MINUTES

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

Synod of Living Waters

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Stated Meeting

November 10, 2016

**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 November 10, 2016 at First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka, Alabama.

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

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Moderator Jim Toomey, 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**

Deborah Wright, San Francisco Presbytery, Jim Kitchens, Sacramento Presbytery,

Robert Hay, Jr. Presbyterian Foundation

**Recognition of First Time Commissioners and Visitors**

**Teaching Elders**

Ministers Present (47) Excused (64) Absent (15)

Abernethy, Barrett P

Acton, Ben P

Adams, Nan A

Alexander, Frank HR E

Anderson, Mike P

Atkerson, Rick E

Bang, Yo Chang A

Becker, Lindsay A

Bird, Shelaine A

Booth, Ben HR E

Brock, John A

Brooks, Richard , HR E

Brown, Taylor, HR E

Broyles, Vernon, HR P

Bruchey, Wayne HR E

Burgess, Sid, HR P

Carl, Bill P

Carleton, Rhon HR P

Carter, Clyde HR E

Casey, Lydia E

Chandler, Doris E

Chaney, Patsy HR P

Chinula, Donald A

Cho, Timothy A

Clark, Molly HR E

Clayton, Susan E

Clendenin, Monty HR E

Coker, Jeff HR E

Crutchfield, Bob HR E

Dantzler, Bill HR E

Davis, Becky E

Davis, Lant P

Dippenaer, Vic E

Duke, Mickey HR E

Durham, Charles HR E

Durham, Erica E

Edwards, Robert E

Ephraim, James A

Epting, Bobbie HR E

Feagin, Debbie P

Frease, Matthew E

Free, Zana E

Genau, Joe P

Goodlet James P

Goodrich, Cat P

Goodrich, Elizabeth E

Hanna, Richard E

Harmon, Dawson, HR P

Hay, Robert P

Hayes, Jeff A

Hibbard, Norman HR E

Homer, John HR E

Hoop, Cathy P

Hurley, Ed P

Hurst, Clyce HR E

Inman, Robert F. HR E

Japhet, Catherine A

Jeong, Junmo P

Jones, Steve P

Kang, JD P

Kelso, Hugh, HR E

Kesler, Randy A

Kim, Sung Woong P

Kim, Young A

Laney, Susan, HR E

Lays, Brian P

McCarter, Neil HR P

McClendon, Bruce P

McClure, John A

McCormick, Mark E

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 E

Northen, Margaret HR E

O’Neill, Elizabeth P

Oh, Jyung, Ho P

Oliver, Catherine E

Patton, Finley HR P

Patton, Roger HR E

Pearce-Reed, Leanne P

Penson, Gozie HR E

Pope, Sam HR E

Porter, Mary HR P

Price, Sandra HR E

Pyburn, Richard, HR E

Rains, Tom HR E

Reed, Kathy P

Reed, Nick P

Rentz-Lane, Neely P

Scarbrough, Leeann P

Scrivner, Joe P

Seitz, Craig, HR E

Sellers, Lou Ann P

Shelton, Jack HR E

Sherwood, Paul P

Sims, Charles HR P

Slane, Joe P

Speaker, Cary E

Stanford, Jim HR E

Stephens, Dan E

Stephens, Gerald HR E

Taylor, Sherwood HR E

Thompson, Ben HR E

Tingle, Terry, HR P

Truesdell, Jim A

Turner, Lucy E

Wade, Lindsey P

Waters, Dana HR E

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 (4)

Arellano, Ben P Haynes, Ernie A

Bonner, Jeff P Harrison, John A

Dodson, Beverly P Sauser, Bill E

Eich, Sharon A. A Thomas, Roger P

Emerick, Robert A Veasey, Lin P

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

**Present (**6**) Excused (4)**

Carter, Eva E Jenkins, Tyler E

Frennea, Rick E Reed, Rick P

Hamrick, Debbie P Toomey, Jim P

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

Jenny Thagard E Bill Stribling P Dotty Lessley P Bill Christians 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-nine churches in Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Forty-two Commissioners were present.

