

Presbytery of
Sheppards and Lapsley

COMMISSIONER PACKET



Summer Stated Meeting
August 18, 2022

First Presbyterian Church
900 Greensboro Ave.
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
205-752-3531

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE UPCOMING August PRESBYTERY MEETING

This Presbytery meeting will be a Hybrid meeting (in person and zoom).

Below are important details regarding registration link, link for the Presbytery meeting and packet link.

Information for ALL Presbytery meeting participants

Presbytery Registration (No later than Friday, August 12)

Please use the link below to register for the meeting. It is very important that you register by August 12, no later than noon. This is so we can get an accurate number for a quorum, lunch reservations and so that the admission from the waiting room goes smoothly.

<https://forms.gle/RCUbufrJwDK3w86B6>

Packet Link

Ministers and Commissioners, please download and read the presbytery packet before the meeting. Click the following link for the packet: <http://pslpcusa.org/meetings/>

Scroll to the bottom of the page and click the links for the packet and the previous meeting minutes.

A Worship folder will be sent out the day before the meeting.

Information for Zoom participants only

Presbytery meeting Zoom link

For the day of Presbytery, August 18th beginning at 9:00 AM (see link below) The actual meeting will begin at 9:45 AM. (As you enter, you will start in the "waiting room." Please be patient - you'll be brought into the main room as soon as possible.)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87245782712?pwd=dXNleDh3MllyckxGODRsa1pHc0pFQT09>

Meeting ID: 872 4578 2712 Passcode: 257382

You may also join us via telephone call. To call in, dial - 1 312 626 6799

IMPORTANT: If you have a video, presentation, or want to share your screen, please contact us no later than Friday, August 12th. This is so the meeting will go smoothly with no technical issues.

In person participants – please review pages 2-3

ATTENDING A PRESBYTERY MEETING

As a Commissioner to the Presbytery, we welcome you! When you arrive, there will be a registration area for those that did not register online. Worship folders and nametags will be available for pickup.

The meeting time of Presbytery is 9:45 AM until 3:00 PM., with registration beginning at 9:00 a.m. All the business of the Presbytery is contained in this packet.

The packet will detail items that you, as a commissioner, will need to take action upon and items for your information. Some items will have discussion, and some items will be contained within an omnibus motion. All items in the omnibus motion are voted on at one time, during the Clerk's report. As a commissioner, if you desire to ask a question or debate any item you need to stand at the time of the motion's presentation and request that item be extracted. The item will then be removed and voted upon separately. Information items come from various committees and entities of the Presbytery that wish to inform you of things they are working on or committee actions they are empowered to take.

On the day of the meeting, a worship folder will be distributed. This worship folder will contain, in order, all the items that will be presented to the commissioners. The difference between the packet and the worship folder is that the worship folder will not have supplemental material, such as faith statements, addendum and resource items. The packet and worship folder are meant to go hand in hand to help you with the flow and business of the meeting.

Please read the introductory items in the packet. These items contain information about parking, directions to the meeting, how to make motions if you wish, and information on parliamentary process.

The meetings of Presbytery have been designed to provide opportunities for the community to worship and discuss issues together, as well as do the business that is before it for consideration.

Again, welcome!

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATING IN PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

1. When speaking at Presbytery, please address the Moderator and not the body. (Zoom: Raise your hand)
2. Introduce yourself, by stating your name, church and role.
3. Our rules are that each speaker during debate has up to two minutes to address the issue to which they are speaking. The Moderator may give a 30-second warning, so that you may conclude your remarks.
4. Only enrolled commissioners are authorized to vote on issues. Corresponding members are entitled to address the Presbytery.
5. Any motion made from the floor (be it a new motion, a substitute motion or an amended motion) must be given to the Stated Clerk in writing, at the time the motion is made. (Zoom: Through Chat room)
6. Any new business must be placed in the hands of the Stated Clerk, **before** the approval of the docket. (Zoom: through the chat room by 11:00 AM)

SAVE THE DATES FOR 2022 PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

November 17 South Highland, Birmingham

9:45 AM – 3:00 PM

GENERAL NOTES FOR THIS MEETING

1. The offering for this meeting will go to the **Commission on Preparation for Ministry's scholarship fund and the Presbytery Pastoral Care fund**. Please make checks payable to *Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley* or you may use the *QR code to the right*. Please indicate your donation as "Presbytery offering".
2. Requests to include **audio-visual presentations** at the Presbytery Meeting should be addressed to Tammy Strickland at tstrickland@pslpcusa.org no later than Friday, August 12, 2022.
3. Requests for an **excused absence** from today's meeting should be addressed to the Stated Clerk, Peter Finley at statedclerk@pslpcusa.org or 205-978-0320, ext. 305.
4. Please contact Tammy Strickland at tstrickland@pslpcusa.org by Friday, August 12, 2022 to reserve **display space for this meeting**.



Please turn in your hanging name badge when the meeting is concluded.

STAY CONNECTED

If you would like to receive the Presbytery newsletter, please contact Tammy at tstrickland@pslpcusa.org. For more information about the Presbytery, please visit our website at <http://www.pslpcusa.org>.

LUNCH

First, Tuscaloosa is graciously preparing lunch (\$10) for attendees of this meeting (cash or check only). Please purchase tickets during registration. Make checks for lunch payable to **First Presbyterian, Tuscaloosa**.

Directions to First Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa

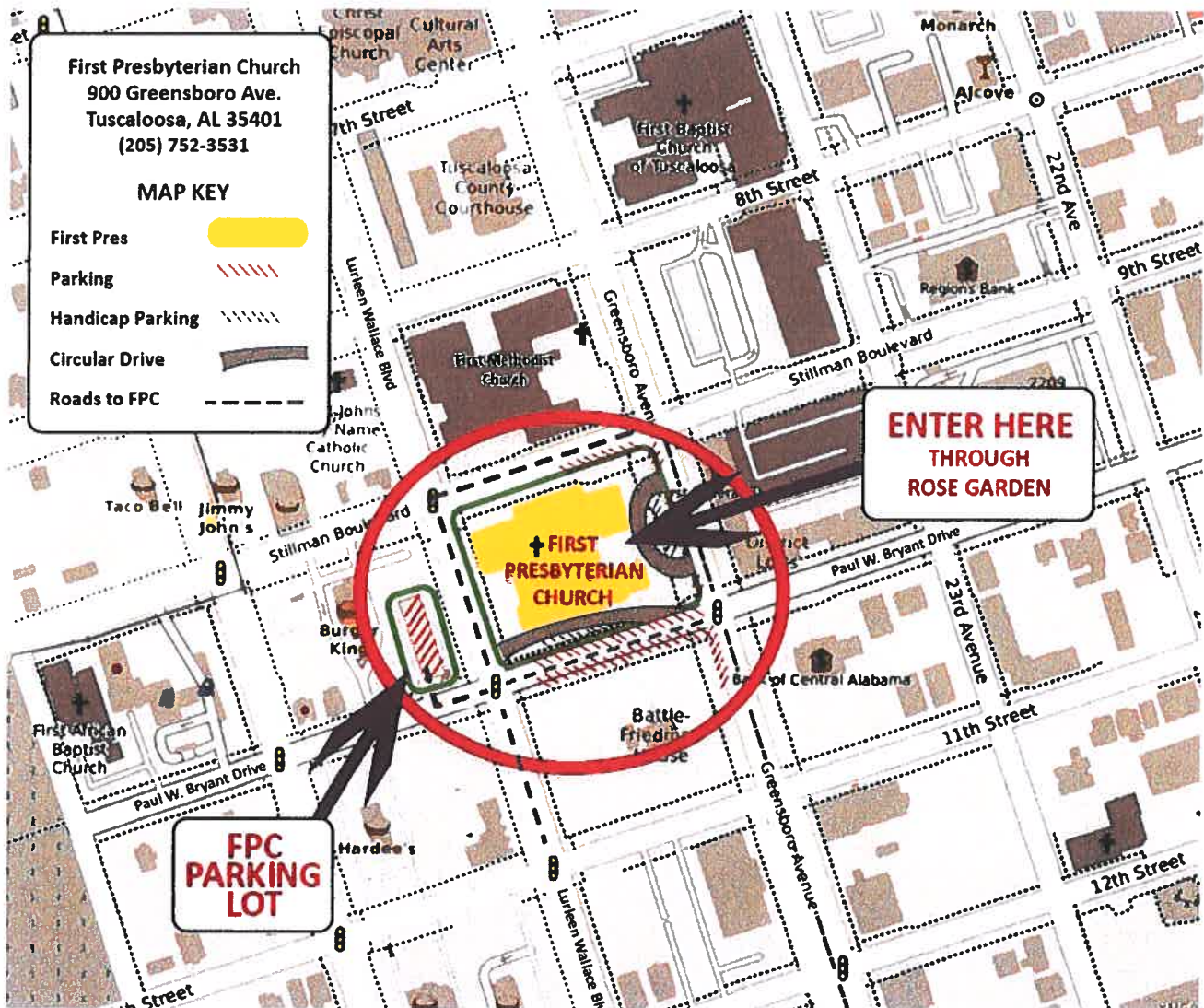
900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

We suggest parking in FPC's lot across Lurleen Wallace Blvd. from the church.

Enter through the Rose Garden on Greensboro Avenue.

For Parking:

- FPC's parking lot is at the corner of Paul W. Bryant Drive and Lurleen Wallace Blvd N. (next to Burger King). It will be on your left and the church on your right as you approach downtown Tuscaloosa on I-359N/Lurleen Wallace Blvd N. **Turn Left onto Paul W. Bryant Drive**, and then Turn Right into the parking lot.
- There is limited parking available along Paul W. Bryant Drive, Stillman Blvd, and Greensboro Avenue, all of which surround the church. **Warning:** Parking next to the church is free and unlimited. Parking on Greensboro across from the church is limited to two hours and strictly enforced.
- There is handicapped access to the building using the semi-circular drives on Paul W. Bryant and Greensboro Avenue.



From I-20/59:

- Take Exit 71B to merge onto I-359N for approximately 2 miles
- I-359N turns into Lurleen Wallace Blvd. N. and remains a one-way street
- **For the parking lot, Turn Left at Paul W. Bryant Drive (10th Street) and immediately Turn Right into the parking lot**
- For other parking or to reach the entrance to the church, Turn Right onto Stillman Boulevard (9th Street)
- At the end of the block, Turn Right onto Greensboro Avenue and the church is on your right

Using Hwy 82W from Montgomery:

- After passing through Duncanville, Turn Left onto Old Montgomery Hwy/State Hwy 215N at the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant.
- Continue on Greensboro for approximately 5 miles.
- 215N turns into Greensboro Avenue after you cross over Skyland Boulevard
- First Presbyterian will be on your left between Paul W. Bryant Drive (10th Street) and Stillman Blvd (9th Street)
- **For the parking lot, Turn Left onto Paul W. Bryant Drive (10th Street). Cross over Lurleen Wallace Blvd N. and Turn Right into the parking lot**

Using McFarland Blvd/Hwy 82W if already in Tuscaloosa:

- Turn Left onto 15th Street and travel for 2.2 miles
- Turn Right onto Greensboro Ave. and travel .4 miles
- First Presbyterian will be on your left between Paul W. Bryant Drive (10th St.) and Stillman Blvd (9th St.)
- **For the parking lot, Turn Left onto Paul W. Bryant Drive (10th Street). Cross over Lurleen Wallace Blvd N. and Turn Right into the parking lot**

* For assistance, call the First Presbyterian Church Office at (205) 752-3531.

**THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TUSCALOOSA
AUGUST 18, 2022**

- 09:00 A.M. **REGISTRATION**
- 09:45 A.M. **CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER** - Moderator, Susan Haskell
Organization - Declaration of a Quorum, Adoption of the Docket, Seating of
Corresponding Members, Welcome of First Time Commissioners, Welcome
of Visitors.
- 10:15 A.M. **CONSENT AGENDA**
1. To approve the Minutes of the May 19, 2022, stated Meeting.
2. To approve absences for today's meeting.
3. That an "Electronic Meetings Rule" be adopted for this meeting so that
virtual attendees seeking recognition from the Chair be allowed to un-
mute themselves and call for the attention of the Moderator for recognition
and obtaining the floor.
- 10:30 A.M. Welcome from the Host Church First Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa
Scripture/Sermon
Communion
Offering
- 11:20 A.M. Anti-Racism Committee Doc Feagin, Leanne Reed and Madison Roberts
- 12:00 P.M. Lunch
- 01:00 P.M. **RECONVENE/CALL TO ORDER** Moderator - Susan Haskell
- 01:05 P.M. General Presbyter's Report Sue Westfall
- 01:10 P.M. Commission on Ministry John Brock
- 01:25 P.M. Executive Council Debbie Feagin
- 01:45 P.M. Stated Clerk Search Committee Sissy Bain
- 02:10 P.M. Trustee's Report Terry Newland
- 02:25 P.M. Presbyterian Home for Children Doug Marshall
- 02:30 P.M. Living River Jenny Thagard
- 02:40 P.M. C.P.M. Kathy Wolf-Reed
- 03:00 P.M. Mission Coordinator Ralls Coston
- 03:15 P.M. Stated Clerk Report Peter Finley
- 03:20 P.M. Good news from Churches Peter Finley
- 03:15 P.M. New Business (Action Items Only) Peter Finley
- 03:20 P.M. General Assembly Commissioners Report
Joe Scrivner, Olympia McCrackin, Jim Toomey and Junmo Jeong
- 04:00 P.M. Adjournment with Prayer Moderator - Susan Haskell

Anti-Racism Report August 18, 1922

The book review of **Gather at the Table** has been well received. There have been more than thirty registrants. The discussion has been very good. The dates for the sessions are 7/14, 7/28, 8/11 and 8/25 at 6:00 pm. If you would like to join in on one of the remaining session, this is the Zoom information:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85197404493?pwd=b0FYK1NiNkgvN1hZTFhmdk9SVDJvZz09>

Meeting ID: 851 9740 4493

Passcode: 769266

Madison Roberts will give a synopsis of this book at the August Presbytery meeting.

Preaching About Racism

Equipping pastors to address racism faithfully from the pulpit

A study group for anyone involved in the ministry of preaching

In six one-hour sessions on Zoom, we'll discuss *Preaching About Racism: A Guide for Faith Leaders* by Carolyn B. Helsel, Associate Professor of Homiletics, Austin Theological Seminary. Speaking primarily to faith leaders who serve predominantly white congregations, Helsel addresses how to thoughtfully and effectively address racism from the pulpit. She provides strategies and a theoretical framework for crafting biblical and theological sermons that incorporate insights from social sciences and psychology, gleaned from more than a decade of writing and teaching about racism.

If you are interested in participating and are willing to commit to attending at least four of the six sessions, please register [here](https://forms.gle/KFU7gAFv5ntXNksA8) (<https://forms.gle/KFU7gAFv5ntXNksA8>) by August 24. You'll have a chance to indicate your preferred meeting times; the option that works for the most participants will be selected. If you have any questions, please contact Leanne Pearce Reed at leanne@svpcusa.org.

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General Presbyter Report, Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley August, 2022

Summer greetings to you! Here are some of the things I'm seeing this summer from where I sit:

- The BA.5 variant of Omicron (COVID) is really making the rounds this summer! While the virus is not as deadly as it was before vaccines were created (and the variant itself tends not to get deep into the lungs) people can still get quite sick, develop lasting effects, and at the very least, it is disruptive. I highly encourage churches in high infection areas return to wearing masks inside. It's a simple precaution and can be effective.
- We've been very grateful for Peter Finley who stepped into the temporary Stated Clerk position this January. He has been a big help and a joy to work with! Sadly, his term ends at the end of 2022. For this reason, the Executive Committee created a search committee for a new Stated Clerk. Their candidate is in their report for your vote. This would be for an installed, three-year term beginning in January.
- The 225th General Assembly of the PCUSA met this summer. We were ably represented by our commissioners, Jun Mo Jeong, Joe Scrivner, Jim Toomey, and Olympia McCrackin. They will report at this meeting. (I virtually attended the plenary meetings of the Assembly and, believe me, they have lots to tell you!)
- The Tech Team has experienced some transition in leadership as Chris Scott, the moderator, moved to Delaware. Chris did a great job leading this group! By God's good grace, John Heiser (South Highland) has stepped in as the new moderator. (Thank you, John!) A reminder that the Tech Team has [tech grants](#) for churches wanting to upgrade their technology. This link is also on the website.
- In June the presbytery provided planning, expertise, and support for yet another racial justice pilgrimage, this one for Central Presbyterian Church in Denver. Several other such pilgrimages are in the offing. This ministry is yet another way we are seeking to dismantle structural racism.
- Summer camping has been in full swing these past few months. Living River hosted creative, meaningful camps for our young people and families. Many thanks to Jenny and her excellent staff and all you great volunteers who served as counselors, chaplains, and nurses! Meanwhile, middle and highschoolers participated in soul stirring weeks at Montreat (Senior High) and Maryville (Middle School). Thank you to the pastors and other adults who served as sponsors, drove the van, prepared the meals and, in the case of Montreat, got the van fixed when it broke down in route! You all are amazing!
- The COM is offering two opportunities to fulfill the mandated sexual misconduct prevention training. They are offering two zoom Boundary Trainings led by Janell Ahnert, an HR attorney from First Pres, Birmingham. The dates are: Tuesday, October 18 at 6:00pm and Thursday, October 20 at 11:00am. Each training is an hour and a half long. Registration will begin in September.
- Many of our churches are concerned about attendance now that they are regularly meeting for worship in person. (Most of our churches which developed

a virtual presence during 2020 are continuing to offer that option as well.) A recent Barna study indicates that, indeed, the pandemic altered a person's worship attendance. Whereas before the pandemic people considered themselves active church participants if they attended worship twice a month, now they consider themselves active if they attend worship once every two months. Some people alternate between in-person and virtual attendance making them hard to "count". And in many cases even those largely absent from worship, still participate in the church's mission and service. And many Bible study and other small groups are actually seeing an increase in attendance! So take heart and stay faithful to proclaiming the gospel in word and in deed!

- The presbytery continues to pursue its Matthew 25 commitment to: **congregational vitality** with several churches participating in the Presbyterian Foundation's "Project Regeneration;" **eradicating systemic poverty**, for example, the Campaign which collects cans of food and financial resources for responding to hunger in their immediate communities (and many other food ministries hosted by our churches around the presbytery); **dismantling structural racism** with the Anti-Racism Committee hosting a book study for the presbytery around the book *Gather at the Table: The Healing Journey of a Daughter of the Slavery and a Son of the Slave Trade* (30 people are registered) and an offering coming up this fall for preachers on addressing racism from the pulpit. These are just a few of the many examples of our churches and the presbytery as a whole as we seek to witness and incarnate the Beloved Community.

