MINUTES

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

Synod of Living Waters

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Stated Meeting

May 14, 2015

**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 May 14, 2015 at Living River Camp and Conference Center, Montevallo, Alabama.

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

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Moderator Lou Ann Sellers, who then offered the convening prayer.

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

We were welcomed to Living River by John Erdman, Director of the Camp and Conference Center.

# ORGANIZATION

**Adoption of the Docket**

The docket was adopted by common consent.

**Seating of Corresponding Members**

Jay Wilkins, Catherine Mason, Donegal Presbytery, Clark Simmons, Greater Atlanta Presbytery, and Bill Carl, Pittsburgh Presbytery

**Recognition of First-time Elders and Visitors**

The Moderator recognized all first-time elders who were introduced to the body.

The commissioners and guests were warmly welcomed by John Erdman, Executive Director of Living River, to this amazing facility.

**Teaching Elders**

Ministers Present (41) Excused (68) Absent (10)

Abernathy, Barrett P

Acton, Ben P

Alexander, Frank HR E

Andreasen, Sam HR E

Atkerson, Rick E

Bang, Yo Chang E

Bird, Shelaine P

Booth, Ben HR E

Brooks, Richard , HR P

Brown, Taylor, HR E

Broyles, Vernon, HR E

Bruchey, Wayne HR E

Burgess, Sid, HR P

Carleton, Rhon HR E

Carter, Clyde HR E

Casey, Lydia P

Chandler, Doris E

Chaney, Patsy HR P

Chinula, Donald A

Cho, Timothy E

Clark, Molly HR P

Clayton, Susan P

Clendenin, Monty HR E

Coker, Jeff HR P

Copeland, Brian P

Crutchfield, Bob HR E

Dantzler, Bill HR E

Davis, Becky P

Duke, Mickey HR P

Durham, Charles HR P

Durham, Erica E

Edwards, Robert A

Ephraim, James P

Epting, Bobbie P

Feagin, Debbie P

Frease, Matthew E

Genau, Joe P

Gilmer, Ron E

Goodlet James P

Goodrich, Cat P

Goodrich, Elizabeth E

Hanna, Richard E

Harmon, Dawson, HR P

Hay, Robert P

Hayes, Jeff E

Hibbard, Norman HR P

Holmes, Wendy A

Homer, John HR E

Hoop, Cathy E

Hurley, Ed E

Hurst, Clyce HR E

Inman, Robert F. HR E

Japhet, Catherine A

Jeong, Junmo A

Kang, JD E

Kelso, Hugh, HR E

Kesler, Randy E

Kim, Sung-Woong A

Knox, Harold HR E

Laney, Susan, HR P

Love, Bill, HR E

McCarter, Neil HR P

McClendon, Bruce E

McClure, John A

McCollum, Sid, HR E

McCormick, Mark P

McElrath, Pete HR E

McElveen, William HR E

McLaughlin, Wayne, HR E

McKean, Mac HR E

Moon, Hak Bae A

Mullins, Bill HR E

Mylalsingh, Emerson HR E

Nettles, Sam HR E

Newland, Terry P

Northen, Margaret HR E

O’Neill, Elizabeth E

Oh, Jyung, Ho E

Oliver, Catherine E

Owens, Michelle E

Patton, Finley HR E

Patton, Roger HR E

Penson, Gozie HR E

Pope, Sam P

Porter, Mary HR E

Price, Sandra HR E

Pyburn, Richard, HR E

Rains, Tom HR E

Reddick, Ross P

Reed, Leanne P

Reed, Kathy P

Reed, Nick P

Reid, Joe A

Scarbrough, Leeann E

Scrivner, Joe A

Sellers, Lou Ann P

Shelton, Jack HR E

Seitz, Craig, HR E

Sims, Charles HR P

Slane, Joe E

Speaker, Cary P

Stanford, Jim HR E

Stephens, Dan E

Stephens, Gerald HR E

Taylor, Sherwood HR E

Thompson, Ben HR E

Tice, Lisa E

Todd, Taylor E

Truesdell, Jim E

Turner, Lucy P

Waters, Dana HR P

Watson, Cody P

Webster, J. Shannon E

Wells, Jim, HR E

Wills, Bill, HR E

Winter, Rachel P

Winter, Tom HR P

Winton, Carlton, HR E

Yarboro, Jonathan P

**Commission Ruling Elders with Vote**

Present (4) Excused (2) Absent (4)

Arellano, Ben P Haynes, Ernie A

Bonner, Jeff P Harrison, John A

Dodson, Beverly P Roser, Don P

Eich, Sharon A. A Sauser, Bill E

Fast, Joe A Veasey, Lin E

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

**Present (6) Excused (3)**

Carter, Eva E Hamrick, Debbie P

Frennea, Rick P Park, Duke E

Jenkins, Tyler E Smith, James P

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

Jenny Thagard P Carolyn Jordan P Bill Stribling 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 the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Forty-two Commissioners were present.

Alexander City First (1) NR

Alexander City Robinson Memorial (1) NR

Annemanie Arlington (1) NR

Anniston Church of the Covenant (1) NR

Anniston Church of the Good Shepherd (1) NR

Anniston First (1) Keener Hudson

Anniston First United (1) Debbie Miller

Anniston Korean (1) NR

Auburn First (2) Carolyn Williams

Robert Barnes

Bessemer Shepherd of the Valley (1) Barri Pratt

Bessemer Good Hope (1) NR

Birmingham Bold Springs (1) NR

Birmingham Bryan Memorial (1) Mary Jo Martin

Birmingham Center Point (1) NR

Birmingham Chapel in the Pines (1) John Liddle

Birmingham Edgewood (1) Ken Smith

Birmingham Fairfield Highlands (1) NR

Birmingham First (1) Mark Aldridge

Birmingham First United of Forestdale (1) NR

Birmingham Five Mile (1) Charlotte Bruce

Birmingham Independent (5) Jeff Granthem

Miller Gorrie

Lee Walthall

Verna Lyons

NR

Birmingham Korean (1) NR

Birmingham Mountain Brook (1) Robert Dudelston

Birmingham Oakmont (1) Ralls Coston

Birmingham Riverchase (1) NR

Birmingham Second (1) Phyllis Vaughan

Birmingham Shades Valley (1) Jack Riley

Birmingham South Highland (2) Lee Cleveland

Cathie Bonner

Birmingham Southminster (1) Pete Van Pelt

Birmingham Westminster (1) NR

Cuba Cuba (1) NR

Camden New Trinity (1) NR

Carbon Hill First (1) Betty Atkins

Dadeville First (1) Evelyn Pangburn

Dadeville Woods (1) NR

Eufaula First (1) Zoe Powell

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) Emily Hodges

Livingston First (1) Allen Tartt

Livingston Hadden (1) NR

Magnolia Rock Springs (1) NR

Marion Junction Marion Junction (1) NR

Montevallo Montevallo (1) Jane Clayton

Montgomery Calvary NR

Montgomery Immanuel (1) NR

Montgomery Korean (1) NR

Montgomery Memorial (1) Kathryn Sweezey

Montgomery Westminster (1) NR

Moundville Saint James (1) NR

Northport Bethel (1) Regina Sadberry

Odenville Odenville (1) NR

Opelika Korean NR

Oxford Dodson Memorial (1) NR

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) Sally Holland

Talladega First (1) NR

Troy Williams Memorial (1) NR

Trussville Cahaba Springs (1) Jon Scholl

Tuscaloosa Brown Memorial (1) NR

Tuscaloosa Covenant (1) Diane McGee

Tuscaloosa First (3) Bob Singleton

Jay Evans

Mike Henderson

Tuscaloosa Korean (1) NR

Tuscaloosa University (1) Jerry Lamme

Tuskegee First (1) NR

Tuskegee Ramsay Memorial (1) NR

Tuskegee Institute Westminster (1) Judith Baldwin

Union Springs Union Springs (1) Leigh Moorer

Wetumpka First (1) Mrs. Lyndon Thomas-Flegel

The body was called to worship reading responsively from the book of Ephesians led by Jane Clayton, then singing *All Creatures of Our God and King.*

Ben Acton\* led in the confession of sins and then assured us of God’s pardon. Our prayer of confession involved holding the hand of our neighbor around the table. Connected to each other through our Creator, we still fail to live into the image of God. Alone, we are but the *blind leading the blind*. Our sin becomes evident as we realize our inadequacy. Yet, inspired by God’s love and trust, we are reminded that our only hope is in Christ. We welcome the forgiveness of God through his son, Jesus Christ. This poignant demonstration reminded each of us of our need for God. Alleluia. Amen.

The Rev. Jay Wilkins, Transitional General Presbyter, prayed that our eyes would be opened as we listened to a reading from Acts 1:1-11, then shared the message titled, “*Where Are You Looking?”* Today just happens to be Ascension Day – forty days after Easter. This passage seemed to indicate a time of transition. Our own situation as the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley seems to identify with this passage. We have been through a journey of waiting, a time of transition. When might the miracle be bestowed on us – the kingdom of God? Jesus said, “you will be my witnesses by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Yes! We will be those witnesses as we look toward the future.

The generous offering collected today will be divided between the presbytery discretionary fund and CPM.

The Lord’s Supper was observed by all gathered as Leanne Reed\* and Robert Hay\* invited us to share communion at the Table. The pulpit used today was made by Charlie Durham\*. It will be used in the outdoor chapel at Living River. He also made the communion table. The communion ware, commissioned for General Assembly held in Birmingham, was purchased to be used at Living River when built.

After all were served, we joyfully joined in singing *I Danced in the Morning*!

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

For Omnibus Motion:

- Approval of the minutes of the February 12, 2015 presbytery meeting.

- To record the reading of Session minutes for Church of the Covenant, First-Anniston,

Good Shepherd, First United-Anniston, Independent, Woods, Gardendale, Green Pond,

First-Jacksonville, First-Livingston, Valley Creek, First-Sylacauga, Springville, First-

Alexander City, First-Auburn, First-Dadeville, First-Eufaula, Immanuel, Union Springs, First-Wetumpka, and Westminster-Tuskegee.

- Approve the transfer of Elton and Edie Birch from the rolls of Presbytery to Pisgah PC.

- To record receipt of reports from the following Administrative Commissions: Westminster Montgomery, Robinson Memorial and Bryan Memorial

- Approval of excuses received for today’s meeting.

The Omnibus Motion was moved by the Stated Clerk and was approved.

For Action:

**1. Motion from Administrative Commission for Robinson Memorial:**

That Presbytery concur in the closure on April 20, 2014 of Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Alexander City, Alabama. Further that the Presbytery Trustees list and negotiate sale of the property, *but no earlier than July 1, 2015 (This is to give the remaining ten members an opportunity to search for a buyer interested in using the property as a place of worship)*. Final authority to sell remains with the Presbytery.

Charles Sims\*, chair of the AC, moved that the report from the Administrative Commission be

accepted. The motion was approved.

Rationale: The church officially closed after the Easter worship, April 20, 2014. All requested records have been furnished. The church was established in 1946 but session records prior to 1988 were lost in a fire. No Session records have been kept since September

2000. We have deeds for three parcels of property, two adjacent to each other and one

across the street. Total acreage according to the three deeds is 3.154 acres. All property

deeded to Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church elders and their successors in office.

Their two remaining former elders thought that since they took the Southern Option the

Church and property belonged to them. They advised they had planned to sell and give the

money to charity. The 2014 Tax Assessor’s records give an appraised value of $257,180 with

an assessed value of $51,440. The church sits in a depressed area.

Commission: Charles Sims\*, Chair; Jeff Coker\*, Eve Pangburn, First Dadeville; Bev Dodson, Green Pond; Mary Dalrymple, First Auburn.

2. **Motion from Administrative Commission for Bryan Memorial (BMPC):**

The Administrative Commission recommends that, upon Presbytery’s determination that the ECO is a reformed body:

1. Upon the cash payment to Presbytery of $165,000, that Presbytery dismiss BMPC, with

all of its property and its name to the ECO pending reception by the ECO.

2. If BMPC declines or fails to make such payment within 120 days of Presbytery’s action,

that Presbytery (a) dismiss BMPC with all of its personal property, including its name, to

the ECO pending reception by the ECO; (b) sell the real estate; and (c) gift BMPC with

40 percent of the net proceeds of the sale of the realty.

Presbytery’s dismissal must, of course, be subject to BMPC’s compliance with Presbytery’s

direction concerning the safekeeping of BMPC’s records. See *Book of Order,* G-3.0107.

Frank James moved the motion on behalf of the Administrative Commission.

A Substitute Motion was read and moved by Don Roser, CRE to Bryan Memorial. The motion received a second. Following extensive discussion, the Substitute Motion was defeated.

Motion by Ben Arellano to table the motion from the AC and that the AC be instructed to continue its work negotiating with Bryan Memorial. A second was received. The motion from the AC on Bryan Memorial was tabled until the August meeting of Presbytery at which time it must be brought before the body once again.

For Information:

2014 Statistical - Membership decreased by 767. Per Capita billing is based on these reported statistics. Those churches failing to report will continue to have their per capita billed on the basis of the last reported statistics.

Final reading of minutes for this year will be Saturday, May 30, 9 a.m. at noon at the presbytery office. Ministers and Lay Pastors please see that your Clerk of Session provides your church minutes to the Stated Clerk prior to August 1, 2015. The Book of Order G-3.0108 mandates session records be sent to the presbytery office for review.

The August presbytery meeting is being held in connection with the Main Event, August 14 and 15 at First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham. The meeting will begin at **3:30 on Friday, August 15**, and commissioners are encouraged to stay through dinner and vespers. More details will follow, but please mark your calendars now and make sure your congregation knows of this change.

