PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY

partner with and equip present and emerging PC(USA) faith communities in central Alabama to serve Christ and our neighbors

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

AUGUST 20, 2020
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
EUFAULA, AL 36027

THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY
PROPOSED DOCKET FOR SUMMER STATED MEETING
AUGUST 20, 2020 / 9:30 AM
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, EUFAULA

GOD CALLS US TOGETHER

9:30 AM **CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER** Moderator Bill Stribling
Organization-Declaration of a Quorum, Adoption of the Docket, Seating of Corresponding Members, Welcome of First-Time Commissioners, Welcome of Visitors, Requests for New Business

WELCOME BY HOST CHURCH John Brock

SCRIPTURE **Proverbs 1:20-33**

HOMILY ***Utmost Seriousness***

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

MUSICAL INTERLUDE ***Praise the Lord! God's Glories Show***

10:00 AM **GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONERS**
Kathy Wolf Reed, Lou Ann Sellers, Lin Veasey, Rush Watson, Patrick O'Connor and Annabelle Beavers

10:20 AM **BOARD OF PENSIONS** Keenan Rodgers

10:25 AM **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL** Susan Clayton
Upon Recommendation of the Anti-Racism Committee, the following two amendments to the Standing Rules be adopted:

1. **Standing Rules amended by adding the document "Proposed Changes to the Standing Rules" (See attached document, page 43)**
2. **To make the following specific changes to the current Standing Rules (See attached document, page 45).**

10:45 AM **BREAK**

10:55 AM **TRANSITIONAL EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER** Sue Westfall

11:00 AM **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY** Jamie McLeod

1. **The COM recommends that the presbytery approves the Rev. Lucy Turner for Honorable Retirement on October 31, 2020.**

2. **Examine and approve Cecilia Chang for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. (Materials included, pages 52-57) Ordination Commission: Joe Genau, Edgewood; Leanne Pearce Reed, Shades Valley; Joe Scrivner, Brown Memorial; Junmo Jeong, Auburn Opelika Korean; Terri Jones, First United Birmingham; Deb Baragona, Shades Valley; Hak Jae Kim, Korean Birmingham; Young Lee Il, Korean Birmingham.**

11:15 AM PROJECT EMPATHY — Ralls Coston

11:30 AM ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE — Judith Baldwin

1. **The Anti-Racism Committee moves to approve the attached Anti-Racism policy. (page 61)**

11:35 AM VOLUNTEER LIAISON FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCHES — James Ephraim

11:40 AM BREAK

11:50 AM STATED CLERK REPORT AND OMNIBUS MOTION — Tom Winter

1. **To approve the minutes of the May 21, 2020, meeting.**
2. **To approve requests for absences from today's meeting.**
3. **Report from Bills and Overtures Committee: that the overture from Southminster Church be approved and referred to Council for implementation. (page 67)**

MODERATOR NOMINATION FOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE — Bill Stribling

NOMINATING AND REPRESENTATION — Patti Winter

1. **For Commission on Ministry, Class of 2022, the Nominations Committee recommends Darrell Love, Westminster-Birmingham (filling an unfinished term)**
2. **For Youth Council, the Nominations Committee recommends Margaret Patton, First-Birmingham; Bibb Albright, Independent-Birmingham; Wesley Ann Barnes, First-Auburn; Tyler Klugh, First-Auburn; Adult-Greg Byrd, Shades Valley, Birmingham; Adult-Lauren Curter-Smith, First-Tuscaloosa.**

TRUSTEES — Rush Watson

1. **Trustees of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley recommends the approval of Bold Springs Presbyterian church giving Birmingham Water Works an easement for the installation of 36" water line.**
2. **Trustees of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley recommends to approve the sale of the property of the former Church of the Good Shepard Anniston, AL to Sams Properties LLC for $300,000.00.**
3. **Trustees of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley recommends the proceeds from the sale of the former property of The Church of the Good Shepard to be used:**

a. **Pay off expenses incurred regarding the Good Shepard property.**
b. **Remaining proceeds divided in half, of that one half to be administered by the Trustees to pay for future expenses incurred in exercising the Trustees responsibilities with regard to property and second half to be used by the Presbytery Council for church related purposes and that a portion be contributed to the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama**

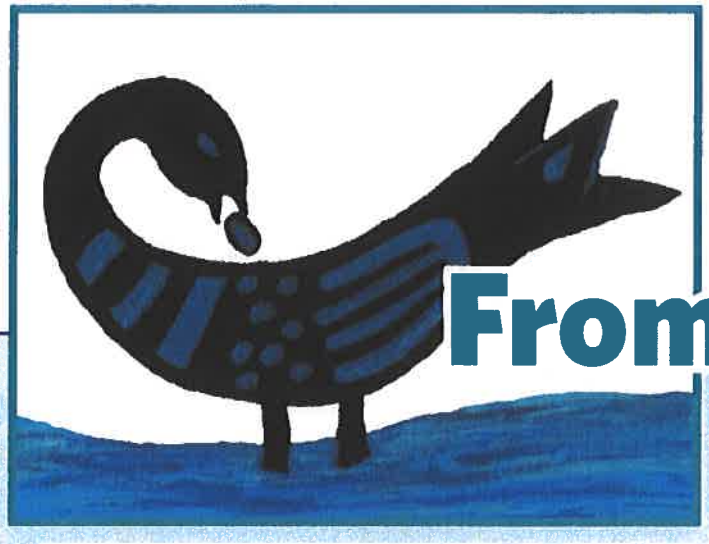
GOOD NEWS FROM CHURCHES — Tom Winter

NEW BUSINESS (ACTION ONLY)

12:30 PM ADJOURNMENT WITH PRAYER — Sue Westfall

We wish to extend a special thank you to Rev. John Brock of First, Eufaula for hosting today's Presbytery meeting and our special Zoom helpers Joe Genau, Robert Newman and Joan Reisinger.

NEXT STATED MEETING – NOVEMBER 12, 2020
Immanuel, Montgomery



virtual GA 224 The Presbyterian Outlook

From lament to action

by Leslie Scanlon, *Outlook* national reporter

From lamentation to action — the 2020 General Assembly called the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the hard work of justice, working to respond to what some referred to as the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice.

Worship. The worship service June 26 used the power of the digital platform to weave together music, art and voices from around the PC(USA) — including a Zoom choir for one of the closing hymns.

Wearing stoles that were a gift from the Committee on Local Arrangements in Baltimore, made by Jeff Wunrow Designs and featuring a Black fist raised in a symbol of power, Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri and Cindy Kohlmann, the co-moderators of the 2018 General Assembly, called the commissioners to journey in faith from lamentation to confession to hope to action.

"Surrounded as we are by the sounds of respirators and the cries of the grieving and the raised voices of protesters, help us, oh Lord, to hear your voice, and give us the courage to hear that voice," Kohlmann said.

God provides abundantly "far more than we could have asked for or imagined," Cintrón-Olivieri said, drawing on a passage from Ephesians. And she recited a poem from Antonio Machado, "Caminante, no hay camino" — telling the commissioners "you make the path by walking" and giving them responsibility to find the way forward as they walk in faith.

Virtual GA. Because of COVID-19, this became the PC(USA)'s first virtual General Assembly, meeting via Zoom — with technology that had more hiccups than hard bumps ("Can you hear me?" was the first thing many commissioners said). That format also meant the assembly considered "core and critical" business — referring many other reports to the next assembly in 2022. Some business that did make it through: offering the church's presence and advocacy for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and support for the work of the Native American Coordinating Council and for repairing Native American church properties.

Co-moderators. Because the opening plenary on June 19 ran late - in part with commissioners debating what business to defer to 2022, and in a dispute over whether San Francisco Theological Seminary remains as a PC(USA) seminary - the assembly added an extra plenary session June 20 in order to elect co-moderators.

The decision didn't take long, as the assembly elected Elona Street-Stewart, an Indigenous ruling elder, and Gregory Bentley, a Black minister, on the first ballot - with 304 commissioners voting for them, three times as many votes as for the next-closest team. Street-Stewart is synod executive of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and, as a member of the Delaware Nanticoke tribe, an assembly's first Native American co-moderator. Bentley is pastor of Fellowship Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama.

Their election was emotional, as Oscar J. McCloud prayed during their installation that their paths had been watered with the tears and blood of their ancestors. Bentley pronounced himself to be "hippopotamus happy and dinosaur delighted."

Bentley and Street-Stewart have chosen as their symbol the Sankofa bird: standing in the Mississippi River, representing flying forward while looking backward, a hope, Bentley said, of bringing "the best of our cultures to make the church better."

Racism. On June 26 the assembly approved a resolution called "Responding to the Sin of Racism and a Call to Action" — declaring that Black lives matter; confessing that the church has been complicit in perpetuating injustice; and pledging to "confront and dismantle systemic racism" in the church and in society. That resolution was a substitute for another option that commissioners determined was not strong enough - as Milo Browne, a young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Scioto Valley put it: "It is inexcusable for us to stand in silence as people are being killed."

Stated clerk. The assembly re-elected J. Herbert Nelson, 61, to a second four-year term as the PC(USA)'s stated clerk — the denomination's chief ecclesial officer and its voice in the public square. Nelson was the only candidate - no one else applied - and was installed with a prayer from his wife, Gail Porter Nelson, also a PC(USA) pastor.

Nelson expressed thanks, saying "I'm still a pastor" at heart — and said "there is a Savior who reminds us you can go to the poor, to the broken, to the widows, and make a difference," to get out of the church building. "I don't ever remember Jesus having a church house. Every one he went into, he got thrown out of."

San Francisco Theological Seminary. Bentley and Street-Stewart avoided a floor fight on this dispute by announcing June 27 that they would bring representatives from the seminary and the Committee on the Office of Theological Education together shortly after the assembly concludes to try to resolve the issue, using a mediator if necessary.

Budget. The assembly approved a unified PC(USA) budget of $80.1 million for 2021 and $83.4 million for 2022 built on the assumption that COVID-19 will cause income to decline by roughly 25% this year and next. The assembly also approved a General Assembly per capita rate of $8.98 per member for 2021 and 2022 - three cents higher than the $8.95 per member rate for 2019 and 2020.

Repentance and action. The assembly concluded with controversy and repentance. The controversy: a failed attempt to introduce a statement on the ways "that Black women and girls are disproportionately affected by the systems of white supremacy and misogynoir in communities, the church and society at large." A vote to suspend the rules to allow that motion to be heard needed 326 votes (2/3 of the enrolled commissioners), but got only 306, with 144 voting against, despite a social media push for the PC(USA) to #TrustBlackWomen.

Asked to address these concerns with prayer, Nelson started with silence, then prayed for Black girls whose "bodies and their minds and their spirits would be broken down in so many ways," and for their mothers who "fall on their knees and pray for their daughters and cry for them."

The assembly then spent 8 minutes and 46 seconds in silent corporate lament — the time that Minneapolis police office Derek Chauvin knelt pressing on the neck of George Floyd.

"Guide our feet," Street-Stewart prayed, asking God to lead Presbyterians as they find their paths, to "live out the church's Great Ends into the street."

[02-020]	**Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force Report**		
Source:	Committee	**Event:**	224th General Assembly (2020)
Committee:	[02] Referral to the 225th General Assembly (2022)	**Sponsor:**	Advocating for Black Girls and Women Task Force
Prefile #:	[COM-085]		
IOB Link:		**Type:**	General Assembly Full Consideration

Recommendation

Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force Report.

The Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force recommends that the 224th General Assembly (2020) approve the following:

1. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to create educational resources for congregations to learn and interrupt practices and policies that perpetuate the adultification of Black girls and criminalization of adolescent behavior, seeking the advice and input of the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC).

2. Direct the PMA, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to invest in training and in identifying trained antiracism facilitators who will provide a geographically accessible and affordable network for congregations and mid councils, and intentionally include gender and gender identity focused on Black women and girls in antiracism and gender justice trainings.

3. Direct the PMA to

a. engage in the work of eradicating systemic violence against Black women and girls in its work throughout all ministry areas;

b. create educational opportunities at denominational gatherings centered on systemic violence as it relates to Black women and girls, seeking the advice and input of ACWC;

c. create opportunities for LGBTQIA+ identified Black clergy to come together for fellowship, education, and mutual support for the work of ministry with a specific focus on trans Black church leadership, recognizing that the PC(USA) does not currently have an ordained or installed openly Black trans minister of Word and Sacrament;

d. offer support and grants for congregations working with Black queer/trans organizations and engaging in work/programming directly addressing the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community;

e. provide resources for making gendered groups safe, spirit-filled places for Black queer and trans women;

f. direct the PMA to join with nonprofit organizations, like Sister Reach (https://www.sisterreach.org/), to

(1) provide grants for a core group of Presbyterians from different congregations in various regions in the church to receive sex education and curriculum and inclusive reproductive justice training in order to share information with their local congregations, and

(2) support legislation that actively protects Black queer and trans women/girls and speak out against legislation that harms this community.

4. Direct the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to

a. develop theology and worship resources for educating congregations in Rites of Passage and a primer/introduction to Black women and other women of color, including biblical and theological studies for lay people (reference the works of Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon);

b. become proactive in finding Black women writers to develop theology, worship, and homiletics books and resources;

c. provide resources for awareness and sensitivity around intersections of race/gender /sexual orientation.

5. Direct Research Services in the PC(USA) to conduct a survey of Presbyterian Black women, including Black clergywomen, about their experiences within the denomination and hold regional focus groups with Black clergywomen conducted by trusted, notable, Black women facilitators, consulting with gender and racial justice staff in the PMA.

6. Direct the Board of Pensions to create opportunities for Black clergywomen to come together for fellowship, education, and mutual support, potentially in its CREDO program.

7. Direct the PMA to continue and to increase its mission engagement efforts and appeals for Presbyterians to

a. support the Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon Scholarship Fund for the purpose of scholarships specifically for women of color to pursue educational studies, including doctoral studies; and

b. increase support for the Legal Defense Fund in the Office of Gender & Racial Justice for the purpose of supporting Black women in achieving racial justice and legal defense.

8. Direct the PMA to continue providing scholarships and financial aid for Master of Divinity students and start providing scholarships for Doctor of Philosophy and Theology students to increase the number of Black Presbyterian women scholars.

9. Acknowledge that the work done in this area is being done by the office with the smallest budget (Office of Gender & Racial Justice in Racial Equity & Women's Ministries in the PMA). Direct the PMA to increase budget support and equity for the Racial Equity & Women's Ministries area in the PMA.

10. Acknowledge the current work being done to end Cash Bail by the Office of the General Assembly, Stated Clerk Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, and the Office of Public Witness. Support legislation efforts to end Cash Bail.

11. Acknowledge and celebrate items that the General Assembly of the PC(USA) has passed, which provides for the full inclusion of the LGBTQIA+, including the affirmation of the trans community.

Rationale

This report has been prepared in response to the immediate effects and long-term consequences of interpersonal and institutional violence perpetrated against Black women and girls in U.S. society and in the PC(USA). This intersectional (race/gender) and multidimensional (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual) violence manifests in dehumanizing expressions of Black womanhood (e.g. pejorative stereotypes) and in theo-political sanctioned and socially accepted practices of disenfranchising (e.g. policing, silencing, making invisible, criminalizing). The dehumanizing tropes are intended to negate Black female identity and the

disenfranchising practices serve to restrict Black female access to resources and opportunities otherwise afforded to those who enjoy hegemonic race/gender/sexual privilege. For example, society attributes sex as a natural role to Black women and girls, thus Black girls are stereotyped as hypersexualized.1 This sexualizing of Black womanhood has its roots in U.S. chattel slavery to absolve White men of raping young Black girls, who were instead cast as evil, lascivious seductresses. The hyper-focus on the Black female body attempts to control Black female access to places/spaces hegemonically determined for "Whites only" and also serves to diminish Black female intellectual abilities and achievements, thereby re-inscribing generalized notions of Black inferiority/White superiority. This continued dehumanization and disenfranchisement of Black women has a deleterious effect upon the overall well-being of Black women, the Black community, and U.S. society as an interconnected communal body of the human family. For members of the household of faith, this dehumanization-disenfranchisement behavior necessitates critical reflection upon ecclesial themes such as theological anthropology (humanity's relationship with the divine and the interrelationship of the human community), upon biblical passages such as love for our sister whom we see, and love for God whom we have not seen (1st John 4:20), and upon theological doctrines and church practices that relegate women to second-class status and an afterthought. Provided herein are the background, recommendations and rationale, biblical/theological framing, historical and contemporary sociopolitical contexts, and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) history informing the recommendations of this task force on the five issues highlighted to address the varied concerns about the direct and indirect violence perpetrated against Black women and girls. Included also are select bibliographic resources from which educational materials can be developed to denounce the many and varied gross misunderstandings undergirding the policies and practices affecting this demographic of the American populace and from which the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force advocates for acceptance of these recommendations.