That's it for now. As ever in prayer,

Sue

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Technology Grant Request

This form is intended to be used to request a grant that can help fund connectivity technology needs at your local church. Please DOWNLOAD and complete the PDF form and return it to presbytery at tstrickland@pslpcusa.org. The Tech Team will review the form and may contact you about specifics.

Your Church

Date

Your Name

Email

Phone

How is your church currently using technology to reach out to members and your community?

In what ways would you like to enhance or expand your use of technology to reach out?

What is your goal for this project? (select all that apply)

Live Streaming

Upgrade System

Add A/V System

Increase online presence

Other (specify)

List any specific tech or devices you have in mind, along with estimated cost and preferred vendor(s).

What is your time frame for completing the project?

How much can your church contribute for this project?

What amount are you requesting from presbytery?

----- TECH TEAM USE ONLY BELOW -----

Follow-up by:

Date:

(notes below)

AMOUNT APPROVED:

APPROVAL SENT TO PRESBYTERY OFFICE - DATE

COM Report
August 2022

Information:

1. Boundary Training, which is required for all ministers, CREs and members of COM and encouraged for all ruling elders, will be offered at two different times. One can attend on Tuesday, October 18, from 6 - 8 pm or on Thursday, October 20, from 11 am - 1 pm. Both offerings will be over Zoom. The cost will be \$25 per participant and there are scholarships available if needed.
2. Approved the Rev. Patsy Chaney, the Rev. Heather Jones Butler, and the Rev. Dr. Cary Speaker to labor outside the bounds of the Presbytery.
3. Gave permission for deNay Kirkpatrick, CRE, to officiate a wedding on November 11, 2022.
4. Appointed the Rev. Richard Hanna to moderate the session at Oakmont Chapel.
5. Approved the position of Student Life Coordinator at Stillman College be a validated ministry for any PC (USA) candidate or minister.

Action Item:

1. Examine the Rev. Rachel VanKirk Mathews for membership in the Presbytery and approve her position at Living River as a validated ministry in the Presbytery.

Rachel VanKirk Mathews - Statement of Faith

I believe in a Triune God who is the perfect communion of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. I believe in the incarnation of the Triune God as Jesus Christ whose birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection are the primary revelatory acts of God's creative and salvific power, spirit, hope, and love. I believe the merciful, liberative message and ministry of Jesus Christ unveiled the truth of God's kingdom as life abundant for all of creation. I believe in the union of the human and divine natures of Jesus that allowed him to both eat with the outcasts and heal the sick, to both suffer on the cross and rise from the dead. I believe in God, the creator of the universe, by whom all things and people were made good. God orders this world with scientific forces, affirms creation through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and opposes the violence of this world with non-violent attraction and love. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ demonstrate God's non-violent renunciation of the violence and death of this world. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God and of Jesus Christ, who spoke life into creation, wisdom into the prophets, and who speaks life and wisdom into us and our communities today.

I believe the earliest Christians gathered in response to the liberating, transformative power of faith in the Triune God as revealed through Jesus Christ. Like the earliest Christians, I believe every generation is empowered to reimagine our tradition. The canonical Scriptures, the means of grace through which God's Word is ever and anew received in the Christian community, is a partner with creation and human experience in understanding God's character and hope for the world. I believe in the priesthood of all believers. Every Christian is a minister of the Gospel and called to the same vocation of faithful living as disciples of Jesus Christ: generosity to the poor, mercy for the outcasts, and care for creation. The vocation of each person is lived out through every moment of their unique embodiment. Each person's vocation is a response to experiencing God's grace and a means through which grace is understood.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus affirmed creation in many ways, particularly through using the simple, mundane elements of life for holy rituals. It is ultimately God's everlastingly new and patient grace, demonstrated by the Lord's supper, a meal that is always waiting, that makes discipleship possible despite our humanity. The mystery of baptism, which imitates Jesus' dying and rising, is also a sign and seal of God's overflowing and generous grace. Remembering our baptism renews our understanding of ourselves as people with belonging both to this present world and to God's kingdom.

Rachel VanKirk Mathews - Faith Journey

My ancestors, family, and childhood context rooted and began my faith. My grandparents were Baptist, Presbyterian, and Catholic. They were generationally Southern and a second-generation Italian immigrant, from poverty and working class. My mom grew up in a Southern small-town her whole life just like her parents and my dad had lived all over the world thanks to the military. Amidst all this, I perceived a gracious balance of self-awareness, pride, belief, openness, and acceptance (of course, not always done perfectly amongst family), and so, I learned that there are many different and equally good ways to live faithfully.

I struggled during adolescence and my college years with depression, self-confidence, and a sense of internal restlessness. Though I had family, friends, teachers, and mentors I loved, I often felt overwhelmed by an unexplainable sense of placelessness. Luckily, I have had a handful of faith leaders throughout my life who taught those they led about God's love for all people and God's grace that is new each morning, giving unfettered, yet specific hope. And so, during dark moments, my deepest knowing of my belovedness and deepest sense of being ok was strong enough to bring me through. All that I experienced internally gifted me with a lot of empathy for all external situations, people, and parts of creation.

During seminary, our neighbors were a middle-aged, Black woman and her teenage son. After some time, she told me, she had decided to keep some distance between us when she first learned I was from Alabama. We talked more about her experiences and the wisdom in setting boundaries. She and the diversity of people- homeless friends, refugee farmers, teachers, and classmates, who I learned from in seminary humbled me in two ways. First, I learned many times over that God's image has an even greater width and depth that I've known yet. Second, God works in the world in relationship. No person is alone or does God's work alone. God is always in relationship with God's self, each person, and creation.

Every moment of our living is a part of our vocation, even the most mundane, in need of redemption, or unconscious. We always live by God's grace and hold the potential of God's love. Being a partner and parent reminds me of this truth daily. We mess up with each other often, yet we always remain wonderful and lovable. At my best, I remember this, and I remember all the stories of God treating the mundane and simple, even the profane, as holy that I was taught in childhood. Prayerfully, this posture and the wisdoms from the moments and people of my life point towards God's hope, grace, and love.

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 Rachel VanKirk Mathews Date 08/05/2022

Address 2909 Coatbridge Lane Birmingham, AL 35242

Phone numbers: Home _____ Cell (678)552-5111 Work _____

Email rvmathews@livingriver.org, rdvankirk@gmail.com

Place of employment (paid or volunteer) Living River: A Retreat on the Cahaba

How are you fulfilling the five criteria above?

I believe that Living River, as a ministry of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, is called to be a part of the Gospel work of the presbytery and its churches, not separate from it. Therefore, my work as Assistant Director for Development should not just answer the question, how does Living River grow in health and impact, but also, how is Living River a partner in God’s work being done by our pastors, churches, and presbytery? In partnership, I plan to seek to understand the needs of our pastors, churches, communities, and presbytery and discern the ways in which God is calling Living River to play its part in responding. *Together*, our discipleship, stewardship of God’s creation, and service to those in need will be done best and healthiest.

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

Are you engaged in serving the larger church (Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly)? If so, how? If not, on what Committee would you like to serve?

I do not currently serve on a larger church committee or as a part of a larger church body. I am open! Our presbytery could maybe use a Young Adult Clergy/Church workers Cohort...

If you are not an installed pastor, explain how you are related to a local congregation. You may use the back of the sheet to comment on your personal rationale for your ministry as meeting the criteria of G-2.0503 and any other comments you may wish to make.

I am not sure yet what church home will be the best fit for my family. However, I plan to be a friend and participant or leader in worship with as many of our presbytery's congregations as possible.

This position at Living River is ministry on an institutional level more than an interpersonal level. Even without the depth to the interpersonal relationships of a traditional pastoral position, working towards fidelity to the Gospel on an institutional level will still be ministry.

My understanding of ministry is very liberal. We can't know the ways in which God is working through our lives. Yet, the entirety of my work as Assistant Director for Development at Living River will be done with the intention of making God's kingdom real to the kids, youth, and adults we can reach by God's grace.

In what ways can the Commission on Ministry support you in your work during the coming year?

There are many skills that I will have to build in my role at Living River that members of the COM may already have (fundraising, development planning, etc.). I love learning and would love to learn from anyone willing to share and teach.

Please return by January 31, 2022 by mail (3603 Lorna Ridge Dr., Birmingham, AL 35216) or email (tstrickland@pslpcusa.org)

**Executive Council report to Presbytery
August 2022**

Class of 2022

Nan Adams*
Terry Hamilton-Poore*
Debbie Feagin*
Kathy Tracey

Class of 2023

Sissy Bain
Judith Baldwin
Susan Haskell
Neil McCarter*

Class of 2024

Tom Bryson*
Shirley Finley
Ed Hurley*
Donna Winn

In meetings held on May 11th, June 8, and July 13th:

The Council approved the Presbytery staffs' continuing to work in the office three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) and from home two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday), to be revisited in September.

The Council formed a Search Committee of Sissy Bain, Ed Hurley, and Donna Winn, with Ed Hurley serving as chair, for a new stated clerk to replace acting stated clerk Peter Finley who is retiring from this position at the end of the year. They received six resumes, conducted three interviews, and brought forward to Council their recommendation, which was unanimously endorsed for approval by Presbytery. They will make their recommendation to Presbytery for a vote at the August Presbytery meeting. If approved, this candidate will serve a three-year term beginning at the first of the year.

The Council approved two clarifying recommendations from the Board of Trustees as follows:

1. When the presbytery, upon the recommendation of its appointed commission, dissolves a church, the property of the dissolved church is placed in the care of the Board of Trustees for care until the property can be sold or otherwise conveyed. The Trustees must pay all expenses required to maintain the property, including the cost of preparing the property for sale. Since there is no separate budget for the Trustees to draw upon for this purpose, these expenses are paid from the presbytery's general fund. When the property is sold or otherwise conveyed, all accumulated expenses for maintaining the property while under the care of the Trustees shall be deducted from the net proceeds of the sale and placed back into the presbytery's general fund and used to cover other budgeted expenses of the presbytery. In any case where proceeds from the sale of property exceed the costs accumulated by the Trustees to maintain that property, these proceeds shall be distributed to other presbytery needs and priorities in a manner proposed by council and approved by presbytery. If former members of the dissolved church have recommendations regarding use of these funds, these recommendations shall be forwarded by the commission and/or Trustees to council for consideration. This same policy shall apply regarding the use of funds generated by the sale of property deeded or gifted to the presbytery, including legacy funds. Priorities for the use of all funds above and beyond reimbursement of accumulated costs accrued by the Trustees shall be determined by the presbytery itself upon recommendation of council.

2. (As amended) It is our recommendation at this time to retain the Presbytery Office and not put the building on the market. The cost to sell far outweighs the benefit to keep the structure. The building is paid for and the expenses that are in place are salaries, utilities, and *maintenance*. The cost to move to a church or another location would require not only rent for leasing space but also the purchase of equipment, office furniture, etc.

The Council's approved proposed amendment to the Standing Rules from the Personnel Committee regarding Designated Volunteer Positions, as amended at the May Presbytery meeting will be voted on, without discussion or amendment, for approval at the August Presbytery meeting. (See attached.)

The previously established temporary Standing Rules Subcommittee to look over the current Standing Rules as a whole and make suggestions regarding any other necessary or preferred changes continues to meet. (Members: Debbie Feagin, Peter Finley, Pat Goodman, Susan Haskell, and Bill Stribling. Suggestions from any Presbytery entity or individual are most welcome and should be addressed to any of the above members.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Feagin

Standing Rules Amendment proposal

SR-5.01 Staff

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

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

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

SR-5.0103 The General Presbyter shall supervise all staff in consultation with the Personnel Committee of the Executive Council.

Personnel policies and job descriptions will be *recommended by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Executive Council.*

Personnel policies shall include provisions as stated in G-3.0110.

SR-5.0104 When a vacancy occurs in any of the Presbytery's professional staff positions, the Executive Council shall be responsible for ensuring that essential functions of the Presbytery continue, and for assessing the mission and needs of the Presbytery. The Executive Council shall have the power to retain temporary and/or interim staff members. When the Executive Council determines that the needs of the Presbytery require a permanent General Presbyter or Associate Presbyter *or Stated Clerk* 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 *or Stated Clerk* search committee, with nominations permitted from the floor. After a search, the search committee shall present a candidate to the Presbytery for approval.

Hires for other staff positions shall be recommended by the General Presbyter in consultation with the Personnel Committee and authorized by the Executive Council.

SR-5.02 Designated Volunteer Positions

SR-5.0201 In some cases it may prove helpful or appropriate for certain volunteer positions in the Presbytery to be given a special designation or title such as "Coordinator". These volunteer coordinators are Presbytery staff, valued and integral to the ministry and mission of the Presbytery. They are not employees of the Presbytery.

SR-5.0202 Designated Volunteer Positions carry out their work under the direction of the General Presbyter in consultation with the Executive Council and are reviewed annually by the General Presbyter. The General Presbyter recommends the appointment, continuation or discontinuation of Designated Volunteer Positions to the Executive Council. The Executive Council annually authorizes all Designated Volunteer Positions.

SR-5.0203 In some cases Designated Volunteer Positions may be given an honorarium as a show of appreciation and to offset any expenses incurred. This honorarium may be provided in a lump sum or broken out into several disbursements. The General Presbyter recommends the amount of the honorarium to the Executive Council. The Executive Council annually authorizes all honorariums for Designated Volunteer Positions.

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley
Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Summary
January to June 2022

Accounts	MTD Actual (This Year)	MTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Budget/Actual (This Year)	Annual Budget (This Year)
Revenues						
General Fund	\$14,188.31	\$21,283.49	\$101,019.07	\$127,700.94	(\$26,681.87)	\$255,402.00
NCD Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mission Giving-Income	\$1,486.70	\$1,851.92	\$10,642.06	\$11,111.52	(\$469.46)	\$22,223.00
Per Capita Income	\$8,958.39	\$16,340.00	\$126,776.09	\$98,040.00	\$28,736.09	\$196,080.00
Total Revenues	\$24,633.40	\$39,475.41	\$238,437.22	\$236,852.46	\$1,584.76	\$473,705.00
Expenses						
Council						
Council Expenses-Other	\$375.00	\$1,064.58	\$10,750.00	\$6,387.48	(\$4,362.52)	\$12,775.00
Salaries & Allowances						
Executive Presbyter	\$8,440.46	\$9,909.67	\$57,019.50	\$59,458.02	\$2,438.52	\$118,916.00
Missional Development Exec	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Administrative Salaries	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$3,600.00
Benefits - Administration	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Staff Expenses	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00	\$3,600.00
Total Salaries & Allowances	\$8,440.46	\$10,509.67	\$58,819.50	\$63,058.02	\$4,238.52	\$126,116.00
Council Vocation Committees	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Council	\$8,815.46	\$11,574.25	\$69,569.50	\$69,445.50	(\$124.00)	\$138,891.00
Development	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equip, Nurture, Connect						
Other ENC Expenses	\$5,650.00	\$1,999.99	\$11,375.11	\$11,999.94	\$624.83	\$24,000.00
Total Equip, Nurture, Connect	\$5,650.00	\$1,999.99	\$11,375.11	\$11,999.94	\$624.83	\$24,000.00
Mission	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$300.00
UKirk Birmingham	\$1,794.16	\$2,460.84	\$15,871.79	\$14,765.04	(\$1,106.75)	\$29,530.00
Trustees	\$5,312.44	\$5,598.33	\$28,593.86	\$33,589.98	\$4,996.12	\$67,180.00
Presbytery Per Capita Expenses						
Stated Clerk & Moderator	\$1,726.16	\$1,846.65	\$8,866.04	\$11,079.90	\$2,213.86	\$22,160.00
Presbytery Commissions	\$432.00	\$558.34	\$5,076.01	\$3,350.04	(\$1,725.97)	\$6,700.00
Asst.to Stated Clerk/Ofc Mgr	\$4,860.95	\$4,854.15	\$29,165.70	\$29,124.90	(\$40.80)	\$58,250.00
Total Presbytery Per Capita Expenses	\$7,019.11	\$7,259.14	\$43,107.75	\$43,554.84	\$447.09	\$87,110.00
Per Capita-Expenses	\$4,759.15	\$8,705.91	\$67,349.86	\$52,235.46	(\$15,114.40)	\$104,471.00
Mission Giving-Expenses	\$1,486.70	\$1,851.92	\$10,642.06	\$11,111.52	\$469.46	\$22,223.00
Total Expenses	\$34,837.02	\$39,475.38	\$246,509.93	\$236,852.28	(\$9,657.65)	\$473,705.00
Net Operating Total	(\$10,203.62)	\$0.03	(\$8,072.71)	\$0.18	(\$8,072.89)	\$0.00
Other Revenues						
Designated Income (Loss)	\$3,968.59	\$0.00	\$3,094.02	\$0.00	\$3,094.02	\$0.00
Gain on Debt Forgiveness	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Other Revenues	\$6,518.06	\$0.00	\$18,454.49	\$0.00	\$18,454.49	\$0.00
Other Expenses						
Total Other Expenses	\$2,792.89	\$0.00	\$16,757.34	\$0.00	(\$16,757.34)	\$0.00
Net Total	(\$6,478.45)	\$0.03	(\$6,375.56)	\$0.18	(\$6,375.74)	\$0.00

NC report to presbytery

The Executive Council elected the Rev. Ed Hurley, elder Donna Winn, elder Sissy Bain and General Presbyter Rev. Sue Westfall to the Stated Clerk Search Committee at the June 2022 meeting. Sissy Bain was elected moderator. Our task was to find a qualified nominee to fill the Stated Clerk position beginning January 1, 2023, assuming the responsibilities from the Interim Stated Clerk Pete Finley whose term ends December 31, 2022.

We sent out the job description with an announcement asking potential candidates to respond with a letter of intent and a resume by July 1, 2022. Six highly qualified individuals responded including male, female, clergy, elders, actively working and retired. There was a wide range of ages and locations represented including one applicant from out of state.

The committee met for the first time to review the applicants on July 5, 2022 and agreed on the applicants we would interview that week. It became clear that any of these applicants would do an excellent job for the presbytery. We unanimously agreed to ask the EC to endorse the Rev. Jay Wilkins, HR as our nominee for Stated Clerk. A motion to endorse Jay's candidacy was made and approved by the Executive Council meeting on July 13, 2022 and we present him to you now as our candidate for a three year term as Stated Clerk beginning in January 2023.

Trustee Report

Motion for August 18 Presbytery Meeting -

Pending the congregation's approval on August 7th, the Trustees move that Grace Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa be allowed to enter into a loan agreement with the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP) in the amount of \$1,000,000.00. There are documents in the packet describing what the church wants to do and the amount it could possibly encumber the presbytery if they default on their loan. Grace has worked tirelessly with their own financial people and the financiers at the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program and everyone is satisfied that they have the means to make good on the loan and do the work to expand their ministry.