**Commission on Ministry** – Ben Arellano

**Items for Information:**

1. Churches requesting permission to continue supply relationships:

a. Bethel to continue relationship with Rev. Mark McCormick

b. Bold Springs to continue relationship with CRE Ernie Haynes

c. Covenant-Tuscaloosa to continue relationship with Rev. Neil McCarter

d. First-Carbon Hill to continue relationship with Dr. Ken Bentley

e. First-Dadeville to continue relationship with CRE Ben Arellano

f. Five Mile to continue relationship with CRE Sharon Eich

g. Good Hope to continue relationship with Rev. Robert Jones

h. Goodwater to continue relationship with Rev. Pete McElrath

i. Hadden to continue relationship with CRE Joe Fast

j. Leeds to continue relationship with Jason Odum

k. Marion Junction to continue relationship with Dr. George Wood

l. Northern Heights to continue relationship with Angela Walker

m. Odenville to continue relationship with Rev. James Elrod

n. Pisgah to continue relationship with Rev. Ira N. Blanchard

o. Ramsay Memorial to continue relationship with Rev. Elizabeth Whatley (Methodist)

p. Rockspring to continue relationship with Rev. V. L. Hackworth

q. Westminster-Montgomery to continue relationship with Rev. Robert Edwards

r. Westminster-Tuskegee to continue relationship with Rev. Gregory Gray

s. Approved placing Steve Jones, former pastor of Southside Baptist Church on presbytery supply list

t. Approved Lydia Casey as Transitional Pastor at Mountain Brook, effective May 5, 2015.

u. Dissolved relationship with Mountain Brook and Cary Speaker effective May 17, 2015.

2. After an interview with Jeff Hayes, did not approve his proposal for a new 1001Worshiping

Community in the Highland Avenue area of Birmingham

3. Approved Ministers Terms of Call. Attached.

4. CRE Bev Dodson has agreed to serve as the Trustee member of the Robinson Memorial

Commission. Bev was appointed to the Commission as authorized at the February 12th

Presbytery meeting.

**Action Required:**

1. Approve Zana Free’s chaplaincy at UAB as a validated ministry. Sustained her examination

for ordination, including sermon, with a recommendation to presbytery that she be examined

and received into membership. She will be ordained at First, Birmingham on June 7, 2015 at

2:00 p.m. Commission consists of Teaching Elders Elizabeth Goodrich and Leeann Scarbrough and Ruling Elders Frank James, Southminster; Ree McIntosh, Shades Valley and John Neiman, First-Birmingham. Statements are attached. The examination was sustained and following the answers to the constitutional questions, Zana was received into membership of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.

2. Approve the call from Independent to Rev. Dr. William Carl effective July 1, 2015. Statements are attached. Terms of call: Cash Salary $154,000, Housing $66,000, Dental $427, BOP $55,901, Professional Expense $3,515, Con-Ed $5,000, other $114

Total Package is $284,957. Installation date is Sunday, August 30, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. Commission consists of Teaching Elders Charles Durham, Ed Hurley, Lucy Turner and Lou Ann Sellers. Ruling Elders Frank James (Southminster), Teresa Pulliam (Independent) and Eva Carter (Westminster-Birmingham). Sitting with the commission: Felix Yarboro, Independent. The examination was sustained and following the answers to the constitutional questions, Bill was received into membership of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.

3. Approve the call from the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley to Rev. Dr. Jay Wilkins effective May 1, 2015 as Transitional General Presbyter. Statements are attached. Terms of call: Salary and housing $75,000; BOP $18,250; SECA (50%) $6,129, Term Life $1,584, Dental $905 – Total Package is $111,139. The examination was sustained and following the answers to the constitutional questions, Jay was received into membership of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.

4. Appoint an Administrative Commission to close First-Tuskegee. Members are: Jonathan Yarboro\* (commission chair and trustee), Nick Reed\*, Nancy Washburn, First-Alex City. The motion was approved.

Appoint an Administrative Commission to work with the Hadden Church following their request to be dismissed to ECO. The commission will consist of Neil McCarter, commission chair, along with Joe Spranzy, a Trustee, and Clair Nichols.

5. Approve retirement of Rev. Richard Brooks effective May 31, 2015. Richard’s son, Gray Brooks, shared memories of their lives in this presbytery and words of thanks to the presbytery for the years of faithful service of his father and the home they all found within this presbytery. Richard Brooks has been approved to be Honorably Retired. [attached]

6. Memorial of Rev. John Toppins given by Rev. Mark McCormick [attached]

7. Memorial of Lee Laack given by Judy Rogers [attached]

Sid Burgess led in a prayer for those who have joined in ministry in this presbytery, the one who has received the designation of HR, as well as giving thanks for the lives of those saints who have joined the Church Triumphant.

Neil McCarter requested that those who are a part of small church ministry join around lunch tables for sharing of ideas and discussion.

Those who were directing a camp this summer at Living River were invited forward to assist in leading the blessing.

The meeting was temporarily suspended for lunch.

The meeting was again called to order as the body joined in an energizer and singing *Spirit of the Living God.*

**Living River** – Keener Hudson

A joyful day indeed…..now to stay focused on the mission Living River was intended to be. Moving forward to the next phase of building requires raising additional funds. The board is committed to further the Gospel through the camps and functions held on this site.

**Executive Council** – Rick Frennea

The recommendation to revise the Standing Rules was moved by Rick Frennea. An explanation of how this process will work was offered by Moderator Sellers, noting that all revisions to this document must be made today. When it is presented at the August meeting there will be an up or down vote only. The *Book of Order* requires a Manual of Operations. These Standing Rules represent the presbytery’s Manual of Operations.

The Executive Council moved the adoption of the proposed changes to the Standing Rules. The motion was approved. [See Appendix A – full Council report follows]

**CPM** – Kathy Reed Wolf

**FOR INFORMATION**:

INQUIRERS CHURCH INSTITUTION

Bennett Alldredge FPC, Tuscaloosa Princeton

Courtney Bowen IPC, Birmingham Louisville

Micah Dowling Cahaba Springs, Trussville Columbia

Sherrad Hayes Second, Birmingham Beeson

Kevin Henderson Edgewood, Birmingham Austin

Rachel VanKirk Mathews FPC, Tuscaloosa Columbia

Lindsay Pruitt Second, Birmingham Graduate

Alfred Rose First, Birmingham Graduate (Union)

CANDIDATES

Zana Free First, Birmingham Graduate

Rebecca Mann Immanuel, Montgomery Graduate (Columbia)

Leigh Ann Min First, Birmingham Graduate (Columbia)

**For Information:**

- The committee approved enrollment of Bennett Alldredge, First Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa, as an Inquirer.

- The committee approved enrollment of Rachel VanKirk Mathews, First Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa, as an Inquirer.

**For Action:**

The CPM moves that Inquirer Micah Dowling be examined and approved for Candidacy status. Kathy Reed\* introduced Micah and asked him to share briefly with the body. Micah was examined by presbytery and was moved from Inquirer status to Candidacy status. The constitutional questions were asked of Micah by Moderator Sellers followed by a charge given by Kathy Reed\* and prayer offered by Patti Winter. Jon Scholl, elder commissioner from Cahaba Springs, stood with Micah.

**Nominating** – Jeff Bonner

1. We place in nomination the following persons to serve on CPM Class of 2016: Lindy Martin,

1st Auburn.

2. We place in nomination the following to serve on the 2015-16 Sheppards and Lapsley

Presbytery Youth Council:

2016 Bailey Busby Southminster F

“ Emily Truchon Southminster F

“ Craig Cantley Independent M

“ Piper Gray Shades Valley F

“ Mary Myers Huddleston South Highland F

2017 Nate Burt FPC Birmingham M

“ Riley Byars FPC Tuscaloosa M

“ Cal Devine FPC Tuscaloosa M

“ Marion Dukes Independent F

“ AJ Fleet Oakmont M

“ Mary Frances Garner SHPC F

“ Emma Grace Jones Independent F

“ Ellie Noden Independent F

“ Evan Klugh First-Auburn M

Adults

2016 James Goodlet UofA UKirk M

“ Betsy Murphy Southminster F

“ Nick Reed FPC Auburn M

2017 Emily Roberts FPC Birmingham F

“ Ben Acton Southminster M

“ LeighAnn DiCesaris Oakmont F

2015 Laura Bannon FPC Auburn F

“ Catherine Goudreau Independent F

“ Patti Winter FPC Birmingham F

Staff: Robert Hay Associate Executive for Nurture M

The Nominating Committee’s recommendations were approved.

**Trustees** – Bill Stribling

**Motion:**

1.  To approve the attached short-term lease for the Trinity Presbyterian Church building at 4565 Montevallo Road; Birmingham, AL 35210 for two months at the rate of $2,000 per month for the months of April and May 2015

**Motion**:

2.  Authorize Trustees to enter into a 3 to 5 year lease with Arise Birmingham, a Christian church, for the Trinity Presbyterian Church building at 4565 Montevallo Road; Birmingham, AL 35210 to commence in June 2015, with the monthly lease amount being $3,000 per month.

Both motions were approved.

Additional information from the Trustees appears in Appendix B.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. with closing prayer and benediction. The next stated meeting will be on August 14, 2015 at First, Birmingham.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Tom Winter, Stated Clerk

**Faith Journey – Zana Free**

I grew up in Cullman, Alabama and was guided and nurtured by Christian parents who continue to show me what trust in God looks like. We attended a small Baptist church where I received an excellent education in the Bible. When I was six years old, I professed that Jesus was my savior. And I was baptized a baptism that was only the beginning of a life of faith, an act of the Spirit that was the first of many conversions, a baptism I continue to live out.

I sensed a very clear call to ministry as an adolescent. I did not know what form that would take. But early on my pastor and youth director encouraged me, and I was given opportunities to lead Bible studies and Sunday School classes. However, since the examples of women in ministry leadership that were celebrated were

I attended Cornell University after high school. It was there that I began to see the only about international work. It was also there that I experienced a kind of crisis of faith. Most of my friends were not Christians. And they were tolerant of my beliefs but seemed to consider them quaint vestiges of my Southern upbringing. And as we talked about God, I saw that I could not convince them that Jesus is the Son of God, that salvation is by believing in him. I was in anguish as I wrestled with God about this. This wrestling was at God is the one who woos, that without the Holy Spirit my efforts are shadow boxing.

I transferred to Auburn University and graduated from there. I then attended Beeson Divinity School. It was through my studies there, especially a course on Calvin taught by Dean Timothy George, that I realized I was a Calvinist (which I realized was what I believe is a Biblicist, a Paulist, an Augustinian, a member of the great Reformed tradition, etc.). I learned that Biblically and systematically, I agreed with muc h of what Calvin summarized in the Institutes and in his letters: that God loves us and calls us, that we are broken, that we can do nothing to save ourselves, that God continues to save us and nurture us. And it was then that I explored Presbyterian polity and opportunities in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

I started to attend First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham during my last year of seminary. I was welcomed and encouraged by the pastor, Rev. Eugenia Gamble, and all of the members there. It felt like home. I knew that the PCUSA was where God wanted me to serve in ministry.

Over the years, I thought that I would serve as a pastor in a church. But after a long process of job- searchingandsoul-searching, I know that I am called to healthcare chaplaincy. I have been a chaplain at Princeton Hospital in Birmingham and at UAB hospital, and it has been the most fulfilling work I have ever done. It feels and mercy. I resources, teach them, and point them towards grace. And time and time again, God faithfully reveals the riches and depths of God’s love for me and for the world.

**Statement of Faith – Zana Free**

I believe in the triune God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God creates, redeems, and sustains the world. Before the foundation of the world, God chose to be God for us and God with us. This is most perfectly demonstrated by the fact that in Jesus Christ God became one of us. Jesus was fully divine and fully human; through his life, sacrificial death, and bodily resurrection from the dead, we have forgiveness of sins, new life here on earth, and the promise of eternal life with God. The Holy Spirit guides us and sustains us in our lives of faith.

We all fall short of the glory of God. Not one part of us escapes the taint of sin. But by we are forgiven. Our lives of faith are encounters God. In baptism Supper, we are nourished spiritually. Through the gift of these sacraments we commune with the Lord and with the saints and proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ. Through the gift of t building up the household of faith, and extending the mercy of God to all the earth.

My Faith Journey—1948-2015

**William J. Carl III**

Like most people, my faith journey is not a straight line from point A to point B. As a son of the manse, I was wary like all PKs of ever going into the ministry. But, as they say, if you want to make God laugh, just tell God your plans! I was nurtured in the faith in a new church development in Oklahoma. Basically I grew up in the faith watching my Dad’s new church plant grow to full maturity. In that case, as in many others, it was the lay people in the congregation—Sunday School teachers, youth directors, and the choir director in addition to family members—who helped water and fertilize my faith.

Majoring in music quickly morphed into majoring in religion and philosophy that became the catalyst for a bit of a faith crisis in college where I realized I couldn’t make it the rest of my life on only an “inherited faith” as James Fowler points out so eloquently in his classic work, ***Stages of Faith***. Seminary was a lot of fun because I could throw myself into studying what I loved in preparation for ministry. George Buttrick mentored me in remarkable ways, not the least of which was modeling how to be intellectual, spiritual and pastoral all at the same time. He also steered me away from doing a PhD in New Testament but instead to go to Pittsburgh and study Homiletics “with his son Davy” as he put it while garnering a PhD in Rhetoric and Communication at Pitt. There my faith was challenged daily since the entire department was atheist except for one recovering Lutheran, a world’s authority on Presidential Rhetoric, who became my dissertation advisor. Teaching at both Pittsburgh and Union (VA) seminaries taught me to learn from my students and my colleagues on the faculty how deep and wide the faith can actually be when we open ourselves to God’s presence in our midst. One of the students even reminded me how important daily prayer and Bible study is when it has nothing to do with preaching or teaching.

Serving as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas for 22 years continued my roller coaster ride on the journey of faith. Fellow travelers in and out of that congregation—on the mission field in Taiwan, South Africa, Korea, Russia, India, Mexico and China, and those I met preaching at camp meetings in Georgia and African-American churches in Dallas—taught me that God has a multi-faceted approach that is so diverse and invigorating that it nearly takes your breath away. A weekend on “Walk to Emmaus” just reinforced that feeling. My wife and two sons have also inspired my growth in the faith.

