

**Draft 7-MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-FOURTH STATED MEETING  
OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS**

**FEBRUARY 17-18, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER/OPENING PRAYER**

The 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas was called to order at 6:45 p.m. in the Munger-Wilson Chapel at the University of the Ozarks, Clarksville on Friday, February 17, 2017 by Teaching Elder Lacy Sellars, Moderator of the Presbytery. He lit the Christ candle and prayed.

**REPORT OF ENROLLMENT/DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Stated Clerk TE Robert Lowry declared a **quorum present, 27 TE, 26 Ruling Elders, 10 other TEs, total of 63 present at gavel.**

**TEACHING ELDERS (who checked on sign-in sheet):** D.C. Adams, Karen Kokles Akin, Robert Brian Brock, Janet Butin, Philip W. Butin, Katie Cummings, Kade Curry, Fern M. Davis, Ruskin Falls, Steven Frazier, Debra Carl Freeman, Elizabeth Gabbard, Susan Gray, Robert Hadley, Steve Hancock, “Chip” Hatcher, Marion A. Humphrey, Clare Martin Kelley, Young Doo Kim, Jai Kwak, Courtney Bacon-Latina, Frank LeBlanc, Robert Lowry, “Mike” McCracken, Jeff Price, Rebecca Purcell, Dennis Ritchie, Leslie Bethell Roper, Susan Rose, Dari Rowen, Anne Russ, Cindy Saul, Lacy Sellars, Georgia Senior, J. Stewart Smith, Rebecca Spooner, Michael Ulasewich, Michael Vinson, Lindy Vogado, Elizabeth R. (Liz) Wagner, Marci Ward, Jeremy Wilhelmi.

**HONORABLY RETIRED ACTIVE TEACHING ELDERS:** Ben H. Bateman, William W. Branch, David H. Dyer, Gordon F. Garlington III, David E. Gill, William F. Henning, David S. King, John E. King, Richard H. Miller, Rita Wilson. **Honorably Retired Non-Active Teaching Elders:** Ron Jones.

**RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS FROM CONGREGATIONS (who signed in):** Memorial, Atkins, Mark Murdoch; First, Batesville, Janet Thomas; Presbyterian Church of Bella Vista, Harry Reif and Darrell Maples; First, Bentonville, Roy Horan; First, Clarksville, Linda Castleman; Harmony, Clarksville, Cindy Lanphear; First, Conway, Carolyn Ishee; First, Dardanelle, DeNann Clark; First, Eureka Springs, Reck Wallis; First United, Fayetteville, Carol Van Scyoc and Michelle Price; Graham Memorial, Forrest City, Curt Patton; Central, Fort Smith, Charles Cook; First, Fort Smith, K. C. Chanthorn; Good Shepherd, Greenwood, Jeanette Belin; First, Harrison, Harry Cikanek; Holiday Island Presbyterian, Mary Diehl; Faith, Horseshoe Bend, George Jackson; First, Hot Springs, William Randall; Westminster, Hot Springs, Lawrence Grubbs; Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village, Patricia Kuntz; First, Huntsville, Carla Taylor; Allison, Little Rock, Leroy Brownlee; Grace, Little Rock, Moira

Donnell; Pulaski Heights, LaWanda Harris; Second, Little Rock, Ralph Cotham, Melissa Fontaine, Lindsey Taylor; Trinity, Little Rock, David W. Bass; Westover Hills, Little Rock, H. K. Stewart; First, Malvern, Charlotte Purdy; First, Mena, Bill Hays; First, Morrilton, Charles Spivey; Hopewell, Morrilton, Susan Morris; First, Newport, Edward L. Cooley; Barr Memorial, Norman, Noah Williamson; Mount Vernon, Pea Ridge, Ron David; First, Pine Bluff, Don Harris, Jr.; First, Prairie Grove, Kyzer Wilmer; First, Rogers, David Webb; Central, Russellville, Natalie Aikman; First, Searcy, Marie Bethell; First, Springdale, David Morris and Jen Allen; Wynne Presbyterian, Charlie Brown; First, Yellville, Mike Simpson.

**AT-LARGE COMMISSIONERS:** Ex-officio members of Coordinating Team Bob Boehmler, Treasurer; Ruling Elder Members of Coordinating Team, Jan Enke, Peg Falls-Corbitt, Karene Jones, Patty Minga; Moderators of Presbytery Ministry Area, Leah Shell, Future of the Church; Ruling Elder Commissioner to General Assembly 222, (2016 Portland) Gail Murdoch; Co-Vice Moderator of Presbyterian Women, Ila Blackketter-Wolfe; Moderator of Presbytery, Ruth Hamilton.

**COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS:** G. Hartley Jones, Barr Memorial, Norman; Kelly Pearson, First, Dardanelle.

**CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS:** Jeannie Ford and NiAnn Thompson. **Certified Associate Christian Educators:** Theresa Spragins. **Christian Educators in Particular Churches:** Mary Shaw, First, Springdale.

**VISITORS TO THIS MEETING:** 29 registered.

**YOUNG ADULT DELEGATE ADVISORS:** 5 registered.

**YOUTH ADVISORY DELEGATES:** 10 registered.

**CORRESPONDING MEMBERS:** “Chip” Andrus, Hudson River Presbytery; Rick Young, Grace Presbytery; Joyce Daniel and Danny Daniel, HR, Southern Kansas Presbytery; James Freeman, Pines Presbytery; Blake Brinegar, Presbytery of Cascades.

**TEACHING ELDERS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES:** Leslie Belden, Nancy Benson-Nicol, Joy Carrington, Lance Clemmons, Jeff Cranton, Lewis R. Donelson IV, James J. Farley III, Al Henager, Chris Jones, Jennifer Lord, Ray McCalla, Marie Mainard O’Connell, Timothy C. Reeves, David Schaller, Patricia Schaller, William Seitz, Rachel Shepherd, Shauna Silmon, Susan Carter Wiggins, Robert Williamson, Harry Young.

**HONORABLY RETIRED TEACHING ELDERS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES:** “Ike” Brighton, Bill Galbraith, Howard H. Gordon, Mark Lenneville, Richard Shinkle, Frederick A. Taylor, Nancy Taylor.

**TEACHING ELDERS ABSENT WITHOUT EXCUSE:** Bill Bailey, Phillip Blackburn, Tasha Blackburn, Bryan Bond, Carol Clark, Mark Clark, Kris Crawford, Clifton P. Ford, Paul Fulks, John Gibson, Libby Lizarraga, Jeff Parker, Emmett Powers, Ward Rudolph, Terry Tallent, Daniel Wooley.

**HONORABLY RETIRED TEACHING ELDERS ABSENT WITHOUT EXCUSE:** Catherine L. Allsbury, Donald K. Campbell II, Milton B. Davis, Guy Delaney, Heinrich B. Eiler, Alan Ford, Orin M. Frank, Richard Frothingham, Sally Johnson, Lance Jones, “Bo” Lewis, James B. Miller, Jerry Rice, C. Michael D. Seitz, W. Kennedy Upham, Don Wardlaw, Darwin Wolfe.

**SESSIONS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES:** First, Arkadelphia; West End, Arkadelphia; Vaughn, Bentonville; Holly Grove; Westminster, Little Rock; First, North Little Rock.

**SESSIONS ABSENT WITHOUT EXCUSE:** First, Alma; Alpine, Amity; First, Beebe; First, Benton; second elder commissioner, First, Bentonville; First, Brinkley; Presbyterian Church of Bull Shoals; Cane Hill; Elkins; Kirk of the Hills, Fairfield Bay; Mount Comfort, Fayetteville; second elder commissioner, First, Fort Smith; One-O-One, Gamaliel; First, Gravette; First, Gurdon; Spring River, Hardy; First, Heber Springs; First, Helena; second elder commissioner, Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village; Woodlands, Hot Springs Village; First, Jacksonville; First, Jonesboro; First, Lincoln; First, Little Rock; fourth elder commissioner, Second, Little Rock; second elder commissioner, Trinity, Little Rock; First, Lonoke; First, Marianna; First, McGehee; First, Mountain Home; Mountainburg; Park Hill, North Little Rock; First, Ozark; First, Paragould; Central, Pine Bluff; Faith, Pine Bluff; second elder commissioner, Central, Russellville; First, Stuttgart; First, Van Buren; First, Walnut Ridge; Cleburne Avenue, West Helena.

**AT-LARGE MEMBERS ABSENT WITH EXCUSE:** Moderator of Presbytery Committee, Ledridge Davis, Committee on Representation.

**AT-LARGE MEMBERS ABSENT WITHOUT EXCUSE:** Ruling Elder Members of Coordinating Team, Ted Belden, Justin Clark, Ken Coker, Marty Shepherd. Ruling Elder Commissioner to General Assembly 222, Jessie Rancifer.

**COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS ABSENT WITH EXCUSE:** Carolyn Beane, Barr Memorial, Norman; Chuck Olson, Memorial, Atkins; Claire and Kenneth Rhodes, West End, Arkadelphia.

**COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS ABSENT WITHOUT EXCUSE:** Jim Keyes, 101, Gamaliel; Rita Manske, Cane Hill Presbyterian.

**CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS ABSENT WITH EXCUSE:** Kristi Button, Lynn King, retired; Linda LeBron, retired; Nancy Irving Smith, retired.