Rationale

The Disparities Experience by Black Women and Girls Task Force offers recommendations and rationales to the 224th General Assembly (2020) for corrective action specifically to address these five areas of concern: (1) adultification of Black girls, (2) toxic theology/gender equality for Black women in ministry, (3) reproductive justice/human rights, (4) LGBTQIA+ equality, and (5) the elimination of cash bail practices. This report is an invitation to the faithful to take seriously the critical issues confronting Black women and girls in U.S. society and in the PC(USA), and to embody through praxis the words of womanist ethicist, the Reverend Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon, the first Black woman to be ordained in the PC(USA) who reminds us that as stewards charged with the sacred responsibility of justice-praxis for members of our species, our true worship of God is evidenced in a love ethic that is expressed in mutual equality, a process of making genuine, demonstrable, honest-to-goodness right-relating connections with all living things.2

Adultification of Black Girls

The courts have ruled that children have diminished culpability as compared to adults. However, when Black children display what psychological, developmental, and educational theorists have otherwise determined to be "age-appropriate" behavior, different standards of assessment are applied and far more serious consequences can result. For example, when seven- and eight-year old Black siblings fought on an Ohio school bus, both were arrested and taken into custody. Additionally, an eight-year-old Black girl in Illinois was arrested for acting out in 2013; a six-year old Black girl was arrested in Florida in 2012 for having a tantrum; and a twelve-year-old Black girl from Orlando was threatened with expulsion from a Christian Academy in 2013 unless she changed her natural hair style. These behaviors are not uncommon for young school age children. Yet, for young Black girls, arrest and expulsion are extreme, life-altering, life threatening, and no doubt frightening, traumatizing, and all too common outcomes for otherwise typical age-appropriate behaviors. These examples, moreover, demonstrate that Black bodies are routinely policed for adherence to comfortability and conformity to standards of dominant cultural ideals of behavior, beauty, and even place in so-called "White spaces."

As these few incidents demonstrate, Blacks are perceived differently—as "nonconforming" to some arbitrarily imposed dominant cultural standard and as a "threat" both to White comfortability and to the hegemonic status quo, thereby warranting punishment for such infractions. In fact, repeated research documents an anti-Black

bias across disciplines in this country. For example, research conducted at the University of Virginia revealed an anti-Black bias in pain management. Similarly, a 2017 report by Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality revealed an anti-Black bias against young girls demonstrating age-appropriate behaviors. In the Georgetown report, a mostly White female participant group perceived Black girls ages 5–14 as more adult and thus less innocent of the same childhood activities as their White peers. This age misperception known as "adultification," assumes Black girls are older than their actual age. Implied in this age misperception is the assumption that Black girls "know better," which somehow justifies more frequent and even harsher punishments for actual age-appropriate behaviors. As such, Black girls can end up with an expulsion or arrest record for simply engaging in 5-, 10-, and 12-year-old activities. In fact, Black girls frequently experience discipline for subjective reasons such as disobedience/defiance, detrimental behavior, and third-degree assault, and are punished more harshly including suspensions, which are connected to higher dropout rates and increased risk of contact with the juvenile justice system.3 This age mischaracterization leaves Black girls three times more likely to be removed from their homes, to be placed in state custody than their White peers, and to receive more severe dispositions even after accounting for seriousness of offense, prior record, and age.4 This age misperception also assumes Black girls "know more" thereby requiring less nurturing, less protecting, less support, and less comfort. As a result, Black girls receive less consoling after a disturbing incident, have less access to mentoring relationships, have fewer advocates or defenders on their behalf, and have fewer leadership opportunities.

As adultification of Black girls adversely affects healthy identity formation and risks access to a future unencumbered by false charges, suspensions, etc., the rationale for this recommendation is to bring attention to the problem young Black girls face as a result of adultification, to provide mentoring resources and leadership opportunities to young Black girls in order to counter the adverse effects of adultification, and to heighten personal self-awareness of unconscious race/gender biases in perpetuating this practice.

Toxic Theology/Gender Equality in Ministry

According to Dr. Katie Cannon, it is important to trace the origin and expansion of the church because the same general schemes of oppression remain prevalent and because as life-affirming moral agents, we have a responsibility to study the ideological hegemony of the past so that we do not remain doomed to the recurring cyclical patterns of the hermeneutical distortions in the present (i.e. violence against women, condemnation of homosexuality, spiritualizing scripture to justify capitalism).5 Our rationale, therefore, begins with the toxic theology that dehumanized and disenfranchised Black women in the past and that still informs beliefs and behaviors toward Black women in society and in the church today.

Traditional theological discourse denied all women full fellowship in the human family as image bearers of the living God. In fact, the doctrine of the imago Dei has been misinterpreted to benefit male authority and to render women subservient in their defective humanity.6 This toxic theology, however, has been particularly problematic for Black women whose God-given identity according to Genesis 1:27 was transformed from image of God to property by a false claim of Blacks as the descendants of Ham cursed by Noah to be servants. Dehumanized and disenfranchised as an inanimate object/commodity, Black women were exploited and abused physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. For example, Black women were exploited sexually for their ability to reproduce human capital and physically for their ability to labor in the field or in the house, both for the purposes of individual and institutional wealth-building of colonial powers. History records that White men physically raped Black women to increase the cash crop of enslaved Black bodies. Yet history overlooks that White women mentally and emotionally raped Black women via verbal assaults. White women beat and killed Black women in ways so disturbing that historians judged White women barbaric.1 The planation legend nevertheless enveloped White mistresses in an aura of light and vulnerability, goodness and agreeableness.1 In fact, White women emerged from the slaveholding era as the epitome of gentile, virtuous womanhood, and a standard-bearer to which Black women are expected to acquiesce.

As chattel, Black women were not recognized as human theologically, socially, or legally, nor were they narrators of their own story. As such, they were pejoratively characterized as promiscuous, foreboding, strong, bad, and angry. Unflattering media images of Black womanhood have been popularized: Aunt Jemima—an

overweight, unattractive, asexual; Sapphire—a loud, overbearing, emasculating, angry woman; Tragic Mulatta—a self-hating biracial representative of empire/empire building; Welfare Queen—the castrating matriarch who bilks hardworking White taxpayers; and Topsy—the lazy, mischievous, child-like, Black who must be watched at all times. Not one of these depictions of Black femininity in the hegemonic imagination is entitled to sociopolitical protection, legislative defense, or even sympathy, unlike White women who, as Brittney Cooper observes, the whole world rises in defense of their tears.7 The reimaging of Black humanity into property that can be placed in the house or in the field just as someone places a vase or a cup of sweet tea from the nation's slaveholding past still informs the theo-political beliefs and behaviors toward people of African descent as evidenced by the frequent calling of police on Blacks in coffee shops, parks, and Airbnb. In fact, legal scholars note that by every social indicator, racism continues to blight the lives of people of color including holders of high-echelon jobs and police-community encounters serve as daily reminders.8

Contemporary racism manifests interpersonally, institutionally, and insidiously as microaggressions, defined as routine experiences that Blacks experience as racist, but appear normal to the dominant culture. For Black women, microaggressions manifest in overt and covert ways including: sexualizing, excluding, policing, silencing, erasing, appropriating their intellectual contributions without attribute, and the presumption of knowing/staying in "our" place lest police are called for sitting, walking, driving, or barbequing while Black reminiscent of the Jim/Jane Crow segregation laws that dictated where Black bodies could eat, sit, swim, relieve themselves, or be buried. Womanist scholar, Kelly Douglas Brown, assesses this normative White gaze toward Blacks noting, the moment the Black body steps out of its chattel space, it is an imminent threat to cherished White property.9 The traditional raced/gendered theology and sociopolitical practices necessitated a nuanced response. Pioneering Black women created womanist discourse that was by/for/about Black women in order to counter the inherited toxic theology characterized by the Reverend Dr. Katie Cannon as the substantial omission of Black women from theological discourse from male theologians using analytical concepts and frameworks that take the male experience as the norm.10

The effects of U.S. chattel slavery still linger—yielding racist/sexist oppression that requires sacred spaces for Black women to share experiences and to support one another in the ministerial journey. They also need resources to educate themselves and the community about healthy ways to respond to routine microaggressions, and to expand their knowledge of the contributions of persons of color, Black feminists, womanists, and Black LGBTQIA+ scholarship. Thus, the rationale for highlighting this issue is to give voice to the dehumanizing and disenfranchising experiences of Black women in U.S society and in the PC(USA) and to provide resources and collaborative opportunities to enhance their personal and professional ministerial presence, consistent with womanist interpretive lens, an effective but underused pedagogy pioneered by the Reverend Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon and others.

Reproductive Justice

Reproductive justice encompasses the human right not to have a child, the right to have a child and to parent a child in a safe and healthy environment, and the right to have access to needed resources (i.e. quality medical care to ensure a healthy birth and to a living wage to materially meet the needs of the childrearing). Access to resources is justified on the grounds that safe, dignified fertility management, childbirth, and parenting constitute a fundamental human right. Reproductive justice also recognizes transgender concerns since the definitions of womanhood, birthing, and mothering do not fit neatly into the male-female binary.11 In fact, some trans people have abortions, use birth control, and give birth.12

Reproductive justice has roots in the nation's colonizing past. During U.S. chattel slavery, Black women's forced sexual intercourse increased the cash crop of enslaved Black bodies for capitalist gain. Once these offspring no longer increased the wealth of slave-owning Whites, laws were enacted to encourage the sterilization of poor Black women. Medicaid actually paid for the sterilizations of poor women up to 150,000 annually; in fact, in 1980 a disproportionate number of the 700,000 sterilizations performed were on women of color.13 Moreover, thirteen states attempted to pass laws sterilizing women for having too many children while receiving day-care, housing assistance, welfare, or Medicaid.14 Today, "dog-whistle politics" enable politicians to attack select segments of the population using code words (e.g. thug, anchor baby, and welfare queen)

rather than explicit racist/sexist language to refer to Black males, Latino/a, black women, and to misinform the mases. For example, despite the racialized stereotype of teen pregnancy as a Black phenomenon, White teenage pregnancy rates are rising in states that mandate the toughest restrictions on sex education, birth control, and abortion access.15

Thus while the rationale for addressing reproductive justice is to provide sex education, curriculum inclusive reproductive justice to Black women, the entire Presbyterian community would benefit in knowing the history of and evolving advocacy on reproductive justice, rights and resources available, sexual health and well-being, and to become better informed about agencies and other resources providing programming on this topic.

Intersection of Race, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

PC(USA)'s position is to welcome all gender identities into church membership. However, we still live in a society where people choose to cherry pick biblical texts to justify excluding full participation of LGBTQIA+ persons in the household of faith, gainful employment, marriage, parenthood, and even the purchase of a wedding cake (e.g. Masterpiece Cakeshop). In fact, the LGBTQIA+ community remains under sociopolitical and theological assault. In 2016, North Carolina passed legislation requiring trans people to use bathrooms corresponding to the gender on their birth certificate. In December 2019, the Trump administration removed sexual orientation from the antidiscrimination policy of the Interior Department.16 And in 2020, United Methodists are proposing a church split over LGBTQIA+ inclusion. These ongoing assaults on the personhood, sexual identity, and human rights of LGBTQIA+ persons necessitate training about the many and varied issues affecting their daily lives. For example, trans people report harassment and discrimination and a general lack of competence about trans healthcare issues.

LGBTQIA+ youth contemplate suicide at three times the rate of heterosexual youth and harassment or abuse increases the likelihood of self-harm. Black women were 91 percent of transgender and gender nonconforming people killed by violence. Nearly half (47 percent) of Black transgendered people have been incarcerated, a rate that is 10–15 percentage points higher than the rate for all Black folk,17 and 15 percent of trans people live on less than $10,000/year, a rate of poverty that is four times the national average.18

Contemporary dehumanization and disenfranchisement practices affecting Black LGBTQIA+ persons are rooted in colonial experiences where the enslaved, male and female, were objectified, sexualized, and raped. While rape was a common method of torture used by White slavers to subdue recalcitrant Black women,19 White males also raped Black males as a show of hegemonic domination. This practice known as "buck busting" was done publicly, as a means of demonstrating social control over and humiliating Black males. Through these and other forced acts of humiliating genital exposure (e.g. scant clothing, forced intercourse via breeding farms, nakedness on auction blocks), Blacks learned to be ashamed of their bodies and of their sexuality. Adding toxic masculine theology via misappropriation of biblical contexts to inherited body shaming and a sociopolitical context that assaults the personhood, sexual identity and human rights of the LGBTQIA+ further dehumanizes and disenfranchises members of this community. Educational resources must be provided to assist LGBTQIA+ persons and allies in understanding sexual identity and in securing safe spaces, job support, healthcare, etc. This recommendation for LGBTQIA+ equality is intended for that purpose.

Cash Bail and Legal Support

The Supreme Court ruled in *Bearden v. Georgia* that punishing someone for poverty violated the equal protection clause. Therefore, an indigent defendant cannot be jailed for an inability to pay fines unless s/he willfully refuses. Nevertheless, to retrieve funding shortfalls caused by the Reagan administration tax cuts, municipalities across the country use public policies that target poor children, women, and homeless. For example, public policies require "resource officers" to be placed into public schools, many with "zero-tolerance policies" causing children to be arrested for age-appropriate behavior rather than reprimanded or respected for difference. There are public policies that target poor women who can be evicted for calling 911 too many times for relief from domestic violence situations, and that target the homeless for public urination and for sleeping outdoors.20 Today, poor people's inability to pay the bloated fines and fees criminalize poverty in an unwinnable cycle,21 and increases the likelihood that persons plead guilty to crimes they did not commit just to

get out of jail. Guilty pleas generate revenue (e.g. for-profit prisons, food servicing, etc.), but also creates other problems (i.e. housing, employment, etc.) for the incarcerated and their families. Moreover, cash bail practices increase the likelihood of conviction if the case goes to trial and increases the likelihood of false confessions in order to be released. In fact, Georgetown law professor, Peter Edelman, reports that 50 percent of defendants not detained before trial over a ten-year period were convicted versus 92 percent of those who had been detained and that clients take a plea in order to get out rather than fight the case while sitting in jail, even if they have a great defense or are totally innocent.22

Due to widespread policing of Black bodies and the illegal enactment of stop and frisk policies across the country, cash bail practices adversely affects Blacks at a higher rate than other demographics and necessitates intentional, well-researched education by dedicated advocates. For example, African Americans are detained at rates nearly five times greater than Whites and at cost of $9 billion per year.23 In fact, between 2000 and 2014, local jail populations grew by 19.8 percent with pretrial detention accounting for 95 percent of that growth.24

Cash bail practices destroy lives, cause job loss, separate families, and even kills. The highly publicized Sandra Bland case is a tragic example of this policy. Neither she nor her family had $500 bail for an alleged "routine" traffic stop. She was jailed and found dead in her cell three days later. Her experience and that of untold thousands like Ms. Bland demand attention and revocation of this cash bail practice.

Presbyterian History

The Presbyterian church has a complicated history with Blacks in America. For example, Presbyterians, like Methodists and Baptists, were on both sides of the enslavement debate. Although both slavery and the institution's most vocal critics were denounced at the 1850 assembly, the church eventually split. The Presbyterian church was again divided participation in and support of Blacks during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. According to Frederick Heuser, many Presbyterians supported peaceful civil rights protests, but many did not.25 In addition, Heuser adds:

> The 1950s and 1960s were decades when Presbyterians, like Americans in general, had to come to terms with the racism that had been deeply embedded in American society since the founding of the United States. That racism assumed a new level in the years following the American Civil War. Despite the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the U.S. constitution, the concept of separate but equal affirmed by the Supreme Court in the landmark *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896 became a part of the American mindset and legal landscape. Interestingly, Associate Supreme Court Justice John M. Harlan, a Presbyterian, had argued against the majority decision in the Plessy case, claiming the constitution as colorblind.26

In 1983, with the reunification of the northern and southern branches, Black Presbyterians faced questions of cultural differences, identity, and ethnic-specific missions. Over the years, various committees have been charged with examining and instrumental in informing the Presbyterian church family of challenges uniquely faced by its Black membership. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) again stands at a crossroads as America is sharply divided over race, gender, and sexuality. PC(USA) must choose on which side of history she stands on these issues that sociopolitically and theologically adversely affect Black women and girls—like New School Abolitionists forging a path forward for the poor, dehumanized, and disenfranchised and thus embracing the recommendations of this task force or like others of that bygone era that concluded any further action would not be for the edification of the church.27

Appendix 1

Select Bibliographic Resources

Following is a partial listing of scholarly resources that were used in the preparation of this report and that can be used to develop educational material to address the five issues of concern highlighted in this report.

