

Fall Stated Meeting
October 4, 2022 at Trinity Presbyterian Church
Jerie Lukefahr, Moderator
Sandra Hedrick, Stated Clerk

On a sunny fall day, the Presbytery of St. Augustine gathered at Trinity Presbyterian Church in person and by Zoom. Over 105 participants attended, including visitors, with about one third on Zoom. We thank Trinity and Pastor Jeff Beebe for their friendly hospitality, musical leadership, and technical proficiency in hosting our first "hybrid" meeting. In worship, we were especially blessed by Trinity's handbell choir (led by Lillian Warner) and Heasuk Che, Director of Music and Organist. We welcomed special guests from the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA), the Presbyterian Historical Society, and the Texas Presbyterian Foundation. Jeff Beebe and Vickie Bossuot officiated at the Lord's Table.

The Rev. Carlton Johnson, PMA's Associate for Vital Congregations, preached the sermon, beginning with "how many here remember your baptism" and continuing with a thoughtful reflection on Luke's narrative of the baptism of Jesus and "preparing the way." Baptism does not change us; it connects us and reminds us of God in us and in our neighbor. "Connect, connect, connect!" That is how we and our communities become vibrant.

Just before worship, memorial moments were offered for minister members Lloyd Alamsha, Dalton Burch, and Chuck DeVane.

Generous givers responded to the offering for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Please give online to add to this offering.

Two actions stand out in the meeting highlights. The presbytery approved the new staff position of Lead Presbyter, as recommended by the Coordinating Council. The position will be posted soon.

Also at the recommendation of the Coordinating Council, the presbytery approved Guidelines for Stewardship of Funds from Dismissed Churches and the Sale of Properties of Closed Churches. Under the guidelines, we will first tithe ten percent of such funds outside of our presbytery with communities in our region and/or the larger church. The remainder may be used for current ministries; new, emerging and creative ministries; and to maintain reserves for emergencies and administration.

The Coordinating Council also shared the 2023 "Asking Budget." The budget depends on unified giving from our congregations (in addition to per capita) in a total amount of \$374,381. The pledging season will begin very soon and will include an individual communication to each church. Thank you for your generosity!

The Call Commission presented three new minister members: Lauren Scott, Associate Pastor for Youth and Families at Riverside Presbyterian Church; Dawn Mayes, Pastor of First Fernandina Beach; and John White, Transitional Pastor of Community Presbyterian Church. We warmly welcome these new colleagues.

The Call Commission also shared that \$48,489 is the new minimum effective salary for full time installed pastors. This is a 5.73% increase from the prior minimum effective salary.

With enthusiasm, our General Assembly (GA) Commissioners gave an overview of this year's assembly and shared their personal highlights. We thank Steve Crowley (RE - First Palatka), John Diller (TE - Orange Park), Jennifer Hallberg (TE - First Jasper), and Connie Smith (RE - South Jacksonville), for their commitment as they were called to serve for many days in the new GA hybrid format.

Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center and Mutual Mission shared highlights of their ministries, and they, along with Presbyterian Women, included more detailed reports in the meeting materials.

Another highlight was the election of volunteers serving on the presbytery's commissions and teams. There are still vacancies to fill, so please take a look at the "Opportunities to Serve" PDF online to view the ways to serve, and prayerfully consider applying. Note: Please make sure you download the form before filling it out electronically.

Our guest from the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) was David Staniunis. In a few words, he shared a breadth of information as to how PHS can help you keep and preserve your church records. Jake Wilson was our guest from the Texas Presbyterian Foundation.

We thank everyone at Trinity who made the fellowship lunch possible and patiently waited for the meeting to conclude later than was intended. During lunch, Rev. Carlton Johnson led a spirited program called "Insights on the Congregational Life Cycle."

The next stated meeting will be held on Saturday, February 4, 2023, at a place TBA.

Respectfully Submitted:

Alexandra (Sandra) Hedrick, Stated Clerk