

**MINUTES**  
**127<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting**  
**Presbytery of the Pines**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**Feb. 13, 2021**

**CONSTITUTION**

Moderator Donna Rose called the meeting to order via Zoom at 10 a.m. The moderator led the body in prayer. The following attendance was taken showing that quorum was present:

*Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Present (13)*

John Albright, Mark Armstrong, Alford Branch, Chris Currie, Harry Cooper, Julia Nance Farrell, Jim Freeman, Jason Leonard, Alex Pappas, Hal Shafer, David Stipp-Bethune, Stephen Sanders and Jungsuk Seo.

*Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Absent (6)*

Kathleen Hignight, James Giddens, Allison Moody, Tom Renowski, Beth Sentell, and James Van Hook

*Honorably Retired – Present (3)*

Rhodes Stipp, George Wortham, J. Daniel Hignight

*Honorably Retired – Excused (15)*

Dianne Brown, Ralph Burns, Philip Farris, Grant Groves, Joe Hill, Mark Kennedy, John McClland, Bryan McDowell, Mike Morgan, Lauren Moore, Robin Nygaard, Maetta Snyder, Jerry Thompkins, Bill Willis and Art Vance.

*Elders Commissioned by Session (19)*

Alto (excused); Athens (absent); Bastrop (absent); Belcher – Danny Logan; Benton

Jeanne Anders; Belcher – Danny Logan; Benton (absent); Bossier City - Korean (absent); Bossier City – Trinity – Gordon Christy; Camden – Ham Singleton; Carthage (absent); Chidester (absent); Choudrant – Alabama (absent); Crossett – Baker Coutler; Dermott (absent); El Dorado – Bill Archer; Ferriday – Linda Alwood; Frierson (absent); Grand Cane (absent); Haynesville (absent); Homer – Christy Gladney; Hope – Sally Short; Jonesville – Martha Brallier; Keatchie (absent); Lake Providence (absent); Lake Village – Lisa Moon; Magnolia – Pierre Boumtje; Manfield-Red Lick (absent); Monticello-Holmes Chapel – Billy

Rigdell; Monticello-First (absent); Natchitoches – Chris Evans; Newellton (absent); Plain Dealing-First (absent); Plain Dealing –Cottage Grove (absent) Rayville- Sandra Watson; Ruston – Betty Sheeler; Shreveport-Broadmoor (absent); Shrevepor-First – Beth Woods, Neill Guilbert; Tallulah (absent); Texarkana – Stephanie Jackson; Vidalia (absent); Warren (absent); West Monroe – Blake Nolan; Winnfield (absent); Winnsboro – John Guice.

***Elders Commissioned to a Congregation***

Cylde Ray Webber – absent.

***Elders Enrolled in Presbytery***

Donna Rose – present; Danny Logan – present; John Guice – present.

***Certified Christian Educators***

J. Daniel Hignight

***Agency Representatives***

Rev. Dr. Dan Krutz, Louisiana Interchurch Conference; Valerie Young, Synod of the Sun; Bok Soon Egbert, Synod of the Sun; Lemuel Garcia, Presbyterian Mission Agency.

**WORSHIP**

Divine Worship was led by the Rev. Dr. Jim Freeman, pastor Broadmore Church, Shreveport; Ruling Elder Bill Archer, First Church, El Dorado; Rev. Elizabeth Brinegar, pastor, First Church, Jacksonville, Arkansas and program director for Solar Under the Sun; Rev. Dr. George Wortham, interim general presbyter, Pines Presbytery; Ruling Elder Donna Rose, First Church, Natchitoches, outgoing moderator, Pines Presbytery; Jean Rowell, pianist, Broadmoor Church Shreveport.

Rev. Wortham led the recognition of the honorable retirement of the Rev. Dr. Alford Branch. He also led the Presbytery necrology, as well as the recognition of outgoing Moderator Donna Rose and the installation of incoming Moderator Rev. Harry Cooper.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator Rev. Harry Cooper called the business meeting of Presbytery to order at 10:42 a.m.

**REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK**

George Wortham, Stated Clerk presented the report. **IT WAS VOTED** to adopt the following recommendations:

1. Report of Quorum.

2. That the Docket for this meeting be approved.
3. That the Minutes of the 126<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Pines be approved.
4. That Donna Rose, Danny Logan, and John Guice be enrolled in Presbytery while serving as moderators of committees or commissions.
5. That the Rev. Dan Krutz, the Executive Director of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference be welcomed and given the opportunity to address the assembly.
6. That Valerie Young, Stated Clerk of Synod, and Bok Soon Egbert, Synod Moderator be seated as corresponding members.
7. That Lemuel Garcia, from the Presbyterian Mission Agency, PC(USA), be seated at a corresponding member.
8. That the following Presbytery Roles, as of December 31, 2020, be approved.

**Ministers serving congregations.**

Albright, John	Allison, Moody
Branch, Alford	Leonard, Jason
Cooper, Harry	Pappas, Alexandra
Currie, Chris	Reinowski, Tom
Freeman, Jim	Sanders, Stephen
Stipp-Bethune, David	Seo, Jungsuk
Armstrong, Mark	Shafer, Hal
Farrell, Julia	Sentell, Beth

**Ministers in validated ministry.**

Giddens, James

**Ministers at large.**

Hignight, Kathleen

**Ministers Honorably Retired.**

Brown, Dianne	Moore, Lauren
Burns, Ralph	Morgan, Mike
Faris, Philip	Nygaard, Robin
Groves, Grant	Snyder, Maetta
Hignight, Daniel	Stipp, Rhodes
Kennedy, Mark	Tompkins, Jerry
McClelland, John	Vance, Art
McDowell, Bryan	Willis, Bill
McLarty, Philip	Wortham, George

**Ruling Elders Commissioned to congregations.**

Webber, Clyde Ray

**Certified Christian Educators.**

Hignight, Daniel

Veit, Lynance Pabst

9. Necrology report.

These are elders who entered the Church Triumphant during 2020

**Ministers of Word & Sacrament**

Elmer Lee Grisso – June 26, 2020

Stephen Kim – Dec. 16, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Athens**

Margaret H. Parkhill – May 15, 2020

James Egan “Jimmy” Marsalis, Jr. – May 24, 2020

Harry Melton Gandy – Nov. 1, 2020

**Trinity Presbyterian Church – Bossier City**

Elizabeth Witt – May 29, 2020

**Alabama Presbyterian Church – Choudrant**

Ray Odom – March 19, 2020

Martha Gaston – Oct. 7, 2020

O.L. Brewster – Dec. 17, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Camden**

Thomas Watts McGill – March 27, 2020

James “Jim” Robert Murray – Dec. 26, 2020

**Presbyterian Church of Crossett**

Phyllis Ross – Aug. 6, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – El Dorado**

Shirley Hurley – June 29, 2020

W. L. Cook – Nov. 17, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Hope**

Gloria Flores – Jan. 9, 2020

Bobby Glyn “Doodle” Franklin – Dec. 22, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Homer**

Kirk C. Andrews – Jan. 30, 2020  
Dr. Harry L. Woodall – May 24, 2020

**Holmes Chapel – Monticello**

Curtis Calbert – March 31, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Natchitoches**

Marilyn Lumpkins – May 26, 2020

**Presbyterian Church of Ruston**

Dorothy Jane White – Jan. 25, 2020  
Johnson Norman “J.N.” Walpole – May 10, 2020  
Thomas Peters Young – July 16, 2020  
Michael Eugene Craft – Dec. 28, 2020

**Broadmoor Presbyterian Church – Shreveport**

Faye Combs Gray – June 15, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Shreveport**

Carolyn Ogilvie – March 23, 2020  
Ruth Doreck – March 27, 2020  
A. B. “Andy” Gallagher – April 11, 2020  
E. N. “Ed” Henderson – Oct. 2, 2020

**First Presbyterian Church – Texarkana, Ark.**

Tommy Boyles – Jan. 8, 2020  
Sallie Sue Rodgers Jan. 1, 2020

**New Iona Presbyterian Church – West Monroe**

Edward D. “Ed” Love – Feb. 9, 2020  
Mary French – Aug. 3, 2020

## REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER

George Wortham, Interim General Presbyter, showed a video on per capita.

