

Presbytery Assembly – August 19, 2023
On Site at The Wild Animal Sanctuary, Keenesburg, CO

Call to Order and Establishment of a Quorum: The meeting came to order at 10:00 a.m. after an hour of exploration at the Wild Animal Sanctuary. Moderator John Yu and Stated Clerk gretchen N. Sausville were present. A quorum was established. John shared that the Assembly would be using a timed docket.

Opening Worship/Dee Cooper and Assembly Members

Our worship was cultivated by our Lead Presbyter Dee Cooper with an invitation to rest, restore, recreate, reflect, and ponder how we can create sanctuary by allowing love to show us how to create a sanctuary for all. [Sanctuary](#) by Boulder singer songwriter Rebecca Folsom was our opening song.

Land Acknowledgement and Prayer:

Elder Candice Sweet, The Stated Clerk of The Synod of the Rocky Mountains opened the Assembly with a Land Acknowledgement.

Welcome and Introduction of Corresponding and new Ruling Elders

John welcomed corresponding members Rev. Gwynneth Livesay from Mission Presbytery and Elder Candice Sweet from Utah Presbytery.

John reminded the Assembly who is eligible to vote and that New Worshipping Community representatives would have the opportunity to advise the Assembly, by casting an Advisory Recommendation before the Assembly members voted on each motion. Voting at this assembly would be done using animal sounds.

Welcome and Introduction of New Minister Members: Sheri Fry and Sandy Safford Rev. Michelle Fincher, Pastor of Calvary Presbyterian Church and Rev. Karla Lara Maldonado, NWC Incubator Pastor, were introduced to the assembly and blessed for service.

Preliminary Business (Omnibus Motion)

The Assembly **approved** the following:

1. **Approve the Docket** as distributed, with such changes as may be announced at the start of the assembly.
2. **Enroll the Corresponding Members** that are introduced, and grant to them permission of the floor. The names and presbytery of membership of such persons must be written on the attendance roster or given to the Stated Clerk.
3. **Approve the minutes of the Stated Assembly May 23, 2023 Assembly** as posted on the Presbytery website, except for any changes in the attendance roll that may be required.
4. **Receive the reports contained in the Assembly packet.**
5. **Receive the Stated Clerk's Report:** The Church Leadership Connection (CLC) which is the Internet-based matching and referral system for call seekers in the

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) The old system from the 1990's has been phased out with a new system that went live in June. The new system is different and the PC(USA) continues to work out the glitches. The Presbytery committees and staff, who work with the system, are available to support clergy and congregations as we learn this new platform together.

6. **Approve Motion from Visionary Leadership Commission that the presbytery allow Community of Grace to sell the former Arvada Presbyterian Church House for not less than 90% of the appraised value of \$520,000 with proceeds to be handled as listed in the background information.** *Background: When Arvada Presbyterian Church sold the church building and property in 2019, the house on the property was not sold as it was a separate parcel of land. The current appraised value of the parcel is \$520,000. Community of Grace (the new chartered congregation from the merger of Trinity and Arvada Presbyterian Churches) is now requesting permission to sell the house. Upon sale they plan to use 10% for mission, replace the boiler in the Community of Grace building, and invest the remainder.*

Agency Review Task Force (ARTF)/Visionary Leadership Commission: Rob Habiger

Rob thanked the existing committees that continue to do their ministry as the new structure is built and until new committees are populated and equipped.

Motion: *The Visionary Leadership Commission recommends to the Presbytery the election of Louise Westfall (class of 2024) to the Servant Leadership Development Committee. Approved.*

Ministry Relations Committee: Sheri Fry

Kiersten Hill - Examination for Ordination

Kiersten Hill, a candidate under care of Denver Presbytery and certified ready to receive a call, was examined for Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Assembly.

Motion: *The Ministry Relations Committee recommends to the Presbytery the ordination of Kiersten Hill to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament as the Associate Pastor for Youth and Young Adults at Wellshire Presbyterian Church. Approved*

Rev. Chris Spotts, Moderator of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, offered prayer for Kiersten and her ministry.