Alexander City First (1) NR

Annemanie Arlington (1) NR

Anniston Church of the Covenant (1) Janet Bain

Anniston Church of the Good Shepherd (1) NR

Anniston First (1) Lee Merrill

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) NR

Birmingham Bryan Memorial (1) NR

Birmingham Center Point (1) NR

Birmingham Chapel in the Pines (1) Janet Roberta

Birmingham Edgewood (1) Don Hagan

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) Kathy Thomson

Jean Shanks

Lee Walthall

NR

NR

Birmingham Korean (1) NR

Birmingham Mountain Brook (1) Carroll Barrett

Birmingham Oakmont (1) Judy Mann

Birmingham Riverchase (1) Sandra Vaughn

Birmingham Second (1) Catherine Rodenhauser

Birmingham Shades Valley (1) Jim Isaminger

Birmingham South Highland (2) Cathie Bonner

NR

Birmingham Southminster (1) Bill Christians

Birmingham Westminster (1) Debra Love

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) Al Peak

Gardendale Gardendale (1) Rodney Mewbourne

Goodwater First (1) NR

Green Pond Green Pond (1) NR

Jacksonville First (1) NR

Lafayette Lebanon (1) NR

Leeds Leeds (1) NR

Livingston First (1) Wayne Harrison

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 Charles Ford

Montgomery Immanuel (1) Kevin Frasier

Montgomery Korean (1) NR

Montgomery Memorial (1) Kathy Sweezey

Montgomery Westminster (1) Bob Akers

Moundville Saint James (1) NR

Northport Bethel (1) NR

Odenville Odenville (1) NR

Opelika Korean NR

Oxford Dodson Memorial (1) NR

Phenix City First (1) Tom Peavy

Piedmont First (1) NR

Plantersville Mount Pleasant (1) NR

Reform First (1) NR

Selma Northern Heights (1) Barbara J. Fears

Selma Pisgah (1) NR

Selma Valley Creek (1) NR

Springville Springville (1) Charles McNutt

Sylacauga First (1) Emory Lawrence

Talladega First (1) Barbara Howard

Troy Williams Memorial (1) NR

Trussville Cahaba Springs (1) Janet Prevatt

Tuscaloosa Brown Memorial (1) Charles Nash

Tuscaloosa Covenant (1) Rush Watson

Tuscaloosa First (3) Angela Hamilton

Mike Henderson

NR

Tuscaloosa Korean (1) Duke Park

Tuscaloosa University (1) Adam Miller

Tuskegee First (1) NR

Tuskegee Ramsay Memorial (1) NR

Tuskegee Institute Westminster (1) Johnnie Faye Haygood

Union Springs Union Springs (1) Darlene Hixon

Wetumpka First (1) Curt Johnson

We were warmly welcomed by Jonathan Yarboro\*, pastor of First, Wetumpka, then Called to Worship by CRE Jeff Bonner and followed in singing *God Is Here.* We were called to confession by Gayle Sandlin who then assured us of God’s pardon.

The Rev. Joe Scrivner read from Psalm 46:1-7 and Mark 9:14-28. Rev. Scrivner’s sermon was titled, “Yes We Can!” Lyrics from popular songs were read (*What a Wonderful World* and *What’s Going On*) to which he proclaimed that these two classic songs portrayed what it is like in our world today. God has called us to be examples of what God has done and what God will do through God’s son, Jesus Christ. In the passage from Mark we see that there was an evil spirit that could not be cast out by the disciples. Jesus said that all things can be done for those who believe to which the father replied, “I believe, help my unbelief.” Like the disciples in Mark, we often cannot do what God has called us to do. So many references in scripture remind us that we must believe and have faith that God is able to do through us what God has called us to do. All things can be done through the one who called us to believe. The good work begun in us will be accomplished. When doubt arises and faith seems weak, we can respond, *yes we can!*  Let us show the world what love looks like.

The offering was received and will be divided equally between the Pastoral Discretionary Fund of the Presbytery and CPM.

Jonathan Yarboro\* and Neely Lane\* presided over the Lord’s Table. Following communion together the body joined in singing *We Lift Our Voices.*

**Update on Child Protection Policy** – Lin Veasey, CRE

The following is an excerpt of the entire policy that continues to be a work in progress. Robert Hay\* assured the body that background checks were done on adults that participate in current camps and retreats.

**Rationale/Statement of Purpose**

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley has declared in “Our Statement of Purpose”:

“As a covenant people, we are life-sharing people. It is through our shared life together that we live in relationship with God and with each other. This shared life is lived out through our congregations, which are the primary agents of God’s mission in the world. As the connectional expression of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in central Alabama, we are called by grace to life-giving service to our congregations, engaging, equipping, nurturing and empowering them in their collective witness to God’s for all people in Jesus Christ.”

We believe that children are a gift of God to the whole of the human community. They are an integral part of the faith community contributing to its worship and ministry. Through the church’s ministry and mission the faith of children and youth is formed and nurtured as they hear and experience the good news of God’s love in Jesus Christ who welcomes all to come to him.

Therefore, we believe that we are called by God to create a safe haven for all of the children and youth in our care, nurturing, protecting, and empowering them, through faith and trust, in mind, body, and spirit. This commitment includes taking appropriate steps to reduce the risk to the young people in our care. ….

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1. With these beliefs guiding us we are seeking to integrate our efforts of this past year in creating a new presbytery wide child protection policy with sound legal understanding and best practices.

2. We strongly encourage all congregations to use both a background check and fingerprint screening process for all adults working with children.

3. Note recent changes in the Alabama law regarding mandatory reporting: The State of Alabama law has changed recently to include **all our volunteers and staff** as legally mandated reporters. When a child is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect, the laws of the State of Alabama have changed to require the mandatory reporter to **report orally by telephone or direct communication immediately, followed by a written report to a duly constituted authority.** Previously, the law permitted a person to notify his or her supervisor, and the supervisor would then be responsible for making the report. That process is no longer permitted, and the **person who has direct knowledge of or suspicion of abuse or neglect must be the one to make the report.**

Regarding teaching elders, the law now states: when a person communicates with clergy in the scope of the clergy person’s professional capacity, and when that communication is made with the understanding that it should not be revealed to another, and the person is merely seeking spiritual advice, the communication is protected by privilege, under Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence. **However, the communication from a person to clergy is NOT protected (and is thus reportable) when the communication is in furtherance of a crime or a fraud, including abuse or neglect of a child.**

Jim Kitchen\* and Deborah Wright discussed the contract between this Presbytery and **Pneumatrix**. Jim and Deborah were introduced by Jay Wilkins who reminded the body that funds had been set aside for the specific purpose of funding development and revitalization projects. Pneumatrix is a company whose purpose is to revitalize congregations. Jim and Deborah asked the questions 1) How did we get here? 2) Who and what is Pneumatrix? and 3) What’s next? [see Appendix A]

According to Phyllis Tickle, every 500 years or so, the church goes through a radical change, the most recent being the Reformation. This is a time to examine what is working and what has ceased to work. The species that is most likely to survive is the one that is most adaptable to change. When a community is wrestling with a problem there are usually some who have figured it out but may not know that they have it figured out. The key is to find those positive deviants and have them teach the rest. Pope Francis is one of those positive deviants. He has shaken up the Catholic Church. Fred Rogers is one of our own Presbyterian positive deviants.