## GREETINGS FROM AGENCIES

Rev. Dan Krutz, the Executive Director of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference; Valerie Young, Stated Clerk of Synod; Bok Soon Egbert, Synod Moderator; and Lemuel Garcia, Presbyterian Mission Agency, PC(USA), brought greetings and an update on the work of their respective agencies.

## REPORTS TO THE PREBYTYERY

**Presbytery Leadership Council.** David Stipp-Bethune and Donna Rose, presented the report. The decisions made by the PLC in the name of the Presbytery since the Nov. 14 meeting are as follows:

- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to appoint Nancy Bergeron as receiving treasurer and grant her authority to sign checks.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to fully fund approved grant requests this year up to \$5,000. The Presbytery will receive \$25,000 from the Louisiana Board of Presbyterian Publications for 2021. There is also some unexpended money in other funds that is available for similar use as the LBPP grant.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to elect Chris Currie to the Louisiana Board of Presbyterian Publications board as a member of the Class of 2023. One vacancy remains on the board for the Class of 2022.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to elect Sandra Watson as Synod commissioner.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to fund the following requests for Louisiana Board of Presbyterian Publications grants:
  - Alto Presbyterian Church - \$5,000
  - Shreveport-Bossier Korean Church - \$4,210.53
  - First Presbyterian Homer - \$5,000
- ✚ The following recommendations were made to the PLC and approved:
  - That Edith Hill continue as receiving treasurer pending other solutions.
  - That the treasurer and Presbytery accountant be given authority to consolidate accounts in one bank.
  - That Diane Dablow, secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Ruston, open all mail to Presbytery (except that which is addressed to a staff member in person) and photocopy all checks and maintain a file of the photocopies.
  - That Nancy Bergeron be authorized to sign checks.
- ✚ Voted to approve a change in the Business Affairs Committee from an ad hoc committee to a committee of two classes of four members.
- ✚ Voted to approve the first draft of the Presbytery docket as presented.

- ✚ Voted to concur with and recommend to Presbytery the 2021 budget from the Business Affairs Committee.
- ✚ Voted to recommend to Presbytery that the terms of Interim General Presbyter George Wortham and Administrative Assistant Nancy Bergeron be renewed for another year.
- ✚ Voted to accept the invitation from First Presbyterian Church-Texarkana to host the October 8-9 meeting of Presbytery. Plans at the moment are for an overnight meeting with committee meetings.

**IT WAS VOTED** to ratify the actions taken by the PLC and that those actions be entered in the minutes.

**IT WAS VOTED** that the position of interim general presbyter, held by George Wortham, and the position of interim administrative assistant, held by Nancy Bergeron, be extended for another year, effective May 1, 2021.

**Committee on Ministry.** David Stipp-Bethune, moderator, presented the report. The following actions taken under commission powers are hereby entered in the minutes:

- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to affirm the electronic vote that George Wortham be allowed to moderate the Jan. 17, 2021 Session meeting at the Presbyterian Church of Ruston.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to grant the request from the Holmes Chapel, Monticello, Arkansas, that the Rev. Alford Branch be granted Honorable Retirement as of March 28, 2021, and to concur with the congregation's decision to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Rev. Branch and the congregation, effective that date.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to name Stephen Sanders as the Moderator of the sessions of First Camden, and Tates Bluff Chidester, Arkansas, as per his Temporary Supply Agreement that had previously been approved.

**Report of the Committee on Recruitment and Representation .** Chris Currie, moderator, presented the report.

**IT WAS VOTED** to approve the following nominations:

1. Recruitment and Representation

Class of 2022

TE Chris Currie (Moderator)

TE Jason Leonard

RE Charles Coyle

2. Business Affairs Committee

Class of 2021

Vacancy

Vacancy

Class of 2022  
Danny Logan (Moderator)  
Vacancy

3. Ecclesiastical Business Committee

Class of 2021  
RE Martha Brallier  
RE Kay Scott  
RE John Guice

Class of 2022  
TE Rhodes Stipp (Moderator)  
RE Lane Thompson  
TE Hal Shafer

4. Permanent Judicial Commission

Class of 2022  
TE Jim Freeman  
RE Ham Singleton  
RE John Guice

Class of 2024  
TE Bryan McDowell  
TE Mark Armstrong  
RE Donna Rose

Class of 2026  
TE James Van Hook  
RE Martha Brallier  
TE Alexandra Pappas

5. Louisiana Board of Publications

Class of 2023: Alexandra Pappas

6. Synod Commissioner; Sandra Watson

**Business Affairs Committee.** Danny Logan, moderator, presented the report.

**IT WAS VOTED** to approve the following budget for 2021:

Presbytery of the Pines - 2021 Proposed Budget

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
403010	Churches - UMS	200,000
403300	Oil/Gas Royalties	13,000
403303	Per Capita Collections	<u>30,000</u>
	Total Revenues	243,000
<b>Business Affairs</b>		
	Staff Salaries	<u>81,800</u>
	Staff - FICA	<u>3,429</u>
	Staff - Medicare	<u>802</u>
504280	Travel & Professional Expenses	<u>25,000</u>
504215	Dues & Subscriptions	<u>1,000</u>
504230	Postage	<u>1,500</u>
504240	Office Supplies	<u>3,000</u>
504250	Telephone	<u>4,000</u>
504270	Office Equipment	<u>6,000</u>
504315	Office Rent	<u>12,000</u>
504320	Insurance	<u>22,000</u>
504411	Audit/Review Fees	<u>5,999</u>
504491	Per Capita Expense	<u>15,000</u>
504500	Business Affairs Committee Exp	<u>500</u>
	<b>Total Business Affairs Expenses</b>	182,030
<b>Committee on Ministry (COM)</b>		
525010	Professional Counseling	<u>100</u>
525112	PNC Support	<u>100</u>
	COM Committee Expenses	<u>100</u>
	<b>Total COM Expenses</b>	300
<b>Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)</b>		
505100	CRE Recruitment and Training	<u>100</u>
505110	Preparation Support	<u>100</u>
525115	Officer Training	<u>100</u>
525500	CPM Committee Expenses	<u>100</u>
	<b>Total CPM Expenses</b>	400
<b>Presbytery Leadership Council</b>		
504420	Synod/GA Commissioners	<u>500</u>
504490	Presbytery Meetings	<u>1,500</u>
536390	Campus Ministry	<u>1,000</u>
547100	Children/Youth Camp Scholarships	<u>1,500</u>
547150	Ecumenical Relations	<u>3,000</u>
536500	PLC Committee Expenses	<u>100</u>
	<b>Total PLC Expenses</b>	7,600

**Camp of the Pines**

570300	Pines USACE Rental	3,050
570380	Utilities	1,000
	<b>Total Camp of the Pines Expenses</b>	4,050
560470	Recruitment & Rep Committee (R&R)	100
560480	Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC)	100
	Grand Totals	194,180
	Net Operating Total	48,820

**Report of the Administrative Commission to close the Dermott Presbyterian Church.**

David-Stipp Bethune, commission moderator, presented the report. The minutes of the commission are hereby entered into Presbytery Records.

Minutes

Dermott Administrative Commission  
December 18, 2020; 1:00 pm Zoom Meeting

Members present constituting a quorum: Kay Childs-Travis, David Stipp-Bethune, Rusty Johnson, Alford Branch, and Maetta Snyder. Members absent: James Scott. Staff present: George Wortham, Stated Clerk

Moderator, David Stipp-Bethune called the meeting to order. Kay Childs-Travis opened the meeting with prayer. The Stated Clerk gave a general orientation to the process and work of the commission and answered questions and concerns.

It was agreed that the commission would reconvene with the Session of the Dermott Presbyterian Church at 3:00 pm on Sunday, December 20, 2020.  
David Stipp-Bethune closed the meeting with prayer.

George Wortham

Interim General Presbyter and Stated Clerk, The Presbytery of the Pines

Minutes

The Dermott Administrative Commission of the Presbytery of the Pines  
The Dermott Presbyterian Church Session  
December 20, 2020

Members of the Commission present: David Stipp-Bethune, Maetta Snyder, Alford Branch, and Kay Childs-Travis; constituting a quorum. Members absent: James Scott and Rusty Johnson.

