordell

The average age of a child of PHC is six years old. They minister to over 9,000 kids, teens and families. There’s job training, college classes, housing and more. Family Bridges is a program where families are paired with a social worker who is in the process of either losing a child/children or have already lost one. They are taught parenting skills and encouraged to fully participate in the lives of their children, providing a safe and healthy home for them.

**New Business**

None

**Closing Prayer and Dismissal**

The next stated meeting will be held on November 9, 2017 at Living River Camp and Conference Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Thomas Winter

Stated Clerk

**Appendix A**

**Transitional Presbyter’s Report**

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Meeting on August 17, 2017**

*Role of the TP:*

1. *to assist and oversee maintaining current on-going programs and services of the PSL;*
2. *to assist and guide the study and evaluation of current programs and services and development of long range goals and priorities;*
3. *to assist and guide creation of a proposed permanent staffing structure;*
4. *to serve as the leader/coordinator of the present staff team;*
5. *to fulfill all constitutional responsibilities of the chief administrative position in the PSL.*

How do we know if we are living into this identity statement? *“partner with and equip present and emerging PC(USA) faith communities in central Alabama to serve Christ and our neighbors”.*

How do we know if we are we are living into the conclusion of our “Statement of Purpose”? “*the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley will itself need to be transformed by the Holy Spirit as it creates new structures, redirecting its mission, reconnecting its members and refreshing its leaders to better serve God’s people in this time and place.*”

How do we tell a story of how we are doing? Are we doing better in following the leading of the Spirit? How do we describe that to each other? The Executive Council has taken up the language I have learned from Gil Rendle in Doing the Math of Mission. Instead of counting resources used and activities created, we focus on the differences God calls us to make in the lives of our congregations and communities. Instead of focusing on how many, how often, how much, we seek to answer the question of how far have we moved toward the differences we are called to make. So it is that each of the committees and task forces of the Presbytery will be asked the passion that empowers them and the difference they seek to make.

I use the expression “describable difference.” As a Presbytery, we do seek to make a difference, and we can describe that difference even if we cannot quantify it. We need to be able to describe the difference so that we can discern if we are moving closer to what God is calling us to be and do. As Rendle puts it, “we are not here to preserve and protect, but to challenge and change. ….A faithful outcome of healthy ministry requires more discernment of God’s will than decision-making about our own future.”

The describable difference we are called to make is for “the next chapter of your life,” for this specific time and place and culture in which we find ourselves. This Presbytery is on a divine adventure living into the identity statement and the “Statement of Purpose” with transitions in the staff. So, we seek to describe differences God calls us to make in shorter time frames, as fits the changing nature of the church and culture.

At the “Big Tent” gathering in St. Louis last month I experienced some of the changes happening in our church. I was in a workshop on “Intercultural Care Giving” that helped us see power dynamics in a multicultural church. As I looked around, I realized that I was one of only two “old white men” in the room. We listened to stories of Africans, Indonesians, Koreans, African-Americans, women, men, young adults, and heard the call to claim that Christian love sees all colors. By seeing the different experiences of others, we might truly learn to do unto others as they would have us do unto them. So we need to learn to ask, to listen, to learn, to be transformed by God’s Spirit.

I give thanks to God for being on this journey with you.

**Appendix B**

The Covenant Between Presbyterian Home for Children and the

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Nature of the Covenant.
   1. Covenant Relationships in General. The relationship that exists between Presbyterian Home for Children ("PHC") and the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. ("the Presbytery") shall be defined and characterized by the word "covenant." The term "covenant" has found its highest expression among God's people. Thus, covenant within the family of God implies the deepest level of trust between covenanting parties and of commitment to one another. A Christian covenant is a living agreement, offering vast opportunities for creative adaptation to meet changing conditions.
   2. Confirmation of the Covenant Relationship. PHC and the Presbytery hereby confirm their covenant relationship recognizing that the life and work of each is enriched and made more dynamic through this relationship and also recognizing that each party has its own role that can be strengthened through the mutual exchange of ideas, resources, and support for the mission of the other.
   3. Purpose of this Document. This document is a current statement of the covenant relationship between PHC and the Presbytery and of the mutual expectations and commitments that provide the basis for review and evaluation of the work done by PHC and the fulfillment of the Presbyter's responsibilities to PHC.

