

**MINUTES**  
**131st Stated Meeting**  
**Presbytery of the Pines**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**June 11, 2022**

**CONSTITUTION**

Moderator Rev. Dr. Jim Freeman 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 (4)*

Jim Freeman, Jason Leonard, Alex Pappas, Beth Sentell, David Stipp-Bethune, and Jungsuk Seo

*Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Absent (3)*

Mark Armstrong, James Giddens, Hal Shafer

*Ministers of the Word and Sacrament – Excused (2)*

Kathleen Hignight, Stephen Sanders

*Honorably Retired – Present (4)*

John Albright, Alford Branch, Rhodes Stipp, and George Wortham

*Honorably Retired – Excused (18)*

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

*Elders Commissioned by Session (21)*

Alto (absent); Athens (excused); Belcher – Danny Logan; Benton – Larche Watters; Bastrop - Jeanne Anders; Bossier City - Korean (absent); Bossier City – Trinity – Marion Moore; Camden – Ham Singleton; Carthage (absent); Chidester – Gene Peterman; Choudrant – Alabama (absent); Crossett – absent; El Dorado – Bill Archer; Ferriday – Linda Alwood; Frierson (absent); Grand Cane (absent); Haynesville (absent); Homer – Beverly Smith; Hope – Kay King; Jonesville – Martha Brallier; Keatchie (absent); Lake Providence (absent); Lake Village (absent); Magnolia – Pierre Boumtje; Manfield-Red Lick (absent); Monticello-Holmes Chapel (absent); Monticello-First – Eric Prichard; Natchitoches – Link Hall; Newellton (absent); Plain Dealing-First (absent); Plain Dealing –Cottage Grove (absent)

Rayville- Sandra Watson; Ruston – Betty Jo Fagan; Shreveport-Broadmoor –Gary Young; Shreveport-First – Nancy Bushnell Harper, David Butterfield; Tallulah (absent); Texarkana – (absent); Vidalia (absent); Warren – excused; West Monroe – Lane Thompson; Winnfield (absent); Winnsboro – John Guice.

*Elders Enrolled in Presbytery*

Donna Rose – present; Danny Logan – present; Susan Smith – present

*Corresponding Members*

Rev. Calvin Reynolds - absent

*Agency Representatives*

None

*Visitors*

John Alwood - Ferriday

**WORSHIP**

Divine Worship was led by Ruling Elder Hamilton Singleton, Camden; and the Rev. Dr. George Wortham, interim general presbyter, Pines Presbytery.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator Rev. Dr. Jim Freeman called the business meeting of Presbytery to order at 10:15 a.m.

**REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK**

Nancy Bergeron, 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 130<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Pines be approved.
4. That Danny Logan, Donna Rose and Susan Smith be enrolled in Presbytery while serving as moderators of committees.
5. That the Rev. Dr. Calvin Reynolds, interim minister, First Presbyterian Church-Shreveport, be seated as a corresponding member.
6. That the attached reports from the Revitalization and Redevelopment Program and the Commissioned Pastor Program

**REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER**

George Wortham, Interim General Presbyter, gave an overview of changes taking place in the Presbytery including the use of electronic media for committees, commissions and Presbytery meetings – some of which has been thrust forward because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another change is the increase in the role of ruling elders in pastoral leadership of congregations. The majority of churches in the Presbytery cannot afford an ordained minister at minimum salary, and the Presbytery does not have the financial resources to offset the lack of funds in congregations.

The report was received as information.

## REPORTS TO THE PREBYTYERY

**Revitalization and Redevelopment Program.** Alford Branch, Presbytery Associate for Revitalization and Redevelopment, presented the report. The report was received as information. (See attached)

**Report on the Commissioned Pastor Program.** Julia Farrell, Pastoral Ministries Coordinator, presented the report. The report was received as information. (See attached)

**Presbytery Leadership Council.** Donna Rose presented the report. The decisions made by the PLC in the name of the Presbytery since the Feb. 12, 2022 meeting are as follows:

1. Approved Hamilton Singleton as moderator for 2023
2. Approved an increase of \$90 per month to the Board of Pensions for retirement pension for Julia Nance Farrell (administrator of the Presbytery training for Commissioned Pastor program).
2. Approved a document concerning validated/ordered ministry in the Presbytery. (See attached)

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

**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 MWS Jungsuk Seo's sabbatical plan as part of a Board of Pensions application, and to approve \$15,000 in Presbytery financial support for his sabbatical set for May 18-June 29. The money will come from the Glassel Fund.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the MIF for New Covenant Parish with the correction of effective salary to \$44,000.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the updated Terms of Call for MWS Alex Pappas.

- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the temporary pastor agreement between Tates Bluff Presbyterian Church in Chidester, Arkansas, and Ruling Elder Eugene Peterman.
- ✚ Temporary supply agreements between between Rev. Lauren Moore and the Crossett church and Ruling Elder Larche Watters and the Benton Church **WERE APPROVED**.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the temporary supply agreement between Ruling Elder John Alwood and First Presbyterian, Ferriday.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve Glassell Fund money for Susan Smith (\$1,630) and David Stipp-Bethune (\$1,252) for continuing education events.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to adopt the attached Severance Policy as guidance and recommend it to Presbytery for approval.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to concur with the congregation of First Presbyterian Church-El Dorado, to dissolve the pastoral relationship with Rev. David Stipp-Bethune effective June 1, 2022.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the severance agreement negotiated by the Session of First Presbyterian-El Dorado with the Rev. David Stipp-Bethunde, pending receipt of final numbers.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to appoint Elder Hamilton Singleton as moderator of Session, First Presbyterian-Eldorado.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to enroll MWS David Stipp-Bethune as minister at large of the Presbytery of the Pines, effective June 1, 2022.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve the MIF for the Presbyterian Church of Ruston and permission granted to upload the form to the CLC website.
- ✚ **IT WAS VOTED** to approve temporary supply agreement between FPC-Monticello, Ark., and Elder Eric Prichard.
- ✚ The committee **SUSTAINED** an examination for a candidate to be elected to a pastoral position in the Presbytery, and made the way clear should that candidate be elected and accept the call of the congregation. (Because the candidate is yet to be announced, that information is being kept confidential for the purpose of this written report at the time of the Presbytery meeting.)
- ✚ **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Presbytery approve the proposed Severance Policy. (See attached)

## ADJOURNMENT

With all business being completed, Moderator Freeman declared the meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m. and offered the closing prayer.

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Rev. Dr. Jim Freeman, Moderator

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Nancy A. Bergeron, Stated Clerk

**Revitalization and Redevelopment Program's Report  
to the Presbytery of the Pines, June 11, 2022  
by Rev. Dr. Alford Branch**

The revitalization and redevelopment program have 7 churches participating in 2 groups who were meeting by zoom on Mondays at 6 p.m. All meetings were well attended by all churches. I feel that all churches are open to changing and ready to further their experience with revitalization and redevelopment. The first group was composed of 4 churches (First churches of Hope, Texarkana, Monticello, and Natchitoches). They completed the first phase of the program with teachings on the 7 components of revitalization and redevelopment on April 11<sup>th</sup>. They are now in phase 2 of the program implementing practical work with component #1, establishing corporate prayer within their church either in-person, conference calls, or by zoom; and component #2, preparing to launch an evangelism campaign. I will be conducting a progress report the first week in June with these churches and expect to elaborate on their progress at the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Presbytery.

Revitalization and Redevelopment group #2 have 3 churches participating (Broadmoor, Trinity in Jonesville, LA, and First Church Magnolia). They completed the first phase of the program June 6. All meetings were well attended by all churches. They also have shown an interest in changing and readiness to further their experience with revitalization and redevelopment. They are now in phase 2 of the program implementing practical work with component #1, establishing corporate prayer within their church either in-person, conference call, or by zoom; and component #2, preparing to launch an evangelism campaign. I will be conducting a progress report with these churches the last week in June and expect to share more on their progress at the October meeting of Presbytery.

Rev. Dr. Alford Branch,  
Associate for Revitalization and Redevelopment

**Commissioned Pastor Program and Pastoral Ministries Report**  
**by Rev. Julia N. Farrell**  
**June 1, 2022**

One of the newest programs in Pines Presbytery is our Commissioned Pastor Program. The Commissioned Pastor Program is committed to serving the presbytery by educating and training our Ruling Elders. We currently have 11 Ruling Elders participating. The goal of this program is to equip and educate Ruling Elders in our churches who are filling pulpits and providing for the pastoral needs of our local congregations. Many of these participants are members of rural churches, while some are members of larger churches, who are providing pastoral care and worship leadership to their local church.

Pines Presbytery is breaking new ground with this program. Once a Ruling Elder has completed their training, they will be commissioned by the presbytery to serve as a Commissioned Pastor. Courses in this program will be taught via Zoom by pastors, elders, and seminary professors.