“The real adaptive change challenges are technical challenges are problems we know we have the answer to. Adaptive challenges are problems we have no clue who to address. When faced with technical change, best practices are your friends. When faced with adaptive change, best practices are your nemeses.”

Churches realize that it is time to recalculate and set up a new course that is faithful to God’s calling but is adapted to the changes around us. Adaptive challenges are often messy and hard work. Struggling to go deeper is tough but necessary. Failure is a way to find out what doesn’t work. Transformation has everything to do with being humble and willing to surrender.

Consumer Church – dispenser of religious services, how do we keep what we’ve got? This is detrimental in that it prevents new members since they want to see what we are doing in the world not what we are doing for ourselves.

Missional Church – we are the church, not we go to church. We are engaged in being the church to the community and the world.

Culture eats strategy for breakfast. We must be aware of the culture in which we live. Often the culture shifts out from underneath us. *Make failure your teacher not your undertaker*. Zig Ziglar

“We will never change the world by going to church but by being the church.”

**Congo Report** - Belinda Dickinson updated the body on the Congo school. The school opened in October and was dedicated. The school held a memorial for Jerry Vandergrift, who was instrumental in beginning the work that continues today.

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

[full report appears in Appendix B]

Recognition and honor was given to Robert Hay\* as he transitions into honorable retirement at the end of January. Fun gifts were given to both Robert and Janice – a pillow for rest, cups to stay hydrated and a sweatshirt for the journey. Robert has served faithfully for twenty years as the Associate Executive for Nurture. Jay offered a Franciscan benediction for Robert.

The meeting was temporarily suspended for lunch after a prayer of blessing over the meal as well as a prayer of dedication for the new fellowship hall that the folks at First, Wetumpka have built.

The meeting resumed and the assembly joined in singing a medley of gospel music led by the dynamic duo of Jonathan and Shannon, the Silverbacks!

**Good News from Our Churches**

First, Talladega; Westminster, Montgomery; Cahaba Springs.

**Stated Clerk’s Report** – Tom Winter\*

For the Omnibus Motion:

A. Approval of the minutes of the August 18, 2016 Presbytery Meeting.

B. Record the receipt of minutes of the Commission to install Rev. James McLeod at First-

Anniston on September 4 and Rev. Brian Lays at Independent on September 18, 2016.

C. Approval of excuses received for today’s meeting.

D. Approval of the attached total Per Capita Budget for 2017 in the amount of $50,520.

[see A below]

E. Approval of the attached Report from the Presbytery Committee on Representation.

[see Appendix C]

F. Approval of dates and locations for 2016 meetings of Presbytery:

February 24 – Independent (held in conjunction with Main Event)

May 11 – First-Auburn

August 17 – Shades Valley

November 9 – TBD

**The Omnibus Motion was approved.**

For Information:

A. Per Capita amount for 2017 will be $17.12. $7.50 of this amount goes to General Assembly,

$3.62 to Synod of Living Waters, $5.00 to the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley and

$1.00 to Campus Ministry.

B. To record the reading of Session minutes without exception for: Brown Memorial,

Montevallo and Independent.

C. The following congregations have not paid any 2016 per capita: Brown Memorial,

Bryan Memorial, Cuba Presbyterian, First-Reform, First-Tuskegee, Montevallo,

Ramsay Memorial, Rock Springs and Williams Memorial. This will cost the Presbytery

$4,013.60. Per Capita statements were sent to churches recently that had a balance. *We*

*give thanks to the 68 churches that have paid or are paying their per capita.*

D. The following congregations did not submit their 2015 Session minutes to be read by the

Presbytery in 2016: Arlington, Bryan Memorial, Calvary, Cuba, Dodson Memorial, Fairfield

Highlands, First-Auburn, First-Carbon Hill, First-Jacksonville, First-Jacksonville, First-Phenix

City, First-Piedmont, First-Reform, First-Talladega, First-Tuskegee, First United Forestdale,

Five Mile, Good Hope, Immanuel, Korean-Anniston, Korean Auburn-Opelika, Korean-

Birmingham, Korean-Montgomery, Korean-Tuscaloosa, Lebanon, Marion Junction, Memorial,

Mount Pleasant, Mountain Brook, New Trinity, Northern Heights, Oakmont, Odenville, Pisgah,

Ramsay Memorial, Rock Springs, Saint James, Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster-

Birmingham, Westminster-Montgomery, Williams Memorial, and Woods.

E. All annual requests from sessions for the continuation of any supply relationship must be

received no later than January 4, 2017.

Ben Acton, representing the AC charged with overseeing the merger of University and Covenant Presbyterian Churches reported on the merger. They truly embody the term adaptive change. The newly merged church will be named Grace Presbyterian Church and the installed pastor will be Cathy Hoop\*.