**Investment &
Loan
Program Inc.**

PRESBYTERIAN INVESTMENT & LOAN PROGRAM

100 Witherspoon Street * Louisville KY 40202-1396

(800) 903-7457 * website: pilp.pcusa.org

email: loan.help@pcusa.org

LOAN APPLICATION

RECEIVED

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY) _____

JUL 07 2022

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT BORROWER

ILP

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TUSCALOOSA

BORROWER'S NAME AS LISTED ON ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OR LATEST AMENDMENT TO ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

113 Hargrove Rd. Tuscaloosa AL 35401
STREET ADDRESS CITY ST ZIP

PO Box 1234 Tuscaloosa AL 35403
MAILING ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT THAN STREET ADDRESS CITY ST ZIP

(205) 758-1193 Tuscaloosa 12/2016 ✓
PHONE FAX COUNTY CHARTER DATE (MM/YYYY)

\$1,000,000 20 ASAP August 2022
LOAN AMOUNT REQUESTED LOAN TERM (YEARS) DESIRED CLOSING DATE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS FUNDS NEEDED BY

If church, whose name is on the title to the church property? ☒ CHURCH ☐ PRESBYTERY

If church, will church property serve as collateral for the loan? ☒ YES ☐ NO

Estimated value of land and buildings \$3,250,000 Number of acres 4.67

PURPOSE OF LOAN (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

NEW CONSTRUCTION

- ☐ SANCTUARY
☐ CHRISTIAN ED SPACE
☐ MULTI-PURPOSE BLDG
☐ ENERGY EFFICIENCY
☐ ACCESSIBILITY

RENOVATIONS/REPAIRS

- ☐ SANCTUARY
☐ CHRISTIAN ED SPACE
☐ MULTI-PURPOSE BLDG
☐ ENERGY EFFICIENCY
☐ ACCESSIBILITY
☐ SAFETY & TECHNOLOGY
☐ DISASTER RELIEF

PURCHASE

- ☐ EXISTING BLDG
☐ LAND/SITE
☐ NCD SITE

REFINANCE

- ☐ EXISTING MORTGAGE
☐ BOND ISSUE
☐ CONSTRUCTION LOAN

☒ OTHER PURPOSE OF LOAN Distribution center for food pantry ministry

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

7/7/22
DATE RECEIVED

15124
PIN NUMBER

642-Sheppards + Lapsley
PRESBYTERY NAME

115-Living Waters
SYNOD NAME

PASTOR/LEADERSHIP INFORMATION

CATHY C. HOOP

PASTOR/LEADERSHIP

January 1, 2017

START DATE

(615) 604-1226

PHONE

cathyhoop@gmail.com

EMAIL

How many head pastors have served this church (exclude Interims and associates)?

1

If current tenure less than 5 years, list previous call:

CHURCH, CITY, ST

FROM (YYYY)

TO (YYYY)

CHURCH, CITY, ST

FROM (YYYY)

TO (YYYY)

CONTACT FOR LOAN APPLICATION

MADELEINE M. HILL

NAME

Stewardship/Finance Chair

TITLE

(205) 344-2206

PHONE

mmhill2206@gmail.com

EMAIL

CLERK OF SESSION

ROBERT SPENCER

NAME

(205) 826-6132

PHONE

robspencer1952@outlook.com

EMAIL

APPLICANT'S ATTORNEY INFORMATION

N/A

APPLICANT'S ATTORNEY

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

FAX

EMAIL

☐ CHECK HERE IF YOU WOULD LIKE COPIES OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS SENT TO YOUR ATTORNEY FOR REVIEW.**BORROWER'S INSURANCE INFORMATION**

INSURANCE BOARD

AGENCY NAME

Amber Marshall

AGENT'S NAME

(484) 654-3386

PHONE

(484) 654-3386

FAX

amberm@sovinsurance.com

EMAIL

SECTION B: COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Factors expected to contribute to the growth or decline of your parish/community's population and economy.

The heart of Tuscaloosa is The University of Alabama with almost 39,000 students plus faculty and staff. Grace is about 3 miles from the UA campus in a neighborhood once characterized by economic decline. Then in 2011, tornadoes leveled a 6-mile stretch of town, including this area and our sanctuary. New apartments, homes, places of worship and businesses are still building, infusing new life into the blighted areas that includes ours. Some worshipers come from the neighborhood but also from many parts of town and beyond, attracted more by our emphasis on social justice and inclusion than by proximity to their residences. The employment rate is high and the area economy is healthy and growing, especially with the easing of pandemic restraints. We are optimistic about the potential for growth and expansion of Grace.

CHURCH DEMOGRAPHICS - CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- ☒ NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT <10 YEARS OLD
 ☐ RURAL/SMALL TOWN
☒ SUBURBAN
 ☐ FEDERATED/UNION CHURCH
☐ URBAN

PREDOMINANT ETHNICITY OF MEMBERS - STATISTICAL PURPOSES ONLY

- ☐ AFRICAN-AMERICAN
 ☐ MIDDLE EASTERN
 ☐ KOREAN-AMERICAN
☒ CAUCASIAN
 ☐ NATIVE AMERICAN
 ☐ OTHER ASIAN _____
☐ HISPANIC/LATINO
 ☐ MULTI-CULTURAL
 ☐ OTHER _____

SECTION C: CHURCH STATISTICAL INFORMATION

If your church participates in the General Assembly's Annual Statistical Report each year, the historical data for membership and average weekly attendance may be found on line at <https://church-trends.pcusa.org/church/search/>. From this page you can find your congregation. On subsequent page you have an option to view statistical information about your church if it has been submitted.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP		AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE		ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP BY AGE CATEGORIES	
2016	<u>'21-163</u>	2016	<u>'21-85</u>	% UNDER 45	<u>95</u>
2017	<u>191</u>	2017	<u>115</u>	% 45 TO 65	<u>53</u>
2018	<u>205</u>	2018	<u>125</u>	% OVER 65	<u>18</u>
2019	<u>214</u>	2019	<u>125</u>		
2020	<u>200</u>	2020	<u>118</u>		

What year was the membership roll last purged? 2021

PLEDGE INFORMATION - OPERATING BUDGET

	2 YEARS AGO	LAST YEAR	CURRENT YEAR
Number of potential pledging units in church	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>95</u>
Number that actually pledge	<u>54</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>59</u>

SECTION D: SOURCES OF REPAYMENT AND OTHER DEBT**BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN**

1. Total pledged to capital campaign _____ over _____ years. Number of pledges _____
2. Pledges will be paid over what period? from _____ to _____
3. Was your capital campaign directed by a professional campaign service? ☐ YES ☐ NO
4. If yes, what campaign service was used? _____
5. Are future building fund campaigns planned? ☐ YES ☒ NO
6. If yes, what are the dates? from _____ to _____
7. In prior capital campaigns, what percent of money pledged was actually received? _____
8. If you have not had a campaign recently, please check this box. ☒

PROJECTED NEW LOANS TO FUND THIS PROJECT (If exact information is not known, use anticipated information.)

LENDER	AMOUNT	LOAN RATE	TERM OF LOAN (years)	MONTHLY PAYMENT
N/A				
TOTALS:	\$0			\$0

CURRENT DEBT - LIST ALL CURRENT LOANS (Check any loans to be paid by new ILP loan.)

LENDER	ORIGINAL AMOUNT	CURRENT BALANCE	MONTHLY PAYMENT	MATURITY DATE	LOAN RATE
No debts since merger in 2017					
TOTALS:	\$0	\$0	\$0		

SECTION E: SITE LOAN DATA (fill in only if loan request is for land purchase)

SELECT ONE:

- ☐ NEW CHURCH DEVELOPEMENT SITE
 ☐ RELOCATION SITE (ATTACH EXPLANATION REGARDING DISPOSITION OF CURRENT PROPERTY)
 ☐ ADDITION TO CURRENT SITE

HOW WILL SITE BE USED?

N/A

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS - SITE LOAN ONLY

1. SOIL TEST RESULTS FOR COMPACTION AND PERCOLATION
2. CONTRACT OF SALE (IF AVAILABLE)
3. REAL ESTATE CLOSING DOCUMENTS (IF PURCHASE HAS BEEN COMPLETED, FORWARD CLOSING STATEMENT, DEED)
4. PROOF OF ZONING COMPLIANCE
5. APPRAISAL WILL BE REQUIRED BEFORE LOAN CAN BE CLOSED

SECTION F: FINANCIAL PLAN - PROJECT COSTS & SOURCES**FOR PURCHASE OF A SITE OR EXISTING BUILDING****1. PURCHASE PRICE OF BUILDING/SITE**

a. AMOUNT OF SQUARE FOOTAGE IN BUILDING

a. _____

b. NUMBER OF ACRES OF SQUARE FOOTAGE OF LAND

b. _____

c. APPRAISED VALUE - ATTACH COPY OF APPRAISAL

c. _____

1. _____

FOR CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATIONS OR REPAIRSSIZE - IN SQ. FT. 2,363COST PER SQ. FT. \$5201. CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT PRICE ☐ ESTIMATED ☐ FIRM1. \$1,230,000

2. ARCHITECT'S FEES

2. \$92,250

3. FURNISHINGS, EQUIPMENT, PARKING, PAYMENT & PERFORMANCE BONDS, INSURANCE - 10% OF CONTRACT PRICE SUGGESTED

3. \$123,000

4. CONTINGENCIES - 15% OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT PRICE SUGGESTED

4. \$184,5005. OTHER ANTICIPATED EXPENSES Unknown Increase in market forces5. \$243,000

6. TOTAL PROJECT COST

6. \$1,872,750**RESOURCES TO FUND PROJECT****CHURCH'S CASH & PLEDGE RESOURCES**

1. CASH ON HAND FROM CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PLEDGES

1. \$65,5002. CASH ON HAND FROM OTHER SOURCES - SPECIFY SOURCE New Covenant & Raymond James Investments2. \$756,075

3. CASH ALREADY EXPENDED ON THE PROJECT

a. FROM CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROCEEDS

3a. \$0

b. FROM OTHER RESOURCES

3b. \$51,175

4. ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TO BE SPENT DURING CONSTRUCTION

4. \$0**GIFTS & GRANTS**

5. PRESBYTERY GIFTS & GRANTS

5. \$0

6. SYNOD GIFTS & GRANTS

6. \$0

7. OTHER GIFTS & GRANTS _____

7. \$0**OTHER LOANS TO FUND THIS PROJECT**

8. PRESBYTERY LOAN

_____ YEARS @ _____ INTEREST _____ MO/PMT

8. _____

9. SYNOD LOAN

_____ YEARS @ _____ INTEREST _____ MO/PMT

9. \$0

10. BANK (COMMERCIAL) MORTGAGE

_____ YEARS @ _____ INTEREST _____ MO/PMT

10. \$0

11. OTHER LOANS

_____ YEARS @ _____ INTEREST _____ MO/PMT

11. \$0

SPECIFY LENDER _____

12. TOTAL RESOURCES - TOTAL ITEMS 1 - 11

12. \$872,750

13. LOAN AMOUNT NEEDED (TOTAL PROJECT - TOTAL RESOURCES)

13. \$1,000,000

14. GRAND TOTAL RESOURCES (LINE 12 PLUS 13 - SHOULD EQUAL PROJECT COST LINE 6)

14. \$1,872,750

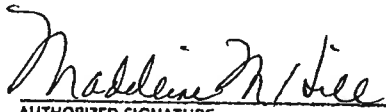
SECTION G: AUTHORIZATION**CHURCH/BORROWER**

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that all statements made herein, are applicable to the organization for which we are signing and are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief. We further certify that this application is submitted with the full knowledge and approval of the official governing board we represent.

We also grant permission to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Investment and Loan Program, Inc., if the loan is funded in whole or in part by investor funds, to use our name and loan information in the production of the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program's informational brochures and promotions, including but not limited to, interviews with the press and list sent to the investors or potential investors.

We also agree to periodically place in the congregation (or governing body) newsletters, bulletin inserts and other communication vehicles material promoting the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program that will include information provided by or preapproved by the Program.

IT IS REQUIRED THAT A COPY OF THIS LOAN APPLICATION BE FORWARDED TO YOUR
PRESBYTERY AND SYNOD, WHEN APPLICABLE.



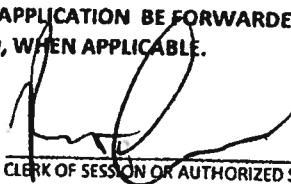
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

Madeleine M. Hill, Stewardship/Finance Chair

TYPED OR PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

7/25/2022

DATE



CLERK OF SESSION OR AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

Robert Spencer, Clerk of Session

TYPED OR PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

07/25/2022

DATE

PRESBYTERY

RE: LOAN APPLICATION FOR GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TUSCALOOSA

ON 07/19/2022 (DATE) THE PRESBYTERY OF Sheppard's & Lapsley IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
POLICIES OF THE INVESTMENT & LOAN PROGRAM AND ITS OWN PROCEDURES:

- * REVIEWED AND APPROVED THIS PROJECT AS TO ITS MISSION FOR THE BORROWER AND/OR THE GOVERNING BODY
- * REVIEWED AND APPROVED THE FINANCIAL PLAN AS FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE:
- * AGREED TO MONITOR THE APPLICATION OF THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS APPROPRIATE TO THIS PROJECT:

* HAS/WILL AGREE (D) AT ITS LAST/NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING HELD ON/TO BE HELD ON August 19, 2022 (DATE) TO
GUARANTEE/CO-SIGN THE LOAN(S) AND TO ASSUME REPAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY IN THE EVENT OF LOAN DEFAULT.



PRESBYTERY EXECUTIVE/STATED CLERK

07/19/2022

DATE

SYNOD - Not required in Synods of Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, South Atlantic, or Trinity

ON _____ (DATE) THE SYNOD OF _____ ENDORSED THIS APPLICATION
FOR FUNDING AS REQUESTED (SYNOD ENDORSEMENT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL LOAN APPLICATIONS INCLUDING LOANS TO PRESBYTERIES,
EXCEPT AS STATED ABOVE).

SYNOD EXECUTIVE/STATED CLERK

DATE

Date : 07/07/2022
Time : 4:48:21 AM

Grace Presbyterian Church
Balance Sheet
June 2022

Accounts

Assets		
Checking Accounts		
1000 - GRACE OPERATING ACCOUNT	\$49,228.53	
1004 - BANK FIRST MONEY MARKET	\$20,082.28	
1006 - VISIONS OF GRACE	\$65,393.04	
Total Checking Accounts		\$134,703.85
INVESTMENTS		
1001 - RAYMOND JAMES OPERATING	\$1,671,115.01	
1002 - RAYMOND JAMES ANN INGLET	\$251,295.73	
1003 - RAYMOND JAMES RESTRICTED	\$266,310.74	
1007 - NEW COVENANT OPERATING	\$1,423,857.61	
1009 - NEW COVENANT ANN INGLET	\$278,300.81	
Total INVESTMENTS		\$3,890,879.90
Properties		
1010 - GRACE PRESBYTERIAN SITE	\$2,371,600.00	
1011 - GP PARKING & CONTIGUOUS LOTS	\$304,000.00	
Total Properties		\$2,675,600.00
Total Assets		\$6,701,183.75
Liabilities, Fund Principal, & Restricted Funds		
Liabilities		
3001 - AL TAXES	(\$443.00)	
3002 - FEDERAL WITHHOLDING	\$1,246.43	
3003 - Medicare	\$272.40	
3004 - Social Security	\$1,164.74	
Total Liabilities		\$2,240.57
Fund Principal		
2999 - GENERAL FUND BALANCE	\$6,695,163.62	
Excess Cash Received	\$3,779.56	
Total Fund Principal and Excess Cash Received		\$6,698,943.18
Total Liabilities, Fund Principal, & Restricted Funds		\$6,701,183.75

HANDOUT:**Key Accomplishments**

2019-2021

2022-2024
**PHFC STRATEGIC
 PLANNING RETREAT**

During our recent Strategic Planning Retreat for the Presbyterian Home for Children, we took the opportunity to look back over the last 3 years at our Key Accomplishments that we shared together in mission partnership with the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley for our calling to at-risk and homeless children and families – now in our 154th year. Here are some of those Key Accomplishments for 2019-2021.

Thanks be to God!

Doug Marshall
 President and CEO
 Presbyterian Home for Children

2019-2021 Accomplishments

- ❖ PHFC was relicensed as a Child Care Institution on April 27, 2021 (Two years) PHFC was relicensed as a Child Placing Agency on November 28, 2020 (Two years)
- ❖ PHFC received an SDHR Certification of Compliance on November 1, 2020 (One year) This was a clean audit.
- ❖ PHFC received EAGLE reaccreditation/certification January 1, - December 31, 2021
- ❖ PHFC received accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA) for June 2020 – June 2024. (Now known as Social Current)
- ❖ Moderate Care Residential Treatment Program received a clean SDHR Contract Audit in 2021
- ❖ Moderate Care Residential Treatment Program received an SDHR Contract Renewal in 2019
- ❖ Family Bridges Intensive In-Home Services Program received an SDHR Contract Renewal in 2021 with a 30% slot increase for service to families. Celebration of 5-year anniversary.
- ❖ PHFC leadership participated in three Eagle Peer Reviews in 2021 for children's homes in other states.

HANDOUT:**Key Accomplishments**

2019-2021

2022-2024

**PHFC STRATEGIC
PLANNING RETREAT**

- ❖ Doug Marshall was elected to the National United Methodist Association Board in December 2021 for Health and Welfare Ministries in addition to serving on the EAGLE Accreditation Commission.
- ❖ PHFC implemented its COVID-19 Policy to include an infirmary and cottage quarantine. Both were utilized from the onset of the first COVID-19 and subsequent cases to manage risk and restore the health of our children and staff.
- ❖ In 2020, Ascension Leadership Academy receives continued accreditation through AdvancED which has unified under the name Cognia and remains the largest educational accreditation agency. Ascension Leadership Academy is fully accredited by Cognia through June 2024.
- ❖ Due to a statewide shelter-in-place mandate issued to assist in the management of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Ascension Leadership Academy transitioned from in-person study to virtual study March-May 2020. We re-opened for in-person classes in the fall of 2020 and have remained open while other schools throughout the state have not.
- ❖ Ascension Leadership Academy has continued our Friday activities and has been able to offer trips locally, and to DeSoto Caverns and The Pumpkin Patch. We have also been able to continue our Friday painting and cooking classes.
- ❖ Last year we had to suspend our Dual Enrollment classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, four students attended fall semester in-person Dual Enrollment classes at Central Alabama Community College (CACC). Each student took two classes, earned 6-semester hours of credit, and earned five A's and one B(89). Three students are continuing their studies in the spring semester. Each student is taking three classes and will earn an additional 9-semester hours of college credit. Our one residential student, from the fall, could not continue due to moving to another location in the state.
- ❖ Our K-6 program has multi-grade classes to meet the student's needs, offering learning through textbooks, Accelerated Reader, worksheets, Path blazers and other online programs using their iPad.