Members of the Session: Frank Henry, Shulin Lee, and Kay Childs-Travis (member of Administrative Commission and Moderator of the Dermott Session).

Staff present: George Wortham, Stated Clerk and recording secretary for the joint meeting.

The joint meeting of the Dermott Session and the Administrative Commission was called to order by the Moderator, David Stipp-Bethune.

Opening prayer was provided by Kay Childs-Travis.

Actions taken:

1. To concur with the request of the Dermott Session to formally close the church on Sunday, February 28, 2021, at 3:00 pm with a service of worship led by the Administrative Commission. The motion was made, seconded and carried.
2. To authorize Frank Henry to handle the sale of all church properties after the closing date of February 28, 2021. The motion was made, seconded and carried.

Frank Henry reminded the Commission of the exception status of the Dermott church that allows sale of properties without Presbytery permission (G-4.0208). The Commission encouraged Frank Henry and the Session of the Dermott Presbyterian Church to sell the church properties as much as possible before the closing date in February.

Maetta Snyder volunteered to coordinate and plan the worship service of closure.

There was general discussion about other issues; the disposal of other items in the church, the submission of the records; and the transference of documents such as bills and the insurance policy.

Frank Henry reported that there had been a fire in the manse the night before the meeting, and that the insurance would cover the damage. He also reported recent improvements to the properties.

The Commission also spent time with the Session talking about the history and past significance of the congregation. Discussion also occurred as to how the roll of membership would be transferred to a local Presbyterian Church. The church in Lake Village was mentioned.

The meeting was closed in prayer by George Wortham.

David Stipp-Bethune  
Moderator

George Wortham  
Stated Clerk, recording secretary

**IT WAS VOTED** to grant the administrative commission permission to serve Holy Communion at the closing worship for the Dermott church at 3 p.m. Feb. 28.

**IT WAS VOTED** that the Presbytery proceed to a Moment of Recognition and Prayer of gratitude for the life and ministry of the Dermott Presbyterian Church, led by members of the commission, Katy Childs-Travis and David Stipp-Bethune.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With all business being completed, Moderator Cooper declared the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m. and offered the closing prayer.

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Harry Cooper, Moderator

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Nancy A. Bergeron, Associate Stated Clerk

**MINUTES**  
**128<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting**  
**Presbytery of the Pines**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**June 12, 2021**

**CONSTITUTION**

Moderator Harry Cooper called the meeting to order via Zoom at 10:04 a.m. and led the body in prayer. The following attendance was taken showing a quorum was present:

***Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Present (14)***

John Albright, Mark Armstrong, Alford Branch, Chris Currie, Harry Cooper, Julia Nance Farrell, Jim Freeman, Jason Leonard, Alex Pappas, Hal Shafer, David Stipp-Bethune, Stephen Sanders, Beth Sentell, and Jungsuk Seo.

***Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Absent (5)***

Kathleen Hignight (excused), James Giddens, Allison Moody (excused), Tom Renowski (excused), and James Van Hook

***Honorably Retired – Present (2)***

Rhodes Stipp and George Wortham

***Honorably Retired – Excused (16)***

Dianne Brown, Ralph Burns, Philip Farris, Grant Groves, Joe Hill, Dan Hignight, Mark Kennedy, John McClland, Bryan McDowell, Mike Morgan, Lauren Moore, Robin Nygaard, Maetta Snyder, Jerry Thompkins, Bill Willis and Art Vance.

***Elders Commissioned by Session (19)***

Alto – Cj Sartor, Athens (excused), Bastrop-Jeanne Anders, Belcher- Karen Logan, Benton (excused), Bossier City-Korean (absent), Bossier City-Trinity-Marion Moore, Camden-Cheryl Brewer; Carthage (absent), Choudrant-Alabama (absent), Crossett-(excused), El Dorado-Nancy Arn Worrell, Ferriday-(absent), Frierson (absent), Grand Cane (absent), Haynesville (absent), Homer (absent); Hope-(absent), Jonesville-Martha Brallier, Lake Providence-(absent), Lake Village-(absent); Magnolia-Mike McNeill, Mansfield-Red Lick (absent); Monticello-Holmes Chapel (absent), Monticello-First (absent), Natchitoches-Link Hall, Newellton (absent); Plain Dealing-First (absent); Plain Dealing –Cottage Grove (absent) Rayville- Sandra Watson; Ruston – Nancy Bergeron; Shreveport-Broadmoor-Linda Hall, Shreveport-First- Craig Springmeyer, Tallulah (absent), Texarkana-Stephanie Jackson, Union

(excused), Vidalia (absent), Warren (excused), West Monroe-New Iona-Nancy Apel, Winnfield (absent) and Winnsboro – John Guice.

*Elders Commissioned to a Congregation*

Clyde Ray Webber – absent.

*Elders Enrolled in Presbytery*

Donna Rose – present; Danny Logan – present; John Guice – present.

*Agency Representatives*

None

**WORSHIP**

Divine Worship was led by the Rev. Mark Armstrong, Teaching Elder, pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church-Jonesville; the Rev. Dr. Chris Currie, Teaching Elder, pastor, First Presbyterian Church-Shreveport; and Marth Brallier, Ruling Elder, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Jonesville.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator Rev. Harry Cooper called the business meeting of Presbytery to order at 10:25 a.m.

**REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK**

George Wortham, Stated Clerk presented the report. **IT WAS VOTED** to adopt the following recommendations:

10. Declaration of of Quorum.
11. That the Docket for this meeting be approved.
12. That the Minutes of the 127<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Pines be approved.
13. That Donna Rose, Danny Logan, and John Guice be enrolled in Presbytery while serving as moderators of committees or commissions.

**REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER**

George Wortham, Interim General Presbyter, gave a statistical overview of the Presbytery. (see Attachment A). The report was received as information.

## REPORTS TO THE PREBYTYERY

**Presbytery Leadership Council.** Donna Rose presented the report. The PLC presented a proposal it has approved to modify the Commissioned Pastor (CRE) Program (see Attachment B). The council also presented a proposal it has approved to add a staff person to coordinate the Commissioned Pastor Program and educational events within the Presbytery (see Attachment C)

**IT WAS VOTED** to approve the revised commissioned pastor program, thereby ratifying the action taken by the PLC and that that action be entered in the minutes.

**IT WAS VOTED** to approve creation of a staff person to coordinate the Commissioned Pastor Program and educational events within the Presbytery.

**Committee on Ministry.** David Stipp-Bethune, moderator, presented the report. The following actions taken under commission powers are hereby entered in the minutes:

- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to approve the following:
  - Temporary Supply Agreement between Dan Hignight and Presbyterian Church of Hope, Ark.
  - Temporary Supply Agreement between Beth Sentell and Trinity Bossier Presbyterian Church, Bossier City, La.
  - Temporary Supply Agreement between Julia Farrell and the Plain Dealing Churches.
  - The Boundaries Covenant between Rev. Alford Branch and Holmes Chapel Presbyterian Church, Monticello, Ark.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to approve Julia Nance Farrell's request for \$6,372 from the Glassell Fund to begin studies for a Doctor of Ministry Degree at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED that the fee for Session moderators be \$50 per Session meeting, plus travel, for in-person meetings; and that the fee also be \$50 per meeting for electronic meetings. The fee for any Session meetings is waivable by the moderator.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to name Stephen Sanders as the Moderator of the sessions of First Camden, and Tates Bluff Chidister, Arkansas, as per his Temporary Supply Agreement that had previously been approved.
- ✚ -IT WAS VOTED to approve Rev. Mark Kennedy as moderator of First-Haynesville.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to approve the following individuals as members of Alex Pappas' installation commission: Teaching Elders Chris Currie, James Giddings and Ted Wardlaw (Austin Seminary); Ruling Elders Donna Rose, immediate past moderator, Presbytery of the Pines; Dana Stinson and Betty Henderson. The installation is set for 4 p.m. June 20.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to dissolve the pastoral relationship between the Rev. Chris Currie and First Presbyterian Church-Shreveport effective July 18, 2021.