**Trustees Report** – Bill Stribling

**MOTION:** To approve the sale of University Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa, AL to WC. LLC or assignee for the sum of $3,000,000. The closing date is to be on or around December 15, 2106. **The motion carried.**

**Executive Council** – Lou Ann Sellers\*

Even though I am preparing this report on the eve of the national elections, I realize you will be reading it after the votes have been cast and leaders determined for the coming years. It struck me that we (church) must often make decisions without knowing the certain outcome – trusting that our good faith decisions will propel us, our church, our presbytery in a direction to build up God’s kingdom. Paul reminded the church at Corinth that even in the face of uncertainty or suffering, to “look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.” (2 Cor 4:18) This call for faith is the antithesis of worry Jesus talks about in the Sermon on the Mount, “do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear…But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” (Matthew 6:25,33) Keeping this in mind, I bring before you some of the issues and opportunities which have come before executive council over the past months.

Based on the 2017 transitional staffing model approved at the August presbytery meeting, Executive Council brings before you the 2017 budget for your approval. Although we have moved closer to a balanced budget, there remains a shortfall this year. Again, Council is taking a two-step, two-year approach working towards a staffing model with two, full-time positions and a balanced budget beginning in 2018.

The work of expanding Living River continues. To re-establish its rotational leadership, the Living River Board asks for the presbytery’s approval of the following persons to serve a three-year term on the board: Nick Reed, First-Auburn, Jimmy Griffin, Jacksonville State UKirk; Emily Roberts, First-Birmingham; Steven Ashworth, South Highland; Kathryn Michael, South Highland; and Jay Patton, South Highland. Executive Council also approved a motion asking the Living River Board to work with the Trustees to bring a motion to Presbytery, regarding the Trinity property no later than the February 24, 2017 meeting of Presbytery. The Executive Council is in support of having a substantial portion of the proceeds of the sale of the property go toward Living River.

Responding to churches seeking to leave the denomination, Council approved a motion to create a task team to look at the issues and to designate up to $20,000 from the Revolving Loan Fund as a legal defense fund.

It is with appreciation and gratitude that we thank several persons for their leadership and energy in discerning God’s mission through the life of the presbytery. In addition to those who have chaired committees or commissions this year, we extend a special thanks to Tyler Jenkins for his service as Treasurer of the presbytery. Finally, it will be hard to imagine youth and children, camping program, Main Event and small church ministry events without the nurture of Associate Presbyter Robert Hay! Robert will be retiring in January 2017. For his experienced counsel and years of service, I speak on behalf of presbytery to express our gratefulness!

1.  Elect new members of Living River Board:

                         Nick Reed\*; Jimmy Griffin, Jacksonville State UKirk;

                         Emily Roberts, First-Birmingham; Steven Ashworth,

                         South Highland; Kathryn Michael, South Highland;

                         Jay Patton, South Highland.

 2.  Approve the 2017 Budget, including

                         a.  $28,500 from Revolving Loan Fund

                         b.  $28,500 from PSL Reserve Fund to address deficit **The motion was approved by acclamation.**

Tyler Jenkins has asked to step down as Presbytery Treasurer due to family circumstances. A monetary gift is being made in Tyler’s honor for his years of service.

**Nominating and Representation** – Jack Riley

The Nominating Committee places the following in nomination:

**Moderator of Executive Council**

**Class of 2019** **Term** **Church**

Jim Toomey 1 First Presbyterian-Birmingham

**Vice Moderator of Presbytery**

**2017**

Jane Clayton 1 Montevallo Presbyterian

**Executive Council**

**Class of 2019**

Nan Adams\* 1

Judy Rogers 1 Montevallo Presbyterian

**Synod Commissioner for 2017**

Eva Carter Westminster-Birmingham

**Synod Permanent Judiciary Committee**

Frank James Southminster

**Commission on Ministry**

**Class of 2019**

Sid Burgess\* 2

Becky Davis\* 2

Jamie McLeod \* 1

Ree McIntosh 1 Shades Valley

TBA

TBA

**Commission on Preparation for Ministry**

**Class of 2019**

Leeann Scarbrough\* 1

Kevin Floyd 1 Westminster-Birmingham

Gillie Presley, University 1 University

Neeley Rentz-Lane\* 1

**Board of Trustees**

**Class of 2019**

Bill Sauser 1 First-Auburn

Beverly Dodson 2 Oakmont

Rush Watson 2 Covenant

**Presbytery Treasurer**

**For a term of three years**

Jean Russell 1 Oakmont

We express our deep appreciation to Tyler Jenkins for his service as Treasurer of Presbytery.

**Personnel Committee**

**Class of 2019 Term** **Church**

Paul Sherwood\* 1

Donna Winn 1 Brown Memorial

**Finance Committee**

**Class of 2019**

Charlie Durham\* 1

Don Andress 1 First-Auburn

**Equip, Nurture, Connect Committee**

**Class of 2019**

Jenny Thagard, (Main Event) 1 1st Tuscaloosa

Catherine Goudreau, (Youth Council) 1 South Highlaned

Patti Winter, (Camp & Children) 1 First-Birmingham

Neil McCarter\*(Small Church)

Joe Genau\* (College)

Board of Presbyterian Manor Apartments

Class of 2019

Cary Speaker \* 1

Glenn Davis 2 South Highland

Johnny Robinson 2 South Highland

Jim Moore 2 Oakmont

J. Benoit 2 Southminster

**The Nominations were approved as presented.**

**Moderator’s Nominations for Moderator of Nominating**

**and Nominating Class of 2019** – Jim Toomey

Cathy Hoop\*, Moderator, Class of 2018

Mary Porter\*, Class of 2019

Bill Christians, Class of 2019, Southminister

Olympia McCrackin, Class of 2019, Brown Memorial

Motion was made by Moderator Toomey, received a second and was approved.