HANDOUT:

Key Accomplishments

2019-2021

2022-2024
PHFC STRATEGIC
PLANNING RETREAT

- ❖ In 2020 and 2021, Sharon Moore and the Transitional Living Team have built a new, broad network for referrals which is very significant and represents much leadership and hard work to help ensure future success.
- ❖ In 2020 and 2021, Cordelia Stanley and the Moderate Care Team have successfully navigated very difficult waters with the pandemic, changes at SDHR, and increasingly more difficult and complex group of teen girls
- ❖ Hosted the SLP Presbytery meeting virtually in November of 2021 with The Rev. Leeann Scarbrough leading worship.
- ❖ Changing the Therapist position from part-time to full-time to meet the residents' needs.
- ❖ Increasing hourly pay rates for Adolescent Care Workers to make them more competitive and comparative with agencies in the area
- ❖ Adding an additional full-time Adolescent Care Worker to the 2nd shift to promote consistency
- ❖ Comprehensive Safety and ADA Walk-Thru at no cost by Tom Reburn (formerly with Spire) and Lisa Reburn (formerly with UAB)
- ❖ Implemented a new Simple IRA Plan and Flexible Spending Benefit Plan for employees
- ❖ Replaced ST disability insurance plan with a stronger ST and LT disability insurance policy with Guardian.
- ❖ Mission Outreach to children and youth in extreme poverty in Wilcox County beginning Christmas 2020 thru Christmas 2021 and including Valentine's Day, Easter, Summer Mentoring, July 4th, Back to School, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. Extended outreach to children and youth in Marengo County for Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas in 2021
- ❖ Successful transition of new leadership at the Home: Bud Kitchin, Jennifer Braxton, Cindy Fisher, Carl Martin, and Bridgette Jacobs
- ❖ Built our first Junior Board based in Birmingham in 2019

HANDOUT:**Key Accomplishments**

2019-2021

2022-2024

**PHFC STRATEGIC
PLANNING RETREAT**

- ❖ Hosted our first Sweet Home Soiree for Birmingham in August of 2019 with net proceeds of \$60K.
- ❖ Hosted our Sweet Home Soiree for Huntsville in February of 2020 with net proceeds of \$40K
- ❖ Hosted a Virtual Sweet Home Soiree in April of 2021 at First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa with net proceeds of \$50K
- ❖ Added a Junior Board in Huntsville and in Mobile, both in 2021
- ❖ Transformed Hope Lodge from a guest cottage to housing TAL residents in 2020
- ❖ Felicia Ayers Storey was named One of 25 Women Who Shape the State for 2020 and One of the Top 50 over 50 in central Alabama for 2021.
- ❖ Maintained a balanced budget for 2019-2021.
- ❖ Celebrated our 4th CMP Annual 5K and 1K Fun Run with the entire Lincoln High School Track Team joining us
- ❖ Started the Sequel to the Historical 100-Year Blue Book in 2021
- ❖ Significantly increased our grant applications and resulting success rate for PHFC operating grants and Union Village capital grants
- ❖ Added Northington Cottage to Phase 1 of Union Village in late 2019.
- ❖ Built the first Union Village tiny home duplex in 2019 and the second duplex in 2021.
- ❖ Secured grant funding from Regions Foundation and the City of Talladega for the third duplex with construction beginning in 2022
- ❖ Secured significant and positive media coverage on the Home, Ascension Leadership Academy, and Union Village which included [al.com](#); Alabama News Center; ABC3340 with James Spann on Ascension, WVUA-23 with Mike Royer's story on Don Hagan's Coast to Coast Bike Ride, Presbyterian News Service, Presbyterian Foundation, The Daily Home; and The Anniston Star

HANDOUT:**Key Accomplishments**

2019-2021

2022-2024

**PHFC STRATEGIC
PLANNING RETREAT**

- ❖ Created a monthly e-newsletter to share what is going on at the Home for thousands of current/potential supporters.
- ❖ Featured in "Alabama: The Bicentennial", an official book produced by the Alabama Department of Archives, and in "The Mask Project", an international art display by renowned artist, Jessica Perez.
- ❖ Leadership Development and DISC profile/training in 2020.
- ❖ Built and launched a new, separate website for Ascension Leadership Academy which was designed as a school website for interacting with parents and the public.
- ❖ In March 2021, launched a comprehensive effort to reduce IT Risk and expand capacity across the organizational footprint. The main campus is served by a 1x1 Gigabit Mbps data distribution. Managed Campus and School Wi-Fi system Controller & Commercial Access Point that now includes Union Village. Implemented a Managed Services Program for IT Help desk for the staff and 24/7/365 monitoring of network security and equipment health. Installed new "Restricted Access" controls to limit the ability to reach harmful external content at the switch level. Local and cloud data backup has been implemented to provide secure, off-premises data backup for improving disaster recovery and reducing risk.
- ❖ Implemented a Managed Services Program for IT Help desk for the staff and 24/7/365 monitoring of network security and equipment health. Installation of Commercial-grade anti-virus software that can be managed and deployed remotely to make certain things are running smoothly, safely, and protected against the ever-increasing threat of cybercrime, hacking, and trojan viruses.
- ❖ Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) Phone System connecting the Home and School with one system was completed.
- ❖ Collaborating with AIDB to improve occupancy and help promote Union Village to the surrounding community as well as the State. Shared security camera access with AIDB Union Village Staff. UV Staff will have visibility to all security cameras at the Village via their smartphones and office desks. Completion of the Men's restroom renovation at Jordan Cottage.
- ❖ Facility Improvements during the last 12 months include: Johnson Cottage Renovation completed and received SDHR compliance, upgraded bedroom furniture and paint at Robinson Cottage, renovated Uptain to house 3 moms with small children, Robinson and Hope Cottages received new roofing.

HANDOUT:

Key Accomplishments

2019-2021

2022-2024

PHFC STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

- ❖ The 2021-2022 Volunteer Program, despite Covid-19 saw over 370 youth and adult volunteers to campus to assist and improve our facility. The Student Life program provided 320 volunteers to help with grounds, facility, and thrift store improvement projects. Corporate Service days, Sunday School groups and energetic individuals provided hundreds of hours of gratuitous labor! Spire, Harmon Dennis and Bradshaw, George Fritsma, and Stan Cowan's paint teams generously provided hundreds of hours of facility improvement.



LIVING RIVER
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

**August 2022
Newsletter**



Summer Camp 2022 Memories
Thanks be to God for a great Summer!



Summer 2022 Camp Statistics

- 4 weeks of kids and youth camp
- 104 campers
- 8 awesome counselors
- 16 adult volunteers
- 14 Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley churches represented



From our Counselors

"This past June was one of the best months of my life! All of these children mean so much to me. Being around them and being in nature and being connected to God meant so much to me. Living River will always hold a very special place in my heart." - Alison Jenkins

"This summer as a camp counselor meant putting others before yourself and serving God through shared moments of laughter and love. The memories and experiences that I made will stay with me for a lifetime, and I am so beyond blessed to have gotten the opportunity to meet so many wonderful and kind people through this process. This summer has been one of the most memorable gifts that I have received, and for that, I am so thankful." - Abby Boldy



Upcoming at Living River

Fall PSL Youth Retreat

Save the Date! Oct. 15-16. All 6th-12th graders are welcome to the Fall Presbytery Youth Retreat! More details to come from the Presbytery's Youth Council.

October Open House

Join us on Oct. 23 from 2-5 pm for an afternoon of Fall activities and volunteer opportunities at Living River including a class, Pumpkin trail chase, Living River trunk or treat, and festive gift exchanges and smores. If you or a group you know are interested in doing a short volunteer job that afternoon, email smallrow@livingriver.org. We hope you'll plan to join us!

Fall Elementary Retreat

Save the Date! Veterans Day Weekend. All 1st-5th graders are welcome to the Fall Presbytery Elementary Retreat!

Clean Out the Closets Christmas Sale

Over the years, beautiful pottery and art have been donated to Living River. This Christmas, we want to honor these as well as a Christmas sale! All the proceeds will go towards the ministry of Living River.

Do you have art you'd like to donate to the Christmas sale fundraiser? Email smallrow@livingriver.org by October 1st. Sale will begin November 1st with details in our November newsletter and website.

Financial Health and How You Can Help

Living River Budget Report				
YTD to Date (through 8/22)				
	Budgeted Amount	Actual	Variance	2022 Annual Budget
Operating Budget				
Programs	\$18,945	\$14,441	\$4,504	\$10,000
Rel. Fund Programs		\$5,473	\$547	\$1,000
Administrative		\$9,918	\$65	\$20,000
Facilities		\$12,000	\$1,033	\$5,000
Other	\$100	\$1,710	\$1,610	\$500
	\$19,045	\$31,642	\$12,597	\$36,500
Unrestricted Funds				
Presbytery Support	\$14,425	\$1,453	\$12,972	\$20,000
Presbytery Support	\$8,148	\$2,423	\$5,725	\$5,000
Grants	\$25	\$2,771	\$2,746	\$5,000
Presbytery Support		\$3,291	\$3,266	\$5,000
Other	\$100	\$1,450	\$1,350	\$5,000
	\$14,698	\$10,948	\$3,750	\$35,000

Financial Highlights:

- This year, without COVID-related loans, Living River needs to increase its annual donations. We've raised only 35% of our budgeted amount for the year.
- Living River's mortgage sits at just \$317,968.22.

How Can You Help? Become a Living River Bedrock Sustaining Donor



Living River's Bedrock of Sustaining Donors give to cover operational costs so other revenue sources are freed to grow its ministry. Currently, Living River's annual giving covers just 20% of operational costs.

Become a Living River Bedrock donor by giving \$25 a month or \$300 annually, strengthening Living River's foundation! Donations can be made online or by mailing a check to the camp. Sustaining Donors will be recognized annually. Thank you!

Executive Director's Corner

Looking back at camp this summer, I am amazed at how God works through so many to bring our campers, volunteers, and counselors into a relationship with God and each other. Watching our campers faithfully struggle with this summer's Bible stories was a joy I wish you all could experience. Seeing the relationships that are formed, the tears upon leaving the camp community, the pride of trying something new; creating space for counselors to grow in their faith and their skills; hearing the laughter of kids playing outside, the splash of jumping off the swim dock or wading in the Cahaba River, and the sound of the camp song completely led by campers; tasting the sweetness of that first and last s'more, all of these are gifts from God that carry me through the rest of the year. This summer also brought several large rental groups, for which I am most grateful. Looking forward, there is much good imagining work to be done with our Board and our new Assistant Director for Development, as we plan to sustain Living River's operations and move from surviving to thriving. Look forward with me as we do what we can to realize the dream of the gift that Living River can be to our congregations, our community, our Presbytery, our state, and the world. Join us in this ministry! -Jenny Thagard

Thank you to...

Volunteer Camp Staff: Andy Spaulding, Grace Daniels, Robert Hay, Joe Genau, Laura Bannon, Shirley Finley, Lorino Hendricks, Lili Kane, Nick Reed, Emily Roberts, Patrick Riley, Paula Neighbors, Cathy Hoop, Jane Shipley, Jonathan Yarboro, and Pat Goodman. **Construction and Save-the-Day Volunteers:** Charlie Durham, Mike Henderson, Kyle Neighbors, Shane Elmore, Park Grimmer, Carolyn Ashworth, Lin Veasey, Cahaba Riverkeeper, David Butler, Cahaba River Society staff, Wil Rainer, Gordon Black, and Hunter.

Living River wishes the best for our former Facilities Director, Paul Fancher, as he moves on to a job with the City of Alabaster. Paul has provided a wealth of knowledge and skills as he took great care of the Living River property and facilities. He will be greatly missed.



LIVING RIVER
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

2000 Living River Parkway
Montevallo, AL 35115



The Presbytery Of Sheppards And Lapsley
Report Of The Commission on Preparation For Ministry – August 2022

INQUIRERS

Annabelle Beavers
Peyton Chandler
Abby Gatliff
Cort Gatliff
Beom Joseph Jung
Daniel Killilea
Kendra Grace-Love
Madison Vaughn

CHURCH

First, Tuscaloosa
Independent, Birmingham
South Highland, Birmingham
South Highland, Birmingham
Auburn-Opelika Korean, Opelika
South Highland, Birmingham
Grace, Tuscaloosa
Grace, Tuscaloosa

INSTITUTION

Union (Richmond)
Vanderbilt
Graduate - Beeson
Graduate - Beeson
Columbia
Louisville
Candler
Graduate - Columbia

CANDIDATES

Bennett Alldredge
Patrick O'Connor
Avery Arden
Barbara Tomek-White

First, Tuscaloosa
Immanuel, Montgomery
Grace, Tuscaloosa
First, Auburn

Graduate - Princeton
San Francisco
Graduate - Louisville
Graduate - Austin

FOR INFORMATION:

FOR ACTION:

- 1) The CPM recommends that Inquirer Peyton Chandler be advanced to the Candidacy stage of the ordination process.
- 2) The CPM recommends the following ordination exam readers for approval:
 - a. Teaching Elder Kathy Wolf Reed
 - b. Ruling Elder (TBA at meeting)
 - c. Alternate, Teaching Elder Rick Atkerson

Submitted on behalf of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry:

Rick Atkerson (2022), Caroline Barnett (2024), Jim Bannon (2024), Joe Genau (2023), Shelley Hancock (2023), Sheila Holland (2024), Gillie Presley (2022), Kathy Wolf Reed (2023), Leeann Scarborough (2022), Andy Spaulding (2024), Adrienne Stokes (2022), and Lee Walthall (2023).

Respectfully,

Rev. Kathy Wolf Reed, Moderator

Peyton Chandler: Faith Journey

As I continue to progress in my vocational call to ordained pastoral ministry, I often reflect on how I got here.” In these reflections, I have come to ponder my own agency in this everchanging, ever in-motion process that is preparation for ministry. Agency” is one of those seminary buzzwords that gets thrown around quite a bit, but a word that, nonetheless, feels operative here. I have certainly “come a long way” even while such a long road remains ahead of me. And through exercising my own agency (making decisions, leaning on the support of community, knowing what I will and will not pursue, trusting myself, etc.) I’ve developed a healthier balance of confidence and humility throughout this process.

As many members of this Presbytery know (as well as my larger network of ministry colleagues), the sudden death of my brother Zack in November of 2016 was the event that “sparked” my “spiritual awakening” (as I affectionately refer to it), which served as the catalyst to my call to the church. In 2017, after graduating from college with a B.A. in English, I worked for a short time doing editorial work before shifting my career focus to advertising. I quickly realized, however, that even in that shift, I was prolonging the inevitable—I knew I was experiencing “a call” to theological education and pastoral ministry. In eventually taking action and applying to divinity school, I took what might be called “the first steps” in exercising my own vocational agency. Of course, I exercised *some* agency in leaving the world of editorial to take my first advertising job. But as I reflect on that season of my life, it is clearer now that I pursued advertising simply because it was something *different*. In that shift, I never felt that advertising was something I actually wanted to do. In my earliest stages of ministry as a student at Beeson Divinity School (where I spent three semesters before transferring to Vanderbilt Divinity School), I experienced my first real, deep connection with my own vocational agency in a way that also felt spiritually challenging and significant. This belief that I held some control of my own situation eventually led me to leave Beeson and transfer to Vanderbilt (VDS)—a place much more in-line with the progressive theologies that seem most connected to my spiritual formation and vocational future in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Had I not taken hold of my own situation; had I not allowed myself to be guided by my friends and colleagues in the PCUSA; had I not trusted that God’s plan for me would continue to become clearer, I would never have “come this far.”

This concept of agency also intersects very directly with community, as I have come to experience it over the past several months. I have connected very deeply with my classmates and

professors at VDS. And in these formations of deep connection, I continue to observe and experience myself as “agent” over my own situation (I am currently experiencing the fruit of *choosing* to come to VDS and *choosing* to invest in the lives of this community). The community I have found at VDS has done as much for my faith journey as anything else, up to this point. In this school, I have developed what feel like lifelong friendships with classmates and professors alike and have been challenged to grow my theology in ways I could never have expected before moving to Nashville. Further (and continuing in this theme of agency), in my current Field Education internship at 2nd Presbyterian Church (2PC), I have been afforded a great deal of freedom to make decisions, ask questions, and to “do” ministry work—an experience which continues to add fuel to this, my ongoing faith journey. At 2PC, I have been encouraged to be very active in crafting the parameters of my internship as that which is helping me reimagine what vocational ministry might look like for me.

In navigating VDS (and 2PC, by extension), I have occasionally reflected back on those earlier seasons of my non-ministry careers in editorial and advertising, my time at Beeson Divinity School, and on the lack of direction I experienced during those seasons of seeking and inquiring. In reflecting, I am reminded of the words of May Sarton, as shared by Parker Palmer. These words about the quest for vocation, carefully chosen and artfully woven, feel directly relevant to my own arrival upon the “right vocational track” of pastoral ministry. Now I become myself. It’s taken time, many years and places. I have been dissolved and shaken, worn other people’s faces” (Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, 9). With great intimacy do I relate to these words. In my life, I’ve often struggled to accept myself and trust that others would accept me exactly as I am. But, throughout the personal struggles and the isolation of the pandemic, and in this new and sacred community at VDS, I have come such a long way in “wearing my own face,” so to speak. And in continuing to prepare for ministry, and finally beginning to “become myself,” I look to my future with eyes of optimism and clarity. I am still fearful and confused about a great many things. But I am no longer as afraid to ask myself, “What do I *really* want to do, and *why*?” I have yet to arrive at a final, definitive answer. But what feels most significant is that I feel myself more and more able to rest in the questions themselves—the questions have brought me this far, and so the questions will continue to carry me forward.

Peyton Chandler: Statement of Faith

God: I believe in the triune God: Father/Mother, Son, and Holy Spirit—that which was from the beginning and sustains all of creation. To confess God in its *threeness* is to bear witness to the fact that God has met us in particular moments, in particular ways (as Father/Mother, as Son, and as Holy Spirit). God's triune nature, then, is an invitation for us to see the particularities of our lives as both divine and connected to God's nature. God is "with us" to challenge, shape, and transform us with God's radical, confounding, all-embracing love. The *community* of the three persons of God illustrates that, for God, community and relationality are primary. When God is understood to be a community, we reflect God's image when we live in relation to the rest of creation.

