

Presbytery of St. Augustine
Winter Stated Meeting Highlights
Memorial Presbyterian Church
February 1, 2020

The Presbytery of St. Augustine gathered at Memorial Presbyterian Church in St. Augustine, Florida, for worship, business and fellowship. We were greeted with a delicious buffet of sweet and savory breakfast treats before convening for worship in the historic sanctuary. During the service, we commissioned those traveling to the Pastors' Retreat in Cuba next week, shared the Lord's Supper, and remembered by name our teaching and ruling elders who passed away during 2019. We received an offering in the amount of \$1,231, all of which is designated for the Jamaica Mutual Mission.

The morning scripture was Matthew 25:14-30, and Hunter Camp's sermon message was entitled "Honest and Well-Meaning ... But ..." In the parable of the unfaithful servant who buried his talent in the ground, we learn that Christ calls us to vision and risk, not caution and safety. "Well-meaning" is not enough for Christian ministry! The message called us to spend more time listening for how to be bold so that we may rise to "a new level of risk that by God's grace will keep us faithful."

The business meeting began with an inspiring report from four of our 2019 Youth Triennium participants, and we heard about the upcoming Youth Day. Next we welcomed two new members to our presbytery - Ricardo Green (Nueva Esperanza) and Susan Rose (Memorial). We recognized Forrest Foxworth, a candidate under the care of our presbytery, who has been approved for ordination and a call as parish associate at First Fernandina Beach. Natasha Sudderth-Davis was introduced by the pastor nominating committee of First Perry as the church's new pastor. We also heard from Jessi Higginbotham and St. Giles about the call she has begun there as parish associate. Mark Hults (new pastor at First Gainesville) and Jeffrey Weenink (interim pastor at Palms) were unable to be present.

Upon the recommendation of the Coordinating Council, the presbytery adopted a strategic plan for the years of 2020-2022. We also voted to become a Matthew 25 presbytery of the PC(USA), which includes our "pledge to encourage 20% or more of our congregations to become Matthew 25 churches and embrace these areas of focus: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systematic poverty." This action includes a pledge to share our stories and the impact of our ministries with one another and with the PC(USA). A full description of Matthew 25 in the PC(USA) can be found at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>. Watch our presbytery communications for more details on how to become a "Matthew 25 church"!

The presbytery reviewed and adopted a deficit budget for 2020 with the understanding that a more balanced budget will be presented at our next stated meeting once we are more certain of our actual expenses and projected income. The Coordinating Council also introduced Susan Lee, Consultant/Coach of our "Comfort My People" program.

The presbytery approved three changes to our Manual of Operations. The most important was that our mission statement was amended to read: *The mission of the Presbytery of St. Augustine is to support our faith community, so that together we are a greater witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.* In addition, our treasurer may recommend an “assistant treasurer” to the Nominating Team for election by the presbytery. Finally, the “Call Commission” is the new name for the Member Preparation and Call Commission.

In a separate action, the presbytery also approved a name change from “Gainesville Ministry Center” to “Highlands Regional Ministry Center.”

The Nueva Esperanza Presbyterian Church (Iglesia Presbiteriana Nueva Esperanza), through its Administrative Commission (AC), presented a plan to remain a PC(USA) congregation rather than becoming a 1001 New Worshipping Community of the PC(USA). The presbytery approved the plan and shares the joy of this congregation as it grows and serves Christ under the leadership of its new pastor, Ricardo Green.

Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center (MPCC) introduced its new Executive Director, Monica Williams. A presentation was made of the plans for reclaiming and renewing its mission and ministry that will continue to unfold over the coming months. We also met the new Moderator of our Presbyterian Women, Daryl Mullee, and heard an update on Westminster Communities from Walk Jones, its Director of Church Relations.

The Nominating Team presented a slate of nominees for election to serve as presbytery officers, commissioners, and team members. Among those elected are Joe Albright, our new Moderator-Elect; Chuck Atkins, who will continue to serve as treasurer of the presbytery corporation; Alan Cummings, who will serve as treasurer of the MPCC corporation; and Tommy Lane, who will continue to serve as president of the MPCC corporation. Upon the recommendation of the Presbytery Trustees, Cynthia Montgomery continues as the president of the Presbytery of St. Augustine, Inc.

In its last action before lunch, the presbytery approved a motion to explore hiring a full time presbytery executive and assigned the study to the Strategic Issues Committee (and others that the committee may ask to “co-op” in performing this task). A report is due back at our next stated meeting.

During our lunch break, we enjoyed conversation over a delicious box lunch provided by the church. The business meeting reconvened with the joyful installation of our new Presbytery Moderator, Edd Norris of Silver Spring Shores. Diane Wilson will lead the Coordinating Council as its chair through the 2021 Winter Stated Meeting. After a brief “Speak Out” time, the meeting ended with a call for the next stated meeting and a closing prayer by Moderator Edd Norris.

The Spring Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of St. Augustine will be held at Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Alexandra (Sandra) Hedrick, Stated Clerk
February 1, 2020