The latest part of my faith journey has included another walk through academia where again the joy of new faith on the faces of young students just keeps me going with humility and confidence. As I take the long view backwards, I sometimes wonder where all the time went, but realize in retrospect that God’s providential plan was unfolding all along the way. I’ve always seen myself at Pittsburgh Seminary as Pastor to the Community. A year ago, after nearly ten years of service, as part of healthy succession planning having completed my goals, I sensed my call was coming to an end. Almost immediately I began to realize God was calling me back to the parish. It is this ongoing rhythm from classroom to sanctuary that has marked both my ministry and my life. Then out of the blue came the wonderful folks from IPC! The past few weeks meeting with Independent Presbyterian Church’s PNC reminded me that God is rarely through with us—God always has something for us to do. And now without question, I can see that becoming IPC’s new Pastor is clearly God’s plan for me at this time. God only knows what will come next. But, it’s better not to anticipate because when we do we’re usually wrong! For that reason, I have always trusted in the Sovereignty of God and let God take care of the rest. Sure, we stumble and fall along the way, but God always picks us up and gets us going again, and for that I am eternally thankful.

**Micah Dowling – Faith Journey**

From an early sense of call at five years old, to my current listening to the Spirit a year into seminary, one constant focus of my call has been communicating the good news of Jesus Christ. These opportunities have come in many forms. This expressing of the divine came first through experiencing it as a young man, when I became aware of my need for God and I professed publicly my faith in Jesus Christ. I began expressing the Holy Spirit’s movement in my life in various ways; playing the guitar from the age of eleven, and leading in a ministerial and worship capacity at my church from age fourteen. My sense of call became further affirmed through preaching, and visiting the hospitalized and shut-in at an early age. It became clearer through bible studies, and courses and dialogue at my undergraduate, Southeastern Bible College.

Then life happened. Somewhere in the next five years I experienced confusion, pain, doubt, discouragement and even despair. All this came in the midst of ministry, and I often did not have the answers I thought theologically sound ministers should have. It seemed the denomination and specific church context in which I found myself focused on having all the right answers instead of asking the big questions. This becomes a significant issue when faced with trauma or real pain. It is in these moments when Christian platitudes or scripture verses aren’t enough.

I sensed God leading me to think differently about church, and ministry, and my own personal faith-life and theological beliefs. It was in the midst of this that I found myself in the Presbyterian Church as a recently hired youth minister. This PC(USA) congregation welcomed me, introduced me to such wonderfully new, unique and sacred traditions such as moments in worship with the time of confession, an egalitarian Church government, a focus on inclusion, and I fell in love. The liturgy, theology, and church government are all big areas of appreciation I have for our denomination, but it was the way I was accepted and valued for where I was in my faith journey and experience, that really spoke to my spirit as a new Presbyterian. That is something I continue to highly value in the PC(USA). In moments of pain, I was ministered to by my home church and it became a huge part of my understanding of the church, my faith and my calling.

I am excited to see where the Lord continues to direct me in my faith journey, but being in a place where I am free to explore my calling as I learn how to embrace others with the love of YHWH is a real privilege. The gratitude I feel to God for giving me this opportunity to learn how to better communicate the love of God is overwhelming. It is an honor to continue to live out and live into this calling.

**Micah Dowling - Faith Statement**

Before the world began, God the Creator, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit existed in a love relationship. The desire to extend this love brought about creation and human-kind. The relationship between God and humanity was a strained one, due to the entrance of sin, but God Almighty provided access to this love relationship through the gift of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. Christ’s birth, life, death and resurrection made it possible through the work of the Holy Spirit for humanity’s eyes and heart to be opened to the revealed truth of God’s mercy, grace and love. By the Holy Spirit’s work in my own life, I have received and acknowledged the gift of Jesus Christ and confess and claim the love of God for myself and the world. My understanding of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus empowers me to become a light and extension of Christ’s love and motivates me to follow this way, as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ is not simply a statement of beliefs, but an attitude of trust that enables us to live as witnesses to Christ’s reconciling love. We are to be a picture of Christ in the way we think, act and live. Our actions are an indicator of faith, and should represent a constant testimony of Christ’s love and reconciliation with the world.

*Reflections on the Retirement of* ***Richard H. Brooks*** *May 14, 2015  
Remarks Delivered by Richard Gray Brooks*

I’m very grateful to be here today. I know a good many of you, though it has been too long since we’ve crossed paths. In the meantime, my heart and my ethos has been with this family of faith that raised me.

It’s an honor to speak to you today on behalf of my mother Susan, my sister Davis, her husband Daniel, and their two delightful tiny Presbyterians, Katherine and Emma. We wanted most of all to​t​hank you for your patience with our husband and father over all these years ­ we understand that it has not always been easy!

Davis and I grew up in the churches of our presbytery, first South Highland Presbyterian, later Edgewood, Avondale, and then our dear Southminster Presbyterian. One aspect that has always stuck with me was the sheer warmth and goodness of the embrace each congregation gave us. I don’t think that was a coincidence and I don’t think that such things come from nowhere. Who we choose as our pastors helps shape who we are. I remain proud of those we’ve chosen over the years and what they’ve done in pointing us towards in life.

You know my father as Richard Brooks ­ the pastor of Oakmont Presbyterian, the most recent of​e​ight congregations to which he has tended. But go back farther. We are, after all ­ the proud denomination of generations, of centuries. Presbyterians helped form this country, founded Princeton, were signatories to the Declaration of Independence. We have inherited a strong and proud faith. And that tradition is grounded ­ no, it has grown from those who have tilled the soil of our community not just in recent years, but throughout our lives.

My father was born into First Presbyterian Church of Sheffield, Alabama near the banks of the Tennessee River. His parents instilled in him early a strong work ethic which saw him provide himself from the early age of 10 ­ whether working as a short order cook, cleaning floors, working as a roofer in Miami, or as a riverboat deck hand on the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers, my father learned throughout life the importance of work and self reliance. In his early adult years, he roamed, traveling far afield ­ becoming an atheist, then agnostic, wandering before a transformation brought him to

philosophy and theology. It was in his crisis of faith in his 20’s when he found through grace not just his faith but his vocation.

My father struggled with a learning disability in childhood ­ good grades did not come easily. But he persisted. After enlisting in the military, he went on to become the first of his family to graduate college, then receive a master’s degree. And in the true spirit of higher education, what he took away was actual philosophy, true love of knowledge and its responsibility.

Those of you who’ve heard my father’s sermons can detect the autodidact. He sprinkles what he has to say with Socrates, with Franklin, with Calvin, Augustine and Bonhoeffer. In proper Presbyterian fashion, he has always sought out the scholarly to inform our faith journeys. I respect that​c​hurches my father tended all grew in membership and initiative. I value that he spoke of the common bond of the Abrahamic religions. That he spoke of our common errancy and the need for civility and tolerance in our lives.

He took from his studies a business acumen which would not only found a successful finance company that provided for his family, but all the more came to bear within our presbytery in his work with its real estate and finance. At the congregational level, but also over time at across the presbytery, he has worked for our interests. His efforts on the Board of Trustees and with the finances of the presbytery have served us well.

The same embrace of the pragmatic that led him to build a computerized mortgage business well ahead of its time encouraged me on my path to first Howard Dean then Barack Obama’s presidential campaign. My work in the current administration is guided by his example of pragmatic service.

I came home earlier this week to help my parents move to Huntsville to be closer to my sister and her beautiful family. While going through the house, I recently came across something ­ the bound copy of the church bulletins from South Highland for the year 1982. Sure enough, in early November, there is a note in the announcements: “Congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. Richard Brooks, upon the birth of a son, Gray.”

Our faith tradition is strong and developed, but it has been built by the men and women who made it over the years. The last service of 1982 at South Highland had a sermon by my father entitled “What is required of you and me? ­ In 1983?” The mandate for community activity lead Dad and other young ministers in the 1980’s to start presbytery committees on Social Justice, Women’s Concerns, Hunger Action, and Peacemaking.

Their efforts echo through the years with programs such as 2­cents­a­meal, congregation peacemaking pledges, the presbytery’s hunger action enablers, and a jobless support group.

We all walk the roads paved by those who have come before us, who have worked hard to make a difference and improve the world. It is all too easy for us to forget how much they have done to make possible what we now do, but on occasions such as this, I hope that we can try.

My father began earning his keep 55 years ago. 35 years ago, he became pastor of his first church in Cairo, Georgia. Soon thereafter, he became a part of our presbytery and our community. We have made him and he has made us. Biased though I am, I believe we are the better for it.  
 I offer these reflections for incorporation into Presbytery Minutes.

**History of Churches Served**

8/2008 ­ 6/2015 Minister **O**​**AKMONT PRESBYTERIAN** (​180 members)

10/2005 ­ 8/2008 Minister **E**​**ASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN** (​200 members)

8/1989 ­ 6/2004 President/Owner ***F*​*IRST SOUTHEAST CAPITAL***

***FIRST SOUTHEASTMORTGAGE* B'ham, AL**

6/1986 12/2002 Minister **Ensley Highland, Edgewood, Avondale, Grace Covenant Chuches**

9/1981 ­ 1/1986 Associate Minister **SOUTH HIGHLAND** (1000 members)

1/1980 ­ 9/1981 Minister **First Presbyterian, Cairo, GA** (148 members)

**Memorial for the Reverend John Toppins** Rev. C. Mark McCormick, PhD

For the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of those without understanding they seem to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though to human sight they seem punished, their hope is full of immortality. . . . Those who trust in the Lord will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with the Lord in love, because grace and mercy are upon his chosen, and the Lord watches over his saints.

The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-4, 9

How do we measure the span of a life, or how do we value the success of a life? The impact of a man like John Toppins can be measured in so many ways. If we consider the chronology of his life, spanning from south Texas in 1923, to west Alabama in 2015, by way of California and many other places in between, then we could say that John’s journey began in a moment before there was television, the Model T was fifteen years old, paved roads were rare, radio was novel. So much that is a regular part of our daily lives were new moments in the life of John Toppins.

But if we measure a life by the ripples of love and compassion that it sets in motion, or by the gauge of sharing one’s gifts and interests with others as an expression of one’s own sense of having been blessed beyond what one could have imagined, then we may get a better measure of the extent of John’s life. The trail that departed San Antonio and led to these moments is populated with a myriad of moments of shared joy and laughter, as well as sorrow and tears. John was Texas big, I can tell you that because, when I met him at Covenant in Tuscaloosa, he always moved in close to me, probably to insure that he could hear what I was saying, but I have to tell you, you can look at my own stature and tell that John Toppins loomed over me when we talked. His intense eyes sparkled with interest and his quick smile assured of good will. But he wanted to hear what I was doing.

When John learned that I was on faculty at Stillman, he was quick to identify with the College — he had been there as Assistant Director of Development — and he reminded me often that he had supervised the purchases of equipment for the labs and the seats in the auditorium, “I ordered the seats for that auditorium, and fought for the back lit screen so that projection could be made from a control room behind the screen,” he would say smiling. I would assure him that the auditorium was still a central and regularly used venue on the campus, where I regularly teach my introductory classes in Old and New Testament. We have long ago replaced the carpeting that he ordered and recovered the seats, but his contribution to an ongoing endeavor was clearly pleasing to John. He was already retired when we had those conversations, but he was not finished. John shared. He shared his knowledge, he shared his experience, he shared his clerical robe, whether for moot court or for an aspiring preacher. John Toppins shared himself and he put himself into anything he undertook to accomplish.

I didn't know then that the Stinson building on the Stillman campus was not his only building contribution or the penchant for building that he had. John Toppins has left a trail of buildings along the path of his life. He enjoyed planning and he enjoyed the execution of a well laid plan.

It was not bragging when John spoke about his achievements or the jobs that he had done over the years. No, it was more of a kind of reminder to others and to himself that he had done what he could in a time when so many worked with so little. He liked being involved in things, knowing that he was still making a contribution was important to him. Even to the end, when he could sometimes just get the words out, he was still planning and making arrangements. Sometimes it was making sure that there would be resources so that his beloved wife Anne could be taken care of, sometimes it even flowed over into making plans for his adult children’s living arrangements, so that he would know that someone would be close for his beloved partner of so many years.

“I just want to be in charge,” he would say with that twinkle of mischievous self awareness.

John Toppins was a faithful servant and worker in the kingdom of God. His life a testimony to the many ways that vocation can be lived out today, not always through the traditional and better known avenues of ministry. John’s labors shared his talent and his skills, even as they shared his love of planning, organizing and building. The structures that he leaves in this world still serve as places of learning, places of health care, living and worship. Even as he has left in this world so many objective and material reminders of his dedication and his commitment to the good news of compassion and reconciliation that is the gospel, we can each one take from his testimonial life a lesson in the awareness of our own lives as structures of purposeful living, tents that give way to buildings, as the Apostle Paul encouraged the Corinthians in the second letter he wrote to that struggling community,

For we know that if the earthly tent that we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with human hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Corinthians 5:1)

John’s work in this world was his earthly tent, his testimony to the compassion of a loving God who could take a gangly boy from south Texas, and pair him with a diminutive girl from Arkansas, to build a building that cannot be measured by years or by dimensions, but is measured by the love shared, the laughter enjoined, the tears dried, and all of these as testimony to the redemptive and reconciling love of God that unites us all in the providential construction of faithful lives by God’s grace.

**The Reverend Leland M. Laack**

January 17, 1933 April 14, 2015byJudy Rogers

Leland Laack, one of the great saints of the church, passed away on April 14, 2015, at Pine Haven Prairie Crossing in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. Lee was born on January 17, 1933, in Sheboygan, son of Leland Paul and Katherine (Grooms) Laack. He graduated from Carroll College in 1955 and received his Master of Divinity degree from the McCormick Seminary in 1959. He did additional theological study at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in the 1970s. Lee married Nancy Coswell, a professional Presbyterian Christian Educator, on December 27, 1959.

Lee served as Associate Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley from June of 1989 until his honorary retirement in 1996. He had previously served as pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Albert Lea, MN; pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Sioux Falls, SD; pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Ft. Myers, FL; Coordinator/Consultant for Church Education and Camping in the Presbytery of South Dakota; and Specialist in Christian Education and Camping in the Presbytery of Central Nebraska. Even after his official retirement, he continued serving our Presbytery by working in the Resource Center, serving as interim pastor in Alexander City and Talladega, and helping extensively with the Presbytery’s new church development in Alabaster. It was through his work with the NCD that I met him and was inspired by his skills, his spirit, and his love of the church. He returned to Wisconsin in 2001, but maintained his membership in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley and followed closely the activities of the Presbytery.