**Report of the Administrative Commission to close the Dermott Presbyterian Church.**

David-Stipp Bethune, commission moderator, presented the report. The Commission met twice since our February Presbytery meeting, to deal with the closing of the Church itself, and then the partial disposal of the former church property. The Presbytery now owns and is responsible for all the former property, that included the Church and manse and two other rental home properties in Dermott.

**At its meeting on March 19, 2021, the Commission voted to take the following actions, per the powers given to the Commission:**

1. To transfer the remaining members of the First Presbyterian Church of Dermott, Arkansas to the First Presbyterian Church of Lake Village, Arkansas.
2. To donate the Church and manse properties to the Charles Graham Ministry of Dermott.

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESBYTERY:**

1. That the Minutes be entered into Presbytery Records (attached below, for information).

Gracefully Submitted,

David Stipp-Bethune  
Commission Moderator

Minutes

The Dermott Administrative Commission of the Presbytery of the Pines

February 28, 2021

Members of the Commission present: David Stipp-Bethune (Moderator), Maetta Snyder, Alford Branch, and Kay Childs-Travis; constituting a quorum. Members absent: James Scott and Rusty Johnson. Staff present: George Wortham, Interim General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, and recording secretary for the meeting of the commission.

The Commission was convened at 3:00 pm in the Sanctuary of the Dermott Presbyterian Church for a service of worship: The Service of Remembrance and Closure of The Dermott Presbyterian Church of Dermott, Arkansas.

Commission members who led the service of worship and the celebration of the Lord's Supper were: David Stipp-Bethune, Maetta Snyder, Alford Branch and Kay Childs-Travis. The remaining two elders of the church, Frank Henry and Shulin Lee, assisted in the Lord's Supper.

Maetta Snyder led the portion of the service called "Meditations and Remembrance." This included previous members of the Dermott congregation: Ted Carnical and Kathy

Carmical. The Clerk of Session, Frank Henry, also shared a summary of the history of the congregation.

Music was provided by the pianist, Christine Lincoln. A special piece of music was sung by Charles Graham.

At the closing portion of worship, George Wortham, made the formal declaration that the building was vacated by the congregation and the congregation dissolved. George Wortham also gave the closing charge and blessing to the service of worship.

Following the worship service, the Commission was re-convened in the church office. Frank Henry and Shulin Lee were also in attendance.

Frank Henry gave an update on the property issues related to the repairs in the manse and the sale of two houses. All these are in process.

Frank Henry then presented Charles Graham to the Commission. Charles Graham brought the proposal concerning how the church building and manse could serve as a community center and could house a variety of programs serving youth and children in Dermott. He also indicated that the Manse could serve as a place of respite for visiting pastors to the area. This could all be realized through the creation of a 403a Non-profit and be managed by a board of directors. Charles Graham stated that he did not want to get in the way of any sale of the property, but if the commission could not find a buyer, donating the property to this end would be a benefit to the community.

The commission thanked Charles Graham for his proposal and promised to give it due consideration.

Frank Henry stated that if the commission did donate the property as a community center, he would like to see some commitment to allowing worship or a song service in the Sanctuary.

It is to be noted that it was Frank Henry who provided the suggestion to the Commission concerning the possibility of donating the property. Charles Graham is held in high esteem in the region for his community work, especially with children and youth.

Having no more business for the day, the Moderator, David Stipp-Bethune closed the meeting in prayer.

George Wortham  
Recording Secretary and Stated Clerk  
The Presbytery of the Pines

Dermott Administrative Commission  
The Presbytery of the Pines  
Minutes of Zoom Meeting

March 19, 2021

Members present: Maetta Snyder, David Stipp-Bethune, and Alford Branch.  
Staff present: George Wortham, Interim General Presbyter and Stated Clerk.

As there was not a quorum for the meeting, the Commission will follow the Standing Rules for Electronic meetings and send two motions to the members by email for concurrence and approval. There is a 48 window for response by commission members. If there is opposition to one of the motions, the Commission is required to re-convene in a virtual meeting for discussion and a final vote. If there is no opposition in 48 hours, the motions will carry. Both of the following motions were presented and seconded without opposition. Email ballots were sent to all members of the Commission on March 19, 2021.

The two motions are as follows:

1. To transfer the following members of the Dermott Presbyterian Church to the Lake Village Presbyterian Church, along with documentation concerning ordinations and baptisms. Frank Henry, Bertha Henry, Rita D. Henry, Martha Spurlock, and Shulin Lee.
2. To donate the church and manse properties of the Dermott Presbyterian Church to the Charles Graham Ministry. This follows the recommendation of the remaining members of the Dermott congregation. The Stated Clerk, George Wortham, will consult with the Presbytery's legal counsel concerning the legal documents required for this donation of property.

On Monday, March 22, the Stated Clerk, George Wortham, reported to the Moderator of the Dermott Administrative Commission, David Stipp-Bethune, that there was no opposition to the approval of these proposed actions. Therefore, these actions have carried.

George Wortham  
Interim General Presbyter and Stated Clerk  
The Presbytery of the Pines

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With all business being completed, Moderator Cooper declared the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. and offered the closing prayer.

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Harry Cooper, Moderator

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Nancy A. Bergeron, Associate Stated Clerk

## **Attachment A**

The Presbytery of the Pines  
An Overview of the Presbytery  
June 12, 2021

### **1. Introduction:**

I think it is helpful and appropriate to “frame” a report of this nature with Reformed Theology. When we read of a decline in numbers we are tempted to pessimism. If the reformers were standing in our midst, they would remind us that our only task is to glorify God (Soli Deo Gloria). We are not to worry about our institutional survival or even our own salvation. They would remind us, in the words of the Heidelberg Catechism, “we do not belong to ourselves, but to our faithful savior, Jesus Christ.”

### **2. Statistical Report:**

Congregations:

2013: 54 churches  
2021: 46 churches  
Loss of 8 churches

Members in Presbytery:

2013: 4,110  
2021: 3,134  
Loss of 976

Members in Congregations:

Churches over 600 members: 1  
Churches 200 – 599 members: 4  
Churches 100 – 199 members: 2  
Churches 50 – 99 members: 10  
Churches 20 – 49 members: 13  
Churches under 20 members: 16

Conclusion: These statistics show that only 7 of our churches have members over 100 and that 39 of our churches have less than 100 members. If we go by the rule of thumb that it takes more than 100 members to sustain the minimum salary of a Minister of Word and Sacrament, then most of our congregations will find calling a Minister of Word and Sacrament increasingly difficult.

Note: These are all “traditional” churches that own and maintain property. There are no “New Worshiping Communities” in our Presbytery.

### **3. Pastoral Leadership in Congregations**

Called Ministers of Word and Sacrament: 11

Temporary Pastoral Supply; Ministers of Word and Sacrament: 5

Temporary Pastoral Supply; Ministers of Word and Sacrament; Honorably Retired: 4

Temporary Pastoral Supply; not Presbyterian Ministers: 3

Commissioned Pastor (CRE): 1

Churches currently vacant: 17

(Of the 17, only 4 are in a mission study and search process)

Conclusion: Of the 46 congregations in the Presbytery, 29 have some form of consistent pastoral leadership. There are 13 congregations that function with only pulpit supply. There are only 4 congregations who recently had pastoral leadership and who are seeking to replace that leadership. It is important to note that there are 11 Ministers of Word and Sacrament who are Called Ministers. The other 9 Ministers of Word and Sacrament are in Temporary Pastoral Supply relationships. This may be a growing trend.

### **4. The response to Covid 19 by congregations and the Presbytery:**

In the last 14 months, the Covid 19 pandemic has been the major challenge to congregations and the Presbytery. Guidance was made available from Presbytery and every Session determined what mitigation was appropriate for their context. The mitigation responses of congregations is as varied as our congregations. One change that should be noted is the move by many congregations to some form of worship through electronic media. We received surveys from 17 congregations and 12 of those congregations developed on-line worship. Many of those churches will be continuing this use of electronic media as a form of outreach. At this time, many churches are moving toward opening up and returning to having church school and worship as normal. Attendance in-person is down at this moment. Some folks are still concerning about Covid spread and infection. I believe we are in a transition period that will last for several months.