II. Parties to the Covenant.

1. Presbyterian Home for Children. Presbyterian Home for Children is an Alabama nonprofit corporation originally established by the Synod of Alabama in 1864. At the October, 1864 Synod meeting in Selma, Alabama, Presbyterians of Alabama focused on the need for care of a great many children who were left without parents or families who could care for then in the wake of three years of a difficult Civil War. They voted unanimously to establish and endow the Orphan's Home of the Synod of Alabama. Over the next four years money was raised and the land and buildings of a former Military School in Tuskegee, Alabama, were purchased for the Home. The doors of the facility were opened on June 1, 1868 with Mr. A.R. Holderby as Superintendent. In 1892 the Home was moved to Talladega, Alabama, to be more centrally located and gain more space for the children. In 1930 the official name of the agency became the Presbyterian Home for Children. In 1973 when the Synod boundaries were realigned in the Presbyterian Church U.S., PRC became an agency of the Presbyteries within the boundaries of the State of Alabama. In 1983 these presbyteries became a part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Home is currently an agency of the Presbytery of South Alabama, the Presbytery of North Alabama, and the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). The agency goal for children in care is to provide in our programs of residential homes, therapeutic treatment, emergency shelter, counseling, spiritual guidance, and education an atmosphere free from fear and rejection where young lives victimized by poverty, illiteracy, abuse, violence and homelessness can be nurtured in God's family, touched by Christ's Spirit and reclaimed, redeemed, and changed
2. Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc. is an Alabama nonprofit corporation. The Presbytery is a regional governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and its jurisdiction includes the central portion of Alabama. Following the reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1983, the presbytery boundaries in the State of Alabama were redrawn. In 1988, The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley was formed by merging all, or parts of, five former presbyteries. Named for missionaries sent to the Congo by Presbyterians in central Alabama, the presbytery continues to support mission in its midst, as well as around the world. The presbytery seeks to aid in the transformation of communities and individual lives by partnering with congregations and agencies committed to demonstrating of the love of God to all people.

III. Legal Relationship of the Parties. PHC and the Presbytery are separate legal entities.

* 1. PHC Board of Trustees. PHC's Articles of Incorporation provide that it shall be governed by a Board of Trustees and that each of the three presbyteries in Alabama shall elect as vacancies occur so as to maintain five (5) members from each of the three presbyteries on the Board, and shall seek persons representative of their constituency. PHC will assume the responsibility for nominating persons within its constituency to the Presbytery Nominating Committee as the Presbytery's nominees for the PHC Board of Trustees
  2. Distribution of Assets Upon PHC Dissolution. PHC's Articles of Incorporation provide that in the event that PHC is dissolved, its assets, after payment of all liabilities, shall be distributed to the Presbyteries within the State of Alabama or their successors.
  3. Liability for Debts of Other Party. It is expressly agreed that neither PHC nor any of its Trustees, officers, agents, or employees shall be liable for any debts, obligations, or other liabilities of the Presbytery and neither the Presbytery nor any of its Trustees, officers, agents, or employees shall be liable for any debts, obligations, or other liabilities of PHC.
  4. Controlling Documents. A copy of PHC's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and any amendments thereto shall be provided by PHC to the Presbytery Executive, and a copy of the Standing Rules and Operating Manual of the Presbytery and any amendments thereto shall be provided by the Presbytery to the President of PHC.