**Presbyterian Home for Children** – Mark Howard

[see Appendix D]

**Equip, Nurture and Connect** – Robert Hay\*

Chair of this new committee will come from Executive Council, Neil McCarter will do Small Church Ministries, Patti Winter will oversee children and youth ministry, Jenny Thagard will head up Main Event and Joe Genau will head up the college ministry. Equip, Nurture and Connect Committee replaces the old Nurture Committee.

**Main Event** – Joe Genau

[see Appendix E]

**Living River** – Keener Hudson

Pat Goodman has chaired an expanded program committee of camping for the summer of 2017. Rick Johnson, interim Executive Director of Living River and Robert Hay are asking to come into your church to hear about the camping program for the upcoming year. Scholarships of up to ½ will again be available. Full accreditation with ACA has been achieved by Living River. Construction on the adult lodge will begin sooner than expected. This is an integral part of the mission of Living River as well as having a significant financial impact. Construction of an outdoor pavilion will also begin soon. Lock Hunter, a member of the Board, will draw the plans and build the pavilion as his contribution to Living River. This construction will begin immediately. The Cahaba Environmental Center in connection with Camp McDowell is in full swing and very successful.

The new class of the Board of Directors will come on board in January, 2017. Great thanks to those rotating off the board were offered. Keener also offered a debt of gratitude to Robert Hay\* for his dogged determination to see that Living River was kept in the forefront of people’s minds throughout this process. He has done amazing fundraising work and he has been a very significant part of seeing that Living River became a reality.

The search committee continues to work to seek a permanent Executive Director for Living River. Thanks were offered to Rick Johnson who has served well as the interim director.

**Commission on Ministry** – Ben Arellano

For Information:

1. Approved Rev. Charles Sims as Stated Supply for First-Sylacauga effective September 1,

2016 for one year.

2. Approved extending Korean Pelham’s interim contract with Rev. Won Lee for one year.

3. Approved Olympia McCrackin, Brown Memorial, to begin the CRE program with Dubuque

Seminary.

4. Approved Jane Clayton, Sid Burgess, Dana Waters and Rick Frennea as a Planning Team for

PneuMatrix.

5. Approved MIF for UKirk-Birmingham.

6. Approved request from Chapel-in-the-Pines for Rev. Sid Burgess to serve as Stated Supply

and Moderator and Rev. Lydia Casey to serve as Supply Preacher beginning November 14,

2016 for one-year.

7. The Stated Clerk received a letter from the Session of Shepherd of the Valley disaffiliating

itself from the PCUSA. A Response/Review Team has been named: Teaching Elders:

Shelaine Bird, and Ed Hurley. Ruling Elder: Jane Clayton.

**For Action:**

1. Approve Installation Commission for Michael Bailey at First-Tuscaloosa: Installation will be

Feb. 19, 2017 at 11:00 a.m., at First-Tuscaloosa. Commission consists of Teaching Elders:

Cathy Hoop, Joe Scrivner, Shannon Webster and Kathy Wolf Reed. Ruling Elders: Dr.

Charles Nash (Brown Memorial), Gayle Howell (Bethel) and Rush Watson (Covenant).

Sitting with the commission: Teaching Elders: Lou Ann Sellers, James Goodlet, Neeley

Rentz-Lane, Dannie Massie (HR, Scots Presbyterian, Charleston, SC), and Ruling Elder Cal

Holt, First-Tuscaloosa. **Approved.**

2. Approve Ordination Commission for Micah Nutter Dowling. Ordination Service will be

December 11, 2016 at 4:00 p.m., at First-Auburn. Commission consists of Teaching Elders:

Kathy Wolf-Read, Tom Winter, Rick Atkerson. Ruling Elders: Patti Winter (First-

Birmingham), Jon Scholl (Cahaba Springs) and Eva Carter (Westminster-Birmingham).

Sitting with the Commission: Rev. Brandon Perkins, Columbia Theological Seminary;

Katelyn Nutter Dowling, Candidate, Columbia Theological Seminary; Rev. Michael Dowling,

Leeds Community Church; Rev. Susan Hayes, Newnan Presbyterian; and Ruling Elder

Preston Wise, Newnan Presbyterian. **Approved.**

3. A Response Team was appointed for Memorial Presbyterian Church, Montgomery for the

purpose of guiding and assisting in the deliberations with Westminster Presbyterian Church,

Montgomery to explore the possibility a church merger, specifically to consider dissolving both

congregations and establishing a new worshiping community in the Memorial Building. The

Response team consists of Rev. Jonathan Yarboro (Chair), RE Phyllis Ward (Immanuel)

and RE Charles Ford, (Calvary)

**MOTION:** Should both congregations vote to move forward with merger, the Memorial Response Team will be folded into the Westminster Administrative Commission (Rev, Rhon Carleton, RE Gayle Sandlin CRE Ben Arellano) TO BECOME AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION TO DISSOLVE BOTH CHURCHES AND ESTABLISH A NEW WORSHIPING COMMUNITY WITH CHURCH NAME TO BE DETERMINED). The powers and authorities of the AC (should it be formed) would be the same as the powers given to the AC for the University and Covenant merger. The commission shall have the power to:

a. Dissolve both congregations and establish a new one.

b. Approve future pastoral leadership.

c. Name the new church.

d. Make recommendations to presbytery trustees regarding the property.

e. Make other personnel decisions as needed.