Althaus-Reid, Marcella. *Indecent Theology: Theological Perversions in Sex, Gender and Politics*. New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2000.

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Gonzalez, Michelle A. *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007.

Hattery, Angela J. and Earl Smith. *Policing Black Bodies: How Black Lives Are Surveilled and How to Work for Change*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. https://www.hrc.org/resources/a-national-epidemic-fatal-anti-trans-violence-in-the-united-states-in-2019.

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Ross, Loretta J. and Rickie Solinger. *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2017.

Wilmore, Gayraud. *Black and Presbyterian*: *The Heritage and The Hope*. Louisville:Witherspoon Press, 2006.

Endnotes

1. Rebecca Epstein, Jamilia J. Blake, Thalia González. *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood*. (Washington: Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality, 2017), 5.

2. Katie G. Cannon. "Intellectual Faith Practitioners: African American Theological Education in the Twentieth-First Century." In *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, Spring 2012, 23.

3. Epstein et al, 9.

4. Epstein et al, 12.

5. Katie Geneva Cannon. *Katie's Canon: Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 46.

6. Michelle Gonzalez. *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007), 168.

7. Brittney Cooper. *Eloquent Rage* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2018), 175.

8. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2017), 12.

9. Kelly Brown Douglas. *Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2015), 116–17.

10. Cannon, *Katie's Canon*, 127.

11. Loretta J. Ross and Rickie Solinger. *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction* (Oakland: University of California, 2017), 196.

12. Ross and Solinger, 197.

13. Ross and Solinger, 51.

14. Ross and Solinger, 50.

15. Ross and Solinger, 177.

16. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/sexual-orientation-interior-department-ethics-guidelines_n_5dff99e3e4b0b2520d0ca480.

17. Angela J. Hattery and Earl Smith, *Policing Black Bodies: How Black Lives Are Surveilled and How to Work for Change*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018, 147.

18. Hattery and Smith, 148.

19. bell hooks. *Ain't I a Woman? Black Woman and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981), 18.

20. Peter Edelman. *Not a Crime to Be Poor: The Criminalization of Poverty in America* (New York: The New Press, 2017), xiv.

21. Edelman, xvii.

22. Edelman, 50–51.

23. Edelman, 46–47.

24. Edelman, 49.

25. Frederick J. Heuser. "Presbyterians and the Struggle for Civil Rights." In *Journal of Presbyterian History*, Spring/Summer 2012, 90(1):8.

26. Heuser, 8.

27. Hugh Davis, "The New York Evangelist, New School Presbyterians and Slavery, 1837–1857." In *American Presbyterians*, Vol. 68, No. 1 (Spring 1990), 15.

Other Comments

Advice and Counsel on Item 02-20—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises the 224th General Assembly (2020) to approve this report.

As this report's recommendations reflect, the church is in need of a more robust approach in its advocacy for ending the oppression of black women and girls. Having a short-term study helps balance prior attention by the church to the situation of young black men and boys, although the history of uneven or limited funding for these

efforts should be cautionary, and the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee may be able to complement ongoing program work overall. This report has an intentionality around education, resources, and prophetic voice that leans into the future of what our denomination could be and how we as people of faith move ourselves into the work of dismantling systems of oppression. Partnering with grassroots organizations as well as "supporting legislation that actively protects black queer and trans women/girls" offers holistic organizing and ecumenical partnerships that can serve as an example to the larger church.

Specific funding requests are often seen as the province of those with program responsibility, while General Assembly commissioners are to focus primarily on policy direction. In the pandemic context in which this is written, however, with its disproportionate impact on communities of color, the report's direct approach may be helpful. There are a number of antiracism programs in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, above all the Matthew 25 initiative, but none seem to be enacting the kind of bold work the report proposes.

Advice and Counsel on Item 02-20—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC)

The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee advises the 224th General Assembly (2020) to approve Item 02-20.

The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee strongly advises the approval of the report. Martin Luther King Jr. prophetically proclaimed, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." Black women and girls experience injustice daily, and we the church must answer our call to dismantle this injustice and inequity.

Advice and Counsel on Item 2-20—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns advises the 224th General Assembly (2020) to approve Item 02-20.

Black girls are overrepresented along the entire exclusionary school discipline system, including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, referrals to law enforcement, and arrest. Across the nation, girls of color have described experiencing discipline in response to their expressions, presentation, and/or identity, instead of in response to an actual threat to school safety.1

According to the most recent U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Data, black girls are seven times more likely to be suspended from school, and four times more likely to be arrested on school campus. Punitive practices and policies in schools fuel systemic inequities and outcomes based on race and gender and have profound consequences for black girls: rather than promote safety and well-being, these practices disproportionately push black girls out of school and further into the margins. Black girls who have been subject to punitive school policies and practices are at an increased risk of coming in contact with the juvenile and criminal courts and leaving school altogether, ultimately impeding their ability to achieve future success and lead successful and healthy lives.2

To this end, the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns urgently requests that the 224th General Assembly (2020) approve Item 02-20.

Endnotes

1. Monique W. Morris, *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* (New York: The New Press, 2016).

2. Ibid.

Office of the General Assembly Comment on Item 02-20, Recommendation 2

COGA has recommended that this item be referred to the 225th General Assembly (2022). However, should the assembly determine that this item of business is core and critical to our governance and sustainability, and needs to be considered by the 224th General Assembly (2020), OGA provides this comment.

Training materials, frames, approaches, and opportunities within and outside of the Office of the General Assembly, and those done in collaboration with other agencies of the church, regularly include gender, gender identity, and black women and girls in their content and consideration. Educational approaches seek to be antiracist and reject centering whiteness and white supremacy. OGA is responsible for and to a connectional church structure that is ecclesial, ecumenical, and constitutional. The *Book of Order* invests an accountability function for councils regarding their implementation plans for inclusion and equity in committees on representation. While the Constitution requires attention to diversity and inclusion in every council above session (G-3.0103), it does not require the same approach in every setting. Any assembly directive that seeks to do so defies the realities of contemporary church and society.

While all agencies are responsible to work on these issues internally, it is well beyond the purpose or mission of any of them to identify facilitators for congregations and mid councils to do the same. The OGA is not resourced adequately to take this task up and would be challenged logistically to maintain such a network. There are resources in church and society (not accessible to all geographic areas and not necessarily affordable) and while it may be possible to provide a clearinghouse function (gathering a list that is made public), vetting persons and organizations to ensure "a geographically accessible and affordable network" for councils below the General Assembly level is beyond staff capacities. Ecumenical cooperation is another resource in this kind of resourcing, as we are not unique in our demographic realities and the need for more education and praxis in antiracism and its intersecting isms. Every church setting is called to uphold the foundational principles including those for unity in diversity (F-1.0403).

Regular resourcing of equity and inclusion work denomination-wide is included in mid council newsletters, trainings, workshops in national and regional events, consultations, and coaching provided for leaders and groups.

Current OGA work:

- Trouble the Water (a series of four short films and curricula on antiracism targeted to PC(USA) structures/functions). Episodes are titled: Why Church? Why Now?; Whiteness; Racial Identity; and Intersectionality and Disruption. The series was developed by OGA and PMA and will be available for release in 2020.

- EQUIP modules (anticipated 2020) are being built for the Equity and Representation office in the areas of disability concerns (Disability and the Way of Jesus), antiracism/anti-oppression materials for applications in denominational life (Trouble the Water), and general equity and inclusion skills. Equip is accessed at http://equip.pcusa.org.

Appendix C-4

[00-29] **On the Church in This Moment in History—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.**

Source:	Committee	**Event:**	224th General Assembly (2020)
Committee:	[00] Plenary		
Prefile #:	[COM-116]	**Sponsor:**	Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA)
IOB Link:		**Type:**	General Assembly Full Consideration

Action Summary

Recommendation	Action
On this Item, the General Assembly acted as follows:	Approve as Amended (AA)

Assembly Action

On this Item, the General Assembly acted as follows:

Approve as Amended

Electronic Vote - Plenary
Affirmative:407
Negative:72
Abstaining:

Recommendation

On the Church in This Moment in History – **[Responding to the Sin of Racism and a Call to Action**

"Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in."
-Isaiah 58:12 (NRSV)

This 224th General Assembly of the PC(USA) declares that Black ~~and Brown~~ lives matter; that our country's most important institutions have been built to sustain white privilege, to protect white lives and white property at the expense of our siblings of color; and that the church, through ignorance, denial, and in some cases deliberate action, has participated in this injustice. We have been slow to face the reality of systemic racism. We have been slow to acknowledge the pain of our fellow Presbyterians, of our fellow Christians, of our fellow citizens, and of those who have come to America for a better life, whose value has been judged by the color of their skin. We pledge to join hands and hearts with our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) siblings to actively confront and dismantle systemic racism in our church and in society at large, and to work for a more just, merciful, and peaceful country that allows all of God's children to flourish.]

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly recommends that the 224th GA (2020)

1. [Call] ~~Urge~~ all Presbyterians to hear and heed the Gospel imperative to love God, neighbor, and self by living out a deeper commitment to active participation with Jesus Christ in the work of building God's kindom through

1. Personal and corporate repentance, spiritual renewal, and devotion to the Great Ends of the Church. **[Repenting, both personally and corporately, for the role we as individuals and as a predominantly White-dominated church played in history and continue to perpetuate today, even if unknowingly, in systemic racism and White Supremacy, especially in terms of our own local silence, silencing those who attempt to speak or act, and our failure to act regarding police brutality, voter suppression, educational and healthcare inequality, and other acts of systemic racism on federal, state, and local levels]**

2. Listening and responding to the voices of peoples long silenced through programs such as Hands and Feet: Presbyterians Engaging in Communities, the Poor People's Campaign, **[and Freedom Rising, approved by the 222nd General Assembly]**

3. Energetic, intelligent, imaginative, and loving involvement in the Matthew 25 *Initiative and its intertwined*foci: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty

2. [Direct the Co-Moderators of the 224th General Assembly (2020) to facilitate a time of silent vigil of 8 minutes and 46 seconds as a symbolic representation in solidarity with our BIPOC siblings, and of corporate lament and personal introspection of our complicity in perpetuating systemic racism and racial injustice before the adjourning of the 224th General Assembly (2020).]

3. Direct the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to review all items of business referred **[from the 224th General Assembly (2020)]** to the 225th General Assembly (2022) to consider prayerfully whether the recommendations could be enacted under current social witness policy or the authority of agencies and their boards to make programmatic decisions between assemblies.

4. [Call] ~~Encourage~~ congregations, sessions, presbyteries, and synods to review items of business referred **[from the 224th General Assembly (2020)]** to the 225th General Assembly (2022) and prayerfully consider the call of God to work and witness for the goals and values expressed therein, **[in particular the following items as starting points for developing plans for action in dismantling structural racism at every level of the PC(USA):**

1. 02-020, "Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force Report"

2. 02-034-INFO, "Special Committee on Racism, Truth, and Reconciliation Progress Report with Recommendation"

3. 02-041, "Lazarus is Walking in Baltimore - from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy"

4. 02-084, "A Resolution Addressing the Lack of Installed Pastoral Leadership in People of Color Congregations in the PC(USA) - From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee"

5. 02-100, "Approval of Part 1 of the 2021–2022 Mission Work Plan for the Presbyterian Mission Agency—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board," especially the sections on dismantling structural racism

5. Recommend that PC(USA) congregations, mid-councils, and all General Assembly Entities develop and adopt an antiracism policy in their bylaws by engaging Item 02-137, "On Amending G-3.0106 to Add an Antiracism Policy with Suggested Training for All Members of Each Council." This work can be done now at all levels, even in advance of the 225th General Assembly, at which time that General Assembly can act on setting a constitutional requirement to do so if it chooses.

6. Honoring the spirit of Item 02-034-INFO - the Progress Report from the Special Committee on Racism, Truth, and Reconciliation and its conclusions regarding the need to address "institutional racism and

oppression within the church" and "to call the church to do the hard work of repair necessary for reconciliation," we direct the Special Committee on Racism, Truth, and Reconciliation to prepare for the 225th General Assembly (2022) a report deconstructing white privilege within our own denomination's (and predecessor denominations') history of involvement in the colonization, enslavement, oppression, and genocide of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), including theological support and benefits to our institutions. The report should also include a study of our denomination's history of prophetic witness, resistance and abolition, and make recommendations towards proposed amends, reparations, and reconciliation.

7. Thank the Stated Clerk for adding his signature to the Open Letter of the Poor People's campaign and direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to commend the use of the learning resources and the Open Letter of the Poor People's campaign as educational tools for congregations.

8. Commend to the entirety of the PC(USA), its members, congregations, presbyteries, synods, and the GA entities the poem included in the rationale and retyped here for reading, reflection, meditation.

A knee on a neck
laying bare for all to see
the evil of
callous
soulless
entitled
power
choking the life from
God's beloved
just because.

We know what must change.
Will we, church?

We have written many
true, significant,
sometimes even sincere
words.

We have confessed:
Belhar, C'67, Barmen…

Enough words?
Never enough witness.

We know we must change.
Will we, church?

Kairos.

~~We believe there is no more core and critical business in this time than attending to the pain, suffering, and long-standing oppression of our BIPOC siblings in Christ~~. We believe that the work of **[attending to the pain, suffering, and long-standing oppression of our BIPOC siblings in Christ is central to our work of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ]**. **When Black Americans are killed at twice the rate of white Americans (https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database/) we have much to lament. We, in particular white people, and as a predominantly white denomination, must confess our complicity in perpetuating systems of oppression against our BIPOC siblings. The church must be the first place seeking racial justice and reconciliation, the dismantling of structural racism, and the healing of our marginalized communities. It has, unfortunately, not often been so. We must have our own**

denominational and congregational houses in order. We must dare to be an image of hope for those around us.

While we recognize and honor the work towards justice that has been happening and continues at every level of the PC(USA), we also name that in this time it is not enough. We must become actively antiracist in our theology, policy, and praxis. When our colleagues, siblings, and neighbors protest in the streets to say that being Black should never be an excuse to be targeted and killed, when so many stand in solidarity to say #BlackLivesMatter, and when our own communities are weighed down in grief and anger, it is the time to stand alongside our BIPOC siblings in voice and in action.

bell hooks, an American author and social activist says this, "Love is an action, never simply a feeling." If we claim to love our neighbor, especially our BIPOC neighbors, we are called to action. We have said a lot and not done enough. Acknowledging the grief of our siblings in Christ and naming that the Church has a primary calling to be repairers of the breach means nothing without moving towards action. We cannot wait until the 225th General Assembly to begin again to take action.]

Sobre la Iglesia en este momento de la historia.—Del Comité de la Oficina de la Asamblea General.

El Comité de la Oficina de la Asamblea General recomienda que la 224ª Asamblea General (2020) apruebe lo siguiente:

1. Instar a todos los/as presbiterianos/as a escuchar y prestar atención al imperativo del Evangelio de amar a Dios, al prójimo y a uno mismo al vivir un compromiso más profundo de participación activa con Jesucristo en el trabajo de construir el reino de Dios a través de

a. Arrepentimiento personal y corporativo, renovación espiritual y devoción a los Grandes Fines de la Iglesia;

b. Escuchar y responder a las voces de los pueblos silenciados por mucho tiempo al participar en programas como Manos y Pies: Presbiterianos Comprometidos con las Comunidades y la Campaña de los Pobres;

c. Participación enérgica, inteligente, imaginativa y amorosa en los entrelazados focos de Mateo 25: construcción de vitalidad congregacional, desmantelamiento del racismo estructural y erradicación de la pobreza sistémica.

2. Encomendar a la Oficina de la Asamblea General y a la Agencia Presbiteriana de Misión que revisen todos los asuntos remitidos a la 225ª Asamblea General (2022), para que consideren en oración si las recomendaciones podrían ponerse en práctica en virtud de la política actual de testimonio social o la autoridad de las agencias y sus juntas para tomar decisiones programáticas entre asambleas.

3. Alentar a las congregaciones, consistorios, presbiterios y sínodos a que revisen los asuntos referidos a la 225ª Asamblea General (2022) y consideren en oración el llamado de Dios para trabajar y dar testimonio de las metas y valores expresados en él.

이 역사의 순간에 있는 교단에 관하여—총회사무국 위원회 상정.