IV. Responsibilities under the Covenant.

* 1. Mission of Presbyterian Home for Children The Presbytery has commissioned Presbyterian Children's Homes to provide a variety of Christ-centered child care services which minister to the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of dependent, neglected, and troubled children and youth, together with their families, in order that they might become the fully functional persons whom God created them to be.
  2. Mission of Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. The purpose of God is fully revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. As Christ's body, the Church is called to proclaim the gospel and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to make disciples, inviting and encouraging people to become followers of Jesus-to grow spiritually, emotionally, and theologically on the journey of faith and faithfulness. All Presbyterian communities are called to be instruments of God's will. To each there is a particular role, with accompanying responsibilities. Being a living expression of the Great Ends of the Church is the primary task of all entities of the Church beginning at the congregational level. Presbyteries exist to create and encourage such congregations and to motivate, develop, and support leadership and mission. The Presbytery is meant to be a community of interdependent congregations and mission endeavors, which include such institutions as PHC. The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley seeks to “partner with and equip present and merging PC(USA) faith communities in central Alabama to serve Christ and our neighbors.”
  3. Mutual Concern and Support. Both PHC and the Presbytery shall at all times demonstrate mutual concern and support for one another. The primary expression of mutual concern and support shall involve program relationships between PHC and the Presbytery in which each provides services for the other.
  4. Governing Boards and Communication. In fulfilling the responsibilities of this covenant, PHC normally acts through its Board of Trustees and the Presbytery through its stated meetings, although each may delegate responsibilities to others. Continuing communication between PHC and the Presbytery should be affirmed and maintained. PHC may communicate with the Presbytery through the Presbytery's Executive Council or the General Presbyter. The Presbytery may communicate with PHC through PHC's Board of Trustees or the President of PHC.
  5. Role of Presbyterian Home for Children.
     1. Legal Responsibilities. PHC, through its Board of Trustees, accepts the legal responsibilities associated with the governance of PHC and the responsibility for nominating persons to the Presbytery for election as PHC trustees, electing at-large Trustees, and training all elected trustees to bring effective leadership to PHC and a general commitment to the goals and programs of the Presbytery.
     2. Availability of Expertise and Resources. PHC commits to offering its expertise and facilities as a resource for the Presbytery. PHC personnel, insofar as reasonable, shall be available to lead or participate in conferences and other events and to serve on committees and task forces of the Presbytery. PHC's physical facilities and resources shall be available for use by the Presbytery in appropriate and needed ways. These services, which are not for profit to PHC, shall ordinarily be rendered on a cost basis to the Presbytery. Both the Presbytery and PHC shall respect the primary responsibility of PHC to fulfill its mission in deploying personnel and other resources.
     3. PHC Funding. PHC agrees to assume primary responsibility in securing funding for its management and operation. PHC is free to solicit funds from individual Presbyterians and other persons, congregations, presbyteries, trustees, foundations, estates, and any other appropriate sources.
     4. Cooperation With Other Presbyterian Child Care Ministries. PHC is cognizant of the existence of other Presbyterian child and social service ministries within the bounds of the Presbytery and will actively seek ways to work cooperatively for the mutual benefit of all.
  6. Role of Presbytery.
     1. Advocate for PHC. The Presbytery shall interpret and advocate the role and programs of PHC to congregations, governing bodies, individual Presbyterians, and others, particularly those within the Presbytery's area of jurisdiction. This will include the distribution of information regarding the mission and work of PHC.
     2. Support of PHC. The Presbytery shall provide support, including, insofar as possible, financial support, to PHC. The Presbytery shall also encourage support of PHC, including financial support, by congregations, governing bodies, individual Presbyterians, and others, particularly those within the Presbytery's area of jurisdiction.
     3. Availability of Expertise and Resources. The Presbytery commits to offering its expertise and facilities as a resource for PHC. Presbytery personnel, insofar as reasonable, shall be available to consult and work with PHC in support of its mission. The Presbytery's physical facilities and resources shall be available for use by PHC in appropriate and needed ways. These services, which are not for profit to the Presbytery, shall ordinarily be rendered on a cost basis to PHC. Both PHC and the Presbytery shall respect the primary responsibility of the Presbytery to fulfill its mission in deploying personnel and other resources.
  7. Annual Report and Review. At the Presbytery's stated meeting each spring, PHC shall provide an annual report to the Presbytery, through the Presbytery’s Executive Council, that shall include, among other things, how PHC is caring out its mission statement, guidelines that under gird PHC's work as a Christian ministry, the names of all members of the PHC Board of Trustees, and a copy of PHC's most recent audited financial statements. After considering the report, the Executive Council shall transmit the report to the Presbytery for consideration. A conversation regarding the state of the covenant relationship and other relevant matters should occur annually, typically following PHC's submission of its annual report

