

Minutes of the Stated Meeting
Presbytery of New Covenant
First Presbyterian Church, Orange, TX
July 16, 2016

Moderator RE Shelley Hernandez (Houston, Pathways) called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and opened with prayer. During our morning worship, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the ordination of women to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, with TE's Lauren Suba, Mary Currie, Guinn Blackwell-Eagleson, Pat Clark, Marie Mickey and Melissa Krabbe in leadership. Patricia Brantley, from the staff of the presbytery, gave the Moment for Mission, representing the Administrative Personnel Association. The morning offering is for scholarship assistance for those who are attending the Southwest Regional Conference of the association, which will be held in Houston, TX, in September, 2016. The morning offering totaled \$2,012.00.

Business resumes at 11:05 am.

A quorum was declared.

Tellers: TE Melissa Krabbe, Westminster Galveston, TE Jim Gill, Faith Baytown, RE Johnna Cormier, Trinity Port Neches, RE Sandy Fine (male) from Clear Lake PC.

The docket as shown in the addendum was adopted.

TE Mike Umbenhaur, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Orange, welcomed the commissioners, and gave pertinent information about the meeting.

We welcomed our first time commissioners who were asked to stand and be recognized. There were no corresponding members. TE Phin Washer was introduced as a new minister member returning from Mission Presbytery.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March, 2016 meeting.

Report of the Stated Clerk

1. At our meeting in November 2015, we celebrated the dissolution of Houston, Westminster, but neglected to vote on it. To that end, the motion was made to approve the faithful dissolution of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Houston, TX, effective December 31, 2015. Motion passed.

Additional errata were reported: pg. 31 (Packet) the contract between Mark Downs and Houston, Oaks will end 1/31/2017, not 2016; pg. 32 (Packet) the commission for Bob David (Pasadena, First) is for three years, ending December 31, 2018; pg. 49 (Packet) TE Kristi Click-

Blankman's name was misspelled; pg. 2 (Addendum) TE Fred Seay is the former chair of the Personnel Committee (delete "and continues to serve"), and pg. 9 (Addendum) TE Rick Myers name has only one letter "e".

2. To validate that the congregation of Southminster Presbyterian Church, Missouri City, Texas has fulfilled the requirements for dismissal according to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure of the Presbytery of New Covenant. The motion passed with a voice vote.
3. Having met the requirements for seeking dismissal, the congregation of Southminster Presbyterian Church of Missouri City, Texas is dismissed to the ECO: Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians pending completion of the transfer to that body. The motion passed with a voice vote.

TE Kevin Boyd (Houston, St. Paul) offered prayer for their dismissal.

4. To approve the dismissal of Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church (MDPC) of Houston, Texas, from the Presbytery of New Covenant and the PC(USA) to the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) as requested by the Session of MDPC. The motion passed with a voice vote.

TE Paul Nazarian (Houston, Northwoods) offered prayer for their dismissal after sharing some reflections about their dismissal.

Report of the Staff Visioning Team

RE Gail Northern (Houston, Pathways) offered an overview of the staff vision team report. She introduced the members of the team and their work together. The proposal includes the hiring of a transitional presbyter with the retirement of TE Mike Cole, cross training for current employees, revitalization of regional gatherings, and some changes in the usage of the Presbytery Center.

Shout Outs – TE Howard Reed (Beaumont, St. Andrew's) welcomed TE Phin Washer back to the presbytery; TE Kristi Click-Blankman (Houston, Spring Branch) offered prayer for those attending Triennium; TE Melissa Krabbe (Galveston, Westminster) thanked everyone involved in their rebuilding after the fire last fall; RE Carol Davis (Houston, Spring Branch) reminded commissioners about the Synod of the Sun Presbyterian Women's gathering in Fort Worth; TE Jim Gill (Baytown, Faith) talked about using Mission Insite and their plans to attract Presbyterians; TE Mike Cole(PNC) asked for those who might want to converse about racial justice and reconciliation to join him for lunch; TE Ed Wolf (Galveston, First) invited