Throughout Lee’s career, his particular interests and activities centered on Christian Education and camping programs. He loved teaching the Bible. He and Nancy together led marriage encounter groups in local churches. He directed management of camp sites, selected camp curricula, and trained camp leadership. His interest in camping led him to follow from Wisconsin what was going on at Living River and the progress that was being made there. He wanted to visit Alabama to see the camp. Nancy suggested that memorial donations for him be directed to Living River.

Lee was a member of the Manitowoc Civil War Round Table and was active in theater in high school, college, and adult life. He enjoyed directing and watching plays, stamp collecting, needlepoint (which he taught me how to do), and collecting Christmas crèches. He also enjoyed genealogy, studying history, and walking through cemeteries.

Lee is survived by his wife of 55 years, Nancy; his daughter, Allison (Kyle) Robar of Newport Beach, CA; his son, Troy (Julia) Laack of Waukesha, WI; five grandchildren, Kenna, Ava, Keaton, Spencer and Stephen; two step-grandchildren, Shane and Sean; and numerous other relatives and friends. Well done, good and faithful servant!

**Appendix A**

**Standing Rules**

**The Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley**

8-15-14

Amended 5-14-15

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Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley: **Our Statement of Purpose**

As believers, our faith flows from living water *as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all things that I have commanded you.” (Matt. 28:18-20)* This living water runs through the stories of our lives as God’s covenant people and through the life of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. From creation and baptism to the Congo and the Cahaba, we are connected by life-giving water. We are refreshed by it; we are nurtured by it; we are saved by it. Living water is our past, our present and our future.

As 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.

As believers reformed and always being reformed *according to the Word of God*, we are participants in God’s ongoing creation, embracing the transformative power of God’s saving grace through Jesus Christ. In our shared life as the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, we are challenged by the radical call of the Gospel to boldly, consciously and intentionally live out this transformation with imagination and joy.

As the expression of our shared and transformed life together, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley commits, with God’s help to:

* Support congregations both large and small by serving as a resource for and an enabler of their ministries in their communities and throughout the world.
* Equip our lay and ordained leaders, and partner with them, to created and sustain healthy and growing worshipping communities that are faithful and vital witnesses of Jesus Christ.
* Nurture and enhance the many and various gifts God has given the members of our congregations and engage those gifts in the service of the wider church and all God’s people, which affirms the relational connection of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
* Empower our congregations and our leaders to be flexible in structure, dynamic in practice and imaginative in their service of the Gospel in a changing world.

To further these purposes, 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.

*Rationale: This would place the Statement of Purpose within the Standing Rules, which is the Presbytery’s manual of administrative operations, so that it serves the purpose of guiding and informing our shared life as a Presbytery.*

**SR-1.01 Chapter I.**

This council (G 3.01) shall be known as the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It shall consist of all the teaching elders who have been received into its membership and the churches within its geographical boundaries. It is established by the authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Synod of Living Waters, and shall have those duties, authorities, powers and responsibilities as specified by the *Book of Order* (G-3.01, G-3.03)*.*

**SR-2.01 Chapter II. Authority, Amendments, and Suspension**

SR-2.0101 These Standing Rules shall establish the basic organization of the Presbytery and provide for its functioning, both during and between meetings of the Presbytery.

SR-2.0102 This document shall be known as the Standing Rules of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (USA), and is created by the action of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley as authorized by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), which Constitution is hereby acknowledged as supreme and applicable in all affairs of this Presbytery.

SR-2.0103 These Standing Rules shall serve as the Manual of Administrative Operations for the Presbytery. A chart outlining items that shall ordinarily occur at stated meetings of Presbytery (see Appendix I) are attached to the Standing Rules.

SR-2.0104 These Standing Rules may be amended as follows: A proposed amendment shall be presented in writing to the Executive Council, which in turn shall present the proposal to the next meeting of Presbytery with its recommendations. To become effective, an amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the votes cast at one meeting of Presbytery and adopted without further revision by two-thirds *of* the vote*s cast* at the next meeting.

SR-2.0105 These Standing Rules, including paragraph SR-2.0104, may be suspended by two-thirds of the votes cast at any meeting of Presbytery.

*SR-2.0106 Policies adopted by Presbytery will automatically be added to the appendix to these Standing Rules.*

*Rationale: Doing so ensures that policies adopted by Presbytery are duly recorded and become part of our Manual of Administrative Operations for future reference and execution. (Note: The revised Standing Rules adds to the appendix two policies previously adopted, one by Presbytery and one by the Executive Council.)*

**SR-3.01 Chapter III. Meetings and Organization**

SR-3.0101 Each year the Presbytery shall ordinarily have four stated meetings**.** The moderator of Presbytery shall call special meetings at the request of, or with the concurrence of, two teaching elders and two ruling elders, representing four different congregations. Should the Moderator be unable to act, the Stated Clerk shall, under the same conditions, issue the call. Notice of a called meeting shall be sent not less than 10 days in advance to each teaching elder and the session of each congregation. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting, and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.

SR-3.0102 The Presbytery shall be governed in its meeting and in the action of all its agencies by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Standing Rules of the Presbytery, and where none of these applies, by *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised -- 11th Edition.*

SR-3.0103 Ruling elders are elected *as*commissioners to Presbytery in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* G-3.0301 *and* as prescribed within the Standing Rules.

a. Churches with 500 or fewer members shall be represented by one ruling elder commissioned by the session, preferably for a one-year term. Churches with membership over 500 shall be represented as follows:

501-1,000 – 2 elders

1,001-1,500 – 3 elders

1,501-2,000 – 4 elders

2,001-3,000 – 5 elders

b. Ruling elders serving as commission or committee moderators, *chair of the Board of Trustees,* members of theExecutiveCouncil, Commissioned Ruling Elder to a particular church or validated ministry, moderator of Presbyterian Women, and moderators of Youth Council who are ruling elders shall be members of Presbytery and shall have the privilege of voice and vote for the duration of their terms. Persons serving in these positions who are not ruling elders shall have privilege of voice for duration of their term.

c. Any ruling elder elected by Presbytery as *general* presbyter or associate presbyter shall be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery for the duration of service in such staff position, whether or not commissioned by his or her session.

d. In accordance with G-3.0301, to achieve numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders to be enrolled as voting members at any stated or called presbytery meeting, the Stated Clerk shall use the following method:

1. Determine the total number of active teaching elders.

2. Determine the total number of *active* ruling elders allotted by SR-3.0103a.

3. Add to the total number of participating ruling elders the following: ruling elders who are officers of the Presbytery and/or Executive Council members during their period of service; *a ruling elder who is chair of the Board of Trustees;* ruling elders commissioned to a particular church or other validated ministry; ruling elders who are Certified Christian Educators in active ministry (G-2.1103b).

4. After these totals have been calculated, if there are more teaching elders than ruling elders, the Stated Clerk shall determine and recommend to Presbytery which of its churches shall be allowed an additional ruling elder commissioner. According to the Department of Constitutional Services of the General Assembly it is permissible to have more ruling elders than teaching elders but not more teaching elders than ruling elders.

e. Certified Christian Educators in active ministry, in accordance with the Book of Order (G-2.1103b) are entitled to the privilege of voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators in active ministry who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote.

SR-3.0104 A quorum of *a* stated meetingof the Presbytery shall be 20 teaching elders and 20 ruling elders, representing at least 20 congregations. *A* quorumof a called meeting of the Presbytery shall be 15 teaching elders and 15 ruling elders, representing at least 15 congregations.

SR-3.0105 Requests by teaching elders to be excused from a Presbytery meeting, together with the reason for the request, shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk prior to the meeting.

SR-3.0106 Clerks of session shall forward to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery the full names, email and mailing addresses, and telephone numbers of the duly elected commissioners in order that commissioner packets may be sent to them in preparation for the meeting. All alternate ruling elder commissioners shall have the privilege of the floor without vote.

SR-3.0107 Should a question arise concerning the status of a commissionerto a Presbytery meeting*,* the Presbytery shall resolve the matter upon recommendation of the Stated Clerk**.**

SR-3.0108 The format for any meeting of Presbytery, including the docket and the time, shall be prepared by the Executive Council upon the recommendation of the Stated Clerk, and then recommended at the opening of the meeting.

SR-3.0109 Provision shall be made for temporary committees as may be required. Members of temporary committees shall be elected by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Moderator *or* the ExecutiveCouncil. The floor shall be open for further nominations.

**SR-4.01 Chapter IV. Officers**

The Officers of the Presbytery shall be: the Moderator, the Stated Clerk, Recording Clerk, and the Treasurer. Expenses, honoraria, and job descriptions of the Officers will be recommended by *the* Executive Council and approved by Presbytery.

SR-4.0101 Moderator

a. The Presbytery shall elect a Moderator for the following year at the last stated meeting of Presbytery each year. The newly elected Moderator assumes the position at the meeting at which she/he is installed.The term shall be for one year or until his/her successor is installed. The office of Moderator shall ordinarily be filled alternately by ruling elders and teaching elders. The Moderator shall serve on the Executive Council.The Moderator shall serve according to the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G3.0104 and G-3.0105).

b. The Moderator will:

1. Moderate meetings of Presbytery.

2. Send a one-page synopsis of the Presbytery meeting to the Presbytery office within one week of the meeting. It will be forwarded to all teaching elders, commissioners and churches.

3. Whenever possible, participate in installations and ordinations.

4. Each year, at the end of his/her term, nominate for election by Presbytery one teaching elder and two ruling elders, one male and one female, to the Committee *on* Nominating and Representation. The moderator of the Committee on Nominating and Representationwill be nominated by the outgoing Moderator of Presbytery from among the Committee on Nominating and Representation.

5. Nominate replacements to fill unexpired terms, honoring the membership balance, on the Committeeon Nominating and Representation as they occur.

c. The Presbytery shall elect a vice moderator at the last stated meeting of Presbytery each year. The vice moderator will ordinarily be nominated to serve as Moderator the next year. The vice moderator will preside over a stated meeting of Presbytery in the absence of the Moderator. The office of vice moderator shall ordinarily be filled alternately by ruling elders and teaching elders. The vice moderator shall serve on the Executive Council*.*

SR-4.0102 Stated Clerk and Recording Clerk

a. The Presbytery shall elect a Stated Clerk to serve a term of three years, and she/he shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of three terms. The Stated Clerk shall serve according to the provisions of the *Book of Order (G-3.0104, G-3.0305 and D-11.0700)* and according to the more specific duties outlined in the Stated Clerk’s Handbook provided by the Office of the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk shall serve as parliamentarian and shall be available to assist individuals and groups with advice regarding presentation of matters to the governing body, and shall see that session records are reviewed in accordance with G-3.0108. When the Stated Clerk is absent or unable to function, the *Executive* Council shall appoint a temporary Stated Clerk until a permanent Stated Clerk is elected.

b. The Stated Clerk will:

1. Inform churches of their per capita assessment at the beginning of each year. The assessment shall ordinarily be due on January 1 and delinquent after March, unless being paid monthly.
2. Give notice at least 10 days in advance of each Presbytery meeting; have prepared and distributed to all appropriate participants a packet containing a proposed docket and all known business coming before Presbytery; enroll Presbytery’s members prior to the opening of each meeting; certify the presence of a quorum to the Moderator at each Presbytery meeting; see that accurate minutes are kept of each Presbytery meeting (minutes are to be reviewed by the Stated Clerk and the moderators of the Executive Council and Presbytery and then made available to the Presbytery); annually submit minutes to the Synod for review.
3. Distribute and receive and report to Presbytery the Annual Statistical Report forms and submit them to Synod and General Assembly.

c. The Presbytery may elect a Recording Clerk to serve a term of three yearsand she/he shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of three terms.

SR-4.0103 Treasurer

a. The Presbytery shall elect a Treasurer to serve a term of three years, and she/he shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of three terms. She/he shall account for all funds and shall present an annual report to the Presbytery.

b. The Treasurer shall

1. Receive and disburse all funds of the Presbytery and funds channeled

through Presbytery; shall keep a strict and accurate count thereof and,

in consultation with the Executive Council, shall arrange for an annual audit of

all accounts.

2. The Treasurer shall ordinarily present a full financial report of the previous year at the February stated meeting of Presbytery and may, if deemed expedient, disseminate reports of the financial situation at other times.

3. At the end of each year, the Treasurer shall give each church a statement of its giving to and through the Presbytery during the year.

*(Rationale: This is covered elsewhere under financial policies that are part of the Standing Rules, so it doesn’t need to be repeated here.)*

*4.* The Treasurer shall provide a monthly financial report to theExecutive

Council giving the status of actual expenditures versus budgeted accounts.

The report shall indicate the general state of actual cash receipts to date

compared to projected receipts for the presbytery as a whole.

*5.* The Treasurer shall function in accordance with the attached Financial Policy

and accounting procedures dated January 24, 2011, and approved by the

presbytery at its February 17, 2011, meeting.

**SR-5.01 Chapter V. Staff**

SR-5.0101 The role of the Presbytery staff shall be to facilitate and enable the entire work of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. The staff is expected to serve in ways that will enable the component parts of the connectional system to work together.

Presbytery staff shall ordinarily serve only as advisory members of any committee or commission~~s~~, with voice but without vote*.*

SR-5.0102 The Presbytery staff shall consist of such professional and office staff as are authorized by action of Presbytery (G-3.0103 and G-3.0110).

SR-5.0103 The General Presbyter shall supervise all staff in consultation with the Personnel Committee of the ExecutiveCouncil. Personnel policies and job descriptions will be approved by the ExecutiveCouncil. Personnel policies shall include provisions as stated in G-3.0110.

SR-5.0104 When a vacancy occurs in any of the Presbytery’s professional staff positions, the Executive Council shall be responsible for ensuring that essential functions of the Presbytery continue, and for assessing the mission and needs of the Presbytery. The Executive Council shall have the power to retain temporary and/or interim staff members. When the Executive Council determines that the needs of the Presbytery require a permanent General Presbyter or Associate Presbyter staff position, they shall submit a job description to the

Presbytery for approval, and ask the Committee on Nominating and Representation to nominate a search committee. The Presbytery shall approve any General Presbyter or Associate Presbyter search committee, with nominations permitted from the floor. After a search, the search committee shall present a candidate to the Presbytery for approval.