**Certified Associate Christian Educators Absent with Excuse:** Lynn Condra, retired; Susie Wright.

### **ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET**

The Moderator moved the adoption of the docket with these changes: for this evening, add appointment of Standing Committees. For Saturday, greetings from Young Adult Volunteers and Youth Advisory Delegates will be added, and 10:00 order of day will be moved to 10:45. **The docket was adopted with additions/changes.**

### **SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS AND GRANTING OF PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR/VOICE**

Seated as corresponding members with privilege of the floor and voice were: four at time of gavel, “Chip” Andrus, Rick Young, Joyce Daniel and Danny Daniel, who were seated with voice. Representative from Dubuque Seminary Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth brought greetings

### **WELCOME TO FIRST-TIME COMMISSIONERS**

Moderator asked for first-time teaching or ruling elder commissioners to stand and introduce themselves. Ruling elders were welcomed from Searcy, Kirk in HS Village, Springdale, Batesville, Russellville, and Second, LR.

### **INTRODUCTION OF PRESBYTERY STAFF**

Moderator introduced the following: General Presbyter Stewart Smith, outgoing Stated Clerk Robert Lowry, Resourcing Director and Recording Clerk NiAnn Thompson, Director of Mission Support Kenneth Rich, Vital Congregations Staff Michael Vinson, Youth Staff Britton Varn, as well as presbytery’s incoming Moderator Ruth Hamilton, incoming Vice Moderator Leslie Roper, and Treasurer Bob Boehmler.

### **WELCOME FROM HOST**

TE Jeremy Wilhelmi, new chaplain from University of the Ozarks, brought greetings from students, faculty and staff. The number of students from PC(USA) attending UofO has increased. A new policy of looking for the right students and helping them to attend and succeed includes “test optional” approach. Improvements to the chapel and environs given by Frances Wilson were celebrated. The reception after worship was announced to be downstairs. He noted the availability of a week of study leave on campus for pastors and the appearance by Rodger Nishioka on April 26. He introduced people from UofO and offered for them to visit in congregations.

### **ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Stated Clerk Lowry moved the following:

1. That Presbyterian Women be granted permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper at their spring gathering.
2. That Presbyterian Pilgrimage be granted permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper at their gathering(s).
3. That the presbytery adopt proposed Standing Rules 3, 4, and 5 recommended by the Coordinating Team.
  - a. Standing Rule 3: Terms of Service for Presbytery Leadership (Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Past Moderator)
    - i. The terms of service for the Past Moderator (as moderator of Coordinating Team), Moderator of Presbytery and Vice-Moderator of Presbytery shall be from January 1-December 31 of each year of service. (NB if Section 4 of the O&S is amended, the titles will be changed to reflect the change)
    - ii. *Rationale: The presbytery practice of starting the program and committee service years on January 1 but delaying the moderatorial start until after the installation service in February is confusing and constitutionally unnecessary. An individual is elected Vice-Moderator with the express understanding that it is a three-year cycle of service. That service is begun in the year following election (normally in October of the calendar year preceding the year of service as Vice-Moderator). Just as a Teaching Elder may begin service in a congregational setting weeks or even months before their installation, the Moderator and Vice Moderator of Presbytery can do the same. As currently practiced, the installation service is more akin to the investiture of a bishop than the installation of a leader in the Reformed tradition.*
  - b. Standing Rule 4: Ex-Officio Members and Quorum
    - i. Ex-officio members of the Coordinating Team (Moderator of Presbytery, Vice-Moderator of Presbytery, General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer) shall count toward the presence of a quorum pursuant to the rules set forth in the Organization and Structure and Committee and Ministry Duties sections of the Presbytery Ministry Manual.

- c. Standing Rule 5: Terms of Service for Coordinating Team Members from Ministry Areas
  - i. Members of the CT appointed to represent ministry areas or committees shall remain members of CT until their successors are named. If an individual is no longer an active member of the committee he/she represented, the position is declared vacant until a successor is named.
4. That the Administrative Commissions for First Rogers, First Lonoke, First Little Rock, Cane Hill/Walnut Grove, and First Ozark be reaffirmed for 2017 with current membership.
5. That First, Marianna be granted an exception to the rule of rotation and term limits for Ruling Elders.
6. That the following changes be made to the Ministry and Committee Duties of the Administration Ministry Area at their request:
  - a. Add to #10 the following: *“Non budget purchases over \$500 must be approved by the Administration Area Committee.”*
  - b. Add to #2 the following: *“A full audit will normally be performed every 5 years, with annual reviews on intervening years.”*

No items were pulled from the consent agenda for individual consideration. **Consent agenda was approved as printed.**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Stated Clerk moved approval of minutes of the 133<sup>rd</sup> stated meeting in October, 2016 as printed in the packet, it received a second. Motion passed.**

#### **APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Moderator appointed the following to serve during the meeting. Stated Clerk gave thanks to Recording Clerk NiAnn Thompson for work on 2016 minutes.

Tellers: TEs DC Adams, Mike McCracken, Brian Brock and RE Judy Thomas.

Leaves of Absence Committee: TEs Rebecca Spooner and Lindy Vogado.

**MOMENT FOR MINISTRY—FIRST UNITED, FAYETTEVILLE HISTORY**

TE Phil Butin spoke of the book published and for sale at display table near registration.

**WORSHIP INCLUDING THE LORD'S SUPPER AND INSTALLATION OF  
MODERATOR**

Moderator Sellars preached, General Presbyter Stewart Smith and TE Susan Gray officiated at the table for communion served by intinction. RE Ruth Hamilton, Kirk in the Pines, HS Village was installed as moderator with TE David Dyer, honorably retired and TE Dari Rowen delivering the charges. Hamilton presented Sellars a gift of thanks from the presbytery during her remarks. Leading the UofO Chamber Singers was Dr. Jonathan Ledger, accompanied by Dr. Sharon Gorman.

A reception hosted by the UofO was held in the beautifully reconstructed basement of the chapel following worship.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator Hamilton called the council to order in Rogers Conference Center at UofO at 8:30 a.m. She lit the Christ candle and gave a devotional. She noted the worship offering from Friday night benefitting the Presbytery of AR scholarship at UofO totaled \$1,508.00. Stated Clerk announced that TEs could pick up ID cards for this year, and lunches may be bought at the cafeteria door.

**MORNING PRAYER INCLUDING INSTALLATION OF THE VICE-MODERATOR**

Chaplain Jeremy Wilhelmi led a scriptural exercise and prayers around tables, and Hamilton installed TE Leslie Roper, pastor at First, Batesville, as Vice Moderator for 2017.

Stated Clerk moved Item #2 on Nominations report to new business since it is related to a new motion coming under new business.

**REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER AND STATE OF THE PRESBYTERY**

TE Stewart Smith reported on the challenges that face the churches and country. He commented on the challenge of securing pastoral leadership in smaller and rural churches and some local church financial concerns moving into crisis. Some congregations have had to cut presbytery giving and even staff. Woodlands, Hot Springs Village law suit, triggered by presbytery's decline to accept their low financial offer to be dismissed, is starting next phase of legal discovery.

Smith reported good news for finances at the end of 2016, stopping the slide in congregational giving for five consecutive years. An extra \$36,000 in congregational giving and \$42,000 in investments totaled \$78,000 more than expected with 21 congregations giving more than in previous years and many more sustaining their giving. Presbytery therefore ended up with

surplus, and committees underspent with two newly formed ministry areas significantly spending less. Budget is decreased from last year but increased from expenses of 2016.

Chenal, Little Rock property sale is impacted by more site studies and expenses so buyer presented a counter offer of \$1,030,000, which change the Administrative Commission has approved. After closing costs \$37,000 is still needed to pay off loans--which financed Presbytery's pledge to Ferncliff's Capital Campaign. **Motion that Presbytery approve up to \$40,000 to pay off the loans related to the Ferncliff gift** was seconded. TE Dari Rowen asked where money is coming from. Smith answered that Administration has not met to discuss this recent development, but it would come out of the cash account of \$268,000. **Motion was approved.** Closing is set for Wednesday. He gave the background for the pledge to Ferncliff's capital campaign.

Under technology issues Smith reported good usage of free conference call service for committees and that Presbytery now has a Zoom video conferencing account which is just getting started.

Smith gave words of thanks to the outgoing Stated Clerk who has served a year and a half. **Motion was made, seconded and approved that The Presbytery of Arkansas express its deep appreciation and gratitude for Rev. Dr. Robert Lowry in his work as Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas; and we wish him well with continued blessings in his new call to service in Mississippi Presbytery and as pastor of Fondren Presbyterian, Jackson, MS.** Presbytery gave him a standing ovation, and Smith offered personal words of gratitude.

Good things are going on in the life of the Presbytery in committee work, helping with congregations going through individual challenges. He mentioned his recent attendance at the celebration at Yellville for their new pastor, Van Buren celebration of 100 years in that sanctuary, intergenerational memorial service of TE Carlos Lopez, and celebration of David Gill's achievements.

### **REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK**

Stated Clerk Lowry gave information and made the following motions:

**For Information:** Statistical reports have been received and can be submitted to Acting Stated Clerk on paper forms this week.

1. All Teaching Elders (including those who are Honorably Retired-Active) are reminded that a condition of continued employment and membership in the Presbytery of Arkansas requires periodic background checks. ALL Teaching Elders must complete a background check Authorization and Release form (found in Section M of the packet) and forward \$10 for the cost of the background check. Congregations employing Teaching Elders are encouraged to cover the cost of the background check.