총회 사무국 위원회는 제 224차 총회(2020년)가 다음 사항을 승인할 것을 건의한다:

1. 모든 장로교인들이 아래와 같이 하나님의 나라를 세워감에 있어서 예수 그리스도와 함께 적극 참여하겠다는 보다 깊은 헌신을 실천함으로 하나님, 이웃, 자신을 사랑하라는 복음의 명령을 귀담아 듣도록 촉구한다.

a. 개인 및 공동체 회개, 영적 갱신 및 교회의 위대한 마침에 대한 헌신;

b. "손과 발: 장로교의 사회 참여 (Hands and Feet: Presbyterians Engaging in Communities)," "가난한 자의 캠페인"과 같은 프로그램을 통해 참여함으로써, 오랫동안 소외되었던 사람들의 목소리에 귀를 기울이고 응답한다;

c. 서로 얽혀 있는 마태복음 25장의 주요점들에 대한 열정적, 지적, 창조적, 그리고 애정 어린 관여: 교회의 활성화, 구조적 인종차별의 해체, 체제적 빈곤의 근절.

2. 총회 사무국과 총회 선교국이 제 225차 총회(2022년)에 회부된 모든 사업 항목을 검토하고 또한 권고안이 현행 사회 증인 정책에 따라 제정될 수 있는지 아니면 대행기관들과 그 이사회가 권한에 따라 다음 총회가 열리기 전 기간에 절차에 입각한 결정을 내릴 수 있는지를 기도 가운데 고려하도록 지시한다.

3. 제 225차 총회(2022년)에 회부된 사업 항목을 교회, 당회, 노회, 대회가 고려하도록, 그리고 그에 표현된 목표와 가치를 위하여 일하고 증거하도록 하는 하나님의 부르심을 기도 가운데 고려하도록 권면한다.

Rationale

A knee on a neck
laying bare for all to see
the evil of
callous
soulless
entitled
power
choking the life from
God's beloved
just because.

We know what must change.
Will we, church?

We have written many
true, significant,
sometimes even sincere
words.
We have confessed:
Belhar, C'67, Barmen …

Enough words?
Never enough witness.

We know we must change.
Will we, church?

Kairos.

The Great Ends of the Church

The great ends of the Church are:

the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;

the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;

the maintenance of divine worship;

the preservation of the truth;

the promotion of social righteousness; and

the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world—*Book of Order*, F-1.0304

Hands and Feet Initiative: https://handsandfeet-pcusa.org/

Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/

Matthew 25 Initiative: https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/

PC(USA) racial justice resources: https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/

Una rodilla en el cuello
que se desnuden para que todos lo vean
el mal de
insensibles
sin alma
autorizado
poder
ahogando la vida de
el amado de Dios
sin razón.

Sabemos lo que debe cambiar.
¿Lo haremos, iglesia?

Hemos escrito muchas
verdades significativas,
a veces incluso palabras
sinceras.
¿Hemos confesado:
Belhar, C'67, Barmen ...

Suficientes palabras?
Nunca suficientes testigos.

Sabemos que debemos cambiar.
¿Lo haremos, iglesia?

Kairos.

Los Grandes Fines de la Iglesia son:

Los grandes fines de la Iglesia son:

la proclamación del evangelio para la salvación de la humanidad;

el amparo, la educación, y la confraternidad espiritual de las criaturas de Dios;

el mantenimiento de la adoración divina;

la preservación de la verdad;

la promoción de la justicia social; y

la exposición del Reino de los Cielos al mundo—*Libro de Orden*, F-1.0304

Iniciativa de Manos y Pies: https://handsandfeet-pcusa.org/

Campaña de los pobres: un llamado nacional para el avivamiento moral: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/

Iniciativa Mateo 25: https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/

Recursos de justicia racial para IP (EE. UU.): Https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/

목 위의 무릎이
밝히 드러내어 모든 사람이 본다
악독한
무정한
비열한
주어진
권력이
목졸라 생명을 빼앗은 것을
하나님의 사랑하는 이로부터
단지 그것 때문에.

무엇이 바뀌어야 하는지 우리는 안다.
그렇게 할 것인가, 교회여?

우리는 많은 것을 썼다
진실되고, 의미있는,
때로는 진심 담은
말들을.
우리는 고백했다:
벨하, 1967년 신앙고백, 바르멘...

충분한가?
충분치 않다.

우리가 바뀌어야 한다는 것을 우리는 안다.
그렇게 할 것인가, 교회여?

카이로스.

교회의 큰 목적

교회의 큰 목적은 다음과 같다:

인류 구원을 위한 복음의 선포;

하나님 자녀들의 안식처, 양육과 영적 교제;

거룩한 예배의 유지;

진리의 보존;

사회정의의 촉진; 그리고

하나님의 나라를 세상에 나타내는 것—*규례서*, F-1.0304

손과 발 사역 (Hands & Feet Initiative): https://handsandfeet-pcusa.org/

빈민 캠페인: 도덕적 부흥을 위한 전국적 부름: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/

마태복음 25장 사역: https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/

미국장로교 인종 정의 자료: https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/

Other Comments

Advice and Counsel on Item 00-29--from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 224th General Assembly (2020) **approve** Item 00-29 On the Church in This Moment in History as amended:

1. Urge all Presbyterians to hear and heed the Gospel imperative to love God, neighbor, and self by living out a deeper commitment to active participation with Jesus Christ in the work of building God's kindom through

a. Personal and corporate repentance, spiritual renewal, and devotion to the Great Ends of the Church;

b. Listening and responding to the voices of peoples long silenced, through participation in programs such as Hands and Feet: Presbyterians Engaging in Communities, and the Poor People's Campaign;

c. Energetic, intelligent, imaginative, and loving involvement in the intertwined Matthew 25 foci: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.

[d. Affirmation and support for the principles of restitution and restoration that undergird the concerns of Black Lives Matter, including the comprehensive reduction of militarization and gun violence in the United States.]

Rationale

The racist past and present in the United States has marginalized people of color; we accept the call of the Black Lives Matter movement for us—especially white people—to redress that. The amendment proposed does not endorse a particular campaign or group, nor does it oppose the need for trustworthy public security for all citizens.

While all lives matter, including those of police officers and others equipped with instruments of lethal force, Matthew 25 and other teachings of Jesus call for us to give special attention to the lives and welfare of those whom society has deprived and undervalued.

Governments at all levels need to strengthen community oversight of police, shift training and equipment away from militarization, and focus police training and operational regulations on resolving conflict without force. This was clearly stated in the Gospel from St. Louis, which included language summarizing the findings of the Justice Department's review of the Ferguson, Missouri, criminal justice system in 2014-15.

The 1999 policy, "Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community," calls the Presbyterian Church (USA) at all levels from the local congregation to the national denomination to dismantle racism within our structures and to actively advocate for policies and practices that dismantle racism in our own communities and in the United States. In doing this work, our denomination celebrates the diversity within our denomination and in our communities. Part of this celebration of diversity is creating a place for all people to be the people God calls us

to be. We lament that this call has not been realized and we covenant to build a community free of the sins of racism.

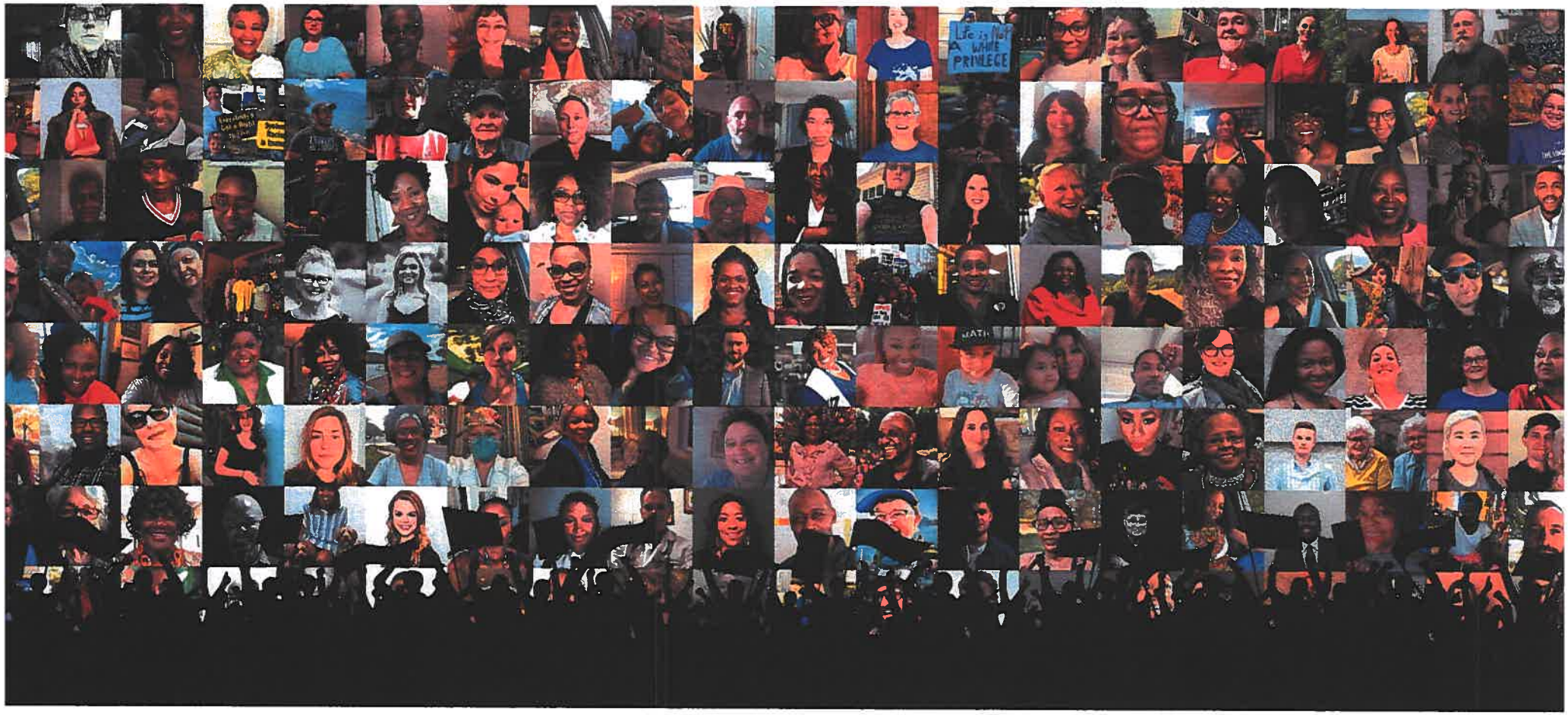
The 1999 policy, "Building Community Among Strangers" calls on the local congregations, mid councils, and the denomination as a whole to work towards the kindom that God calls us to be. We lament that the sin of racism continues to divide the church and seeks to deny the rich diversity found in God's kindom.

The Belhar Confession could also be cited to indicate how God takes the side of the suffering and calls the church to be an agent of change.

Appendix C-5

A MORAL POLICY AGENDA TO HEAL AMERICA: The Poor People's Jubilee Platform

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

Poor People's Campaign A NATIONAL CALL FOR MORAL REVIVAL

KAIROS THE CENTER FOR RELIGIONS, RIGHTS, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

JULY 2020

A MORAL POLICY AGENDA TO HEAL AMERICA

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States. – Preamble to the U.S. Constitution

No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. – 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless. What will you do on the day of reckoning, when disaster comes from afar? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your riches? – Isaiah 10:1

From Alaska to Arkansas, the Carolinas to California, Mississippi to Maine, Kansas to Kentucky, the Bronx to the Border, Appalachian hollers to Apache sacred lands, people are coming together to organize their moral outrage against systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy and the false narrative of religious nationalism into a powerful moral fusion movement. There are 140 million people who are poor and struggling against these injustices in the richest country in the world. A society sick with these interlocking injustices needs a voice rooted in our deepest Constitutional and moral values to remind us of who we are and who we must be.

We know that poverty and inequality kill 250,000 people every year in American and it is still not frontpage news. Alongside these unseen deaths, we have seen more than 130,000 deaths from the novel coronavirus. We have also witnessed the brutal murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and untold others at the hands of state violence. For every day that we choose not to address the five interlocking injustices, there is a death measurement.

In 2018, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival set forth a comprehensive Moral Agenda based on the needs and demands of the 140 million. For years we have been shifting the narrative and building power among the poor to create a compelling moral force for broad and bold systemic change. On June 20, 2020, millions of people tuned into the Mass Poor People's Digital Assembly and March on Washington to hear the reality facing the 140 million. Hundreds of thousands of people took action and forwarded these moral policy priorities to Congress and their state governors.

We now launch a Moral Policy Agenda to Heal America: The Poor People's Jubilee Platform. This platform proclaims that moral policy is also economically sound policy, because the 140 million are not only the hope of the poor. The least of these, who are, in actuality, most of us, can lead this country out of the pain we have been suffering. The rejected are leading a moral and economic revival to save the heart and soul of this nation.

The Poor People's Jubilee Platform is organized into five sections:

Part I. Establish Justice and End Systemic Racism: The Right to Democracy and Equal Protection Under the Law

Part II. Promote the General Welfare: The Right to Welfare and an Adequate Standard of Living

Part III. Ensure Domestic Tranquility: The Right to Work with Dignity

Part IV. Secure the Blessings of Liberty: The Right to Health and A Healthy Environment

Part V. Provide for the Common Defense: Reprioritizing our Resources

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The Platform is grounded in these five principles:

1. **We need a moral revolution of values to repair the breach in our society.** This platform abides by our deepest Constitutional and moral commitments to justice. Where harm has been done, it must be acknowledged and undone.
2. **Everybody in, nobody out.** Too many people are hurting and we can't be silent anymore. Everybody is deserving of our nation's abundance.
3. **When you lift from the bottom, everybody rises.** Instead of "trickle-down," we start with the bottom up.
4. **Prioritize the leadership of the poor, low-income and most impacted.** Those who are on the frontlines of these crises must also be in the lead in identifying their solutions.
5. **Debts that cannot be paid must be relieved.** We demand freedom from servicing the debts we cannot pay.

Throughout our history, it has always been the role of moral movements to turn pain and righteous anger into a transforming force. From Abolition to Reconstruction and the organized outrage of the labor movement, women's movement, Civil Rights Movement and more, fusion movements have compelled governments to take transformative action. This happened when those movements brought diverse people together, resisted efforts to divide their members against one another and refused to narrow demands to what was seen as politically possible. Instead, they pushed for what was necessary and made that possible.

In the early 20th Century, roaring inequality and the Great Depression brought about mass unemployment, hunger and homelessness. Millions of people demanded government action to secure jobs, labor protections and the general welfare. The unemployed councils of the 1920s and 1930s and widespread popular resistance sowed the seeds of the Social Security Act, Federal Housing Administration, Works Progress Administration and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Some decades later, the Great Society of the 1960s reshaped the federal budget: it reduced military spending and increased funding for social welfare and entitlement programs, created Head Start, established Medicare and Medicaid and passed the National Environmental Policy Act. All of these programs redefined the role of government and harnessed the wealth of this country towards the needs of the poor. This did not happen haphazardly, but was brought about by the power of poor people taking action together.

We know that poor and dispossessed people will not wait to be saved. Instead, people are taking lifesaving action borne out of necessity to demand justice now. This is the force that is coming together in the Poor People's Campaign. In 46 states across the country, and together with 19 national faith denominations and more than 200 national partner organizations, we are demanding voting rights, guaranteed incomes, work with dignity, living wages, health care, clean air and water and peace in this violent world.

In 2018, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival released the Souls of Poor Folk Moral Audit, which looked at how the injustices of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy have evolved over the past 50 years. In 2019, we released the Poor People's Moral Budget and showed that if we implemented the demands of this Campaign, we could fundamentally revive our economy and transform our society.

The Poor People's Jubilee Platform now identifies legislative and policy priorities to heal this country. We have been investing in punishing the poor; we must now invest in the welfare of all. We have been investing in systemic racism and voter suppression; we must now invest in expanding democracy. We have been investing in killing people; we now must invest in life. We have been investing in the wealthy and corporations; we must now invest in the people who have built up this country and make it run every day, the 140 million and more who have been abandoned in an era of abundance.

Somebody's been hurting our people, and it's gone on for far too long, and we won't be silent anymore!