The motion was approved.

NB: Should the congregational votes to merge be defeated (negative vote for merger by either or both congregations), the Memorial Response Team shall remain in place and the Westminster Administrative Commission shall continue to work with the respective churches as a way forward is contemplated.

4. Approve Rev. Joe Slane for Honorable Retirement effective January 31, 2017. Ben Acton offered praise and well wishes to Joe as he approaches honorable retirement. By common consent and with great thanks and deep appreciation, the designation of Honorably Retired will be bestowed on Joe upon his retirement in January of 2017. Ben Acton\* shared Joe’s “story” followed by comments from Rev. Slane who received a standing ovation. **The motion was approved.**

Information was shared regarding the Commissioned Ruling Elder program and churches were encouraged to promote the program.

**Commission on Preparation for Ministry** – Bill Christians

**FOR INFORMATION**:

INQUIRERS CHURCH INSTITUTION

Bennett Alldredge FPC, Tuscaloosa Princeton

Rachel VanKirk Mathews FPC, Tuscaloosa Columbia

Mary Sellers Shaw IPC, Birmingham Vanderbilt Divinity

Caitlin (Avery) Smith University, Tuscaloosa Louisville

Alexandra Stewart FPC, Tuscaloosa Columbia

Samuel Turpen Edgewood, Birmingham Columbia

CANDIDATES

Courtney Bowen IPC, Birmingham Louisville

Micah Dowling Cahaba Springs, Trussville Graduate (Columbia)

Rebecca Mann Immanuel, Montgomery Graduate (Columbia)

Leigh Ann Min First, Birmingham Graduate (Columbia)

FOR INFORMATION:

The commission enrolled Samuel Turpen of Edgewood Presbyterian, Birmingham, as an Inquirer.

The commission removed Inquirer Alfred Rose of First Presbyterian, Birmingham, from the ordination process.

FOR ACTION:

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry nominates Ruling Elder Susan Haskell of Independent Presbyterian, Birmingham, to serve as an Ordination Exam Reader alternate for the Class of 2019. **The motion was approved**.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm with prayers offered by Paul Sherwood\*.

The next meeting of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley will be held on February 24, 2017 at Independent Presbyterian, Birmingham, in conjunction with the Main Event.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Winter

Stated Clerk

**Appendix A**

**PneuMatrix**

**Seeking Leaders for a Fresh Future in our Congregations**

**Notice: This letter calls for at least one response!**

Dear Presbyters:

The Presbytery Commission on Ministry (COM) is looking for both an Eli and a Samuel in your congregation and your Presbytery. Remember how the call of Samuel comes about? Eli is God’s intermediary, helping Samuel both to hear and to respond to God’s call.

We need an “Eli” who will identify one or more likely prospects—Samuels--in his or her congregation who could effectively serve as an “Adaptive Change Apprentice” in the “Fresh Future for Your Church”/PneuMatrix program to be launched during our November 10th meeting at Wetumpka First Church. Key to this appeal: the “Eli’s” are welcome to self-identify as likely “Samuels!”

What is an “Adaptive Change Apprentice?” And why would any veteran church leader want to be called an “apprentice?” Jim Kitchens and Deborah Wright will make a presentation on the PneuMatrix process during the Presbytery meeting in Wetumpka on November 10. We invite you to talk with them following the meeting, or on Friday, November 11, at 11:30 AM in the Presbytery office. Please email jwilkins@pslpcusa.org and let him know of your interest.

Second question first: the term “apprentice” is something of a misnomer. We are not looking for a youth, a novice, or a beginner, but we are looking for a committed Christian willing to absorb new information and consider new ways of providing leadership in service to the adaptive challenges of a congregation that is not his or her own.

First question second: an Adaptive Change Apprentice is a teaching or ruling elder who will accept assignment to one of the eight congregations to be chosen for participation in the first year of the PneuMatrix program; in other words, he or she would become a trained resource for a church seeking a “fresh future.” Apprentices will commit to one year of on-the-job training in Adaptive Change Leadership and Positive Deviance skills. The apprenticeship is offered without pay, but all study materials will be supplied. Transportation expenses will be reimbursed on request. For a one year cycle the apprentice will meet with and help guide their assigned church toward a decision about the nature of its future.

The apprentices will: (estimated at 4-6 hours/month time commitment on average)

• Submit MBTI results- if you know them, or take a short online version.

• Meet with the church leadership team, engaging in each consult they have with a principal of PneuMatrix (approx. monthly)

• Participate in a monthly cohort meeting (some on site, some by skype) with the other apprentices, building adaptive change skills using a modified case study approach

• Complete all assigned readings in preparation for apprentice cohort meetings

• Keep a journal of the engagement, from which to share with the cohort

• Make one informal roundtable presentation to the cohort about your engagement

• Write a short case study summary of your engagement at the end of the year.

