

Assembly Highlights

Tuesday, October 23, 2018
Stated Assembly Meeting



On October 23, 2018, the Presbytery of Denver gathered in Assembly at Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church. Rev. John Anderson, Presbytery Moderator, moderated the Assembly with the assistance of Vice-Moderator Ruling Elder (RE) Wanda Beaman. Rev. Dan Dolquist and Ruling Elder Karen Kingman, Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church, welcomed the Presbytery, and the congregation hosted fellowship before and after the meeting. The Presbytery of Denver offers thanks and appreciation to the host congregation for hosting the Assembly and preparing the wonderful fellowship gatherings.

Assembly at Worship

In order that we might celebrate the diversity of our congregations, worship was designed by and led by our host church. Transitional Presbytery Pastor, Rev. Dana Hughes delivered the message "FEAR NOT!" based on Isaiah 43:1-13.

The Assembly Received the report of Council establishing the dates and locations of the 2019 assemblies and the dates for voting on proposed amendments to the Constitution:

1. January 22, 2019, Wheat Ridge Presbyterian Church; March 26, 2019, Genesis Presbyterian Church, Littleton; May 28, 2019, North Highland Presbyterian Church, Denver; August 10, 2019, Church of the Eternal Hills, Tabernash; October 22, 2019, Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver.
2. Voting on the Proposed amendment to the Constitution of the PC(U.S.A.):
January Assembly: 18-B.1, 18-B.2 Renunciation of Jurisdiction; 18-G. Disciplinary Offense; 18 – H.1, 18-H.2 Time Limit.
March Assembly: 18-A – Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons; 18-C – Officers; 18-D Membership of Presbytery; 18-E – Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor; 18-F. Welcoming to the Table.
<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/ga/ga223-proposed-amendments-book-order/>

Introduction of Transitional Presbytery Pastor

Vice-Moderator Wanda Beaman, who served on the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee, introduced Rev. Hughes and the gifts that the committee experienced in making their selection. Rev. Hughes shared her background and expressed thanks for the opportunity to serve as Transitional Presbytery Pastor.

Partnership of Zimbabwe & Denver Presbyteries

Ruling Elder Rob Habiger shared that the United States Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe, turned three of the four invited delegates from Zimbabwe down for travel visas. The committee has contacted local federal politicians with the Presbytery's concerns over the denied visas and has heard from two who have offered to assist the Presbytery in the future. Rob introduced visiting delegate, Elder Joe Nyamutumbu, who was granted a visa. Joe is head of the Business Investment Unit for the Presbytery of Zimbabwe who brought greetings from the Presbytery of Zimbabwe.

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Committee on Ministry

Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP), Sandy Safford, offered the following motion on behalf of Committed on Ministry (COM):

COM requests the language requirement in G-2.0607c. Book of Order, be waived pursuant to G-2.0610 Book of Order, for Rev. Ian Cummins, providing a path for him to be ordained and installed as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PC(U.S.A.) should he receive a call.

The Book of Order requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote on the motion. Ballots were distributed to voting members of the Presbytery during registration and formation of the rolls. CLP Sandy Safford spoke for COM on behalf of the motion. Rev. Cummins spoke regarding his call and responded to questions. Rev. Cummins was excused and further discussion ensued. The question was called and voted on. The moderator declared that the motion to end discussion passed. The vote by ballot was taken with the following results:

112 votes cast

23 No

87 Yes

2 Abstentions

The percentage was determined based on 110 votes – abstentions excluded = 79.09%

The exception was **Approved**.

Introduction of new minister members

Two new minister members were introduced. Rev. Randi Henderson, Honorably Retired (HR) was introduced by Rev. Heather Cameron. Rev. Henderson's statement of faith was included in the Assembly documents. She recently retired after completing an intentional interim pastorate with Westminister Presbyterian Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Newly ordained and installed, Rev. Amy Petre'-Hill, a temporary member, was introduced by Charla Musgrave. Rev. Petre'-Hill is serving as Minister for Mental Health & Inclusion Ministries at Mountain View United Church in Aurora, CO.

Minister of the Word and Sacrament Minimum Compensation – 2019

Commissioned Lay Pastor Safford discussed the committee's recommendation of a 2% increase in the minimum salary and for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. In addition to the salary increase COM recommended an increase on the minimum reimbursable for continuing education from \$750.00 to \$1,000.00. It was moved that the Assembly approve the minimum salary and housing for a pastor when no manse is provide of \$49,590.00, if a manse is provided \$36,105.00, and \$1000.00 reimbursable for continuing education. **Approved**.

Nominating Committee:

Rev. Susan Boucher brought the Slate of Nominees on behalf of the Committee:

Officers of the Presbytery:

Presbytery Moderator: RE Wanda Beauman (Peoples), Class of 2019

Presbytery Vice-Moderator: MWS Justin Spurlock (Grace), Class of 2019

Council: To re-elect to the Class of 2019 MWS John Yu (True Light); to elect to the Class of 2020 MWS Joel Adams (NW Denver Mission Comm), RE Jo Culbertson (Central), RE Pat Queen (Green Mountain), and RE Kendal Mullins (Wellshire)

Committee on Ministry: To elect to the Class of 2019, CRE Sandy Safford (Byers) as Moderator; to re-elect to the Class of 2021 MWS Louise Westfall (Central), RE Rick Kesler

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(Arvada), RE CJ Biewenga (Elizabeth) and to elect MWS Rolfe Granath (HR) and Judy Jensen (Church of the Hills).