The following courses have been offered in the past 6 months:

- Reformed Theology
- Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- Sacrament of Baptism

This summer we will be offering Worship Planning and Prayer Writing. PC(USA) Polity will be taught in the fall.

If you are interested in exploring a call as a Commissioned Pastor, please contact me and fill out an application. This is an open program where anyone can join at any time. Once a Ruling Elder submits their application, the committee will review the individual's gifts and experiences; and with the applicant, will decide the best path forward.

Rev. Julia Nance Farrell  
Pastoral Ministries Coordinator, Pines Presbytery

## **Pines Presbytery Ruling Elders who have completed Baptismal Training**

John Alwood, Ferriday  
Charles Anders, Bastrop  
Ray Boggs, Plain Dealing  
Jacob Dickson, Shreveport  
LaShunda Jackson, Monticello  
Donnie Meadows, Lake Providence  
Eric Pritchard, Monticello  
Donna Rose, Natchitoches  
Lane Thompson, West Monroe  
Gary Young, Shreveport

## **Pines Presbytery Sacramental Elders\***

John Alwood - Ferriday, La.  
Linda Alwood - Ferriday, La.  
Charles Anders - Bastrop, La.  
Susan Bensberg - Camden, Ark.  
Ray Boggs - Cottage Grove, La.  
Nancy Bergeron - Ruston, La.  
Pierre Boumtje - Magnolia, Ark.  
Mary Lou Brown - Natchitoches, La.  
Phil Brown - Natchitoches, La.  
Gordon Christy - Bossier City, La.  
Jacob Dickson - Shreveport, La.  
Mike Dumas - El Dorado, Ark.  
David Grisso - Shreveport, La.  
Link Hall - Natchitoches, La.  
Sue Ellen Hall - Texarkana, Ark.  
Martha Henris - Monticello, Ark.  
LaShunda Jackson - Monticello, Ark.  
Cordell Klein - Texarkana, Ark.  
Clint Land - Shreveport, La.  
Jennifer Land - Shreveport, La.  
Amelia Leverett - Hope, Ark.  
Donnie Meadows - Lake Providence  
Tom Milliken - Ferriday, La.  
Bob Neff - Shreveport, La.  
Gene Peterman - Chidester, Ark.  
Karen Peterman - Chidester, Ark.  
Eric Prichard - Monticello, Ark.  
Donna Rose - Natchitoches, La.  
Ham Singleton - Camden, Ark.

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Cynthia Steele - Homer, La.  
Sharon Scioneaux - West Monroe, La.  
Sally Short - Hope, Ark.  
Lane Thompson - West Monroe, La.  
Larche Watters - Benton, La.  
Chris Vaughn - Ferriday, La  
John Ed Watkins - Hope, Ark.  
Beverly White - Shreveport, La.  
Nancy Arn Worrell - El Dorado, Ark.  
Gary Young - Shreveport, La

## **Severance Policy Presbytery of the Pines**

A severance agreement for compensation is required when a congregation initiates the dissolution of a pastoral relationship with an installed Minister of Word and Sacrament. Ordinarily, a severance agreement is not required when a Minister of Word and Sacrament initiates the dissolution of the pastoral relationship due to a new call or retirement. Nor is a severance agreement ordinarily required when the dissolution of the pastoral relationship is initiated by the Committee on the Ministry.

When a congregation initiates the dissolution of a pastoral relationship, the congregation shall provide a severance package for the Minister of Word and Sacrament. This severance package will begin on the effective date of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship as approved by the Committee on the Ministry.

### **Minimum Severance Requirement**

The congregation shall provide the Minister of Word and Sacrament with a month of current compensation and current Board of Pension benefits for every year so service to the congregation with a minimum of six (6) months of current compensation and current Board of Pension benefits. This shall not be paid in a lump sum and shall be paid monthly for all the allotted period of time. Excluded from this compensation agreement is access to any allowances provided to the Minister of Word and Sacrament for professional or continuing education expenses. Any deferred income held by the church in a medical account will remain in effect during the allotted time of the severance agreement and the balance returned to the Minister of Word and Sacrament at the completion of the agreement. The payment of this severance agreement is not mitigated by any future employment of the Minister of Word and Sacrament.

The above policy seeks to establish a minimum standard for all severance agreements in the Presbytery. Special situations, such as disability, will arise that transcend the intent of this policy. For this reason, the Committee on Ministry has final authority to approve and modify any severance agreement to meet the needs of a specific situation.