2. All Teaching Elders must complete and return to the Stated Clerk an Acknowledgement of Receipt of the presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Policy. Completed Acknowledgements of Receipt must be returned to the Stated Clerk.
3. The Stated Clerk made the following editorial revisions to the Ministry and Committee Duties section of the Presbytery Ministry Manual
  - a. Changed all references to number of regions to four from five.
  - b. Changed language for membership of Future of the Church to make consistent with rest of manual.
  - c. Added for clarity "non-Caucasian" to description of required majority for COR.
  - d. Changed wording as necessary to match adopted changes to Organization and Structure
4. The Siloam Springs church has been officially dismissed to the EPC following receipt of the first installment of the financial settlement.
5. The Stated Clerk filed the following annual reports with the Office of the General Assembly as required by GA rules:
  - a. **Governing Body Costs Report**
    - i. Number of FT employees 2
    - ii. Number of PT employees 5
    - iii. Total Cost of Salaries and Benefits \$283,154
    - iv. Total Cost of Staff Travel \$12,090
    - v. Total Cost of Building (incl. utilities)\$33,295
    - vi. Total for All Categories \$328,540
  - b. **Salaries and Benefits Report for 2016**
    - i. David Dyer
      1. Salary \$1,142
      2. Benefits \$0
      3. Total \$1,142
    - ii. Robert Lowry
      1. Salary \$18,880
      2. Benefits \$3,267
      3. Total \$22,147
    - iii. Kenneth Rich
      1. Salary \$56,275
      2. Benefits \$20,530

- 3. Total \$76,805
  - iv. Stewart Smith
    - 1. Salary \$80,000
    - 2. Benefits \$34,703
    - 3. Total \$114,703
  - v. NiAnn Thompson
    - 1. Salary \$31,733
    - 2. Benefits \$14,481
    - 3. Total \$46,214
  - vi. Britton Varn
    - 1. Salary \$14,319
    - 2. Benefits \$0
    - 3. Total \$14,319
  - vii. Michael Vinson
    - 1. Salary \$7,822
    - 2. Benefits \$0
    - 3. Total \$7,822
- c. Summary of Church Changes Report**
- i. Number of Congregations 1-1-16      84
    - 1. Total added                      0
    - 2. Total dissolved                  0
    - 3. Total Merged                    0
    - 4. Total dismissed                 1
  - ii. Number of Congregations 12-31-2016      83

**For Action:**

- 1. That Section 4 of the Organization and Structure be deleted entirely and the following language be inserted:

***4) Officers and Staff***

***A. Officers- The constitutional officers of the presbytery shall be the Moderator and Stated Clerk. The presbytery also provides by rule for Moderator-in-Election and Moderator of Coordinating Team.***

***1. Moderator: The Moderator shall preside at meetings of the presbytery and fulfill such other duties as provided by rule and the most recent edition of the PC(USA) Book of Order.***

a) Election- *An individual nominated to serve as moderator will normally be elected as “Moderator-in-Election” (or vice-Moderator) in the fall preceding the first year of service. Upon election as Moderator-in-Election, the individual is deemed to have been elected to the full three years of service as Moderator-in-Election, Moderator, and Moderator of Coordinating Team unless resignation or removal from office prevent the completion of the term.*

b) Installation- *The Moderator shall normally be installed at the first meeting in the year of service as Moderator.*

c) Vacancy: *Should a vacancy occur during the first year of service (Moderator-in-Election), the Nominating Committee shall bring to the next stated or called meeting of the presbytery the name of an individual to be elected for the remainder of the term. Should a vacancy occur during the second year of service (Moderator), the Moderator-in-Election shall assume the role of Moderator for the rest of the unexpired term and continue to serve his or her own elected term. Should a vacancy occur during the third year of service (Moderator of Coordinating Team), the Moderator-in-Election shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term as Moderator of Coordinating Team.*

2. Stated Clerk: *The Stated Clerk shall serve as the parliamentarian of the presbytery and as the designated authority on matters of policy and polity.*

a) Election- *Upon vacancy or upon the nomination of more than one candidate, the Nominating Committee shall bring to the presbytery a Stated Clerk Nominating Committee to be elected and charged with presenting a candidate to the presbytery for election. Nominations shall be allowed from the floor.*

b) Vacancy: *Should a vacancy occur a Temporary Stated Clerk shall be named by the Coordinating Team from among previous Stated Clerks or otherwise qualified individuals. The appointment shall be presented to the presbytery at the next stated meeting for its approval. A search for a new Stated Clerk shall commence for the election of a Stated Clerk to complete the unexpired term.*

B. Parity- *The office of Moderator shall normally alternate between Ruling and Teaching Elders.*

C. Staff- The presbytery staff shall normally include an Executive/General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer and may include such other staff approved by the presbytery for the fulfillment of the presbytery's mission and ministry.

Rationale: The revisions are intended to clarify which are constitutional offices required for the presbytery and which are offices created by rule for the effective operation of the presbytery. Additionally, the expected three-year commitment for candidates to serve as Moderator-in-Election (or vice-Moderator), Moderator, and Moderator of Coordinating Team is clarified. Common vocabulary is sought. **Motion was made, seconded**, there was no discussion. **Motion was approved.**

2. That the Organization and Structure be amended as follows:

- That a new letter 3.D.3.g and 3.D.3.h be inserted with the following text:

g. Moderators of CCM, CLD, Future of the Church, Administration, Y/YA/C, Mission of the Church, Nominations, and Representation who are Ruling Elders shall be enrolled as members with voice and vote if not otherwise members of the presbytery. Moderators who are not Ruling Elders may be seated as Corresponding Members with voice but not vote.

h. Ruling Elder members of the Coordinating Team not otherwise members of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members of the presbytery during their time of service on the Coordinating Team.

Current section g shall be re-designated as 3.D.3.j

*Rationale: This change will ensure that all moderators of standing ministries and RE members of the CT have voice in the work of the larger presbytery.*

- That 5.H.1 be revised to read as follows (text to be added is shown in *italics* and text to be deleted is shown with a ~~strikethrough~~):

Membership- There shall be no more than ~~17~~ 22 and no fewer than ~~10~~ 15 members of the Coordinating Team.

*Rationale: This change clarifies that the five ex-officio members of the CT are part of the total membership.*

- That all other Presbytery documents be amended to reflect these changes.

**Motion was made, seconded**, and there was no discussion. **Motion was approved.**

Moment of personal privilege given by TE Robert Lowry, who complimented the elected leaders of Presbytery and voiced appreciation for his time in the region as pastor and Stated Clerk.

### **REPORT OF THE COORDINATING TEAM**

Moderator TE Lacy Sellars made the report.

For Information:

The Coordinating Team took the following actions on behalf of the presbytery during a called conference call on January 13, 2017

1. Accepted with regret and with thanks the resignation of TE Robert Wm Lowry as Stated Clerk effective at the close of the 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting.
2. Elected TE Leslie Belden as temporary Stated Clerk from the close of the 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting until the election of a new Stated Clerk.
3. Instructed the Nominating Committee to bring names to the 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting for a Stated Clerk Search Committee.

The Coordinating Team took the following actions on behalf of the presbytery at its stated meeting January 21, 2017:

1. Created a task force of six members (two each to be named by Future of the Church, CCM, and CLD) to evaluate the criteria of how to prepare and support CREs. The task force shall return its final report to CT no later than January 21, 2018. Stewart Smith will act as staff support.
2. Approved the start time for the 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting, requests for docket time, a pre-presbytery workshop, Orders of the Day for Theological Discussion and a report from the Polity Committee, and an invitation to TE Chip Andrus to lead the Theological Discussion.
3. Authorized the Stated Clerk to solicit and accept an invitation from a host for the 135<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting June 3, 2017.
4. Instructed the General Presbyter to consult with the vendor responsible for background checks to ensure that the Background Check Release Form is limited to the scope prescribed in presbytery policy.
5. Referred three proposed Standing Rules to the presbytery for approval or disapproval (included in Consent Agenda).

6. Referred changes to the Organization and Structure to the presbytery for approval or disapproval.
7. Extended an invitation to TE Rebecca Spooner and Dr. David Johnson to lead the Theological Discussion at the 136<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting.
8. Set the date and location for the 136<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting for October 6-7, 2017 at Graham Memorial Presbyterian Church, Forrest City.
9. Appointed a Task Force of four to examine the financial resources of the presbytery and report back to Coordinating Team no later than August 1, 2017 on recommendations for policies and procedures for use of funds beyond the annual presbytery budget. One member each shall be named by the Future of the Church, Mission of the Church, Administration, and Coordinating Team.

Sellers summarized and highlighted the report. He thanked TE Leslie Belden in absentia as Temporary Stated Clerk. Coordinating Team will focus at their April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting on the conduct of presbytery meetings. Sellers asked that the report be received.

### **GREETINGS FROM YOUTH ADVISORY DELEGATES AND YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION**

Greetings were brought by Serena McClarrinon, Youth Advisory Team co-moderator, who announced Senior High YouthQuake, and that the Team has Presbyterian socks for sale. Three YAVs serving in AR explained their unique experiences: Ashley Nipp noted applications for YAV service will be open soon, Katie McGee applauded Disaster Assistance kits, Chris Utterback appreciated efforts to help people find their passion after college graduation. Moderator thanked both groups.

