

Greetings to the Saints of Mission Presbytery!

I had the honor last Sunday of taking part in the installation of Kathy Escandell to serve as Pastor of McAllen First. Being back in that pulpit and that chancel reminded me deeply of where I was one year ago this coming weekend: sharing fajitas and mariachi and promises with you. It's been quite the 17 months! In the time since May 15, 2016, here's what I've done:

No surprise, my #1 use of time has been for task forces and committee meetings (87). A close second is the time I've spent breaking bread with you: meals, coffee, etc (74). I've preached 21 times and worshiped another 18 times with our congregations. I've met with all six of our regions, and I've also met with the leadership of all the PCUSA-related ministries in our bounds: Austin Seminary, Schreiner University (I just helped inaugurate their new President!), Trinity University, Presbyterian Pan American School, Mo-Ranch, and as of today, Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services.

Other than that, there have been 7 Session meetings, 11 meetings of GA or Synod, 7 installations, 2 church meetings, 5 officer trainings, 6 times I've provided retreat leadership, 1 wedding, 7 funerals, 3 hospital visits, 2 board meetings (Presbyterian Outlook), 1 Hurricane, and a partridge in a pear tree. Whew!

When the Personnel Committee performed my annual review earlier this year, I was asked if – knowing what I know now – I'd still consent to serving as General Presbyter. I think my direct quote was "Heck yeah!" I do love ministering alongside all of you. It's been so great to worship with you, laugh with you, grieve with you, hammer out hard issues with you, and make strides toward where God is calling us all to go. I wouldn't trade the privilege for anything.

I'm looking forward to being with you in Corpus. We've got a good meeting and a great lineup of pre-Presbytery workshops – not to mention the hospitality of our friends at Parkway. See you there!

PRESBYTER SIGHTINGS

October 27-28 - Meeting of Mission Presbytery, Corpus Christi Parkway

October 29 - Lead a class and worship with the Convencion gathering, Brownsville

October 31 - Happy 500th Anniversary of the Reformation!

November 1 – Happy birthday to My Beloved, Paul Watson!

November 2-4 – Synod EP Forum, Stated Meeting of the Synod, and Imagine

November 5 – Preach for Presbyterian Church of Lake Travis, 10th anniversary!

November 7 – Breakfast with HR pastors in San Antonio

November 8 – Meet with Fiscal Oversight Committee

November 9 – Lunch with San Antonio region pastors

November 10 – Meet with Committee on Preparation for Ministry

November 11 – Ordination/installation for Jennifer Mitchell, Karnes City First

November 12 – Preach for Austin Faith anniversary service