Rev. Dr. William Barber II
President, Repairers of the Breach; Co-Chair, Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival

Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis
Director, Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice;
Co-Chair, Poor People's Campaign: National Call for Moral Revival

Shailly Gupta Barnes
Policy Director, Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival;
Policy Director, Kairos Center for Religions, Rights and Social Justice

Roz Pelles
Strategic Advisor, Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival;
Vice President, Repairers of the Breach

PART I. END SYSTEMIC RACISM AND ESTABLISH JUSTICE: THE RIGHT TO DEMOCRACY AND EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW

1. **Protect and expand the right to vote.**
   - Reinstate key protections of the Voting Rights Act, specifically Section V, and develop a preclearance formula to include jurisdictions that were covered by the Voting Rights Act as well as all jurisdictions that have passed voter suppression laws since 2013.
   - Enact all of our voting rights demands, including: securing online registration, automatic voter registration, same day registration, and early registration for 17-year-olds; establish verifiable paper records; make sure judges who are nominated to the federal bench have a clear history of decisions that support voting rights; grant the right to vote for people who are currently and formerly incarcerated; make Election Day a National holiday; grant statehood to Washington D.C.
   - Establish the right to participation as an indicator of democracy and a federal authority to monitor the registration and participation of minority, poor and low-income voters.

2. **Protect and honor the rights of first nations, indigenous and native people.**
   - Protect the rights of indigenous people to their lands and resources, the free exercise of their culture and religion, sovereignty for first nations and secure their human rights, Constitutional guarantees and treaty protections.
   - Direct adequate federal resources towards Indian Health Services and tribal schools, as well as towards indigenous and tribal housing, water, sanitation, utilities, cultural and other needs.
   - With the meaningful engagement of impacted communities, cease all mining and extraction on indigenous and native lands.
   - Establish a pre-requisite that assesses harms to the free expression of the right to religion for any federally authorized projects on native land.

3. **End police brutality and mass incarceration. Redirect resources towards impacted communities. Establish a National Truth Commission.**
   - Demilitarize the police: end the 1033 program that sends military equipment to local law enforcement, end all military training for law enforcement; ban the use of force as a punitive measure or means of retaliation.
   - Hold police, law enforcement and local governments accountable under federal law as well as state law for abuses of their powers to kill; enforce the duty to intervene.
   - End cash bail, predatory fines, fees: stop criminalizing the poor to raise state and local revenues.
   - Stop locking people up for non-violent crimes and misdemeanors; issue renewed sentencing guidelines that reduce jail time and the incarcerated population.
   - Redirect resources from policing and mass incarceration towards building up impacted communities.
   - Work with frontline communities, impacted people and families to establish a National Truth Commission on Mass Incarceration and Police Violence; lift up their pain and identify their solutions to these crises to shape and inform federal policy.

4. **Protect immigrant communities and recognize their place and role in our society.**
   - Move immigration out of the Department of Homeland Security.
   - End the 287G program and the collaboration between ICE and local law enforcement.
   - Redirect CBP, ICE and resources for the border wall towards reuniting families and securing appropriate documentation for and meaningful assistance to border communities.
   - Repeal mandatory detention laws, close child detention centers, private detention centers and shadow detention centers; draw down the population of people who are currently detained.
   - Institute a moratorium on deportations and roll back the expanded deportation provisions of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act.
   - Extend eligibility of federal assistance, social welfare programs and CARES Act provisions to include immigrants.
   - Repeal the Public Charge rule that threatens the immigration status of immigrants who receive public benefits.

5. **Protect democratically elected leadership from being undermined by unelected emergency financial managers who are brought in to resolve budget shortfalls.**
   - Implement a federal moratorium on emergency manger / emergency financial manger laws that are often applied to minority majority cities to take over local budgets and resources. Remove emergency managers who have been appointed, dissolve takeover boards and return governing responsibilities to elected officials
   - Secure the fiscal health of cities and states facing budget crises by establishing automatic stabilizers that will: infuse federal resources into local and state governments; institute moratoriums on municipal and state debt servicing, evictions, rent hikes, utility shut offs and family separation; and increase taxes on corporations and financial institutions.
   - Establish local oversight systems to ensure that resources are being used to resolve the fiscal crisis, rather than serving financial interests

6. **Secure quality, equitable and diverse public education for all and protect public education.**
   - Increase federal funding for Head Start and Early Head Start so these programs can enroll all eligible children.
   - Increase federal funding for pre-K-12 education that enhances public education.
   - Establish federal resources to support substantive efforts to desegregate schools and school districts by race, income and ability.
   - Increase resources for school infrastructure and the development of teachers / administrators.
   - Establish a technology infrastructure that can provide reliable and secure online and remote learning options to support public education, rather than replace it.
   - Identify specific resources for tribal schools and institutions and HBCUs.
   - Make public school salaries in poor and low-income communities competitive; expand loan forgiveness programs for public school teachers.
   - Protect and expand the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

7. **Relieve student debt and provide free higher education for all.**
   - Provide federal resources to ensure that public colleges and technical programs can be free for everyone who wants to attend.
   - Establish 100% debt forgiveness for households with incomes under $50k; up to $50k debt forgiveness for households with incomes under $100k; and proportionally less debt relief for those earning up to $250,000.
   - Allocate federal resources to higher education programs and institutions to train poor and low-income students for the Jubilee Jobs Program.

PART II. PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE: THE RIGHT TO WELFARE AND AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

1. **Change the poverty measure to reflect current conditions**
   - Redefine poverty in terms of economic security and the ability to meet basic needs. At a minimum the official poverty line must be pegged to the median cost of living and include expenses for: housing, utilities, food, transportation, childcare, personal and household items, health care, education, debt and tax burdens, savings and access to financial services.
   - This new measure will determine eligibility and the level of assistance for federal welfare, assistance and entitlement programs. All of these programs—including unemployment insurance, guaranteed adequate income, direct cash assistance, SNAP, WIC, social security, SSI, SSDI or others—must ensure an adequate standard of living that is measured by this new threshold.
   - During the interim period until a new definition is implemented, the appropriate measure will be at least 2x the Supplemental Poverty Measure poverty threshold.

2. **Establish a universal and guaranteed adequate income.**
   - $2k per month for adults, $1k for children / dependents.
   - Provide an opt-out option at 400% of the poverty line.
   - Include a care income to recognize the economic contribution of routine housework, childcare, tending to the elderly and other household or non-household members and other unpaid activities related to household maintenance.

3. **Redefine welfare as a right that strengthens our society.**
   - Establish a guaranteed entitlement of the poor to a direct cash-assistance program. Payments must go to primary care givers and be commensurate with an adequate standard of living today.
   - Repeal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
   - Prohibit the use of any funds allocated towards welfare spending to go towards family separation or child removal.
   - Expand SNAP and other programs that work for the poor, like the EITC and the CTC.
   - Eligibility for welfare programs must be based on an income threshold using the new poverty measure. Eligibility cannot be limited by imposing work requirements or lifetime limits.
   - Expand childcare and development block grants to meet childcare and early child development needs for poor and low-income families.
   - Expand eligibility to include immigrants and the formerly incarcerated. Anyone in need must be able to access these entitlements.
   - Index funding of these programs to inflation on an annual basis.
   - Establish participatory oversight at all levels of governance.

4. **Protect and expand Social Security, Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance.**
   - Ensure that SS, SSI and SSDI payments secure an adequate standard of living as measured by the new poverty measure.
   - Protect these critical sources of income from economic crisis, fiscal crisis or any other public health crisis.
   - In the case of an economic downturn, the Treasury must transfer the necessary funds to offset in full any losses to ensure that these payments continue to be made and provide for an adequate standard of living.

5. **Secure housing for all.**
   - Acknowledge the true extent of homelessness to establish housing policies that can account for all the homeless.
   - Establish the Housing First program within the Jubilee Jobs Program to end homelessness by providing housing for all: Mobilize public resources and capacity to turn vacant units into affordable public housing. Build new public housing. Protect and expand housing and rental assistance for poor and low-income households. Minimize the use of shelters.
   - Prevent further homelessness: Ensure that the costs of housing are within the income abilities of every household. Stop all evictions. Prohibit rent increases and the imposition on any late fees on mortgages and housing payments. Curb speculation in housing markets.
   - Impose penalties on Wall Street, real estate corporations and other institutions that have profited from the housing and financial crisis of 2008-9. These penalties will be directed towards the Housing First program and rental assistance.

PART III. ENSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY: THE RIGHT TO WORK WITH DIGNITY

1. **Update the unemployment measure and expand unemployment coverage.**
   - Establish the U6 measure of unemployment as the standard measure of unemployment.
   - Make COVID-19 unemployment provisions permanent: Expand unemployment insurance coverage to include all who were eligible for the expanded coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic, incentivize work sharing and extend the number of weeks that unemployment insurance is available.

2. **Institute living wages and economic security for all workers.**
   - Raise the federal minimum wage to $15 / hour.
   - Make concrete plans to raise the minimum wage from $15/hour to a real housing wage ($23/hour in 2019) in no less than two years; index the real housing wage to inflation and adjust annually.
   - Legislate equal pay for equal work and make it mandatory under federal law.
   - All workers must have paid family leave, paid sick leave, hazard pay, personal protective equipment and living wages.

3. **Establish the Jubilee Jobs Program, a federal jobs program to secure full employment as a right.**
   - Prioritize socially beneficial industries, with massive investments in caregiving, education, health care, mass transit, water / utilities / infrastructure jobs and cultural production in poor and low-income communities, deindustrializing communities, small towns, rural areas and indigenous areas.
   - Within the Jubilee Jobs Program, establish: (1) Community Care Corps that will focus on expanding health care training, capacity and resources; (2) Green Jobs Corps that will focus on environmentally sustainable infrastructure jobs; (3) Housing First that will focus on converting vacant property into affordable public housing and building new affordable public housing; (4) Together We Thrive that will focus on education and schools; (5) Jubilee Arts and Justice Corps that will focus on cultural production; (6) Universal Tech Corps that will focus on training and placement in ICT, R/D and automation sectors; and others.
   - Include job training and placement programs to support employment of poor and low-income students and workers who have been displaced in these socially beneficial industries.
   - All jobs within this program will provide living wages, worker protections and give workers the right to form and join unions. They will also give workers in these programs a leading voice in their design and implementation.

4. **Secure the right to free association and the right to form and join unions.**
   - Ensure the vast majority of workers are able to form and join unions.
   - Establish sectoral and geographical forms of bargaining.
   - Establish the NRLA as a floor, not a ceiling, and allow states to go above and beyond its protections.
   - Extend NRLA, FLSA, OSHA protections to include all workers: informal workers; so-called independent contractors; self-employed workers; undocumented workers; workers with disabilities; incarcerated workers; and workers designated as "essential" workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
   - Expand protections for workers who organize.

PART IV. SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY: THE RIGHT TO HEALTH AND A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

1. **Protect and secure health care for all.**
   - Expand Medicaid and Protect Medicare.
   - Establish a universal, single player health care system that provides health care to all, regardless of income, disability, prior health conditions, employment status, immigration status or any other characteristic that is used to deny eligibility for health care coverage.
   - Increase resources for Indian Health Services to make sure it is adequately funded.
   - Expand Veterans health care to make sure it meets the needs of our veterans.
   - Allocate specific resources for COVID-19 vulnerable populations, including people who are homeless, incarcerated, detained and those in congregate care at nursing homes and other care facilities.

2. **Expand our public health care infrastructure and capacity.**
   - Move federal resources and capacity towards re-opening hospitals that have been closed over the past 10 years, prioritizing hospitals in poor, low-income, rural and native communities.
   - Update hospitals in these communities so they are equipped to provide the best possible modern medical care.
   - Nationalize production and distribution of critical health care equipment.
   - Establish a public health communications infrastructure to share resources, learn and communicate with hospitals and health professionals across the country and world.
   - Establish a Community Care Corps within Jubilee Jobs Program to train community health service providers and expand health care resources in poor and low-income communities, rural areas and small towns.
   - Expand resources for CDC and NIH to study health impacts of poverty, inequality and ecological devastation.

3. **End medical debt.**
   - Establish a federal relief fund to end all medical debt, especially for poor and low-income people.
   - Resource the relief fund by imposing penalties on the past and future profits of insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, device manufacturers and other health care companies.

4. **Secure access to water and utilities for all.**
   - Institute a moratorium on all shut-offs; turn the water and lights back on; and relieve water and utilities debt.
   - Implement a national water affordability program that is funded in part by past and future profits from water bottling companies.
   - Restore federal funding to local water systems. Funding must be conditioned on ending water shut offs and turning water / utilities back on.
   - Direct national resources and capacity to rebuild water, sanitation and utilities infrastructure.
   - Return private water and utilities to the public sector.

5. **Declare climate change a national emergency.**
   - Redefine critical infrastructure as infrastructure necessary for a 100% renewable and climate resilient economy. This includes a modern smart grid that can manage and support 100% renewable energy use.
   - Prohibit the construction or expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure, including all new pipelines, refineries and coal, oil and gas export terminals. Ban fracking, mountaintop removal coal mining, coal ash ponds and offshore drilling. End federal fossil fuel subsidies.
   - Expand and strengthen the EPA, reinstate environmental rules and regulations that have been rolled back and prohibit rule-making that weakens federal policies on climate protections.
   - Allocate federal resources to climate research and climate crisis mitigation strategies that are working and that can be scaled up.
   - Rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement and become a global leader on climate reduction goals

6. **Establish a Green Jobs Corps within the Jubilee Jobs Program.**
   - Target poor and low-income communities that have been reliant on fossil fuels, extraction and polluting industries and/or experienced ecological devastation and climate crisis. These jobs will provide pension support and early retirement support for those who choose / can no longer work, especially for workers who are being transitioned from fossil fuel jobs.
   - Projects will include: expanding water, utilities and sanitation services; infrastructure development (roads, bridges, broadband and communications); updating and retrofitting public housing to ensure that it is climate resilient and energy efficient; recycling/composting; sustainable agriculture, land restoration and protection; expanding and strengthening public mass transit; installing solar panels; building wind turbines, advanced batteries and the hardware and software of smart grids, and more.

7. **Make a full, financial assessment of the environmental damage knowingly caused by fossil fuels and extractive industries.**
   - Target fossil fuel companies, agribusiness and other large GHG emitters, including military-industrial contractors; asset management firms with significant fossil fuel holdings; financial institutions with significant loans to fossil fuel companies; insurance companies with significant coverage of fossil fuel companies' risks; consulting companies, software companies and retailers who have contracted services with fossil fuel companies; and households that constitute the top 0.01% of wealth holders in the United States.
   - Redirect this wealth towards the clean-up costs and responsibilities of establishing a 100% renewable and climate resilient economy, including the Green Jobs Corps, and other social programs indicated in this platform.

PART V. PROVIDE FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE: REPRIORITIZING OUR RESOURCES

1. **End the culture of war.**
   - Cut military budget by $350 billion: close foreign bases, cut unnecessary weapons, dismantle nuclear weapons, close unnecessary domestic bases, cut overhead costs, cut foreign military aid, cut resources for overseas contingent operations and more.
   - Do not reauthorize the Budget Control Act when it expires in 2022, instead, delink military spending from social welfare spending and redirect military resources that have been cut towards securing basic needs here at home, as indicated in this platform.
   - Shift emphasis in foreign policy towards diplomacy, foreign debt relief and humanitarian assistance.
   - End economic sanctions that are hurting poor people, including in Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, North Korea, Sudan and Syria.

2. **Demilitarize our communities.**
   - Implement policy priorities under Part I, End Systemic Racism and Establish Justice, to end police violence, mass incarceration and to demilitarize the US-Mexico border.
   - End the easy access to firearms that are militarizing our communities.

3. **Implement fair taxes and penalties on the wealthy, corporations and Wall Street.**
   - Fair taxation will raise nearly $8.9 trillion over the next ten years that will be used to support the programs in this platform. Taxation includes: wealth tax on ultra- millionaires and billionaires, raising the top individual tax rate, taxing income from investments the same as income from work, strengthening the estate tax, taxing capital gains appropriately, restoring the corporate tax rate to 35%, repealing tax breaks for fossil fuels, reinstating a financial transaction tax and more.
   - Implement additional penalties on wealth that has been wrongfully gained through the climate crises, 2008-9 foreclosure crisis, water scarcity and profiteering from multiple health crises.

4. **Relieve the debts of those who cannot pay them.**
   - End payments on crushing individual and household medical debt, housing debt, water / utilities debt and relieve student debt, especially for poor and low-income families. Waive all interest payments.
   - End payments on municipal and other bonds for cities and states that are in fiscal crisis. These bonds funnel public resources towards servicing debt—rather than meeting critical public needs—and must be relieved. Waive all interest payments.

5. **End the practice of profiteering from crisis.**
   - Federal resources to address economic, social or public health crises must first be directed towards the needs of the poor and most marginalized and cannot go to lobbyists, insurance companies, financial institutions, pharmaceutical companies, wealthy corporations or otherwise be used to increase the wealth of Wall Street, corporations and the wealthy.
   - Stop banks from freezing accounts and garnishing payments from poor and low-income individuals.
   - Increase federal protections from predatory lending.

