

Presbytery of New Covenant

Stated Meeting

March 19, 2016

Moderator Shelley Hernandez called the meeting to order at 9:02 am, and opened with prayer prior to worship led by our Presbyterian Youth Connections Council led in worship. We offered a service to commission those attending the 222nd General Assembly. After the benediction the worship leaders were thanked with applause. The offering was \$2831.01 for scholarship funding for Youth Triennium.

A quorum was declared. Tellers appointed were: RE Maggi Focke (College Station, Covenant), RE Greg Feigh (Houston, Pathways), RE John Woodhouse (Houston, St. Thomas), TE Alex Lee-Cornell (Houston, St. Stephen), TE Jackie Hannan (Atascocita), and TE Marie Mickey (Bryan, First).

Nominating Committee: Ginger Bailey (Tomball, First) and Gary Long (Houston, Northwoods) were elected to serve unexpired terms in the class of 2016.

Adoption of the docket: the meeting docket was adopted without amendment.

TE David Green offered a welcome from the host church, and thanked those who have worked hard to make this meeting happen. First time commissioners were welcomed. Corresponding members included TE Jan Edmiston from Chicago Presbytery, TE Phin Washer (Mission Presbytery) and TE Arnold Pheri from Malawi. Exhibitors were invited to introduce themselves, and invite people to meet them in the display area.

The omnibus motion was passed.

Report of the Stated Clerk

Dismiss Love PC – 2 motions were approved which read as follows:

1. To validate that the congregation of Houston, Love Korean Presbyterian Church, has fulfilled the requirements for dismissal according to the 2011 Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure of the Presbytery of New Covenant.
2. Having met the requirements for seeking dismissal, the congregation of Love Korean Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas, is dismissed to the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) pending completion of the transfer to that body.

TE Mark Plunkett (Houston, Heritage) offered prayer for the Love Korean Church. Mark had served on the discernment team.

Dismiss the AC – this motion was approved with thanks:

1. To approve the dismissal, with our gratitude, of the Administrative Commission appointed on November 21, 2015, to inquire about the reported difficulties at the Young Nak Presbyterian Church of Houston.

Lynn asked the commissioners to offer thanks to those who have served on the twelve discernment teams. Their names appear on page 16 of the packet.

Membership cards for Teaching Elders are available at the registration tables.

We celebrated church anniversaries, TE anniversaries, and the necrology. Lynn offered prayer for those that died in 2015.

Report of the General Council: TE David Green, moderator of council, offered the report which dealt with the current litigation with Houston, First and Houston, Memorial Drive.

State of the Presbytery: General Presbyter TE Mike Cole shared that the core of our being is love. We are moving forward in new ways and are willing to seek forgiveness and make amends when we are wrong. He highlighted the outreach ministries of the presbytery. He sang a paraphrased version of “You Can’t Take that Away from Me”.

Celebration of Ministry: Mo-Ranch summer camps with DJ Owens.

Keynote Speaker: Associate General Presbytery RE Mary Marcotte introduced our Keynote speaker, TE Jan Edmiston, who serves as the associate executive for ministry in the Presbytery of Chicago. Her talk was titled, “What Breaks God’s Heart in Your Neighborhood?” She shared images of things in 1950 contrasted with 2016 – school, grocery stores, churches. She highlighted shifts in culture – print vs. e-based culture, and shifts in the church between the modern era and the post-modern era: outreach to the unchurched or previously churched vs. to the spiritually curious who have never been to church; a “come” mentality vs. a “go out” mentality; we GO to church vs. we ARE the church. She asked these questions: “Why do we exist?”; “Are we more interested in pleasing ourselves or God?”; “Are we more afraid of members of our congregations or of God?”; “Are we here for ourselves, the world or both?” The old building blocks of Attendance, Building and Cash don’t work anymore (Glenn McDonald). New blocks are Neighbors, Organization and Paradigm. “It’s not about YOU; it’s about growing the Kingdom of God.” WEGMAN’S grocery store wants to be the community center on the east coast. We answered quiz questions based on “The Church Addiction Test” by Tom Bandy. Theme verses for churches should be: Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 5:1-4. Book recommendation: “Start With Why?” Simon Sinek – also a TED talk. Look at own neighborhood to find the needs to which to respond.

We broke for lunch after receiving instructions and saying a blessing for the meal. After lunch, we reconvened with the singing of “We Are All One in Mission”.

Administrative Division Steering Committee: RE Jane Larkin introduced RE Janet Rainey of the Ecclesiastical Affairs Committee to introduce the overtures. She called on RE Lynne Parsons (Houston, St. John’s) to give an overview of the 9 overtures from the Presbytery of Foothills. Janet read the various overtures one by one, and there was debate offered after each. She then called on TE David Jones (Woodlands Community) to give an overview of the tenth overture, “Confronting HIV and AIDS Globally”. The ballots were collected for counting.