1. Authorization of Other Program Relationships. PHC and the Presbytery recognize the advantages of working relationships between PHC and other individuals and organizations (including other church governing bodies) not inconsistent with this covenant. Such relationships allow for mutual responsibilities and resources to be identified and exercised at every level. PHC, therefore, may continue or establish relationships with other individuals and organizations (including other church governing bodies) that are subordinate to and not inconsistent with this covenant.
2. Review and Renewal of the Covenant. The statement of covenant relationship between PHC and the Presbytery shall be reviewed and, if necessary, revised at least every five years. It is the joint responsibility of PHC and the Presbytery to ensure that such a review is accomplished. Interim changes agreeable to both parties may be made as conditions require.
3. Formal Approval of the Covenant. Presbyterian Home for Children and the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc., by formal action of their respective governing boards, adopt this current statement of their covenant relationship, effective on the affirmative vote of both governing boards.

Approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of Presbyterian Horne for Children

on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2017

by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, President

Approved and adopted by the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2017

by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , Moderator of the Executive Council

**Appendix C**

**Nominating Committee Letter**

Mr. Larry Dawson,

Chair, Westminster Apartments Board of Directors

474 Kingsway Dr.

Anniston, AL 36207

Dear Mr. Dawson,

On behalf of the Nominating Committee of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley,

please accept my most sincere apologies for the action that was taken at the May 11, 2017 meeting with regard to the creation of a new Board of Directors.

I take the responsibility of this misstep, and today brought forward the recommendation to rescind this action at our regular stated Presbytery Meeting. In an attempt to ensure that all the Presbyterian homes had established boards, I neglected to research the by-laws of the individual organizations. I apologize for the unnecessary stress and frustration this has brought to you and your board members, and I hope that the board’s trust in this Presbytery will not be damaged by this error on our part.

With prayers for renewed relationship, please accept our sincere apology.

In the unity of Christ,

Rev. Cathy C. Hoop

Chair, Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Nominating Committee

PRESBYTERY MINIMUM COMPENSATIONRECOMMENDATION

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley (**Revised 7-11-2017) Appendix D**

TotalEffective Salary: Present Previous

Cash, Housing, **etc.**(**See Effective Salary Booklet**) **$39,521** $38,370

Church expense included in compensation package

Board of Pensions **(**36-1/2%) **14,425** 12,087

Auto Allowance **(**mileage x IRS allowable rate**)** IRS rate IRS rate

(not included in effective salary if total amountpaid

by voucher for actual expense)

Continuing Education 750 750

(not included in effective salary if total amountpaid

by voucher for actual expense)

TOTAL MINIMUM COMPENSATION PACKAGE **$54,696+**mileage$51,207

4 weeks Vacation – 2 weeks Continuing Education Study Leave

The terms of the call shall always provide for compensation that meets or exceeds any presbytery minimum requirements when the call is made and shall thereafter be adjusted annually as required to conform to such requirement. (G-2.0804)

A Sabbatical Leave of at least three months after six years of service to an individual church is

recommended and must be considered as part of the pastor’s annual review of terms of call. If a congregation is unable to approve and implement a sabbatical leave plan within the guidelines of the Presbytery Sabbatical Leave policy, it shall provide a written rationale for denial to COM along with the present terms of call.

This minimum salary is for a full-time pastor. Part-time pastors working at least 20 hours per week, the salary is prorated accordingly. Vacation and study leave remain the same.

**(**For Board of Pension dues for part time installed pastor, call Stated Clerk.)

Temporary Supply Pastors working less than 20 hours per week are not covered by the Board of Pensions and are paid in accordance with hours worked. Those working at least 20 hours per week may be provided benefits through the Board.

Pulpit Supply is paid an honorarium, plus mileage. The minimum honorarium is $150 per Sunday. Mileage is at the current IRS rate. A Presbytery appointed Session Moderator should be paid $50 per stated session meeting. Mileage at the current IRS rate should be paid if the Moderator travels to the location for Session Meeting only.

All church sessions are encouraged to make provisions for sick leave and an annual review for both ordained and non-ordained staff.