6. **Work to close the racial wealth divide.**
   - Establish a "Baby Bonds" program that provides bonds for each American child, regardless of race, valued at between $500 and $50,000, depending on the parents' wealth level.

THE BOARD OF PENSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

I hope all are healthy and well. I wish we could be together in person, but as the coronavirus pandemic prevents that from happening, I write to share these key updates from the Board of Pensions. If you have questions, my colleagues in Philadelphia and I are happy to assist.

Blessings,

Keenan Rodgers
Church Consultant
M: 215-341-8143
krodgers@pensions.org

Member/Employer Services
800-773-7752
Mon-Fri 8:30-7:00pm EST

Statement on Racial Justice

The Board of Pensions stands in support of racial equality, and against deeply ingrained prejudices against Black Americans and other people of color simply because of the color of their skin. With full support of all at the Board, we share this statement with you. Follow the link to read the full text of the statement. Translations in Korean and Spanish are available as well.

2021 Employer Agreements Available Now

Each year, Employer Agreements are updated and submitted online through Benefits Connect, the Board of Pensions' benefits portal. The season for selecting benefits to offer in 2021 begins July 20 and ends October 9. Highlights about the 2021 Benefits Plan are on the following page. The Employer Agreement provides key information about the cost of benefits and the opportunity to model different selections to help church leaders make informed decisions about what benefits to offer. The Board of Pensions website provides info to help the church's designated Employer Representative follow the steps to complete the Employer Agreement.

If help is needed, contact Employer Services at 800-773-7752, option 2.

Other Notable Headlines

- A 2% Experience Apportionment for the Pension Plan took effect July 1—These are increases in accrued pension benefits for both active and retired pension plan participants. Pensions have increased 26.4% over the past eight years due to experience apportionments.
- Don Walker succeeds Judy Freyer as Chief Investment Officer for the Board of Pensions—Don served as the Director of Investments for the Board for 14 years and worked closely with Judy. Our deepest thanks to Judy for over 30 years of service to the Board!
- Call to Health Continues! Pastors and church staff covered under the Medical Plan have until November 13 to get the 1,000 points needed to lower their deductibles in 2021. Required annual check-ups may be completed virtually. Encourage them to 'Answer the Call' today!
- State-based pricing for the dental PPO plan begins in 2021—Previously, there was a single price for the national plan. Pricing details will be available in your employer agreement.

Changes to benefit offerings for 2021

The Board of Pensions has announced changes to the Benefits Plan that extend support to more ministers and add benefits that promote financial protection for all church workers effective January 1, 2021. Employers can choose benefits for 2021 beginning July 20.

Minister's Choice benefits package added

To address the Board of Pensions' concern that too many ministers are not enrolled in the Benefits Plan, the 2021 plan offers two benefits packages for PC(USA) ministers: the existing Pastor's Participation and the new Minister's Choice.

Enrollment in Pastor's Participation, a comprehensive benefits package with medical coverage and pension participation, is required for installed pastors and may be offered to any minister with a minimum 20-hour workweek. Dues, paid in full by the employer, will remain at 37 percent of effective salary for 2021, with no reduction to existing benefits and the addition of the new Temporary Disability Plan.

Benefits Packages		
	Pastor's Participation	Minister's Choice
Medical Plan	● PPO (includes EAP)	EAP only
Death and Disability Plan	●	●
Temporary Disability Plan	●	●
Defined Benefit Pension Plan	●	●

● Included in package

Minister's Choice, available for non-installed ministers working at least 20 hours a week, includes pension, death and disability, temporary disability, and the Employee Assistance Plan. The cost is 10 percent of effective salary, also fully employer paid.

Minister's Choice also opens the door for eligibility to assistance and education programs that have been available only through Pastor's Participation, such as CREDO and Minister Educational Debt Assistance.

New Financial Protection Programs

For 2021, the Board of Pensions has added financial protection options, including the Temporary Disability Plan, Long-Term Disability Plan, and an expanded term life benefit.

The Temporary Disability Plan provides a partial weekly income for up to 90 days of disability, with a 14-day waiting period before benefits payments begin. Employers pay the full cost for ministers enrolled in Pastor's Participation and Minister's Choice. Employers may offer it outside of those benefits packages, with the employer or the member paying the full cost.

The Long-Term Disability Plan offers financial protection for employees with a disability that surpasses 90 days, providing a partial monthly income throughout their disability. Employers may offer the plan to employees who are not enrolled in the Death and Disability Plan (which includes a long-term disability benefit) and are working at least 20 hours per week. Employers pay the full cost of coverage.

The Term Life Plan offers the same low-cost coverage available in the 2020 Benefits Plan. But in addition to a fixed amount of coverage (from $5,000 to $50,000), it includes a new feature — an income-based benefit amount, equal to one times a member's effective salary, capped at $50,000. Under either option, employers pay the full cost of coverage.

The Board of Pensions' goal is for every minister and church worker to have access to quality benefits in support of well-being. The 2021 Benefits Plan advances on that goal while also enabling more ministers to access assistance and education programs designed to help them devote their best gifts to ministry.

Proposed Changes to the Standing Rules to reflect that the Anti-Racism Task Force is now a Committee

The Anti-Racism Committee requests the description of the Anti-Racism Committee be added to the Standing Rules as a Presbytery Committee under Section SR-604 as SR—6.0403.

SR-6.0403 Anti-Racism Committee

The Anti-Racism Committee shall be established as a permanent Committee of Presbytery in order to advocate for racial justice and to develop curriculum, identify potential trainers and coordinate training events for the Presbytery. The Nominating Committee shall appoint the members of the Committee based on recommendations from the Committee and others. The Anti-Racism Committee shall make regular reports on their activities to Executive Council and Presbytery.

a. The Anti-Racism Committee shall maintain a size of no less than nine members and no more than 13 at any given time.
b. The Anti-Racism Committee shall be composed of a balanced number of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and lay congregants (either Elders or parishioners).
c. The Anti-Racism Committee shall be composed of a balanced number of members representing all genders, and races, and ethnicities members of the Presbytery where possible.
d. The Anti-Racism Committee shall make an effort to include members from small and geographically remote congregations where possible.
e. Members may serve up to three years with the option to be nominated after one year of absence.
f. The Anti-Racism Committee may recommend policy statements to Presbytery based on occurrences, issues, or actions of injustice, hatred, or racism within the Presbytery, State of Alabama, or the nation if such occurrences, issues, or actions are deemed offensive or detrimental to the quality of life, health, and safety of groups against which said actions are intended or perpetrated.
g. The Anti-Racism Committee may partner or engage with other anti-racism groups within the Presbyterian Church USA, or joint ecumenical groups with a similar purpose and scope to strengthen the message of intolerance to racism and injustice on a local, national, and global platform.
h. The Anti-Racism Committee shall present a proposed budget to Executive Council of Presbytery in September of each year to be voted on and approved for inclusion in Presbytery's Annual Budget.

Other Actions of the Anti-Racism Committee

1. The Anti-Racism Committee may recommend policy statements to Presbytery based on occurrences, issues, or actions of injustice, hatred, or racism within the Presbytery, State of Alabama, or the nation if such occurrences, issues, or actions are deemed offensive or detrimental to the quality of life, health, and safety of groups against which said actions are intended or perpetrated.

2. The Anti-Racism Committee may partner or engage with other anti-racism groups within the Presbyterian Church USA, or joint ecumenical groups with a similar purpose and scope to strengthen the message of intolerance to racism and injustice on a local, national, and global platform.

Anti-Racism Committee proposed changes to the Standing Rules

SR-4.0101 Moderator

Current reading:

When disciplinary charges are filed with the Stated Clerk between meetings of the Presbytery, the Moderator, with the consent of the Stated Clerk, has the authority to appoint an Investigative Committee of three to five persons (Book of Order D-10.0201b), to investigate an allegation and determine whether or not formal charges should be filed. The Stated Clerk will report the action at the next meeting of Presbytery.

Proposed reading:

When disciplinary charges are filed with the Stated Clerk between meetings of the Presbytery, the Moderator, with the consent of the Stated Clerk, has the authority to appoint an Investigative Committee of three to five persons (Book of Order D-10.0201b), ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***, to investigate an allegation and determine whether or not formal charges should be filed. The Stated Clerk will report the action at the next meeting of Presbytery.

Current reading:

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.

Proposed reading:

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, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***. 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.

Current reading:

SR-6.02 The Executive Council

The Executive Council is empowered to create such committees and task teams as are necessary to accomplish its work. The Executive Council is empowered to create Executive Council committees (either chaired by voting members of the Executive Council or reporting to council through a member liaison), and task teams (ordinarily chaired by voting members of the Executive Council). Such committees and task teams will report at each meeting of the Executive Council. 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.

Proposed reading:

The Executive Council is empowered to create such committees and task teams as are necessary to accomplish its work. The Executive Council is empowered to create Executive Council committees (either chaired by voting members of the Executive Council or reporting to council through a member liaison), and task teams (ordinarily chaired by voting members of the Executive Council), ***with due consideration to gender, racial, and geographic diversity***. Such committees and task teams will report at each meeting of the Executive Council. 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.

Current reading:

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.

Proposed reading:

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, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***, and elected by the Presbytery.

SR-6.0303 Commission on Preparation for Ministry

Current reading:

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.

Proposed Reading:
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, **with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***, and elected by the Presbytery.

SR-6.0304 Permanent Judicial Commission

Current reading
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).

Proposed reading:
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, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***. 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-6.0401 Trustees

Current reading:
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:

Proposed reading:
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, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***. The Board will appoint its own Chair from the membership elected. The duties of the Trustees shall be to:

SR-6.0402 Committee on Nominating and Representation

Current reading:
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.

Proposed reading:

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, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***. 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.

Current reading:

SR-60402b. 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 Executive Council.

Proposed reading:

SR-60402b 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 Executive Council, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***.

Current reading:

SR-60402c The Committee shall receive recommendations for Youth Council representatives from the current Youth Council and present them to Presbytery for its approval.

Proposed reading:

SR-60402c The Committee shall receive recommendations for Youth Council representatives from the current Youth Council and present them, ***with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity***, to Presbytery for its approval.

Transitional Presbyter Report
August, 2020

And so the pandemic rolls along. About the middle of July I noticed that a lot of pastors hit a wall and wisely scheduled vacation or study leave. When you're in it for the long haul, you absolutely have to pace yourself. Meanwhile, the mission of the presbytery proceeds apace.

- The Executive Council continues to seek ways to keep our shared commitment to Matthew 25 before the presbytery and encourages churches to sign up. The Matthew 25 goals are at the heart of the gospel itself – building vital congregations, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. While the work itself is hard work, signing up is easy. To do so and to learn more go to https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/become-a-matthew-25-church/
- The anti-racism committee is actively engaging their own dialogue and learning about how to be anti-racist in order to vet some possibilities for the whole presbytery. Meanwhile, many congregations are doing book studies and educating themselves about how to go about dismantling racism. I believe we're at a tipping point in this nation around race and I am so proud of our congregations who are stepping up to this needed work.
- Both the Commisssion on Ministry and the Commission on Preparation for Ministry continue their active support of future and current pastors and their congregations. Theirs is some of the most crucial work presbtyeries are called on to do and they are doing it very well!
- We continue to use Zoom technology to accomplish the presbytery's work (including this presbytery meeting).
- The Living River adaptively restricted their summer program and delivered hundreds of "camp in a box" to campers all around the presbytery.
- The Ukirk Steering Committee has hired a ministry coordinator for their newly reconfiigured campus ministry plan. Executive Council was pleased to approve Emily Frandsen for the position.
- Our two new worshipping communities – King's Cross International and Saraang Community – continue to work with the GA office for support both material and financial in partnership with the presbytery.
- The presbytery is launching Project Empathy which buys up medical debt for some of the most affected in the Black Belt.
- Most of our congregations are continuing to meet and worship digitally. Those that have opened their buildings are doing so thoughtfully and safely. And, meanwhile, they are remaining very faithful in pastoral care and spiritual formation for their parishioners.

Now let me say a word about finances. While the work of the presbytery continues, its finances are not continuing apace. As you know the Presbytery relies on Per Capita and Mission/Unified

contributions from its member churches to fund the full mission of the Presbytery. For the first six months of the year, we have had a budget shortfall of over $33,000 in the Mission/Unified giving component of our year to date budget. If the Mission giving component continues at the same rate for the remainder of the year, we will have a shortfall of over $66,000 in that component. We have typically not had 100% participation in Capital Giving. Last year Per Capita giving had a shortfall of about $21,000.

Here's what you can do: **Congregations, if you have not paid your per capita, please do so. If you can give an additional gift for the operating budget, please do that as well.** I realize that some churches have been hit financially, too, though not as much as you'd expect given how many people we have on fixed incomes. Give as the Lord leads you and provides for you so that our collective work can thrive.

I continue to be grateful for and dare I say proud of the health and vigor of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley and I am privileged to serve along side you.

Sue Westfall

Faith of Journey

For the past 20 years, I have served in Children's and young adults ministry delightfully and passionately because the compelling importance of raising the next generation who would foster the spiritual development of the next generation. I as a child, who grew up in a non-Christian home, was able to come to know Christ through one Sunday school teacher, who gathered children playing on the street on Sunday morning and took them to the church. She visited every child's house and obtained the permission from parents to take children to the church. Because I have witnessed how God touches children through children's ministry, especially wounded children or children who grew up in a non-Christian home, I have served in children's ministry faithfully for last twenty years.

For me serving and ministering to children, especially physically and emotionally wounded children, always moves my heart and fills me with joy, ideas, and great expectation from God because I have experienced similar hardship, heartache, and healing grace. I was emotionally wounded by negligence, poverty, and an extremely difficult family background, but God displayed his grace through my brokenness. I was raised by a single mother who were not capable to raise a child emotionally and finally. I never have come to know my father. One day, sitting at a pew and praying more likely crying out of desperation, I felt the love of God, who is the Father of the fatherless and felt accepted and loved.

Back in my undergraduate days, I got carried away. I believed Christ is the King and living out a Christian life what we call a seemingly Christian living, attending and serving a church, but I did not serve Him as a king over my life. I believed Jesus as my Lord and Savior but did not surrender to him. Although my former Youth Pastor who became senior pastor in that time suggested me to pursue seminary education when I visited him during summer. When he mentioned it, we were having sushi, and it almost choked me to death. I did not pay attention to his suggestion at all, and had moved on with my life.

My Damascus Road experience had happened when I was working as a full time purchasing specialist at Hyundai-Motor. When I was working as a purchasing specialist in Hyundai Motor, I felt a call from God. He spoke to me in my heart to let go of all that are in my hands. He promised me that He will fill my emptied hand with what is His. I already had the gift of speaking in tongues in that time, but He bestowed more spiritual gifts upon me which made me unable to sleep for few days. I was in fire, praying night and day for several days.

After that my life had been completed changed. What I love, what I value, things I care for, and dream of my life, all have been changed. I have come to see that behind the choice of hidden treasures (Matt 13:44-46) is the choice of a master. Christ not only has forgiven my sin, but he is now my King. I hope my brokenness and weakness can be used by God as a platform to reveal God's power, love, and glory to the children belong to God, where God can raise next generation who will also foster the spiritual development of our next generation. Currently, I am serving King's Cross Campus Ministry and our vision for King's Cross is to be a community of young adults seeking meaning through confidence in Jesus with a mission to serve local minority groups in need of a safe place to freely worship without abandoning what makes them unique. We seek to be a local outreach welcoming of cultural diversity, inclusive of differing worship

styles, and sensitive to speakers of English as a second language in order to restore, empower, and build bridges into the local community through the hope of the Gospel, through faith in life with Jesus Christ. And after the ordination, I and my family will continue to serve 2nd minority generation.

This is what I believe, and I testify.

This is my testimony of Christian faith.

For God so loved me that God gave His only begotten Son that if I trusted Jesus as my personal Savior, I would have the gift of eternal life and I have it. I have it, not because I am good, not because I deserve, but because God promised it. And I believe What God had promised.

This is what I believe.

My beliefs about Christ starts with the fact that Christ rose from the dead. Christ is alive at the Father's right land. Hebrew 10:12 says, 'But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God...For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

So first, **I believe that Jesus was all sufficient, one sacrifice for the sin of the whole world**.

A second thing **I believe is that we are forgiven and eternally secured in Jesus**.

A third thing **I believe is that we are going to live forever**. John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, whoever believes in him, will not perish but have everlasting life."

