

Presbytery of New Covenant
Stated Meeting
March 18, 2017

The meeting began with worship which constituted our opening prayer. TE Paul Hooker offered a “moment for mission” introducing some of the work of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (APTS). TE Rose Niles preached from John 4:19-42 (the woman at the well), challenging us to focus outward rather than inward as we are sent out to sow and harvest. We celebrated communion. The offering was \$2260.25 which will be given to Austin Seminary for needs based scholarships.

A quorum was declared. An opening prayer for the business session was offered by moderator David Green.

Tellers: RE Dick Black (Galveston, First), RE Shelley Hernandez (Houston, Pathways), TE Melissa Krabbe (Galveston, Westminster), TE Ed Wolf (Galveston, First)

Nominations to the nominating committee – move to the afternoon

Amend the docket – add time for Teresa Kingsbury to talk about the Certificate of Youth Ministry program at Austin Seminary. The docket was approved.

Steve Oglesbee offered the welcome from the home congregation, sharing the 3E’s of Clear Lake - “*Embrace every person; Empower every life; Engage every neighborhood.*” We thanked the 50+ volunteers with our applause.

Corresponding members: Robert Rush (Tomball, First – Cumberland PC); Carolyn Helsel (Mission Presbytery, APTS); Tom Currie (HR, Mission Presbytery)

New Minister Members were introduced: Barbara Johnson (HR), John Purcell (HR), David Puig (Houston, Northwoods).

Exhibitors were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and their work: Teresa Kingsbury (Certificate in Youth Ministry – APTS); Rita Odom (Schreiner University); Jim Currie (Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest); clergy retreat; missional communities of CLPC.

The omnibus motion was passed which included the approval of the minutes from the November 2016 stated meeting of the presbytery.

The Stated Clerk, Lynn Hargrove, offered that the report was found on page 7 of the packet, and pages 7-8 of the addendum. She highlighted that church anniversaries and ordination anniversaries were found on pages 5-6 of the packet, and that the necrology was found on pages 5-6 of the addendum. There were three additional names offered from Webster, Webster: Deacon Gregory Wilson (July 20, 2016), RE and Deacon Jim Young (July, 2016), and RE Rogge Marsh (July, 2016).

Motion: To approve an Administrative Commission be appointed to act to correct the difficulties at the Formosan Presbyterian Church, Houston, TX. This commission shall be given the full power of the session, assuming original jurisdiction of the existing session, which shall cease to act until such time as the presbytery shall otherwise direct.

TE Michael Chen, pastor of the Formosan Church spoke in favor of the motion saying that they really need this help. The motion was approved.

Recognition of the First Presbyterian Church in Jasper: Lynn Hargrove offered a part of the story of the congregation. David Green offered a prayer of thanksgiving for their ministry. We held hands and sang “Amen, Amen” in the manner that the congregation would end their worship service. TE Jim Currie recognized the ministry of TE Louise Row who was the pastor of the congregation at the time of the dragging death of James Byrd. The congregation was engaged in the work of racial reconciliation in the community.

David introduced TE John Wurster, chair of the EAC, who introduced our keynote speaker, the Rev. Dr. Carolyn Helsel from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Her address was titled, “The Work of the Church – Preaching and Public Life.” Carolyn reminded us that God loves each of us, and those who are challenged in American life today – LGBTQ, immigrants, racial reconciliation, and others – and that our expressions of God’s love exist in the public forum.

RE Shelley Hernandez offered a report from the Transitional Presbyter Search Committee that they are in serious contact with a candidate.

TE Bob Patterson was asked to report for the General Council that there are no lawsuits pending and that work continues.

TE Brent Hampton offered the report of the Finance Committee, explaining the presbytery budget for 2017. The members of the finance committee stood behind Brent as he made the report. The 2017 presbytery budget was approved. Brent offered a prayer for the presbytery.

TE Jackie Hannan offered the report of the Personnel Committee which was found on pages 11-12 of the addendum. TE Marie Mickey asked about raises for the other staff. The support staff had received a raise last year.

TE Melissa Krabbe offered the report of the Nominating Committee which was found on page 25 of the packet, and page 1 of the addendum. There were no nominations from the floor. The nominations were approved.