commissioners to a recital on August 31; RE David McCarty (Houston, First) invited commissioners to their “Ignite” event in September; RE Connie Nyquist (Houston, Clear Lake) invited people to the “Connect with Montreat” event in October; RE Sharon Gazaway (Port Neches, Trinity) mentioned a new ministry of transitional housing for those who age out of foster care; TE Brent Hampton (Brenham, Brenham) invited commissioners to an interfaith dialogue on October 2; TE Nora Fitch (Houston, St. Thomas) thanked Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for funding to repair flood damage, and invited commissioners to a concert tomorrow afternoon benefitting the healing from the recent shootings in Orlando; TE Jack Barden (APTS) mentioned two programs at the seminary – the online certificate program for Spanish leaders, and the new Master of Arts in Youth Ministry; RE Ron Everett (Beaumont, St. Andrew’s) invited people to a tasting on August 16 benefitting “Some Other Place”, a ministry outreach in the Beaumont area; RE Megan Britton (Huntsville, First) mentioned an upcoming conference at Mo-Ranch – young adults race relations; RE Trish Burke (Bryan, First) talked about their mission efforts in Peru, and invited commissioners to go to Peru in August 2017.

TE Mike Umbenhaur offered a blessing before lunch, and we adjourned to the Fellowship Hall to eat sandwiches from Quizno’s.

We reconvened at 1:15 pm, with the singing of “Sanctuary”.

Joyce Batty from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance/Presbyterian Women made a presentation about preparedness for times of disaster, prompting commissioners to write or update their emergency/disaster plans.

Reports from our 222nd General Assembly Commissioners

TE Lynn Hargrove reported for RE Gary Denmon (Atascocita, Atascocita) who was unable to attend and served on Committee 7 – Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations. TE Becky Downs (Houston, John Knox) served on the Committee on Social Justice Concerns, also known as the “apology committee” which also considered race relations and other areas of concern. RE Regena Bass (Wharton, First) reported on the GA Procedures committee of 49 people which dealt with the various overtures that had come to the assembly. She read a statement that had been added to an overture regarding child abuse in the church. TE Kevin Boyd (Houston, St. Paul) served on Committee 12 – International and Peacemaking and shared his experience of bickering over “itty bitty words” and discussing larger topics such as a statement that came down a General Assembly committee on war and serving in the military. RE Johnna Cormier (Port Neches, Trinity) served on Committee 14 - Theological Issues and Institutions. She highlighted the election of our co-moderators, TE Jan Edmiston and TE Denise Anderson, as well as TE J. Herbert Nelson who was elected as Stated Clerk. TE Nora Fitch (Houston, St. Thomas) explained the role of the Young Adult Advisory Delegates and the voting process. She served on

Committee 10 – Mission Coordination, which had 75 people that served. They discussed 15 overtures, and 4 other actions, as well as consideration of how to do the work of the denomination more efficiently. There is a new pilot program to reach out and advocate for Young African American males in Baltimore, Charlotte, Cleveland, New York and Pittsburgh. RE James Hooper (Houston, Pinecrest) served on Committee 4 – the Way Forward, a committee of 78 that began the day before the start of the assembly. This committee was dealing with the future of the denomination and they had a lot of meetings. TE David Green (Conroe, Texas) served on Committee 9 – Immigration and Environmental Issues. He thanked the presbytery for approving an overture that came from his session. It passed our presbytery and was approved at the General Assembly. He shared his experience with a Commissioner’s Resolution regarding church property. His work on the minority report on fossil fuel divestment taught him many things including “Committee work is an individual sport, plenary work is a team sport,” and about the work of MRTI – Mission Responsibility Through Investment.

The next assembly will be held in St. Louis, Mo.

