

DIGEST

ONE HUNDRETH THIRTY THIRD STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF EASTERN VIRGINIA

April 25, 2023
Williamsburg Presbyterian Church
Williamsburg, Virginia

Moderator: the Reverend Dr. **John E. Morgan**
Vice Moderator: Ruling Elder **Joyce Melvin-Jones** (Carver Memorial)
Stated Clerk: Ruling Elder (RE) **Q. John Tamm** (1st VAB)
Journal Clerk: Mr. **Raymond Rodrigues**

WORSHIP

- The Reverend Brian H. Harroff preached a sermon titled, "Work While It Is Day," based on John 9:1-6.
- Reverend Dr. John E. Morgan, pastor of Williamsburg Presbyterian Church and the Reverend Dr. **Helen Bessent Byrd**, led the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
- The offering was for the Matthew 25 Initiative Fund.

MODERATORS

- Rev. Dr. John E. Morgan was the Moderator and Ruling Elder Joyce Melvin-Jones, vice moderator.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT Ruling Elder **Lisa Schlickemeyer** (Hilton)

The Presbytery acknowledged that it was gathered on the traditional territory of the **Kiskiack**, one of the six original tribes/bands of the Powhatan Chiefdom. The Kiskiack lived between tribes Paspahagh to the west and the Kecoughtan to the east.

STATED CLERK

The report was published to the Presbytery in the packet.

PRESBYTERY COUNCIL (PC)

Ruling Elder **Dianne F. Schoonover**, moderator.

The Presbytery approved the following:

MOTION: The Presbytery elect the Reverend Dr. **Jeffery S. Bell**, the Reverend Dr. **Michael T. Condrey**, and RE **Linda Marley Smith** (Simonsdale), to the

Nominations Committee for a term of three years in the class of 2026.

MOTION: The Presbytery approved a gift of \$65,000.00 to Massanetta Springs Camp & Conference Center's "Building a Place for All Campaign" from the proceeds of the Makemie Woods sale.

MOTION: The Presbytery approved the actions of the Presbytery Council:

- On February 13, 2023, approved the minutes of the January 28, 2023, Presbytery meeting.
- On February 13, 2023, approved a \$2,500.00 grant for Grace Covenant Church, Virginia Beach, for the High School youth conference at Montreat Camp and Conference Center, Montreat, NC in July 2023.
- On March 13, 2023, proposed a modification to the proposed Boundary Training Policy by the Commission on Ministry (COM). The Council voted to add the presbytery staff to those covered by the policy and endorsed the amended recommendation to the Presbytery.
- On March 13, 2023, approved a request from St Andrew Church, Suffolk, for \$2,500.00 from the Outdoor Ministry Fund for the Montreat Youth Conference, Montreat, NC, in July 2023.
- On April 3, 2023, appointed to the Personnel Committee, the Reverend Dr. John E. Morgan, Ruling Elder (RE) Joyce Melvin-Jones (Carver Memorial), and RE Robbin Ruth (First Hampton).
- On April 3, 2023, approved an increase in the payment to congregations sponsoring a presbytery stated meeting to \$600.00 from \$500.00.
- On April 3, 2023, approved a disbursement of \$100.00 to each congregation that sponsored a stated meeting since a return to in-person meetings from April 19, 2022. Those congregations are Yorkminster, Second Norfolk, Bethany, and First United.
- On April 3, 2023, approved two separate Outdoor Ministry Grants to Wythe Church, Hampton: \$2,500.00 for the

Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference, Harrisonburg, for the Middle School conference in July 2023, and \$1,500.00 for the High School youth conference at Montreat Camp and Conference Center, Montreat, NC in July 2023.

SESSIONAL RECORDS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Ruling Elder **Jill Keifer** (Royster Memorial), Chair

MOTION: Approved the following report:

No exceptions: Calvin, Community Portsmouth, Groves, Hidenwood, Lynnhaven, Suffolk, Wycliffe

Exceptions: Christ:24, 25, 28b, 29a, 29b, 33; First Portsmouth - 28.b; Franklin: 2b, 28b, 29a, 29b, 23, 26; Hilton:29, 30; Third - 23, 24, 25, 26, 27a and b.

Not Received: Carver Memorial, First United

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (COM)

Report to Presbytery

RE **Roxie O. Holder**, moderator.

as pastor and head of staff. He had 29 years of ordained service.