Jesus: I believe in Jesus Christ—the Son of God who instructs us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Christ *is* love. Through the person of Jesus, God united God's self to humanity, becoming "one of us." In so doing, God entered into our human condition not to provide criteria for establishing appropriate hierarchies, but to lift us up to fellowship with the Divine. Further, I believe that Jesus Christ is *most* intimately concerned with healing and liberation from suffering. This figure, Christ, is not a concept or proposition. Rather, Christ is "an event of liberation"—a happening in the lives of those who struggle for hope in the midst of suffering. There is no truth in Jesus Christ independent of human suffering.

Holy Spirit: I believe in a wild and untamable Holy Spirit—one that blows where it wills. We ourselves can never know the full range of the Spirit's activities. We cannot prescribe the Spirit's comings or goings, nor can we understand its ways. The work of the Spirit is no less legitimate, even when it exceeds, surpasses, or disrupts our own conceptions. We *cannot* prescriptively close the door to God's wider work that may be unfolding through the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Scripture offers a framework for us to deepen our connection to things divine, always with an eye towards discovering something new. I believe scripture's central purpose is to deepen, in us, a double love of God and neighbor. When scripture is used for an end that is alternative to such love, scripture is being misunderstood and misused. Scripture can both create *and* destroy—both liberate *and* enslave—both build up *and* tear down. If our reading of scripture is not rooted in the law of love—that is, if it does not lead us to deeper, more inclusive love in the earthly community, there is, then, something inherently flawed in our reading.

Sacraments: In the sacrament of baptism, we are called to a new way of life as Christ's disciples. God claims us as God's own through the deep well of mystery found in the water. Throughout our lives, as we remember our baptism, we are reminded to whom we belong, and we

are reminded of the divinity within our very selves. In the new life to which baptism calls us, we might find ourselves emboldened to share the gospel with an active heart for a hurting world. In the sacrament of communion, we glimpse the tangible, equalizing impact of God's presence. At the table, we taste and see the elements—the *particular* loaf of bread, the *particular* cup of wine, the very body and blood of Christ. Around the table, filled with and united by the Spirit, we glimpse what it might mean to join with others and their “particular particularities.” People are not to be abstracted. And as we come to the table—that which is set for *all*—we are acknowledged for *precisely* who we are. And together, in remembrance of Christ, we feast.

The Church: Christian life is necessarily “other person-centered,” and thus, should not be lived privately and in isolation. Christian faith is both personal and communal. The church receives its identity from the God who has called it into being and in whose grace it lives. Because that God is a living reality—a living, triune *community*—the church must struggle in *every* situation with the question of what God is calling it to *be* and to *do* as a community. And in that community, the body of Christ wrestles with such questions with openness and wonder. But above everything else, the goal of the church is to increase love of God and neighbor among people. And as it continues to experience its ongoing reformation—and as the increase of love becomes increasingly active—the church ought to continue realizing itself as a community of moral discourse, giving particular attention to issues of justice for marginalized groups in society.

Grace: The grace of God is an enabling and empowering gift. In receiving God's gift of grace, we are called to become God's gift *for others*. We are reconciled to God, as *we* are also ambassadors of God's reconciliation—not “*we*, the church,” but rather, “*we*, humanity.” As such, we are to resist all forms of oppression, to work against any form of dehumanizing and unjust structure or power, to work for the flourishing of all created life. However, God's grace is such that we do *not* have to take the first step to remake ourselves in order to be “right with God.” We do *not* need to be righteous to be loved by God; we receive God's grace *despite* our *not* being righteous. The grace of God is a transformative grace—one that creates new life.

Report of the Mission Coordinator to Presbytery, Aug. 18, 2022

1. The Presbytery is sponsoring another Habitat for Humanity house in the Birmingham area. Construction begins Thursday, September 8, 2022. We do not know the house's location nor the family we will be helping until sometime in August. Once we learn the construction site address, I will inform you, by the newsletter and Facebook. I am asking the Birmingham area churches to provide money and volunteers. Donations may be sent to : Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsey, Habitat House Fund/Birmingham. To volunteer, you will need to go to Habitat for Humanity's Birmingham chapter website, check the volunteer calendar, register as a volunteer, and choose the date you desire. This website is: habitatbirmingham.org.

Also, there are other Habitat for Humanity chapters in Alabama that can use funds and volunteers. The Tuscaloosa Habitat chapter's website is: habittuscaloosa.org. The Anniston Habitat's chapter website is: habitatanniston.org.

2. The Pentecost Can-paign will be ending August 7. If your church is participating, please send the amount of food and money your church collected and information where your church sent its donations. Please send the information to the Presbytery office or to me, Ralls Coston: rcoston@pslpcusa.org. I will try to have the donation numbers available at the Presbytery meeting on August 18.

3. The Cents-Ability Offering is this Presbytery's year-round hunger offering. The Offering is collected monthly by churches. Part of the donations is sent by the churches to the food ministries of their choice. Another portion of the Offering is sent to the Presbytery to help fund hunger programs in the Presbytery.

4. The Congo Mission Partnership of this Presbytery has suffered a great loss in the passing of Belinda Dickinson. The Partnership has received many messages of condolence from Congolese leaders. Please pray for God's comfort and healing to Belinda's family and friends.

The Partnership team is continuing its work for our sisters and brothers in Congo. The team has chosen, as Interim Chairperson, Lydia Wilfong. She is a long time member of the Partnership team.

Also, the team needs more members. If you are interested, please contact Lydia at: Wilfonglydia@gmail.com.

5. Inspiritus is a Lutheran organization dedicated to assisting refugees. It is based in Atlanta, but it has an office in the Birmingham area. The Executive Council has approved us to help with Inspiritus' work. There are some Afghan refugees already in Alabama. If anyone would want to help please go to Inspiritus' Facebook page: facebook.com/Inspiritus.AL. They provide welcome bags for the refugee families. At present, they need shampoo, conditioner, men's and women's razors and men's and women's deodorants. There are also wish lists on Amazon and Target.

***Stated Clerk's Report
August 18, 2022***

Stated Clerk Report:

1. The Stated Clerk will continue to review your Session's minutes from 2021 if your Minutes have not been reviewed; but, [1] you may drop them off at the presbytery office or, [2] call the Stated Clerk to initiate a conversation as to how to send or bring them to the office. Or, [3] you may do a check list of your own minutes, print, sign, scan, and email them to: statedclerk@pslpcusa.org

2. A report of the Meeting of the General Assembly which was held June 19th, 2022 through July 9, 2022 in Louisville, Kentucky, will be presented by our Commissioners the Reverend Junmo Jeong and Reverend Joe Scrivner; and, Ruling Elders, Jim Toomey and Olympia McCrackin.

3. Our next Stated Presbytery Meeting will be held at the following Church, on **November 17, 2022**, South Highland Presbyterian Church, Rev. Ed. Hurley. The Meeting will either be in-person, and 'Hybrid' i.e., in-person/virtual; but, specific details will be disseminated as soon as is determined.

4. Our Per Capita Assessment for 2022 is \$25.32. Many thanks to those who have supported Per Capita! Much encouragement to those who have yet to give.

5. The SC has is still implementing the Background Check phase of our Child and Youth/Vulnerable Protection Policy. As of this writing, requests for authorization to conduct these checks have been sent to Commissioned Ruling Elders and Temporary Supply Pastor. Requests for authorization will go out to Ministers of Word and Sacrament by the end of this month. The "CYPP/VP" calls for such background checks to be on an every three year cycle. The only exemption is for those who are no longer engaged in ministry or who have had a "BGC" within the last three (3) years. Please contact the SC with any questions or concerns you have in regards to Background Checks.

6. Per Capita - for **2022** is **\$25.32**, if you have not paid your Per Capita, please do so as soon as possible.

2022 General Assembly Report
Joe Scrivner
Committee Summaries

- Theology, Worship, and Education
 - I had the privilege of serving as Moderator for this committee. Here are a few highlights from 18 action items.
 - The recipients of the Excellence in Theological Education Award.
 - Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell
 - Rev. Dr. Darrell Guder
 - Rev. Dr. Frank Yamada
 - Rev. Dr. Gayraud Wilmore (posthumously)
 - A video for each can be seen at this link:
<https://www.presbyterianfoundation.org/teawards/>
 - The General Assembly approved forming a committee to write a confession to be considered for inclusion in the Book of Confessions. This new confession would address social-historical sins committed by the Presbyterian Church in the United States. By addressing American history, it would be a step beyond the Belhar Confession, which originated with Apartheid in South Africa.
 - The General Assembly approved its continuing relationships with related seminaries, universities, and colleges, including our own Stillman College.

- Ecumenical and Interfaith Engagement
 - The General Assembly approved the “Theological Rationale for Interreligious Relationships” as an official statement of the PC(USA). You can see a news report here. <https://pres-outlook.org/2022/06/theological-rationale-for-interfaith-relations-approved-by-ecumenical-and-interfaith-engagement-committee/>
 - The General Assembly approved distribution of “Statement Denouncing Antisemitism and Islamophobia” as a study document of the PC(USA). You can see a report here. <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2022/6/28/overture-denouncing-antisemitism-islamophobia-appr/>
 - The General Assembly approved developing a covenant agreement with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ghana.

- Polity
 - In response to the overture from this presbytery, the General Assembly approved the following proposal be sent to presbyteries for a vote. “Shall the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 be amended as follows: ‘All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy.’”
 - The General Assembly approved amending G-2.0503 to change designation from “Honorably Retired” to simply “Retired.”
 - The General Assembly disapproved a recommendation that Commissioned Ruling Elders can be ordained as Teaching Elders after serving in a ministry for six years.

- Standing Rules
 - The General Assembly amended a standing rule to include the following: “Opening worship or the first meeting of the General Assembly shall include an acknowledgment of the Indigenous peoples on whose land the assembly is meeting.”
 - The General Assembly approved eliminating the required ratio of 3 to 1 for commissioners and advisory delegates.
 - The General Assembly amended a standing rule to include the following: “All decisions made by assembly committees by a three-quarters vote shall be placed on the assembly plenary consent agenda to be considered as the first order of plenary business following committee meetings.”

- General Assembly Entity Policy and Procedures
 - The General Assembly disapproved a proposal to change the Memorandum of Understanding between the General Assembly and the Board of Pensions.
 - The General Assembly approved a proposal that the Office of General Assembly ask more specific financial questions as part of the Session Annual Statistical Report.
 - The General Assembly approved a proposal that the Office of General Assembly include the following categories for age as part of the Session Annual Statistical Report.
 - 17 and Under
 - 18–25
 - 26 –40
 - 41–55
 - 56–70
 - 71 and Over
 - Youth in the congregation
 - Age 4 and under
 - Elementary School (K–5th Grade)
 - Middle School (6th–8th Grade)
 - High School (9th–12th Grade)

225th General Assembly report from Olympia H. McCrackin 8/18/2022

The 226th General Assembly will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah. At GA 225, commissioner and advisory delegates approved a format by which the committees will meet online and the plenaries will meet in person. By a tally of 203-151 on Saturday night, 6/18/2022, Rev. Ruth Santana-Grace and Rev. Shavon Starling-Louis were elected co-moderators of the 225th General Assembly. Santana-Grace, 69, is executive presbyter of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Starling-Louis, 39, is pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. The assembly confirmed Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett's re-election to a second term as president and executive director of Presbyterian Mission Agency. We confirmed the re-election of the Rev. Dr. Tom Taylor as president and CEO of the Presbyterian Foundation. The assembly also confirmed the 2021 election of Rev. Dr. Asa Lee, as president of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

I served on the Rules of Discipline Committee (ROD) and will report on it, Race and Gender Justice (RGJ), Immigration (IMM), Moving Forward 2020 (MOV), and Financial Resources (FIN).

Rules of Discipline Committee (ROD)

Like the Rules of Discipline Committee did June 20th to 22nd in Louisville, commissioners worked chapter by chapter to amend the Rules of Discipline, part of the Book of Order that will be renamed Church Discipline. Our work on July 7, 2022, centered on ROD-03, which came to the Assembly from the Rules of Discipline Task Force, appointed five years ago. Rev. Paige McRight, who chaired the task force, said the 10-chapter Church Discipline was intended "to clarify language and processes to make church discipline more useful to the church." The Rules of Discipline were last updated in 1996.

During the 7/7/2022, morning plenary, the Rules of Discipline Committee recommended that the General Assembly disapprove a recommendation from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force. When my committee met in June, there was much discussion on the limits of confidentiality in the context of pastoral care, and we voted 19-5 to disapprove ROD-07. Robert Brashear, moderator of the Rules of Discipline Committee, made the motion that the full assembly disapprove the motion. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) also recommended disapproval of the original proposal, expressing concern about terminology related to mandating and establishing thresholds for reporting. ACC said, "Such a drastic expansion of disclosure and reporting requirements could adversely affect the needs of most people who seek the support of pastoral counselors and could undermine the extensive time many abuse survivors need to gather the courage necessary for public disclosure of their victimization."

Commissioners, committee members and staff spent a lot of time discussing the motion, substitute motion and amendments. It was ultimately the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, offering language for a second substitute motion, that a majority of commissioners could support. It specified: "Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and commissioned ruling elders shall hold in confidence all information revealed to them in the course of providing care and all information relating to the exercise of such care except:

- When the person whose confidences are at issue gives express consent to reveal confidential information, then a minister of the Word and Sacrament or a commissioned ruling elder may, but cannot be compelled to, reveal confidential information, or
- When a minister of the Word and Sacrament or a commissioned ruling elder reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person.”

It passed by a vote of 325 to 65. The amendments to G-4.0301 will be sent to the presbyteries for affirmative or negative votes. The assembly approved ROD-05, which essentially says the judicial process would go on even if an accused minister or member of the church renounces its jurisdiction.

ROD-01 was on the Consent Agenda. It instructs the Office of the General Assembly to create a resource guide for the church that details the process of dealing with allegations of sexual misconduct. The Guide should be available within one year. The guide should reflect the need for sensitivity to the rights of safety, dignity, and privacy of all involved in accordance with the purpose of church discipline as defined in section D-1.0301 of the *Book of Order* on Church Discipline. The estimated cost for The Guide is \$15,500.00.

ROD-04 was approved 326 to 19. The Stated Clerk will send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes.

1. Shall the first paragraph of D-10.0303 of the Book of Order be amended to read as follows: “If no charges are filed, the investigating committee shall file a written report of that fact alone with the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, and notify in writing, both the person who has been accused and the person making the accusation.”
2. Further, that all other sections referring to “the accused” in the Rules of Discipline be modified to read “the person accused.”
3. Amend D-10.0302 as follows:

If the investigating committee has decided to file charges, it shall promptly inform the accused in writing of the charges it will make, including a summary of the facts it expects to prove at trial to support those charges. It shall ask the accused if they wish to plead guilty to the charges to avoid full trial and indicate the censure it will recommend to the session or permanent judicial commission.”

We also voted 352 to 2 on Recommendation 2 to appoint the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) to recommend the continuation and application of any existing authoritative interpretations relating to the current Rules of Discipline as they apply to the new Church Discipline section of the Book of Order.

Race and Gender Justice (RGJ)

On July 7, 2022, in Plenary 7, commissioners and advisory delegates approved several items of business from the Race and Gender Justice Committee (RGJ), including RGJ-07 (votes were 368 to 21): A Resolution Addressing the Lack of Installed Pastoral Leadership in People of Color Congregations in the PC(USA) - From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee and RGJ-08 (votes were 373 to 19): On Offering an Apology to African Americans for the Sin of Slavery and Its Legacy. Nine items of business from RGJ were placed on the consent agenda.

The final text on RGJ-07 was as follows:
That the 225th General Assembly (2022)

1. Encourage each presbytery to review their minimum compensation policies for pastoral calls in light of this resolution and seek ways to fully resource congregations of color; and directs the Office of the General Assembly to gather reports from each presbytery after one year on actions taken to date and to disseminate that information to all mid council leadership for the purpose of sharing best practices. Encourage our mid councils in cooperation with PMA, to assist congregations of color in calling and supporting Teaching Elders with three years of minimum salary plus pension and medical.
2. In the spirit of the biblical concept of the year of jubilee and in pursuit of the goal of parity for congregations of color, (defined as congregations in which 80% or more of the members identify as persons of color),
 - a. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Center for Repair of Historical Harms to identify all congregations without installed pastoral leadership and/or who do not meet PC(USA) policies of minimum compensation standards (Book of Order, G-2.0804 Terms of Call) utilizing and involving as needed research from the six agencies of the PC(USA) that documents, and to determine:
 - (1) How long minimum compensation standards have not been met;
 - (2) The racial demographic of congregations without installed pastoral leadership;
 - (3) The racial demographic of white congregations to do a comparison of compensation of white congregations with compensation of congregations of color;
 - b. Further direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Center for Repair of Historical Harms to facilitate connections among congregations in need and congregations with funds for mission partnerships, for the specific goal of seeking to responsibly retire debt of congregations in need with resources provided by congregations with available funds.
 - c. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, through the new Center for Repair of Historic Harms, to establish grants, and in partnership with the Board of Pensions, work to assist congregations of color in calling and installing pastoral leadership by helping with the costs of Board of Pensions (BOP) dues.
 - d. Encourage the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program Inc., in cooperation with the other five agencies of the Presbyterian Church (USA), to establish a program to acquire funds, grants, special gifts, per capita funds, mission giving grants and credits, and unused endowment funds, to pay off the debt of congregations of color without installed pastoral leadership on a case-by-case basis and in a manner consistent with the congregation's fiscal ability to pay.
3. Establish reparations to African-American and repatriation for Indigenous American congregations.
4. Encourage mid councils to research and begin to develop a centralized system of PC(USA) for meeting minimum compensation standards for congregations without installed pastoral leadership.
5. Commend the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC) for their analysis of the causes of the lack of installed pastors.

6. Strongly encourage mid councils to respond to the National Black Presbyterian Caucus's (NBPC) analysis of causes of the lack of installed pastors in predominately people of color congregations.

The two-hour plenary ended with white Presbyterians who were present in the assembly room reading aloud "A Litany of Repentance" found in RGJ-08 and entered below, which begins with the words: "As white Christians we repent of our complicity in the belief in white supremacy." Co-moderator Starling-Louis invited white Christians wherever they were to read the litany of repentance spelled out in RGJ-08, and for African Americans, other people of color and individuals from Native communities to receive the words. Starling-Louis emphasized that the invitation was optional.

A LITANY OF REPENTANCE

As white Christians we repent of our complicity in the belief in white supremacy: the belief that people of European descent are superior in intelligence, skills, imagination, and perseverance. We acknowledge that this belief in white supremacy has been the foundation of, and an excuse for, atrocities against people of African descent in the United States and in the world.

