

Presbytery of St. Augustine
Winter Stated Meeting Highlights
Moderator: Edd Norris
Saturday, February 6, 2021
At 9:30 a.m. Via Zoom

Our Winter Stated Meeting began with worship! Rhonda Link-Cummings preached the sermon "Community Commissioning" inspired by Matthew 4:18-22 and Rev. 3:20-22. Rev. Link-Cummings is the Interim Pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church and one of our presbytery's Area Relationship Coordinators. Drawing from the example of her grandma of German heritage, "who taught hospitality and mission in every aspect of her life," Rev. Link-Cummings reminded us that, "Our ministry in the church always begins with God's initiative, God's gracious action to shine light into darkness. God still shines the light of comfort, hope, and strength." This is why the fishermen disciples dropped everything to follow, "without so much as asking a question!" Likewise, we are called and commissioned to answer Christ's knock on the door and seek out an area of darkness where God can shine the light, both in the church and far outside of its walls.

We designated the morning offering for Mutual Mission. You are invited to the website donations page (<https://www.staugpres.org/presbytery-donations/>) through February 19 to add to the \$410.00 that has been received up to this date. We thank Natasha Sudderth-Davis (First Perry) and Joeavian Rivera (Palms) for the inspirational music they provided during worship.

Much of the meeting was a celebration of new beginnings! Our new Ministry and Mission Coordinator, Holly Dillon Inglis, introduced herself and shared some of the exciting ways that our churches are engaged in the Matthew 25 vision of the PC(USA). We met three new ministers: Adam Anderson (Pastor, South Jacksonville), Jennifer Hallberg (Pastor, First Jasper) and Rebekah Hutto (Minister At-Large). Approval was given for Jeff Beebe (Interim Pastor, Trinity) to be elected as the installed pastor of the church he is serving.

Continuing with the theme of new beginnings, Coordinating Council Chair Diane Wilson (First Starke) provided an engaging overview of our 2021-2023 Strategic Plan. We elected twenty individuals to serve in offices, commissions and teams, including Moderator-Elect Jerie Lukefahr (First Fernandina Beach) and Treasurer John Ragsdale (Honorable Retired). Several of these elected men and women are serving in presbytery roles for the first time.

We also paused to look back, giving gratitude for the variety of ways that God calls us to the ministry of Jesus Christ. As a part of the opening worship service, we read the names of over 90 ruling elders of our churches who died during 2020. We also remembered the life and ministry of four pastors who died since our last meeting: Tom Are, Sr., John Harris, David Lee, and Eriberto (Eddie) Soto. We recognized Chuck Atkins (Lakewood) for his many years of service as our treasurer.

Ministry continued as the focus for presentations from Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center, Highlands Regional Ministry Center (located in the former Highlands church building), Mutual Mission, and Presbyterian Women. In addition, we adopted the 2021 Presbytery Operating Budget and approved recommendations that the presbytery and Montgomery apply for Payroll Protection Plan loans from the Small Business Administration, which can be used for payroll and other expenses and are forgivable.

Also as a part of the meeting, a new covenant was approved between the six presbyteries in Florida, the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, which is the emergency and refugee program of the PC(USA). Near the close of the meeting, there were updates and communications relating to the request of St. Johns Presbyterian Church to be dismissed from the PC(USA) denomination.

We marked another new beginning with the installation of our new presbytery Moderator, Joe Albright, Pastor of Geneva Presbyterian Church. Outgoing Moderator Edd Norris (Silver Springs Shores) led the installation, which concluded with a closing prayer by Susan Letizia (Geneva) and a charge by Hunter Camp (Memorial). Edd Norris, who will now moderate the Coordinating Council for one year, gave his heartfelt thanks to Diane Wilson, the outgoing Council Moderator.

Several individuals responded to the invitation for one-minute of "speak-out time" at the end of the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m. with Joe Albright's call for the **Spring Stated Meeting to be held on May 4, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.**, and a prayer of blessing.

Each of the documents, reports and memorial resolutions mentioned above can be read on the meeting page (<https://www.staugpres.org/next-stated-meeting/>). Please contact me if you have any questions!

Submitted by:

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