Approved by COM: 04/21/2022

## **Ordered Ministries within the Presbytery of the Pines beyond the Ordained Ministry of Word and Sacrament**

1. Pulpit Supply.
  - a. The Session has responsibility and power to provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard. (G-3.0201a)
  - b. The Committee on the Ministry (COM) shall report qualified individuals for pulpit supply to the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall maintain a roll of pulpit supply and post this roll on the Presbytery website; [www.pinespby.org](http://www.pinespby.org).
  - c. Sessions that invite individuals to provide pulpit supply shall follow Presbytery guidelines for compensation. These guidelines are found on the Presbytery website.
  
2. Sacramental Elders.
  - a. “It is appropriate that a presbytery authorize and train ruling elders to administer the Lord’s Supper in the event of the absence of pastors.” (W-3.0410; G-3.0301b)
  - b. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) shall report to the Stated Clerk all those individuals who have completed the training and are enrolled in the program. The Stated Clerk will maintain and update this roll of Sacramental Elders and report this roll to Presbytery on an annual basis.
  - c. Sessions that invite a Sacramental Elder to provide the Lord’s Supper shall follow the Presbytery compensation guidelines for Pulpit Supply.
  - d. A Sacramental Elder can provide the sacrament of baptism when there is no pastor available, when approved by the COM on a case-by-case basis, and when the elder has received training on the sacrament of baptism.
  
3. Temporary Pastors. (already approved by Presbytery)  
Definition and order regarding the Temporary Pastor.
  - a. A Temporary Pastor is a Ruling Elder who enters into a Temporary Pastoral Relationship with a Session under G-2.0504b of the Book of Order.
  - b. The council of jurisdiction for this Ruling Elder is the Session of the Congregation.
  - c. The Committee on the Ministry shall serve as the Presbytery committee for consultation and guidance for the Session and the Temporary Pastor.

The Committee on Ministry (COM) shall:

- a. Determine the terms of service and the limitations of service.
- b. Approve the covenant agreement between the Session and the Temporary Pastor and provide oversight and support to the Session and to the Temporary Pastor.
- c. Keep a roll of Temporary Pastors and the congregations they serve and report this roll to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery on an annual basis.
- d. Name the Temporary Pastor as Moderator of the Session of the congregation they serve with oversight by the Committee on the Ministry.
- e. Encourage the Temporary Pastor to seek the training to become a Commissioned Pastor (Commissioned Ruling Elder).

4. Commissioned Pastors (Commissioned Ruling Elders)
  - a. Commissioned Pastors are Ruling Elders who are commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the Presbytery. (G-2.10)
  - b. This commission shall not exceed three years and is renewable.
  - c. Commissioned Pastors shall be members of Presbytery during their period of commissioning. The Stated Clerk shall provide Presbytery with an annual roll of serving Commissioned Pastors.
  - d. The Commissioned Pastor can be commissioned to the following validated ministries:
    1. One or more congregations.
    2. A Parish.
    3. “At large” service to the Presbytery. This is a commissioning to all the congregations within the Presbytery.
- . Any Commissioned Pastor with a commission to a specific congregation is authorized to respond to requests from other Sessions for occasional pastoral and sacramental service. (This item has already been approved by Presbytery)
  - e. Commissions shall be reviewed by the COM annually. An evaluation shall also occur at the end of the three-year period of commissioning.

The Committee on Ministry shall recommend the following service to the Session to recognize this ministry to the local congregation.

Service of Recognition of Ministry (This service can occur after approval of the covenant by all parties)

(Suggestion: The Temporary Pastor and the members of the Session gather at the front of the church)

**Moderator of Session, or  
Representative of the Presbytery:**

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”  
(1 Corinthians 12: 4-7)

(Name of Temporary Pastor), the Session of (Church name) has entered into a covenant with you to provide pastoral care and leadership in this congregation. This covenant has been approved by the Committee on the Ministry of the Presbytery of the Pines.

Will you seek to faithfully fulfill this covenant, to serve this congregation, depending on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ?

**Temporary Pastor:** I will.

**Moderator:** Let us pray.

Good of grace, pour out your Holy Spirit on (name) as he/she enters into new ministry and service to this congregation. Give her/him wisdom and courage to work for the common good. Give your grace and love that she/he might be a servant leader to these your people. To the glory and honor of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

- f. Commissions shall be reviewed by the COM annually. An evaluation shall also occur at the end of the three-year period of commissioning.