Committee on Preparation for Ministry: To re-elect to the Class of 2019, MWS Russ Kane as Moderator.

PZDP Committee: To re-elect MWS Ruth Huff (At Large) to the Class of 2020 as Moderator, REs Rob Habiger and Jean Hart (both from Central) to the Class of 2021.

Highlands Camp Joint Committee: To re-elect RE Geoff Noble (PCOC) to the Class of 2021 and to elect RE Roxanne Bennett to the Class of 2021.

There were no nominations from the floor for any position. The slate was **Approved**.

Council Reports

RE Jean Demmler introduced the Council work group reports.

Personnel Work Group: Bruce Spear brought the report for the Personnel workgroup. The staff was invited to leave the room momentarily. He move a 3% cost of living increase for the Presbytery staff for 2019. **Approved.** Bruce moved the terms of calls for Rev. Amy Mendez and Rev. Olivia Hudson Smith with the 3% cost of living increase included. **Approved.**

When the staff returned Bruce invited Presbytery Staff Members Amy, Olivia, and Beth forward. Council approved granting each staff member a \$2,500.00 bonus and an extra week of vaction to be taken in either 2018 or 2019 in recognition of the additional duties undertaken after Rev. Tom Sheffield's retirement in November 2017. The Assembly showed there appreciation with standing applause. The staff thanked Council and Personnel for the generous gift. Bruce recognized and thanked the Interim Presbytery Pastor Nominating Committee (IPPNC) for their work and diligence in bringing forth the recommendation of Rev. Dana Hughes as the Interim – Transitional Presbytery Pastor. Council has dismissed the IPPNC members with gratitude.

Moderator John Anderson acknowledged RE Jean Demmler's work over the past year as Moderator Pro Tem of Council with a gift from Council.

Bruce thanked Rev. Bill Calhoun and Rev. Bill Sander for their pastoral care during the period of transition.

RE Jean Demmler thanked Bruce for his work as well during the transitional period.

Leadership Work Group: RE Nancy Dixon reported that the workergroup is excited about the November Leadership event at Highland Camp and Retreat Center on November 9th and 10th. There are scholarships available and if anyone is in need of one they should contact the Presbytery Center. Nancy announced the 2019 Leadership event which will feature the Rev. Jimmy Hawkins, Director of the PC(USA) Presbyterian Mission Agency's Office of Public Witness. The dates for the 2019 event are November 8-9, 2019.

Mission and Ministry Work Group: Rev. Sandy Smith introduced the Youth Triennium 2019 task force, CLP Sandy Safford, CLP Cindy Moorman, and Rev. Bill Davis. A short introductory video of the Triennium was shown and Cindy spoke about the event asking churches to encourage high school aged youth to participate. Sandy recognized Rev. Loye Troxler who gave an overview of the structure of Mission and Ministry in the Presbytery while flyers were distributed to commissioners. Rev. Troxler emphasized that the moneys used for connectional mission in the Presbytery comes directly from individual churches mission giving to general

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mission which in the past has been split 70% to the Presbytery and 30% to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Approximately 40 of the congregations are involved in connectional missions within the Presbytery. Rev. Troxler stressed that because congregations are choosing to do directed mission giving, general mission giving is down but the needs of our connectional Mission Partnerships, Covenant Communities, and Task Forces are up. The structure adopted by the Presbytery 20 years ago is working and commissioners are encouraged to go back to their sessions and leadership to support general mission giving.

Board of Pensions: Clayton Cobb, Regional Consultant for the Board of Pensions (BOP), highlighted four (4) new programs that the BOP is offering. 1) Pathways to Renewal- of the 3200 seminary graduates last year only 60% were enrolled in the BOP. The 40% that were not enrolled were majority women. Data show that those not enrolled are two times more likely to leave ministry in five (5) years. Data also shows that the viable number of congregants to afford a full-time pastor is 200 members, anything less is questionable. For churches under 200 the BOP is offering a reduction in dues to enroll the pastor in BOP benefits, this will also apply to churches over 200 who are hiring a full-time Associate Minister. 2) Educational debt reduction of \$25,000 over five years with a 4% contribution by the pastor making \$40,000.00 and similar structure for those making an increased salary. 3) A new initiative beginning in January 2019 called Healthy Pastor, Healthy Congregations, will offer \$10,000.00 to any pastor for emergency needs. More information will be available later. 4) First Call, First Steps is a program for Seminary graduates entering a first call on how to negotiate terms of call. Clayton may be contacted for additional information on any of the program initiatives.

Ghost Ranch: Rev. Skip Herbert, (Director Carrie March was also present) highlighted the activities of Ghost Ranch. He provided that there has been a shift in governance as the current director has announced her retirement in early 2019. He discussed recent challenges including flooding and strong winds that destroyed buildings and caused extensive damage. There are approximately 40,000 visitors each year. They encouraged continuing support to the Ghost Ranch