*(Rationale: This provision is intended to clarify procedures to ensure continuity of Presbytery’s operation during staff transitions and the process required to fill staff vacancies. Without such a provision, the Presbytery found itself in a position of having to wait a few months for the next meeting to approve a transition plan following the departure of the last Executive Presbyter. This provision allows for transitional leadership to begin without such delays.)*

**SR-6.01 Chapter VI. Agencies of Presbytery**

The agencies of Presbytery shall be all councils, commissions, committees, and other work groups elected in classes by the Presbytery to accomplish its work. Task teams will be formed to fill a specific purpose.

SR-6.0101 Unless otherwise provided for in the *Book of Order* (see D-5.0105) or by these Standing Rules, a person elected to serve any agency of the Presbytery shall serve a three-year term, or, if needed, to fill a vacancy, a portion thereof. A person shall be eligible to serve two full terms consecutively. Ordinarily, no person shall serve on more than one commission, committee or task team of Presbytery at the same time. Any member of the ExecutiveCouncil, or committee or commission of Presbytery, elected by Presbytery, who, without prior excuse, fails to attend a majority of meetings held in any year, or any two consecutive meetings, shall cease to be a member of said unit. Moderators of commissions, committees *or* task teamsshall report to *the* ExecutiveCouncil any non-participating members. Upon notification by the ExecutiveCouncil, the Committee on Nominating and Representation will then present names for replacements at the next stated meeting of Presbytery (see SR-6.0402d).

SR-6.02 The Executive Council

The purpose of the *Executive* Council is to direct, coordinate, assist and promote all of the programmatic work of the Presbytery.

*The Executive Council will engage itself in two primary areas: propulsion and navigation.*

*Propulsion: This area of responsibility is about the recurring tasks related to being a Presbytery: planning Presbytery meetings, receiving reports from constitutionally required committees and commissions, and from committees and task teams of the Executive Council; receiving and presenting General Assembly amendments to Presbytery; and bringing action items to Presbytery.*

*Navigation: This area of responsibility is about keeping Presbytery on course with its stated vision through ongoing discernment: setting our short- and long-term goals, making small or large adjustments to reach those goals, evaluating ministries, structures and functions, dismissing entities which are no longer needed, and encouraging and blessing new ministries, functions and structures.*

*(Rationale: John 6:16-21: “When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, got into a boat, and started across the lake to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The lake became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, ‘It is I; do not be afraid.’ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land towards which they were going.” This nautical text illustrates that (positive/missional/God-centered) movement requires the presence of Jesus and two other actions/mechanisms: propulsion and navigation. The disciples must keep rowing the boat, and they must make navigational adjustments. When all three are present, the boat of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley will reach the lands to which Jesus is leading us.)*

The ExecutiveCouncil is empowered to create such committeesandtask teamsas are necessary to accomplish its work. The ExecutiveCouncil is empowered to create ExecutiveCouncil committees (*either* chaired by voting members of the ExecutiveCouncil *or reporting to council through a member liaison*), and task teams (ordinarily chaired by voting members of the ExecutiveCouncil). Such committees and task teams will report at each meeting of the ExecutiveCouncil. The committee on Nominating and Representation shall present a slate of names for committee membership for election by the Presbytery while the Executive Council will have the authority to appoint members of task teams.

*The Executive Council* ***may*** *recruit a Mission and Outreach Coordinator who shall report directly to Council and have such duties as Council assigns in keeping with its mission.*

SR-6.0201 The ExecutiveCouncil shall oversee the implementation of Presbytery policy and assign responsibility relating to the work of Presbytery. Within the guidelines established, committees and task teams shall be expected to, and are authorized to, function in the way they deem best to accomplish their assigned work. Their actions are always subject to review and confirmation by theExecutiveCouncil, with final approval placed with the Presbytery. Matters that require administrative decisions shall be referred to the ExecutiveCouncil with recommendations for appropriate action.

SR-6.0202 The ExecutiveCouncil shall be responsible for Presbytery meetings, selecting meeting dates and places, providing worship, and presenting the docket.

SR-6.0203 The ExecutiveCouncil shall also be responsible for communication, stewardship development, and personnel, andshall develop, for Presbytery’s approval, the annual budget and provide for an audit and review of all Presbytery records and minutes.

SR-6.0204 The Executive Council shall receive and approve nomination of persons who belong to churches in the Presbytery to the Living River Board of Directors and shall present the nominations to Presbytery for election. The ExecutiveCouncil shall appoint one of its own members to serve on the Living River Board of Directors.

SR-6.0206 The voting membership of the ExecutiveCouncil shall be as follows:

*a.* Moderator and vice-moderator of Presbytery*.*

*b.* Ten members at-large, one of whom would serve as moderator of the Executive Council, two of whom would *ordinarily* serve as moderators of the personnel and finance committees of the Executive Council, and one of whom would serve on the Living River Board of Directors. The members at-large must have been members of this Presbytery or of a church within this Presbytery for at least two full years, and will be elected in as equal numbers as possible based on age, gender, ethnicity, geographic location, size of congregation, ruling elders and teaching elders. The members at-large shall be elected in three classes, serving three-year terms.

*c*. Professional staff and Stated Clerk shall serve as advisory members of the Executive Council, with voice but without vote. The Executive Council shall have the right to meet in executive session outside the presence of staff as needed.

SR-6.0207 The ExecutiveCouncil shall ordinarily meet monthly and on the call of the moderator of the ExecutiveCouncil.

SR-6.0208 A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting membership.

*(Rationale: Restructuring the Presbytery Council as the Executive Council is intended to create a more streamlined body with specific responsibilities for executing Presbytery policy and the ongoing discernment of its vision. The Executive Council would function like a congregational Session. The number of members would be reduced from more than 25 to 12 plus professional staff in advisory roles, and the frequency of meeting from quarterly to monthly. The current size of the Presbytery Council and frequency of meeting are no longer effective for providing oversight of and direction to Presbytery’s mission and work. It has been the experience of the Temporary Executive Board that the smaller size better facilitates discussion, and a more frequent meeting schedule provides more opportunity for effectively carrying out the work entrusted to it by Presbytery. A significant portion of the Executive Council’s focus will be devoted to discerning God’s vision for our Presbytery and directing its energies in pursuit of that vision. This has not been the case with the current Council structure.)*

*(Rationale: Eliminating Divisions as an agency of Presbytery is another step in streamlining the function and work of Presbytery. Over time, the effectiveness of the Division structure and quarterly meeting schedule has diminished. The Nominating Committee struggles to fill and maintain the full 18-member requirement for each of three Divisions (a total of 54 teaching and ruling elders). While some committees of the Divisions function effectively, others do not. The Executive Council’s discernment and visioning focus combined with the task team format would allow Presbytery to be more flexible in responding to its missional and programmatic needs without having to maintain formalized structures, which the Temporary Executive Board believes will be better stewardship of our human resources. Committees that are currently functioning effectively, or that have fiduciary responsibilities, would continue their work within the task team format under the guidance of professional staff and would report to the Executive Council.)*

*SR-6.0209 The Executive Council may take electronic votes if an item for council action is*

*best addressed before its next meeting.* *(See Appendix IV)*

SR-6.03 Presbytery Commissions

SR-6.0301 There shall be three standing commissions of Presbytery. Each commission will be composed as described below. The term of service shall be three years. Members are eligible for re-election to one additional term. Ordinarily, each commission of Presbytery shall recommend to the Committee on Nominating and Representation annually by September 1 one of its members to serve as moderator for the upcoming year, and the moderator of each Commission shall be elected annually by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Committee on Nominating and Representation.

Commissions are responsible to Presbytery and shall report to the Presbytery. They shall establish their own operating guidelines, which shall be approved by the Executive Council, which also shall approve any changes.

SR-6.0302 Commission on Ministry

The Commission on Ministry (COM) shall function in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-3.0306, G-3.0307, G-2.0702, G-2.0504b, G-2.0902, G-2.1103b and G-2.1001-1002). The Commission will be composed of no fewer than 18 members (half teaching elders and half ruling elders) nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery.

*The Commission may divide functions among its membership into Pastoral Relationships and Congregational Relationships as detailed in the current Advisory Handbook for Ministry and the handbook entitled “On Calling a Pastor.*

*(Rationale: Dividing responsibilities between members into these two major categories will allow for a more proactive ministry with our congregations and better support pastoral leadership. It distributes more evenly the work of the Commission among the 18 members.*

The Commission on Ministry shall:

a. Visit regularly and consult with each minister in the presbytery; report to presbytery the type of work in which each minister is engaged; require an annual report of each teaching elder engaged in validated ministries outside a congregation (G-2.0503a).

b. Make recommendations to the presbytery regarding calls for the services of its teaching elders.

c. Review annually the status of Members-at-Large [G-2.0503(a) (b)] (G-2.0508) and recommend to Presbytery changes in status when necessary.

d. Examine and sustain the preaching part of the examination for candidates being ordained and make that a part of the motion for presbytery approval.

e. Visit with each session of the presbytery at least once each year. (G-3.0303 and G-3.0307) *and stay in regular contact with each assigned church session as needed throughout each year.*

f. Counsel with churches regarding calls for permanent pastoral relations. Oversee the Pastor Nominating Committee process from the time the pulpit is vacant through installation of the next pastor; recommend Commission for Ordination/Installation at the same time the motion is provided to ordain/install a candidate for membership (G-2.0504a) (G-2.0801) (G-2.0805) (W-4.4006)

g. Counsel with churches regarding temporary pastoral relations, providing lists of available teaching elders, ruling elders, and ministers of *another Christian Church after constitutional requirements have been met* (G-2.0504b) (G-2.0505) (G2.0506), to supply vacant pulpits. Rationale*: Wording better states the position of the cited references.*

h. Approve temporary pastoral relationships, including designated pastors, and approve moderators for sessions. (G-1.0504) (G-3.0104)

i. Provide for the implementation of equal employment opportunity for teaching elders and candidates, and report to presbytery the steps taken by each calling group to implement equal employment opportunity. (G-2.0104) (G-3.0106)

j. Find in order calls issued by churches, approve and present calls, approve examination of teaching elders transferring from other presbyteries, dissolve pastoral relationships, grant permission to labor outside the bounds of presbytery, and dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries and report actions to Presbytery. [G-3.0301 (a)(b)(c)]

k. Provide care and oversight of the presbytery’s Commissioned Ruling Elder program, including recommendation for commissioning. (G-2.1001 – G-2.1004)

l. Promote the peace and harmony of the churches.

m. Counsel with sessions regarding difficulties in the congregation, act as mediator in conflict situations, and/or act to correct difficulties in conflict situations when asked to do so by the parties involved or when authorized by presbytery to do so. [G-3.0303d(1)(2)(3)]

n. Respond to conflict situations within congregations or where congregations, or leaders within, find themselves in conflict with their ordination vows to be governed by church polity and to abide by its discipline in accordance with the Response/Review Commission guidelines.

o. Approve Teaching Elders as Parish Associates with annual review and the stipulation that the relationship ends when the current installed pastor leaves.

p. Recommend to Presbytery the number of members on the Commission on Ministry, with equal numbers of ruling and teaching elders, providing for diversity and adequate members per geographical area for liaison purposes.

q. Provide pastoral care for teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service and Certified Christian Educators. (G-3.0307 and G-2.1103) (W-6.1003 and W-6.3000)

*r. Provide a support system and a visitation program for retired teaching elders inactive because of health problems.*

SR-6.0303 Commission on Preparation for Ministry

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) shall function in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-2.06). It shall have no fewer than 12 members (half teaching elders and half ruling elders) nominated by the Committee *on Nominating and Representation* and elected by the Presbytery.

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry shall:

a. Have the authority to take Inquirers under care of the commission; to recommend to the presbytery that an Inquirer, after at least a year under care, become a Candidate; and to certify a Candidate ready to receive a call after at least a year as a Candidate.

b. Have the authority to establish requirements for the process of preparation for ministry.

SR-6.0304 Permanent Judicial Commission

The Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) shall fulfill all those duties and responsibilities delineated in the *Book of Order* (Rules of Discipline, Chapter 5) of the Permanent Judicial Commission. The PJC shall be composed of four teaching elders and five ruling elders. They shall be elected to serve in three classes to terms of six years as provided in the *Book of Order* (D-5.0102, D-5.0103 and D-5.0105).

**SR-6.04 Presbytery Committees**

SR-6.0401 Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall fulfill all those duties and responsibilities in the *Book of Order* (G-4.00-4.0208). The Board of Trustees shall be composed of nine persons elected by the Presbytery through the Committee on Nominating and Representation. *The Board will appoint its own Chair from the membership elected.*

The duties of the Trustees shall be to:

a. Hold and convey title in the name of the Presbytery of any real property belonging to the Presbytery, as directed by the Presbytery. *Has Presbytery authority to list and negotiate any property transactions assigned in accordance with G-4.0205 of the Book of Order.*

b. Administer funds as Presbytery’s agent, when directed by Presbytery;

c. Be responsible for the care and oversight of all properties owned and operated by the Presbytery.

d. Upon request, advise Presbytery and its churches on property matters.