\*The church-wide median salary for ordained clergy enrolled in the Benefit Plan is **$63,116** effective **5-1-16.** For exempt lay members **$42,800;** for nonexempt lay members **$31,200.** For non-ordained professional staff members (Christian Educators & Music Directors), churches are encouraged to use these minimum terms as a guideline for both full-time and part time employees. **It is also strongly encouraged that churches provide adequate medical and pension benefits for all church employees.**

**My Journey into the Presbyterian Church (USA) Appendix E**

**John Allen T. Bankson**

I was born in 1967 and so was completely unaware of the issues that were dividing the PCUS at that time. I was a member of the church of which my parents were members. That was all I knew. As I entered high school and became more aware of theological issues, I knew one thing: I was a Presbyterian. I was also aware that, in my then-denomination, there were a lot of people who would always follow “We’re Presbyterian” with the word “but ...” as in, “We’re Presbyterian, but we’re not the ones who have women elders,” or “We’re Presbyterian, but we’re more Evangelical than Presbyterian.” I knew I wanted to be a Presbyterian. I didn’t want to be a “Presbyterian But.”

When I graduated from Samford and felt the call to ministry, I went to the seminary where my brother was already a student and where my uncle had been a professor. I was fortunate in that, since it was not tied to any particular denomination, I had professors, and fellow students, who were PCA, PC(USA), EPC, Christian Reformed, and even a couple of Roman Catholics and a Lutheran (the latter was my roommate). Two of my most influential professors were members of the Presbytery of Mississippi: Al Freundt and Knox Chamblin. In seminary, I became aware that I didn’t exactly “fit the profile” of the denomination in which I had grown up. I embraced, for example, the Second Helvetic Confession’s statement that “the preaching of the Word of God is the Word of God,” believing in a more dynamic understanding of the Word of God (following Barth) than the approved party line. I also embraced a vision of worship that was more in the center of the Reformed tradition and more in keeping with ecumenical practice than the Puritan-leaning views of my denomination.

In time it became even clearer that I did not agree with that denomination’s view of interpreting scripture nor its understanding of what the Reformed tradition is. I did not agree with its shutting out women from the ministry. LGBT issues were not on my radar screen at that time, but soon I would vehemently disagree with their unwelcoming stance on that front as well.

It was time for me to go, officially, to the PC(USA). When I was received into the Presbytery of Mississippi I felt that I was finally “at home.”

Here’s what I appreciate about the PC(USA): first, I appreciate that it is connectional.

I am also glad to be in a denomination that embraces the wideness of God’s mercy and the diversity of the church. I am glad to be in a denomination that sees that the Holy Spirit can distribute the gifts of the Spirit as the Holy Spirit desires. As a musician, I am glad to be in a denomination that has a heart for worship that is biblically informed, ecumenically aware, and aesthetically beautiful. Time and again, the people of PC(USA) churches have never ceased to welcome and embrace me, as imperfect as I am. They have enfolded, loved, and ministered to me. They have behaved as a church, as a family. Jesus said, “By this will everyone know that you are my disciples, by your love for one another.” That kind of love is what I have seen in the PC(USA).

**Statement of Faith**

**John Allen Bankson**

I believe in the faith once for all delivered to the saints: the Christian faith as expressed in the three ecumenical creeds: the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds. I believe one God, who exists eternally in three persons, and that these three persons are the same in substance and equal in power and glory, yet are not three gods, but one God.

I believe in a God who is all-powerful, everywhere-present, and all-knowing. I believe God created humankind in God's image, but that we rebelled against God's gracious rule. Nevertheless, because of God's great love for us, God reached out to redeem and heal us. The eternal second person of the Trinity became a human being: Jesus Christ. Jesus did this to fully identify with us in our brokenness and give his life for us. Jesus was fully human yet fully divine. Jesus was crucified, but God raised Jesus from the dead. In union with Christ, we now share in the resurrection life. Christ ascended into heaven and then sent the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, to be with us forever. The Holy Spirit lives within and empowers the people of God

and continues to guide God’s people into the truth.