This pandemic has also had an effect on how Presbytery has functioned. One change has been the move to electronic on-line meetings of committees and Presbytery. I anticipate that committees will continue to meet primarily by electronic media with the occasional in-person meeting. We have had 14 months of practice and we have adapted to this new reality. By October of this year, we hope to return to in-person meetings of Presbytery. It is possible that we will continue the June Stated Meeting as an on-line meeting.

Another change in Presbytery has been the leadership role of the Presbytery Leadership Committee. This committee has met weekly by electronic media and has made many of the ongoing administrative decisions of Presbytery required by this Covid crisis. This has allowed us to shorten the docket to work within the limitations of an on-line meeting of Presbytery. Of course, as we come out of this time of pandemic, we will continue to adjust how we do the work of Presbytery.

## **5. Finances:**

During the last 14 months, all our funds deposited with the Presbyterian Texas Foundation have done well. Our designated funds have shown growth and Presbytery leadership is exploring how funds can be used to strengthen our Presbytery and congregations. The proposal to strengthen the Commissioned Pastor (CRE) Program is one such project.

On the whole, congregations have not experienced financial crisis because of the pandemic. A few churches saw a drop in giving; the majority saw little change; and a few saw an increase in giving.

United Mission Support (UMS): At the end of last year we were unable to send out pledge requests to congregations due to the failure of the computers that managed our financial records. Fortunately, congregations have been faithful to give what they gave in the previous year and we have collected \$51,810.00 in the first quarter of this year.

Per Capita: To date, 23 churches have paid or are paying their Per Capita totaling a receipt of \$25,571 out of a target of \$40,742.00. Churches pay Per Capita in different ways. Some pay installments and others pay at the end of the year. By the October meeting of Presbytery we should have a clearer picture of Per Capita giving.

## **6. Accomplishments in the last 14 months:**

There were three significant accomplishments in the last 14 months. The first of these was the reduction of Presbytery staff and the electing and hiring of new staff. I was elected and hired as Interim General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer, in a part time capacity. Nancy Bergeron was elected and hired as the Associate Stated Clerk and Administrative Assistant in a part time position. The position of General Presbyter was previously a full-time position and the Stated Clerk a part-time position. This reduction of staff was driven by economic considerations.

Of course, we began our work at the same time that the Covid 19 crisis began to effect our personal lives and effect how Presbytery functioned. The last 14 months have been challenging for all of us. We are thankful to the Presbytery leadership and to congregations for their patience and support as we learned these new staff positions.

The second major accomplishment was the reduction of the administrative size of the Presbytery. We reduced the Presbytery to a minimum size. This means that there are less committees and less people serving on committees. This has been described as a "Constitutional" model of Presbytery. Which means that the Presbytery only does those things that are required by the Book of Order. While this reduction of Presbytery had been considered as a possibility for some time, the Covid crisis made it a necessity.

The third major accomplishment was forced upon us. In the fall of last year we experienced a total crash of our computer that managed all the finances of the Presbytery. We lost a great deal of data with little backup. Basically, we were using dated software and our

computer had been in service more than 10 years. Fortunately, our outside accountant, who does our annual review of our books, and our staff account, were able to re-populate the data on up-dated software on a new computer. This process took about six months and we are now working with a much improved system with cloud backup.

## **7. A final word on our “connectional” identity.**

To be Presbyterian is to be connectional. But how we understand our connectional nature is changing. For many decades we have understood “connectional” in terms of a common polity, Book of Order, and participation in the mission of the extended church. In many ways, this has not changed. What has changed, in this Presbytery, is a change of emphasis. This change began some years ago with a Presbytery-wide study process and then the creation of the Presbytery Future Commission. The result of the study and the work of the commission has been a commitment to strengthen relationships within the Presbytery. I see this as a shift away from a business model and “franchise” way of understanding the church to a more biblical model of the Body of Christ. In other words, rather than seeing our smaller congregations as failing “businesses,” we see the Presbytery as a congregation with various needs. Therefore, what makes us “connectional” is our care, concern, and commitment to one another. One of the direct results of the growing concern for the health of our Presbytery and congregations is the proposal to strengthen the Commissioned Pastor (CRE) Program that is being presented at this meeting of Presbytery.

Rev. Dr. George Wortham  
Interim General Presbytery and Stated Clerk  
The Presbytery of the Pines

## **Attachment B**

### **Proposal for modification of the Commissioned Pastor Program**

In this document the term: “Commissioned Pastor,” replaces the following terms used in previous program documents: “Lay Pastor,” and “Commissioned Ruling Elder.”

This proposal does not change the general goals of the program, nor does it change the required areas of study and knowledge. This proposal does provide a flexible model that recognizes ministerial skills already acquired and allows the student to serve the church in formal ministry while pursuing the educational goals of the Commissioned Pastor Program.

### **General Considerations**

The role of Commissioned Pastor is a role that is primarily pastoral rather than academic.

This means that specific abilities related to pastoral care are needed:

1. The ability to preach and teach.
2. The ministry of sacraments.
3. Pastoral accompaniment: in times of crisis, visitation to those in need, and end of life ministry.

A basic definition of Pastoral Care:

To communicate and embody the gospel as God’s love, promise, hope, and peace. And, to communicate the challenge of God’s word to personal transformation, discipleship, and service.

This guides the assessment process of the program in form as well as content. The focus is on personal relationships and mutual support in shared ministry. Therefore, assessment will be achieved by committee interviews with less focus on standardized tests. Given this form, the assessment team will explore with the applicant the following:

1. Areas of background knowledge
2. Pastoral care skills. Example: capacity for compassion and listening.
3. Character and personality. Example: emotional and spiritual maturity.

To put this in Biblical terms, the program will focus on the “heart” rather than the “head.” If the heart is healthy, the head will follow.

This program also recognizes possible areas of specialization not required or included in the program:

1. Pastoral counseling.
2. Spiritual direction.
3. New Worshiping Communities development.
4. Christian Education.

## **Program Levels**

1. Applicant for Ministry: first contact.  
Requirement: Elder ordination PC(USA).  
Initial Assessment Interview will establish status and begin the conversation concerning a plan of program of study and development.
2. Student in Ministry enrolled in the Traditional Education Module: This status indicates that the individual is not yet ready for supervised ministry.  
Requirement: Passed criminal and economic background check required by Presbytery.

Ministry education and development goals:

- a. Adequate background knowledge in designated areas of study.
- b. Sacramental Elder training.
- c. Vocational practice: teaching, preaching, worship leadership.
- d. Pastoral care skills.

A plan of study will be agreed to by the candidate and the CPM. There will be an annual assessment as to growth in learning and pastoral development.

3. Supervised Pastoral Ministry Educational Module: This status indicates that the individual is already advanced in vocational practice. This is a training and probational status. This is not a commissioned position.  
This position will have a 12 month term: renewable.  
The Supervised Student Pastor will be available for contract with church Sessions, approved by the CPM.  
The Supervised Student Pastor will meet monthly with a mentor assigned by the CPM.  
There will be an end of term evaluation by the CPM. This will include an interview with the Session or Sessions.

Requirements:

- a. A history of vocational practice.
- b. Sacramental Elder training.
- c. Some background knowledge in areas of study.

Ministry education and development goals:

- a. Areas of background knowledge.
- b. Pastoral care skills.

The Supervised Student Pastor will agree with the CPM on the course of study to be achieved during the 12 month term.

Possible assignment status: approved by CPM.

- a. "Yoked" assignment. The pastor will be assigned to two or more congregations offering pulpit supply, sacramental ministry, and other pastoral ministries as requested.
- b. Assignment under a contract to a specific congregation or congregations.

A supervised Student Pastor can be assigned under both a Yoked assignment and a specific assignment. Example: the pastor has a specific part time agreement with a congregation, but also is available to other specified congregations.

4. Commissioned Pastor: This status indicates that the individual has fulfilled all requirements.

This is a 3 year term; renewable.

CPM presents and recommends the individual to the COM for approval as a Commissioned Pastor.

COM approves all contracts with congregations.

The COM will assign a liaison who will meet quarterly with the Commissioned Pastor.

Requirements:

- a. Adequate knowledge in all areas of study.
- b. Has met all the requirements and goals listed under supervision status.
- c. Has completed previous Commissioned Pastor training.

Possible commissioning status: approved by COM.