We repent of our failure to recognize and take responsibility for the legacy of slavery.

We repent of the injustice, pain, humiliation, and suffering imposed on African Americans by our ancestors and ourselves through actions and inaction. We repent of our complicity in failing to act in mutual loving relationship.

We repent of closing our eyes to the degradation and injustice forced upon African Americans who were enslaved, segregated, terrorized, and imprisoned.

We repent of covering our ears to the crying of families torn apart, to the sound of human flesh being struck, while songs of freedom and heavenly grace flow from our lips.

We repent that we have failed as an institution and as individuals to use our voices to abhor and end lynching, segregation, and racial profiling. We regret our generations of silence on these issues so that we could maintain a comfortable life in our churches, homes, and communities.

We repent of shutting our hearts to the experiences of fellow humans whose stories of pain, suffering, hardship, struggle, love, and joy mirror our own life journeys, yet are deprived of privilege and marred by racism. We have turned our backs and walked away pretending not to see, yet we saw, pretending not to know, yet we knew, and convincing ourselves that we were not complicit, yet we are.

We now know that we as white Christians have benefitted directly and indirectly from these injustices. We name ourselves as complicit and repent.

Finally, we repent of our violent actions to suppress Black agency. African Americans, since the time of slavery, have actively pursued their freedom ... built this country ... laid foundational

structures ... and demonstrated their capacity to fully participate in the construction of this American society in spite of white supremacy.

As repentance means turning and going the other way, with Christ's help we seek to do so. At the same time, we commit ourselves to walking with people of African descent toward the goal of healing, reconciliation, and eliminating racism as we seek to dismantle white privilege.

The assembly also approved RGJ-12 calling for a new special committee to expose white supremacy within the denomination and make recommendations for improvement. In addition, the assembly approved RGJ-13, directing the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to "create educational resources for congregations to identify and interrupt practices and policies that perpetuate the adultification of Black girls and criminalization of adolescent behavior." Commissioners and advisory delegates passed resolution, RGJ-14, denouncing violence against Asian women and Pacific Islanders.

The Church will form a committee to write a new PC(USA) confession.

Immigration Committee (IMM)

The General Assembly voted 340 to 25 on July 5th on IMM-06 to declare the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) a sanctuary and accompaniment church. IMM-06 was the only item of the committee's work not to be placed on the assembly's consent agenda. Ginna Bairby, moderator of the assembly's Immigration Committee acknowledged the Immigration Committee's decision to approve IMM-06 "was not without conflict," and that the committee considered a potential amendment "to make it less declarative." But the committee and later the assembly ultimately decided to use this language: "We do hereby declare the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be a 'Sanctuary and Accompaniment Church' that supports and encourages its congregations, mid councils, and members to support immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and their children, and to resist efforts by the government to separate families." The language the assembly approved also states the PC(USA), through the Office of the General Assembly, stands ready to assist councils "in discerning their own calls to become "Sanctuary and Accompaniment" mid councils and congregations, to inform them of the legal risks associated with doing so, and to equip them to serve as places of welcome, refuge, accompaniment, and healing for those targeted due to their immigration status or other differences, while taking into consideration local contexts, capacity, and the results of congregational discernment."

The assembly approved all other work of the Immigration Committee as part of the consent agenda including: IMM-03: Directed the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to urge Presbyterian attorneys, translators and interpreters with skills in the necessary languages, and paralegals to be trained in asylum law, to expand the legal assistance available to asylum-seekers through existing pro-bono immigration support networks. IMM-08: Encouraged PC(USA) officials to continue advocacy work showing welcome for refugees. It added language to the resolution to encourage the stated clerk, the Office of Public Witness and the Office of Immigration Issues to advocate for the end of family separation for detainees and the use of for-profit detention facilities. IMM-09: Approved a resolution from the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC) to support PC(USA) justice work on behalf of immigrants and refugees.

Moving Forward 2020 (MOV)

Eight items from MOV were on the consent agenda. From the consent agenda, MOV-01 was approved. The Final text read as follows:

1. Approve the Guiding Statement to the church in its entirety for use by and for the church until a time in which the church deems it prudent to form a new guiding statement.

The Guiding Statement

Our Reformed heritage understands the power of words and we humbly offer this Guiding Statement as speaking truth and declaring life. The 2020 Vision Team was mandated by the 222nd General Assembly (2016) and charged with developing a guiding statement for the denomination as it moves into the future. In the faithful desire to discern the will of God we listened throughout the denomination and beyond, hearing hope and frustration, expectation and anxiety. Along our journey even when it is hard to see the way forward, God has spoken and continues to speak to us in these times and places. Therefore, with renewed energy, we believe God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be:

Prayerful

- Confessing our sin to God and those we have wronged, we accept our responsibility for the brokenness in the world and in ourselves. In Christ we are assured of forgiveness and freed to forgive others.
- We ask the Holy Spirit to direct and guide us as we actively listen to Scripture and fully engage in the joys and challenges of life in this present world.
- By grace and love Christ binds us together, cleanses us in the waters of baptism, nourishes us at the Lord's table, and sends us out to share the Good News.

Courageous

- Reformed and always being reformed, we follow the Holy Spirit in new and imaginative ways to places we have not yet been.
- We foster the hope of reconciliation in Christ who transforms the world through healing individuals, communities, and creation.
- We work for God's justice and peace for all people in every land, walking with the vulnerable, the marginalized, the oppressed, and the abused.

United

- As members of the Church universal, we are Christ's disciples, called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Against forces that seek to divide, Christ compels us to bear witness to a love that connects communities across great differences.
- We approach others in a spirit of openness and trust as we follow Jesus Christ in respecting the freedom of other religions, worldviews, and traditions.

Serving

- Gratefully following the One who washed his disciples' feet, we listen to our neighbors, working to meet their practical needs.
- We partner with others to become the hands and feet of God in the world, showing compassion and generosity to all creation.

- The Holy Spirit pushes us beyond the familiar, meeting people where they are as we share Christ's transformative love.

Alive

- We are people of the resurrection: though death surrounds us, we are not afraid because we follow the One who was raised from the tomb.
- The Holy Spirit gives us courage to trust each other and build a community that reflects the fullness of God's image in humanity: beautifully diverse in age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexuality, physical and mental ability, geography, theological conviction, and viewpoints.
- In the sure and certain hope of resurrection, we joyfully testify that the Church and its members are called to follow Christ's model by risking all, even life itself, for the sake of the Gospel.

And so, God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be: Prayerful, Courageous, United, Serving, Alive. Thanks be to God.

2. Commend this Guiding Statement and attached resources to the agencies of the PC(USA) (Board of Pensions, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Foundation, Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program, Inc., Presbyterian Mission Agency, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation), its mid councils, seminaries, congregations, and individuals, to study, engage in conversation, and reflection using this Guiding Statement for the purpose of vision, spiritual growth, and formation of the PC(USA).

3. Mandate the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation develop resources and curricula with a focus on this Guiding Statement.

4. Commend that the Moderator(s) of 225th General Assembly (2022) appoint an Implementation Team to introduce this Guiding Statement and to integrate it into the life of the denomination. This Implementation Team shall also seek to proclaim and celebrate the transformative stories of those who engage intentionally with this Guiding Statement. In reflecting the spirit of the mandate given to the vision team by the 222nd General Assembly (2016), the assembly shall allocate sufficient resources for the Implementation Team to effectively accomplish its work. In light of the events of the last two years, the 2020 Vision Team recognizes that the words of the Guiding Statement have become touchstones for inspiration and direction in the ever-changing landscape of our life together. This adaptive framework reflects who we are as the people of God.

The Implementation Team serving a two-year term shall be made up of the following:

1. At least three teaching elders and at least three ruling elders, or members at large and up to three staff.
2. The following demographic traits should be considered when naming members of the committee: gender identity; geographic location; inclusion of people under the age of forty; people of color; those engaged in both parish and validated ministries; theological diversity.
3. The following skill sets should be considered when naming members of the committee: creativity, communication, technology, marketing.

4. The current Co-Moderators of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

shall serve as additional, ex officio, members of this committee. Two members of the current 2020 Vision Team will work with the Implementation Team.

5. Commend that the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) recommend to the 228th General Assembly (2028) to consider forming a 2030 Vision Team to discern by reviewing, assessing, affirming and updating as necessary, the guiding statement for the denomination with the intention to help us name and claim our denominational identity as we seek to follow the Spirit into the future decade.

The total financial Per Capita implication for The Guide is \$17,784.00: \$7,392.00 for 2023 and \$10,392.00 for 2024.

Recommendation 1 of MOV-02: Move the Mission Engagement and Support Department from the Presbyterian Mission Agency to the Administrative Services Group (ASG) within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation (A Corp) was approved by 289 to 69.

Financial Resources Committee (FIN)

After advisory delegates unanimously advised approval of FIN-13 as amended, commissioners voted 342 to 9 to approve. The amended FIN-13 was: "The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency recommend the 225th General Assembly (2022) adopt the following per capita apportionment rate: \$9.85 for 2023 and \$9.80 for 2024." Prior to the week's financial implications adjustments, the recommended rate had been \$9.61 for 2023 and \$10.28 for 2024.

After another unanimous vote to approve by advisory delegates, commissioners voted to approve FIN-14, 355 to 4, which recommended "the adoption of the 2023-2024 consolidated budgets of the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, and the Presbyterian Mission Agency: \$88,365,740.00 for 2023, and \$89,557,635.00 for 2024" as well as "approval of the allocation of annual income realized in 2021 and projected for 2022 from the John C. Lord and Edmund P. Dwight Funds in support of the budget for the general mission work of the Presbyterian Mission Agency."

It was moved that the Assembly act on FIN-12 by answering it with FIN-14, as recommended by the committee. The committee's recommendation was for us to approve FIN-12: "a General Assembly Per Capita budget of \$15,230,243.00 for 2023 and \$15,615,216.00 for 2024," by "answering" FIN-12 with its work on FIN-14. For the third time, the advisory vote showed unanimous support. The commissioners approved FIN-12 with action on FIN-14 by a vote of 364 to 4. This was the last vote of the plenary.

Jim Toomey, General Assembly report to Presbytery

Now that the 2022 General Assembly has ended – the first-ever hybrid assembly – the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will try to live into the commitments made and the work ahead. Ruth Santana-Grace and Shavon Starling-Louis, the new co-moderators, stood for election using the theme “Unbounded We Thrive,” and the assembly spoke its mind on issues affecting the church and the world.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY 225 ROUNDUP

Israel/Palestine. The assembly voted 266-116 to approve one of the most controversial items before it — INT-02, declaring that the PC(USA) recognize the laws, policies and practices of the Israeli government regarding the Palestinian people “fulfill the international legal definition of apartheid.” Some have criticized the PC(USA) stance towards Israel as antisemitic, saying it hurts interfaith relations. Others say the assembly spoke courageously in supporting human rights for the Palestinian people.

Climate change. Voting 340-41, the assembly directed PC(USA) entities to divest from five oil and gas companies it concluded are not moving quickly enough to try to slow global warming — Chevron, ExxonMobil, Marathon Petroleum, Phillips 66, and Valero Energy. The vote reflected continued support for the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI)’s strategy of corporate engagement and selective divestment. Action on another item, ENV-09, also affirmed “that working in the fossil fuel industry is a necessity for many” and assured Presbyterians that “divestment is not a condemnation or judgment of their choice of employment.”

Litany of repentance. One of the assembly’s most powerful emotional moments came when White Presbyterians recited a litany of repentance from RGJ-08, offering an apology to African Americans for the sin of slavery and its legacy. One assembly committee focused exclusively on issues of race and gender justice — including violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, disparities experienced by Black women and girls, and racial disparities in health care. Other concerns: confronting White supremacy in the PC(USA) and working for reparative justice.

Gun violence. With recent mass shootings still echoing, the assembly approved VIOL-07, declaring 2022-2032 a “Decade to End Gun Violence” — asking the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) to develop tools for faith-based advocacy against gun violence and for studying “the intersection of white supremacy culture, Christian nationalism, and gender with gun violence.” It also approved VIOL-11,

directing MRTI to begin a process of corporate engagement with Walmart, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Kroger, three publicly-traded companies included in the investment portfolios of either the Board of Pensions or Presbyterian Foundation, and which sell guns not classified as semi-automatic and assault-based weapons. (Those weapons previously mentioned are already on the divestment list.)

Family leave. The assembly approved a **proposed amendment** to the PC(USA) constitution to say a minister's terms of call shall include at least **12 weeks of paid family medical leave** (covering the birth, fostering or adoption of a child; care for ill or disabled family members; and healing following a loss or tragic event). To take effect, the proposed change needs approval from a majority of the presbyteries.

Immigration. The assembly voted 340-25 to declare the PC(USA) a "**sanctuary and accompaniment church**" — saying the denomination stands with immigrants and asylum-seekers and is committed to working for justice in U.S. immigration policy. **That work** often involves Presbyterians accompanying immigrants by offering housing and legal assistance, going with them to immigration hearings and other appointments and trying to get people released from detention.

Restructuring. Supporting recommendations from a **special committee**, the assembly voted to **create a commission** with the power to act and the responsibility for unifying the PMA and the Office of the General Assembly — basically, to restructure the top level of the PC(USA). Citing **financial stress on congregations and presbyteries**, the assembly also created a team to develop experimental models as alternatives to the current **per capita funding system**.

Reproductive justice. In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, the assembly approved a **resolution on reproductive justice** — **saying the PC(USA) rejects** "attempts at all levels of government to reduce, limit, or eliminate access to contraceptive and abortion care."

LGBTQIA+ equity. The assembly created a **new LGBTQIA+ Equity Advocacy Committee** as a permanent committee of the General Assembly — equivalent in access and accountability to the Advocacy Committee for Women and Gender Justice and the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee.

Per capita. The assembly set the **new General Assembly per capita assessment** at \$9.85 per member for 2023 and \$9.80 per member for 2024. **That compares** to the current per capita rate of \$8.98 per member.

2024 General Assembly. Presented with four options, the assembly **opted for a hybrid approach** again for the 2024 assembly — choosing **Plan Omega** with online committee meetings and in-person plenary sessions in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Report Highlights -

HSB - Health, Safety, and Benefits

Items of Business to Be Considered in Plenary

Items are listed in the order in which they are expected to be considered during the plenary presentation.

HSB-06: On Amending G-2.0804 and Recommendations Regarding a Family Leave Policy—From the Family Leave Policy Task Force

HSB-07: On Amending G-2.0804 Regarding PC(USA) Paid Family Leave

HSB-05: Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force (Recommendations 2, 3, 4, 9, 1, 6)

HSB-09: Special Committee to Study the Reformed Perspective on Christian Education Recommendations on Amending the Book of Order

HSB-11: On Affirming Reproductive Justice

Items of Business Added to the Consent Agenda

HSB-02: On Commending and Furthering Mental Health Ministry in the PC(USA)

HSB-03: A Resolution on Reproductive Justice—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns

HSB-04: On Furthering Mental Health Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

HSB-05: Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force (Recommendations 7, 8)

HSB-08: Resolution on the Update for Comfort my People—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

HSB-10: On Addressing Mental Health Challenges at Every Level of the Church

[HSB-06] On Amending G-2.0804 and Recommendations Regarding a Family Leave Policy—From the Family Leave Policy Task Force

Approve as Amended

1. Direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes: (Text to be deleted is ~~struck through~~; text to be added is [in brackets and underlined].)

Shall G-2.0804 be amended to read as follows:

“The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister's terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery's minimum requirements. The call shall include [provision for a minimum of twelve weeks] paid family medical leave and participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.”

2. Define “family leave” as including but not limited to the following:

- Leave to accommodate the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child;
 - Leave to provide care to an ill or disabled family member;
 - Leave to heal following a loss or tragic event.
3. Request that the Administrative Services Group create a sample policy as a template to be used by presbyteries.

Referral

Referral to ASG from HSB-06

3. Request that the Administrative Services Group create a sample policy as a template to be used by presbyteries

[HSB-11] On Affirming Reproductive Justice

Approve as Amended

1. In appreciation of the complexity and seriousness of issues concerning abortion, we affirm that women and pregnant people are full moral agents, created in the image of God. Recognizing that God alone is Lord of the conscience, we support their moral capacity to decide whether to continue or end any given pregnancy.
 2. Denounce attempts to prevent people from receiving essential healthcare, particularly when it results in forced pregnancy and the violation of bodily autonomy.
 3. Reject attempts at all levels of government to reduce, limit, or eliminate access to contraceptive and abortion care.
 4. Affirm the principles of the Reproductive Justice Movement [1] to support the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy to have children, to not have children, and to parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities, [2] in recognition that Christian moral and ethical concerns about abortion should be considered within broader conversations about human sexuality, fertility, reproduction, contraceptives, and parenting.
 5. Clearly and publicly make known the PC(USA)'s consistent support of access to contraceptive and abortion care and our commitment to respect the moral agency of all God's people.
 6. Direct Presbyterian Mission Agency, in connection with Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns, to create a theological reflection to guide the church on the issue.
 7. Urge the Board of Pensions to continue to develop the policies and practices that will ensure that plan members are able to access reproductive health care, access to contraceptives and abortion, equitably, no matter the state they live in.
-

ENV - Environmental Justice

Items of Business to Be Considered in Plenary

Items are listed in the order in which they are expected to be considered during the plenary presentation.

ENV-04: On Creating the Presbyterian Tree Fund

ENV-10: Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Response to 223rd General Assembly Directive on Environmental Policy

ENV-09: On Actions in Support of an Energy Transition

ENV-01: On Learning About and Starting the Process of Divestment from Fossil Fuels

ENV-06: On Affirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Paris Agreement)

ENV-07: On Fossil Fuel Divestment

ENV-08: On Declaring the Time Is Now to “Cherish Creation, Cut Carbon, and Speak Up”

ENV-02: Investing in a Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

Items of Business Added to the Consent Agenda

ENV-05: On Reducing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Carbon Imprint

ENV-11: On Protecting the Diversity of Creation

[ENV-04] On Creating the Presbyterian Tree Fund

Approve as Amended

Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), no later than June 30, 2023, to develop and implement a carbon offset program for carbon emission generated as the result of work-related air travel by personnel of the PMA, that includes the following components:

[ENV-10] Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Response to 223rd General Assembly Directive on Environmental Policy

Approve

The Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, upon recommendation from the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) do the following: ...

[ENV-09] On Actions in Support of an Energy Transition

Approve as Amended with Comment

The Presbyterian Church (USA) affirms its historic work of confronting the current climate crisis. The PC(USA) also repents of our participation and growing complicity in the processes that have

brought our planetary ecosystem to the tipping point of unsustainability for humans, most significantly marginalized people, and mass extinction of other species. We must continue towards a way of life divested from fossil fuels both monetarily and in our daily living.