I believe that the church is the Body of Christ. We have been commissioned by Christ to make disciples of all nations, to baptize in the name of the Triune God, and to teach about Jesus Christ’s word and works. The Holy Spirit gives various gifts to the members of the Body of Christ in order to carry out Christ’s mission in the world. The Spirit is no respecter of

persons and thus gives these gifts as the Spirit sees fit, empowering women and men. The Holy Spirit has also given us the means of grace (the word, the sacraments, and prayer) in order to build us up in our faith and to make us more like Jesus Christ.

I believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the unique witness to Jesus Christ, who personally is the Word of God. In the Sacraments, the Spirit is pleased to use visible signs

(water, bread, and wine) to communicate the grace of God and to assure us that we belong to Christ. I believe the prayers of God’s people are powerful and effective. We cast our burdens upon God in prayer, knowing that God loves and cares for us, and knowing that Christ continually prays for us before God. The church, in response to these means of grace, being built up in the knowledge and love of God, is to demonstrate that love to the world by word and

deed: by announcing the Good News and by seeking to minister, as Christ did, to the needs of all people, whether spiritual, emotional, financial, or physical needs. By ministering in Jesus’ name, following Jesus’ example, we truly are Christ’s Body in this world.

**Appendix F**

Living River Report

Presbytery Meeting

May 2017



When you think of summer camp you probably think of S’Mores

* Summer Camp enrollment is continuing- More campers have enrolled for this summer than this time last year-but there is always room for S’More *Register on line at www.livingriver.org*
  + Scholarship funding is available!
* Summer staff are being hired but there is always room for S’More
  + We are working with Columbia and Princeton Theological Seminaries to offer contextual field education opportunities to MDiv students.
  + Do you know College Students that are looking for an 8 week experience from Mid-May to Mid-July that will provide invaluable life experience, faith formation and resume building. *Email* [bangelini@livingriver.org](mailto:bangelini@livingriver.org)
* Summer camp curriculum is “Branching Out: Connecting With Jesus”. We can all use S’More Jesus in our lives-camp is a great place for contributing to the faith formation of campers and staff
* Living River is in the process of submitting foundational grants to help support S’More

Facilities and Ministries:

* + Adult Lodge
  + Swimming pool
  + Pavilion
  + Outreach ministries
  + The work of the Cahaba Environmental Center
* The Cahaba Environmental Center is serving S’More students and schools
  + Enrollment is increasing each season
  + Through PSL congregational support, school students from marginalized communities are receiving the gift of God’s creation and its exploration
    - Please support this unique ministry of God’s creation with prayer and S’More support
* S’More Retreat opportunities are available for the fall and winter
  + Consider holding a Day retreat or One or Two night Retreat to
    - Increase congregational care and community
    - Provide space for leadership visioning
    - Retreat from busyness of life and associated technology
  + We all need S’More space and time to listen for God’s still small voice
* Rev. Betty Angelini, Living River’s Executive Director, is available to provide a Minute for Mission or bring God’s Word through leading a Sunday School class or Wednesday evening program or preaching during worship. Please call 412-596-3166.

**Appendix G**

**Congo Partnership Team May, 2017, report to Presbytery**

The Congo Partnership Team is happy to report good increases in our fund raising  
for the Baolonga School in the Kasai. These students currently meet in a dilapidated mud brick building with a dirt floor. Thanks to the Presbytery trustees for $20,000 toward our need for  
$85, 000. This generous gift brings our balance to $53,000. We have expectations for another  
ten to fifteen K from one of our churches. This will increase our fund to at least $63,000. We  
give thanks to our Presbytery and churches for their commitment to missions and to the Congolese Presbyterian Church. Without their work, education for the children of Congo would be much less likely to be available. As Presbyterians, we recognize the importance of education for making a difference in the lives of the students and in producing leaders for the country.

We continue to visit churches and tell the story. Dean Vandegrift continues her necklace ministry. We recently did a presentation for our friends at Riverchase Methodist Church. It is a real blessing to us to share the story with others.

Please pray for our Congolese friends in their daily struggles. Together in service,

Belinda Dickinson, Moderator Congo Partnership Team

**Appendix H**

**MAIN EVENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

MAY 2017

The Main Event was held February 24-25, 2017. Tom Long, the Bandy Professor Emeritus of Preaching; Director of the Early Career Pastoral Leadership Program at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University was the keynote speaker and preacher. Thirty presenters moderated twenty-seven workshops on a variety of topics. One hundred and one participants registered before the event for Friday and Saturday’s events. Seven individuals registered on Saturday.