- a. "Yoked" commissioning. The pastor will be commissioned to two or more congregations offering pulpit supply, sacramental ministry, and other pastoral ministries as requested.
- b. Commissioned under a contract to a specific congregation or congregations.

A supervised Commissioned Pastor can be commissioned under both a Yoked commission and a specific commission. Example: the pastor has a specific part time agreement with a congregation, but also is available to other specified congregations.

Commissioned Pastors are required to attend annual continuing education provided by the CPM.

Commissioned Pastors can be assigned by the COM to moderate Sessions.

Commissioned Pastors are members of Presbytery with voice and vote. They will be listed in the annual rolls of Presbytery. They are expected to attend Presbytery meetings.

5. Commissioned Pastor: from another Presbytery.

A Commissioned Pastor, who serves in an adjacent Presbytery, may be available to serve a congregation in the Presbytery of the Pines.

Requirements:

- a. That the Commissioned Pastor be in good standing in his or her Presbytery of jurisdiction.

Commissioning possibilities and term limits will be the same as listed above.

The CPM will present and recommend the individual to the COM for approval.

The contract will be approved by the COM.

The Commissioned Pastor will be invited to Presbytery meetings and be seated as a corresponding member with voice and vote.

The Commissioned Pastor will be invited to annual continuing education provided by the CPM.

### **Issues Related to Process**

1. Initial assessment interview can be carried out by 3 members of the CPM or a sub-committee of 3 persons. Ongoing assessments can be 1 to 3 persons from the CPM.
2. Initial assessment places the applicant in one of the following status:
  - a. Not a qualified applicant.
  - b. Student in Ministry in the Traditional Module.
  - c. Supervised Pastoral Ministry (Supervised Student Pastor).
  - d. Commissioned Pastor.
3. Initial assessment team reports back to the CPM with recommendations concerning the applicant.
4. Initial assessment includes Presbytery required economic and criminal background check.
5. The Student in Ministry and the Supervised Student Pastor status are under the authority of the CPM as part of the education and preparation process.
6. Commissioned Pastors are under the authority of the COM.
7. CPM is responsible for providing for annual continuing education for Commissioned Pastors.
8. The Commissioned Pastor is required to attend annual continuing education provided for by the CPM unless granted an excused absence by the COM.
9. Contracts for service to a congregation or congregations are approved as follows:
  - a. Supervised Student Pastors: CPM
  - b. Commissioned Pastors: COM.
10. Supervised Student Pastors and Commissioned Pastors shall agree to a Covenant of Service (signed document) with the Presbytery and agree with the contract with the Session or Sessions of Congregations (signed document).
11. At the first commissioning of a Commissioned Pastor by Presbytery there shall be the following:
  - a. Worship liturgy of Commissioning.
  - b. Questions to the Candidate (commitment) and to the Presbytery (support).
  - c. Presentation of a Stole.
12. Individuals can be immediately removed from the Commissioned Pastor Program by the COM or the CPM if they do not fulfill their specific commissioning contract or are found to be in violation of the Covenant of Service with the Presbytery.
13. The CPM and COM shall give consultation to Sessions and the candidate concerning the following contract issues:
  - a. Supervised Student Pastor: available resources available to employees by the Board of Pensions.
  - b. Commissioned Pastor: available resources available to employees by the Board of Pensions and the exclusions available under IRS rules (Housing Allowance).

## **Educational and Pastoral Development Guidelines**

The CPM will create a specific educational and development plan that meets the need of the applicant. Both the CPM and the applicant will approve and commit to the plan. This plan can be developed using the following means:

- a. An assigned mentor who will work one-on-one with the candidate concerning an area of study. The mentor will report the student's progress and completion of the area of study to the CPM.
- b. A course provided by the CPM utilizing teaching staff from the Presbytery. Example: Sacramental Elder training.
- c. A course of study provided by a Presbyterian Theological institution.
- d. A course of study provided by other Presbyteries within the PC(USA).

Steps in the Initial Assessment process:

- a. Assess the status of the applicant.
- b. As Student in Ministry: develop with the student a plan of study. Focus question: What does the candidate need in order to move to Supervised Ministry?
- c. As Supervised Student Pastor: Develop with the Student Pastor a plan of study for the next 12 months. Focus question: What does the Supervised Student Pastor need in order to strengthen and deepen his or her ministry?

## **Attachment C**

### **Staff Position Proposal**

**June 12, 2021**

Title: Pastoral Ministries Program Coordinator

#### General Description:

1. To work with CPM as regards recruitment, education and assessment of students in the Commissioned Pastor program.
2. To work with COM as regards the end of term assessment of Commissioned Pastors and the continuing education of Commissioned Pastors.
3. With the CPM and COM, plan an annual retreat and continuing education opportunity for Presbytery Leadership.
4. With CPM and COM, coordinate the Sacramental Elder program and maintain records of those who have completed the course.

#### Specific Programs:

1. Commissioned Pastor Program.
2. Leadership Continuing Education and Retreat.
3. Sacramental Elder Program.

#### Rationale for the position:

In the past year we have reduced the size of our Presbytery structure and reduced staff positions at the Presbytery office. We have also identified the primary challenge for our Presbytery: to support the health and development of congregations. Key to meeting this challenge is the quality and presence of pastoral leadership in our congregations. Presbytery has created various programs over the years to respond to this challenge. Unfortunately, these programs have not been consistent over time as committees changed and leadership left the Presbytery. Given our smaller committees and staff limitations, it would seem reasonable to identify one person who could work with the General Presbyter and the committees to coordinate these programs and give the needed continuity and oversight for the programs to be successful.

Status of Position: 10 hours a week.

Accountability: Annual review by PLC.

Oversight: General Presbyter.

Stipend: \$900.00 per month.

Professional expense account: \$1,000.00 per year.

Specific Tasks:

1. With the General Presbyter and committees, develop regional strategies to provide pastoral leadership.
2. With the GP, communicate with congregations and Sessions concerning pastoral leadership needs.
3. With Christian Educators in the Presbytery, resource the Presbytery concerning educational and training opportunities provided by Synod, GA and PC(USA) Theological Institutions.
4. Oversee the development and creation of courses of study for the Commissioned Pastor Program.
5. Organize meetings of Commissioned Pastors and Students to form a cohort for ministry within the Presbytery of the Pines.
6. Maintain contact with applicants, students, and Commissioned Pastors and offer support and guidance.
7. Plan an Annual Retreat and educational opportunity for Ministers, Commissioned Pastors, Christian Educators and students in the Commissioned Pastor program.
8. With the General Presbyter/Treasurer and the Business Affairs Committee, develop a program budget and strategy for funding.

**Funding Proposal:**

It is proposed that this position be guaranteed for a two-year period with resources from the Glassell Fund. That during this two-year period, strategies will be developed for continued funding.

The amount to be used from the Glassell Fund: \$23, 600.00.

Guidelines of the Glassell Fund:

- 2.A. The Principal of the Fund shall never be invaded.
- 2.B. The purpose of use of the Fund shall be as follows:

The annual net income received from the A. C. Glassell Fund shall be used for the formal, structured, educational experiences of candidates for the ministry, ordained ministers, students preparing to serve as Directors of Christian Education, and lay persons formally preparing for further service to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (Revised, 2006)

Current Status of the Glassell Fund:

Fund Principle: \$500,000.00.

Total Fund Value: \$1,490,239.79.

**MINUTES**  
**129<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting**  
**Presbytery of the Pines**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**Oct. 9, 2021**

**CONSTITUTION**

Moderator Harry Cooper called the meeting to order via Zoom at 10:02 a.m. and led the body in prayer. The following attendance was taken showing a quorum was present:

***Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Present (10)***

John Albright, Mark Armstrong, Harry Cooper, Julia Nance Farrell, Jim Freeman, Jason Leonard, Beth Sentell, Hal Shafer, David Stipp-Bethune, and Jungsuk Seo.

***Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Absent (6)***

Kathleen Hignight (excused), James Giddens, Allison Moody (excused), Alex Pappas (excused), Stephen Sanders, and Tom Renowski.

***Honorably Retired – Present (5)***

Alford Branch, Dianne Brown, Bryan McDowell, Rhodes Stipp and George Wortham

***Honorably Retired – Excused (14)***

Ralph Burns, Philip Farris, Grant Groves, Joe Hill, Dan Hignight, Mark Kennedy, John McClland, Mike Morgan, Lauren Moore, Robin Nygaard, Maetta Snyder, Jerry Thompkins, Bill Willis and Art Vance.