Those successfully completing the first year of training will be deemed qualified for consideration by the COM to work solo on a new engagement of discernment within the presbytery.

What qualities make for a good Apprentice? Emotional intelligence, adaptability, intuition, a clear sense of boundaries, and the ability to reside in the unknown for extended periods are all crucial qualities for an Adaptive Change leader. Adaptive Change and Positive Deviance practices require radical contextuality, clear honesty and transparency, as well as a high tolerance for risk and failure. It is hard, often intense and very rewarding work. See the attached position description.

If you know of a likely prospect, please pass this communication on to her or to him, with your encouragement. And, if you, would like to be considered as one of our Adaptive Change Apprentices please feel entirely free to respond. All responses should be sent to PneuMatrix consultant Deborah Wright at avalondlw@aol.com by NOVEMBER 21, 2016. Include your reason for applying and your MBTI if you know it. Attach a copy of your resume, C.V., or short bio (no need to write anything new), as well as your preferred contact info. Also complete the attached application form.

Note: If your own congregation is going through the PneuMatrix process, you can be an apprentice, but you will not be assigned to your church. This position is open to teaching and ruling elders. The final selection of apprentices will be made by the PneuMatrix consultants.

For the Commission on Ministry,

Sid Burgess, Jane Clayton, Dana Waters, Jay Wilkins

**Call to Action for a Fresh Future for your Congregation**

**Notice: The letter calls for two responses!**

Dear P​resbyters:

“The appointed time has come,” announces Psalm 102, “when God will rise up and have compassion on God’s people.” With the psalmist, your Presbytery leadership believes the “appointed time” for Sheppards and Lapsley has now come.

This is to urge you to make plans now to attend the November Presbytery meeting when we will all learn more about the creative work of two PCUSA pastors who are helping churches like ours experience a fresh future! When Presbytery gathers on November 10th at First Wetumpka, Jim Kitchens and Deborah Wright, leaders of the “fresh future” program called PneuMatrix will make a presentation beginning at 11:30. ​Attached is a "roadmap" describing what will be happening when you participate in this process. ​Jim and Deborah will then be available to talk with interested congregations throughout the afternoon in Wetumpka, and again on Friday morning at the Presbytery office.

**First response requested: make an appointment**

To make good use of your time, we are offering to schedule specific times for your leadership (pastor, commissioner, Session members, PW leaders, etc.) to meet with Jim & Deborah to ask questions related specifically to needs and challenges of your congregation. Please reply to jwilkins@pslpcusa.org requesting times you prefer.

The times available:

Thursday, Nov. 10, in Wetumpka – 1:00, 1:20, 1:40, 2:00, 2:20, 2:40, 3:00 PM

Friday, Nov. 11, the Presbytery office – 9:20, 9:40, 10:00, 10:20, 10:40, 11:00, 11:20​ AM​.

**Second response requested: make application**

Once you and your Session are ready to apply to be in the program’s first group of eight, fresh-future-seeking congregations, complete the attached application form and return it to jwilkins@pslpcusa.org or mail it to Jay Wilkins, 3603 Lorna Ridge Drive, Birmingham, 35216. All applications should be received by Friday, November 18. The PneuMatrix planning team will be in touch after the eight congregations have been chosen.

​Sid Burgess​, Jane Clayton, Dana Waters, Jay Wilkins

**Appendix B**

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

*Role of the Transitional Presbyter:*

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.*

At our August Presbytery meeting, I invited those present to respond to the following question by leaving notes on newsprint:

What is one thing that we can do to release the energy and resources needed to fulfill our calling to “partner with and equip present and emerging PC(USA) faith communities in central Alabama to serve Christ and our neighbor”?

What themes and patterns do you see in these responses?

* Actually seek out our neighbors and find out their needs
* Help shape stability @ Living River and promote the programs they offer to connect all our churches
* Create fulfilling relationships
* Pray for openness to wonder and our individual and corporate roles in it
* Estate planning & planned giving in churches
* First & foremost – PRAY! Secondly, organize and have cluster gatherings to have fellowship and brain storming sessions. Then, join together to identify needs within these clusters that individual churches can focus on
* Walk alongside those wrestling with questions of race and how we can better reflect the full diversity of God’s creation
* Focus on and emphasize not only on what individual churches may do, but what we can do together – not us vs. them but “us” emphasis
* To do a better job of pastoring small, struggling churches within our Presbytery, which are considerable! We are a Presbytery of small churches!
* Work on the bridge between young and aging viewpoints
* Listen to the Holy Spirit as it speaks to us about where to cast our nets
* Embrace classical Christian theology which bonds together the churches of the Presbytery under the Lordship of Jesus Christ
* UKIRK BHAM ✞
* Actually Act and Do and not wait for someone else to Act and Do
* Focus! Do a few things & do them well
* Create Greater Parishes served by a regional “staff” of Pastors, CRE, Christian Educators, and “Greenlight” Ruling Elders to take over management tasks. All with a charge to expand.
* Give up compromising and ending with lowest common denominator & reclaim our radical heritage
* Serve beer
* Be courageous to step out in bold faith in God and to always ask how we are serving Christ with this ministry
* Congregations make a pledge to the Presbytery operating budget
* Have congregations equipped to start off-site “franchises” in non-traditional locations
* Coordinate regular reports of successful missions/ministries/movement of Spirit, which might be initiated in other churches
* Clear/free up all the designated funds whose purpose we no longer know or whose need has been fulfilled

What themes and patterns do you see in these responses?