Many thanks to the Planning Team of Catherine Oliver, Cathy Hoop, Elizabeth Goodrich, Joe Geneau, Pat Goodman, Patsy Chaney, Patti Winter, Barrett Abernethy, Tammy Strickland, Linda Coogan, Terry Tingle, Jay Wilkins, and Eva Carter.

The Planning Team has not met to evaluate the event and make future plans. We welcome new members to our team. You are invited to contact Jenny Thagard to be added to our small, but mighty group…jthagard@fpctusc.org.

**Appendix I**

**Small Church Task Force – Neal McCarter**

On Saturday, April 1, 2017, thirty leaders and pastors of smaller membership churches gathered at Riverchase Church for the fourth and last session of Project Regeneration. This effort was a cooperative venture of the Small Church Task Force and the Presbyterian Foundation.

Paul Grier, one of the keynoters, reviewed for the group the focuses of the previous sessions and then began by stating the format for this session. That format is: “Plan A: Business as Usual”; “Plan B: Reinvention”; “Plan C: The 11th-Hour Plan: What Is Plan C if Plan B Doesn’t Work?”.

If a church decides to keep on with business as usual, then Mr. Grier cited several trends regarding church life that are current:

1. “In the last decade, median weekend worship attendance in U. S. congregations has declined (from 129 to 80”;

2. “7% of US congregations have a membership of 400 or more; yet half of U. S. churchgoers attend such a congregation.”;

3. “Most [US] congregations are small, but most people are in large congregations.”;

4. “A great majority of the nations’ churches report a decline in attendance, while churches attracting 400 people or more on Sundays are dramatically increasing their market share.”;

5. “Rapid growth remains a hallmark of very large congregations, with a median growth rate of 26% over five years.”;

6. “Small churches can be more personal, but large congregations often excel at creating small groups offering regular spiritual support to groups of individuals with shared experiences and interests. Young adults . . . are more likely to find a network of close friends they can rely on for spiritual growth in a larger congregation.”;

7. “Random factoid: 1/3 of all US bookstores have closed in last ten years; but those that remain are doing well and better than before.”

(These citations are from a handout given to participants. Attribution of sources can be found on handout.)

For Plan B, Mr. Grier outlined these important aspects that need to be implemented:

--Acknowledge identity, and name competition: for the visitor or new member; for the charitable gift; for congregational leaders.

--Keep score: use Foundation’s “Online Financial Health Assessment”; Identify key operating metrics: what really drives the engine (economics) of the church; know your members meaning who are key givers in range of categories. Bar charts may be helpful. (Note: Observation of standards of confidentiality is valued and practiced.)

--Identify someone who’s done what you want to do;

--Monitor progress towards goals.

--Define and observe operational triggers.

Regarding Plan C, Robert Hay, Jr. invited the group to divide into smaller groups to discuss the following questions: “Where are you?”; “What do you see is your plan?”; “What obstacles do you see in your plan?”

Mr. Grier addressed the matter of follow-up sessions. He stated that the Foundation is willing to work individually with those congregations whose future seems fragile; to participate with Presbytery in events and training sessions for sustainability of ministry of smaller congregations; to conduct future annual updates with smaller membership congregations of the Presbytery.

Mr. Hay distributed flyers for “Stewardship Kaleidoscope: Real Tools for Real Ministry” which will occur at TradeWinds Island Grand Resort in St. Peter Beach, Florida, September 25-27, 2017. This event is for pastors, lay leaders, presbytery staff and anyone who is looking to learn more about stewardship in today’s church context. There will be over thirty workshops from which participants can choose to attend. For registration and more information, go to the following: [www.stewardshipkaleidoscope.org](http://www.stewardshipkaleidoscope.org/).

The Task Force, pending Executive Council’s concurrence, is planning to conduct a shortened version of the leadership training event in January for leaders and pastors of smaller membership churches after the Summer Meeting of Presbytery in August. Presbytery will meet in August at the Shades Valley Church in Birmingham.