### **REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION MINISTRY AREA**

Moderator RE Jan Enke gave the report.

For Information:

1. “Financial information including Balance Sheet, Year End Budget Report, and Year End Benevolence Report were included in the packet.
2. We ended the year 2016 with net income. This was due to a larger than anticipated income from investments combined with several committees of the presbytery keeping a careful eye on the expenditures.
3. The Chenal Property is scheduled to be sold on February 22, 2017.

4. The Board of Pensions Insurance was reviewed with the new options available. After a discussion with the staff covered, it was decided that the 100% member and children would be covered by the presbytery but not the spouse. The spouses will be required to get insurance through their employers. The salaries of those who will be affected will be adjusted by the amount of their spouse's insurance premium. This plan saves the presbytery \$14,083.”

For Action:

1. **The Administration Ministry Area moved the following terms of call for General Presbyter Stewart Smith for 2017:**
  1. **Effective salary:**
    - a. **Salary: \$40,000**
    - b. **Housing: \$35,000**
    - c. **403(b): \$5,000**
    - d. **Spousal Insurance Cost Offset: \$865.80**
  2. **Full medical, pension, death and disability coverage through the Board of Pensions (for Stewart and child only; spouse not covered)**
  3. **SSI reimbursement: \$6,196**
  4. **Professional expenses: \$15,000 (reduced from \$18,000)**
  5. **Continuing Education: \$1,500**
  6. **Paid Vacation Leave: four (4) weeks;**
  7. **Paid Continuing Education Leave: two (2) weeks;**
  8. **Three month Sabbatical after the seventh year of work.**

Enke explained the savings to the budget (Smith and Kenneth Rich chose to have spouses' insurance covered by spouses' employers.) Smith left during report. **Motion was approved.**

2. **The Administration Ministry Area moved to adopt the 2017 Operating Budget. (Distributed at registration.) totaling \$805,330.00. (See appendix.)**

Rationale: The 2017 Operating Budget proposes \$80,000 in reductions from the 2016 operating budget. If expenses come in at the projected number of \$805,330, we anticipate having a deficit and transferring some funds from investments. There was no discussion. **Motion was approved.**

3. **Motion that the changes endorsed by the Administration Ministry Area to the job description for part-time presbytery staff member TE Michael Vinson be approved.** (Description follows.). Enke gave background of the changes, “so his skill set might more effectively meet the needs of the presbytery,” and noted that changes had been approved by General Presbyter, Future of the Church Ministry Area, and Administration. In discussion/questions Leslie Roper questioned why churches would pay for services. Smith explained that this continues his current work, but that multiple visits and multiple days working with individual congregations would be beyond his current work. Butin suggested a sliding scale payment approach for congregations unable to pay. Smith said some congregations have come to Future of the Church Area for grants to help pay the costs. TE Debbie Freeman spoke of First, Jacksonville's buy-in to Vinson's work with them, and the grant from FotC, which was the presbytery's gift. **Motion was approved.**

Enke asked congregations to fill out the pledge form and give to Kenneth Rich or after Session meeting, fill out and return to him so budget planning can be complete.

### **Proposed Job Description**

#### **PART 1: SKILLS FOR THRIVING IN CHANGE WORKSHOPS**

The Theme of the work for 2017 would be Skills for Thriving in Change. In meeting with the discernment group, one of the things that they thought would be helpful would be hands-on learning and skill development to help them do ministry in a variety of settings and in the complicated world of ministry in which the church currently exists. The benefit of the workshop to the local pastor is that it gives them some tools to begin conversations with their session and to develop their own skill set in navigating ministry during rapidly changing times. The benefit to the Presbytery is that the Presbytery begins to have leaders who can use their skills to help others discover their purpose and fulfill their calling in new ways. This allows the Presbytery and the local congregations to develop leadership skills and plans that are flexible and productive. The Purpose of the workshops would be to build skills for thriving in change for leaders within the Presbytery.

This would include a series of three pre-presbytery workshops:

- Workshop One: Fostering a Life Nurturing Environment In Your Congregation
- Workshop Two: Mapping Congregational Transformation, Aligning with your Purpose as a congregation.
- Workshop Three: Shifting From Old Patterns of Behavior and Developing New Patterns of Behavior

The overall benefit for this group of workshops for the Presbytery will be to begin to develop leadership that can help discern new ways of being the church within the Presbytery based on skills and knowledge from the workshops. The individual congregations will learn how to assess that its behaviors and actions help or distract from accomplishing its purpose, how to foster an environment within the congregations that is life-nurturing and affirming in order to accomplish its purpose; and to learn how to develop leadership, vision and community to accomplish its purpose.

Each pre-presbytery workshop would be approximately three hours in length. They will be offered once during the course of the year perhaps as a part of the regularly scheduled Presbytery meetings. Leadership at all levels of the church would benefit from these workshops. This would include deacons, elders, and pastors.



Additionally there would be one workshop offered at least twice in different parts of the state. The theme of this workshop would be Thriving in Change. This would be an afternoon and morning workshop with the first part of the workshop taking part in the afternoon and the second part of the workshop taking place the next morning for a total of eight hours. This workshop would be beneficial to deacons, elders and pastors as they would begin to develop tools for assessing and discerning ways to fulfill their purpose individually and collectively.

The design of the workshops, the implementation of the workshops, including the development of resource and educational material for the workshops, would be covered by the current salary.

Some Benefits to these workshops would include:

- Strengthening the relationship between the session and the pastor to lead a congregation that thrives in times of transition.
- Moving from one stage of ministry to the next by broadening the discussion beyond the present ministry challenges to bring understanding to where to put energy in ministry that brings about lasting improvement.
- Broader conversations with respect to the mission of the Church.
- Conflict Prevention in transition by developing new patterns of behavior that strengthen the current mission and context of mission.
- Development of new patterns of behavior that take congregation out of patterns of behavior that no longer serve them and keep the congregation in conflict.
- Development of organizational wide understanding of transition: where it starts, how to thrive in transition, stages along the way and development of a path forward to a new mission.

## PART 2: WORKING WITH CONGREGATIONS

This is work that relates to specific congregations. This would be like the deep discernment work that I have done with congregations like Jacksonville and Rogers.

The purpose of this work is to help the congregation learn new ways of being as it discerns next steps in ministry. This is accomplished in a variety of ways. There are individual interviews which allows individual members to discern how well the church is doing in accomplishing its purpose, identify things that need to be eliminated, reduced or developed. It allows the congregation to look at its history and come to terms with behaviors

that have been helpful in moving the ministry of the congregation forward and to look at behaviors that have not been helpful in moving the ministry forward. The focus groups allow the participants to assess and discern next steps in ministry while at the same time learning new skills to help them accomplish their ministry. As more congregations do this kind of work the presbytery will see congregations that have clarity of purpose as it relates to their ministry in local congregations and across the presbytery increasing the connectional ties of the work together.

This work would be limited to three churches a year and would be paid for by the church requesting the services. The payment might come through a presbytery grant.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CHURCH'S MINISTRIES**

TE Dari Rowen, moderator, gave the report.

For Presbytery Action:

### **Blake Brinegar Statement of Faith**

I believe in God the Father, creator of all things, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit. God is not finished with creation; scripture tells us, "The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." God is caring, nurturing, accepting, and patient. Most encounters with God are through ordinary order and structure. Our faith and relationship with God is lifelong, a continual process of deepening one's relationship with God.

God is manifest in the person of Jesus Christ, fully human, fully divine, the incarnate Son of God, our Lord and Savior. The ministry of Jesus was to share the Good News of God's will for the world. Jesus died on a cross for the forgiveness of sins, and his resurrection shows that God is ultimately victorious over sin and death. We turn from God and try to separate ourselves from God. I believe nothing can separate us from God. God is with us in the Holy Spirit, guiding, nurturing, and challenging us to live faithful lives. In recalling God's presence with us, we know we are children of God, called to spread the Good News of the Gospel in the world. As disciples, we offer the gift of God in Jesus Christ by making new disciples, through mission work in our community, our country, and around the world.

We encounter God through the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible, the inspired word of God, an authoritative guide of how to live, speaks to each of us. The Bible should be interpreted with humility and love. God related to humanity, first by leading the Israelites, then in the Incarnation of Jesus. God's purpose and power are endless, adding to God's mystery and grandeur. Created in God's image, we are challenged to use our minds in relating to humanity. We are called to be good stewards, entrusted with caring for God's creation.

God works through the church, the body of Christ. Our no longer being separated from God by sin is secured in our faith, not works or merit. We don't earn God's love; it is a freely given gift. The role of the community of believers through which God works is multi-faceted. The community helps us to live more faithfully. We are called to ensure all peoples the basic necessities of a life of dignity.

Through our life in congregations, presbyteries, and as Presbyterians, we belong to the larger community of believers, the church universal. We enter this community through the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the sign God first chose us, even before we could make our own profession. The Lord's Table belongs to Jesus, not a church. When we partake in the Lord's Supper, Jesus is spiritually present in the elements. As the bread is broken and the cup poured, we are reminded of the brokenness of Christ's body. In this act, we share with the faithful around the world, including the saints who have gone before us, as we seek reconciliation with those around us, rededicating ourselves afresh to Christ.