Where do you see God’s Spirit moving the Presbytery?

How do we support each other as we seek to release the energy and resources needed?

Share with me what you see and hear! email at [jwilkins@pslpcusa.org](mailto:jwilkins@pslpcusa.org) or call at 205-978-0320.

**Appendix C**

**Committee on Representation**

**Report of the Committee on Representation Attachment A**

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**

**Date (November 2016)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit** | **WMC** | **WFC** | **WML** | **WFL** | **BMC** | **BFC** | **BML** | **BFL** | **AMC** | **AFC** | **AML** | **KML** | **PML** | **YTH** | **Spec** | **HMC** | **Total** |
| PRESBYTERY COUNCIL | 18.18 | 27.27 | 27.27 | 18.18 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 9.10 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| COMMISSION ON MINISTRY | 50.0 | 18.75 | 6.25 | 18.75 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 6.25 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| COMMISSION ON PREPARATION | 41.67 | 25.00 | 16.67 | 8.33 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 8.33 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
| PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| COMMISSION ON REPRESENTATION | 11.11 | 22.22 | 33.34 | 22.22 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 11.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
| REPRESENTATION |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| PERMANENT JUDICIAL | 22.22 | 11.11 | 33.34 | 22.22 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 11.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
| COMMITTEE |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TRUSTEES | 22.22 | 11.11 | 44.45 | 11.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 11.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| NOMINATING COMMITTEE | 11.11 | 22.22 | 33.34 | 22.22 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 11.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| GENERAL ASSEMBLY SELECSELECTRED | 20.00 | 20.00 | 20.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 20.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 20.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SYNOD | 50.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 50.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

CATEGORIES: WMC white male clergy BMC black male clergy AMC asian male clergy

WFC white female clergy BFC black female clergy AFC asian female clergy

WML white male clergy BML black male lay KML korean male lay

WFL white female lay BFL black female lay PML Philippine male lay

YTH youth Spec persons w/disabilities HMC Hispanic male clergy **Appendix D**

**Greetings from the children and families at the Presbyterian Home for Children!**

****Fall is a busy time at the Home and it will just get better (and busier!) as the calendar moves closer to Christmas! Everyone is invited to join us again this year for our **Christmas Campus Decoration Day**. We will be decking our halls on Saturday, December 3rd. If you would like to join us or need more information please contact Jacque Cordle at [jcordle@phfc.org](mailto:jcordle@phfc.org) or (256) 362-2114 x 1204. We have jobs from big to small and for all ages and abilities. Please come share the joy of Christmas with us!

We invite each congregation to participate in the **Christmas Season Offering** for the Presbyterian Home for Children. Bulletin inserts and posters are available for free. Not only will your offering help us provide much-needed services to our children and families, you will also help us provide Christmas joy to those we serve.

We are well into the school year at ***Ascension Leadership Academy and Hope Academy***. Ascension Leadership Academy is our new school for children in grades K – 8 and is located in the educational building at First Presbyterian, Talladega. The students are doing exceptionally well and we are so blessed by the partnerships with the churches and individuals from Sheppards & Lapsley that have made the school possible. Our high school students at Hope Academy are flourishing this year as they can now have their “own” high school space at our facility on campus. Hope Academy’s inaugural class of Student Government Association officers was just installed. We currently have 39 students enrolled in the Presbyterian Home for Children Educational System.

The residential cottages at the Home are full to capacity and positively shining with potential from the children, families, and young adults being served by the ***Moderate Care, Secure Dwellings, and Transition to Adult Living*** (TAL) programs. At any time on campus you are likely to hear the sounds of children playing and babies cooing while their Mothers attend life skills training sessions. The young women of TAL recently had a class on how to coupon and are in the process of starting their own coupon notebooks with plans for a group coupon shopping trip. The girls in Moderate Care recently participated in the 2016 Walk & Ride 4 Sickle Cell event. The girls had the opportunity to help raise awareness for Sickle Cell and also had a Healthy Lifestyle Group Session on Sickle Cell Disease to provide them with knowledge and understanding of the disease.

We are excited to announce the addition of a new program that will allow us to expand our services to more at-risk children. The new ***Family Bridges Intensive In-Home Services*** program began on October 1st. Family Bridges offers assistance to families in need of intensive in-home services within a 7 county area. Intensive in-home service is a dynamic process that focuses on achieving the outcome of successful permanency within a safe, stable family setting in a timely manner for children.

We want to say a big THANK YOU to all of the churches, groups and individuals, who supported our **Children’s Home Challenge** bicycle event on October 15th! For those of you who rode a bicycle from 5 to 100 miles - way to go! We welcomed over 60 cyclists from all over the state to the Home and enjoyed the opportunity to share the good news of the Presbyterian Home for Children. Go ahead and mark your calendars for Fall 2017 and our next Children’s Home Challenge!

***We are so thankful for your prayers and support of the Presbyterian Home for Children and the precious children, families and young adults that we have been called by God to serve.***

**Appendix E**

LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY

FEBRUARY 24-25, 2017

INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

KEYNOTE PRESENTER

The Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long

is Bandy Professor Emeritus of Preaching and Director of the Early Career Pastoral Leadership Program at Candler School of

Theology.