To that end, we recognize: ...

**[ENV-02] Investing in a Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation—From the
Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy**

Approve as Amended with Comment

The Environmental Justice Committee affirms the work of the ACSWP and their paper "Investing in a Green Future," and further refers the church to overtures ENV-04 and ENV-05 from the 225th General Assembly for practices intended to work towards and fulfill the inspirational objectives of this paper.

INT - International Engagement

Items of Business to Be Considered in Plenary

Items are listed in the order in which they are expected to be considered during the plenary presentation.

INT-15: On Advocating for a Peace Agreement in the Korean Peninsula

INT-12: Regarding a Korea Peace Treaty

INT-19: On the Russian Military Invasion of Ukraine

INT-14: On Expanding Mission Engagement and Education with Eastern Europe

INT-02: On Recognition That Israel's Laws, Policies, and Practices Constitute Apartheid Against the Palestinian People

Items of Business Added to the Consent Agenda

INT-01: Overture on Affirming the Effectiveness of Nonmilitary, Collaborative International Approaches to Resolving Conflict

INT-03: On Support of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

INT-04: Jerusalem 3, 2, 1: Three Faiths, Two Peoples, and One Human Family—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

INT-05: Seeking Hope Amid Despair in Central America— From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

INT-07: On Promoting Human Rights in the Philippines

INT-08: On Responding to the Human Needs of Those Affected by the Violence in Cameroon

INT-09: Regarding Depleted Uranium in Iraq

INT-10: A Call for Ending the Siege of Gaza and Collective Punishment of Innocent Palestinian and Israeli Citizens

INT-11: On Responding to the Human Needs of Those Affected by the Crisis in Syria

INT-13: On Designating May 15 as the Palestinian Nakba Remembrance Day

INT-16: Resolution on Sanctions—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

INT-17: Afghanistan: A Time to Mend—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

INT-18: On Engaging in Study, Prayer, and Action to Promote Peace in Ethiopia

**[INT-15] On Advocating for a Peace Agreement
in the Korean Peninsula**

Approve

The Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse overtures the 225th General Assembly (2022) to do the following:

1. Endorse the Korea Peace Appeal . . .

**[INT-19] On the Russian Military Invasion of
Ukraine**

Approve as Amended

The Commissioners of the 225th General Assembly recommend that the 225th General Assembly:

- 1. Condemn the Russian military invasion of Ukraine and crimes against humanity, and call for a cease-fire and the immediate resumption of internationally mediated negotiations to resolve the conflict. ...**
-

**[INT-14] On Expanding Mission Engagement and Education with Eastern
Europe**

Approve as Amended

Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to strengthen our accompaniment in the region impacted by the war in Russia and Ukraine and listen deeply and broadly to the many voices in the region, through the following actions: ...

**[INT-02] On Recognition That Israel's Laws, Policies, and Practices Constitute
Apartheid Against the Palestinian People**

Approve as Amended

The Presbytery of Grace overtures the 225th General Assembly (2022) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the following:

- 1. Recognize that Israel's laws, policies, and practices regarding the Palestinian people fulfill the international legal definition of apartheid. Apartheid is legally defined as inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them This occurs in Israel/Palestine through: ...**
 - a. Establishing two sets of laws, one for Israelis and one for Palestinians, which give preferential treatment to Israeli Jews and oppressive treatment to Palestinians,**
 - b. Expropriating Palestinian land and water for Jewish-only settlements.**
 - c. Denying the right to freedom of residence to Palestinians.**
 - d. Dividing the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the Palestinians.**
 - e. Denying Palestinians the right to a nationality.**
-

MC - Mid Councils

Items of Business to Be Considered in Plenary

Items are listed in the order in which they are expected to be considered during the plenary presentation.

MC-11 On Memorializing Non-Ordained Servants of the Church

MC-02 On Benefit Equity Among Mid Council Executive Staff

MC-05 On Amending G-3.0104 to Allow Appointment of Ruling Elder Moderator or Moderation of Session Electronically from a Remote Location in Extraordinary Circumstance

MC-03 On Establishing the Authority of Presbyteries to Define Severance Plans for Installed Ministers

MC-08 On Clarifying the Intent of G-2.1001 Regarding Use of Commissioned Pastors

MC-06 On Amending G-3.0401 to Facilitate Full Participation and Representation in Synod

MC-10 On Establishing a Task Force to Explore the Theology and Practice of Ordination to Ordered Ministry for Ruling Elders

Items of Business Added to the Consent Agenda

MC-01 On Recognizing Non-Chartered Fellowships as Churches to Promote Representation and Participation on National and Regional Committees and Councils

MC-04 On Creating a Task Force Regarding the Creation of a Korean-Language Nongeographic Presbytery (NGP) on the West Coast

MC-07 A Resolution on Chartering Immigrant Fellowships—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee

MC-09 Report and Recommendation of the Administrative Commission to Address Disorder in the Synod of the Covenant

MC-12 On the Synod of the Alaska-Northwest Financial Review

[MC-05] On Amending G-3.0104 to Allow Appointment of Ruling Elder Moderator or Moderation of Session Electronically from a Remote Location in Extraordinary Circumstance

Approve as Amended

[MC-07] A Resolution on Chartering Immigrant Fellowships—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee

Approve

- 1. Direct the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to develop standardized guidelines for chartering Immigrant Fellowships, Worshiping Communities, and New Church Developments.**
- 2. Direct the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to use the term “New Church Development” instead of Fellowship and include them in the national statistics of the PC(US)**

GA - MC - General Assembly Ministry Coordination

Items of Business to Be Considered in Plenary

Items are listed in the order in which they are expected to be considered during the plenary presentation.

[GA-MC-05] Regarding the Creation of an Advocacy Committee for LGBTQIA+ Equity—From the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force

[GA-MC-04] On Renaming the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns

[GA-MC-07] On the Inclusion of Inclusive Gender Options When Gender Information Is Collected by Any Entity in the PC(USA)

[GA-MC-12] Changing Families and the Church—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

[GA-MC-11] On Changing AIDS to HIV in the Presbyterian Planning Calendar

[GA-MC-15] On Determining the Format for the 226th General Assembly (2024)—From the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

Items of Business Added to the Consent Agenda

[GA-MC-02] On Updating the Video Resource, Who Are We Presbyterians, with Accompanying Study Guide

[GA-MC-03] Women of Faith Award Nominees to the 224th General Assembly (2020)—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

[GA-MC-06] Sam and Helen R. Walton Awards for 2018 and 2019—From the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board

[GA-MC-09] Epistles from Baltimore: Insights for Urban Ministry and Mission—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

[GA-MC-10] Lazarus Is Walking in Baltimore—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

[GA-MC-13] A Witness from the Presbytery of
Mid-Kentucky

[GA-MC-14] Sam and Helen R. Walton Awards
2020-2021

[GA-MC-16] Approval of National Certifying Bodies—from the Committee on the Office of
the General Assembly

[GA-MC-05] Regarding the Creation of an Advocacy Committee for LGBTQIA+
Equity—From the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force

Approve as Amended

1. Direct that an LGBTQIA+ Equity Advocacy Committee be created as a permanent committee of the General Assembly with
 - a. Assigned functions, accountability, and access identical to those named for the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC) and the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC) in the Presbyterian Mission Agency Manual of Operations but as related to LGBTQIA+ equity in the church and in the world.
 - b. Seven committee members with four-year terms, eligible for re-nomination for one additional term, elected by the General Assembly via the General Assembly Nominating Committee nominations process with commitment to balance and inclusiveness with regards to gender-identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and race.
 - c. Budget to cover one in-person meeting during non-General Assembly years, two in-person meetings during General Assembly years, three resource person attendees to General Assembly, and several electronic meetings.
2. Direct that two members from the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force serve on the newly formed LGBTQIA+ Equity Advocacy Committee for two-year terms with eligibility for one, two-year re-nomination via the General Assembly Nominating Committee process.

[GA-MC-15] On Determining the Format for the 226th General Assembly (2024)—From the
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly

Approve Alternate Resolution

Final text:

The General Assembly Mission Coordination Committee recommends that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve the "Omega" option (online committees, in-person plenary) as outlined by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (in the additional resource document "Possible GA Formats...") as the format of the 226th General Assembly (2024) and instruct the Office of the General Assembly and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly to devise and implement detailed plans.

Report to Presbytery meeting as GA commissioner

Teaching Elder Jun Mo Jeong

I am very happy to be a commissioner and having various experiences at the 225th PCUSA General Assembly.

But to be honest, I feel bad that I couldn't fully participate in the meetings because I couldn't fully understand due to language and interpretation issues.

As you know, this is the first general assembly meeting held after the COVID 19 pandemic, and everyone gathered in a hybrid form without being able to gather all together.

Only the committee gathered at the Louisville General Assembly Center and the rest of the plenary session was online via zoom.

I will briefly share three things that were good and another three things that could need some work.

3 good things:

- 1) It was good to be able to attend the PCUSA General Assembly for the first time as a commissioner and learn what agenda the PCUSA usually holds at the GA.
- 2) The commission meeting was very informative. I attend the Addressing Violence in the USA committee and it was good to have time to think a lot about how to reduce violence and create a safe peaceful society in the US.
- 3) In this age of diminishing and changing influence of the church, it was good to have time to think about which direction the PCUSA should go.

3 improvements:

- 1) It's too bad that we couldn't get together because of the COVID Pandemic.
- 2) The meeting hours was very long, so honestly it was impossible to participate in all the plenary sessions.
- 3) I felt that a lot of agendas were leaning toward social justice. I would like to address topics such as evangelism, overseas mission, church planting and church growth in depth.

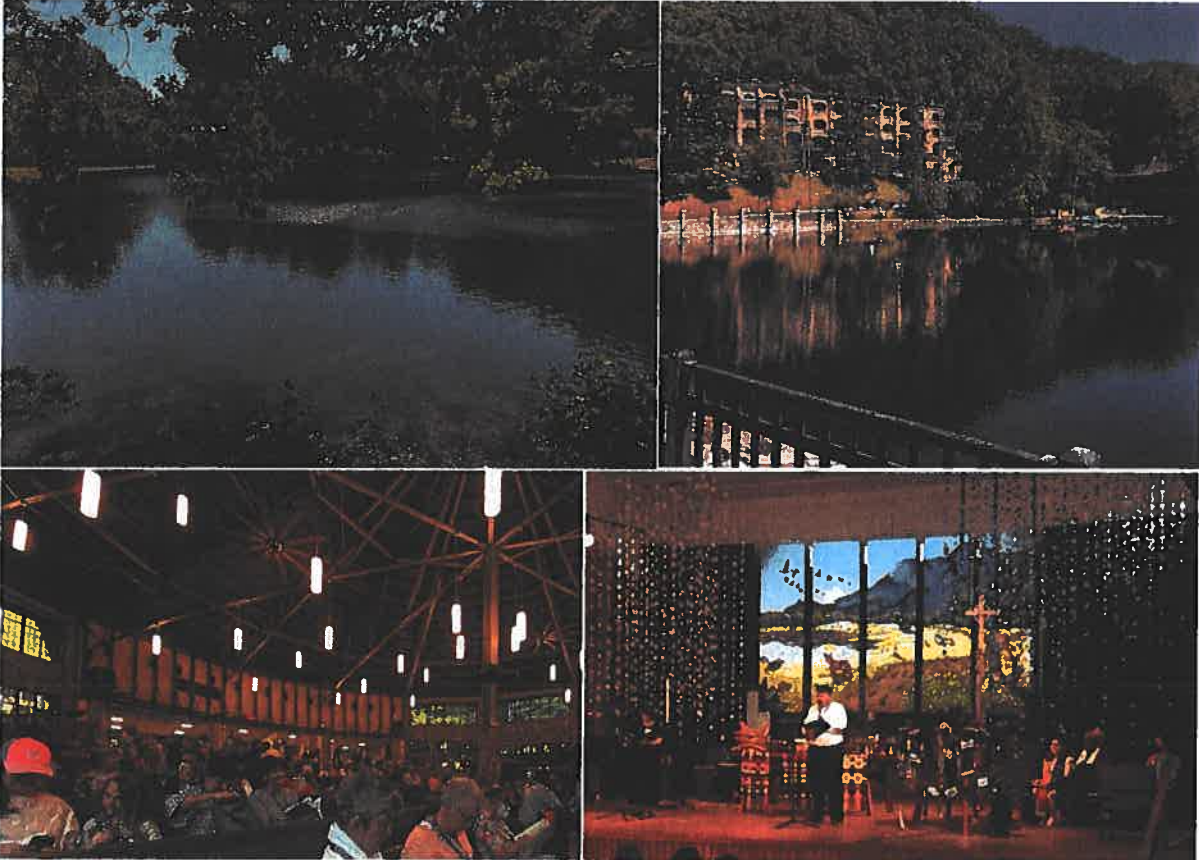
Thank you for sending me as a commissioner by Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley so that I could have a good experience. Thank you!

Jun Mo Jeong, August 2022.

PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSICIANS

Worship and Music 2022 at Montreat

JOHN ALLEN T. BANKSON



Introduction

From June 19 to June 25, 2022, I was privileged to participate in Week 1 of the Music and Worship Conference presented by the Presbyterian Association of Musicians at the Montreat Conference center in Montreat, NC (near Black Mountain). I am grateful to the Presbyterian Association of Musicians for a scholarship which covered my registration, to the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, particularly our General Presbyter, Sue Westfall, for funds for my room and board while at Montreat, to the First Christian Church of Birmingham, Alabama, where I serve as Director of Music Ministries, for allowing me to be

away for two Sundays (and the week in between) in order to attend this life-changing conference, and to the many individuals, far and near, who assisted me with transportation funds to get to Montreat. This report is presented with much love and gratitude to you all.

History of Montreat and the Worship & Music Conference

In 1897, a Congregationalist minister from New England, the Rev'd John C. Collins, formed the Mountain Retreat Association and purchased 4,000 acres of land east of Asheville, NC, near Black Mountain. Montreat (a portmanteau of "Mountain Retreat") operated for the next ten years as an ecumenical Christian retreat. In 1906, the Synod of North Carolina of the PCUS--the "southern" Presbyterian Church, which reunited with the "northern" UPCUSA in 1983 to become the PC(USA)--purchased Montreat for use as a retreat for Presbyterians in North Carolina and across the PCUS. In 1911, the Rev'd Robert Campbell Anderson, Jr., was appointed as director of Montreat. Anderson began a successful capital campaign and oversaw the addition of many buildings at the conference center as well as the establishment, in 1916, of Montreat College (first known as Montreat Normal School and later as Montreat-Anderson College). One of the centerpieces of the conference center, the expansive and beautiful stone structure known as Anderson Auditorium, completed in 1922, is named for Robert Anderson.

In 1956, the Board of Christian Education of the PCUS established the Worship and Music Conference to provide ongoing education and inspiration for church musicians, pastors, and other church leaders. After fourteen years of running the Montreat Worship and Music Conference, the Board of Christian Education determined that they no longer had the financial resources to continue to this annual event, and so the Presbyterian Association of Musicians was born in 1970 to support the Montreat Worship and Music Conference. Since that time, the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) has grown to be much more than simply this annual conference. PAM exists to support church musicians, pastors, liturgists, elders, worship committees, and all who love and want to promote worship and music. It publishes the excellent *Call to Worship* journal (formerly known as *Reformed Liturgy and Worship*), has its own choral music series, the *PAM Choral Series*, published by MorningStar Music Publishers, and has recently instituted PAM regional bodies for greater collaboration among church musicians. I am honored to be the Vice President for the PAM

Mid-South Region this year. PAM Mid-South will be presenting our first-ever in-person event this fall at the First Christian Church of Birmingham, Alabama.

Worship at the Conference

The theme of this year's conference was "In the Stranger's Guise," based on the ancient Celtic Rune of Hospitality:

We saw a stranger yesterday.
 We put food in the eating place,
 Drink in the drinking place,
 Music in the listening place.
 And with the sacred name of the triune God
 He blessed us and our house,
 Our cattle and our dear ones.
 As the lark says in her song:
 Often, often, often, goes the Christ
 In the stranger's guise.

The worship services were built around this rune and also around the Six Days of Creation, reflecting the Celtic reverence for nature. Also interwoven into the six worship services were the six statements of Jesus from the story of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25: "I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, I needed clothes, I was sick, I was in prison." In this way we learned to see Christ not only in the beauty of nature, but to see Christ in the face of the stranger, the one on the margins, the one whom the world denies, the one from whom most would turn away. The conference preacher, the Rev'd Aisha Brooks-Johnson (Executive Presbyter for the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta), impressed on us each day to look upon the world, to look upon each person, with the eyes of Christ—eyes of love and compassion.

Worship took place on the opening night of the conference, Sunday, June 19, and thereafter at 11:00 a.m. for the weekdays of the conference. We celebrated the Sacrament of the Eucharist twice during the week: at Tuesday's worship service and in the Friday worship service. Each of these emphasized a different aspect of the Eucharistic Feast: Tuesday's service was contemplative and relatively quiet (reminiscent of a Maundy Thursday Eucharist), while Friday's was celebratory and festal (reminiscent of the Eucharist on Easter

Sunday, Pentecost, Christmas, and other joyful feasts). I was privileged to read Scripture and also to help administer Communion in Friday's worship service.

Course Participation

These are the courses I participated in at this year's conference:

Expanding Your Repertoire: Honoring Diverse Peoples and Cultures (John Sherer & Samuel Gaskin) – In this workshop we considered ways of expanding the tradition and opening the organ loft to other ideas and people such as playing a jazz prelude on the organ or starting an entire service using jazz. We explored and shared ideas about organ music written in the gospel tradition, music by African Americans, and organ music from many cultures. Organ music written by women was also featured, and we looked at adding other instruments with the organ. We also considered ways of making the organ more accessible through YouTube videos, organ tours, and community gatherings.

Adult Choir (André Thomas) – This ensemble rehearsed twice a day, at 9:00 a.m. and again at 2:30 p.m., to prepare to sing in the worship services and also in the Friday night concert. Our repertoire included "The Stranger's Guise," an anthem in the PAM Choral Series newly commissioned for this conference, composed by Karen Marroli, which we offered in worship on Thursday morning, and an arrangement by André Thomas of "The Drinking Gourd" which we performed with the Children's Choir during the Wednesday worship service. More about our choral repertoire can be found in the section on the evening programs, below.

Every Time I Feel the Spirit: Performance Practice Considerations of Negro Spirituals and Folk Tunes (Brandon A. Boyd) – Music of the Black Spiritual and Gospel traditions has become a common element in choral programs across the country and the world. This session featured a historical overview, vocal techniques, conducting considerations, and repertoire examples appropriate for choirs of all levels. Especially important to me was the discussion of performance practice that does justice to this literature vs. questions of cultural appropriation.