- 1. Motion to approve the call of TE Blake Brinegar as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Yellville, effective January 1, 2017, and enroll him as a member of the Presbytery of Arkansas, requesting that the Presbytery of Cascades dismiss him, with the following terms of call and details concerning the installation service:**

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Effective Salary</b>           |                  |
| <b>Cash Salary</b>                | <b>31,800</b>    |
| <b>Rental Value of Manse</b>      | <b>9,673.08</b>  |
| <b>Dental</b>                     | <b>443.40</b>    |
| <b>Total Effective Salary</b>     | <b>41,916.08</b> |
| <b>Reimbursable Expenses</b>      |                  |
| <b>Auto @ 53.5/mile</b>           | <b>3,000</b>     |
| <b>Cont. Ed.</b>                  | <b>1,200</b>     |
| <b>Presbytery Expense</b>         | <b>420</b>       |
| <b>Moving Costs</b>               | <b>5,000</b>     |
| <b>Pension in Full</b>            |                  |
| <b>Paid Vacation 4 Weeks</b>      |                  |
| <b>Paid Continuing Ed 2 weeks</b> |                  |

**Motion was approved.**

- 2. Motion to approve TE Blake Brinegar's installation service on February 12, 2017 at 4 pm with the offering recipient to be the Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Response and commission members:**

TE Lacy Sellars to moderate and propound the Constitutional questions

TE Dick Shinkle, HR to preach

TE Brian Brock to charge the pastor

RE Jeanne Simpson, First, Yellville to charge the congregation

RE Evelyn Mills, First, Harrison

TE Patty Schaller

**Motion was approved, noting installation had already occurred.** Brinegar brought greetings and introduced the people from Yellville.

**3. Motion to receive TE Joyce A. Daniel (HR) as a member of the Presbytery of Arkansas.**

**Statement of Faith**

As a child I sang with the congregation, “Oh how I love Jesus because he first loved me.” I believe that the sovereign triune God being the source of all love, created the human race in God’s own image. God reveals Godself to us through the Holy Scriptures, through the living Word, Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Spirit, who inspired the writers of Scripture and is present to teach us as we read and listen.

I believe that God’s full expression of love, justice, and mercy is found in Jesus Christ, truly human and truly God. Jesus came willingly to earth to live, suffer, and die that we might be forgiven of sin and have eternal life in relationship with God. In the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, sin and death were defeated. Our forgiveness being forever accomplished on the cross, we are called to confess our sins and forgive others as we also receive forgiveness.

The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost to be present within and around us. I believe Holy Spirit unites us mysteriously with the person and work of Jesus Christ, and guides, companions, comforts, empowers, and advocates for us.

We who believe are called to practice our faith and love in community. This communal expression of faith is experienced in Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. I believe, as Augustine said, both Sacraments are “visible signs of God’s invisible grace” through which the Church is invited into deeper communion with Jesus Christ. In Baptism the Church recognizes God’s sovereignty in the life of a person and affirms the ongoing communal nature of God’s work through the Church. At the Lord’s Table we are nourished by the Spiritual presence of Christ in the receiving of the bread and the cup, as we are in communion with the triune God and all believers of every time and place.

As head of the Church, his body, Christ calls and empowers us to live out the reign of God on earth, praying and working for peace and justice for all people, and caring for and enjoying the environment. We are charged to share the good news of Jesus in our words, our prayers, and our actions, loving God and neighbor; in this way the reign of God grows, and will one day be complete.

In summary, I believe my salvation and sanctification rest solely on the gracious love and power of God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and that nothing will ever separate me from that eternal presence of love.

**Motion was approved.** She brought greetings and thanks.

**4. Motion to receive TE Danny Daniel (HR) as a member of the Presbytery of Arkansas.**

**Statement of Faith**

Legend has it that sometime in the early 1960’s, while lecturing at the University of Chicago; the renowned theologian Karl Barth took a few questions from the audience. Allegedly, Dr. Barth was asked by an inquisitive divinity student if Dr. Barth could summarize his life’s work in theology by one brief statement. The most famous theologian of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century supposedly replied with something like this, “Yes, I can... ‘Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so.’”

I doubt if anyone can top Karl Barth's wit or profound succinctness, neither should I try. This is my brief statement of faith:

I believe that I worship and have an intimate relationship with an omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscience God. Through my understanding of Scripture and the Confessions of the PCUSA I have come to believe that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (one God in three persons). I believe that the Triune God has created and is still creating all humankind in the image of God. I believe that God is revealed to us through the Holy Scriptures, through God's only begotten son, Jesus Christ (who came to us being fully divine and fully human), and through the immense workings of the Holy Spirit.

I believe Jesus' life, death on the cross, and his resurrection provided the atonement for our sins and broke the chains of eternal death for all believers. By the grace of God and the unconditional love found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, all believers have a perpetual relationship with the most holy and almighty God and have become children of God and heirs to God's kingdom. I believe that the Holy Spirit has been sent to indwell within us and is an advocate to accompany us through the many joys and trials of the life we have been given. I believe that the Holy Spirit beckons people from all "walks of life" into action after hearing the voices of the oppressed in the world, not only the injustices leveled upon humanity but also the planet earth we are called to preserve, honor, and protect. I believe that the Holy Spirit continues to connect each of us to the community of faith in Jesus Christ (the catholic Church) as we honor the Sacraments of our faith, baptism and the Lord's Supper. I believe that the Holy Spirit calls all believers, i.e. men, women, and children from across the diverse globe, to unite together in one body, the Body of Christ.

And yes after saying all this, one of the most profound beliefs that I can attest to is... "Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so."

**Motion was approved.** Daniel brought greetings.

5. **Motion that Ruling Elder Ed Wilkinson be approved and commissioned as Commissioned Ruling Elder at Good Shepherd Presbyterian, Greenwood.** **Motion was approved.** He brought greetings and thanks for service. He will moderate session and administer sacraments, for three years, for no compensation. Moderator led the commissioning service and asked the constitutional questions. People from Greenwood stood and were welcomed.

**6. Motion to adopt:**

**Policy for Pastors from Other Denominations Seeking to Serve PC(USA)  
Congregations in a Pastoral, Transitional or Supply Role.**

- 1.. When a congregation requires pastoral or transitional pastoral leadership and would like to consider a candidate whose ordination in good standing, prior service, and/or training are not in a denomination in full communion with the Presbyterian Church (USA), the session of that congregation shall consult formally with the Committee on the Church's Ministries through its presbytery

liaisons before any formal or informal conversations are conducted with any such candidate.

2. Through its assigned liaisons and its appropriate Examinations Subcommittee, the Presbytery's Committee on the Church's Ministries shall determine whether, when, and to what extent the person's ability to lead, teach, preach, and provide pastoral care may or may not serve the present and future mission and vision of the congregation in a manner consistent with Presbyterian theology and polity, and the ethos of The Presbytery of Arkansas and the Presbyterian Church (USA). This determination shall be made in a formal examination by the appropriate Examinations Subcommittee and approved by the Committee on the Church's Ministries.
3. In addition in order to preside at the Lord's Supper or to celebrate a baptism of the PCUSA congregation, a potential pastor, transitional pastor, minister, or leader whose credentials in good standing are in a denomination not in full communion with the PCUSA, shall normally be required to pursue pre-approved coursework in the following areas:
  - a. Reformed Theology (*Book of Confessions*)
  - b. Reformed Understanding of the Sacraments (*Book of Confessions* and "Directory for Worship")
  - c. Presbyterian Polity (*Book of Order*)
4. Following the completion of the above coursework or its equivalent, the appropriate Examinations Subcommittee of the Committee on the Church's Ministries shall examine the candidate again and may—at the Committee on the Church's Ministries sole discretion—specifically authorize the individual to exercise one or more of the following pastoral functions if it judges the exercise of that function by that individual to be desirable for the church's ongoing ministry:
  - a. Presiding at the Lord's Supper
  - b. Celebrating a baptismSuch authorization shall apply only to the congregation, context, and time-frame specified by the Committee on the Church's Ministries.
5. In no event shall a pastor, transitional pastor, minister, or other leader whose ordination, prior service, and training are not in a denomination in full communion with the Presbyterian Church (USA) moderate the Session of a congregation of the Presbytery of Arkansas unless/until such leader shall be elected and ordained as a ruling elder or teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Questions included which denominations are in full communion with PC(USA). Stated Clerk answered ELCA, Moravian, RCA, UCC, CRC are in full communion and their ministers can immediately serve in PC(USA) congregations. No other Presbyterian denomination has chosen to be in communion. Cumberland denomination members are examined on a case-by-case basis. Roper asked on #5 in policy about the language of “in no event” is a moderator. Stated Clerk said there is no leeway because the presbytery cannot change this denominational rule. Phil Butin echoed that problems have resulted from non-Presbyterians moderating Session. DC Adams voiced concern about nothing in policy about discipline of the church being exercised. Butin said CCM did not intend for this policy to cover discipline. RE Mike Simpson asked about local Session making these determinations. Stated Clerk replied that constitutional responsibilities cannot be delegated to lower councils (presbytery to session). Butin said this is a mark of being Presbyterian. Stewart Smith echoed Roper’s concern and said mid-council leaders are now talking about this. Kade Curry asked if this is only for transitional leaders because CLD encourages non-PC(USA) ministers to come into full communion. Butin answered it is also for installed positions, even part-time, citing RE Ronnie Prevost, serving at Rogers. Curry asked if Prevost is working toward CRE, because he is not yet under care of CLD. Branch, traveling evangelist, said he hopes he can ask for honorably retired TEs to be moderators of Sessions in east AR. RE Curt Patton asked about dual election or dual ordination. Stated Clerk said that if minister is not in communion he must choose which denomination, and he referenced ruling from 1992. Gabbard asked if CCM policy was written for specific person. Rowen said CCM has previously worked on a case-by-case basis, and they now need policy. **Motion was approved.**

For Information:

**Honorable Retirement:**

TE David Gill was granted Honorable Retirement status effective January 31, 2017. TE Anne Russ spoke on his behalf. He voiced thanks and received gifts.