***Elders Commissioned by Session (20)***

Alto (excused), Athens (excused), Bastrop-Jeanne Anders, Belcher- Danny Logan, Benton (absent), Bossier City-Korean (absent), Bossier City-Trinity-Marion Moore, Camden-Cheryl Brewer; Carthage (absent), Choudrant-Alabama (absent), Crossett (absent), El Dorado-Nancy Arn Worrell, Ferriday-Linda Alwood, Frierson (absent), Grand Cane (absent), Haynesville (absent), Homer-Beverly Smith, Hope-Sally Short, Jonesville-Martha Brallier, Lake Providence-(absent), Lake Village-(absent); Magnolia-Mike McNeill, Mansfield-Red Lick (absent); Monticello-Holmes Chapel (absent), Monticello-First (absent), Natchitoches-Juliana Sheffield, Newellton (absent); Plain Dealing-First-Charles Coyle (absent); Plain Dealing – Cottage Grove (absent) Rayville- Sandra Watson; Ruston – Greg Hilburn; Shreveport-Broadmoor-Shay Joines, Shreveport-First- Anna Gnann and Shannon Butler Green, Tallulah (absent), Texarkana-(excused), Union (excused), Vidalia (absent), Warren-Carrie Johnson, West Monroe-New Iona-Lane Thompson, Winnfield (absent) and Winnsboro-Sherri Bullard.

*Elders Commissioned to a Congregation*

None

*Elders Enrolled in Presbytery*

Donna Rose – present; Danny Logan – present; John Guice – excused.

*Agency Representatives*

Joseph Moore, Presbyterian Foundation; Susan Smith, point person for South Central Region of the Association for Presbyterian Christian Educators

**WORSHIP**

Divine Worship was led by the Rev. Harry Cooper, Teaching Elder, pastor, Hollywood Church, Shreveport and Good Hope Church, Frierson; the Rev. Jason Leonard, Teaching Elder, pastor First Presbyterian Church-Homer; and Nancy Arn World, Ruling Elder, First Presbyterian Church-El Dorado.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator Rev. Harry Cooper called the business meeting of Presbytery to order at 10:28 a.m.

**REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK**

George Wortham, Stated Clerk presented the report. **IT WAS VOTED** to adopt the following recommendations:

1. Declaration of Quorum.
2. That the Docket for this meeting be approved.
3. That the Minutes of the 128<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Pines be approved.
4. That the following dates in the year 2022 for the Stated Meetings of the Presbytery be approved: February 12; June 11; and October 8.
5. That Donna Rose, Danny Logan, and John Guice, be enrolled in Presbytery while serving committees or commissions.
6. That Susan Smith and Joseph Moore be granted privilege of the floor.
7. That Presbytery receive the report and the following recommendations from the Presbytery Future Commission: (Attachment A)
  - a. That this report be received as information.
  - b. That Nancy Bergeron be elected to the position of Stated Clerk, effective January 1, 2022.
  - c. That the Interim General Presbyter serve as Associate Stated Clerk.
  - d. That this commission be dissolved with gratitude from the Presbytery.

## **REPORT OF THE INTERIM GENERAL PRESBYTER**

George Wortham, Interim General Presbyter, reported that plans are to hold the February 12, 2022 Stated Meeting in person in at First Presbyterian Church-Texarkana. He also reported that a questionnaire will be emailed to those attending the October Zoom meeting inquiring whether they prefer Zoom, in-person or a combination. The report was received as information.

## **REPORT OF THE PRESBYTERY TREASURER**

George Wortham reported the report was not received in time to be included the packet but would be sent out in a separate email.

## **GREETING FROM PROGRAMS AND AGENCIES**

Susan Smith updated the Presbytery on the work of the South Central Region of the Association for Presbyterian Christian Educators. Joseph Moore reported on the Presbyterian Foundation. Julia Nance Farrell updated the Presbytery on the new Commissioned Pastor program.

## **REPORTS TO THE PREBYTYERY**

**Presbytery Leadership Council.** Donna Rose presented the report.

**IT WAS VOTED** to enter the following actions taken under commission powers into the Presbytery minutes:

1. Approved request from FPC Magnolia for \$4,674.15 for updates to equipment for online worship.
2. Rev. Julia Nance Farrell hired as coordinator of Commissioned Pastor Program.
3. Permission given to Crossett Presbyterian Church to donate their building to the Greater Crossett Area Food Bank, with understanding that they will continue to hold services there.
4. Approved position of Presbytery Associate for Revitalization and Redevelopment, along with job description and program proposal and stipend. (Rev. Alford Branch)
5. Approved restoring the unused small trailer owned by the Presbytery and donating to South Louisiana Presbytery for use in Hurricane relief efforts.
6. Approved virtual meetings for June Presbytery meetings and, when possible, in person meetings in February and October.

**IT WAS VOTED** to ratify the action of the PLC to create the position of Presbytery Associate for Revitalization and Redevelopment and to name the Rev. Alford Branch to fill that position. (see Attachment B)

**Committee on Ministry.** David Stipp-Bethune, moderator, presented the report. The following actions taken under commission powers are hereby entered into the Presbytery minutes:

- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to approve the new temporary supply agreement between Lauren Moore and the Presbyterian Church of Crossett, Ark. The agreement is for a period of 12 months, backdated to Feb. 1, 2021.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to appoint Ruling Elder John Guice as moderator of New Covenant Parish, effective Oct. 11.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to appoint Associate Pastor Alex Pappas as moderator of Session of First Presbyterian Church, Shreveport, effective July 18.
- ✚ THE COM APPROVED:
  - Teaching Elder Dianne Brown to moderate the Session of First, Hope, AR, effective Aug. 1<sup>ST</sup>.
  - Teaching Elder Bryan McDowell to moderate the Session of First, Belcher, LA, effective Aug. 1.
  - The Temporary Supply Contract between New Iona, West Monroe and Ruling Elder Lane Thompson.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED to approve the proposed Temporary Supply Agreement between the Keatchie Presbyterian Church and the Rev. James Giddens effective March 15, 2021.
- ✚ IT WAS VOTED To call a congregational meeting of the First Presbyterian Church of Magnolia on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm, to discuss the following items:
  - To discuss with the congregation the relationship between the congregation and the Presbytery.
  - To discuss with the congregation the relationship between the congregation and the pastor, Hal Shafer.
  - No other business will be considered at this Congregational Meeting.
- ✚ THE COM APPROVED:
  - Teaching Elder Mark Armstrong to moderate the Session of 1<sup>st</sup>, Ferriday.
  - Temporary Supply agreement between MWS Beth Sentell and Trinity Presbyterian Church, Bossier City.

**IT WAS VOTED** that the Presbytery dismiss the Rev. Harry Cooper to the Presbytery of Pittsburgh, effective at the end of this meeting of Presbytery.

**IT WAS VOTED** the Presbytery concur with the actions of Hollywood Presbyterian Church, Shreveport, LA, and Good Hope Presbyterian Church, Frierson, LA, in dissolving their pastoral relationship with the Rev. Harry Cooper, effective at the end of this meeting of Presbytery.

**Committee on Ministry.** Jason Leonard presented the report. Eunja Seo, an inquirer for Pines Presbytery, received a Glassell Fund scholarship in the amount of \$5,000. The report was received as information.

**Recruitment and Representation.** Dianne Brown presented the report.

**IT WAS VOTED** that the following individuals be elected to serve on listed committees and agencies:

**Business Affairs**

Class of 2022:  
Danny Logan

**Committee on Ministry**

Class of 2023:  
Alford Branch  
Barbara Callaway  
Ham Singleton  
Alexandra Pappas

**Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

Class of 2023:  
Beth Sentell  
Robert Folsom

**Recruitment and Representation**

Class of 2023:  
Beth Sentell  
Martine Boumtje

**Ecclesiastical Business**

Class of 2023:  
Martha Brallier  
Kay Scott  
Susan Smith

**LA Board of Publications**

Class of 2023:  
Barbara Callaway  
Donna Rose

**IT WAS VOTED** that the Presbytery Leadership Committee be authorized by Presbytery to name:  
1) Commissioners to the 2022 General Assembly, 2) the Youth Advisory Delegate to the 2022 General Assembly, and 3) the moderator-elect for the Presbytery of the Pines for 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With all business being completed, Moderator Cooper declared the meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m. and offered the closing prayer.