RE Val Aldred (Houston, Pines) shared the work of disaster planning. He also serves with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. There is information available on the presbytery website.

TE Steve Oglesbee was invited to instruct commissioners how to get to lunch, and to offer a prayer for the meal. We moved to the gym for table fellowship while we had box lunches from Jason’s Deli.

We reconvened at 1:00 with the singing of “The Church’s One Foundation” (verses 1-4). David reminded commissioners to share the stories of good things that are happening in our congregations.

Shout outs included the reopening of the sanctuary at Heights after their fire; a diaper ministry (Cherry Cheeks) at Dickinson, First; the dedication of the fellowship hall at Tomball, First; Spring Branch is offering the “Pray Ground” and a Gathering Place ministry.

TE Jim Currie explained the examination process – first the sermon is preached, then questions about the sermon are answered, and then more general questions of examination may be asked. The first candidate to

preach was Chad Lawson, being called to serve at Crockett, First. The text was John 6:24-35. There were no questions and the sermon portion of the examination was sustained.

Celebration of Ministry: Rita Odom from Schreiner University shared about the new things that are happening there in Kerrville.

TE Jim Currie introduced Omar Rouchon, being called to Houston, St. Philip, to preach his sermon. The text was Genesis 18: 1-14. There were no questions and the sermon portion of the examination was sustained.

Celebration of Ministry: TE Tom Currie brought greetings from the Presbyterian Outlook and shared information about the publication.

ADSC – David Jones was not present. John Wuster reported for EAC. The other committee reports were given in the morning session.

Celebration of Ministry: Teresa Kingsbury was invited to share about the Certificate in Youth Ministry Training program at Austin Seminary. The core components are cohort, coaching, classroom, church and care.

TE Helen Deleon reported on behalf of the Committee on Ministry. The upcoming clergy retreat was highlighted as the work of the Professional Life subcommittee. TE Jim Currie invited Chad Lawson forward to complete his examination. Jim asked Chad to explain Jesus crying out on the cross, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” There was a question about his statement of faith, and how he is shepherding Crockett, First, into God’s mission and future. The motion to sustain the examination of Chad Lawson was approved.

TE Jim Currie then invited Omar Rouchon forward to complete his examination. Jim asked Omar to explain open communion in the Presbyterian church. There was a question about what he does for fun, and another about his statement of faith and how he is being called to serve God’s people. The motion to sustain the examination of Omar Rouchon was approved.

RE Bill Hargrove reported for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The motion was approved to elect these readers of ordination examinations for 2017-2018 (there were no nominations from the floor):

Teaching Elder Principles

TE Kevin Boyd
TE Laureen Suba
TE Kristy Vits

Teaching Elder Alternate

TE Mary Currie

Ruling Elder Principle

RE Julie Wells, Houston, St. Philip
RE Jim Allison, Houston, Pines
RE Greg Feigh, Houston, Pathways

Ruling Elder Alternate

Kate Burkart, Houston, St. Philip

TE Kristi Click-Blankman presented on behalf of the Ministries Division Steering Committee, highlighting the Vision Initiative and Lynn Johnson Social Justice grants and the application process. The application deadline is April 30, 2017.

TE Keatan King encouraged commissioners to attend the “Being and Becoming a Multigenerational Church” event with Karl Travis. This will be held at Houston, St. Andrew’s on March 30-April 1.

TE Shawn Kang encouraged commissioners to attend the “Mental Health 101” workshop on June 8 at the Presbytery Center. Matthew Stanford, from the Hope and Healing Center, will be the presenter.

Kristi concluded with the report of the Outreach Committee, sharing that there are grant funds available in the work of peacemaking and outreach. She also asked for commissioners to report on congregational mission trips to allow some partnerships between congregations.

Moderator's Remarks: Isabel Rivera-Velez has agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee for a three year term. The Board of Pensions offers debt reduction for newly ordained teaching elders. David shared statistics from the Barna group on the decline in the PCUSA. He lifted up that we have stories of good things to share with each other.

The motion to adjourn was approved, and we closed with the singing of "Amen" and a prayer and benediction.

We adjourned at 3:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn R. Hargrove

Stated and Recording Clerk