*e. Presbytery has directed that any contract, loan or grant entered into by Presbytery over the amount of $5,000 will require the signature of at least one trustee. Further, that any contract, loan, or grant regarding real property requires trustee signatures in accordance with the above provisions of the Book of Order.*

*f. Presbytery has approved a “fast-track” process for routine property matters, stating as follows: “If authorized by the Board of Trustees and the Executive Council, a Standing Commission of Presbytery may be authorized to make decisions on behalf of presbytery for real property matters valued under $25,000 and/or due to mandatory governmental jurisdiction. The protection of church and presbytery financial interest will be the Trustee’s primary concern in all such approval.*

*g. Presbytery approval has been given the Trustees to advise sessions and Administrative Commissions on how church property is handled and the procedures for approving encumbrances, dissolving or dismissing a church in accordance with Appendix III of these Standing Rules noting that costs associated with the activities involved shall be paid by the individual church.*

SR-6.0402 Committee on Nominating and Representation

The Committee on Nominating and Representation shall function in accordance with the *Book of Order* (G-3.0111, *F-1.0403, F-3.0106, G-2.0104 and G-3.0103), providing for inclusive membership in the makeup of all functions to which it is asked to nominate persons.* It shall have nine members: three teaching elders and six ruling elders. The term of office shall be three years and eligibility ends after one term. Nominations to the Committee on Nominating and Representation are made in accordance with SR-4.0101b 4 & 5.

a. The Committee shall be responsible for nominating to the Presbytery qualified persons to serve in all elected positions in the various Agencies, Commissions, Committees and the ExecutiveCouncil of Presbytery, except as provided by the Presbytery Response/Review/Commission Process.

*b.* The Committee shall be responsible for nominating Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to Synod and General Assembly according to criteria developed by the Committee and approved by the ExecutiveCouncil.

*c.* The Committee shall receive recommendations for Youth Council representatives from the current Youth Council and present them to Presbytery for its approval.

*d*. The Committee shall nominate a person to fill any vacancy for an unexpired term on any Commission or Committee and *the Board of Trustees* and present the nomination at the next meeting of the Presbytery for its approval. Service ends at the normal scheduled end of the term being filled. The person would be eligible *to serve two full consecutive terms.*

*(Rationale: Combining the responsibilities of the Committee on Representation with those of the Nominating Committee recognizes that this is a function of the nominating process as it is currently practiced in our Presbytery. It also is yet another step in streamlining our organizational structure, eliminating the need for a separate committee to inform the nominating process and hold it accountable to the standards for representation set out in the Book of Order.)*

**SR-7.01 Chapter VII. Election of Trustees of Institutions**

SR-7.0101 Institutions for which the Presbytery is to elect Trustees shall submit nominees through the Committee *on* Nominating and Representationfor election by the Presbytery.

SR-7.0102 All suggestions for nominations submitted by the institutions are to be in conformity with the Provisions of the *Book of Order* and these Standing Rules.

**SR-8.01 Chapter VIII. Book of Order Changes**

When by General Assembly action, changes are made to portions of the Book of Order Referenced in these Standing Rules, such changes shall be automatically inserted into the Standing Rules by the Stated Clerk and notification shall be made at the next appropriate meeting of Presbytery.

**Approved at the August 15, 2014 Presbytery Meeting**

Appendix I.

The following items shall ordinarily occur at the corresponding stated meeting of Presbytery:

**Meetings of Presbytery**

(Ordinarily meet the third Thursday of month)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Presbytery Meetings** | **February** | **May** | **August** | **November** |
| **Worship** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** |
| **Communion** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** |
| **Action of Stated Clerk** |  |  |  |  |
| **Necrology** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| **Minister Memorials (when needed)** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** |
| **Announce Per Capita Amounts** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **Announce Meeting Sites for Coming Year** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **Receive Executive Council Approval of Meeting Docket *at least* two weeks before meeting** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** |
| **Provide Schedule for Review of Session Minutes** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| **Action of Moderator** |  |  |  |  |
| **Install New Moderator** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| **Report from Retiring Moderator** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| **Moderator Chooses Committee *on Nominating and Representation*** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **Reports** |  |  |  |  |
| **Committee on Nominating and Representation**  **Report** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **\*Fill Committee Vacancies** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** |
| **GA Commissioners Report** |  |  | **\*** |  |
| **Synod Commissioners Report** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| **PW Moderator Report** |  | **\*** |  |  |
| **Budget/Finance**  **Financial Report on Prior Year** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| ***General* Presbyter Report** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*** |
| **Votes** |  |  |  |  |
| **Vote on Amendments** | **\*** |  |  |  |
| **Vote on minimum salary requirements** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **Elections** |  |  |  |  |
| **Elect GA Commissioners** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **Elect Synod Commissioners** |  |  |  | **\*** |
| **Elect Presbytery Moderator and Vice Moderator** | **\*** |  |  |  |

Appendix II

**Manual of** **Financial Policy and Accounting Procedures**

*(approved by Presbytery 02-17-2011)*

**I. Overview:**

Financial contributions from the presbytery’s member churches for ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are accounted for by means of a restricted/designated fund, referred to as **Mission Treasury Services (MTS)**. The accounting system shall be protected by using a password composed of both letters and numbers. The password is to be available only to the Bookkeeper, the Treasurer, and the General Presbyter.

All monies received are deposited in a specific interest bearing bank account, currently maintained with Wells Fargo Bank. As instructed by the Treasurer of Presbytery, the Bookkeeper forwards such monies to the various receiving agencies on a monthly basis in accordance with the churches’ instructions, advising those agencies as to the donor church.

Reports detailing contributions for the year to date, by agency and date of gift are to be mailed to each church quarterly by the Bookkeeper. The reports are to be mailed both to the Church Treasurer and the Moderator of Session at different addresses.

At the end of each month, a summary of receipts is recorded on a form entitled **Mission Treasury Receipts** and entered in the accounting system by journal entry. In order to forward these funds to receiving agencies, all monies received each month are transferred to the general checking account at the close of the month, and a **Mission Treasury Payables** disbursement voucher is prepared to authorize payments to the appropriate agencies.

**II. Internal Controls/Receipts:**

**A. Receiving and Depositing Funds:**

Incoming mail is to be opened by the Office Manager. Deposit slips are to be completed listing all checks received and initialed by two persons for verification. All remittances are to be stamped with the Presbytery’s endorsement. Financial contributions from presbytery’s member churches are deposited in the **Mission Treasury** account. For funds to be deposited in this account, a copy of the deposit slip and copies of the checks to be deposited are to be attached to the remittance forms which accompany church contributions and deposited by the Office Manager. Bank reconciliations are to be done monthly by the Presbytery Treasurer and signed to assure that all funds received have been properly deposited and accounted for.

**B. Recording Procedure:**

Receipts are entered by the bookkeeper into presbytery’s records maintained on the bookkeeper’s computer using the Microsoft Access data base/software. The icon to access the program is called “Revenue”. This will open to the “Revenue Processing” screen [Main Menu]. To enter the deposits for a day, click on the “Enter Daily Work” button. Use the drop down box to look up the church pin number or type the pin number. Tab and enter the check number, tab and enter the check amount, tab and enter the deposit date. The special codes box is for Presbyterian Women, for individuals’ checks to be credited to a church, or for direct payment to an agency. “R” is the default for a regular check from a church.

Click on the “Continue” button, enter the agency code, then tab and enter the amount to credit to that agency. If the amount is an allocated one the program will automatically do the allocation and those amounts will appear under the agencies which will receive the funds. Anytime the allocation amounts change, such as at year end, it will be necessary to enter the “Work with Agency File” button, find the appropriate code and type in the new percentages. Tab to enter more funds, one per line. When entering an agency that is not on the list, add one by double clicking on the agency code field. When finished adding the agency, then click to close the agency master window. The “Oops” button is to be used to go back to the previous page and correct any errors. When finished the amount left to disperse will be at 0.00, then click “Return”.

Enter each church separately and when all for the day have been entered, click “Print Proof of Daily Work” on the “Revenue Processing” screen. This prints a report to allow for visually matching totals. If something appears to be in error, go back to the “Enter Daily Work” button and enter the data again. The program will find the data entered earlier and allow adjustments. Reprint the Proof of Daily Work to make sure it matches the deposit slip. The Proof of Daily Work should be discarded when all is correct.

Next click on the “Post Daily” button. This moves all data to the appropriate tables. The report that it prints is the one that should be kept with that day’s deposit slips. After posting daily, it is not possible to go back and easily access that data. After the data is posted, a screen will come up with prompts for the month and year being entered. Then a sum of the month’s deposits will appear so that it can be checked against the deposits, making sure that all deposits have been posted. Click on “File” and “Close” to close this window and go back to the “Revenue Processing” screen. The “Restore Temporary Backup (if necessary)” button can only restore the data from the previous posting.

**C. Report Selection Screen:**

All of these use the criteria shown on the screen to produce the reports. Therefore, it is possible to print the report for one day, one church, one agency or all or a range of each. 000001 and 99999 are the defaults for all churches. A001 and Z999 are the defaults for all agencies. Note that Allocated Giving and Mission Treasury just need a date input.

*Church Statement* – prints the per capita assessment that can be folded and placed in a window envelope to be mailed to the church. The appropriate percentages must be entered in the agency code A200. Make sure that the membership for each church has been corrected to correspond with the statistical report for the prior year. Then put letter head paper in the printer.

*Church Statement* – prints the statement of church giving for the period selected. Print on letterhead,

*Summary Church* – revenue by church summary.

*Summary Agency* – revenue by agency summary.

*Detail by Church* – revenue by church.

*Detail by Agency* – revenue by agency.

*Allocated Giving* – allocated giving by churches.

*Mission Treasury* – unified giving plus Alabama Campus Ministry giving as compared with total giving and any pledged giving.

After each month is entered, print a *Summary Agency, Detail by Agency* [making sure the totals equal the total for the month’s deposits plus direct payments], A*llocated Giving*, and *Mission Treasury (MTS)*. These reports are used to determine the distribution of funds received. The forms for entering MTS in the accounting module are on file in the Accounting Office along with the voucher form for MTS Payables.

**III. Internal Controls/Expenditures:**

**A. Spending Procedures:**

All expenditures shall be validated by at least two authorized signatures: one on the check and a different signature on the authorizing voucher. Authorized signatures are those of the Office Manager, the Treasurer, and the ~~Executive~~ *General* Presbyter, or his/her designee. Access to bank accounts is limited to those signatories. An authorized signature on a voucher may be that of the committee chair or staff person. Approval of vouchers and signatures on the checks shall be based on funds being available, the expenditure being for a valid Presbytery purpose, and the expenditure being charged to the proper account in the budget approved by Presbytery. In no case shall a check made out to an individual be signed by that same individual, and no check shall be made out to "Cash." All checks over five thousand dollars ***($5,000)*** are to have two (2) authorized signatures, one of them to be either that of the Treasurer or of the General Presbyter.

The Bookkeeper shall provide monthly to each chair a report of all expenditures charged to the budgetary accounts of that committee. The chair shall review all such reported expenditures and indicate to the Treasurer his/her approval of, or questions regarding, the expenditures.

Ordinarily, checks shall be written on Wednesdays before noon for signature by the Office Manager, with payroll checks being written on or about the 12th and the 27th of each month. Checks may be issued at other times in emergencies or to preserve discounts and avoid penalties with specific approval of either the Treasurer or General Presbyter.

**B. Credit Card Controls:**

In addition to the above approvals, the Bookkeeper will review monthly all credit card payments and all payments to third parties which specifically benefit a single staff member (i.e. travel, in-service education, etc.). All credit card purchases shall have been documented by receipts showing the exact item purchased and the amount charged and shall be further documented to show the account number to which it is to be charged. Any item questioned by the Bookkeeper shall be referred to the Treasurer. If in the Treasurer's judgment the item cannot be justified as a legitimate Presbytery expense, it shall be referred to the appropriate Committee for review. If it is not deemed to be a legitimate expense it shall be reimbursed to the Presbytery by the purchaser, unless subsequently approved by the Executive Council's Finance Committee.

**C. Insurance and Audit:**

The funds of the Presbytery shall be protected by full coverage of all funds under the terms of the Presbytery's Insurance Program. Employee dishonesty coverage shall be reviewed every three years. The Finance Committee of the Executive Council and the Treasurer shall be responsible for annual audits/reviews of all Presbytery funds as provided in *The Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The annual audit/review is to be completed by July 15 of the following year.

**IV. Restricted Funds**

**A. Types of Funds**

Restricted funds of the Presbytery are those that have been designated by action of the Presbytery or the ExecutiveCouncil to be used for specific purposes and shall be continued from year to year. All requests for solicitation of special funds shall be submitted to the ExecutiveCouncil for approval/disapproval and for final action/authorization. Restricted funds may be designated as short term funds, mission funds, or long term funds.

The funds listed below are the existing restricted funds of the Presbytery as of January 1, 2010. The purpose of each fund is described and the authority to disburse from each fund is given. Expenditures from any restricted account or fund will be made only after submission of a voucher to which is attached a copy of the Minutes, or an excerpt thereof, recording the action authorizing the disbursement.

**B. Short Term Designated Funds**

Short term designated funds are those contributed for specific ministries/programs of the Presbytery. They may be disbursed upon the authorization of the Presbytery entity responsible for the ministry or program for which a specific account was established when such authorization is recorded in the Minutes of that entity.

**General Presbytery Funds**

**810200. General Exchange –** Temporary holding account for all funds managed by the Treasurer of Presbytery.

**810205. Prepaid Per Capita** - Temporary holding account for per capita assessments remitted in advance by the churches. Disbursements from this account are authorized by the Stated Clerk.

**810210. Stated Clerk Reserve -** Temporary holding account for per capita funds remitted by the churches. Disbursements from this account are authorized by the Stated Clerk.

**810215. Building/Equipment Reserve.**

**810220. Candidates Reserve** - Funds to be used for financial aid, consultations, and retreats in support of candidates preparing for ministry. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry authorizes disbursements from this account.

**810230. Resource Center Catalog/Gifts** - Funds to be used in support of the Presbytery Resource Center. The Resource Committee and/or the Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account.

**810235. Co-Op Video Library -** Funds to be used to purchase and maintain resources for the Cooperative Video Library. The Resource Committee and/or the Executive Council authorize disbursements from this account.

**810240. Disaster Relief-Presbytery -** Holding account for funds donated for disaster Relief within the Presbytery. The ExecutiveCouncil is authorized to disburse funds from this account.

**810250. CLP Training Fees -**

**810280. Dan Stephen's Study Rollover** - Holding account for funds provided for the named Staff person's Continuing Education. Disbursement is made upon the authorization of the Personnel Committee of the Executive Council.

**810282. Robert Hay Study Rollover** - Holding account for funds provided for the named staff person's Continuing Education. Disbursement is made upon the authorization of the Personnel Committee of the Executive Council.