Scripture also says **that we are also going to experience the resurrection too**. That is part of the message of the resurrection. In 1 Corinthians 15:42 Paul said, "So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable." We do not know what and how we might look like when the resurrection happens, but I guess, it means there will be no bad hair days. We do not have to worry about how we look and how we dress.

Last but not least, with this new resurrected body, we will live in heavens.

What I believe about God

God is the Creator who is personal and grants eternal life to people through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Because humans are finite with epistemological limitation, and God is infinite who transcends all, it must come about by God's manifestation of Himself if we are to know God. We can only know the identity of God by His Word and activity in this created world because God's activities tell who God is. For that God's creative work in the creation tells us God is the Creator, also redemptive work tells us our God is the Revealer and Redeemer, and God's sanctifying work tells us our God is the Sanctifier.

What I believe about Jesus

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world to show God's love and to save us from Sin. Jesus Christ the Son of the living God came into this world lived and walked among us, suffered and died on the cross and resurrected, and now sits at the Father's right hand. Jesus is Fully human and fully God.' The humanity of Christ never existed apart from the second person of the Trinity as God the Father carries out creative works through the Son inseparably and mutually. It is only because Jesus Christ is a union of two natures, true and complete God and true and complete human in one person that makes it possible for Christ to mediate between the holy God and the sinful human beings, interceding for the redemption of the world and returning in glory to judge and reign forever. Jesus Christ is the Word of God (John 1:1) and Jesus is all sufficient, one sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. (Hebrews 10:12).

What I believe about Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit (the third person of Trinity) is "the giver and re-newer of life" who gives our faith and enables us to follow Jesus Christ. Scripture says, "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13, ESV). When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we are sealed, not sealed by our conduct, but sealed by the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. When we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in you. The Holy Spirit seals us that we are now children of God, and no one can break that seal. And that is just beginning of a new life. Scripture says once the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us, first thing the Holy Spirit does is He seals us and then changes us. The Spirit of God gives us desire and power to live Christian living. The Spirit gathers us for worship, enlightens and equips us through the Word, claims and nourishes us through the Sacraments, and empowers us and sends us out for service in the Church and mission in the world.

What I believe about Baptism

Baptism is the sign and seal of our incorporation into Jesus Christ. In baptism God proclaims us as his children. In baptism Jesus identified himself with sinners, yet God claimed Him as a beloved Son. Paul wrote, through the gift of Baptism we are "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11). Jesus Christ died of our sins and rose again from the dead the third day according to the Scriptures. Jesus died that our sins might die, and Jesus lives again that our souls may live.

What I believe about Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper was instituted by the Lord, Jesus Christ and commanded to be used by all who have faith in Christ (1 Cor.11:23-25; Mt.26:26-29; Mk.14:22-25; Lk.22:19-20). The Lord's Supper and Baptism are two sacraments for believers in Christ. The Lord's Supper is a divine sign and seal of Believers' communion with crucified and risen Christ. It is a sign given to believers to confirm God's promise of salvation. When we receive this sign, we do this in remembrance, we are reaffirming our response to God's covenant of grace. We are remembering with thanksgiving that wonderful exchange that God has made for us-Christ has taken our guilt, and we have received Christ's innocence (2 Cor.5:21).

What I believe about the Church, the body of Christ.

To believe in Jesus Christ is to believe in and belong to a community of faith, the church. The church consists of those who have been called out of the world into a community of faith-those whom God has "called...out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9). To become a Christian is to enter into this community of support, encouragement and love.

First, the church is one. All Christian churches are based and founded on the one and only foundation of Jesus Christ. There is no other foundation on which they can stand. The church is that body of people that acknowledge Jesus Christ as its head (Colossians 1:18). The disunity of the churches does not deny the fact that the church is one. What Many Christian churches have in common is far more precious and important than what divides us.

Second, the church is holy. The church is holy not because of anything we have in ourselves but because of the One who has called us is holy. The church is holy because of our calling, not because of our nature. We believe in a holy God wo has called us as individuals into a

community of faith in Christ, within which God's work of renewal and regeneration can take place.

Third, the church is catholic. In saying that the church is catholic, we are affirming that its message is valid and relevant to every age and every situation. It is not as if there was one church with a message suited to the needs of the second century and another with a message suited to the needs of the twentieth. It is the same church, throughout the ages and across the world, which seeks to apply the same gospel in any situation it may happen to meet. Catholic is an affirmation of the universal validity and relevance of the gospel.

Forth, the church is apostolic, meaning that it continues steadfastly in the faith and teaching of the first apostle (Acts 2:42) and gladly accepts the Great Commission entrusted to us (Matthew 28:16-20). The faith and the tasks of the apostles have become ours!!!

REQUIRED ANNUAL REPORT FOR MEMBERS AT LARGE AND MEMBERS IN VALIDATED MINISTRIES

"A member-at-large is a minister who has previously been engaged in a validated ministry, and who now, without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry, is no longer engaged in a ministry that complies with all the criteria in G-2.0503a. A minister may be designated a member-at-large because he or she is limited in his or her ability to engage in a ministry fulfilling all the criteria for a validated ministry due to family responsibilities or other individual circumstances recognized by the presbytery.

A member-at-large shall comply with as many of the criteria in G-2.0503a as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a congregation. A member-at-large is entitled to take part in the meetings of presbytery and to speak, vote, and hold office. The status of member-at-large shall be reviewed annually." (G-2.0503b)

The five criteria for a validated ministry listed in G-2.0503a are:

a. Demonstrate conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, The Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order of the church.
b. Serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others.
c. Give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word.
d. Be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served.
e. Include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC(USA) (G-5.0201)

The Commission on Ministry is charged with reviewing annually the work of all ministers engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation. To that end, please complete the following:

Name _____Cecilia Young Chang_____ Date ____Aug _____

Address ___604 Willowcrest cove Birmingham Al 35226_____

Phone numbers: Home _____ Cell __334-296-6233_____ Work _____

Email ___kingscrossic@gmail.com/ychang@samford.edu_____

Place of employment (paid or volunteer) _____Half time Paid_____

How are you fulfilling the five criteria above?
We are fulfilling the five criteria by preaching the Word of God every Lord's Day and celebrating sacraments regularly. Through worship service and bible study rooted in Scripture, we have few new converts and were baptized. We celebrate Communion every first Sunday of the month; we already had two baptism. We also serve lunch to the homeless in downtown Birmingham and provide financial assistance and volunteering at low-cost dental health clinics. King's Cross International Church seeks to be a local outreach welcoming of cultural diversity, inclusive of differing worship styles, and sensitive to speakers of English as a second language in order to restore, empower, and build bridges into the local community through the hope of the Gospel, through faith in life with Jesus Christ. We have campus bible study (on-site but now via zoom), and Cecilia is serving an Anti-racism committee of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Also, by offering a window into world

missions with short term mission trips, mission partnerships, and opportunities for local service and outreach we serve and enable the ministry of others.

Is it your desire to continue as a Member At Large? ____yes_____

Please return by January 31, 2019 by mail (3603 Lorna Ridge Dr., Birmingham, AL 35216) or email (statedclerk@pslpcusa.org)

Revised 11/28/18

Rev. Lucy Turner Retirement Recognition
August 20, 2020
Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Stated Meeting via Zoom

Earlier this year, Rev. Lucy Turner announced her desire to retire from her position as Independent Presbyterian's Associate Executive Pastor and Director of Congregational Care and Counseling, effective October 31. In typical Lucy fashion, she asked we not make a big deal about this. But Lucy's ministry has been a big deal- a blessing to countless people. So as her colleagues and friends, we couldn't let the moment pass without offering our gratitude to God and to Lucy for her many years of service.

Lucy was born to faithful, committed Presbyterian parents and along with her five siblings, she grew up in Gulfport, MS where the church was at the center of her family's life. Her first career followed a Masters of Business Administration degree, and she enjoyed much success in the world of business. But as a member of First Presbyterian Church in Atlanta in those early years of her business career she felt a sense of call to the ministry. After spending time working with Habitat for Humanity, Lucy headed to Columbia Seminary where she received her M.Div degree. She served two churches in North Carolina-in Winston Salem and Hickory, and was deeply loved by both of those congregations. Lucy joined this presbytery 16 years ago when she accepted the call to become IPC's Director of Congregational Care and Counseling, fulfilling her deepest sense of God's call to the pastoral care ministry of a congregation.

Lucy's own words in her recent letter to the congregation at IPC describe Lucy's ministry best.

We have been together in the worst of times and the best of times. You have given me your newborn children to hold when they were just hours old. I have stood by you and held the hands of your loved ones as they took their final breath in the ICU. I have officiated at your weddings and conducted funerals for your loved ones. I have baptized more children than I can count, promising along with the congregation to love and nurture our newest members of God s family. We have shared the body of Christ and the cup of salvation every month in the sanctuary and every week in the chapel for all these many years. I have prayed with you and shed tears for you as you endured grief and loss. I have laughed with you at your discovery of joy again, thanking God all the while.

As promised in the gospel of John, from Jesus Christ we have received grace upon grace. During my 30 years of ministry, I have felt awash in the grace of God. Not that there haven t been tough times. Not that there haven t been times when I felt inadequate for the task. But never have I doubted God s call on my life; never have I questioned God s providence. I have been blessed to have served three fine congregations. Who could ask for more than that?

My gratitude for you is deeply heartfelt. My love for you is enduring. My hope for you is boundless.

Lucy, we feel the same way about you. You have been a faithful pastor, preacher and teacher. You have used all the gifts God has given you with joy and faithful focus. You have been a generous colleague and a dear friend in ministry. And God is not finished with you yet!

Lucy has plans to continue in ministry as a part time chaplain in the Birmingham area, so this is not goodbye, but rather a time to give thanks for a call to ministry faithfully answered and to welcome a new season of life. So we pray you will continue to serve God and God's people faithfully, but with a bit more time for fly fishing, hunting, renewing your golf swing, enjoying time with friends at the lake and family across the country. Save me another journey with you to Scotland! Wishing you all joy and nights and weekends free of meetings upon retirement! Thank you for your ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Revs. Susan Clayton and Elizabeth Goodrich

Report of the Mission Coordinator for Presbytery August 2020

There is a great amount of poverty in Alabama. The Black Belt has some of the greatest poverty rates in the state. Ten of the counties in the Black Belt are: Wilcox, Perry, Sumter, Greene, Pickens, Macon, Hale, Dallas, Lowndes, and Chambers. The poverty rate in these counties, according to the US Census Bureau, range from 18.7% up to 35.3%. Approximately 173,000 people live in these counties.

Medical debt is one of the burdens on the poor. It affects their credit rating, their rent, and ability to buy. Medical debt in these 10 counties totals about $13 million. In Matthew 25, our Lord Jesus shows His concern for the poor and suffering, and insists that we work to help those in trouble.

In February, 2020, a Sunday School class at Southminster Presbyterian Church in Vestavia had the idea to do something about that debt. The Presbytery Executive Council unanimously approved this project in the Presbytery.

This project is Project Empathy, in which the Presbytery will work with RIP Medical Debt, Inc. to raise at least $50,000 to eliminate $5 million of medical debt in the ten counties.

RIP Medical Debt, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Its website is: ripmedicaldebt.org. It was founded in 2014 by two former collections industry executives, Craig Antico and Jerry Ashton. RIP Medical Debt buys blocks of medical debt and forgives the debts, sending notifications to the debtors and credit reporting agencies.

Every $1 contributed will relieve at least $100 in medical debt.

Contributions may be made to our Project Empathy donation page: secure.qgiv.com/event/projectempathy/. RIP Medical Debt will send every donor a letter thanking for the donation and documenting the gift for tax purposes.

We hope that all churches and members in the Presbytery will give to Project Empathy, and, ask your friends to give.

To learn more, and to get involved, go to ripmedical debt.org and look for the link to our donation page under the heading CAMPAIGNS, The Black Belt Region of Alabama. Project Empathy will run from August through December 2020.

Overture:
The Session of Southminster Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, AL overtures the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley to the following:

A. Commit to a high priority of Child and Youth Protection in the Presbytery and strongly encourage all churches in the Presbytery to also adopt this priority
B. Review all policies relating to Child and Youth Protection, Sexual Misconduct, and background check policies and amend/rewrite so that all are compatible in language and intent.
C. Adopt revisions/amendments to the Presbytery Standing Rules to define and assign concrete and explicit responsibilities for Councils, commissions, committees and individuals to implement the policies of the Presbytery concerning Child and Youth Protection.
D. Adopt an accountability process to assure these policies are faithfully and meticulously carried out.
E. Continue ongoing dialog with churches to help each develop their own policies, regardless of size or numbers of children in their care.

Rationale:
The purpose of this overture is to set into motion a process to critically look at how the Presbytery is seriously handling the screening and training process related to child and youth protection for persons, volunteer or professional, engaged in ministry in the churches of the Presbytery and to make changes in procedures where there is a need.

From the Child and Youth Protection Policy of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley adopted Nov. 2018:
"Consistent with this purpose' [we are called by grace to lifegiving service to our congregations, engaging, equipping, nurturing and empowering them in their collective witness to God's love for all people in Jesus Christ.] "we adopt this Amended and Restated Child and Youth Protection Policy to establish essential procedures and standards of conduct to guide us in our work with children. We believe that children are a gift of God to the whole of the human community. They are an integral part of the faith community contributing to its worship and ministry. Through the church's ministry and mission, the faith of children and youth is formed and nurtured as they hear and experience the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ who welcomes all to come to him."
"Through action taken at the 221st General Assembly (2014) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and later approved by vote of the presbyteries, the General Assembly amended the Book of Order, effective as of June 21, 2015, to require all councils of the church (including the General Assembly, presbyteries, synods, and church sessions) to adopt child and youth protection policies. Pursuant to that directive, at the 222nd General Assembly (2016), the General Assembly adopted a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy to govern activities and events sponsored by the General Assembly. Our Presbytery adopted a child protection policy in 2017 that is being amended and restated by this Policy. All churches in our Presbytery are required to adopt a child protection policy. The Presbytery will assist any church that needs help in creating a policy."
The Child and Youth Protection policy defines the persons for whom a background check is required by the Presbytery and how often the check is to be performed. At the May 2020 Presbytery meeting, it was obvious there was a disconnect between background check policy and implementation. It appeared from the discussion that either the policy was not being followed or that the persons responsible did not know what the policy was. Either way, it's not a good situation.
To be true to our stated purpose of safeguarding both children and adults, it is important to prioritize our commitment and establish and enforce best practices and be accountable.
We urge the Presbytery to approve this overture.

Find | Next

Minister Transactions 2020

115642 Sheppards And Lapsley **Beginning Year: 113**

-------Additions-------	------Removals-------	------Dismissed To-------	-------Received From-------
		M00039434 Baltimore	M00014446 Greater Atlanta
		Catherine D Goodrich	Sue Ellen Westfall
		M00503096 Greater Atlanta	
		Neely Lane	

Current: 112 **Additions: 0** **Removals: 0** **Dismissed: 2** **Received: 1**

Friday, August 07, 2020 **Minister Transactions**

The Presbytery Of Sheppards And Lapsley
Report Of The Commission on Preparation For Ministry - August 2020

INQUIRERS	CHURCH	INSTITUTION
Abby Gatliff	South Highland, Birmingham	Beeson
Cort Gatliff	South Highland, Birmingham	Graduate - Beeson
Beom Joseph Jung	Auburn-Opelika Korean, Opelika	Columbia
Patrick O'Connor	Immanuel, Montgomery	San Francisco
Kendra Peeples	Grace, Tuscaloosa	Candler
Madison Vaughn	Grace, Tuscaloosa	Columbia
CANDIDATES		
Bennett Alldredge	First, Tuscaloosa	Graduate - Princeton
Young Cecilia Chang	Shades Valley, Birmingham	Graduate – Beeson
Emily Frandsen	Independent, Birmingham	Dubuque
Alexandra Hutson	First, Tuscaloosa	Graduate - Columbia
Avery Smith	Grace, Tuscaloosa	Graduate - Louisville
Samuel Turpen	Edgewood, Birmingham	Graduate - Columbia
Barbara Tomek-White	First, Auburn	Graduate - Austin

FOR INFORMATION:

1) The commission received Abby Gatliff (South Highland) and Cort Gatliff (South Highland) as Inquirers.
2) The alternate examination for Young Cecilia Chang (authorized by Presbytery in May) was administered on June 2, with a unanimous "satisfactory" result.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry:
Rick Atkerson (2022), Jim Bannon (2020), Joe Genau (2020), Shelley Hancock (2020), Sheila Holland Cathy Hoop (2021), Thecla Lindsey (2021), Gillie Presley (2022), Leanne Pearce Reed (2020), and Leeann Scarborough (2022).