RE David McCarty (Houston , First) offered the following “Resolution for July 2016 Meeting, Presbytery of New Covenant”

Whereas, the Presbytery of New Covenant overtured the 222nd General Assembly to engage the fossil fuel industry through MRTI’s shareholder relationships as a wiser alternative to divestment,

Whereas, the overture faced strong pressure from those favoring divestment, both in committee and in plenary sessions,

Whereas, in his role as commissioner from the presbytery, TE David Green, First, Conroe led the effort in committee to write and publish an excellent minority report and spoke eloquently against the majority report in plenary, having also worked with honor and integrity to gain the support of several other commissioners, with the result of a resounding vote in favor of engagement over divestment,

Resolved, that Presbytery of New Covenant formally acknowledges and commends David Green for his steadfast effort, perseverance, and grace under pressure at General Assembly.

The resolution passed with a standing ovation.

Administrative Division Steering Committee

RE Jane Larkin (Houston, St. Philip) introduced RE Cathy Bliton (Katy, New Hope) who offered the report from the Finance Committee. She explained the expenses attributed to General Council which included the annual audit.

Jane then called on TE Mike Cole (PNC) who recognized RE Forbes Baker, the Director of Finance, upon the occasion of his retirement from full time service to the presbytery.

Committee on Ministry

Committee Moderator RE Bob Patterson (Houston, St. Andrew's) explained revisions to our policy on background checks.

Motions

1. The committee recommends and moves that TE Jake Gonzales be granted Honorably Retired Status effective May 31, 2016. This motion was approved.
2. The committee recommends and moves that the Pastoral Call between First Presbyterian Church, Bay City, and their Interim Pastor TE Tracy Williams be approved. THIS ACTION REQUIRES A ¾ VOTE OF THE PRESBYTERY (G-2.0504c).

Salary		\$ 22,674.13
Housing and Utility Allowance		24,191.30
Social Security Compensation		1,734.57
Auto Allowance @IRS Rate		Actual
Board of Pensions Dues		17,010.00
Study Leave Allowance	cumulative for 3 years	1,450.00
Study Leave	cumulative for 3 years	2 weeks
Vacation		4 weeks
Annual Review		

This motion was approved after questions. TE Tracy Williams will be installed as the Pastor of Bay City, First, on August 28, 2016.

TE Kevin Keaton from the Board of Pensions was introduced. He invited commissioners to two workshops for lay employees of congregations.

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CPM)

RE Bill Hargrove introduced Jim DeMent (Houston, St. Philip) who is seeking candidacy to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. Jim shared about his formation process, including his Supervised Practice of Ministry at Houston, St. Paul.

1. The committee recommends and moves that **James DeMent (Houston, St. Philip)** be enrolled as a candidate. The motion was approved. A service of candidacy was offered.
2. The committee recommends and moves that the following be elected to serve as Ordination Exam Readers for 2016-17:

TEACHING ELDERS

PRINCIPALS:

TE Kevin Boyd

TE Laureen Suba

TE Kristy Vits

ALTERNATES:

TE Mary Currie

The motion was approved.

RULING ELDERS

RE Julie Wells (Houston, St. Philip)

RE Christy Craig (Houston, First)

RE Jim Allison (Houston, Pines)

RE Kate Burkart (Houston, St. Philip)

General Council

TE David Green (Conroe, First) told the commissioners that the committee report was on page 41 – 44.

Ministries Division Steering Committee

Chairperson RE Carlton Currie reported on the Vision Initiative and Social Justice Grants.

Congregational Resourcing Team: Carlton introduced TE Connie Alexander (HR) and RE Carol Davis (Houston, Spring Branch) who invited people to the Day with Bruce Reyes-Chow who will talk about using Social Media. This event will be Thursday, September 29, 9 am – 3 pm, at Spring Branch Presbyterian Church. The cost will be \$16 which includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

Evangelism and Church Growth: TE Lucia Oerter (Houston, Pines) was present by a video message about New Beginnings. TE Becky Downs (Houston, John Knox) shared their congregation's experience with the New Beginnings program.

Nominating Committee

Chairperson RE John Cronk (Houston, St. Thomas) offered these two motions:

To elect the nominees to the Transition Presbyterian Search Committee (listed on page 49).

To approve the slate of nominees found on page 49.

Both motions were approved.

No new business was submitted prior to the meeting. Shelley offered remarks and a closing prayer prior to our adjournment at 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Hargrove

Stated and Recording Clerk