**810290. Ministers' Fund-** Holding fund designated to meet particular needs of individual ministers of Presbytery. The GeneralPresbyter authorizes disbursements from this Fund at his/her discretion.

**810295. Living River** - Clearing account for funds donated to the Presbytery designated for the Living River Retreat. The Treasurer is authorized to transfer these funds to Living River.

**810299. General Presbytery Misc./one-time**

**Development Funds**

**810420. NCD Donations** - Holding account for funds received from churches or individuals for New Church Development within the Presbytery. The Executive Councilauthorizes disbursements from this account to NCDs approved by the Presbytery.

**810430. Hispanic Ministry** - Holding account for funds contributed by the churches for Hispanic ministry projects within the Presbytery. The Executive Council authorizes disbursements from this account.

**810435. Hispanic Ministry/Minister** - Holding account for funds contributed by the churches for remuneration of an Hispanic minister within the Presbytery. The Executive Council authorizes disbursements from this account.

**810440. Hispanic NCD Grant/2006-2011** - Holding account for funds received from the General Assembly and the Synod of Living Waters for a Hispanic NCD. Funds from this account are disbursed by the Hispanic New Church Development Committee and/or the Treasurer of Presbytery. [This account will be closed after February 2011.]

**810499. Development Misc./ one-time**

**Mission Funds**

**810600. Missional Development** - Holding account for grants received from the Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation Grant that supports the Presbytery staff position of Associate Executive Presbyter for Missional.Development. The Treasurer is authorized to make regular disbursements from this account.

**810605. Self Development of People/Grants** - Pass-through account for grant funds appropriated for approved denominational SDOP projects. The Treasurer is authorized to forward funds to grant recipients.

**810610. Hunger Reserve** - Funds collected by churches through Cents-ability Offerings to be used to match church’s gifts to hunger agencies of their choice. The Peace, Justice, and Hunger Committee and/or Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account and approves changes to disbursement policies.

**810620. Peacemaking Reserve** - Holding account for funds from the annual PCUSA Peacemaking Offering. The Peace, Justice, and Hunger Committee and/or the Executive Council authorize disbursements from this account.

**810625. Habitat House Fund/Bham** - Holding account for funds that Birmingham-area churches contribute toward the annual Habitat House build in Birmingham. The Treasurer is authorized to make disbursements from this account per invoices received from Habitat for Humanity.

**810630. Prison Ministry** – Holding account for funds contributed by the Oak Grove Missionary Church. The Treasurer is authorized to make disbursements from this account upon the request of the State prison in North Alabama.

**810670. Congo Partnership-General Fund** - Holding account for donations from churches for the use of Presbytery's Congo Team. The Congo Team authorizes disbursements from this account.

**810675. Congo Donations** - Holding account for donations from churches and individuals for miscellaneous projects in Congo. Funds in this account are designated by the donors. Presbytery's Associate Executive for Missional Development authorizes disbursements to the PC(U.S.A.) several times a year.

**810680. MMOA Special Gifts** - Holding account for donations for Presbytery's Oaxaca Partnership. The Mexican Partnership Committee and/or Executive Council authorize disbursements from this account.

**810685. MMOA/Oaxaca Water Project** - Holding account for Living Waters for the World Installations in Oaxaca. The Mexican Partnership Committee and/or Executive Council authorize disbursements from this account.

**810699. Mission Division Misc./ one-time**

**Nurture Funds**

**810800. Camp Scholarship Fund** - Funds available for camper scholarships for Presbytery residential camps. The Camp Committee and/or Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account.

**810805. Day Camps-Birmingham** - Funds given to support Presbytery day camping programs in the Birmingham area. The Camp Committee and/or the Executive Council authorize disbursements from this account.

**810810. Day Camps-Montgomery** - Funds given to support Presbytery day camping programs in the Montgomery area. The Camp Committee and/or the Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account.

**810815. Youth University** - Funds given to support the Youth University Program. The Youth Committee and/or the Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account..

**810820. Main Event** - Holding account to be used for the Main Event Leadership Training and Development Program. The Leadership Training and Development Committee and/or the Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account.

**810825. Westminster Campus Fellowship -**- Holding account for campus ministry efforts in Birmingham. The College Committee and/or the Executive Councilauthorize disbursement from this account.

**810830. Young Adult** - Funds received from churches to carry out Young Adult ministry. The Young Adult Committee and/or the Executive Councilauthorize disbursements from this account.

**810840. Small Church Fund** - Holding account for grants made by the Synod to provide retreats for pastors of small membership churches. The Small Church Committee and/or the ExecutiveCouncilauthorize disbursements from this account.

**810850. ConEd Scholarship Fund** - Funds given to support youth leaders attending continuing educations events. The Youth Committee and/or the Executive Councilare authorized to make disbursements from this account.

**810899. Nurture Misc./one-time**

**Health FSA Accounts**

**820000. Health FSA-L Burrowes** - Holding account to be used to reimburse named staff person for federally approved health related expenses. The Treasurer is authorized to disburse these funds upon receipt of itemized statements and an approved voucher.

**820005. Health FSA-D Stephens** - Holding account to be used to reimburse named staff person for federally approved health related expenses. The Treasurer is authorized to disburse these funds upon receipt of itemized statements and an approved voucher

**C. Mission Treasury Fund**

Mission Treasury Funds are those budgeted from congregational mission giving for carrying out the mission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Synod of Living Waters, and Presbytery. Expenditures of Mission Treasury funds are authorized through the Annual Budget adopted by Presbytery and are to be regularly disbursed to agencies of the PC(U.S.A.) by the Treasurer.

**Mission Treasury Clearing Accounts**

**830100. GA Unified**

**830110. GA Selected**

**830120. GA Per Capita**

**830200. Synod Unified**

**830210. Synod Selected**

**830220. Synod Per Capita**

**830300. Presbytery Unified**

**830310. Presbytery Selected**

**830320. Presbytery Per Capita**

**830400. APCM Designated -** Funds to be used by the Alabama Presbyterian Campus Ministry Board in support of campus ministries. The Treasurer is authorized to remit funds from this account monthly according to the amount budgeted by the Presbytery.

**D. Long Term Designated Funds**

Long Term Designated Funds allow the Presbytery to do mission above and beyond the ministries supported by Mission Treasury funds and by short term designated accounts. Proposed grants and/or loans from these funds in excess of $20,000 shall require an action of the Presbytery.

**Revolving Loan Fund** - This fund was established to provide loans to churches for construction, renovation, and plant improvement. Loan requests are reviewed by the Grants and Loans Committee of the Executive Councilin consultation with the Trustees of Presbytery. The Executive Councilmay approve and authorize disbursement of funds for a loan up to $20,000. Larger loans must be approved and authorized by action of the Presbytery. All loans are to be secured by promissory note and appropriate collateral. The interest rate is to be the prime rate in effect at the time of the approval of the loan.

**880100 – Revolving Fund**

**Development Grant Fund** - This fund was established to provide grants for New Church Development and for existing church development, growth, and vitality. Grant proposals are reviewed by the Grants and Loans Committee of the Executive Council. The Executive Councilmay approve and authorize disbursement of a grant up to $20,000. Larger grants require the action of the Presbytery.

**880200. Development Fund**

**880205. Mummert Fund**

**880210. King Trust Interest**

**880215. Robinson Mission Fund Interest**

**880220. Hispanic NCD Presby Grant/2006-2011**

**First, Opelika Fund** - These funds, received from the sale of the Opelika First Church property were designated as a term of the dissolution of the church for mission in the Opelika area. Funds are disbursed only by action of the Presbytery.

**880295 -- First, Opelika Fund**

**Metro-Urban Fund** - This fund was established to provide for Presbytery mission to metro-urban areas of the Presbytery. Projects constituting valid uses of these funds are to be recommended by the Executive Council. Disbursements from this Fund require the action of Presbytery.

**880300 – Metro-Urban Fund**

**PSL Uncommitted Operating Reserve Fund** - This is a loan fund established so that funds are available to meet cash flow shortages during a given year. The Treasurer, in consultation with the GeneralPresbyter, is authorized to make disbursements from this fund to pay operating expenses in the event of a cash short fall. Ordinarily, loans from this fund shall be repaid by the end of the calendar year in which they were used.

**880900 - PSL Uncommitted Reserve**

Appendix III

***Property Encumbrances / Dismissal Procedures (Approved by Presbytery 11-20-2014)***

***Reference SR-6.0401g***

***Procedures for Church Real Property, Loans, Mortgages, Leases, or Sells***

*1. Review the church deed noting any restrictions of use.*

*2. Review a Title policy noting any encumbrances with restrictions.*

*3. Verify with local tax authority for consequences if change of use.*

*4. Have a specific property surveyed and contract drafted by legal counsel.*

*5. Approved by session and a duly constituted congregational meeting.*

*(CAUTION: contracts cannot be finalized until next item complete)*

*6. Have encumbrances reviewed by presbytery trustees, noting that property transactions may*

*require presbytery approval.*

*7. Have a real estate qualified attorney record the appropriate documents at the county courthouse.*

***Procedures for Dissolving or Dismissing a Church with Property***

*Deed: Clarify any restrictions on property use and ownership. Same with Endowments.*

*Survey/appraisal: Clarify property in questions and estimate value.*

*Contracts: Clarify with presbytery legal counsel noting all liabilities and property*

*Recording any presbytery interest.*

*Records: Provide all church records to Presbytery.*

*Sign documents: Upon verification, sign as directed by Presbytery or Administrative Commission.*

Appendix IV

Email voting policy for the Executive Council (Adopted by the Executive Council 01-09-2015)

*1. In some instances, Executive Council actions may be taken by email by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members.*

*2. If an item for council action is best addressed before the next meeting, the following factors will be considered by the council moderator before determining whether to ask for an action by email.*

*a. How soon a decision is required.*

*b. Whether the decision would be better made after further discussion and/or whether*

*alternatives should be considered.*

*c. Whether all council members have sufficient information to make an informed*

*decision.*

*3. If after considering the above factors, the council moderator determines it would be best to take the action by email, the council moderator will email the proposed action to all members at their respective email addresses.*

*4. The mailed proposal does not require that a member declare that he or she is making the motion or for another member to declare a second to the motion. A quorum for an email vote is seven members.*

*5. The emailed proposal shall allow for discussion among council members by email reply to all members, with a timeframe set by the moderator.*

*6. The email shall request that each member vote by email reply to all members that he or she:*

*a. is in favor of the proposed action or*

*b. is opposed to the proposed action or*

*c. requires such additional information or consideration that the action be tabled until the*

*next meeting; three council members making this request would trigger such a delay.*

*7. If the action is approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of members, all members shall be sent immediate notice of the approval including the text of the proposed action and its effective date and time.*

*8. At the first council meeting following the email vote, the proposed action and the list of votes shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.*

**Full Executive Council Report**

Since the February Presbytery meeting of Sheppards and Lapsley the Executive Council has met on March 2, 2015 and April 13, 2015 (a scheduled meeting is planned for May 6). Overall, the opening months of 2015 have been a time of anticipation as we await the arrival of new Transitional Presbyter Dr. Jay Wilkins on May 1 and the opening of Living River. Task Teams continue to formulate their work for our presbytery along with ongoing presbytery committees and missions dedicated to the helping us best serve as a connectional body serving Christ in this place and time.

In March the EC welcomed incoming Vice Moderator Jim Toomey. Susan Clayton from Independent Presbyterian Church shared the history of the funding for a missional position at the presbytery level from IPC Foundation resources. There was a general discussion of what a new position might look like in the future with an emphasis from Susan that most positions funded by grants from the Foundation are also funded by additional sources. The EC thanked Susan for her guidance and will use this information to consider with our incoming Transitional Presbyter future staffing and funding sources. Finance committee reported on work related to enhanced understanding of restricted funding accounts and concerns that congregational giving to the general operating budget of PSL has been reduced in recent years. Discussion focused on possible ways to better inform congregations and individuals about the work of the presbytery and how it is impacted by reduced budgets. The EC agreed that financial planning along with a pastoral presence will be a significant part of the work for the incoming Transitional Presbyter.  
 The Technology and Communication Task Team has begun to gather members. Ross shared results of surveys following the February presbytery meeting. Lou Ann thanked all who helped make things go so smoothly, especially host church Covenant Presbyterian and the other Tuscaloosa churches and elders.  
 The EC approved covering reasonable travel expenses for Jay Wilkin’s visit to COM in March from the Stated Clerk’s budget.  
 EC approved (pending blessing of the Trustees) a motion to empty the storage shed which sits on the presbytery office lot and move the shed to Living River where the shed will be used for much needed general storage. EC recognized the importance to carefully examine which records stored in the shed need to be saved, shredded, or thrown away. Conversation also included a brief discussion of the Resource Center and the need to have some examination of contents and visioning for the future of this component of our connectional life. Office Space

Task Team will be asked for their input as well others of interest in the presbytery including Jay Wilkins.  
 Bev and Rick reported that the Standing Rules revisions will be ready for our meeting in early April and should be on track to be presented for a first reading at the May presbytery meeting. All were reminded of the pastor’s welcome lunch hosted by South Highland during Jay Wilkins visit to COM, he meeting was adjourned with prayer

The EC meeting on April 13 opened with prayer. Bobbie informed the council that currently the fiscal numbers for the year were positive and that the Finance Committee continues to fine tune some of the line items from the budget. Other committees and Task Teams offered updates and reports. Communication and Technology continues to gather members and may video Jay’s sermon at the presbytery meeting to offer access to those not able to attend. Co­chair Rick Frennea will offer the EC Report at presbytery in May since Lin will be out of state. For the Leadership Task Team Bev has emailed updated information on the Commissioned Ruling Elder program (formally Commissioned Ruling Elders) to all churches. Related to the Task Team for Church VItality James Goodlet shared the hopes for the forming of a U­Perk ministry in Tuscaloosa, other possible areas for college related new ministries include Birmingham and Jacksonville.