**Necrology**

Larry Curtis Mitchell, age 68, died Friday, November 18, 2016 at his home in Forrest City, AR. He had served as pastor of Graham Memorial Presbyterian, Forrest City for six years. A native of Frankfort, KY, Larry graduated from Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA with a Master of Divinity and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary with a Doctorate of Ministry degree. He was ordained in Flint River Presbytery in 1974 and pastored churches in GA, MO, TX, NC and from 1987 to 1991, First, Little Rock. In Arkansas Presbytery he served on the Christian Education Committee and the Committee on Clusters after serving on Presbytery Council in Mission Presbytery, evangelism committee in Savannah Presbytery, and as synod commissioner from Cherokee Presbytery.

He is survived by his wife of 27 years Janice B. Frank Mitchell, a step-daughter Ashley Bermingham (Jason) of Little Rock, one granddaughter Mary Parker Bermingham, his mother and sister. After his cremation the memorial service was held at Graham Memorial on November 29. Memorials were suggested for the church, American Heart Association or to American Diabetes Association.

### **Necrology**

Rev. Carlos Alberto Lopez, 93, died on Saturday, January 21, 2017. He was an honorably retired minister member of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

A native of Puerto Padre, Cuba, Lopez graduated from Universidad de la Habana/University of New Mexico with an economics degree and San Francisco Theological Seminary with a master's degree in theology. Before ordination, he was a staff sergeant in the New Mexico Air National Guard. Ordained in 1962, Lopez pastored Presbyterian churches in Albuquerque, El Paso and San Antonio, served on the board of San Francisco Seminary, and was active on committees in Tres Rios and Mission Presbyteries. He retired in 1990 and in AR Presbytery served on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, taught Spanish at Westover Hills Presbyterian Church, and sang in that church choir.

He is survived by his wife Rev. Sally Johnson, also an honorably retired minister, son Daniel Lopez (Kristin) and daughter Alicia Martinez (Eric); stepchildren Charlie Johnson (Robin); Voris Johnson, Jr. (Darrell) and Julie Holt (Kent), and 13 grandchildren. Memorial service was held on Saturday, Jan. 28, at Westover Hills Presbyterian, 6400 Richard B. Hardie Drive, Little Rock. Memorials are suggested to the church, Presbyterian Village, AR Hospice or San Francisco Seminary.

### **Transfers Out and Changes in Status**

TE Marie Mainard O'Donnell was approved as the Transitional Associate Pastor of Second Presbyterian Church of Little Rock.

The Committee on the Church's Ministries approved transferring TE Robert Lowry's membership to the Presbytery of Mississippi pending their request effective following the 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

The Committee on the Church's Ministries approved moving TE Bob Hyatt's membership from Honorably Retired Active to Honorably Retired In-Active.



The Committee on the Church's Ministries approved the continuing Internship of Krista Denne as the Student Intern serving First Presbyterian Church of Clarksville.

### **Requests from Congregations and Presbytery Entities**

The Committee on the Church's Ministries granted permission for Barr Memorial Presbyterian Church, Norman, to allow RE David Lysobey to continue serving on the Session following his two terms.

The Committee on the Church's Ministries recommends that a Congregation/Session shall normally pay a Pastor \$50 per visit plus mileage for moderating a Session meeting. This was highlighted.

The Committee on the Church's Ministries requested that the Coordinating Team create a task force to evaluate the criteria of how to prepare and support CREs.

Responding to the request of the Coordinating Team to develop a policy concerning families of former pastors, it was the consensus opinion of the Committee on the Church's Ministries that there is no authority to set such policy.

Park Hill Presbyterian Church of North Little Rock was granted permission to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee, and First Presbyterian Church of Pine Bluff was granted permission to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee when the mediation team is in place and there is a request by the mediation team to grant such permission.

The Committee on the Church's Ministries approved TE Bill Branch to serve as the "traveling evangelist" to the smaller congregations in northeast Arkansas.

Moderator gave break until 10:45 a.m when Order of the Day was scheduled.

### **ORDER OF THE DAY: Chip Andrus on the New Directory for Worship**

TE Chip Andrus from NY, formerly serving in this presbytery, presented a brief history of Presbyterian worship, details of the current Directory for Worship section of the Book of Order, and the changes, including shortening, in the proposed new directory.

The body stood in recess at 11:40 for lunch in the Seay Cafeteria and resumed business at 12:45 p.m.

### **AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION**

On return Moderator asked TE Joyce Daniel to bless the food received.

**Stated Clerk made motion to amend the docket to reflect Ferncliff Annual Report, Order of the Day, CLD, Nominations, Future, Mission, Arkansas Gives, Minute Announcements. It was seconded and approved.**

### **FERNCLIFF CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER BOARD**

Retired director David Gill reported that no presbytery has been more supportive of their camp and conference center than AR. Board of Directors members TE Kade Curry and TE Elizabeth Gabbard showed photos and gave highlights of the year: 6<sup>th</sup> straight year of growth, Ferncliff in the 20% of camps that are growing, summer camping highlights, accreditation process completed, national gathering of PCUSA conference hosted, day camp for children of missionaries, nature preschool, dinner honoring David's 20 years of service, his son Joel Gill was named Acting Executive Director for 20 months. Gabbard recalls her own years of camp attendance, camp hosting Credo for TEs, conference for mid-council leaders, missional activities including packaging 50,000 meals, Over the Hill Gang built storage buildings, new mattresses on adult beds shared with shelters, day camps for VBS. Hanna Lahodny is newest staff member, theme for summer camp in 2017, service and sustainability are emphasized, summer chaplains are still needed. YADs opened backpacks and played a guessing game. Two changes were approved by board to pay back Presbytery: Presbytery committees invited to meet with no charge for meeting space and congregations can now pay what they can (pay meals, invoice is paid by what you can afford.) Drone was released for a group selfie photo.

### **ORDER OF THE DAY: REPORT OF THE POLITY COMMITTEE**

At 1:11 p.m. General Assembly commissioners reported. Stated Clerk explained that vote must be up or down with youth voting first. Commissioner Gail Murdoch introduced two of the other commissioners to General Assembly last summer, TE Gabbard and TE Roper.

For Action:

*Business referred to the presbyteries by the General Assembly may not be amended. The referrals must be voted on as presented.*

**1. Item 16-G. Access to the Lord's Table On Amending W-2.4011a. and b.**

Shall W-2.4011a. and b. be amended by striking the current text and inserting new text to read as follows? [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

*"Theology of the Lord's Supper*

*"a. The opportunity to eat and drink with Christ is not a right bestowed upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. All who come to the table are offered the bread and cup, regardless of their age or*

*understanding. If some of those who come have not yet been baptized, an invitation to baptismal preparation and Baptism should be graciously extended.*

*“Worshippers prepare themselves to celebrate the Lord’s Supper by putting their trust in Christ, confessing their sin, and seeking reconciliation with God and one another. Even those who doubt may come to the table in order to be assured of God’s love and grace in Jesus Christ.*

*“Welcoming to the Table “*

- c. In cases where baptized children who have not yet begun to participate in the Lord’s Supper express a desire to receive the Sacrament, the session should provide an occasion to welcome them to the table in public worship. Their introduction to the Lord’s Supper should include ongoing instruction or formation in the meaning and mystery of the Sacraments.”*

The Polity Committee recommends APPROVAL of Item 16-G.

**Youth voted first and were unanimously in favor. Amendment 16-G was approved.**

**2. Item 16-H *Directory for Worship On Replacing the Current Directory for Worship***

Shall the Book of Order be amended by striking out the text of Chapters I through VII of the current Directory for Worship and inserting new text to read as follows?

*The full text of the proposed Directory for Worship can be found on the PCUSA website at:*

*[http://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/2016\\_proposed\\_boa.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/2016_proposed_boa.pdf)*

*(Copies of directory were also available from pick-up table.)*

The Polity Committee recommends APPROVAL of Item 16-H.

**Youth voted unanimously in favor. Amendment 16-H was approved.**

- 3. That the Polity Committee be dismissed with the thanks of the presbytery. Youth voted in favor. Motion was approved.**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

TE Kade Curry, moderator, gave the report. He focused on personal and genuine care for inquirers and candidates. Three or four more people are interested in CRE training.

**For Information:**

“The Committee on Leadership Development met January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017 via teleconference and continued its work with those under care for Church Leadership positions.

The CLD received and accepted the resignation of Mike Easley as a member of the Committee and Sherry Miller as a member of the Committee.

The CLD also discussed the new and incoming members of the Committee.