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Harry Cooper, Moderator

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Nancy A. Bergeron, Associate Stated Clerk

**Attachment A**

## **Presbytery Future Commission Report**

### **BACKGROUND**

Upon the announcement of his retirement effective April 2020 by General Presbyter Rev. Joe Hill, the presbytery began its journey of discovery: what will the presbytery look like and how will it operate in the future. A committee was appointed and given the task of listening to member churches to try to discern what churches needed in terms of presbytery services and what was the best structure to facilitate those services. In summary, this committee determined that churches had little expectation of presbytery, wasn't sure what presbytery did and felt little connection to fellow churches in the Presbytery of the Pines.

At a subsequent presbytery meeting, presbytery elected a commission to put in to place a structure which more nearly addressed the needs of member churches in light of the presbytery's current condition both financially and human resource availability. What this commission affirmed was that the presbytery was using reserve funds to fund the deficit in its budget and had been doing so for over ten years. To no one's surprise, few people were volunteering to serve on presbytery agencies and committees. It was obvious that a new and innovative structure was called for.

### **THE NEW COMMISSION**

As the commission organized itself, we heard from Rev. Joe Hill regarding observations about his work and how structures might be changed. We found his comments to be helpful as we looked to a different future. We also heard from other presbytery staff regarding who was doing what tasks including financial responsibility. The Commission investigated what other presbyteries in similar circumstances had done. We soon discovered that our problems were the same as most peer presbyteries. Several had begun to use part time executives and clerks. From the beginning, the commission realized that much of our structure would have to be adjusted as we progressed. We acknowledged that "we would have to learn to fly the airplane as we built it". Such has been the case.

### **GENERAL STRUCTURE**

The recommendation to presbytery was that four part time positions be established:

1. Interim General Presbyter and Stated Clerk
2. Administrative Assistant and Associate Stated Clerk
3. Central Treasurer
4. Bookkeeper

These positions were approved by presbytery. As the commission envisioned, the people who staffed these positions have exercised the flexibility to make this structure work in an actual work environment. Actions by presbytery have, or will, slightly change these designations. The General Presbyter will assume the title of Interim General Presbyter AND Associate Stated Clerk and the Administrative Assistant will assume the title of Interim Administrative Assistant AND Stated Clerk. The commission is most pleased with the innovative vision shown by the current staff in identifying individual talents and adjusting job requirements to match those talents.

The commission recognized early on that “communication” was essential to the success of a new structure. This current staff has been particularly attuned to the needs of our churches, many of which are small membership churches.

Given the fact that many of our churches are not financially able to call a full time pastor, our staff has sought to address this unique need for pastoral leadership. A new position has been created to recruit and train Commissioned Pastors. All of us should be excited about this new and innovative position which speaks directly to the need of small membership churches. The staff position has been filled and is to be funded by the Glassell Fund.

Also being proposed as a part time position is that of Presbytery Associate Position for Revitalization and Redevelopment. Rev. Dr. Alford Branch is being proposed to fill this position. For churches which are truly interested in more than just survival, Rev. Branch provides unique talents. He comes to this task with a proven track record of work in church development. This staff position arises out of the work of our present staff in addressing the particular needs of this presbytery. Again, the vision of this Commission is being realized by the work of our current staff.

#### OBSERVATIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS.

The commission strongly believes that we have the right people in the right positions. This staff development has been exactly what the commission envisioned when this structure was initially proposed. As a presbytery, we are on the right track and have the right people to carry us forward.

With this current structure, we have matched our expenses with our income. No longer do we have to use prior funds to finance current expenses. Using the Glassell Fund for the purpose for which it was created (to assist in education), we are creating opportunities, not just for survival, but for growth also. The vision and flexibility of our staff is contributing mightily to our faithfulness to be called as witnesses to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

The commission would, in a very general way, commend to staff and presbytery that our calling process, especially for small churches, be more suited to the realities of leadership in our small membership churches. In putting together mission statements, pastor nominating committees, etc, we recognize that, often times, the same people who serve on the session are the same ones who will fill the other positions in the process of calling a pastor. Often times, churches don’t do things in the proper order but facilitate a process which is unique to small membership churches. We want the call process to be a help to the calling church, not an obstacle to be overcome.

Recognizing that much of the work of this commission is now and will henceforth be done by the Presbytery Leadership Council, we recommend that:

1. That this report be received as information.
2. That Nancy Bergeron be elected to the position of Stated Clerk, effective January 1, 2022.
3. That the Interim General Presbyter serve as Associate Stated Clerk.
4. That this commission be dissolved with gratitude from the Presbytery.

**Attachment B**  
**Proposal for Presbytery Associate Position**

Position: Presbytery Associate for Revitalization and Redevelopment.

Proposal for Position: Rev. Dr. Alford Branch

Job Description:

It will be the responsibility of the Associate for Revitalization and Redevelopment to provide guidance and support to congregations, Sessions, and leaders, concerning mission and ministry in their local communities. The Associate will provide resources and consultation to this end. The Associate will accompany congregations and leaders as they discern and explore their calling in the ministry of Jesus Christ to the world. The Associate will be accountable to the General Presbyter as Head of Staff, and to the Presbytery Leadership Committee. The Associate will also act as support staff to the Committee on Ministry.

Program Proposal:

That the Presbytery of the Pines will identify several churches to initially participate and commit to this program. This will be a two-year program that requires multiple visits by the Associate to the congregation and continual contact with the Session and leaders of the congregation. The congregation will be guided through the revitalization and redevelopment curriculum developed by Dr. Branch. An initial consultation by the Associate with the Session will result in a covenant with the congregation as to the possible number of visits and the total cost to the congregation.

Program Curriculum:

“The 7 components of church revitalization and redevelopment”; Rev. Dr. Alford Branch.

“Becoming an Acts 2: 42-47 Church”; Rev. Dr. Alford Branch

This curriculum is the result of 37 years of work with Holmes Chapel Presbyterian Church, Monticello, Arkansas, and the successful revitalization and redevelopment of that congregation.

Other denominational resources will also be made available.

Rev. Dr. Alford Branch: Professional Vitae on Revitalization and Redevelopment:

Revitalization and Redevelopment consultant to five churches in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Presbytery.

Revitalization and Redevelopment consultant for three years to Christ Presbyterian Church in Houston, Texas.

Workshop presenter on “Revitalization in the Small Church”; Synod of the Sun.

Workshop leader for the Presbyterian Church (USA) Churchwide Redevelopment Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, 2002.

Workshop leader for the Presbyterian Church (USA) Churchwide Redevelopment Conference, Los Angeles, California, 1999.

Workshop leader for the Presbyterian Church (USA) during the African American Church Growth Consultation, 1988.

Workshop leader in “Developing Committed Church Leadership” for the Arkansas Black Presbyterian Caucus Leadership Conference.

Workshop leader of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Churchwide Redevelopment Conference in Irving, Texas.

Proposed Compensation:

From the local congregation:

\$100 plus mileage for consultation visits.

From the Presbytery:

1. Monthly stipend: \$200. Designated as Housing Allowance.
2. \$200 for each consultation visit to a congregation. This is inclusive of any expense related to other means of electronic communication. These payments will be designated as Housing Allowance.
3. Annual Continuing Education Allowance: \$1000.00.  
For conferences on Revitalization and Redevelopment.
4. Annual Professional Expense Allowance: \$3000.00.  
For Hotel and meal expenses, other travel expenses, presentation resources, etc.

Duration of Contract Agreement:

Two-year, effective November 1, 2021. Renewable.

Funding Source:

Phoenix/Church and Manse Fund.

Fund description: A fund established by action of the Presbytery and administered by the Presbytery Leadership Committee with funds from sales of former church properties and special gifts to support congregational redevelopment and revitalization, plus repairs of church and manse properties.

Fund Balance as of 2/28/2021: \$294,604.17.

8/26/2021