Janet asked for a show of hands for those that would be interested in taking a bus to the meeting in Orange in July. Lynn asked for volunteers to host presbytery meetings in 2017.

Finance Committee: Jane invited RE Kathy Bliton, committee chair, to present the budget, and for the members of the committee to join her on stage. Kathy offered prayer before talking over the budget figures. She shared the financial background of each of the committee members. The motion to approve the proposed budget for FY 2016 passed with the words, "Thank you, Finance Committee".

Personnel Committee: Jane pointed to the actions taken on behalf of the personnel committee.

Committee on Ministry: RE Bob Patterson (Houston, St. Andrew's) presented the committee report.

Motion: to grant TE Debbie Measells (Brazoria, First) and TE Sam Fabila (Houston, Biyaya) honorably retired status. The motion passed with the words, "Thank you for your service."

Motion: to grant TE Debbie Measells (Brazoria, First), TE Sam Fabila (Houston, Biyaya), and TE Joe Degatto (Houston, Heights) pastor emeritus status.

TE Mike Cole offered a service of retirement for TE Debbie Measells (Brazoria, First). TE Sam Fabila was not in attendance. Debbie shared reflections on her 30 year ministry at Brazoria with the commissioners.

Bob reminded the commissioners of the Clergy Retreat on April 5-7, and about the Healthy Boundaries training. He then introduced TE Kevin Keaton from the Board of Pensions who gave an overview of the upcoming changes in the benefits program.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry: RE Bill Hargrove (Houston, St. Andrew's) reported on the committee's work. He invited Daniel "Dan" Aikins (Houston, MDPC) to the platform and then recommended and *moved that Dan be enrolled as a candidate*. Dan shared his story of call to ministry. *The motion passed*. Shelley offered a service of candidacy for Dan. All those who came to support Dan were invited to the platform to lay hands on him during the closing prayer of that service.

Bill then called on TE Rose Niles from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary who talked about the New Covenant International Student Fellowship. She then introduced RE John Hartman (Houston, MDPC) to share more information about the fellowship. TE Arnold Phiri, from Malawi, shared his experience as an international student at APTS.

Shelley mentioned the Men's Conference at Mo-Ranch.

Ministries Division Steering Committee: TE Ann Marie Quigley-Swanson (Houston, Northwoods), vice chair of the committee informed the commissioners about the availability of the Vision Initiative and Lynn Johnson Social Grants which totals \$65,000 this year. Shelley introduced TE Charlotte Kibler (HR) who shared information about the Mental Health Symposium which will be in April at Houston, St. Andrew's. AGP Mary Marcotte offered the report regarding 1001 New Worshipping Communities since TE Kaz Minter was not able to attend the meeting. TE Alex Lee-Cornell (Houston, St. Stephen) introduced Greg Rousos (EVP/COO, Presbyterian Foundation) and Jim Brown (LIT) who talked about being better stewards by having an energy audit of the church facilities. Often the savings are 30% of current expense on utility cost.

Ballot Count: Shelley reported the following counts for the votes on the overtures to General Assembly:

03.01 = 70 for/92 against with 1 abstention (motion fails);

03.02 = 74 for/87 against with 3 abstentions (motion fails);

03.03 = 80 for/81 against with 2 abstentions (motion fails);
03.04 = 116 for/45 against with 2 abstentions (motion passed);
03.05 = 80 for/83 against with 1 abstention (motion fails);
03.06 = 65 for/97 against with 1 abstention (motion fails);
03.07 = 55 for/107 against with 1 abstention (motion fails);
03.08 = 64 for/98 against with 1 abstention (motion fails);
03.09 = 79 for/81 against with 3 abstentions (motion fails);
03.10 = 145 for/13 against with 4 abstentions (motion passed).

The Stated Clerk will report these results to the Office of the General Assembly in Louisville.

Nominating Committee: RE John Cronk placed the names of those who have agreed to serve in nomination (information to be found in the meeting materials). The motion passed.

There was no new business offered. Shelley offered remarks to close the meeting. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed. The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 3:30.

Reported Registered Attendance:

Voting Commissioners: 70 minister members; 103 ruling elder commissioners; 7 elders with privilege by virtue of office; 4 former moderators or stated clerks of the presbytery (Ruling Elders); 1 elected presbytery staff; and 1 Fellow in the National Association of Church Business Administrators.

Non-voting: 6 corresponding minister members; 21 visitors; 2 presbytery staff; 1 other church professional

Total: 216 in attendance

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lynn R. Hargrove

Stated and Recording Clerk