MOTION: The Presbytery approved the Policy on Boundary Training and other sexual misconduct prevention measures. Background: *This section on Prevention will become part of a revised presbytery sexual misconduct policy which is being drafted. If the proposed Amendments to the Constitution regarding boundary training are passed by a majority of presbyteries, as expected, then the presbytery will be required to have a policy on boundary training.*

Motion: The Presbytery approved the following actions of the COM.

1. On February 2, 2023, received from the Lehigh Presbytery, Allentown, PA the Reverend Dr. **Elizabeth C. "Betsy" Baker-Smith** as honorably retired.

2. On February 2, 2023, Received from the Lehigh Presbytery, Allentown, PA the Reverend Dr. **Gerritt W. "Skip" Baker-Smith** as honorably retired.

3. On February 2, 2023, approved the Covenant Pastor terms and covenant between the Reverend **Charles M. Tucker** and the Session of Community Church, Hampton, from March 12, 2023, to March 12, 2024, inclusive.

4. On February 2, 2023, approved the Interim Pastor terms and covenant between the Reverend **Donald P. Troast** and the Session of Jamestown Church,

Williamsburg, from February 12, 2023, to February 12, 2024, inclusive.

5. On February 2, 2023, approved the Bridge Pastor Agreement between the Session of the Franklin Church and the Reverend **Rebecca P. Lesley** from January 17, 2023, to July 16, 2023, inclusive.

6. On February 2, 2023, approved the Commissioned Pastor (CP) Agreement between the Session of Lafayette Church, Norfolk, and CP **Sidnia B. "Sid" Etherington**, from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, inclusive.

7. On February 2, 2023, approved the Interim Pastor Covenant between the Session of the Stone House Church, Toano, and the Reverend **Michelle D. "Mike" Burcher**, from February 15, 2023, to August 15, 2023.

8. On February 2, 2023, approved the request of First Church, Norfolk to appoint a Commission to ordain Ruling Elder (RE) **Joel Matthew Phillips** as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament

9. On February 2, 2023, approved the request of the congregation of Lynnhaven Church, Virginia Beach to appoint a Commission to install the Reverend **Jaechul "Jay" Pi** as Pastor.

10. On February 2, 2023, approved the request of the session of Third Church, Norfolk for CP Sidnia B. Etherington to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper during the months of February and March 2023.

11. On February 2, 2023, approved the sabbatical request from the Reverend **Thomas Clinton "Clint" Mitchell**, pastor of Grace Covenant Church, Virginia Beach, from May 15, 2023, to September 3, 2023.

12. On February 2, 2023, approved the term limit waiver request from Groves Memorial Church, Hayes in accordance with the provisions of the Book of Order, G-2.0404.

13. On March 7, 2023, approved upon examination, a minister member of the Presbytery, **nomen nescio**, as the associate pastor of Wycliffe Church, Virginia Beach.

14. On March 7, 2023, approved the terms of call for the associate pastor of Wycliffe Church contingent that a portion of the effective salary be designated for housing.

15. On March 7, 2023, approved the Ministry Information Form for Simonsdale Church, Portsmouth.

16. On March 7, 2023, approved the mission study for Stone House Church, Toano.
17. On March 7, 2023, appointed CP Sidnia B. "Sid" Etherington the moderator of Third Church, Norfolk.
18. On March 7, 2023, appointed the Reverend **L. Monica Gould** the moderator of Powelton Church, Wachapreague.
19. On March 7, 2023, appointed the Reverend **Elizabeth "Beth" Hilkerbaumer** the moderator of Calvin Church, Norfolk.
20. On April 4, 2023, approved the Covenant Pastor agreement between the Reverend **Vernon G. Murray** and the Session of Holmes Church, Cheriton, from April 5, 2023, to April 4, 2024, inclusive.

Pastoral Relations

- Ordained:** the Reverend Joel Matthew Phillips, on February 19, 2023, at First Church, Norfolk.
- Deceased:** None
- Received:** On February 2, 2023, received from the Lehigh Presbytery, Allentown, PA the Reverend Dr. Elizabeth C. "Betsy" Baker-Smith as honorably retired. On February 2, 2023, received from the Lehigh Presbytery, Allentown, PA the Reverend Dr. Gerritt W. "Skip" Baker-Smith as honorably retired.
- Dismissed:** None
- Installed:** the Reverend Jaechul "Jay" Pi, Lynnhaven Church, Virginia Beach on March 26, 2023.
- Dissolutions:** None
- Honorably Retired:** None

BOARD OF TRUSTEES/STEWARDSHIP TEAM (SMT)

Ruling Elder **Marc T. Steiner**, (Green Acres), moderator.