Worship Reflections (Worship Team) – Last year, when I did the Online Conference, this was easily the most beneficial course of the conference for me, and this year was no

exception. Worship Reflections gave conferees a behind-the-scenes understanding of how our worship services are planned and implemented with the intent of helping us take ideas, approaches, and understanding home to assist in enhancing worship in our own worship contexts. The moderator, Kendra Buckwalter Smith (who also led Morning and Evening Prayer each day), led the discussion and fielded questions for the panel consisting of the preacher (Aisha Brooks-Johnson), the liturgist (Sudie Niesen Thompson), the visual artist (David VanderMeer), and the organist (John Scherer).

Routley Lectures: Jesus Sought Me When a Stranger (David Gambrell) – The Routley Lectures are the annual lecture series at Worship & Music on Congregational Song. They are named for Erik Routley, the British hymnologist and the premier voice for congregational song of the 20th century. Routley ended his career at Westminster Choir College in New Jersey and led the lecture series at Montreat, which would eventually bear his name, in 1974. This year, I was thrilled that my dear friend and colleague, David Gambrell, was the Routley Lecturer. The 2022 Routley Lectures considered the strangeness of congregational song, reflecting on the unexpected encounters with God and surprising gifts of the Spirit that come when we make music together as the body of Christ.

Preaching Seminar: Matthew 25 – Stories from the Street (Aisha Brooks-Johnson) – During this daily seminar, conference preacher Aisha Brooks-Johnson reflected on the process involved in crafting each day's sermon, and we spent a lot of time having a sort of "talkback" with her and unpacking each day's message. This was a wonderful time to get to know Aisha on a more personal level and to learn more about the craft of sermon writing. An accomplished jazz musician herself, Aisha brought in music that is especially influential on her and which inspired various illustrations within her sermons. This was the last class of each day (followed by dinner, which was then followed by the Evening Program) and was a beautiful way to close each day's classes.

Other Course Offerings

There was not enough time in the day to participate in the other courses offered. Below are the other offerings, with a brief description of each.

Adult Bible Study: "Transformed by the Stranger" (Justin Reed) – Focusing on Genesis 1 and Matthew 25 (the key passages for the week's worship services), this Bible study aimed to deepen participants' understanding of the stranger not only among us, but also within each of us. I was able to sit in on one session of Professor Reed's Bible class, and he is an extremely well-studied, clear, and thought-provoking teacher.

Art Workshop: "That's great, but how do we do that at our church?" (Ellen Phillips and David VanderMeer) – This Liturgical Art class discussed the nuts and bolts of what is involved in creating, developing, and maintaining a church arts ministry: everything from theology and history to a sense of playfulness. Participants also experienced the fellowship and hospitality that result as people create together. Through the use of paper, color, fabric, and nature elements, participants made art for the daily worship experiences.

Global Connection Through Drumming – In this 50-minute class, musicians experienced drumming from around the world while connecting with and fine tuning their internal rhythm.

Handbells (Carlos Rivera and Angela Hampton) – Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced handbell choirs rehearsed daily. Several handbell choirs played in the Friday evening concert.

Instrumental Ensembles (Mark Britt and Phil Kent) – These ensembles provided opportunities for instrumentalists to rehearse and perform during the conference, including during the daily worship services and in the Friday night concert.

"Let's Start at the Very Beginning" (Mary Biddlecombe) – Using tone chimes, a white board, and a hymnal, clinician Mary Biddlecombe gave participants some extremely practical advice about helping the church's children become music readers.

Liturgy Writing Seminar: Holy Words for the Whole Service (Sudie Niesen Thompson) – The word read and proclaimed is central to Christian worship, especially in the Reformed tradition. As such, worship planners and participants often give particular attention to the sermon. But what about the rest of the service? From the Gathering Words that invite us to stand on holy ground to the Charge that sends us forth to proclaim the good news, the words we use in worship have power to shape our faith and faithfulness as the people of

God. In this workshop, conferees explored creative approaches to proclaiming the word throughout the whole service.

Organ Improvisation Workshop (Samuel Gaskin) – Improvisation for all levels of organists, from beginner to advanced. I did get to sit in on one session of this class (as described above) and play piano while Samuel improvised on the organ. Many friends took this class and learned a lot of useful skills for improvising during the worship service.

Professional Concerns: From Postlude to Prelude (Mark Kemp) – The hidden part of ministry that often goes unseen can be the most challenging! Establishing routines for the day-to-day work, continuing education opportunities, relationships with colleagues, and personal expectations are only a few of the things that need to go well so that worship leadership can be effective. In this seminar, Mark Kemp discussed important resources as well as how to honor our God's calling to our communities of faith.

The Rhythms of Justice: A Missional Engagement of the Faithful in the Work of Proclaiming Justice (Alonzo Johnson) – Issues of justice continue to be of great concern to our churches and their surrounding communities. With biblical emphasis on caring for the stranger as its backdrop, this workshop examined justice and its intersectional issues. With an emphasis on multigenerational ministry, music, the arts and social media, this workshop also equipped participants with effective strategies centered around spirituality and relationship building in engaging issues of justice.

What's All the Fuss? (Justin Reed) – Certain church denominations, politicians, and school districts condemn critical race theory (CRT) as racist, anti-American, and incompatible with the Bible. But there are some Christians who believe that CRT is exactly what Christianity needs to live out the kingdom of God. This class compared and contrasted how each side defines critical race theory. Participants experimented with how concepts from CRT might make a difference in how we read the Bible. I spoke with many who attended this class and all reported that it was excellent and that Professor Reed (of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary) was extremely knowledgeable, clear, and convincing.

Evening Programs

Monday: Samuel Gaskin Organ Recital – What a delight it was to have not one, but two world-class organists for the Conference this year. John Scherer, the organist at Chicago's historic Fourth Presbyterian Church, was the Service Organist, and Samuel Gaskin, Assistant Organist and Choirmaster at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in San Antonio, was the Recitalist and also participated in both the Organ Repertoire class and the Organ Improvisation class. Samuel is an accomplished jazz pianist and I had the pleasure of teaching the Improvisation class a little about the blues, playing a 12-bar blues on the piano while Samuel improvised on the organ. The repertoire on his recital was appropriately eclectic for a musician of his range, featuring Widor, Dupré, and Bach, as well as jazz-inspired pieces, including an organ re-imagining of Art Tatum's legendary recording of Irving Berlin's "Blue Skies."

Tuesday: Children and Youth Talent Show – It was so encouraging to see so many children and youth at the Conference. Last year, due to COVID concerns, there were not many children or youth attendees, and the 2020 conference was online-only. This year's numbers were back up, including the young people. Children, middlers, and youth could participate in a wide variety of music ensembles as well as having fun activities every day. (High school students could also choose to participate in any adult classes.) For those children whose parents were attending the conference but who personally were not interested in taking part in musical ensembles, Montreat offers Clubs, kind of a combination of VBS and a great day camp. On the first night of the conference, at the same time as Adult and High School Chamber Choir auditions, there were auditions held for the Children's and Youth Talent Show. This night offers the young conferees to share their musical gifts with the adults, and it is a much-beloved part of the week.

After the Talent Show, PAM members and donors had the opportunity to attend the Members and Donors' Reception, which this year took the form of the Conference's first-ever Beer and Hymns. This was held at the Black Mountain Kitchen and Ale House and was a rousing success. PAM members provided accompaniment on keyboard and guitars, and PAM members and donors spent several hours raising the roof with beloved hymns as well as a few newer ones. This may have been the first Beer and Hymns event at the Conference, but it will certainly not be the last.

Wednesday: Hymn Festival Led by David Gambrell – One of the responsibilities of the Routley Lecturer each year is to lead the Wednesday night Hymn Festival, and David Gambrell certainly did not disappoint. David is Associate for Worship and Music for our denomination and is an accomplished hymn writer as well as being a Minister of Word and Sacrament. David skillfully organized the Hymn Festival around the conference theme of encountering Christ in the stranger's guise. The Festival featured not only the marvelous digital organ in Anderson Auditorium but also the grand piano, guitars, percussion, and an ensemble of many different kinds of instruments. We sang hymns in a variety of ways: unison, harmony, alternating sections of the auditorium, and alternating between cantor and assembly. I was honored to be asked by David to serve as cantor on one of the hymns: "Jesus Entered Egypt (*KING'S WESTON*)," Hymn 154 in *Glory to God*.

Thursday: Chamber Choir Concert – There are two Chamber Choirs (small, auditioned ensembles) at each Montreat Worship and Music Conference: an Adult Chamber Choir and a High School Chamber Choir. André Thomas, Professor Emeritus of Choral Music at Florida State University and a prolific composer, arranger, and clinician, conducted the Adult Chamber Choir. Tucker Biddlecombe, Director of Choral Activities at Vanderbilt University (and a former student of André Thomas), was the conductor of the High School Chamber Choir. Biddlecombe also served as tenor soloist on one of the pieces performed by the Adult Chamber Choir.

Friday: Closing Concert – Arguably the highlight of the Montreat Worship and Music Conference each year, the Closing Concert on Friday night features all the musical ensembles at the Conference: Adult Choir, Adult Chamber Choir, High School Choir, High School Chamber Choir, Middler Choir, Children's Choir, Advanced Handbell Ensembles, Intermediate Handbell Ensembles, Instrumental Ensembles (Brass, Woodwinds, Percussion), as well as organ and piano. The Adult Choir portion of the concert included an arrangement of the Gospel song "Sign Me Up" by Brandon Boyd (a member of this year's conference faculty), an arrangement by André Thomas of "If I Can Help Somebody" (on which I had a solo), and "Praise the Lord" by noted African-American composer Florence Price. The closing number of the concert was "Hope for Resolution: A Song for Mandela and DeKlerk" arranged by Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory, performed by all the choral ensembles (adults, high school students, middle schoolers, children), with piano and percussion

accompaniment. This piece features the ancient chant "Of the Father's Love Begotten" paired with a South African freedom song, *Thula sizwe*, which the Adult Choir sang in Zulu. The English translation of the song *Thula sizwe* is:

Nation, do not cry.
Jehovah will protect us.
We will attain freedom.
Jehovah will protect us.

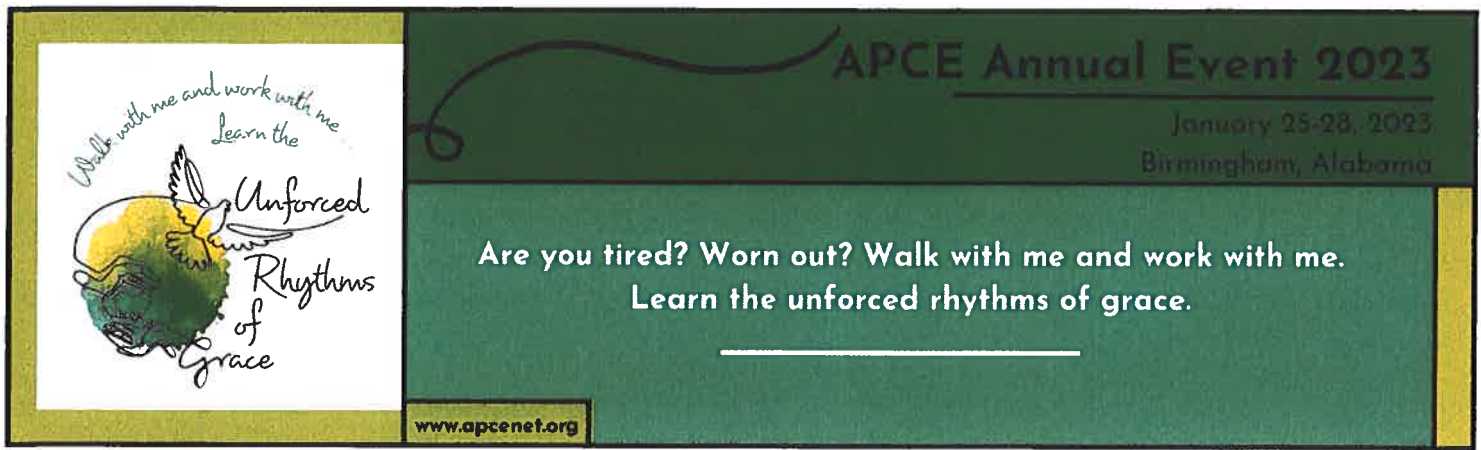
The Daily Office

Each year, the Montreat Worship and Music Conference observes the Daily Office (hours of prayer) as set forth in the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s *Book of Common Worship*. Morning Prayer was held each day between breakfast and the first class of the day, and Evening Prayer began fifteen minutes after the conclusion of each evening's program. The Daily Office this year was led by Kendra Buckwalter Smith (also Moderator of the Worship Reflections class) of Pittsburgh's historic Shadyside Presbyterian Church. Each day's Morning and Evening Prayer service followed the historic pattern of liturgical prayer as provided in the *BCW*, with Scripture readings, sung canticles, confession, intercession, and praise. In addition to the *Book of Common Worship*, prayers for these services were also drawn from Celtic sources, including the *Iona Abbey Worship Book* and John Phillip Newell's *Celtic Treasures*, *Celtic Blessing*, and *Celtic Benediction*, in keeping with the Conference's thematic basis in Celtic spirituality.

Conclusion

Once again, I am tremendously grateful to the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, to the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, to the First Christian Church of Birmingham, and to many, many friends and relatives who made it possible for me to attend this year's Montreat Worship and Music Conference. Even though I have tried to report about my experience in some detail, there is no way to express even a fraction of what I learned during the conference or how I was spiritually fed and lifted up. It was a true gift from God not only to be with so many others from my faith tradition for the entire week, but with those from my faith tradition who are also musicians and artists.

The theme of next year's conference will be "Thirst No More." I strongly encourage all pastors, church music leaders, worship committee members, choir members, instrumentalists, and all who have a heart for worship to make plans now to attend next year's conference. Week 1 will be June 18 - 24, 2023, and Week 2 will be June 25 - July 1, 2023.



Come -

Come and get away for a few days and join us as we gather to grieve the losses we have endured due to illness, fear, convenience, laziness, complacency, workaholism, comparison.

Jesus is calling us to rest—really rest. It is our hope that you will find rest and company during the Annual Event in Birmingham. At the same time, it will be an emotionally challenging week, as we will be gathering during the 60th Anniversary of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing. Together we can lament and grieve the tragedies of our world and find comfort in a God who bears it all with us.

We are excited about the opportunities to worship, lament, explore, learn, be challenged, and grow during our time together. We are hoping to provide opportunities for some “Unforced Rhythms” like unscheduled time to gather with friends, explore the Spirituality center, or go back to your room and take a holy rest/nap!

Our leadership for 2023 includes:

- John Pavlovitz, Keynoter, author, *If God is Love, Don't be a Jerk* (WJK publishing)
- Michael W. Waters, Preacher, author, *For Beautiful Black Boys who Believe in a Better World* (Flyaway Books)
- Katie Nakamura Rengers, Preacher
- CeCe Armstrong, Preacher
- G. Phillip Shultz, Musician and Worship Coordinator and Mary Button, Conference Artist

How YOU Can Help with APCE!

January 25-28, 2023 (Pre and Post Conference Opportunities also available.)

We will need many volunteers to make this conference a success...
and we know you can help us offer southern hospitality!

Volunteer Opportunities Include:

Greeting and welcoming attendees.

Assisting with registration.

Assisting Workshop Leaders with room set up or take down, distributing handouts.

Driving your church bus as we take people from the BJCC to the Civil Rights Museum.

Greeting visitors to the spirituality center.

Serving as guides at the BJCC.

Resetting conference room tables with table décor before and after meals.

*And speaking of table décor, we are looking for **quilters!** Our hope is to make simple quilted table runners for our conference room tables, as inspired by the Gee's Bend tradition. Do you sew or would you like to learn? All instructions and simple patterns will be provided.*

IF you are interested in helping, or would be willing to coordinate volunteers from your church, please contact Cathy Hoop (cathyhoop@gmail.com), Jenny Thagard (jthagard@livingriver.org), or Caleb Carter (carterc@moravian.edu).

**International Peacemaker comes to Sheppards and Lapsley:
Pastor Helivao Poget
From Madagascar**



**Plan to hear her message September 22 - 25 at First Pres in Tuscaloosa or
September 26 in Birmingham – specific times and places will be announced
soon!**

International Peacemakers: Leaders from partner denominations and organizations around the world visit the Presbyterian Church (USA) each year to interpret issues of peace and justice. These visits inform Presbyterians, open hearts and minds, touch lives, establish relationships and inspire new ministries. By sharing stories of their work and witness, the peacemakers help us understand peace and justice concerns around the world and provide insights that can inspire us to greater faithfulness.

About Pastor Helivao Poget:

She was ordained as a pastor in the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (known by its Malagasy initials, FJKM) in 1989. In 2009, she started a ministry to socially and economically displaced people, known as SAFFIFAA, within the FJKM's Chaplaincy program. SAFFIFA works in a number of sites across Antananarivo and around the island providing a wide range of services aimed primarily at marginalized communities: youth, women, migrants, and developmentally challenged people. Much of SAFFIFA's work helps to provide young people alternatives to criminal

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activity, substance abuse and sex work. In 2010, after one of the women she knew from Isotry died while working as a domestic worker in Lebanon, Pastor Helivao began to learn about and expose human trafficking networks and to help Malagasy women abroad to escape abusive situations.

PRESBYTERY CALENDAR – 2022

AUGUST

18	Summer Presbytery meeting (hybrid), 9 AM-3 PM, Host church, First-Tuscaloosa
19	Presbytery office closed
22	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
23	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom
25	Personnel, 9:00 AM, via Zoom
	Anti-Racism Book review, 6:00 PM, via Zoom
27	CRE training, 9 AM – 4:00 PM, Oakmont Chapel

SEPTEMBER

5	Presbytery office closed in recognition of Labor Day
6	COM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
7	Presbytery staff meeting, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
8	Habitat House build begins
14	Executive Council, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
26	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
27	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom

OCTOBER

2	Installation of Revs Leanne Pearce Reed and Tom Bryson
4	COM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
5	Presbytery staff meeting, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
12	Executive Council, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
18	Boundary Training, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, via Zoom
20	Boundary Training, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM, via Zoom
24	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
25	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom

NOVEMBER

1	COM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
2	Presbytery staff meeting, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
9	Executive Council, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
17	Fall Presbytery meeting (hybrid), 9 AM-3 PM, Host church, South Highland
18	Presbytery office closed
23-25	Presbytery office closed in recognition of Thanksgiving
28	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
29	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom