

## **Presbytery of St. Augustine Fall Stated Meeting Highlights**

Moderator: Edd Norris

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

Over 125 participants attended our Fall Stated Meeting, which was held by Zoom on October 6, 2020, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Soon after Moderator Edd Norris called the meeting to order, we entered a time of worship. Sacred music was provided by soloists Jill Hayman-Aponte (Weirsdale) and Chandler Johnson (Woodlawn). Alan Cummings (Silver Springs Shores) preached a message entitled "The Fiery Ordeal" from the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3:8-20). He contrasted "easy and cheap" grace, where participation in the worship and life of a faith community is treated as unimportant or irrelevant, with faith that is tested by "the fiery ordeal." As Christ suffered by daring to love and care for others, those who follow him, "loving and caring for others, living the way God calls them to live, also suffer." Weaving together the life of Christ with examples of those who have lived in the Lord through the ages, Rev. Cummings challenged us to consider whether we are conforming to the world or "sharing in the fiery ordeal and growing in our love of Christ. That is the question!"

Our morning offering was divided equally between Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program (PDA). If you would like to donate to this offering, you may use the presbytery meeting "donate" button on the homepage of our website ([www.staugpres.org](http://www.staugpres.org)) through Friday, October 16. Over \$660 was donated as of October 7. Thanks for your generosity!

During the business portion of the meeting, we honored Nancy Brown on the occasion of her retirement after 21 years of service to our presbytery. We welcomed Cyndi Rigby in the new position of Office Manager. The 2021 Asking Budget was presented.

Alexandra (Sandra) Hedrick was elected to serve as stated clerk in a new three-year term beginning on November 1. Visit our website ([www.staugpres.org](http://www.staugpres.org)) to find out more about upcoming Session Clerk's Workshop which will be led by Sandra and our Assistant Stated Clerk Ed Kelly. The presbytery also approved the slate of the Nominating and Representation Teams that includes over 50 names of individuals serving on our presbytery teams and commissions.

We remembered and gave thanks for the ministry of three members who had died since our last stated meeting: Jack Hurse, Jim Tinsley, and Bert Swearingen. We welcomed six new ministers to the presbytery: Dale Ambler (Honorably Retired), Ruth Elswood (Honorably Retired), Walk Jones (First Ocala), Brian Lays (Riverside), Joe Reggin (Green Cove Springs) and Conrad Sharps (Amelia Plantation Chapel). We recognized the honorable retirements of Ruth Elswood, Chuck Harmon, and Bruce Seaman, and we gave thanks for our minister members serving in validated

ministries and those who are members at-large.

Sandra Hedrick and Yvette Grant shared their experiences as commissioners to the 224th General Assembly of the PC(USA), supplementing written reports provided by all of our commissioners and delegates.

In response to the recommendation of an administrative commission first elected in 2017, the presbytery voted to close Iglesia Presbyteriana Nueva Esperanza. This action was followed by prayers of gratitude for the lasting ministry of the congregation and compassion and support for its members.

In other action, we approved an increase to the minimum effective salary for full-time installed pastors from \$44,517 to \$44,962. The presbytery received our plan for ongoing boundaries training, and appointed the Coordinating Council to serve as a commission for updating our sexual misconduct policy.

Monica Williams, Executive Director of the Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center (MPCC), highlighted the substantial progress and activities at Montgomery Center since January 2020. Treasurer Alan Cummings provide a financial update. As a part of the Mutual Mission Team report, Julie Higbee (First Fernandina Beach) and Joe Medearis (Arlington/Peace) shared the highlights of the Pastor's Retreat held earlier this year with the pastors of Matanzas Presbytery in Cuba. Moderator Daryl Mullee reported on behalf the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of St. Augustine.

Other presentations included Kathy Broyard, Executive Director of the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Network, and Clark Simmons, Senior Consultant for the Southeastern United States for the Board of Pensions. Many individuals took the opportunity to share during the "Speak-out Time" provided at the end of the meeting.

The meeting ended at about 1:00 p.m., but unlike stated meetings of the past, we did not have the opportunity to enjoy a meal together. Our 2021 Winter Stated Meeting will take place on February 6, 2021, beginning at 9:30 a.m., at Silver Springs Shores Presbyterian Church in Ocala, Florida.

Submitted by:

Rev. Alexandra (Sandra) Hedrick

Stated Clerk/Pastor at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church