The CLD reviewed its process and talked in detail about its purpose in the work of the Church at Large. There was agreement that the focus continue to be on those under care and that we personally and genuinely invest in their learning and preparation as a committee via a system that utilizes the use of Liaisons. We assigned 2 committee liaisons to each student under care. A list was reviewed that outlined good guidelines for being an effective committee liaison for someone under care. Our current Liaison assignments are as follows:

Liaison assignments:

- Katherine Norwood – Susan Anderson and Lynn Condra
- Molly DeWitt – Kade Curry
- Krista Denne – Debbie Freeman and Sherry Miller
- Brittany Fiscus Van Rossum – Kade Curry and Debbie Freeman
- Stacey Hammons – Debbie Freeman and Kathy White
- David Mills –Debbie Freeman
- Jordan Akin – Susan Anderson and Bill Henning
- Max Hill – Debbie Freeman and Lynn Condra

The CLD Committee has also reviewed its documents and processes for guiding prospective Commissioned Ruling Elders to Church Leadership. The CLD has a comprehensive manual for anyone interested in CRE. The CLD encourages sessions and congregations to send prospective CRE’s our way. All documents needed for the process or for those interested in the process are now located on the Presbytery Website under “Resources” and then “Presbytery Documents.”

The CLD also has an emphasis this year on Session relations. We want all Sessions to know that we have not forgotten that the covenant agreement between those under care and the Presbytery involves the Session of the candidate’s local church. We want to work closely with the Sessions and home churches to ensure the best experience for those who seek to lead in the Church.

**Current “Under Care” List**

**Inquirers:**

Max Hill- 2<sup>nd</sup> Little Rock; Jordan Akin- 2<sup>nd</sup> Little Rock

Stacey Hammons- 2<sup>nd</sup> Little Rock; David Mills- 2<sup>nd</sup> Little Rock

**Candidates for Candidacy (presented for endorsement to the 134<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting):**

Katherine Norwood- 2<sup>nd</sup> Little Rock

Molly Dewitt- 2<sup>nd</sup> Little Rock

**Candidates:**

Brittany Fiscus Van Rossum- 1<sup>st</sup> Jacksonville

Krista Denne- 1<sup>st</sup> Clarksville

**For Action:**

1. **That RE David Clark (First, Heber Springs) come under care as a candidate for Commissioned Ruling Elder. Motion was approved.** Clark will be introduced at a future meeting.

Statement of Faith

I am a child of the church. I am a Presbyterian by birth, by upbringing and by choice. When my father died in 1993, I lost my spiritual advisor as well as my father but in a lot of ways my spiritual journey began after I lost him. When you are the child of a minister you don't have to wrestle with spiritual questions, you can just pick up the phone and call your dad.

I preached my first sermon at Boy Scout camp. The text was Psalm 8. As an Elder I was asked to fill the pulpit at Batesville. I was asked more and more to fill various pulpits near Batesville. I began filling in a Greer's Ferry when Walter Swetnam's health prevented him from preaching. Eventually I began preaching there every other Sunday.

I am approaching retirement from public schools. I have been asked several times if I would consider going to a church on a more permanent basis. My response has always been that I wasn't a CRE. The time has come for me to change this.

I have always tried to be open to God's call. I have always done that by being prepared for what might come next. I believe that this is the next step in that process for me.

2. **That Stephen Moody (First, LR) be enrolled under the Covenant Agreement of Inquirer by the Arkansas Presbytery.** He was introduced and gave greetings. **Motion was approved.** TE Debbie Freeman prayed for Moody. Members from First, LR and First, Jonesboro stood.
3. **That Molly DeWitt (Second, LR) be enrolled under the Covenant Agreement of Candidacy by the Arkansas Presbytery.** She was introduced, is a student in Indianapolis, former YAV who grew up in Wabash Presbytery. Questions on her statement of faith were invited: expound on "righteous community" by Purcell. Dewitt left the room. Curry explained discernment of inquiry vs. preparation for ministry of candidacy. **Motion was approved.**

Statement of Faith

I believe in the triune God who is sovereign, infinite, and mysterious in nature. I believe in the saving grace of Jesus Christ who came to liberate and reconcile the world through his life, ministry, and death on the cross. In his humanity and divinity, we are able to connect to Christ personally as well as gain better understanding of our Creator. The salvation of Christ is given as a free gift of grace, undeserved and unable to be earned by works of the flesh. There is nothing that I can do to earn this salvation other than accepting Christ as Savior, yet I am called to a life of sanctification nonetheless. Faith calls me to never stop working to become closer to Christ.

I believe in the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, which provides continuous insight into the revelation of God throughout time. The Holy Spirit enlightens through Scripture, as well as through the constant process of developing individual and corporate Christian faith. These three, God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, work independently and simultaneously as one. Through them, the church is called to minister to the world.

The mission of the church is to glorify God while living in righteous community. In order to live accordingly, the church is called to love, seek and call out injustice, proclaim the good news of the gospel, and work for peace as we await the coming realm of God. The church ministers to the world through the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, bringing together those who seek to learn and work together as members of an imperfect body, renewed by the mysterious sustenance of Christ's blood and body.

4. **That Katherine Norwood (Second, LR) be enrolled under the Covenant Agreement of Candidacy by the Arkansas Presbytery.** She is a child of Second Presbyterian, active in United Campus Ministry at Fayetteville, YAV in New Orleans, inspired by safety at church, passion for campus ministry and now student at Louisville Seminary. Questions on her statement of faith were invited: Adams asked about scripture containing truth and she answered. She left the room. **Motion was approved**

Statement of Faith

I believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. I believe God created the world and loved the world so much that God sent Jesus, who was fully human and fully divine, to die on the cross for all of humanity's sin. I believe the Holy Spirit was sent by God and is still present with us today. I believe that these three are One called the Trinity. I believe the Bible is Scripture and contains truth. I believe the Church is the body of Christ working to be his hands and feet and flesh in the world today.

I find comfort in a compassionate God who loves me and knows me, who is behind and before and always with me. I feel unworthy of Jesus' death on the cross for my sin, and study his life and teachings to better understand how to live a life like he taught. I have felt the Spirit's guiding presence in moments of stillness. I believe that my life of faith will lead me to a life of justice work welcoming the stranger, advocating for the marginalized, and wrestling with my own privilege because I believe God's wildly inclusive love is meant for all people.

Moderator asked both candidates the Constitutional questions. Prayers were offered for Katherine by TE Susan Rose and for Molly by TE Lindy Vogado.

The Committee on Leadership Development will meet next on Saturday, March 11, 2017 and will interview each of its newly accepted Inquirers individually to help them to continue their own discernment processes. Please consider adding “Those Under the Care of Arkansas Presbytery for Church Leadership” to your church’s prayer list and be in continual prayer for the future leaders of the PC(USA).”

Vice Moderator Roper moderated the next portion through the end of the Presbytery meeting.

### **COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

Moderator TE Elizabeth Gabbard gave the report.

#### **For Information:**

The form to self-nominate or nominate someone from your congregation was in packet.

#### **For Action:**

- 1) That the Presbytery elect the following to fill immediate vacancies:

Committee on Church and Its Ministries

TE Carol Clark, Park Hill, North Little Rock, Class of 2019

TE Lindy Vogado, Second, Little Rock, Class of 2019

Committee on Leadership Development

RE David Clark, First, Heber Springs, Class of 2018

RE Sarah Leer, First, Bentonville, Class of 2019

Future of the Church Ministry Area

RE Collins Andrews, Second, Little Rock, Class of 2018

TE Michael Ulasewich, First, Conway, Class of 2019

Nominations were requested from the floor. There were none. **Nominees were elected.**

- 2) That the Presbytery elect the following to serve as the Stated Clerk Search Committee:

TE Steve Hancock, Moderator, Second, Little Rock

RE Dick Freer, First, Jonesboro

TE Georgia Senor, First, Bentonville

TE Bill Bailey, Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village

Certified Christian Educator Theresa Spragins, First, Conway

TE and General Presbyter Stewart Smith, Staff Resource

With the exception of GP Smith, this is the same committee that performed this task in 2015. The hope was that the committee would bring the name of a candidate for election as Stated Clerk to the presbytery meeting in June. **Motion was moved to New Business.**

## **REPORT OF THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH MINISTRY AREA**

Moderator RE Leah Shell pointed out the written report.

### **For Information:**

1. "MOTIONS INCLUDING THE MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS AND APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WERE APPROVED.
2. Ted Belden and Peg Falls-Corbitt gave a report on the Coordinating Team. Ted Belden and Peg Falls-Corbitt will continue to serve on the Coordinating Team in 2017.
3. The state of the Administrative Commissions that are currently staffed by members of the Future of the Church was discussed. The Administrative Commissions include: Lonoke; Rogers, Ozark, Crossover and Chenal. Dick Freer has been added to the Lonoke Administrative Commission on which Anne Russ and Marie Mainard O'Connell serve.
4. Mike Vinson, our Staff Liaison between Future of the Church and the Presbytery led a discussion on what he does which can be of more help to congregations within the Presbytery. The committee and Mike had a discussion on how best we could use his resources.
5. A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED FOR PEG FALLS-CORBITT AND ANNE RUSS TO SERVE ON THE CRE TASKFORCE OVERSIGHT WORKGROUP. Some discussions about the CRE Program were held by the committee. Stewart Smith indicated that over half of the congregations within the Arkansas Presbytery do not have full-time called pastors.
6. A MOTION WAS MADE TO FUND \$2500 OUT OF THE TECHNOLOGY BUDGET FOR 2016 TO FUND A DAYLONG SEMINAR TAUGHT BY AUBURN SEMINARY FOR LOCAL CHURCHES WANTING TO LEARN ABOUT HAVING A DIGITAL MEDIA PRESENCE. THE MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED .The costs of the seminar will be \$50 per attendee. It will be held March 7 from 9-1 at First Presbyterian, Conway. Lunch will be provided. There will be online registration. 22 spots are available. Limit 2/church.
7. A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED AND APPROVED TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOP SOME MODELS FOR MINISTRIES THAT FOTC COULD PRESENT TO THE PRESBYTERY TO GIVE GUIDELINES TO CHURCHES IN DEVELOPING NEW MINISTRY MODELS TO SERVE THEIR CONGREGATIONS AND MINISTERS INTERESTED IN SERVING THEM.
8. A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED AND APPROVED FOR JEFF PRICE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE MINISTRIES SUPPORTED CURRENTLY WITH MONEY FROM FUTURE OF THE CHURCH
9. The committee discussed the budget allocation for 2017. The total amount for the FOTC budget for 2017 is \$76,548. The following decisions were made by the committee.