Respectfully Submitted,
Joe Genau, Moderator

Living River Report to Presbytery
August 20, 2020

Greetings from the Living River Board! Ministry and witness at Living River continues amidst the pandemic. The goodness of God is consistently revealed in and through all that happens on the banks of the Cahaba.

The Development Committee is reviewing the list of projects that have been funded previously but not completed. The Board will receive a recommended schedule for completing these projects in August. The fundraising plan for 2020 and beyond remains a work in progress.

The Environmental Committee continues to explore and establish partnerships with existing environmental education programs. College students and their respective programs are beginning to come to Living River for research and field study experiences. These opportunities are also being presented to high school level STEM programs in the state.

The Finance Committee continues to modify the operating budget for 2020 as existing plans for the year adapt and change. Living River received a legacy gift from the Alice McSpadden Williams family trust, and the proceeds of that trust will be used to establish a rainy-day fund as well as a legacy investment fund through the New Covenant Trust of The Presbyterian Foundation. The overall spending and investment policies of Living River are being reviewed and modified.

Governance is beginning the process of filling Board positions for the coming year. This work is done in conjunction with the Nominating Committee of Presbytery. The Personnel Committee recommended making a modest increase in the Caretaker salary to offset the increase in health insurance premiums. Paul Fancher continues to be an invaluable blessing and the Board is thankful to have the ability to show appreciation in this manner.

The Program Committee rebounded from the devastation of having to cancel plans for residential summer camp with gusto. A Camp in a Box program was assembled with funding assistance from Presbytery. Every camper from last year received a personal Camp in a Box kit to facilitate a week of camp at home. Extra kits were assembled and distributed to families in need of camp like activities for their children.

The Property Committee continues to address security and safety issues along with ongoing maintenance. Following a break in at the maintenance shed, utilities were run to that building to facilitate installation of security equipment and a more productive work space. Insurance covered the replacement of stolen equipment. Plans for a second security gate are being developed. Opportunities for small group work projects exist in abundance.

In general, the Living River Board wants to thank everyone for the continued prayers. While the present reality of Living River is far from anyone's expectations and / or hopes, our place on the Cahaba continues to be a place to experience God's overwhelming abundance. The Board's efforts towards good stewardship of God's gifts are as strong as ever. Come and be a part of all God makes possible at Living River!

Peace,
Jonathan Yarboro / Living River Moderator

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley
Revenues & Expenses - Summary
January to June 2020

Accounts	MTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Budget (This Year)	Annual Budget (This Year)	Annual Budget Remaining (This Year)
Revenues					
General Fund	$8,869.94	$83,978.07	$118,804.98	$237,610.00	$153,631.93
NCD Assistance	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Mission Giving-Income	$972.37	$9,738.73	$5,134.02	$10,268.00	$529.27
Per Capita Income	$9,012.70	$137,386.86	$99,086.52	$198,173.00	$60,786.14
Total Revenues	$18,855.01	$231,103.66	$223,025.52	$446,051.00	$214,947.34
Expenses					
Council					
Council Expenses-Other	$391.80	$2,979.61	$7,387.50	$14,775.00	$11,795.39
Salaries & Allowances					
Executive Presbyter	$9,077.61	$51,864.82	$60,000.00	$120,000.00	$68,135.18
Missional Development Exec	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Administrative Salaries	$0.00	$900.00	$900.00	$1,800.00	$900.00
Benefits - Administration	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Staff Expenses	$0.00	$0.00	$2,050.02	$4,100.00	$4,100.00
Total Salaries & Allowances	$9,077.61	$52,764.82	$62,950.02	$125,900.00	$73,135.18
Council Vocation Committees	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Total Council	$9,469.41	$55,744.43	$70,337.52	$140,675.00	$84,930.57
Development	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Equip, Nurture, Connect					
Other ENC Expenses	$5,244.97	$13,871.05	$14,475.00	$28,950.00	$15,078.95
Total Equip, Nurture, Connect	$5,244.97	$13,871.05	$14,475.00	$28,950.00	$15,078.95
Mission	$11.00	$127.20	$150.00	$300.00	$172.80
Anti-Racism	$0.00	$237.42	$4,249.98	$8,500.00	$8,262.58
Trustees	$4,296.96	$33,188.76	$29,766.96	$59,534.00	$26,345.24
Presbytery Per Capita Expenses					
Stated Clerk & Moderator	$1,274.81	$8,678.64	$11,787.54	$23,575.00	$14,896.36
Presbytery Commissions	$25.50	$3,661.94	$1,599.96	$3,200.00	($461.94)
Asst.to Stated Clerk/Ofc Mgr	$5,083.04	$30,498.24	$30,112.98	$60,226.00	$29,727.76
Total Presbytery Per Capita	$6,383.35	$42,838.82	$43,500.48	$87,001.00	$44,162.18
Per Capita-Expenses	$5,257.40	$80,142.35	$55,586.04	$111,172.00	$31,029.65
Mission Giving-Expenses	$972.37	$9,738.73	$5,133.96	$10,268.00	$529.27
Total Expenses	$31,635.46	$235,888.76	$223,199.94	$446,400.00	$210,511.24
Net Operating Total	($12,780.45)	($4,785.10)	($174.42)	($349.00)	$4,436.10
Other Revenues					
Designated Income (Loss)	$5,137.43	$4,096.45	$174.48	$349.00	($3,747.45)
Total Other Revenues	$5,137.43	$4,096.45	$174.48	$349.00	($3,747.45)
Net Total	($7,643.02)	($688.65)	$0.06	$0.00	$688.65

Gifts and Gratitude from Congo Partnership Team and Partners **August, 2020**

From: Belinda Dickinson <belindabjld@bellsouth.net>
To: Belinda Dickinson <belindabjld@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020, 08:38:09 AM CDT
Subject: Fw: Remerciement

Dear Jeff Boyd and Belinda Dickinson,
Grace and peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ to whom we serve day and night.
I am pleased to inform you of the acknowledgment of receipt of funds sent on 07/02/2020 and received on 07/07/2020.
I am very grateful for all the benefits that you never cease to show to our rectory and sincerely thank you with all my heart.
I and the whole presbytery never cease to implore the Lord to support you in this work of the propagation, the extension and the consolidation of the Gospel of the Lord on this earth.

We inform you that since our government declared a state of emergency, our Churches have remained closed until now in this period of containment and are awaiting the official opening, on 08/15/2020 and we need support from your prayers.

All the details on the purchase of a motorcycle and the formalities will be sent to you shortly.

My sincere greetings in Christ

Yours truly
Rev Maurice Tshiyoyo

From: kabala mboyamba <kabalamboyamba@gmail.com>
To: Belinda Dickinson <belindabjld@bellsouth.net>
Cc: Serge MAKOLO <drsergemak@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020, 01:30:28 AM CDT
Subject: Re: funds

Thank you for this Belinda.
God bless.
Pastor MBOYAMBA.

Le mer. 1 juil. 2020 à 03:49, Belinda Dickinson <belindabjld@bellsouth.net> a écrit :
Dear Friends, We received a small donation of $74, for the nutrition center at IMCK from Southminster PC in B'ham. It will be mailed tomorrow through Jimmy Shafe and Mission:Hope. Belinda Dickinson

Belinda: Green Pons sent $500 to the Presbytery Monday for Good Shepherd Hospital. Will you see that it gets sent. Thanks
Hope you both are well. Stay Safe.
Blessings,
Bev

Serge MAKOLO <drsergemak@gmail.com>
To:Belinda Dickinson
Cc:jimmy shafe
Sun, Jul 19 at 8:25 AM
Dear Belinda,
Thank you for advocating for IMCK.
Our sincere thanks to the members of Greenpond Church for this financial support.
God bless you all!

Dr. Serge.
Dear Jimmy, We sent $500 To you from Greenpond Church for the hospital for women and the nutrition center. It was sent to us . I think they also sent you $500 Directly for Missions in gen'l. Remember that is the little church with 24 members and Bev Dodson is the lay pastor. Belinda

Jimmy Shafe <jshafe@careertrain.com>

To:cpc_improka@yahoo.fr,kabala mboyamba,Dr Christophe BakamubiaCc:Linda Johns (mfrances@gvtc.com),'RSchaad',Omba Noel Ngandu (omba_ngandu@yahoo.fr),BelindaDickinson

Wed, Jul 1 at 8:11 PM

Hi Simon, et.al.I just transferred today:

$11,500 Moma Hospital, less 2.2% ($253 deducted, so a net to Moma of $11,247 This is for Sewing building repairs, rebuilding doctor's home, purchase 6 sewing machines, purchase sewing supplies, funds for sewing instructor for 5 months. (From Friends of Moma)

$ 2,000 CPC legal fund to help pay for the legal fees recently incurred to resist the takeover, less 2.2% ($44 deducted, so a net of $1,956 to CPC legal fund). (From Sheppard's and Lapsley Presbytery)

$ 400 Pastor Mboyamba for a conference in the fall of 2020, less 2.2% ($9 deducted, so a net of $391 to Pastor Mboyamba). (From Friends of Moma)

$13,900 Total amount transferred today

May God bless you and I thank you for all you do for the CPC and God!

Jimmy Shafe

Director, Mission: Hope, Congo
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 12:56 PM
To: debbie feagin <debbifeagin@aol.com>; ralls coston <rcoston@pslpcusa.org>; lynn nelson <lynn.nelson1959@gmail.com>; Charles Nash <cnash@uasystem.ua.edu>; Craig Seitz <craigwseitz@gmail.com>; craigwstz@gmail.com; dean vandegrift <jdvandeg@charter.net>; sue westfall <swestfall@pslpcusa.org>
Subject: congo team/PLEASE REPLY

Dear Friends, I have received a message from our partners regarding the repair of the church/temple that was damaged by a tree falling on it in what we would call the chancel area. The cost for the repairs in dollars would be $1500. I would like to send that

plus $4,000 for a motorbike for Nganza and tshibashi with the understanding it is a gift for Tshiyoyo and Ilunga to use but if they

for some reason leave their positions , the motor bike will stay with the Presbytery for their successor to use. I would also like to send $1000 to Good Shepherd for Dr.Serge to buy emergency personal protective equipment. Our funds balance thru February were: Designated account 810675 - $4,170.50 Undesignated 810670 - $11,493 Education 810678 $ 5,654.

I propose we take the money out of the Undesignated account. These are my suggestions. PLEASE ADVISE ME OF YOUR FEELINGS REGARDING THESE EXPENDITURES. STAY WELL! BELINDA

From: Jean Tshidinda <tshidindamambajean@gmail.com>
To: Belinda Dickinson <belindabjld@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 01:11:57 AM CDT
Subject: ThanksDear Belinda,
Presbyterian church un RDC has a pleasure to thanks you for the love and genorosity, you showed for it. In the help you gave ($1950).
We repeat for you biblical parole saying :"God is not unfair he will not forget the work you did or the love you showed for him in the help you gave and are still giving to your fellow christians (heb 6:10)".

May God bless all of you.

Yours
Tshidinda Mamba Jean

Presbyterian Home *for* Children

Raising hopes, growing confidence and nurturing faith since 1868
Post Office Drawer 577 • Talladega, Alabama 35161
Telephone: (256) 362-2114 • Email: info@phfc.org • Website: www.phfc.org

Doug Marshall,
President & CEO

Dear Sheppards and Lapsley Presbytery Family,

Please know that our prayers continue with deep love for all of you during this very difficult time in our country and world. By now, even if we are well, most of us know someone impacted by the pandemic. We are thankful for your prayers and support as we work hard to keep our children, families, and staff safe while continuing to walk out our calling from God for now 152 years.

Our Officers and Board of Trustees of the Home recently issued our own Statement on Racial Inequality as we listen, examine, and rededicate the organization to the mission of caring for children and their families. I have enclosed this Statement for your reading as all of us work together for justice.

The Home has been incredibly blessed recently with much positive exposure in local, state, and national media sources with various stories in The Daily Home Newspaper, AL.com, Alabama NewsCenter, and Presbyterian News Service. I have also enclosed these stories for your reading as a way to update you about the Home.

We appreciate all of you for being both our friends and our ministry partners.

Please stay safe and take good care.

In Christ,

Doug

Doug Marshall

Presbyterian Home for Children Statement on Racial Inequality

We believe that all people are children of God, lovingly created in God's image and born of God-breathed Spirit. We believe that all lives matter to God, but that in certain times and circumstances, some lives need more care than others. At this particular time in history, racial inequalities have been exposed in the COVID-19 pandemic and in the recent killings of individual black lives right before the eyes of this nation and too many unseen others. We understand that while these tragedies have received much publicity as the collective soul of our country has been awakened, the fact is that racism, inequities, and unlawful acts happen to minorities and the disenfranchised on a daily basis. We acknowledge that racism affects many different groups, but we also understand that it has been especially difficult on and painful for the African-American community in the United States. Anti-Black racism exists in many forms and has since the founding of this nation. Therefore, we believe that racism goes against the Heart and Will of God because we believe God loves and values everyone, and "Black Lives Matter" to God. We believe that because each individual Black life matters to God, each individual Black life matters to us.

Our Savior Jesus Christ calls us to challenge the unjust structures around us and to work for peace and justice for all God's beloved children. We join with others to engage in the work of eliminating racism and racist acts.

We believe that through the power of the Holy Spirit, poured out lovingly upon us by our Creator and through the grace we have received from our Savior, we can do better and will lead others to do better for all of God's children, especially those who have been mistreated by and hurt through unjust systems and unloving people.

The Presbyterian Home for Children, with our Board of Trustees and Staff denounces racism in all its many forms and we pledge to work daily toward righting wrongs by doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with our God. We seek to grow even deeper in the unconditional love of Jesus Christ as instruments of healing in the Hand of our Heavenly Father for each individual, created with immeasurable value and for great purpose.

So help us, God.

Doug Marshall, President and CEO
Felicia Ayers Storey, VPPO, LGSW, Vice-President of Program Operations and Services

Board Officers:
Dr. Cindy Wilson, Moderator
Ms. Carol Copeland, Vice Moderator
Ms. Sue Martino, Secretary
Mr. Newell Witherspoon, Treasurer
Mr. Al Hill, Immediate Past Moderator
Mr. George Fritsma, At Large Member of Exec. Committee
Mr. John Haley, Esq., Legal Counsel

Board Trustees:
Dr. Susan Ashbee
Rev. Christie Ashton
Mr. Ted Autterson
Ms. Heather Benoit
Mr. Chuck Carneal
Ms. Millie Chastain
Mr. Stan Cowan
Dr. Jim Davis
Ms. Bettye Dixie
Mr. Avery Embry
Rev. Joe Johnson
Ms. Janice Jones
Ms. Linda Madsen
Rev. Brandon Miles
Mr. John Myers
Rev. Joseph Scrivner, Ph.D.
Mr. Terry Smiley
Mr. Chuck Williams
Ms. Janis Williams

Presbyterian Home for Children

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256-368-8187

Presbyterian Home for Children Achieves National Accreditation

The Presbyterian Home for Children, located in Talladega, AL, has achieved national accreditation through the New York-based Council on Accreditation (COA), an approved accreditor for Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

"COA Accreditation is important to the Home as a formal recognition of the high performance standards which have always made the Home special. It is an objective, independent, and reliable validation that we are delivering the highest quality services to all of our stakeholders," said Presbyterian Home President Doug Marshall.

To achieve COA accreditation, the Presbyterian Home for Children first provided written evidence of compliance with the COA standards, followed by a series of on-site interviews with trustees, staff and clients conducted by a group of specially trained volunteer Peer Reviewers who confirmed adherence to these standards. The accreditation process took about 2 years and involved documenting best practices across all functional areas of the Home. COA accreditation demonstrates accountability in the management of resources, sets standardized best practice thresholds for service and administration, and increases organizational capacity and accountability by creating a framework for ongoing quality improvement. The accreditation must be renewed every four years in order to remain valid.

"COA rigorously evaluated all aspects of our programs, services, management, and administration against international standards of best practice in the field of human services that ultimately support our clients, staff, and communities. We are so proud of our team for this amazing and historic accomplishment," said Felicia Ayers Storey, Vice-President of Program Operations and Services for the Home.

Based on their findings, COA's volunteer-based Accreditation Commission voted that the Home had successfully met the criteria for accreditation.

Founded in 1977, COA is an independent, not-for-profit accreditor of the full continuum of community-based behavioral health care and social service organizations in the United States and Canada. To learn more about COA, please visit www.coanet.org.

The Presbyterian Home for Children is a 152-year-old ministry of the Presbyterian Churches of Alabama which provides a faith based safe haven for children and families through programs which nurture, educate, and equip individuals to become the fully functioning persons God created them to be.

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