MOTION: The Presbytery approved use of \$250,000 from the assets of dissolved congregations held in the Temporarily Restricted Fund, to create a designated restricted fund for Property Management to cover expenses of PEVA's former church properties until they are sold or re-purposed and to cover costs of un-budgeted urgent capital needs of other PEVA property. The fund would be replenished over-time from the assets of dissolved congregations up to the original amount of \$250,000. The Board of Trustees will manage the Property Management Fund.

The Presbytery approved the action of the Board of Trustees:

Action taken:

The trustees received a request from Carver Memorial PC leadership for PEVA approval of the sale of lots located across the street from the church to the Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority for \$80,000. Given that the offer was time-sensitive with a response required on or before March 3, 2023 and settlement by April 20th, the trustees approved the request on behalf of the Presbytery.

Motion: The narrative report was received and printed in the minutes of this meeting.

Narrative Report:

During their meetings in February and March 2023 the PEVA trustees reviewed the Presbytery's financials particularly the year end 2022 financial reports, church pledges to date for 2023, and information about investments through the New Covenant Trust Company. Most obvious in the year-end reports are the adjustments resulting from the sale of Makemie Woods, showing a net value of \$564,922.95.

The 2022 year-end Revenue & Expense report showed combined revenue (\$562,383.82), use of restricted funds (\$28,150.76), and budgeted use of investment income (\$50,000) totaling \$640,534.58. Expenses totaled \$643,245.80 resulting in a small operating deficit of \$2,711.22. The report also reflects the unrealized investment losses from 2022 of \$1,067,454.28 which was anticipated given the volatility of the stock market. The trustees recognize that despite the downturn in the market, the Presbytery's overall financial health is good following several years of growth in the market and additions to presbytery investments from property sales in recent years.

As of the March 22 trustee meeting, a few congregations were still finalizing 2023 pledge decisions.

The Trustees heard reports from the administrative commissions for the former Squires Memorial and Ocean View congregations. A purchase agreement has been signed for the Squires Memorial property for \$625,000 and the due diligence period has begun for the buyers. An offer has been made for the Ocean View property and a purchase

agreement was in process as of the March meeting of the Trustees.

COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CPM)

The Reverend **Emma L. Ouellette**, moderator.

The Presbytery received and had printed in the minutes of this stated meeting the status of the Inquirers to Ministry and the Candidates for Ministry of the Presbytery.

HUNGER MINISTRY TEAM

Motion: The Presbytery received the narrative report.

NARRATIVE REPORT

MEETING THE NEED: PEVA's Hunger Team is hosting a "Let's Can Hunger, Meeting the Need Challenge." The Hunger Committee wants to keep hunger in the forefront of PEVA members' minds. What better way to do that than by supporting the churches that are hosting the quarterly Presbytery meetings in 2023 with needed food items for their hunger & outreach ministry. So, the second church hosting in April of 2023 is Williamsburg Presbyterian Church

Our neighbors in Hampton Roads are feeling the recent loss of SNAP emergency allotments, along with the rising costs of food these days is dramatically reducing their monthly food budget. This is extremely difficult for those that live on the margins or those that find themselves experiencing a temporary hardship. This leads to increased demand for food assistance at food banks and or church food pantries.

Protein products and other items high in protein are donated less frequently than other items like snacks and cereal.

There are several health benefits of protein in our diets. So, one of the most needed items for food banks and food pantries is meat and or protein. The goal is 150 cans of protein such as beans, stew, chili with meat, chicken, turkey, ham, spam, corned beef, fish (tuna and salmon) or other canned meat.

These needed items will be used for Williamsburg PC's hunger and outreach ministries including the Wesley Foundation at William & Mary Food Exchange, and all those they serve in the communities around them. Please consider donating and bringing a can of protein to the PEVA office by April 20th or for those that are planning to attend

the PEVA meeting on April 25th, please remember to bring your cans. There will be a collection point at the presbytery meeting.

PEACEMAKING MINISTRY TEAM

Elder **Gerry Ellis**, Denbigh United moderator

NARRATIVE REPORT:

Rev. **Lauren Cogswell Ramseur** (The James) shared a short video and discussed the ministry "Voices of Jubilee" which is supported by the Presbytery of the James. Voices of Jubilee is "a new worshipping community of hope and liberation, connecting with incarcerated youth in Virginia." Many of the incarcerated youth they serve are from within the boundaries of PEVA. The committee will explore ways that we can inform the rest of the presbytery about Voices of Freedom and support the ministry.