- Funding \$30,876 for the New Ministry Initiative
  - Funding \$7,500 for 1001 new Worshipping Communities
  - Funding \$7,500 towards technology needs for the Presbytery
  - Funding \$7,125 for Continuing Ministry Support
  - Funding \$3,000 towards CRE Support
  - Funding \$3,000 of Administrative and Listening Expenses
  - The remaining funds of \$17,547 will be allocated towards Small Church Development.
10. Kade Curry, the Moderator of the Committee on Leadership Development, who also serves as the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Searcy and the moderator for the First Presbyterian Church, Beebe called into our meeting to discuss the status of these congregations. Dick Freer volunteered to serve as a liaison between the Beebe Congregation and the FOTC. Marie Mainard O'Connell will also be asked to participate.
  11. During our conversation with Kade we discussed the need to fund some of the training needed for Commissioned Ruling Elders. The training costs \$2,500-\$3,000 per person. He explained to the committee that most of the training is done online. It takes the typical person 18-24 months to complete this training. A MOTION WAS MADE TO FUND \$3,000 OF FUNDING FOR THE CRE PROGRAM OUT OF 2017 FUNDS. THE MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED AND APPROVED.
  12. A request from the First Presbyterian Church Conway to fund an internship of Jeanie Corbitt. The request for funding was \$1,200 and this amount will be matched by the First Presbyterian Church session. Peg Falls-Corbitt recused herself and left the room while the discussion and vote took place. THE MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO FUND \$1,200 TO FUND THE INTERNSHIP FROM 2016 FUNDS. THE MOTION PASSED.
  13. A request from Susan Rose at United Campus Ministry was made to fund the Leadership Initiative Grant for 2017. Fund will be taken out of 2016 to fund this Internship. The funding requested is \$5,000. THE MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED AND PASSED TO FUND THIS INTERNSHIP OUT OF 2016 FUNDS.
  14. The agenda was approved by a vote of 8-0. It was moved by Ted Belden and seconded by Becky Purcell.
  15. A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO INVEST 20-30 MINUTES PER MEETING TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH.
  16. Property reported that the Chenal property in Little Rock is under contract with closing expected on 2/22. The Crossover property remains listed.
  17. There was then discussion with Mike Vinson. He has a proposal to offer workshops to the presbytery. Workshops would be offered: 1) Fostering life nurturing environments. 2) Knowing your purpose. 3) Shifting from old patterns of behavior to new patterns. 4)

How do we thrive in change, using the energy of change in a positive way? Mike also proposes to do work with 2-3 individual churches. A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO SUPPORT THE EFFORT OF MICHAEL VINSON TO LEAD SPECIFIC WORKSHOPS AND CONVERSATIONS FOR AND WITH THE PRESBYTERY. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

18. In new business Ted asked about technology for meeting remotely. Dick mentioned Interfaith Power and Light. Peggy suggested we have a mission fair at a presbytery meeting. Anne mentioned missional thinking; thinking about mission as reaching people who are "none" or "done." A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO move ACs off our plate. General consensus was reached that less time could be spent however motion failed 4-3.”

She announced that grants will be opened to apply to reach out as congregations. Technology workshop for those understanding Facebook on March 7 at First, Conway has nine spots still open. Congregations are invited to reach out to members on FotC.

### **REPORT OF THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH MINISTRY AREA**

CRE Kelly Pearson, moderator, deferred to a Minute Announcement since the written report was in the packet (following).

For Information:

The Church and Its Mission ministry-area met in a called meeting on January 7, 2017 to primarily consider the recommendations of a task-force. The task-force had been assigned to make recommendations to the ministry-area concerning educational-training events for the presbytery in 2017, such as The P.L.A.C.E.

The ministry-area accepted the recommendations of the task-force regarding the following:

- In lieu of having The P.L.A.C.E. in 2017, to encourage attendance at the-not-too-distant venues of *NEXT Church* and *Big Tent*, to be held March 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> in Kansas City and July 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> in St. Louis, respectively. (The P.L.A.C.E. will be considered again for 2018)
- That eight grants of \$50 be made available to those persons in our presbytery who may need assistance to help with expenses for either of the above events.
- To organize and sponsor the theological-discussion at the October presbytery meeting with the general theme related to “*The New Faces of Christian Spirituality*,” inviting the Rev. Dr. David Johnson, professor of Christian history and Spirituality at Austin Seminary, to be the primary leadership, with the Rev. Rebecca Spooner, of Wellspring and a teaching elder at-large of our presbytery, to assist with this discussion, relating also to aging, as in parenting of parents. This

item was sent on to and given approval by the Coordinating Team. (Pre-presbytery workshops related to these topics may also be considered for the October presbytery meeting.)

The next regular meeting for The Church & Its Mission will be on Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 by telephone conference.

### ARKANSAS GIVES

Melissa Hendricks from Vera Lloyd Home made the report about the unique giving day on April 6, 2017 to benefit VLH, Ferncliff and Presbyterian Village among others. Last year VLH received \$35,000, and the goal is \$50,000 this year.

### MINUTE ANNOUNCEMENTS

These made minute announcements:

RE Liz Branch encouraged congregations to have a plan for preparedness for disasters. The presbytery's committee can help with this. Grants are available for financial challenges, such as generators. TE Jan Butin encouraged attendance at educational events (NEXT Church and Big Tent, July 6-8). Eight \$50 grants are available through the Church and Its Mission Ministry Area. March 13-15 in Kansas City are dates for NEXT Church. TE David King, HR spoke of NOMH, AR chapter. Display table has information about the annual walk on Memorial Day at Dickie Stevens Park in NLR. RE Ila Wolfe is incoming PW co-moderator and announced PW Spring Gathering in April. RE Karene Jones spoke of PW Retreat on August 12 for Jewish, Christian, Muslim women. TE Jeremy Wilhelmi announced chaplaincy support endowment at UofO and a week on campus for TEs. RE Ron David announced Pilgrimage on second weekend of April at Ferncliff. TE Phil Butin talked about work on Honduras relationship with Presbytery that he will do during the summer during his sabbatical. Rachel Cowan announced Senior High YouthQuake information is on website.

### NEW BUSINESS

Stated Clerk Lowry announced there were three items of new business.

**1. Motion to amend the charge of the Administrative Commission for First, Ozark to empower them to dismiss or dissolve the Ozark church. Motion was seconded and approved.**

2. Background on the second item is that two years ago the Restructuring Task Force announced they would not look at presbytery staffing until a new GP had been called, and Smith has been in office since Nov. 23.

**Motion that the Presbytery of Arkansas form a four-person task force to assess the current staff model of the Presbytery and that this task force:**

**-consist of four members (three to be named by the moderator (2017) and moderated by the Vice-Moderator (2017));**

**-report to the presbytery no later than the 136<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting with any recommended changes to presbytery staffing;**

**-provide reports at least quarterly to the Coordinating Team.** Motion came from TE Brian Brock, and it was seconded. Brock said that it was a reminder that it is time to look at staffing now to give good guidance to the search committee for new Stated Clerk. TE Katie Cummings asked about Leslie Belden's timing, whether she will be willing to serve that long, and how that impacts their search. Stated Clerk answered Belden is aware the "temporary" time line might extend past June. **Motion was approved.**

**3. Motion to elect the named people to a search committee for Stated Clerk (in Nominations report) had been moved to new business.** If they are elected, they will be on hold until the TF reports back in October. TE Gabbard suggested voting "no" on this motion so the search committee would not have to wait until after October to start work. TE Bill Branch asked why there would be a delay since SC is not on Presbytery staff. Stated Clerk Lowry answered that SC is separate, but job description would be impacted by this TF work. **Motion failed.**

#### **REPORT OF THE LEAVES OF ABSENCE COMMITTEE**

Stated Clerk Lowry made the report on behalf of the committee. A total of 166 people signed in: 53 TEs, 6 corresponding members, 47 ruling elder commissioners from churches, 9 other voting ruling elders, 2 commissioned ruling elders, 2 certified Christian educators, 2 certified associate Christian educators, 1 educator in church, 29 visitors, 10 youth advisory delegates, 5 young adult delegate advisors, and 17 with excused absences.

**Motion to adjourn and second was approved.**

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

TE Leslie Roper gave the closing prayer.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment came at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

NiAnn Thompson  
Recording Clerk

Robert William Lowry  
Stated Clerk

Draft 7