Scripture, Sermon, and Exploration in the spirit of Terra Divina | Dee Cooper

Worship continued with a sermon and scripture from the book of Job. Dee reminded us of Job and how in the midst of deepest despair he was invited to learn, seek and ask from the animals. She shared that the animals had a great deal to teach us about taking risks into new ecosystems and structures and she invited us to go out among the animals in the spirit of *Terra Divina* which is a *divine conversation with co-created*

beings and creation. The Assembly had time to go back outside among the animals- to wander, explore, observe, listen, imagine with curiosity, wonder, pray, ponder, and reflect about what we can learn from the animals about ourselves, our creation, our creator, and our call.

Time of Engagement | John Yu

Moderator John Yu invited the assembly to think about what transpired in this sacred time among the animals. The assembly pondered the following questions. *What were some things that were heard, observed, and learned through these experiences? How has God challenged you in these moments? How is God speaking to you through these animals, through nature, and through one another? How have you been challenged?* John invited each individual to consider writing a letter to themselves about where God may be speaking to them. The letters will be mailed back to folks in the coming weeks. He also invited each participant to consider the 8 values of the Presbytery. Each person was given 3 animal stickers to place upon the values they believe God is telling the Presbytery to focus on.

The top 3 Values selected by the Assembly:

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) = 23 Votes

Community-Focused = 22 Votes

Letting Go = 21 Votes

Servant Leadership Development (Committee on Representation): Nancy Dixon

The number of commissioners Denver Presbytery sends to the General Assembly decreased, and only 1 Minister of Word and Sacrament and 1 Ruling Elder (RE) and alternates for each need to be elected. We are still in need of a \ MWS Commissioner Alternate and a Young Adult Advisory Delegate for the General Assembly. The SLDC only received 1 female applicant for GA Commissioner and they wished to be an alternate.

Two female Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Lynn Bell and Bethany Peerbolte) were nominated from the floor. Bethany Peerbolte was elected to be added to the slate for GA Alternate MWS.

The Vice Moderator has to be a female Minister of Word and Sacrament based on the Ruling Elder/ Minister parity of the Presbytery.

Motion: *The Servant Leadership Development Committee (SLDC) recommends to the Presbytery the following names to be elected for service on the Ministry Preparation Committee: Cleve Dixon (class of 2024), Martin Cobb (class of 2024), C.J. Biewenga (class of 2025), Bruce Taylor (class of 2025). **Approved***

Motion: *The Servant Leadership Development Committee (SLDC) recommends to the Presbytery the following individuals to be elected as Commissioners to the 226th General Assembly: Commissioner Ruling Elder: Jeff Sneddon (Church of the Eternal Hills), Commissioner Ruling Elder Alternate: Diane Ritzdorf (Calvary Presbyterian Church), Commissioner Minister of Word and Sacrament Bill Sanders (Honorably Retired), Commissioner Minister of Word and Sacrament: Bethany Peerbolte (Our Tapestry).* **Approved**

Motion: *The Servant Leadership Committee (SLDC) recommends to the Presbytery the Rev. Ruth McCollum Huff to be elected as Vice Moderator of Presbytery Assembly for 2024.* **Approved**

Treasurer Report: Sue Pilcher

Our treasurer gave a brief oral report based on the financial documents in the Assembly Packet.

Ministry Relations Committee | Sandy Safford

Amanda Osenga - Examination for Ordination

Amanda Osenga, a candidate under care of Atlanta Presbytery and certified ready to receive a call, was examined for Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Assembly.

Motion: *The Ministry Relations Committee recommends to the Presbytery the ordination of Amanda Osenga to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament as the Associate Pastor for Youth and Families at Montview Boulevard Presbyterian.* **Approved**

Sandy Safford offered prayer for Amanda and her ministry.

Adjournment & Closing Prayer

Moderator John Yu blessed the Assembly after a motion to adjourn was affirmed with the roar of bears. The Assembly adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. gretchen N. Sausville, Stated Clerk