*On March 28, 2023, certain pastors will participate in a Zoom call entitled "Emotional and Spiritual Care after a Human Caused Disaster." The presenting team will be staff from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Rev. Dr. Kathy Riley, Associate for Emotional and Spiritual Care at PDA, organized the presentation.

*We regret that we will not participate in the International Peacemaking Program this fall. Over the years we have enjoyed hosting Peacemakers but feel that our small group cannot commit all the time and energy that is required to provide a meaningful experience for all.

ACTIONS TAKEN:

- Contributed \$500 to the PDA, designated for Pastoral Support and Care.
- Contributed \$500 to Voices of Jubilee.

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY TEAM (CVT)

Reverend Dr. Christina M. B. Carrasco, moderator

NARRATIVE REPORT

CVT Presents our Quarterly Zoom Webinar on Wednesday, May 3 at 10:00
Responding to Trauma: Becoming the Vaccine for Loneliness

"A wise response to a viral pandemic is to become more closed until a vaccine becomes widely available. A wise response to a trauma pandemic is to become more open so that we ourselves

become the vaccine." (Trauma: The Invisible Epidemic, Paul Conti)
Trauma has been described in many ways and however it comes to us, it could certainly be described as an encounter with death, not literal death, but the death of what is familiar and known to us. The trauma of the pandemic affected us all, but as people of faith we believe that death is not the end only the path to resurrection and new life. What new life has emerged from the pandemic in our churches? In what ways can we be a vaccine against the consequences of the pandemic and its trauma?

GENERAL PRESBYTER GOOD NEWS

The Reverend **Elizabeth G. Hendricks**

I have heard great things about Easter services this year. Musicians who went all out, more people present for in-person celebrations, Easter Egg-hunts adapted for variable weather conditions, creative children's messages, and activities. There was a week of meaningful Holy Week services, including some that were innovative like **Green Acres** Maundy Thursday service which alternated readings from the birth narratives from the Advent season with those for Jesus' last week and last supper. And on Good Friday, **Second Church** built its readings and music for Tenebrae around the 23rd Psalm. The Saturday after Easter Hidenwood held its Celebrate Creation Spring Festival. **Hidenwood** is one of about 300 PCUSA congregations to be named an Earth Care Congregation. **Kings Grant** had a mission trip earlier this year to Puerto Rico where they stayed in PCUSA/PDA lodging while they did light construction and disaster relief support. **First Hampton** is planning a multi-generational mission trip to repair homes in New Bern, NC which were damaged and still need work after Hurricanes Ian and Florence. Thank you to all those who helped collect more than 230 shirts during Farm Workers Awareness week. The shirts were delivered 4/21/23 to the Virginia Workforce Center on the Eastern Shore. The Reverend **Gillian Weighton**, pastor at St. Andrew, successfully defended her dissertation for her D. Min. degree and today she passed her civics exam and has been approved for US citizenship.

Let us also give thanks to one of the saints from Ocean View, Betty Goddard Morris, whose estate has provided a bequest of \$200,000 for the Presbytery's use.

In March I went on a pilgrimage to Montgomery, AL with 40 colleagues from other presbyteries. We spent one morning at the Legacy Museum on a moving journey through history from the 1500s (beginning of the slave trade) to the present. The museum uses videos, sculptures, walls with news clippings, holograms of people enslaved and of some incarcerated in the present day. The sense of volume followed me through the various eras of history, as the money trail and rationalizations for treating some human beings as inferior and as threats, continued beyond emancipation. We went to the Memorial for Peace and Justice to walk through and underneath a forest of hanging coffin-like pillars memorializing those who have been lynched, with each pillar naming the individuals by state and county - I saw and noted that Accomack, Franklin, Norfolk, Newport News, & Suffolk, each had one or more victims for whom we might especially pray along with praying for their families and for those who took their lives.

I return grateful for the experience and the way it all was presented -not to make me feel guilty or defensive about being white but to understand the past more fully, and how it continues to impact all of us today.

NOMINATIONS:

Ruling Elder **Linda Marley Smith** (Simonsdale).

The Presbytery approved the report of the Committee as follows:

Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Commissioner
The Reverend Dr. **Lawrence L. Willis**

ENROLLMENT REPORT

52	Ministers
43	Ruling Elders
95	Total voting members
22	Visitors
117	Total Registered

OFFERING

\$1,008.00

NEXT MEETING

- Tuesday, July 25, at 10:00 am, Wycliffe Church, Virginia Beach