Rick and Bev shared copies of the revised Standing Rules to be presented at the May presbytery meeting. With very minor alteration they were approved. It was voiced that every effort should be made to help clarify the process, especially the need for first and second readings and how changes may be made. The EC and presbytery staff will do all they can to assure the Rules are available in time to all commissioners for review. The Standing Rules Revisions will be emailed posted on the website and mailed to churches.  
 The EC will help coordinate some cluster meetings so that Jay can meet our pastors and elders and begin to establish relationships in the presbytery. The dates of these regional events will hopefully be announced at presbytery in May.  
 After a short, but glowing, report from Robert Hay about Living River, the EC discussed some logistics and the docket of the meeting to be held on May 14. EC approved an honorarium for musician Jeffrey Harper if he is available to play.  
 Presbytery Moderator Lou Ann Sellers offered several responses that she had found related to the passing of W­4.9000. The EC voted to share the letter from GA Moderator Heath Rada with all our churches. The letter will go out in the presbytery packet (as part of the EC Report), be offered as a link in the newsletter and be mailed to churches.  
 The EC members were reminded that the next meeting would be May 6th and that Jay Wilkins first official day with PSL will be May 1st. Meeting was closed with prayer.

Appendix B

**Trustee Report**

For information:

Trinity – Trustees were approached by Arise Birmingham, a group of Christian millennials, offering a lease-purchase for the building. This worship started in a living room and when they outgrew that space monthly services were held at various locations around Birmingham including the Botanical Gardens. They wanted their first service in the building on Easter. Ben Arrelano, Bev Dodson and Bill Stribling met with the leaders of the church at the property where we reviewed their financial documents and witnessed their commitment and faith. Upon their report Trustees entered into a two month lease with the group and seek authorization to enter into a longer lease.

That negotiation is ongoing. The property will continue to be for sale but a right of first refusal will be in the lease allowing Arise to meet any other acceptable offer that may be tendered. Terms will be between 2 and 5 years. It would be a typical commercial lease with the tenant required to maintain the property, insure the building and contents and restore the space to original condition at lease termination. Arise would like for a portion of the lease payments go toward future purchase.

If a long-term lease is signed much of the contents will be available for other churches. A priority ranking has been established for disbursement of the items.

Harper Chapel- A lease has been created naming the Presbytery as owner of the property. Bev Dodson will meet with George Wood and Mr. Rochester to execute.

Cemetery separation document- A full research of all applicable laws and cases has been received. Richard Brooks has agreed to work with Mr. Tim Davis to build upon the document and produce a simple form that individual churches can use to separate their church from cemetery. A copy of the document is available in the Presbytery for any church who may need to use it to research the issue.

Annie King Trust- The issue of payments from this trust is in the court of Judge Meigs. Joe Spransey is keeping in touch with the court in case a more definitive ruling is made.

First Presbyterian Tuskegee- Once Presbytery dissolves this church Trustees will be able to move forward to dispose of the property. Ben Arellano will work within COM to get the necessary action.

Trustee matters continuing but no updated information- Robinson Memorial, Bryan Memorial, St. James; Moundville, First Presbyterian Bessemer/ Shepherd of the Valley.

Korean Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa mortgage- A request to alter terms of their mortgage has been received. The church will be supplying financial documents to support the request. Presbytery action expected in August.

***COMMERCIAL LEASE***

This Lease Agreement (this "Lease") is dated as of March 27, 2015, by and between Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley ("Landlord"), and Arise Birmingham ("Tenant"). The parties agree as follows:

**PREMISES.** Landlord, in consideration of the lease payments provided in this Lease, leases to Tenant Top floor sanctuary and offices of church building. (the "Premises") located at 4565 Montevall Rd, Birmingham, AL 35210.

**TERM.** The lease term will begin on April 01, 2015 and will terminate on June 01, 2015.

**LEASE PAYMENTS.** Tenant shall pay to Landlord monthly installments of $2,000.00, payable in advance on the first day of each month. Lease payments shall be made to the Landlord at 3603 Lorna Ridge Dr, Hoover, Alabama 35216. The payment address may be changed from time to time by the Landlord.

**POSSESSION.** Tenant shall be entitled to possession on the first day of the term of this Lease, and shall yield possession to Landlord on the last day of the term of this Lease, unless otherwise agreed by both parties in writing. At the expiration of the term, Tenant shall remove its goods and effects and peaceably yield up the Premises to Landlord in as good a condition as when delivered to Tenant, ordinary wear and tear excepted.

**USE OF PREMISES.** Tenant may use the Premises only for Church worship center with associated offices The Premises may be used for any other purpose only with the prior written consent of Landlord, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. Tenant shall notify Landlord of any anticipated extended absence from the Premises not later than the first day of the extended absence.

**FURNISHINGS.** The following furnishings will be provided: Separate list to be attached Tenant shall return all such items at the end of the lease term in a condition as good as the condition at the beginning of the lease term, except for such deterioration that might result from normal use of the furnishings.

**PROPERTY INSURANCE.** Tenant shall maintain casualty insurance on the Premises in an amount not less than 100% of the full replacement value. Landlord shall be named as an additional insured in such policies. Tenant shall deliver appropriate evidence to Landlord as proof that adequate insurance is in force issued by companies reasonably satisfactory to Landlord. Landlord shall receive advance written notice from the insurer prior to any termination of such insurance policies. Tenant shall also maintain any other insurance which Landlord may reasonably require for the protection of Landlord's interest in the Premises. Tenant is responsible for maintaining casualty insurance on its own property.

**LIABILITY INSURANCE.** Tenant shall maintain liability insurance on the Premises in a total aggregate sum of at least $2,000,000.00. Tenant shall deliver appropriate evidence to Landlord as proof that adequate insurance is in force issued by companies reasonably satisfactory to Landlord. Landlord shall receive advance written notice from the insurer prior to any termination of such insurance policies.

**MAINTENANCE.**

Landlord's obligations for maintenance shall include:  
- the roof, outside walls, and other structural parts of the building - the electrical wiring

Tenant's obligations for maintenance shall include:  
- the sewer, water pipes, and other matters related to plumbing  
- the air conditioning system  
- all other items of maintenance not specifically delegated to Landlord under this Lease.

**TAXES.** Taxes attributable to the Premises or the use of the Premises shall be allocated as follows:

REAL ESTATE TAXES. Landlord shall pay all real estate taxes and assessments for the Premises.

PERSONAL TAXES. Landlord shall pay all personal taxes and any other charges which may be levied against the Premises and which are attributable to Tenant's use of the Premises, along with all sales and/or use taxes (if any) that may be due in connection with lease payments.

**TERMINATION UPON SALE OF PREMISES.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this Lease, Landlord may terminate this lease upon Sixty (60) days' written notice to Tenant that the Premises have been sold.

**DEFAULTS.** Tenant shall be in default of this Lease if Tenant fails to fulfill any lease obligation or term by which Tenant is bound. Subject to any governing provisions of law to the contrary, if Tenant fails to cure any financial obligation within 5 days (or any other obligation within 10 days) after written notice of such default is provided by Landlord to Tenant, Landlord may take possession of the Premises without further notice (to the extent permitted by law), and without prejudicing Landlord's rights to damages. In the alternative, Landlord may elect to cure any default and the cost of such action shall be added to Tenant's financial obligations under this Lease. Tenant shall pay all costs, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorney fees and expenses) suffered by Landlord by reason of Tenant's defaults. All sums of money or charges required to be paid by Tenant under this Lease shall be additional rent, whether or not such sums or charges are designated as "additional rent". The rights provided by this paragraph are cumulative in nature and are in addition to any other rights afforded by law.

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**LATE PAYMENTS.** For any payment that is not paid within 5 days after its due date, Tenant shall pay a late fee of $250.00.

**HOLDOVER.** If Tenant maintains possession of the Premises for any period after the termination of this Lease ("Holdover Period"), Tenant shall pay to Landlord lease payment(s) during the Holdover Period at a rate equal to 200 % of the most recent rate preceding the Holdover Period. Such holdover shall constitute a month-to-month extension of this Lease.

**CUMULATIVE RIGHTS.** The rights of the parties under this Lease are cumulative, and shall not be construed as exclusive unless otherwise required by law.

**NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS.** Tenant shall be charged $100.00 for each check that is returned to Landlord for lack of sufficient funds.

**REMODELING OR STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS.** Tenant shall have the obligation to conduct any construction or remodeling (at Tenant's expense) that may be required to use the Premises as specified above. Tenant may also construct such fixtures on the Premises (at Tenant's expense) that appropriately facilitate its use for such purposes. Such construction shall be undertaken and such fixtures may be erected only with the prior written consent of the Landlord which shall not be unreasonably withheld. Tenant shall not install awnings or advertisements on any part of the Premises without Landlord's prior written consent. At the end of the lease term, Tenant shall be entitled to remove (or at the request of Landlord shall remove) such fixtures, and shall restore the Premises to substantially the same condition of the Premises at the commencement of this Lease.

**ACCESS BY LANDLORD TO PREMISES.** Subject to Tenant's consent (which shall not be unreasonably withheld), Landlord shall have the right to enter the Premises to make inspections, provide necessary services, or show the unit to prospective buyers, mortgagees, tenants or workers. However, Landlord does not assume any liability for the care or supervision of the Premises. As provided by law, in the case of an emergency, Landlord may enter the Premises without Tenant's consent. During the last three months of this Lease, or any extension of this Lease, Landlord shall be allowed to display the usual "To Let" signs and show the Premises to prospective tenants.

**INDEMNITY REGARDING USE OF PREMISES.** To the extent permitted by law, Tenant agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend Landlord from and against any and all losses, claims, liabilities, and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, if any, which Landlord may suffer or incur in connection with Tenant's possession, use or misuse of the Premises, except Landlord's act or negligence.

**DANGEROUS MATERIALS.** Tenant shall not keep or have on the Premises any article or thing of a dangerous, flammable, or explosive character that might substantially increase the danger of fire on the Premises, or that might be considered hazardous by a responsible insurance company, unless the prior written consent of Landlord is obtained and proof of adequate insurance protection is provided by Tenant to Landlord.

**COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS.** Tenant shall promptly comply with all laws, ordinances, requirements and regulations of the federal, state, county, municipal and other authorities, and the fire insurance underwriters. However, Tenant shall not by this provision be required to make alterations to the exterior of the building or alterations of a structural nature.

**MECHANICS LIENS.** Neither the Tenant nor anyone claiming through the Tenant shall have the right to file mechanics liens or any other kind of lien on the Premises and the filing of this Lease constitutes notice that such liens are invalid. Further, Tenant agrees to (1) give actual advance notice to any contractors, subcontractors or suppliers of goods, labor, or services that such liens will not be valid, and (2) take whatever additional steps that are necessary in order to keep the premises free of all liens resulting from construction done by or for the Tenant.

**ASSIGNABILITY/SUBLETTING.** Tenant may not assign or sublease any interest in the Premises, nor effect a change in the majority ownership of the Tenant (from the ownership existing at the inception of this lease), nor assign, mortgage or pledge this Lease, without the prior written consent of Landlord, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

**NOTICE.** Notices under this Lease shall not be deemed valid unless given or served in writing and forwarded by mail, postage prepaid, addressed as follows:

**LANDLORD:**

Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley 3603 Lorna Ridge Dr  
Birmingham, Alabama 35213

**TENANT:**

Arise Birmingham  
4565 Montevallo Rd Birmingham, AL 35210

Such addresses may be changed from time to time by any party by providing notice as set forth above. Notices mailed in accordance with the above provisions shall be deemed received on the third day after posting.

**GOVERNING LAW.** This Lease shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Alabama.

**ENTIRE AGREEMENT/AMENDMENT.** This Lease Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties and there are no other promises, conditions, understandings or other agreements, whether oral or written, relating to the subject matter of this Lease. This Lease may be modified or amended in writing, if the writing is signed by the party obligated under the amendment.

**SEVERABILITY.** If any portion of this Lease shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and enforceable. If a court finds that any provision of this Lease is invalid or unenforceable, but that by limiting such provision, it would become valid and enforceable, then such provision shall be deemed to be written, construed, and enforced as so limited.

**WAIVER.** The failure of either party to enforce any provisions of this Lease shall not be construed as a waiver or limitation of that party's right to subsequently enforce and compel strict compliance with every provision of this Lease.

**BINDING EFFECT.** The provisions of this Lease shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of both parties and their respective legal representatives, successors and assigns.

**LANDLORD:  
Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley**

By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

**TENANT:  
Arise Birmingham**

By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Presbyterian Women - 2014-2015 Report**

PW in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley continue to amaze as they find various ways to do mission. These mission efforts spread about the presbytery and beyond. This is the “life blood” of PW. PW traditionally is the largest giver of undesignated funds to General Assembly Mission. Also, many “hands on” efforts were reported to us and displayed at our Gatherings.

We have been enjoying an excellent Bible Study: ”Reconciling Paul: A Contemporary Study of 2nd Corinthians” by Elizabeth Hinson Hasty. A bonus was the presence of the author at the AL/MS PW Conference which was held at First Presbyterian in Spanish Fort, AL. This study was also enhanced by well done overviews at our four Fall Gatherings.

Our Annual Spring Gathering was held at Sylagauga’s First Presbyterian Church. The Theme: ”Let’s Be Friends”. Speakers included Karla Conway and the president, Mark Howard from Presbyterian Home for Children; Columbia Friendship Circle scholarship recipient, our own Leann Scarbrough; the AL State Rep. for Mission Haven, Brenda Toomey; a Stamp Project by Dotty Lessley and Zoe Powell who shared the experiences of the Eufaula church in working with Living Waters for the World. A true “feast” of Mission. Our Communion and worship was beautifully led by the Rev. Shelaine R. Bird, a member of our Presbytery who inspired us to be at work in our faith. We were blessed with her presence and joy for life

The Moderator has attended and participated in Council meetings (until November when a new Executive Council was formed) as well as Presbytery meetings - both with Voice and Vote. A strong and committed Coordinating Team is dedicated to the work of PW in the Presbytery. We are greatly PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

appreciative of the support of the presbytery and synod and commit ourselves to “strengthen the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and to witness to the promise of God’s Kingdom” (from the Purpose of PW). We are also grateful for the “connectional” church which binds us to our sisters and brothers throughout the world.

With Grace and peace,

Carolyn Jordan, Moderator, 2009-2016, Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley