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Joel Belz Elected Moderator of 31st Assembly

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 10, 2003)—Ruling Elder Joel Belz of Asheville, North Carolina, was elected Moderator of the 31st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). He was unopposed for the position, and was elected by acclamation.

A member of Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church in Asheville, Mr. Belz is best-known for his having founded *World*, the leading Christian news magazine. Prior to that, he was on staff for a number of years with the *Presbyterian Journal*, which was the predecessor publication of *World*.

The *Presbyterian Journal* was one of four organizations which called in 1971 for the formation of a Continuing Presbyterian Church, a movement which led to the founding of the PCA two years later. Over the years, several men associated with the *Journal* have been elected Moderator of the PCA Assembly, including board members Jack Williamson (1973), Jim Baird (1984), and Morton H. Smith (2000), and a couple of editors: G. Aiken Taylor (1978) and Will Barker (1994).

Nominating Mr. Belz was Dr. Robert Rayburn, pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church, Tacoma, Washington. Dr. Rayburn noted the long heritage of involvement in Christian education which has characterized the Belz family, starting with the patriarch sixty years ago. Cono Christian School in Walker, Iowa, was begun by Joel's father, Max Belz, as a result of his vision for a Christ-centered education.

Dr. Rayburn lauded the nominee's work on the board of Covenant College, as well as on the Session of his church and in Western Carolina Presbytery. The Tacoma pastor also made note of the significant influence which *World* magazine has had.

Upon accepting the moderatorship, Mr. Belz alluded to his work as a journalist as he offered three "accurate" quotes to aid the Assembly in its business. The first was from the Apostle Paul with regard to putting away all malice and wrath and above all things to put on love. Secondly, he referred to the ordination vows which every commissioner had taken, to study the peace and the purity of the church.

He stated that that was "not simply an ecclesiastical shibboleth." We need to speak the truth in love to each other; he added that "mercy and truth have kissed each other," a theme he sees throughout Scripture.

and my dad hauled me off to the General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church." He said that he was fascinated with the functioning of the church court, including parliamentary procedure; and reminisced on his days with the *Presbyterian*

Journal when "lo and behold, I got to go to six or eight or ten General Assemblies or Synods every single summer—you might think, What kind of punishment is that?" He then recounted that his father described the church as a gnarled old log, a snarled piece of wood, and that his father said that "God designed the church that way. He made us so that we agree in different directions. It's kind of hard to split that kind of wood."

To the amusement of the Assembly, Mr. Belz held up a huge gavel which he had had a friend fashion for him—a gavel which illustrated the gnarled nature of the church. The Moderator said, "Let's ask Him [God] to use these gnarled knots for the good of the church and not its destruction and I pray that that will be the case."

In an interview after the evening recess, Mr. Belz responded to a question

about the state of the denomination by saying, "I have fears, but my optimism is greater than my fears."



Moderator Joel Belz displays a large gavel made of knotty wood which he hoped would illustrate how difficult it is to split the church.

The third quote was from his late father. Joel Belz stated that his "first acquaintance with Presbyterianism came when I was seven years old

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Adoption of the Docket Not a Routine Matter

Assembly Sets Aside Business for Two Hours of Prayer

Court Also Schedules Early Discussion on Filioque Controversy

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 10, 2003)—The adoption of the docket for the 31st General Assembly proved to be a more lively matter than is usual for this type of meeting. But wrestling with the issue of priorities in what many regard as a full agenda led to significant amendments to the proposed docket.

Leading off the debate was a motion by the Rev. Dr. Morton H. Smith, Moderator of the 28th General Assembly and original Stated Clerk of the PCA. Dr. Smith moved that the entire morning on Wednesday be given over to a time of prayer and fasting, with commissioners to gather either individually or corporately, with the time of devotion to conclude with the scheduled worship service at 11:15 AM. Dr. Smith's motion specified that all exhibits be closed during this time, and that no committees meet either. The veteran churchman said, "I look at this Assembly as perhaps the most significant since those early Assemblies" of the PCA. "We need to have the Lord's guidance in this matter [i.e., subscription]."

The Rev. Larry Hoop of Iowa Presbytery spoke against the motion. While conceding that "it's awfully hard to speak against prayer," he also said that "we have many other items of business and a very short time to do it."

Dr. D. Clair Davis spoke in favor of Dr. Smith's motion. "This is perceived as a very, very important matter," one which called for "all the prayer we can muster. . . . I think we're better off supporting this change on the agenda," he said, even if it means having to go a couple of extra hours in the evenings.

The Rev. George Robertson offered a substitute

motion, which simply called for two hours of prayer from 8:00 to 10:00 AM. The St. Louis pastor said that setting aside two hours for prayer, rather than the entire morning, was "in view of the rationale offered by the previous speaker."

The substitute for the amendment carried, and then the amendment was adopted by an overwhelming margin.

The other major matter for discussion surrounded the request from the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (CRPR) that the matter of the exception to the minutes of Southern Florida Presbytery be scheduled as the first item of business for Wednesday at 10:00 AM. The controversy has to do with the denial by an ordinand of the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son.

Presenting the motion to schedule the early consideration of the controversy was CRPR Chairman Ted Trefsgar, who urged that the matter was of such significance that his Committee believed that it had to be handled early in the meeting, when most of the commissioners would be present.

Opposing the motion was the Rev. Mike Khandjian, who stated that since the Assembly had set aside two hours of prayer particularly with respect to the subscription issue (Item 2 of the *BCO* amendments), "then to push off that discussion would be wrong."

CRPR member Dwight Dolby of Southwest Florida Presbytery spoke in favor of the motion: "It became clear to the Committee that this item provides

the context" for the subscription issue, and that it "will shed important light to that 'Good Faith' subscription vote."

The Rev. Joseph Wheat of Rocky Mountain Presbytery said, "I think the things we have before us are hugely significant for the PCA," and urged that the Assembly should "move forward with this docket."

The Rev. Jeff Hutchinson of Western Carolina Presbytery, another CRPR member, said, "We on the Committee represent a wide variety of views" regarding subscription, and that "without dissent" the Committee believed that the Assembly as a whole needed to deal with whether the exception "struck at the heart of the fundamentals" of the system of doctrine. Alluding to the work of the Committee, the Asheville pastor quipped, "We report, you decide."

The Rev. Dr. Peter Lillback moved a substitute motion, that the CRPR partial report be acted on immediately following the *BCO* amendment discussion. "Let's deal with the general, because that's what moved us to prayer and fasting. If we deal with the particular, it may cloud the general."

Opposing that substitute was Dr. Neill Payne, a ruling elder from Black Mountain, North Carolina, who stated that he would like to see how the subscription matter operates in actuality "and not in generality" and "how this will probably play itself out."

The Rev. Joe Novenson spoke in favor of the substitute. "Within our Session, to deal with personality [first] is fraught with difficulty."

The Assembly approved the substitute, and then the motion as amended.

Good Faith Subscription Passes Assembly

Item 2 Approved, 816-545, or 60% to 40%

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 11, 2003)—The 31st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) this morning gave final approval to a *Book of Church Order (BCO)* amendment which endorses "Good Faith" subscription. The standing vote was 816-545, or about 60% to 40%.

The debate, though intense at times, was characterized by respect on the part of the participants.

Leading off the debate was a speech against the proposal by the Rev. Skip Dusenbury of Potomac Presbytery. He argued that the amendment "had defects in it itself," including the fact that the placement of the amendment in Chapter 21 (rather than in the Preliminary Principles) is unwise, that it doesn't define the term "exceptions," and that it "enshrines a straw man." Secondly, he cited the "danger of impatience": "When we become impatient, we often make mistakes. We can do better." Thirdly, he appealed to the "duty of charity" with respect to love and the preservation of unity among the brothers. "I would urge us not to press this. . . . All things are lawful, but not all things are expedient."

The Rev. Warren Gardner of North Georgia Presbytery sought the microphone to issue a Constitutional challenge to the amendment, in that it seeks to modify Confessional Standards without the requisite votes in *BCO* 26-3. However, Moderator Joel Belz ruled that the 3/4 vote specified there refers to the modification of the Confession itself, rather than

subsidiary documents.

Dr. Frank Barker of Evangel Presbytery spoke in favor of the amendment. "From the beginning, this denomination was never intended to be a strict subscriptionist denomination." He stated that the current proposal was designed to "put into words" what had always been the intention, and that this amendment was "to solve controversy."

Ruling Elder Pat Shields of Potomac Presbytery, reflecting upon the number of times which his presbytery had had to vote on the matter, said, "In a few moments, I will have the sixth opportunity to vote on Item 2. I agree with the sentiments expressed in Item 2." However, he urged the defeat of the measure, because "no matter how intended, it will dilute" the Confessional Standards. "I understand the fatigue of brothers who have wrestled with this [issue] for ten, twenty, or even thirty years." However, "we will have opportunity to have a study committee."

Dr. Will Barker argued in favor of the proposal for four reasons: 1. it is the best way to safeguard orthodoxy, to have a candidate declare his difference; 2. it guarantees a candidate's knowledge of the Standards; 3. it guarantees honest subscription; 4. it really guarantees the priority of Scripture.

In opposing the amendment, the Rev. Wallace Tinsley of Fellowship Presbytery stated: "I agree with Frank Barker's statement that we need to solve these problems. . . . I also agree with three and a half of

Will Barker's statements as well." However, "the Confession of Faith and Catechisms are our tool to bind us to the Bible." He continued: "I have struggled to understand the term 'Good Faith'; and he suggested the following "functional definition": "it's an assertion of good intentions necessarily joined with an admission of failure." Given that definition, he would urge different nomenclature.

Dr. Kennedy Smartt of North Georgia Presbytery began his speech by saying, "I'm going to keep on loving you no matter which way you vote." He recounted the poll he had done several years ago of the Organizing Committee of 40 for the Continuing Presbyterian Church (which led to the formation of the PCA), and noted that three of the respondents wanted the new denomination to adhere to total abstinence, while only one wanted it to stand for strict subscription.

The Rev. Andrew Webb, an organizing pastor in Fayetteville, North Carolina, appealed to history and the warning which Robert Toombs, Jefferson Davis' Secretary of State, issued concerning the decision to fire on Fort Sumter: "It is unnecessary, it puts us in the wrong, it is fatal." Mr. Webb said: "At the time, of course, his warning went unheeded, but I wonder how many men a little over four years later, viewing the destruction of Atlanta and Richmond, the death of over 600,000 Americans, wished it had been [heeded]?"

"That's the problem though, isn't it? You rush to

the decision in the heat of the moment, and once you fire the shot, you can never take it back.

"Brothers, we are about to make a decision we have arrived at as quickly as we possibly could, without the erection of a study committee or even the benefit of perfecting language.

"Once we have made it, I fear we will never be able to take it back.

"Once we pass this, our presbyteries will be empowered to grant exceptions to *any* doctrine we confess is taught in Scripture by a simple 51% vote.

"Once those exceptions are granted, precedent is set, and that doctrine will never again be an impediment to the ordination of any man. . . .

"Gradually, but inevitably, our standards will be eroded.

"This will not happen overnight, there will be no immediate catastrophe, in fact the initial action will probably be hailed as a triumph. But while I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, if we do make this decision, I foresee a day when presbyters—watching as men who believe things they thought unthinkable are ordained—will wish they could come back here to this moment in time and change what happened.

"Brothers, this amendment 'is unnecessary, it puts us in the wrong, it is fatal.'"

Dr. Bryan Chapell of Illiana Presbytery contended that the amendment honors the PCA's commitment to the Bible as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice."

President Chapell said that the source of tension over the amendment "is good men differing over what will best preserve" the church. "We all want to fend off liberalism," he proclaimed.

Dr. Joseph Pipa of Calvary Presbytery urged the commissioners to vote down Item 2. He stated that the "question as it has been framed . . . has manifested tremendous misunderstanding of this issue." As for taking ordination vows in "good faith," Dr. Pipa said that the Confession of Faith addresses the matter of oath-bearing. He also stated: "This amendment takes

it a step further" than simply allowing exceptions, in that "the presbytery may decide if it is an exception." Like previous speakers, he counseled the appointment of a study committee "to help a divided church" come to consensus on the matter.

The Rev. Mike Khandjian of Southern Florida Presbytery noted: "For twenty-five years, we have debated . . . strict subscription versus 'Good Faith' subscription." He claimed, "Something important happened last year—80 to 90% voted to send this to the presbyteries." Furthermore, more than 2/3 of the presbyteries had voted to approve: "We're not talking hanging chads here. We made a defining decision as

competing slogans of strict subscription and Good Faith subscription, rather than dealing with the actual language. He called attention to the fact that the term "fundamentals" arose during the Fundamentalist controversy, and that "a presbytery could construe it as the barest of evangelical Christianity." On the other hand, a presbytery could interpret it quite strictly as referring to all the doctrines of the Confessional Standards. This radical difference could lead to the "balkanization of our denomination." He noted that Potomac Presbytery had produced a unanimously-adopted paper on creation (even though there are different views in the presbytery); but on this issue, "the vote was 28 to 29."

Tom Leopard of Evangel Presbytery appealed to his fellow ruling elders, as he urged the Assembly to vote in favor of the amendment. "We're never going to arrive at perfect agreement," he averred.

The Rev. Jonathan Inman of Western Carolina Presbytery urged defeat of the proposal. "There are times we have to be very cautious," adding that the controversy which had obviously been generated "is sufficient warrant for voting down this amendment." In his view, what was called for was a proposal that was "less controversial, less divisive, and hopefully will be more helpful" to the church.

The Rev. Ron Steel of Chesapeake Presbytery had the last word in the debate. He argued in favor of the amendment as addressing some of the issues regarding "how much freedom" and "how much constraint regarding doctrine" there should be.

Several times during the debate, the Assembly had extended time for ten minutes. After Mr. Steel's speech, a motion to extend time for seven minutes—i.e., until the orders of the day—failed.

A request from Dr. Pipa for a secret ballot was also voted down. At long last, the motion was put, and the momentous vote was cast. After the vote, a number of commissioners recorded their negative votes on the action just taken.



The Assembly casts the momentous vote on "Good Faith" subscription.

a denomination. We did something pretty cool. We out loud said as a denomination this is who we really are." Responding to a previous speaker who warned against making mistakes as a result of hasty decisions, Pastor Khandjian said, "We just make mistakes—that's part of life. . . . I'd rather make the forging ahead kind of mistakes," rather than holding back.

Dr. David Coffin of Potomac Presbytery "offer[ed] all honor to those who are proponents." However, he said that "part of the problem is that [the discussion] has remained in the stratosphere," between

On Close Vote, Assembly Declines to Erect Study Committees on Doctrinal Subscription

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 12, 2003)—The 31st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) this afternoon decided not to erect study committees on the matter of doctrinal subscription. The key vote was on a substitute motion to adopt a minority report from the Bills & Overtures (B&O) Committee, to answer Overtures 8 (from Western Carolina Presbytery) and 16 (from Mississippi Valley Presbytery) in the negative. That substitute became the main motion, 530-477, or about 52.6% to 47.4%.

In bringing the item to the floor, the B&O Committee itself also reflected the highly-divided nature of the vote in the Assembly. The Committee had voted 20-16-1 to recommend that Overture 8, which called for a study committee, be answered in the affirmative, and that Overture 16, which called for an ad interim committee, be answered by reference to that action.

After Dr. Robert Ferguson of South Texas Presbytery presented the minority report, the Rev. Andrew Webb, another member of B&O, spoke against the substitute. He pleaded that "it would be a very bad idea not to heal some of these wounds" that have been inflicted over the past year. "I am asking that the majority be magnanimous in victory."

Speaking in favor of the substitute was the Rev. Ray Cortese of Central Florida Presbytery. The pastor from Lecanto, Florida, said, "Sometimes, there has to

be a decision made"; and he suggested that "the effect of a study committee would be to distract us from moving forward" in ministry and mission. He also stated that many elders and ministers had absented themselves from the General Assembly because of not relishing "the arcane debates."

The Rev. Jeff Hutchinson, senior pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Asheville, North Carolina, stated that there was a perception that some comments have suggested a less-than-gracious attitude on the part of the majority that approved Good Faith subscription. In his words, it was an attitude of, "We want to move on and make the minority eat our dust."

After his speech, time expired, the Assembly declined to extend time, and took the momentous vote. However, adopting the substitute as the main motion did not end the debate on the matter.

Dr. Don Clements of Blue Ridge Presbytery, who was B&O Chairman, spoke from one of the floor microphones against the motion. He noted that Overture 8 spoke of "perfecting" the Constitutional language on the issue, and that appointing such a study committee would not entail "reopening the whole issue." He also argued that waiting a few more years will make that process more difficult.

The Rev. George Robertson of Missouri Presbytery argued for the motion: "We have never come to a more clear conclusion than by drawing the

line in the sand between full subscription and Good Faith subscription. . . . A one-third minority of this denomination is not, I hesitate to say, a substantial minority, although it's significant in the sight of God. . . . This church has consistently said it refuses to be made into something it never intended to be."

Arguing against the motion was the Rev. David Hall of North Georgia Presbytery, who contended that "the best of 'good faith' is to hear one another. . . . This issue is worth our time. . . . If I were a leader in the Good Faith position, I would want to increase the consensus from a 530 to 476 vote. We have nothing to fear," he said, in studying the matter via a committee.

The Rev. Larry Hoop of Iowa Presbytery said that much of the contention over subscription "sounded more like interpersonal issues. Before we do any more study on the book of order, let's take some time to rebuild relationships."

Dr. Ferguson concluded the debate by saying that with regard to "perfecting" language, "there's no question that people are already debating the language. . . . No one of us really knows what those words in themselves really mean. . . . I don't believe we will have enough information until we see the matter in practice."

The Assembly, by a larger margin than on the previous vote, denied Overtures 8 and 16.

Effort to Defeat 'Good Faith' Subscription in the Presbyteries Comes Up Just Short Switch of Three Individual Votes Would Have Altered Outcome

An effort to defeat "Good Faith" subscription in the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) failed. With all 64 presbyteries reporting, the subscription amendment, also known as Item 2, garnered the affirmative votes of 45 of the middle judicatories, with 19 votes in opposition. Consent by two-thirds (43) of the presbyteries was necessary in order for the amendment to be considered by the 2003 General Assembly.

The proposal's proponents touted the measure as one which would bring unity and peace. However, that goal seemed to be elusive, as across the PCA, the debate raged, highlighting the divided nature of the church. Within the presbyteries, there were many highly-divided votes. Moreover, three presbyteries reversed themselves; and there were formal efforts in at least five other presbyteries to have them change their votes, and informal discussions among men in at least four more toward the same end.

So close was the contest that a switch of just three individual votes within three presbyteries would have altered the outcome. In Northern New England Presbytery, the vote was 7-6-1; in Potomac Presbytery, the final vote was 29-28; and in Blue Ridge Presbytery, the tally was 17-15. If there had been a one-vote switch toward the negative in each of those three presbyteries, Item 2 would have been defeated.

Adding up the votes in all of the presbyteries also showed the lack of consensus in support of Item 2. The final tallies indicated that 1446 (59%) voted for the amendment, 899 (37%) voted against, and 101 (4%) abstained.

Balloting within several of the presbyteries was marked by confusion and turmoil. In Covenant Presbytery, the court voted in February 40-34-0 in favor; the matter was reconsidered, and then the amendment was approved, 42-33-3. However, in May, Covenant rescinded its prior approval, 28-24-4, and then voted against the amendment, 20-33-4. In Potomac Presbytery in February, the tally initially was 34-28-6; the motion was declared lost, because Potomac historically has counted abstentions as part of the total vote, and, with the abstentions, there would not have been a majority of all votes cast. However, when that procedure was challenged, the Rev. David Coffin moved to reconsider the matter, so that there could be a re-vote. When the new vote was taken, the measure carried, 34-28-2. In June, Potomac voted to rescind its prior approval of the amendment, 30-28; and subsequently voted once more for the amendment, 29-28.

In Southern New England Presbytery, a meeting was called for April 8th in order to consider rescinding approval of the amendment; however, when strong objection was lodged to having a called meeting, that meeting was called off. At its May stated meeting, a motion to rescind was defeated, and its original vote of 16-10 was allowed to stand. In Southern Florida Presbytery, a motion to rescind was defeated by about a two-to-one margin, reflecting the original vote in favor, 24-12.

In Siouxlans Presbytery, a motion to rescind was placed on the docket for the April stated meeting, but was never called up.

Besides Covenant Presbytery, the other court which reversed prior approval and voted against the amendment was one of the Korean presbyteries. Originally, Korean Capital had voted in favor, 21-0-0; but in April, it voted against, 4-17-4.

On the other side of the ledger, Northern Illinois, which had voted against the measure in October (8-13-2), finally gave its blessing to Item 2. In January, a motion to rescind seemingly carried, 21-20-2; but the Moderator, upon challenge, ruled that the abstentions should count as part of the total, and that a majority had not carried the motion. However, in April, the court once again voted, and this time approved the amendment, 20-4-2.

The amendment accordingly went to the floor of the 31st General Assembly, where a simple majority had to approve in order to enact it. By a vote of 816-545, the General Assembly gave its blessing to "Good Faith" subscription. (See article on page 2.)

PCA General Assembly Votes for Pastoral Letter on Racism and the Gospel

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 12, 2003)—The 31st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) today voted to direct the Mission to North America (MNA) Committee to draft a pastoral letter on racism and the gospel. The vote to adopt Overture 17 from Nashville Presbytery, as amended, was overwhelming.

However, approval did not come without a fight. The Bills & Overtures (B&O) Committee itself was divided on the question, having voted 24-13-1 to adopt the overture; and a minority report in opposition was also before the court.

Representing the minority was Ruling Elder Hugh Sung of Philadelphia Presbytery. Reflecting on his own experiences of having been discriminated against as one of Korean descent, Mr. Sung, poignantly at times, proclaimed that the radical nature of the gospel precluded the adoption of worldly standards of culture. "Our identity should be primarily spiritual and not cultural."

The Rev. Bruce O'Neill spoke against the minority's substitute motion. Confessing himself to be a son of the South, and descended from a slave owner, he claimed, "We still have tremendous things we have to get over." He also confessed "the racism of my own heart."

Favoring the minority report was the Rev. Bob Slimp of Palmetto Presbytery, who stated that the unity which believers have in Christ "has been emphasized at this Assembly again and again." Instead of relying upon the words of mere men who would write such a pastoral letter, "we should depend upon prayer."

The Rev. George Robertson of Missouri

Presbytery argued against the substitute and in favor of the overture, which he said simply says that racism



Rev. Brent Bradley of Kingsport, Tennessee, was a signatory to the minority report.

is contrary to the gospel. He excoriated those who believe that there was some righteousness in slavery and that there is warrant for segregation.

As time on debate on the substitute motion expired, Mr. Sung stated that "the church is called to rule her people in spiritual matters and spiritual needs.

Our God is able to break down all these barriers." He urged the commissioners "to find a better way—to call upon our God and not look upon these problems as the world does."

The minority report was voted down, and the debate continued on the main motion, which was to adopt Overture 17. The Rev. Howard Davis of Louisiana Presbytery alleged: "It's obvious if you look at any of our churches in the PCA that racism is a problem."

Opposing the motion, Ruling Elder Jim Mezzanotte of Central Carolina Presbytery noted that his granddaughter is half African-American. "If there is any prejudice in our hearts, we pray that the Lord would remove it. Let's not write something. Let's leave here and go out and do something about it."

The Rev. Cal Boroughs of Tennessee Valley Presbytery argued for the overture: "What is at stake here is the proclamation of the gospel in its integrity." He claimed that the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America in 1861 stated that the African race in the midst of us can never be elevated in the scale of being. He continued: "There are published remarks that there are those who believe the races should be separate."

The last word in the debate went to Committee Chairman Don Clements, who spoke proudly of the good work of all the members of the Committee, including those in the minority on this issue who had helped to perfect the language. He said that the MNA Committee needs to pay close attention to the precise language which the B&O Committee had proposed, and what language had been left out.

Rationale for the Minority Report

We affirm in the strongest possible terms that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).

The truth of our denominational position on the issue of the gospel and race is not in doubt; we must show the full measure of Christ's love to the whole world. (Gal 3:26-29, Eph.2:14-18, Col 3:11, Matt 28:18-20, John 3:16, etc.)

We further believe that the most effective way to address issues between the races is by declaring the whole counsel of God, with all the imperatives of the gospel. We make this statement to show that it is possible to disagree about how the church should deal with these issues for reasons other than that one is a "racist" – i.e. a desire to safeguard the spirituality of the church, etc.

However we remain convinced that this overture is

fatally flawed for the following reasons:

1. Scripture clearly teaches that Christ has broken down the middle wall of separation between the races and that in Christ, all Christians are reconciled to God in one body. (Eph. 2:14) In Christ the divisions between the races are destroyed and in him all believers are one. (Gal. 3:28) The overture, on the other hand, seeks to define and address believers merely according to their race.
2. "Racism" is implicitly defined and addressed in the overture only in the very limited and parochial sense originally addressed in the statement on racism adopted at the 30th GA. This ignores the reality that treating people in an ungodly fashion because of their race is a sin that afflicts all races and nations equally (cf. Acts 6) and is not merely a problem of

one race or another.

3. There is a danger of encouraging so-called "minority congregations" to remain so in an ungodly sense – in effect, narrowing the door of the gospel to redefine admission according to cultural terms, rather than allowing the Lord to work providentially to allow any given church to grow beyond boundaries artificially imposed by culture, and limiting views of our true identities as new creations (2 Co 5:12).
4. The overture allows the concerns of the culture to determine the concerns of the church. Our fear is that once the church embarks upon this course, it will become a normative practice. We remind the Assembly that some mainline denominations spent the *majority* of their time addressing cultural issues rather than confining themselves to the ecclesiastical business of the church.

Lynchburg, Virginia

Interested in working with a new confessional and evangelical Reformed Presbyterian Church?

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General Assembly Seeks Consensus on Recording Exceptions in Minutes

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 12, 2003)—The knotty issue of the recording of exceptions in the minutes of presbyteries was once again before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Through a set of amendments to the Rules of Assembly Operation (RAO) dubbed the Chapell-Clements Compromise, and also the Virginia-Missouri Compromise, the Assembly has now required that “Presbytery minutes shall record ministers’ and ministerial candidates’ stated differences with our Standards, that the presbytery approves as doctrinal exceptions.” The Assembly also added the following statement to the RAO: “Neither the report of the committee [i.e., the Committee on the Review of Presbytery Records] nor the General Assembly’s approval or disapproval of this report establishes doctrinal precedent.”

The proposal was forwarded by the Bills & Overtures (B&O) Committee, which had recommended the accommodation on a vote of 27-6-2. Dr. David Coffin immediately moved a substitute, that the Assembly respond to Overture 5 from Illiana, Eastern Canada, North Florida,

and Blue Ridge Presbyteries in the negative. The Fairfax, Virginia, pastor stated that the change in the RAO “is in fact contrary to Chapter 40” of the *Book of Church Order (BCO)*, which speaks of the review of records, as well as contrary to other Constitutional provisions. Furthermore, with regard to the language regarding not establishing doctrinal precedent, Dr. Coffin averred: “I find this language as somewhat marvelous. A precedent is a ground for a future action.” In his view, if the Assembly rules in a particular way on a matter, “we are required to act in the same way.”

However, the substitute was defeated, and debate continued on the main motion.

The Rev. Jonathan Inman of Western Carolina Presbytery moved an amendment, to strike the last clause in the first proposed change to the RAO (“that the presbytery approves doctrinal exceptions”). The Asheville pastor argued that not only would this be a simpler rule, but that it would also ensure that those stated differences would be recorded, even if a presbytery did not regard

them as “doctrinal exceptions.”

Arguing against this amendment was Dr. Robert Ferguson, who said that eliminating this clause would clutter up the minutes and make it harder for the review committee to do its job. He also said that “what we should be reviewing is not what a brother said at a presbytery, but what action a court has taken.”

Mr. Inman’s amendment was heavily defeated, and then the main motion was adopted. The Assembly also, by reference to this action, answered Overture 6 from New Jersey Presbytery and Overture 20 from Westminster Presbytery, which proposed amending the *BCO* regarding subscription and exceptions.

The next item of business was handling Overture 18 from Covenant Presbytery, which proposed only the first of the RAO changes. The B&O Committee had recommended, 21-16-0, to answer that overture in the negative, and with no debate, that recommendation carried.

Assembly Clarifies Committees’ Role Regarding Presbytery Overtures

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 11, 2003)—The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) General Assembly today clarified what power committees of commissioners have to amend presbytery overtures.

After an extensive debate, the Assembly voted that such committees may propose “amendments intended to further the stated intent of the originating body.” However, the Assembly rejected the normal parliamentary standard that any amendments must be “germane,” since that term can encompass amendments which are “hostile” to the intention of the presbytery which has sent in the overture.



Dr. David Coffin pleads with the Assembly.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM TE DAVID COFFIN TO ELDERS SERVING ON COMMITTEES OF COMMISSIONERS TO THE 31st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[Editor’s note: The issue of whether Bills & Overtures (B&O) Committee may amend presbytery overtures caused quite a stir at the 2002 PCA General Assembly. One of the denomination’s recognized parliamentary experts, the Rev. David Coffin, went to the extraordinary length of challenging the orderliness of the B&O Committee report, for its failure to honor the long-standing practice of allowing for such amendments. The Assembly sustained the ruling of the Moderator, that the B&O report should not be ruled out of order. In an open letter sent by email just prior to the 2003 General Assembly, Dr. Coffin openly pleads for commissioners to reconsider and weigh carefully the arguments.—Ed.]

Fathers and Brothers,

I write today to those of you serving on committees of commissioners to the 31st General Assembly to urge you to maintain your right to offer germane amendments to overtures considered by your committee. I urge this upon you in spite of the fact that the Stated Clerk will instruct you otherwise, and in spite of the fact that the Moderator of the 30th General Assembly was sustained, upon the Stated Clerk’s advice, in ruling to the contrary. You have the right and responsibility to exercise independent judgment in this matter. Our rules and long established practice permit this wise—this essential—work, and nothing in *Robert’s Rules* can be fairly construed to say otherwise.

Attached is a brief paper that sets forth the ground for the position I advocate, as well as a copy of the point of order I raised concerning this matter at the last General Assembly, and a copy of the protest that I registered upon the denial of the point of order. You will also want to read the paper of the committee appointed by the Assembly to respond to my protest (*M30GA* (2002), Appendix O). With respect to this last, please note that the paper was improperly included in the minutes of the 30th General Assembly, since it was never approved by that Assembly. Please note also that the committee’s answer offered 5 pages in response to my single paragraph, and, in my judgment, is marred by factual mistakes and *non sequiturs*, and improperly goes well beyond responding to the protest by addressing matters I never raised in that protest.

If you are persuaded by this argument, and do offer germane amendments, please be aware of your rights in the matter. If the chairman rules such a motion out of order, you have the right to appeal the judgement of the chair. Should the chair be sustained, you have the right to have your negative vote recorded in the minutes, noting that you continue with the work under protest. The critical point is this, for those who are persuaded by the attached arguments, you must not acquiesce in this mistaken ruling, for the error is given further legitimacy if it is unchallenged. To legitimize this error is to allow a significant rule to be changed merely by a reinterpretation imposed by political force.

Further, please be careful to inquire whether “The Manual of Operations for Committees of Commissioners” continues to read: “The Committee may propose amendments to the overture, when it deems such would improve the statement, if adopted by the Assembly.” (C.3.c., p. 3) If it does not, you may ask at whose direction and by what authority it has been changed. If it is asserted that minor amendments may be offered, but not substantial amendments, you may inquire as to where in the rules this distinction is authorized.

Please note: clearly, under our rules, amendments cannot introduce new business. However, just as clearly, germane amendments are not only lawful, but proper as a wholesome part of the process of achieving consensus in disputed matters. Robert’s Rules defines the standard as follows: “[A]n amendment must be *germane* to be in order. To be *germane*, an amendment must *in some way involve* the same question that is raised by the motion to which it is applied. A secondary amendment must relate to the primary amendment in the same way. An amendment cannot introduce an independent question; but an amendment can be hostile to, or even defeat, the spirit of the original motion and still be germane.” *RRO*, sect. 12, pp. 129-30.

I urge this course today because in my judgment there is no more critical issue with respect to the preservation of biblical Presbyterianism in our Assembly than to preserve the only forum available where real deliberation, debate and conscientious compromise are possible at the Assembly level. Please read and consider these matters carefully and prayerfully.

If you have any questions concerning this issue, please do not hesitate to write to dfc@nhpca.org or to call 703-385-9056. Your servant in Christ, TE David F. Coffin, Jr.

PCA Votes to Favor Church Union

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 11, 2003)—With no debate, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) General Assembly overwhelmingly approved the unanimous recommendation of its Interchurch Relations Committee of Commissioners to adopt an overture from Philadelphia Presbytery which expresses that the PCA is “desirous of entering into conversations with [NAPARC denominations] with a view toward Church union.” The overture also directs the Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee “to initiate conversations with equivalent NAPARC Churches’ committees with a view toward Church union.”

General Assembly Cites Presbytery Regarding Doctrine of the Trinity

Charlotte, North Carolina (June 11, 2003)—The 31st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) today voted to reject the response of Southern Florida Presbytery to an exception to its minutes taken last year with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity. The issue revolves around a candidate’s rejection of the historic affirmations of the Holy Spirit’s eternal procession from the Father and the Son.

Presenting the recommendation to find Southern Florida’s response inadequate was the Chairman of the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (CRPR), the Rev. Ted Trefsgar of New Jersey Presbytery. The CRPR recommended a pastoral-type letter to be sent to Southern Florida.

Leading off the debate from the floor was a ruling elder from Pacific Northwest Presbytery who serves on the CRPR. He noted that he was the last one on the Committee to be persuaded of the necessity of the recommendation. However, two reasons convinced him: 1. the position which the man in question espouses is not even the Greek Orthodox position; 2. the Presbytery doesn’t even think it’s an exception.

Ruling Elder Tom Bingham of Iowa Presbytery asked the Moderator whether the motion from CRPR was in order, given the action just taken to approve “Good Faith” subscription. The chair ruled that it was.

Dr. D. Clair Davis, who had at last year’s Assembly strongly supported taking exception to Southern Florida’s minutes in order to find out what the candidate was advocating, this year spoke against the CRPR’s recommendation. “In my judgment, the burden of proof is on the presbytery records committee, . . . not on the Presbytery.” He also suggested that a full-fledged evaluation of this doctrine should involve the Mission to the World Committee, which is working in countries with a heavy Eastern Orthodox influence. He stated: “I’m very surprised, frankly, that this matter has been pinpointed” by CRPR.

The Rev. Jeff Hutchinson of Western Carolina Presbytery, a member of CRPR, stated that the “tone of this letter [proposed by CRPR] shows that we regard Southern Florida brothers as brothers.” However, “if we do not guard this doctrine, we will be breaking fellowship with our brothers around the world.” He stated: “Clearly, the doctrine strikes at the fundamentals in many ways.” In his view, this view “would eviscerate our Confession of Faith. This man would have to take exception to whole portions of our Confession of Faith,” including with how the gospel came to believers in the Old Testament era.

The motion to reject Southern Florida’s response carried overwhelmingly.

In Other Action . . .

In other action, the 31st PCA General Assembly:

Declared that “Nothing done by the previous General Assembly compels any court of original jurisdiction to exercise discipline on issues pertaining to the report of the Ad-Interim Committee on Women in Military.” This was in response to Overtures 1 (Potomac) and 3 (Chesapeake).

Voted down all overtures seeking to modify the election procedures at General Assembly.

Answered Overture 19 from Philadelphia and Rocky Mountain

Presbyteries by a statement that affirms that marriage is monogamous and heterosexual, and that states that “the Scriptures warn of the danger to any nation that defies God’s law regarding the family.”

Editorially corrected BCO 58-5 regarding the words of institution for the Lord’s Supper, and also sent down an amendment to the same section, granting flexibility in the wording of institution.

Encouraged two sister presbyteries “to discuss any matters of dispute between them.”

Heard On The Floor

“Shuttle buses—as Billy Graham would say, ‘Your buses will wait.’”—Stated Clerk Roy Taylor.

“The first question they ask is, ‘Where’s Nebraska?’, the second question is, ‘Why would anyone go to Nebraska?’, and the third question is, ‘Whatever happened to the Nebraska football team?’ I don’t know the answer to the third question, I shouldn’t have to answer the first question, but I’d like to tell you the answer to the second question.”—Bart Moseman, RUF campus minister at the University of Nebraska.

“It’s the home of Krispy Kream donuts and the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., and a friend told me when I moved there, ‘Kevin, it’d be good not to be addicted to either one.’”—Kevin Teasley regarding Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

“And Mr. Dunahoo, I have a chocolate chip cookie for you—you came in at exactly 15 minutes, and I thank you for that.”—Joel Belz, commending the CE/P Coordinator for keeping to the allotted time.

“Good morning, fathers and brethren, and fellow sleepyheads.”—Dan King, Chairman of Ridge Haven Committee of Commissioners, at 8:10 AM.

“We are really excited, . . . because we are going to be in a position to get one of those famous Moderator cookies.”—Mo up de Graaf, Ridge Haven Coordinator, prior to keeping his report to 15 minutes.

“Forgive me, fathers, for I have sinned: I already got my cookie because they were up there.”—Roy Taylor.

“If I could call for a minute of personal privilege.”—Peter Lillback. “That would help us solve so many problems. If you wonder about why we’ve been huddling—usually, we panic when we’re running behind; right now, we’re running ahead and we’re trying to figure out what to plug in.”—Joel Belz. “Well, then I’ll take two minutes.”—Peter Lillback.

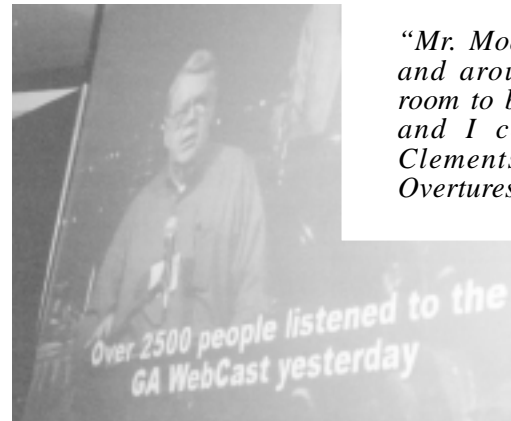
“Yes, Lord—I’m talking to the Assembly, I’ll get back to you in a minute.”—Roy Taylor, hanging up the telephone which rang as he was addressing the Assembly.



CE/P Coordinator Dr. Charles Dunahoo proudly claims one of the Moderator’s famous chocolate cookies.

“Mr. Moderator, I looked around and around to find the makeup room to be in front of the camera, and I couldn’t find it.”—Don Clements, Chairman of Bills & Overtures Committee.

Don Clements, head of Metokos Ministries, appears on the big screen.

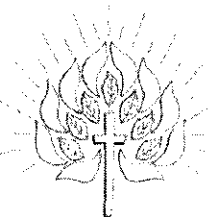


“In this part of the document, as hard as I looked, I couldn’t find any omnibus motions.”—Don Clements, reflecting on the fact that none of his Committee’s recommendations was unanimous.

“The vote was 27-7-4. I wouldn’t call it a miracle, but pretty close to it.”—Robert Ferguson, member of the Bills & Overtures Committee.

“The much-ignored mike in the corner here.”—a commissioner at microphone 13.

“Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints....”



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Scenes from Charlotte . . .

hostess to
the 31st
General
Assembly



The Charlotte skyline



A downtown plaza in the
Queen City of the Carolinas



The name of the local trolley evokes memories
of Charlotte's gold rush days.



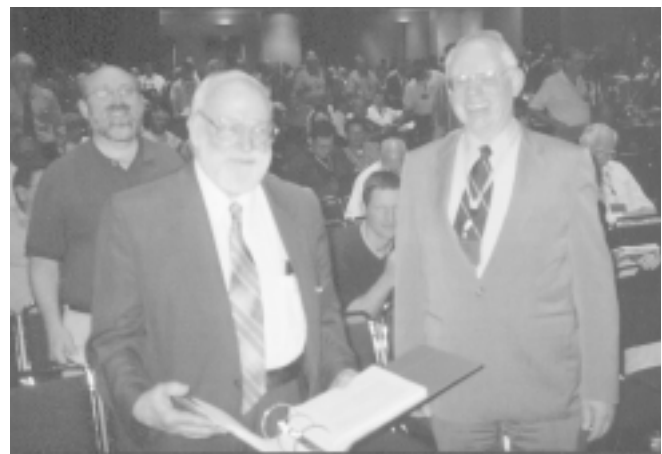
A Charlotte street corner boasts various
sculptures which celebrate the city's past.



Downtown Charlotte offers shady
streets and delightful restaurants.



Stated Clerk Roy Taylor, newly elected Moderator
Joel Belz, and retiring Moderator Skip Ryan



Dr. Morton H. Smith and Dr. Paul Gilchrist, the
PCA's two former stated clerks, find themselves
voting on the same side.



Eastern Canada's Stated Clerk Don
Codling is joined at the microphone by
John Owen Butler, Stated Clerk of the
former Mid-America Presbytery.



Ed Hackenberg and Bingy Moore
flank Moderator pro tem
Sam Duncan.



Bill Leuzinger of Abingdon, Virginia, seeks
reconciliation between presbyteries.



Led by a worship team, including two guitarists and a lady playing the bongo drums, the 31st General Assembly celebrates its Presbyterian heritage.



Two worship leaders get caught up in the spirit of the worship service.



Members of the Standing Judicial Commission take solemn vows.



Amidst a flutter of red cards, the 31st PCA General Assembly casts another vote.

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Strategic Planning Sub-Committee Makes Radical Proposals

By Robert Shapiro

The Strategic Planning Sub-Committee is proposing radical initiatives for consideration by the full Strategic Planning Committee, and for adoption by the Administrative Committee and the General Assembly. Among the proposals are the following: a review every five years whereby the General Assembly would vote on whether a particular committee or agency "should continue to be able to solicit the support of the denominations churches as an authorized committee/agency of the Presbyterian Church in America"; prohibiting representatives of churches "that do not give at least 2% of their operating budget to denominational committees/agencies" from voting on this question; and placing more power in the hands of the Administrative Committee, which would be charged with securing "the services of a panel of highly qualified, godly individuals who can objectively

evaluate the work of the committees/agencies and render a report to the administrative committee."

In a cover letter to the full Committee, Sub-committee Chairman Dr. Frank Brock writes: "Your sub-committee has been faithfully meeting by telephone conference for an hour and a half every two weeks since General Assembly. As the deadline approaches to render a report to the Administrative Committee in March 2004, we need to call a meeting of the full committee.

"In light of the strategic priorities developed and disseminated at the 2003 GA, 'Being Revived + Bringing Reformation,' the sub-committee submits five realistic initiatives that would be the *first steps* [emphasis in the original] toward realizing the PCA Strategic Priorities. (We may have further recommendations by February 27th.)"

Committee members are urged to respond

promptly by email as to whether they can meet in Atlanta on February 27th. The letter also says, "Please give us your comments", and provides three blank lines for such.

Besides Dr. Brock, the other members of the Sub-committee are Dr. Will Barker, Dr. Ligon Duncan, Mr. Harry Pinner, Dr. Roy Taylor, Mr. Jim Wert, Mr. John White, and Mr. Jack Williamson.

[*Note: as a public service, P&R News is happy to provide to our readers this interim report in its entirety (see below). And, in order to facilitate feedback from across the denomination, we are also providing, at the end of the report, the contact information for the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee.*

For editorial comment on the report, see "Questions and Concerns Regarding the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee Report" on page 12.]

Interim Report of the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee

December 8, 2003

First Initiative – Funding

Rationale for the first initiative

Since most churches have different levels of ability to support the PCA denominational causes and since the existing system of per capita giving assumes the opposite, a new more equitable non-per capita system needs to be developed. We recommend a change from a per capita asking (Partnership Shares) to a proportional giving plan.

The benefits of proportional giving include more equitable funding between committees and agencies, additional incentives/benefits to supporting churches, and a uniform system of reporting operating budgets. (This system for distribution is based on operating budgets that are developed using the same assumptions and criteria.)

A further benefit is greater proportionality between church resources and denominational/presbytery giving. Many initiatives are best supported at the presbytery level.

The benefits of belonging to a denomination can only materialize when member churches individually and collectively support the work of the committees/agencies of the denomination and trust those elected to oversee the effectiveness of committees. Such trust and support is especially important to the Administrative Committee, which serves the denomination as a whole – churches, presbyteries, and general assembly.

The Administrative Committee can serve the denomination best by collecting and analyzing data, helping the denomination develop strategic denominational priorities, coordinating efforts between agencies, disseminating "best practices" to churches and presbyteries, etc. Such important behind the scene activities cannot be supported with the funding

presently being received. Since the activities of the Administrative Committee are largely unseen, it is difficult to raise money for the work that is currently being done and projects that should be done which are of vital and strategic importance to the denomination as a whole.

Initiative

The denomination should ask churches to tithe their offerings received. Five percent, or half of this tithe, would go to the denomination's committees and agencies. Five percent, the other half of the tithe, would go to the local presbyteries. "Offering received" would exclude capital expenditures and special gifts, such as building programs.

Second Initiative – Organization

Rationale for the second initiative

In the course of the strategic planning process, as we requested input from Presbyteries, there were a number of suggestions made regarding the committees and agencies. Examples of such suggestions include making Ridge Haven Conference Center a responsibility of regional presbyteries rather than the entire denomination, establishing synods to accomplish regional ministries, making church planting a regional presbytery responsibility, combining MNA and MTW, incorporating the work of CE & P in Covenant Seminary and Covenant College, making the PCA Foundation part of RBI and combining PCA Foundation, RBI and the AC/SC into one Ministry Committee.

Other issues were raised during the planning process, such as a feeling of disenfranchisement (by both some large and small churches), cultural non-awareness, leadership training, alternate credentialing and growth of ethnically targeted churches, current meeting designs/processes and women's issues.

The General Assembly represents the entire denomination and is charged with oversight of the denomination's committees and agencies. The General Assembly must have a way to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of all PCA committees and agencies, both in accomplishing their individually assigned roles and mission, as well as in how they work in combination with other committees/agencies in accomplishing the mission of the PCA. *Effectiveness* criteria need to include the denominational strategic priorities identified by the General Assembly. *Efficiency* criteria need to include cost effectiveness and coordination between agencies and minimization of duplicated effort.

Initiative

The Administrative Committee needs to secure the services of a panel of highly qualified, godly individuals who can objectively evaluate the work of the committees/agencies and render a report to the administrative committee. This committee should be charged with the following:

- Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of committees and agencies regarding their respective roles assigned to them by general assembly,
- Evaluate how the committees and agencies relate to one another toward accomplishment of the mission of the PCA, and
- Develop a system of periodic external review (peers, consultants, constituents)

Knowing that any planning process requires continued oversight and encouragement to enable full participation and success, we propose those responsibilities be given to the Administrative Committee along with additional funding which would be factored into the formula used in Initiative One.

Until the assembly empowers and funds the administrative committee to oversee these activities, the strategic planning committee should continue its work as long as resources permit.

(Continued on next page)

Third Initiative – Structure

Rationale for the third initiative

Currently, the primary way that churches have of expressing approval or dissatisfaction with the work of committees and agencies is by giving or withholding financial support. On the other hand, committees and agencies often feel that they are unable to accomplish their tasks because of lack of support. The denomination needs to provide the committees and agencies the financial support necessary to serve the denomination without having to spend excessive resources in fund raising. This initiative would address two perennial complaints:

- complaints from churches that the committees/agencies are ineffective
- complaints from the committees and agencies that they are not adequately funded to do their job.

The BCO and RAO need to be amended to provide those churches that support committees/agencies the opportunity to vote on whether to continue or sever the relationship between the General Assembly and the committee/agency. Representatives of churches that do not give at least 2% of their operating budget to denominational committees/agencies will be ineligible to vote. Such votes will be by paper ballot that will be in each eligible commissioner's packet and will occur on the first full business day of each general assembly.

The BCO and RAO need to be amended to provide that every year general assembly commissioners will vote as to whether a particular committee or agency should continue to be able to solicit the support of the denomination's churches as an authorized committee/agency of the Presbyterian Church in America. Such votes shall be scheduled by the Administrative Committee in such a way that each committee/agency will come up for a vote every five years.

Any committee or agency that does not receive a minimum of 25% of the commissioners voting for the committee/agency to continue as a PCA committee/agency is automatically put on probation for one year. A second vote will be scheduled for the following year. If the committee or agency fails to receive 35% of the vote the following year, it will cease to be a committee or agency of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Fourth Initiative – leadership and training

Rationale for the fourth initiative

Biblical church government calls for ruling and teaching elder leadership but there is a lack of ruling elder participation sometimes at the local church level, often at the presbytery level and, especially, at the general assembly level. In addition, because of actions in various PCA church courts, it appears that the body is sometimes confused about the distinctive PCA polity.

We need to reaffirm PCA polity (governance) and have comprehensive training in polity, as expressed in our eight preliminary principles found in the preface to the BCO. "The power of all church courts in PCA is exclusively moral and spiritual. This spiritual power is completely separate from, and is to be kept separate from, civil coercive power, just as planets moving in concentric orbits BCO 3-4:"

Active informed ruling elder involvement is necessary for the health of the entire church in matters of doctrine, polity, spiritual vitality and cultural engagement. The goal of this initiative is increased participation by ruling elders in all aspects of church life according to gifts, recognizing differences in gifts and roles.

Initiative

The responsibility for ruling elder training and participation should be given the Administrative Committee, which should work toward the following goals:

- Strive to assure greater proportional representation between TE's and RE's in presbytery and general assembly.
- Have minimum training standards prior to ordination for RE's. Include in this training education on the need for denominational awareness and participation
- Have PCA curriculum available for training RE's and TE's.
- Provide general member training in PCA polity
- Provide a short course for spouses of RE's and TE's.

Fifth Initiative – the next generation

Rationale for the fifth initiative

A key to the future effectiveness of the PCA is the passing on of the heritage received by this generation of leaders to the next generation. This will involve deploying our denominational resources to help the rising generation realize the goals of Christ in this world and the Spirit's gifts for accomplishing these goals. There are many methods to stimulate the next generation: vacation Bible school, retreats and conferences, youth ministers, Reformed University Ministries, Covenant College, Covenant Seminary.

Covenant Seminary needs to take the lead in putting together a high level committee with representatives of CE & P, Covenant Seminary and Covenant College to address the concerns represented in this initiative. The responsibilities of this committee would include:

- Gathering and analyzing data to better pinpoint where we are doing well in reaching the next generation.
- Challenging our youth on the various callings in the kingdom and with regard to the cultivation of the gifts needed for these callings
- Ensuring that the church is talking in relevant ways to the oncoming culture
- Reaching multi-ethnic youth

Contact Information for the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee

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PCA Congregation Announces That Women Will Serve as Deacons

According to the official web site of New Hope Presbyterian Church, San Diego, California, that congregation will have women serve as deacons. In the section on Nomination Forms, the congregation states that women are invited "wholeheartedly . . . to exercise their gifts for ministry in the church. The only area in which we do not allow women to serve is in the role of elder or pastor."

The official document takes to task both "progressives" who "will use a few verses to say that women can do anything and everything"; and "Traditionalists" who "because of fear of departing from familiar practices and/or fear of the 'slippery slope' will use a few verses to prohibit women from serving in capacities that scripture clearly allows. We have decided to try and draw boundaries where they are biblically clear, and to allow women the freedom to serve in areas made clear by scripture. This means, that, by conviction, we will not allow women to be elders/pastors, but will allow them to hold the office of deacon." The document appends a theological paper by Dr. Robert Strimple, a minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary in California, which the church says "is an excellent piece that provides a rationale for opening the office of deacon to women."

The full information regarding the church's female church officers can be found on the worldwide web at <http://www.newhopesandiego.com>.

New Hope Presbyterian, pastored by the Rev. John D. Tinnin, is a member of South Coast Presbytery. The congregation identifies itself with Mission San Diego, a partnership with other area PCA congregations.

The developments in California parallel others on the East Coast. The Village Church, located in lower Manhattan and a daughter church of New York City's Redeemer Presbyterian Church, currently lists five ruling elders—all male; and five deacons—all female (Tara Hawks, Kristy Johnson, Karen Lacy, Carol Roman, and Brita Rose).

*The Rev. John D. Tinnin, Pastor
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www.newhopesandiego.com*

*The Rev. Sam Andreades, Pastor
The Village Church
(212)808-4460, ext. 151; thevillagechurch@att.net
www.villagechurchnyc.com*



Business Administrator John Robertson holds up a copy of *PCA by Faith*, the proposed new denominational magazine. Previously the responsibility of Christian Education & Publications, the development of such a magazine has for several years been under the auspices of the Administrative Committee.

Editorials and Letters

Questions and Concerns Regarding the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee Report

As noted in the memo to the Strategic Planning Committee, the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee may have more proposals for the full Committee at its meeting on February 27, 2004. But even based on what we've seen, we are more than a little concerned about the direction in which the Sub-Committee wants to take our denomination.

For example, the entire concept of having this two-tier system of voting is reprehensible. Perhaps in political utopias there may be a distinction made between those who are equal and those who are more equal than others—but we don't think that this notion should apply in the church.

Moreover, it is totally un-Presbyterian to suggest that only certain commissioners should be allowed to vote on matters which come before the court. After all, it was on the basis of the equality of all commissioners that denominational bureaucrats were allowed (by the 2002 General Assembly) to continue to lobby for their political agenda—even to the point of using denominational funds to push the agenda of a certain political pressure group. It would be inconsistent to the point of hypocrisy for those who loudly supported the "rights" of ecclesiastical bureaucrats, to disenfranchise those who, for any number of reasons, have not paid their quota. Quite frankly, this whole approach smacks of simony. (Or, in a light-hearted vein, perhaps we should say it implies, "No representation without taxation.")

But the issue is deeper than that. The suggestion that some commissioners should be excluded on the proposed basis from such an important vote by a Presbyterian General Assembly, is anti-Presbyterian. A Presbyterian General Assembly is not supposed to be a political convention (although we wonder if the left-wing of the PCA has grasped this basic fact). A Presbyterian General Assembly is not

supposed to be, in its essence, a business meeting. It is supposed to be a gathering of elders who come together, under the Lordship of Christ, directed by His Word and Spirit, and bathed in prayer, for the turning of the keys of the kingdom. And no elder, duly certified by the lower court, should be barred from participating in those decisions.

Given the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee's total disregard for Presbyterian polity, the fact that the Administrative Committee would have authority to indoctrinate ministers and elders (and their wives) in the PCA's "unique polity" raises an interesting question: if this proposal is adopted, would the AC be expected to inculcate an anti-Presbyterian polity?

With regard to the proposal that committees and agencies could be cut off from the church, we realize that the Sub-Committee was trying to instill accountability. (Although in view of the fact that three-fourths of the eligible commissioners would have to vote against a committee or agency in order to suspend it, the likelihood of this event ever occurring seems rather remote.) However, the very proposal manifests an un-Biblical understanding of the church, in at least two ways. First, it implies that committees and agencies are appendages which can be cut off from the church at will. That idea, of course, goes directly contrary to the fact that the church is a "body." Secondly, it implies that committees and agencies, rather than being responsible to the General Assembly, are really autonomous. If these committees and agencies were really subject to the General Assembly, then the court, instead of cutting them off, would rein them in by removing recalcitrant members who, for instance, refuse to carry out the plain directives of the Assembly.

Moreover, how would this excision be carried out? Could

the action of one General Assembly be able to amend the Constitution (so as to remove the offending committee or agency from having a representative on the Administrative Committee)? Would the committee's or agency's corporation be allowed to walk away with the assets (as was done with the Investors Fund for Building and Development in 1994)? Indeed, given the nature of not-for-profit corporations, how would the Assembly be able to hold on to such corporations (since the owners are the members of the board, not the denominational corporation or the General Assembly itself)?

We are also concerned about this report, because of its subtle move toward what seems to be virtually a triumvirate. Under this set of proposals, the Administrative Committee (AC) would gain in power, as would Covenant Theological Seminary (both at the expense of Christian Education and Publications, and AC presumably at the expense of the PCA Foundation and PCA Retirement and Benefits, Inc.). Although there is more a hint than an explicit proposal with regard to Mission to the World, the third center of power could very well be a new Missions Committee which would swallow up Mission to North America.

It seems to us that there should be widespread concern that anyone in authority would have the audacity to concoct these preposterous proposals. However, given the complacent and compliant attitude currently manifested in the denomination, we predict that these proposals, couched in seemingly matter-of-fact language, and invoking the personal piety of those in power as self-evident justification for outrageous notions, will eventually be enacted. After all, a church, like a people, gets the type of government that it deserves.

—Frank J. Smith

A Commonwealth, Not an Oligarchy

There is much for which to commend James River Presbytery and the commission which heard a couple of complaints out of one of the congregations back in April (see story under "News from the Presbyteries"). However, we would respectfully take exception to a couple or three of the notions which came to expression in the commission's report.

At one point in the report, the commission says: "Written documents and related papers indicate that a member or members of a committee of James River Presbytery may have begun dialogue with members of the New Covenant Congregation without first obtaining permission from the Session to do so. If this was the case, Session should immediately complain to Presbytery. This is contrary to procedure that our courts are to follow." It is always possible, of course, that any conversation or correspondence might be inappropriate. However, it simply is not the case that conversation or correspondence between members of the congregation and members of the Presbytery, without express permission of the Session, is sinful, rebellious, or a violation of Presbyterian polity.

At another point in the report, the commission says that the ecclesiastical officers "alone are allowed to make governmental decisions as to 'calling in a committee of the Presbytery' and the like. The laity of the body are not qualified or required of God to do this." While it is true that only the Session has the governmental authority in the local church, the commission's statement could be misleading, in this sense, viz., that it might be interpreted to mean that a member of the congregation could never directly approach the Presbytery with allegations of wrongdoing. Such a position, of course, would go against BCO 40, which allows for the use of memorials and other such means.

Perhaps most troubling, however, is the commission's position with regard to whether the complaints were even proper to start with. The commission clearly implies that when a responsible person (such as an elder) who was treated poorly does not complain against that treatment, then no one else may issue a complaint in the matter. Astoundingly, the commission goes on to suggest that a higher court might rule "that complaints made by laymen on behalf of Elders are out of order because of our system of government."

But our Constitution is clear that any matter is complainable by a communicant member in good standing who is subject to the court which has allegedly erred. (The only exception has to do with a judicial matter which is being appealed.) The *Book of Church Order* is thereby reflecting the historic Presbyterian understanding that our polity, which features representative government, does not imply an oligarchical system (rule by a few), but rather is built on the commonwealth model. Or, to use a common Biblical figure, the church is a body, and any member must be heard when it is hurting.

We certainly agree with the commission's perspective that congregational meetings should be rare events, and that the scope of their agendas is necessarily narrow. However, we must be careful not to stretch our rule-by-elders approach beyond what it was intended to be. Yes, let us celebrate our representative government. But let us also make sure that we don't take that to such extremes that we can't listen to the laity and their pleas for help.

Letters

Now that General Assembly is over it is time to stop and reflect on the experience again. It was good to make contact with people I have not seen for some time and also to make contact with people unknown to me in the PCA. It was nice to be able to have some input in the committee of commissioners meeting I was in. It was good

to see all the organizations that had stands set up and see what they are all about. It was good to wrestle with significant issues among us. It was good to worship and be challenged by many who preached and made presentations. It was good again to get an overview of all our ministries and all that is being done by the PCA in our nation and around the world, we gave a lot to be thankful for.

On the negative side, and as I get older I see myself more as a curmudgeon willing to express the negatives, it was very clear to me at this General Assembly that I am able to identify less and less with the mainstream of our denomination. As the culture has passed me by so also, it seems, is the PCA. Yet, I have not moved much, what used to be mainstream is now seen by many as the radical and dangerous fringe.

The way Scripture is interpreted and applied, the way worship is done, the way our Confession of Faith is viewed, and the direction we are going and what we are becoming is more and more foreign to me. Take one philosophical direction that was stressed at this GA, that of diversity.

There is a big emphasis on diversity and the solution to get that diversity is, in my words, to niche market the church. But try as I might, I can't see this is being a good direction for us over time.

Recently a family came back to the PCA after having been in a fast growing congregation in another denomination. The reason for coming back he said as that every bit of growth in the congregation was preceded by some compromise. It had come to the point where he was no longer comfortable with the compromises being made. I don't feel comfortable with a lot of our compromises and wonder how many others are starting to feel uncomfortable too.

A retired minister shared with me at this assembly, a man I had not known prior to meeting him at GA, that he had made it a point to visit all the churches in his Presbytery. He noted that not one church service was the same. I guess he found that a good thing. He wished that he could have seen the variety before he had retired, he might have benefited in his ministry from the ideas. But to me that is a part of the problem, we are losing unity in diversity.

We have had PCA people come into our area and visit us. They often do not stay, but end up at the larger churches of other denominations. We are so different from what they were used to wherever they came from that they are not comfortable with us. Yet, I think I rightly say that we are clearly a Bible based church where people have been saved and grown in the Lord. They could have found great fellowship in the Word and with one another if they could have tolerated the differences.

I had one of our members go to another region of our country and they were almost lost to the PCA because they could find no church that worshipped like we do. I thought that what we did was standard in the Reformed and Presbyterian church, but I guess not. It is this lack of unity that will, in my view, be our down fall. Yet, the whole emphasis of MNA and other GA committees this year was in making each church unique for the people we are trying to reach. We make our congregations so unique, that though we grow, we have no loyalty to one another and generally dislike what others are doing. We are not uniform and this is a problem. The success of the chain store, which is able to succeed in all variety of neighborhoods and ethnic groups, is that you can count on the store to be the same wherever you go. Take Wendy's for example, they do not have a Hispanic menu for Spanish tastes or Indian dishes or Chinese items. They know what they are and they are that consistently in every neighborhood. They did not take the nation by storm by diversity in menu. Wherever you go you know what you are going to get.

It used to be that the regulative principle meant something and you could count on regulating the worship wherever you went. There was an approach to worship and its elements that were common to us. The church had a book of Common Worship. But today there is no common worship and any unity based on a

common vision for worship is being quickly lost among us. The regulative principle regulates little today. As there was a day when every church you went to had the same translation and everyone spoke the same Biblical words, now we are divided over translations. We use different translations, memorize with different translations, quote the same verses to each other and do not recognize the words. So we sing different songs, approach worship in different ways, exegete and apply truths in ways different from those who have gone before us and from one another. This is not good.

Yet I see also see a diversity for new things, but a rejection of what was. In this GA we had so many new songs and tunes it was hard for many of us to catch on. Some services we did not know one tune. Yet the Psalter, which could be a good source of unity in our worship, was neglected for the most part, again. There seems to be a bias to the modern and new over the traditional and tried.

I guess part of my discomfort is over the compromises made in the name of growth, concerned that we have less and less a like mind, concerned that as a family we will begin more and more to not like getting together because we are really so different from one another in areas where we ought to be the same. I would like to see more emphasis on our unity and have certain conformities. We can still have diversity, but can we have at least a few things in common. Do we have to reject so much of the old as we embrace the new? As I have seen PCA people turn up their noses at other PCA congregations considering them unworthy to get to know or attend worship with, that this will be more and more our attitude even at GA level. I am concerned that we are losing many good things because we do not take the time to teach what the good is, but merely give what people naturally like or accept. Can we teach others to appreciate worship done with the regulative principle?

I hear more and more that the ones who hold to doctrinal fidelity and some of the old ways are those who are not evangelistic. I wonder if there are many like me who see another side, that doctrinal truth can be sacrificed for the sake of evangelism. Old ways are being rejected for new ways, though it has not been shown that the new ways are better or that the old ways can't be accepted by new converts. It has never been for

me an either or kind of proposition, either you are doctrinally sound or you are evangelistic. Just the idea of pitting the two against one another is foreign to me. It is always contending for the faith in evangelism and discipleship. But all too often the straw man is brought out, if you are not in line with us, you must not care about souls.

I don't know how this diversity will work out in the end and whether we will be any more successful than our Presbyterian forbears of working through these continual sources of division among us. I hope we can. I just hope that we do not become so diverse that we lose the unity we ought to have. I say this as one who started a Korean congregation and has had very good working relationship with those who were different. But despite the differences, we had so much in common. I hope we can keep what is common despite the differences, but I am beginning to wonder if we will be able to.

Sincerely,
Gary Englestad

June 27, 2003

Brethren,

In a decision announced this past week, the Supreme Court of the United States has determined that homosexual activity conducted within the privacy of one's home is outside the reach of the law. This decision opens the door for all kinds of immoral behavior to be justified now simply because it is taking place in one's private habitation. What is now to stop those practicing, bestiality, polygamy, or using child pornography etc, etc from using the same arguments to protect their 'rights'?

At the same time, the Massachusetts Supreme Court is set to consider a case this summer, which would establish homosexual unions as marriages. Due to a clause in the Constitution, every other state may have to recognize such unions.

In the schools of America today, much like the children of Germany just before the rise of Hitler, the children are being indoctrinated into the new doctrine of 'tolerance'—which is really a mask for hateful INTOLERANCE for anything that is Godly or Biblical. The rise of witchcraft, sorcery, and all methods of the occult are fast becoming the new religious force of our nation. The popularity of Harry Potter alone is one

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PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED NEWS

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News from the Presbyteries

Blue Ridge

April 2003

Grace Covenant Church, Blacksburg, Virginia, hosted the fourth meeting of the Presbytery of the Blue Ridge on April 4-5, 2003. At the worship service, host pastor Gordon Woolard and musicians and singers from the congregation led the time of prayer. The Rev. Will Traub, missionary to Germany, preached a sermon from I Corinthians 1:17-31, entitled "The Cross: The Wisdom and Power of God."

The next day, the Moderator, the Rev. Essen Daley, preached the sermon and administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, assisted by the Rev. Jim Creech.

Treasurer Bill Porter noted that FY2003 income would be 10% short of expected income, and he asked each church to pray and to consider increasing its contribution to the Presbytery's operating fund.

The Rev. Paul Carter of Lexington, Virginia, provided a positive report as fraternal delegate to the meeting of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church's Virginia Presbytery.

The Presbytery voted against Item 1 of the BCO amendments (with regard to assuming original jurisdiction over a minister by the General Assembly), 7-21-2. Presbytery approved the "Good Faith" subscription amendment, 17-15-0, as well as adding "unity" to the ministerial ordination vows (21-9-0) and changing the name of Insurance, Annuities, and Relief (30-0-0).

Presbytery voted to suspend the annual examination of the records of the Stated Clerk for this year since there was an insignificant amount of required/organizational paperwork. It was reported that the Presbytery Prayer Chain would be included in the soon-to-be-developed Presbytery web site.

Presbytery approved as a first reading several amendments to its Standing Rules.

By a vote of 31-1-0, Presbytery adopted an overture asking for changes to the Rules of Assembly Operation.

Presbytery approved the application of Eagle Heights Presbyterian Church, Winchester, Virginia, for \$80,000 from the denomination's Five Million Fund.

Presbytery took under care Mr. Terry Burns, from Trinity Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville, Virginia. The court found that his divorce from his first wife was prior to his conversion and that he is fully qualified for office in the PCA.

Mr. Bradley Wright, who was being called as Assistant Pastor for Youth at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville, preached a trial sermon before the Presbytery. The sermon was approved, and the staff at the Trinity Church was requested to continue to counsel him "in the preparation of Christ-centered sermons." By a three-fourths vote, the candidate's documented service on the youth staff at Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Missouri, and at the Trinity Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville, were accepted as equivalent to an internship. It was moved and seconded to approve the examination as a whole. A substitute motion, however, prevailed: "to sustain all parts except theology; that the examination in theology not be sustained and that the candidate be reexamined at a later date when recommended by the Committee."

The Rev. S. Michael Preg was examined and transferred from Western Carolina Presbytery, based on his call to be the Associate Pastor for Ministries at Trinity Church, Charlottesville.

The Presbytery endorsed the request from Candidate Tripp Sanders for financial aid from Covenant Theological Seminary.

World Missions Committee Chairman Gordon Woolard introduced a young lady from Covenant Presbyterian Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia, who is an approved itinerating missionary who will be serving with Mission to the World on the Arabian Peninsula. Mr. Traub also provided a report on his work in Germany.

The following PresWIC officers have been elected: Angie Pearson, President; Jesse Derey, Vice-President; Sandra Dick, Secretary-Treasurer; and Janice Lindsay, Mercy Chairman. The court approved these officers.

Reports were heard from organizing pastors Essen Daley (Tabernacle Presbyterian, Waynesboro, Virginia) and Doug Hart (Hope Presbyterian, Martinsville, Virginia). Danville and Lynchburg were approved as key sites for Presbytery-led church planting efforts.

It was moved and seconded "to approve the requirement of MNA assessment for [Presbytery] funding." Upon motion, the word "requirement" was changed to

"preference," and the motion, as amended, carried. The Church Planting Committee Chairman presented a proposal from the committee entitled "Funding Plan for Church Planting." The following actions were taken in regards to the document: 1. "to receive this document and give our committee feedback over the next three months, so we can refine our philosophy and strategy, as presented in this paper, and present it for presbytery approval at our meeting July 12"; "to establish a separate presbytery bank account for our committee, for church planting - not to be spent until we have presbytery approval for both our overall philosophy and strategy, and the specific works we want to support"; "to approve establishing MNA-GA accounts for church planting in Danville and Lynchburg - not to be spent until we have presbytery approval to begin these works and for their particular budgets"; "to grant permission for our committee to write and visit the churches of our presbytery in order to present and discuss our vision for church planting, including an appeal for financial support through their local church budgeting"; "to help with funding of a possible intern at Hope Mission, Martinsville up to but not exceeding \$1,000.00."

Ruling Elder Bill Bebout, Chairman of the Collegiate Engagement Committee, prayed for campus ministers John Pearson (Reformed University Ministries [RUM] at Washington & Lee University) and Greg Thompson (RUM at University of Virginia) prior to their reports. The Rev. Drew Trotter gave a brief report on the work of the Christian Study Center, Charlottesville. Chairman Bebout noted that \$4,100 had been given toward the startup of a new Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) chapter at Virginia Tech, and he asked the Presbytery to take time during their personal prayer times to consider and pray about supporting the expansion of RUF chapters within the bounds of the Presbytery.

July 2003

Harvestwood Covenant Presbyterian Church, Floyd, Virginia, hosted the fourth stated meeting of the Presbytery of the Blue Ridge on July 12, 2003. In the absence of the Moderator, the Stated Clerk called the meeting to order. The Rev. Jim Creech was elected Temporary Moderator by acclamation. Mr. Creech officiated the worship service and preached a sermon from Ephesians 1:15-23, entitled "A Ministry of Hope, Riches, and Power." The Rev. Riley Ware of the host church administered the Lord's Supper.

The Treasurer, Ruling Elder Bill Porter, reported that the actually monthly income had become more steady and had stabilized the Presbytery's financial picture. However, there were some significant expenses expected and churches needed to consider an increase in giving. He also stated that additional income would be needed to support an increase in the number of RUF campus outreach projects. The Treasurer's Report was received as information.

Presbytery postponed its second (final) voted on proposed amendments to its Standing Rules until the October meeting, due to lack of a sufficient number of present teaching elders to meet the requirements of the Standing Rules to vote on amendments.

Presbytery recommended that each teaching and ruling elder purchase a copy of the Sinclair Ferguson audiotape from the 2003 Banner of Truth Conference. [The Scottish professor addressed the currently hot topic of justification.]

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia, expressed disagreement with an exception taken to its minutes. The exception was as follows: "The record indicates that TE Joe Slater was elected as 'Standing Moderator' and he continued in this role for the remainder of the year. While BCO 12-4 allows associate and assistant pastors to serve as moderators, BCO 12-2 limits the cases in which this may occur only to emergencies and to prudential reasons by invitation of the pastor." The Session responded: "After review of BCO 12-4 and 12-2, the CPC Session does not agree that this is a valid exception. BCO 12-4 clearly states that an associate or an assistant pastor may substitute for the pastor as moderator of the session 'at the discretion of the pastor and session.' The only restriction given is the discretion of the pastor and session. The Senior Pastor was present at the 9/5/02 meeting and along with the others approved the election of TE (Associate Pastor) Joe Slater as Standing Moderator. As far as BCO 12-2 is concerned, the Session and the Senior Pastor clearly indicated that there were prudent or wise reasons for this decision by their vote of approval. It appears that the determining of 'prudence' in this case resides with the senior pastor and session of the local

church."

Jim Morton provided information on the Presbytery's web site. Its URL will be www.blueridgepres.org.

A complaint signed by 42 members of Valley Presbyterian Church, Narrows, Virginia, had been referred from the Session to the Presbytery. The Presbytery acceded to the Session's request to assume original jurisdiction in this case, and appointed a commission of Presbytery, clothed with judicial powers and authority to adjudicate the case. Ruling Elders Bob Miller, Nat Kelley, and Roger Goughnour, and Teaching Elders Riley Ware, Vic Wolf, and John Kuebler, were elected as members of the commission.

Presbytery received under care Mr. Mick Leary, a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville, Virginia, and Mr. Dwight Basham, a member of Draper's Valley Presbyterian Church, Draper, Virginia.

The Rev. Gordon Woolard reported for the World Missions Committee. A lady member of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia, is currently completing intensive training in New York City prior to deployment to Amman, Jordan. Another lady, a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Blacksburg, Virginia, has been invited to serve as the national recruiter for internationals on the Navigators' staff. The Rev. Will Traub, missionary to Germany, gave a brief statement concerning an MTW Vision Trip to Germany, October 13-24, 2003, with the cost being \$3,500 per person. Mr. Woolard noted that churches throughout the Presbytery were sponsoring numerous short-term mission trips this summer.

Ruling Elder John Bennetch, chairman of the Church Nurture Committee, introduced Mr. Mike Owens, a field representative for Great Commission Publications. He noted that sample packets of the new children's curriculum were available.

Candidate Brad Wright reported on the Presbytery Youth Retreat. Over 450 young people from the Presbytery had participated.

Mrs. Angie Pearson, chairman of the Blue Ridge PresWIC, also gave a report.

Candidate Kyle Kockler preached a trial sermon, which was approved.

The Rev. Jim Creech, acting chairman of the Church Planting Committee, reported on the progress of the Lynchburg and Danville commissions. Core groups, he reported, are in place and coalescing as a team. A tentative selection of a church planter has been identified for the Lynchburg work. The Danville Commission has a candidate but has not made a final decision.

Tabernacle Presbyterian, Waynesboro, Virginia, added 13 members and 6 other individuals are studying for membership.

It was noted that the church plant planned for Roanoke County would be done under the auspices of the Presbytery, rather than as a daughter church of Westminster Presbyterian in the city of Roanoke.

There was a brief report concerning the Virginia Church Planting Network. A Regional Church Planning Vision Retreat was planned for October 22-24, 2003, at the Wintergreen Resort.

A brief update was given regarding the development of a philosophy and strategy for church planting within the Presbytery.

The church plant in Martinsville, Virginia, is going well. The youth group from Westminster Church, Roanoke, was doing building rehab and maintenance and conducting Vacation Bible School there this week.

Chairman Paul Carter gave the report of the Collegiate Engagement Committee. Blue Ridge Presbytery is working jointly with James River Presbytery to establish Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) ministries at Virginia Commonwealth University, William & Mary, and Virginia Tech. Blue Ridge Presbytery presently allocates \$36,000 per year to support RUF and this will have to increase in order adequately to support the expansion of this ministry. At the University of Virginia, about 450 students participate in the weekly large group meeting, and they are beginning to take a larger role in the ministry. Campus minister Greg Thompson is currently working on making greater utilization of small groups in the fall. Campus minister John Pearson noted that at Washington & Lee University, there is an increasing opportunity to minister to the parents of students who were involved in RUF.

Presbytery approved the request for the dissolution of the Stated Supply relationship between Valley Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Dr. Don Clements, effective September 1, 2003. The Rev. Dr. Cortez Cooper was appointed Stated Supply effective the same date. The

part-time call of Dr. Clements as an Evangelist with Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship (PEF) and Director of Metokos Ministries was approved as a full-time call, also effective September 1, 2003.

Mr. Bradley Wright, whose ordination exam had been approved in July in all parts except in the field of theology, appeared again before the Presbytery. His examination was approved. The candidate noted his exceptions to the Westminster Standards, as follows. With regard to Creation, he stated: "The reason I say that I am not convinced of the 6-24 hour day view, as the Westminster Divines were convinced is because I see valid arguments in the other proposed views of the length of each day in the creation account. Even so, I see weaknesses in their arguments and therefore I find myself struggling to discern the clear interpretation of the length of the days in the creation account. Whatever the view, the centrality of the authority and inerrancy of the Scripture will define my thinking and understanding." With regard to the Sabbath, he said: "I am not convinced that the Westminster Divines interpretation of proper Sabbath observance in respect to recreation is accurate. Following the pattern of the Apostles and the teaching we receive in Revelation 1:10, I see the importance and necessity of a day set aside for the corporate worship of God but I do not see how therefore we ought to have nothing to do with recreation. I do think that our practices on the Lord's Day ought to be different than those things we practice lawfully on other days of the week." Presbytery voted that these exceptions "were allowable and did not strike at the vitals of the denomination's system of doctrine."

Presbytery examined and approved Mr. Kyle Kockler for ordination. The candidate read the two statements regarding his exceptions to the PCA Constitution. First, he stated: "Question 109 of the Larger Catechism states that 'the sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion; the making of any representation of God, of all or any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever... The reservation that I have to this catechism question is the fact that it prohibits any making or use of any representation of God for any purpose. I completely agree that no representation of God should be used for worship purposes and that God alone is to be worshipped.'" During questioning the candidate gave as examples of images which might be appropriate pictures in Sunday School curriculum and the popular 'Jesus film' produced by Campus Crusade. Secondly, he stated: "The Larger Catechism question 117 states that 'the Sabbath or the Lord's day is to be sanctified by an holy resting of all day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful.' The reservation that I have with this is the with the word 'recreation'. I believe that the Sabbath is the Lord's Day and therefore should be set aside for worship and rest. However, there are types of recreation that I would consider to be a form of rest and therefore not a violation of the fourth commandment."

It was moved and seconded that the candidate's expressed difference in relation to the definition of "religious images" be found not out of accord with the Westminster Standards. However, a substitute motion, that his views are an allowable exception to the standards that do not strike at the vitals of the system of doctrine, was approved. Presbytery also approved his expressed difference with regard to recreation on the Sabbath.

The following report of the Committee on Thanks was approved:

*As God's rain has greened your land,
As his Son has bloomed these hills,
Certainly a harvest of bounty is near at hand.
Nehemiah told the church, "This day is holy to the Lord
your God. Eat the fat, drink the sweet wine and send
portions to those who have none ready."
Harvestwood Church, you have prepared and shared
generous portions with us. Our feast of fellowship and
food with you has been both rich and sweet.
May this be an appetizer of the bounteous harvest feast
to soon come in your midst. May God's richest blessings
bring a great Harvest of the Gospel in all ya'lls lives,
your families, your congregation, this beautiful
community of Floyd County, Virginia and to the
utmost parts of God's World.*

Covenant

The 98th stated meeting of Covenant Presbytery was held at Christ Presbyterian Church, Olive Branch, Mississippi, on May 27, 2003. The Rev. Tim Reed,

Moderator, called the meeting to order. Opening worship was led by the Rev. Bill McCutcheon, who preached from Colossians 1:1-14.

The Stated Clerk reported that the following commissions had completed their business: the Church Care Committee acting as a commission to transfer Lee Bloodworth to Southeast Alabama Presbytery pending receipt; and the commission to install Rob Thacker as pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Indianola, Mississippi.

The Treasurer, Lee Mattox, reported that there was \$35,688.36 in the bank as of January 1, and \$25,851.36 as of April 30.

The Presbytery granted to the Rev. Chris Miller the powers of an evangelist to instruct officer candidates, and gave to the Session of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas, plus two additional teaching elders, the authority to examine the officer candidates, to organize the mission work in Rogers, Arkansas, into Trinity Grace Church, to install the pastor, and to ordain and install the other officers on July 27, 2003. The Presbytery approved Mr. Miller to be pastor of the new church, pending the particularization of the congregation and his election as pastor.

The Presbytery appointed the Session of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, to instruct officer candidates, to organize the mission into Covenant Church of Hot Springs on July 13, 2003, to install the pastor, and to ordain and install the other officers. The Presbytery approved the Rev. Corey Pelton to be the pastor of the new church, pending particularization of the congregation and his election as pastor. Mr. Pelton presented a plan for an internship training program for rural mission work in Arkansas.

The Rev. Fred Marsh of the denominational Mission to North America Committee presented a vision of MNA's work, and commended Covenant Presbytery for the church planting within its bounds.

Ruling Elder Bebo Elkin of Mississippi Valley Presbytery reported for the Mississippi Joint Committee on Campus Work. The Presbytery approved the following recommendations: "that churches be encouraged to have campus ministers speak to their congregations so that people can see that God is using Reformed University Ministries to transform lives"; "that churches be reminded that approximately 11% of the funds for campus work comes from presbyteries, and the remaining portion must come from the benevolence giving of local churches and gifts from individuals. The continuance and any expansion is dependent upon the gifts of churches and individuals."; "that churches be encouraged to pray regularly on behalf of the campus ministry, not only remembering the campus ministers, their families, and the students involved, but also the ministry's efforts to reach those who are lost. Particularly remember in prayer the strategic opportunity that the campus ministry has to reach those international students studying in the United States on our university campuses."; "that praise and thanksgiving be offered to God for His blessings on the work of Reformed University Ministries in reaching students for Christ and equipping them to serve Him while on the campus and throughout their lives." The Rev. David Bryan, Chairman of the Presbytery's MNA Committee, led in prayer for the military chaplains as well as the campus work.

Upon recommendation of the Administration Committee, overtures from First Presbyterian Church, Indianola, Mississippi, and Grace Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Tennessee, were found out of order, since they dealt with a Book of Church Order amendment and the deadline as set in the General Assembly's Rules of Assembly Operations had past. However, since the overtures expressed concurrence with Overture 6 to the General Assembly (which was already before the higher court), Pastor Thacker of the Indianola church was appointed as a Presbytery representative to express on the floor of the Assembly the concurrence of Covenant Presbytery with said overture by means of a personal resolution. [Note: this matter had to do with subscription to the church's theological standards.]

A complaint against the action of the Session of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Tennessee, was received. A commission consisting of three teaching and three ruling elders was appointed to adjudicate the matter.

Memorials for Ruling Elder John E. High, the Rev. Robert "Scotty" Hastings, and Ruling Elder James P. Graeber were spread on the minutes.

The Rev. William Gleason presented the report of the Christian Education Committee. Presbytery approved that committee's plans to host an Equip Conference at College Hill Presbyterian Church, Oxford, Mississippi.

The Rev. Don Erwin presented the Mission to the World report. The Rev. Charles Godwin, MTW short-term missions coordinator, addressed the court. Mr. Erwin

encouraged churches to support the MTW VBS fund-raising project in Ethiopia and the compassion ministries in that nation which is suffering a terrible famine at this time. He also encouraged churches to support Bill and Dana Evans as they raise support to go to Scotland. (Mr. Evans later spoke to the Presbytery on the decline of Christianity in Scotland and the need for the gospel there. The Presbytery also approved his internship, upon recommendation of his mentor, Dr. Phillip Douglass.) The Presbytery approved allocating \$1,000 of vision trip funds for the Rev. Ford Williams to visit Carl Chaplin and the church planting team in the Czech Republic.

Previous notice having been given, Covenant Presbytery voted to rescind its prior approval of Item 2 of the BCO amendments (regarding theological subscription), 28-24-4. The Presbytery then voted against Item 2, 20-33-4.

Mr. McCutcheon, who had preached the opening sermon, was presented for licensure. He is a member of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), and has been called as Stated Supply for the Christ Presbyterian Church, Olive Branch, Mississippi. After examination, Covenant Presbytery licensed him to preach and approved his supplying the pulpit in Olive Branch. The Rev. Ford Williams and the Rev. Robert Browning were appointed "to regularly and pastorally meet with Rev. McCutcheon while he serves at Christ Presbyterian Church."

Presbytery approved the extension of the license to preach of Frank Aderholdt, per his request.

Mr. Ted Trainor, current headmaster at Westminster Academy in Memphis, Tennessee, was received as a ministerial candidate. The Presbytery approved that the Covenant Presbytery Scholarship Fund for Covenant Theological Seminary be divided equally among current candidates and interns attending that institution. Mr. Trainor was approved for the Lamb's Fund.

Eastern Canada

The Presbytery of Eastern Canada met in Bedford Presbyterian Church in early October. As almost all business was routine, we were able to spend a lot of time in prayer for one another and for our churches.

Grace Mississauga, a spin off from Grace Toronto Church, was received as a mission congregation. It was agreed to dissolve the pastoral tie between Stephen Beck and Grace Toronto Church December 21, and to appoint Stephen as part time organizing pastor of Grace Mississauga. His ministry there will be shared with the volunteer help of TE Gene Haas (professor at Redeemer College), and ministerial candidate Frank Lembo. Stephen was also granted permission to work out of bounds as a short term missionary with MTW, teaching at the German Theological Seminary (Freie Theologische Akademie). He will be spending four weeks each semester teaching urban theology/ministry and church planting. He and his wife are considering the possibility of going full time with MTW in two years, to teach at the seminary and to plant a church in Frankfurt. They asked for prayer as they sought clarity regarding God's call.

Bedford Presbyterian Church reported that God has apparently opened a door in answer to their prayers, giving them most of the necessary financial resources and a highly gifted man. They are hoping to support Glenn Davis as a pastoral assistant (until he is ordained) for outreach and youth ministries, with a commitment as one major element of his work to lay the groundwork for a second congregation in Metro Halifax. They ask the denomination's support in prayer, and may need to seek some extra financing later.

Sovereign Grace mission in Antigonish and River Denys is struggling with discouragement, after almost three years seeking an organizing pastor. Several people have shown interest, but thus far none have continued who were able to qualify as a church planter.

Yours in Christ, Don Codling, Stated Clerk

Eastern Carolina

The 93rd Stated Meeting of Eastern Carolina Presbytery was held on April 12, 2003.

The court examined the Rev. David Geib and transferred him from Tennessee Valley Presbytery, in order to become pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church, Winterville, North Carolina. Mr. Geib took exception to the Westminster Standards with regard to the Sabbath. He stated: "I don't believe that the significance of the Sabbath is a physical rest as described in Chapter 21, paragraph 6, as well as the Larger Catechism Q. 117. I believe that the Sabbath has to be understood eschatologically. The Sabbath rest instituted in creation and reaffirmed in the law has been fulfilled in Christ. It is more than a day, it is the daily rest in which the believer lives by faith. To define the Sabbath as a day and place observance within the limits of physical

exertion places before our sinful hearts a temptation to deny the very rest Christ secured for us by creating rules absent in Scripture and keeping them. Yet, I admit there is an already/not-yet tension here. I believe that we must 'make every effort to enter that rest.' Heb. 4:11 The grace given to us in Christ's fulfillment of the Sabbath obliges the believer to attend to 'the general equity' WCF 19-4 of God's rest in the celebration of worship and the balance of work and rest that glorifies God. For example, if a believer works seven days a week at the expense of family life and a regular, weekly time of worship, I believe he needs to be exhorted to rest based on the Sabbath command. However, I wouldn't exhort such a person based on duty or the requirement of the law as much as I would encourage him as Paul did Peter in Galatians 2 when 'they were not acting in line with the truth of the Gospel.' To neglect rest defined this way is to place the god of labor and accomplishment before the God of rest who calls us to come and join Him. For the believer it is a neglect of the Gospel. It is grace that empowers us to turn to Christ from labors, not a legal requirement. Until glorification, this 'not-yet' aspect of Sabbath fulfillment beckons us to repent, to turn from idols of labor and achievement and rest in the love and grace of Christ. It is the 'already' fact of our justification that makes the 'not-yet' life of obedience possible. Beyond setting aside the Lord's Day as a time for corporate worship, our activities are best defined as a matter of Christian liberty and so must be done in faith, with a clear conscience, and never to the hindrance of a weaker brother. Colossians 2:16 My concern is that we do not bind on a believer's conscience what God does not bind on our conscience. To do so would be to fall short of entering the promise of God's rest. Hebrews 4:1." Mr. Geib stated that he did not believe that his view constituted an exception to the PCA's Standards, based on the "Good Faith" subscription. The Presbytery approved granting an exception to Mr. Geib with regard to the language of Confession of Faith 21-8, "worldly employments and recreations" and "taken up, the whole time, in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy" (emphasis in the original motion).

The Presbytery transferred the candidacy of Guy Waters to Mississippi Valley Presbytery. The court approved the completion of Lindsey Williams' internship, considering his previous ministry experience at Uptown Christ Covenant Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, as sufficient to meet the one-year minimum period of internship.

A motion to examine Jonathan Fowler for transfer from the Southern Baptist Convention to serve as a PCA chaplain with the U. S. Army, was withdrawn because he was not present for today's meeting.

Presbytery approved the applications of Mr. Tim LeCroy to Covenant Theological Seminary for Presbytery Scholarship Funds and for a Lamb Fund loan.

The stated supply relationship between the Covenant Reformed Mission and Mr. Art Peterson was approved for six months.

Presbytery empowered the Moderator to appoint a commission to particularize the Wilson (N. C.) Presbyterian Mission. Presbytery also formally established a mission church in Carrboro-Chapel Hill under the governance of the Rev. Ru Sen, serving as an evangelist.

Peter and Haley Conlon, formerly of Grace Covenant Mission, which had been dissolved by the Presbytery, were transferred to the Pilgrim Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, North Carolina, at their request. The other members formerly of Grace Covenant Mission were placed under the oversight of the MNA Committee, serving as a commission acting as a session, per BCO 13-10(3).

James River

James River Presbytery held its one hundred and tenth meeting at Sycamore Presbyterian Church, Midlothian, Virginia, on April 12, 2003. The Rev. Tom Darnell opened the worship service and read passages from Daniel 9. The Presbytery Moderator, the Rev. Harry Long, preached from I Samuel 18:1-12 on jealousy. Mr. Long administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with the assistance of Mr. Darnell and Ruling Elder Gene Friedline.

As the Moderator in Nomination was not able to attend this meeting, Mr. Long was elected to continue to serve as Moderator.

It was reported that Pastor Norman (Scotty) McLeod was called home to be with the Lord on March 21, 2003. He had ministered out of bounds of the Presbytery over the past 25 years at a small chapel in a predominantly black community in Prince George County. He was described as a "giant among men and a humble servant of our Lord, Jesus Christ." The presbyters were urged to keep his wife, Geneva, and his family in their prayers.

The Treasurer, Charles Parker, presented the financial report. The beginning balance on January 1st was \$9,702.50; receipts for the first quarter totaled \$5,572.50 and disbursements totaled \$5,803.43; and there was an ending balance on March 31st of \$9,471.57.

The Rev. Calvin Frett, Chairman of the Ministerial and Church Relations (MCR) Committee, reminded presbyters "that when the Congregation, the Session, or the Pastor is considering dissolving the pastoral relationship, the MCR committee should be informed."

Presbytery approved the request from the West End Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, Virginia, that the Rev. Wayne Good continue as interim pastor and as moderator of the Session until a new pastor has been installed.

The court agreed with the ruling of the Moderator that a complaint from the New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, was timely filed and in order, and that it be referred to the same commission dealing with a similar complaint. He gave the following rationale: "The two complaints deal with the same issue. In order to resolve said issues as quickly as possible the Moderator did not think it to be in the best stewardship of time or of wisdom to wait until the April meeting to assign the Complaint."

The two complaints revolved around the dismissal of an assistant pastor who had philosophy of ministry differences with the senior pastor, and the subsequent removal of a ruling elder and his wife from working with the church's Youth Committee. The Presbytery denied every specification of both complaints, except for one point having to do with the ruling by the chairman of a congregational meeting that a ruling of the chair cannot be appealed to the body as a whole.

The commission counseled the Session that the "fact that some did not accept this dismissal [of the assistant pastor] when it finally took place is evidence that the Session has not spent enough time and resources on the education of the flock in the area of Church Government."

The commission continued: "We doubt that any of your members would consider going to the Virginia General Assembly and attempt to place a motion on the floor of either house that had to do with how government procedure was to be conducted, much less attempt to circulate a paper declaring their opinion to be fact as they presented the motion. No good citizen of our Commonwealth would ever consider this and yet in the taped congregational meeting on 1/26/03, this is what happened."

"The problem seems to be that the Church Member making the motion understands representative government in the civil realm, but not in the Church. It appears that officers and all other members of the congregation must have additional knowledge of how Presbyterian Government functions. Officers who meet ecclesiastical qualifications are elected by the congregation and are given the authority and responsibility by Christ to govern, rule and teach in His name. They alone are allowed to make governmental decisions as to 'calling in a committee of the Presbytery' and the like. The laity of the body are not qualified or required of God to do this."

"Congregational meetings should be very seldom needed in a presbyterian form of government. Said meetings should never be called for the purpose of discussing church conflict. Such meetings allow for the congregation to make motions that essentially rule in the areas that the congregation has committed to the Session. Session has erred in calling such meetings and by so doing has further ingrained congregational thinking into the membership."

"A proper format for discussion of church conflict is to have families meet with the Session. There questions can be asked, answered and discussed in a more pastoral manner and certainly a less emotionally charged environment."

Under Recommendations, the commission adopted the following: "It has been said that you can please some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time. This applies to the Church as long as she is in the world. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why our primary purpose is to please God. With this in mind, we recommend the following:

"1. The Session is requested to purchase, view and show to the congregation, the six part series from Peacemaker ministries entitled, 'Learning to Resolve Conflict Biblically' and report back to [James River Presbytery] upon completion.

"2. The Session is requested to teach a course on presbyterian government to the congregation. We believe that a better understanding of said government needs to be developed and practiced.

"3. That the New Members Class curriculum be revisited by the Session to be sure that Church Government is covered in some detail.

"4. That Session considers placing formal charges

against their accusers.

"5. If [the ruling elder involved] continues to allege that this resignation from the session of [New Covenant Presbyterian Church] was anything other than completely initiated on his part and that he felt forced or strongly persuaded by the letter now known as 'Exhibit R' of the Respondent's documents, then this matter should be dealt with properly. Since he is a Ruling Elder, elected by the congregation, he may only be removed from office by a case of process or by the procedure outlined in BCO 34-10 (last sentence) or along the lines of 24-6 (second paragraph)."

To the complainants, the commission offered the following advice and recommendations: "Although we have denied a number of your complaints for the reasons we specify, it is not without some understanding and sympathy for your effort. Taking up the cause and defense of another is certainly sometimes biblical. This is true when that person is unable or incapable of representing their own interests, but when responsible men, being Elders in the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, do not find good reasons or cause in their own hearts to complain against wrongs imposed upon them by their peers, there is very little that can be done. This is especially true when our governmental system in the PCA provides guidelines for them to follow and in some cases requires them to follow these guidelines if they are offended."

"In attempting to complain for others, it has been necessary for you both to assume the intentions and motives of others. Did the Session of [New Covenant Presbyterian Church] intend to censure a Ruling Elder without a trial and defame his good name? Did they fire a young Teaching Elder unfairly, without feeling and without any consideration of this man's best interest? In order to answer questions like these you must know the hearts of the people involved. To even make accusations of such things you would need first hand information of more than one witness and preferably other documented evidence or proof along with convincing motivation for such crimes. In spite of a great deal of effort put forth on the part of you both, you have not furnished these in our opinion."

"In an effort to solve the problems of perceived conflict between members of the ruling body in your local church, you have attempted to engage the congregation in the governing process. In Presbyterian Government, the congregation is responsible to God to elect men who have proven themselves qualified for the office of Elder. When this has been done, these men are to rule and shepherd in Christ's name. This is why the election of officers is such a solemn business and why prayer should be made for a large majority of votes one way or the other. The election is to determine the will of God. The Lord holds these Elders, not the congregation, responsible for all governmental decisions made in the Church. In the PCA there are three exceptions allowed to this and they are in the area of election of officers, voting on the terms of pastoral call and on the buying and selling of real property. These exceptions may or may not be pleasing in God's sight, but that is not the point being made here. It is that members of the congregation individually or collectively are not responsible to God at all in decisions on governmental matters."

"It may well be that a court above this one will rule that complaints made by laymen on behalf of Elders are out of order because of our system of government. If this should happen, we will willingly yield to this argument even though it was not our Presbytery's decision to dismiss the complaints originally."

Ruling Elder Brian Anderson spoke on behalf of the New Covenant Session to "express our deepest thanks to the judicial commission appointed by Presbytery to look into the complaints lodged against it. We would like it to be known that we are in full submission to the commission's rulings and recommendations." The following motion made on behalf of the Session was adopted: "That the session of [New Covenant Church] meet with the members of the judicial commission to assist the session to bring about a Godly closure to these rulings by helping to interpret some of the specific recommendations and in the communication of the results to the congregation."

With regard to the King George County Mission Church, confusion had arisen as to the action of Presbytery on October 19, 2002, as to what party had the authority to receive members. A motion to rescind the action of granting that power to the organizing pastor and sustaining the motion of establishing Stony Point Reformed Presbyterian Church as the Mother Church serving as a temporary session, failed to achieve a majority. The following motion was adopted: "The Presbytery, with thanks to the Session of Stony Point Presbyterian Church, recognizes its procedural errors at its October 19, 2002 meeting when, in connection with the establishment of Grace Mission Church

in King George County, Presbytery established 'Stony Point as the mother with its session serving as a temporary session' . . . ; and Presbytery approved 'the call from the Mission of Presbytery Committee to TE David Bentz as organizing pastor and evangelist with powers to receive members for Grace Mission Church' . . . ; and further, That Presbytery now clarifies its action it then intended to take by rescinding its previous action to the extent that it appointed the Stony Point Session as a temporary session and referred to TE Bentz as 'organizing pastor,' a term not used in the Book of Church Order; and further, That Presbytery now confirms the authority of TE Bentz and the role of the Stony Point Session whereby, pursuant to BCO 5-3(1) and 8-6, TE Bentz is serving as an evangelist with the power to receive members for Grace Mission Church and the Stony Point Session is overseeing and assisting in the work of TE Bentz as evangelist, with ongoing communications, including TE Bentz's practice of meeting regularly with the Stony Point Session."

Presbytery approved the particularization of Trinity Mission Church, Norfolk, Virginia, July 27, 2003, and also approved the organizing pastor, the Rev. Jack Howell, to be installed as pastor on that date pending his election as pastor by the congregation.

Reports were heard on the Reformed University Ministries (RUM) campus work at Washington & Lee University and the University of Virginia. Efforts are underway to organize RUM at other universities in the Commonwealth, including Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Virginia Tech, and the College of William & Mary. A motion was adopted to sign an agreement with RUM to establish a campus ministry at VCU for the fall of 2003; \$15,000 has already been given and pledged for this work.

A motion from Ruling Elder Dan Carrell regarding BCO 21-4 with respect to "good faith" subscription was considered out of order.

The court transferred the candidacy of Stephane Jeanrenaud to Mississippi Valley Presbytery, per his request. Messrs. Sam Capitano and Robert Rumbaugh, both of the New Life in Christ Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia, were examined and placed under care as ministerial candidates.

Pastor Sung Lee, who had been ordained in the Korean Agape Church and wishes to minister to Koreans in the Fredericksburg area, was examined and received into membership. His call as Assistant Pastor at New Life in Christ Church was also approved. In light of the exceptional circumstances of Pastor Lee's ordained status, his previous work on the pastoral ministry, his mentoring relationship with New Life in Christ Church, and the fact that his principal language is Korean, Presbytery unanimously waived oral examinations in church history, PCA history, and the requirements for theological exegetical papers.

Miss Gindy Miley gave a brief report on the PCA's ministry to TCK (third culture kids—missionary kids) through Mission to the World. She was formerly a missionary in India who is now assisting missionaries with educational needs.

North Texas

The North Texas Presbytery met in its 74th Stated Meeting on Friday and Saturday, May 3-4, 2003, at Heritage Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The presbytery, meeting for the first time in Oklahoma since the dissolution of Mid-America Presbytery and assignment of Oklahoma to its bounds by General Assembly in 2001, was convened with prayer by the Moderator, TE Ron Dunton, pastor of Metrocrest Presbyterian Church, Carrollton, Texas. TE Chuck Garriott, pastor of Heritage PCA, greeted the presbyters and guests.

The presbytery opened with worship at 7:00 PM on Friday evening. The court was called to worship by Shawn Young, HPC's Assistant Pastor of Outreach and Assimilation. A choir from HPC presented the anthem "A Song Unending." The worshippers were then led in congregational singing by a trio of violin, keyboard, and guitarist TE Chris Garriott, HPC's youth pastor, in the selections "O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus!" and "Just As I Am, Without One Plea." TE Chuck Garriott preached a sermon on Genesis 6:5-8, entitled, "God Grieving." The presbytery then observed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The time of worship was closed out with the singing of the hymn "Be Thou My Vision."

The presbytery then took a 20 minute break, and reconvened at 8:30 PM with the singing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." The Moderator appointed a resolution of thanks committee consisting of TE Mike Bowman and RE Tim Armer.

The Presbytery then heard a partial report from the Christian Education committee. Mrs. Linda Clark, North Texas PresWIC President, spoke to the presbytery

concerning the organization's activities and upcoming events.

The Presbytery then moved to a thirty-minute time of sharing of prayer requests and prayer.

Ruling Elder T. John Mulkey, Stated Clerk of the North Texas Presbytery, gave his report. The presbytery approved its minutes of the 73rd Stated Meeting (February, 2003), and the report of the commission to organize Trinity Harbor Presbyterian Church, Rowlett, Texas, as a particular church, with installation of ruling elders and its pastor, TE Jim Ungaro, who was Trinity Harbor's organizing pastor.

Ruling Elder Bruce Breeding, Treasure of the North Texas Presbytery, brought his report, as did TE John Duke, the Nominations Clerk of the presbytery. Presbyters were elected to the various committees of presbytery, as well as committees of commissioners of the upcoming General Assembly.

TE Darrell McIntyre, chairman of the presbytery's MTW committee, reported on committee's activities. NTP-MTW's proposed budget was approved.

NTP-MNA's chairman, TE David Clelland, reported for his committee. In news related to the court, New Saint Peter's PCA, a church plant from Park Cities PCA, Dallas, was slated to begin worship in east Dallas on 18 May 2003, at the Dallas Children's Theatre. The new congregation will be initially composed of 57 families from Park Cities.

Ruling Elder Brad Bradley, coordinator of the Southwest Church Planting Network, reported on the progress of SWCPN's works within North Texas Presbytery. Among the items reported:

Lone Star PCA, Fort Worth, Texas, was approaching its one-year anniversary.

Christ the King PCA, Norman, Oklahoma, was beginning the process of training officers, with ordination/installation of the officers and particularization of the church sometime in the autumn of 2003. CTK currently has 170 members on its roll, with attendance around 190 on the Lord's Day. It meets in a Catholic day school, but is rapidly outgrowing those facilities.

Grace PCA, Stillwater, Oklahoma's organizing pastor, Jonathan Dorst, reported that he had relocated to Stillwater, and will soon start a Sunday evening Bible Study. Worship services are anticipated to begin in the autumn of 2003.

The Presbytery heard an update on South Texas Presbytery's intentions to request the General Assembly to concur in the division of STP into three presbyteries. NTP elected to not request transfer of the Temple and Waco areas of Texas to a proposed former-STP presbytery.

After prayer, the presbytery recessed for the evening at 10:25 PM.

The Presbytery reconvened at 8:00 AM on Saturday, 3 May 2003, with a devotional given by Dr. Elliott Greene of Westminster Theological Seminary's Dallas campus.

The newly-formed Reformed University Ministry Committee reported through its chairman, TE Mike Sherratt. The presbytery heard from the Oklahoma RUF campus ministers, TE Doug Servin at Oklahoma University, and TE John Knorr, at Tulsa University. The court also heard from TE Ronnie Rowe, RUM-GA's Southwest Area Coordinator.

The Presbytery approved its Sessional Records Committee report, and adopted the Administration Committee's proposed Budget for FY 2003. TE David Sherwood, representing a sub-committee of the Administration Committee, reported to the presbytery discussions concerning the establishment of a presbytery "Pastor-At-Large" to shepherd the teaching elders of NTP. The sub-committee would receive input concerning the matter, and make recommendation to the court at its August, 2003, Stated Meeting.

The Presbytery then heard its Candidates Committee report. The churches of NTP were encouraged to comply with the requirements of the BCO for written Sessional endorsement of candidates for the Gospel ministry, as well as formal approval of proposed programs of internship prior to the an intern beginning his work.

The presbytery removed the name of Imeine Ukhun from the roll of candidates under care of Presbytery at his request. It approved a proposed internship plan for Glen Clary at Westminster PCA, Gainesville, Texas, and approved applicants for the Lamb's Fund Loan at Covenant Theological Seminary.

Messrs. Scott Wallace and Clay Daniel, of Park Cities PCA, Dallas, and Mr. Scott Moran, of Fort Worth PCA, were presented to the court as seeking to come under its care as candidates for the Gospel Ministry. After examination, the men were received under the care of Presbytery. TE Mike Philliber, pastor of New Life PCA, Midland, Texas, brought a charge to the men from Galatians 2:20.

The Ministerial Relations Committee chairman, TE Ron Brady, reported that the committee, under NTP's rules clothing it with powers of a commission in dismissal of

ministers in uncontested cases for dissolution of pastor relations, had dismissed TE David Farbishel to the Southwest Presbytery of the PCA. The Presbytery also dissolved the associate pastoral relation between TE Jeff Birch and Heritage PCA, Oklahoma City, and dismissed him to Central Florida Presbytery of the PCA. The court approved a change in call to TE Jacob Yohannon from assistant to associate pastor at Trinity PCA, Plano, Texas. The terms of call to Ron Williams as assistant pastor for seniors ministry at Park Cities PCA, Dallas, were approved, pending successful examination and reception by presbytery.

The Theological Examining Committee then proceeded to examine Mr. Williams, a former Southern Baptist minister and current ruling elder at Park Cities. The presbytery waived portions of Mr. Williams' examination as a minister coming from another denomination (BCO 13-6 & BCO 21-4) due to Mr. Williams' demonstrated knowledge of the Word of God, the Reformed Faith, previous pastoral ministry, and life-experience. After approval of Mr. Williams' examination and his answering the PCA's ordination vows, he was received as a member of North Texas Presbytery, and a commission to install him as assistant pastor at Park Cities PCA was erected.

Under old business, the Moderator reported on his appointments to a previously approved ad-hoc committee to promote collegial relations in the presbytery.

After hearing from the resolution of thanks committee, the presbytery adjourned its 74th Stated Meeting with prayer at 10:52 AM.

Submitted by John Owen Butler, pastor of Beal Heights Presbyterian Church, Lawton, Oklahoma.

South Texas

The seventy-fourth stated meeting of the Presbytery of South Texas met at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas on July 25-26, 2003. The Moderator, the Rev. Michael Groves, called the meeting to order with prayer and the reading of Psalm 112. The host pastor, the Rev. Bob Roane, led the worship and the Presbytery celebrated the Lord's Supper.

The denominational Mission to North America Coordinator, the Rev. Dr. Jim Bland, introduced Ron and Judy Haynes, who were given the privilege of the floor in order to share their disaster relief ministry. Dr. Bland reported on his labors in Atlanta.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Ferguson reported for the Multiplication Committee, dealing with the establishment of a new presbytery (Houston Metro Presbytery), as approved by the General Assembly. The continuing South Texas Presbytery will have the name and the corporation, along with all obligations ("except for those obligations that will be a part of the transitional financial arrangements yet to be determined and shared between the continuing South Texas Presbytery and the new 'Houston Metro Presbytery'"). The Presbytery approved a motion which states that the "ongoing budget responsibilities for MNA and RUF supported works be prorated at that time between the two Presbyteries and that such prorated responsibilities be carried for 3 years (2004, 05 and 06)." Ministers and churches were to be in the respective presbytery according to the geographical boundaries as approved by the 31st General Assembly; ministers serving out of the geographical bounds were to inform the Ministerial Relations Committee as the presbytery to which they would want to be assigned. The October 2003 meeting of the Presbytery was to be a celebration of "this milestone in the history of the PCA in South Texas." The new presbytery was to be established as of January 1, 2004. The Moderator appointed steering committees for each of the presbyteries, "to facilitate the transition."

Mr. Ken Thurman was examined and approved for ordination as an associate pastor at Southwest Presbyterian Church, Bellaire, Texas. He stated the following exceptions to the Westminster Standards and the Book of Church Order:

Teaching on the Observation of the Lord's Day (e.g., WCF Chap. XXI, Art. VIII.) - I agree with this paragraph on the observation of the Lord's Day. But I do not strictly enforce it on family and allow them to exercise their own consciences in activities on the Lord's Day which allows them to some extent to do acts which are not acts of private devotion, public worship, works of mercy or necessity (such as my daughter's making her scrapbooks, my wife reading the newspaper, etc.). And this has meant at times that I have thrown the football with them in the yard, played dominos, etc. But I do forbid them from and do not myself participate in activities that require others to work or organized sporting events like soccer, etc.

Teaching on the Administration of the Sacraments by Ministers (e.g., WCF Chap. XXVII, Art. IV., BCO 56-1 and

related paragraphs) – I do not believe that the Bible limits the administration of the Sacraments to the Minister or Teaching Elder but think that Ruling Elders should be able likewise to administer them. However, I will submit to the PCA's method of administering the sacraments.

Teaching on What is Forbidden by the Second Commandment (e.g., WLC # 109) – I do not believe that the second commandment forbids us from possessing all representations of Christ as the Larger Catechism teaches because He was a man and I do not believe to represent Him in His Humiliation as a man is unbiblical. I think that to show Him as a man would be acceptable in Sunday School literature or in other ways.

The Presbytery voted to find these exceptions permissible for ordination.

The Rev. Wade Coleman, a member of Mississippi Valley Presbytery, was examined and approved for transfer, so that he could accept a call as pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas.

Mr. Julian Zugg, a licentiate of Southeast Louisiana Presbytery, was examined and approved for licensure.

Mr. Campbell Silman, a candidate under the care of Southeast Louisiana Presbytery, was transferred as a ministerial candidate.

Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relationship between the Rev. Aureliano Tan and Christ the Redeemer PCA, Cypress, Texas, per mutual request. Presbytery also directed the Ministerial Relations Committee, "under the provisions of BCO 34-10, to investigate the allegation that TE Tan has failed in the regular discharge of his official functions and to report its findings to the South Texas Presbytery at its October 2003, meeting." The motion passed unanimously.

Reports were heard with regard to All Saints PCA, a church plant in Austin, Texas; Redeemer PCA, a church plant in San Antonio, Texas; and the Southwest Church Planting Network.

The Rev. Ronnie Rowe reported on Reformed University Ministries activities in the Southwest. Reports were heard regarding the RUM activities at Rice University and Texas A&M University.

Miss Jane Smith reported on her missionary labors and support raising. She recently returned from Portugal and is leaving for China in early 2004.

The Rev. Doug Stelzig reported on his missionary work at a Bible institute in Port Elisabeth, South Africa, the past four years. He and his family are planning to return there in the fall of 2003.

The Rev. Jerry Rahm and the Rev. Tom McKeon reported on their trip to Ukraine and Turkey. The Rev. Lawrence Ruddell reported on his work toward establishing a new seminary in Turkey.

Presbytery voted to extend for another year the call of the Rev. Guillermo Salinas in Mexico.

It was reported that the Rev. Linc Ashby has agreed to coordinate youth activities in South Texas Presbytery. The Presbytery expressed its thanks to Christ PCA, New Braunfels, Texas, for hosting the Presbytery's youth retreat this summer. The South Texas PresWIC is slated to hold its fall retreat October 10-11 in San Antonio.

Southwest

September 2002

The Presbytery of the Southwest met for a stated meeting on September 19, 2002, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Alamogordo, New Mexico.

The Rev. David Bennett reported on the work of the Southwest Church Planting Network. Three men have looked over possibilities in the Phoenix area. Two more churches have joined the network—Desert Springs in Tucson and Westminster in Alamogordo.

A group from the Phoenix area sent a petition (with 31 names) to Presbytery to become a mission church. Most of these people have come out of the Camelback Community Church. One of the things they desire is a more traditional worship service. The pastor of their former church has given his blessing to this group. It was moved and carried to approve this petition and to receive this group, to be known as Christ Church Phoenix, under the oversight of the Missions Committee and the Southwest Church Planting Network.

The Rev. Jack Barnes reported on the work at Covenant Community Presbyterian Mission Church in Scottsdale, Arizona. There were 150 children at Vacation Bible School, including some Muslim children, and several girls have continued in a Bible study since then. It was moved and carried to approve a petition from this mission church to become a particular church.

The Rev. Martin Ban reported on the church planting effort in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which has been averaging 60-80 people each Sunday. The Rev. Gary McMillan

reported on the work in Farmington, New Mexico, including the fact that several people have been coming down from Durango, Colorado to worship in Farmington. He has also been leading a Bible study in Aztec, New Mexico, using the book *Confessing Christ*. Presbytery extended to him the powers of evangelist for another twelve months.

The Rev. Tom Johnson, former pastor of Christ the King PCA in El Paso, Texas, has moved with his family to Indiana, where they recently became members of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne. He believes he is being called to minister in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. The Presbytery voted to erase Mr. Johnson's name from the rolls, while also noting that his actions had caused this irregularity.

The Rev. Vince Wood was elected Moderator for 2003. The Rev. Stu Sherard was elected for another three year term as Stated Clerk, Ruling Elder Andy Balcom for another three year term as Treasurer, and the Rev. Rick Steele for another three year term as Recording Clerk.

Per his request, the Rev. Bruce Hougesen was moved to the retirement rolls because of health reasons.

January 2003

The Presbytery of the Southwest met on January 16-17, 2003, at Catalina Foothills Presbyterian Church, Tucson, Arizona.

Presbytery granted the Rev. Larry Mills, a member of Palmetto Presbytery, permission to labor within the bounds. He will be working part-time with a group in Phoenix that wants to become a PCA church.

Presbytery transferred the candidacy of Mr. John Jones from Missouri Presbytery, and also received under for the ministry Mr. Clay Smith.

The Rev. David Valencia was examined for transfer from the Anglican Communion Worldwide and was received into membership of the Presbytery. The court also approved the call for him to become Assistant Pastor at the Catalina Foothills Presbyterian Church.

Licentiate Shaynor Newsome was examined and approved for ordination as Campus Pastor at New Mexico State University. His theological paper, "The Ordination of Women in the Church," was accepted as fulfilling that ordination requirement.

Presbytery decided to ask the Rev. Gary McMillan to assist Licentiate Bill Inman in translation of the book of Colossians from the original Greek, in fulfilling the Greek language requirements for ordination. It was also reported that efforts were being made to assist Licentiate Peter Boling to fulfill his educational requirements for ordination.

The Stated Clerk read two sets of minutes from the commission appointed to organize the Covenant Community PCA into a particular church and install Billy Barnes as pastor. These minutes were approved, and the commission dismissed with thanks.

The Presbytery Treasurer, Andy Balcom, was recovering from a broken left hip and wrist due to a fall from a ladder. In his absence, a brief Treasurer's report was given by the Rev. Dennis Hermerding, Chairman of the Administration and Judicial Business Committee.

The Presbytery recessed, in order to convene as a corporation. The corporation elected Vince Wood as President, Stu Sherard as Vice-President, and Andy Balcom as Secretary-Treasurer.

With regard to Book of Church Order amendments, the Presbytery voted against Item 1 (amending BCO 34-1 in terms of assuming original jurisdiction over a minister), 10-18-2; and Item 2 (amending BCO 21-4—the "good faith" subscription amendment), 11-18-1. The court approved Item 3 (adding "unity" to the ministerial ordination vows), 16-13-0; and Item 4 (changing the name of Insurance, Annuities, and Relief), 29-0-1.

The Committee, having been assigned the task of determining what is meant by "regular preaching" in BCO 19-1, recommended that the Presbytery leave the definition of "regular preaching" up to each Session, and that BCO 19-1 stand as it is written.

Mr. Hermerding, who is RUM Campus Pastor at the University of Arizona, introduced four students who are actively involved in that ministry. Each student—Liz, Tracey, James, and Dan—spoke briefly about why RUM is important to them. Ruling Elder Bruce Ferg prayed for the RUM work at the University.

The Rev. Gary McMillan reported that there are 28-30 people who worship regularly in Farmington, New Mexico, at 10:00 AM, and 35-45 who worship regularly in Durango, Colorado, at 3:00 PM. Presbytery granted him permission to labor out of bounds, and Rocky Mountain Presbytery, which covers the state of Colorado, is in agreement.

Other reports were heard on Iglesia Presbiteriana Oasis PCA Mission, El Paso, Texas; the mission work in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the RUM work at New Mexico State University; the Rev. Will Tilley's work as a chaplain at the

University Medical Center in Tucson and in the Naval Reserve; and the Rev. Tom Troxell's work as National Guard chaplain.

It was reported that a minister has requested the status of honorably retired; his intention was to have his credentials, after he was honorably retired, transferred to Tennessee Valley Presbytery, in whose bounds he is currently residing. The Offices, Churches and Nominations Committee recommended that Presbytery grant this request. After a time of prayer, the Presbytery defeated this recommendation. Thereupon this request for retirement was sent back to the Committee pursue his apparent violation of BCO 13-2, and for a report to be given at the April stated meeting of the Presbytery.

It was moved, seconded, and carried that the credentials of Bruce Hougesen be transferred to the Presbytery of San Diego, pending his reception by that presbytery. [NB: there is no Presbytery of San Diego; apparently, the reference is to South Coast Presbytery.]

Presbytery received a request from the Rev. Wayne Nieman that he be divested without censure. Final action on this request was scheduled for the April stated meeting.

February 2003

The Presbytery of the Southwest held a called meeting Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Mesa, Arizona, on February 21, 2003.

The Presbytery examined the Rev. Scott Brown and transferred his credentials from Ohio Valley Presbytery; and examined the Rev. David Farbishel and transferred his credentials from North Texas Presbytery. Mr. Brown has been called by the Southwest Church Planting Network to plant a church in Tempe, Arizona. Mr. Farbishel was granted permission to labor out of bounds at the Providence Classical School, Mesa, Arizona, where he serves as teacher, advisor, and chapel overseer.

Presbytery examined and licensed Mr. Clay Smith, and also approved the internship work he did under the supervision of Covenant Presbytery as fulfilling the requirements in BCO 19-7.

Southwest Florida

The fifty-third meeting of the Presbytery of Southwest Florida was held at Covenant Life Presbyterian Church, Sarasota, Florida, on October 14, 2003. The court elected the Rev. Bob Burrige as Moderator for 2004.

Mr. Kevin McCarty was received as a candidate under the care of Presbytery, while Mr. Fernando Mejia was licensed to preach. Examined and approved for ordination were Messrs. John Anderson, Danny Dalton, and Esaie Etienne. Mr. Anderson has been called as Assistant Pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Naples; Mr. Dalton is called to serve at Cypress Ridge Presbyterian Church; and Mr. Etienne was approved as an Evangelist for the El Shaddai Mission under the oversight of Mission to North America. Don Broadwater was examined and sustained by Presbytery to serve as Senior Pastor at Cypress Ridge Presbyterian Church in Winter Haven. TE Robert Byrne was approved to be the Stated Supply at Seminole Presbyterian Church in Tampa.

The Mission to North America Committee reported on each of its works in progress and those being planned. Core groups are being organized into mission churches in North Ft. Myers and South Lakeland. The churches of Presbytery were reminded of the responsibility they have to support the ministries of Bill Roldan working with the Inglesia Beran Mission, and of Esaie Etienne with El-Shaddai Mission.

The Christian Education Committee is assembling a resource list of educational materials which can be shared among the churches. An Excel format form is being e-mailed to the churches to compile a list of available resources.

Susquehanna Valley

Susquehanna Valley Presbytery met on November 15, 2003, at the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Ephrata, Pennsylvania. The Moderator, the Rev. John Gallagher, opened the meeting with prayer. Mr. Tucker York, a ministerial candidate, preached from I Peter 2:1-12, and the Lord's Supper was administered. The offering taken up during the final hymn was \$472.

Ruling Elder Fred Gaston presented the Treasurer's report. As of September 30, 2003, there was \$37,499.52 in the General Fund; \$199,739.35 in Investment Funds; and \$19,893.62 in Others' Investment Funds.

The Rev. David Myers having resigned as Vice Moderator for 2004, the Rev. Andy Phillips was elected in his place.

Several men were nominated to General Assembly committees. The Presbytery also authorized the Administration & Stewardship Committee to "review the

additional nominations and, acting with the power of a commission on behalf of the Presbytery, . . . have the authority to break ties on nominations.”

Reports were heard from Christ’s Community Church, Williamsport, Pennsylvania; Westminster Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Hanover Valley Presbyterian Church, Hanover, Pennsylvania; Reformed Presbyterian Church, Ephrata, Pennsylvania; and New Life Presbyterian Mission, York, Pennsylvania. The Rev. Dr. Robert Rapp also reported on his ministry with Westminster Biblical Missions.

The Rev. Steve Heinbaugh reported for the commission dealing with the situation at First Korean PCA, Dillsburg, Pennsylvania. The commission is continuing to work to resolve matters. It was reported that Korean Capital Presbytery will await Susquehanna Valley’s decision on releasing the congregation and its pastor, Paul Kim.

Presbytery voted 31-1-2 in favor of the amendment to BCO Chapter 58, with regard to the administration of the Lord’s Supper.

Messrs. David Kieffer and William Tuck York were received under care as ministerial candidates; Mr. York had been a candidate under South Texas Presbytery. Presbytery approved the sermon he had preached as fulfilling the requirements for ordination, and also approved his prior internship experience in South Texas and Missouri Presbyteries. Presbytery placed Candidate Drew T. Lints under internship in order to test his gifts for the ministry.

Presbytery appointed a commission for the organization of Hanover Valley Presbyterian Church, and another commission for the organization of the Harvest Presbyterian Mission, Lampeter, Pennsylvania.

Presbytery voted to set up a separate savings account to receive funds for a contemplated church plant in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. If that work is not forthcoming, then those funds will be placed in the Church Planting & Oversight Committee’s “Other Initiated” funds. Presbytery voted “to require from donors contributing to the Presbytery on behalf of the potential Chambersburg church plant to provide written release stating that they consent to allowing the Presbytery to apply the contributions to other ministries of the Presbytery in the event that the Chambersburg work is not begun.”

The Rev. Scott Johnston gave encouraging reports on behalf of campus

ministers Tom Becker (Millersville State University) and Chad Brewer (Penn State University).

The Presbytery voted to operate according to the 2003 budget until the next meeting.

Westminster

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Kingsport, Tennessee, hosted the stated meeting of Westminster Presbytery on October 11, 2003. Host pastor Brent Bradley led the worship, which included singing portions of Psalm 103 and Psalm 32. The Rev. Dr. Jim Richter preached from II Corinthians 4:13-5:21, covering Chapter 32 of the Westminster Confession of Faith. The sacrament of communion was administered by Mr. Bradley.

The Moderator, Ruling Elder Dan Witcher of the host church, was the Moderator in Nomination, and he was re-elected by acclamation.

Mr. Pablo Ayllon, a student at King College and member of Eastern Heights Presbyterian Church, Bristol, Tennessee, was taken under care as a ministerial candidate. His pastor, the Rev. Rick Light, gave the charge to the candidate.

The candidacy of Mark Pearson was transferred to Fellowship Presbytery.

The court heard a complaint from the Rev. Jim Thornton and voted to deny it.

The court also heard a complaint from Messrs. Nathan Blevins and Paul Seufert against the Session of Westminster Church, Kingsport. This complaint revolved around disciplinary issues with regard to the wife of a man whose sin of pornography was deemed to constitute adultery that rose to the level of justifying the filing of divorce (see *P&R News*, January-March 2003, for coverage of the original complaint in the matter). The Presbytery finally adopted the following statement: “That Westminster Presbytery upholds the complaint, and we interpret our action as affirming that the Session erred in its refusal to acknowledge that in this case [the wife’s] obligation to submission [to her husband] was not relieved in light of her husband’s adultery. We therefore encourage the Session to review its decision not to drop the charges against [the wife], and do encourage the Session to lift the sanctions against her and transfer her to another congregation at her request.”

At this point, the hour was late (almost

seven o’ clock in the evening), and the court voted to adjourn. The remaining items on the docket, including several committee reports, were tabled until the next stated meeting on January 10, 2004.

Letters (continued from page 13)

measure of the rise of the influence of witchcraft and wizardry upon our children.

In all this, I wait in vain for the Church of Jesus Christ to stand up and ROAR!!!!

Where are those with the gift of prophecy who can call our people back from the brink before it is too late, and the judgment of God Almighty overtakes us all? Why is the church so deathly SILENT while millions are going over the precipice? Do we think God is going to be impressed at the throne of Judgment by our doctrines—however true they may be—if we did not stand up and speak the Truth to the lost, while they still had time to repent? It is not a matter of being able to win the argument. It is not a matter of the fact that people not only don’t want to hear it, but are hostile to the message; brethren, it is a matter of FAITHFULNESS to our calling as the people of God, bought with precious blood—and NOT our own. Hear the cry of the heart of our God who sooo loves the world that He gave His Son up to death for our sake:

“...Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, O! HOLD THEM BACK!! If you say, “See, we did not know this,” does He not consider it, who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it, who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?...” (Proverbs 24: 11-12)

Brothers, the World is waiting. This is the hour of our own testing. Will we bear the cross ourselves, and accept the scorn of our generation in order to faithfully proclaim to them the true and ONLY way of salvation; or will we continue to hide our light under the bushel basket within the confines of the church’s four walls?

Where are those who will unashamedly and PUBLICALLY preach the Truth in the open air? The revivals we so love to remember started with two things: PRAYER for Grace and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and open air preaching to the lost. Witness David Brainerd in the open among the Indian, and in private before His Lord for those lost savages. Witness George Whitefield, or Dwight Moody. God is searching for His men today!! The harvest will never be reaped within buildings that the lost refuse to enter—we must go out and LOOK for the lost sheep.

I ask those who are acknowledged as the leaders of our denomination, to consider drafting

a formal proclamation of where we, the church of Jesus Christ (known by all as the Presbyterian Church of America), stand on these issues; and let it be published as a full page add in all the most prominent newspapers of our nation. Let the Church arise and Proclaim—“Here we stand, we can do no other.”

“We will be vilified”—yes, but hearts will also be convicted of sin, and seek us out. “The press will crucify us as a body”—yes—but did they not do the same to our Lord? Does Jesus not promise us that we are ‘Blessed when all men revile’ us? ‘But it might split the church’— is Unity a blessed thing if it keeps us from pleasing our Master? Would we not rather hear the “Well done, thou good and faithful servant?”

Thank God for the Franklin Grahams and the Rick Santorums of today who will speak the truth no matter who it may offend, that they may be found faithful!! How sad however that they are viewed by the world as an insignificant fanatical minority—because the Church that bears the same Name as they do, sits silently by allowing them to take all the heat alone.

OH! Brothers, RISE UP to your calling!! You are great, IN HIM. You are mighty IN HIM. You will be victorious IN HIM!! Let the Church rise up and ROAR, lest in keeping silent ‘the rocks themselves cry out!!!’ (Luke 19:40)

Your sister IN HIM,
Joann M. Longton
366 Jefferson Ave
New London, CT 06320
1-860-447-2903
jmlongton1@juno.com

P.S. A Petition is currently circulating, asking for a Constitutional Amendment which would only allow for marriage to be between a man and a woman in our nation. For further details, and to sign the petition, go to:
<http://www.nogaymarriage.com/>.

Gentlemen:

As a response, prompted by your publication of an interview of Dr. Morton Smith in the July-September 2002 issue of P&R News, Rocky Mountain Presbytery adopted the following resolution at its Spring Stated Meeting, April 25, 2003:

“Be it resolved that Rocky Mountain Presbytery believes and affirms that the Scripture does not support the concept of racial segregation.”

We respectfully request that this resolution be published in an appropriate section of your publication.

Sincerely in Christ,
Lyle E. Lagasse, State Clerk

SUPPORTERS

ALABAMA

EBENEZER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2478 Hobbs Island Road/Huntsville
S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM
Bible Study, Wednesday, 7:00 PM
Fellowship Supper, 2nd Wed., 6:30 PM
(205)883-7298

TALUCAH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2374 Talucah Road/Valhermoso Springs
S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 10:45 AM
(205)778-8288

ARIZONA

CALVIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(OPC)†
4150 Acoma Road/Phoenix
S.S., 9:15 AM; Worship, 10:30 AM/6PM
Wednesday Bible Study, 7PM
(602)992-4454

DESERT SPRINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1555 W. Overton Road/Tucson
S.S., 9:20 AM; Worship, 10:30 AM
(520)742-8990

CALIFORNIA

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (OPC)†
Meeting at Costa Mesa 7th Day Adventist Church, 271 Avocado St./Costa Mesa
S.S., 11:30 AM; Worship, 9:30 AM
(714)526-3153

CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
610 North Glendale Avenue/Glendale
S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM
(818)244-3747

CONNECTICUT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MANCHESTER
43 Spruce Street/Manchester
S.S., 9:15 AM; Worship, 10:30 AM
(860)643-0906

FLORIDA

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1875 N. W. Britt Road/Stuart
S.S., 9:30 AM;
Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM
(561) 692-1995

SHARON ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH†
17680 NW 78 Avenue/Hialeah
S.S. 11:20; Worship 10:00 AM/5:00 PM
(305)821-5761

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH†
44 Southview Avenue/Valparaiso
S.S., 9:15 AM/Worship, 10:30 AM
Third Sunday Service and Supper, 6:00 PM
(850)678-0060

GEORGIA

CRAWFORDVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Crawfordville
S.S., 10:00 AM;
Worship, 11:00 AM (2nd Sunday)

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

One Harker Road/Ft. Oglethorpe
S.S 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM
(706)866-2521

BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Bethany Church Road/Greensboro
S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (4th Sunday)
(706)486-2682

SOUTH LIBERTY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sharon Barnett Road/Sharon
S.S., 10:00 AM;
Worship, 11:00 AM (1st/5th Sun.)
(706)456-2377

CHEROKEE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
5549 Hwy. 92E/Woodstock
S.S., 9:35 AM; Worship, 8:00/10:45 AM
(770)928-2051

LOUISIANA

AUBURN AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
224 Auburn Avenue/Monroe
S.S., 9:15 AM
Worship, 10:30 AM/6:00 PM
(318)323-3061

BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2040 East McNeese Street/Lake Charles
S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 8:15 AM/10:45 PM
(318)478-5672

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

146 E. Cherry Street/Opelousas
S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 10:45 AM
(318)948-9339

MARYLAND

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
209 East Main Street/Elkton
Worship, 3:00 PM
(410)398-3192

www.christpresbyterianchurch.com
CHRIST REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Diplomat Building, 13992 Baltimore Avenue, Suite 300/Laurel
S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM/6:00 PM
(301) 498-3700

MINNESOTA

GOOD SHEPHERD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
15321 Wayzata Blvd./Minnetonka
S.S., 11:15 AM; Worship, 9:30 AM
Sunday Evening Bible Study, 6:00 PM
(952)835-6358

MISSISSIPPI

MCDONALD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
295 E. Williamsburg Road/Collins
S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM
Wednesday prayer meeting, 7:00 PM
(601)765-6437

<p>FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH East Beach Blvd. at 24th Ave./Gulfport S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM Wed., Family Dinner (6:00)/Bible Study (6:30) (228)863-2664</p>	<p>TRINITY REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 3701 South College Road/Wilmington Worship 10:30 AM (910)395-1252</p>	<p>CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 9201 Old White Horse Road/Greenville S.S. 10:00 AM; Worship 11:00 AM/6:00 PM Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 PM (864)294-0895</p>	<p>WESTEND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1600 Atlantic Street/Hopewell S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 10:50 AM/6:00 PM Wednesday Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM (804)458-6765</p>
<p>ST. PAUL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 5125 Robinson Road/Jackson S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 10:55 AM/6:00 PM (601)372-7497</p>	<p>NOVA SCOTIA BEDFORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 49 Nelson's Landing Blvd./Bedford S.S., 11:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/7:00 PM (902)864-1587</p>	<p>SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 105 River Street/Greenville S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM Wednesday, 5:45 PM (864)232-7621</p>	<p>CORNERSTONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Seventh Day Adventist 9858 Fairmont Avenue/Manassas S.S., 11:15 AM/Worship, 9:30 AM Wednesday Bible Study, 7:00 PM (703)368-8594</p>
<p>COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 625 N. Church Ave./Louisville Worship 11:00 AM and 6:00 PM 2nd Sunday, Fellowship Meal, 12:15 PM, Evening Studies at 1:00 PM. Wed Supper 6:00 PM; Prayer Mtg, 6:30 PM (601)773-5282</p>	<p>OHIO FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2540 S. Main Street/Akron S.S., 9:30 AM Worship, 10:45 AM/6:00 PM Wednesday, 7:00 PM (330)644-9654</p>	<p>TENNESSEE BRAINERD HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 6388 East Brainerd Road/Chattanooga S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 10:45 AM/ 6:30 PM (423) 892-5308</p>	<p>KNOX REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 4883 Southard Lane/Mechanicsville S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM Sunday Evening, 6:00 PM (804)779-7608</p>
<p>PEARL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2933 Old Brandon Road/Pearl S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (601)939-1064</p>	<p>CHRIST COVENANT REFORMED (PCA) 14787 Palmer Road SW/Reynoldsburg Psalter Service, 9:30 AM Worship, 10:45 AM Thurs. Bible Study, 7 PM (740)964-0889</p>	<p>MIDWAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 4011 Old Jonesborough Road/ Jonesborough S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship 11:00 AM/7:00 PM (423) 753-941</p>	<p>IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 4700 Colley Avenue/Norfolk Worship, 10:30 AM/6:30 PM Wed. Christian Education Classes, 7:00 PM Sat. Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM (757)440-1100</p>
<p>TCHULA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 109 E. Main Street/Tchula S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/5:00 PM Wednesday Prayer Meeting, 7:30 PM (601)924-7334</p>	<p>OKLAHOMA BEAL HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 614 SW Park/Lawton Worship, 10:45 AM and 6:00 PM (580)355-4702</p>	<p>BRIDWELL HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 108 Bridwell Heights Drive/Kingsport S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (423)288-3664</p>	<p>TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH† 108 Hill Street/Tazewell S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00/7:00 PM (540)988-9541</p>
<p>FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 600 Main Street/Woodville S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 AM Wed. Prayer Mtg. (Oct.-May), 6:00 PM (601) 888-4837</p>	<p>PENNSYLVANIA NEW LIFE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP 2795 Patterson Drive/Aliquippa S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (724) 378-4389</p>	<p>FELLOWSHIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Highway 25/70/Newport S.S., 9:30 AM/Worship, 11:00 AM/7:00 PM Wednesday Prayer Meeting, 6:00 PM (423) 623-8652</p>	<p>WASHINGTON WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2700 Andresen Road/Vancouver Worship, 10:00 AM Sunday Bible Study, 6:30 PM (360)254-1726</p>
<p>SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1926 Grand Avenue at 20th/Yazoo City S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/5:00 PM Wednesday, 7:30 PM (601)746-8852</p>	<p>LEHIGH VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 31 S. 13th Street/Allentown S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (610)797-8320</p>	<p>WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 900 Watauga Street/Kingsport S.S., 10:00 AM Worship, 11:00 AM/7:00 PM (423)247-7341</p>	<p>WEST VIRGINIA PROVIDENCE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 5865 Davis Creek Road/Barboursville S.S. 11:30; Worship 10:00 AM/6:00 PM (304)736-0487</p>
<p>NEW JERSEY LOCKTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 197 Locktown-Flemington Road/Flemington S.S., 10:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (908)996-7707</p>	<p>FAITH REFORMED CHURCH 2953 Saltsman Road/Erie S.S., 9:45 AM/Worship, 11:00 AM (814)899-3037</p>	<p>TEXAS COLLEYVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 715 Cheek Sparger Road/Colleyville S.S., 11:10 AM; Worship, 9:30 AM/6:00 PM (817)498-2626</p>	<p>WISCONSIN CALVARY ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH† 136 West Union Avenue/Cedar Grove S.S., 10:30 AM; Worship 9:00 AM/7:00 PM (920)668-6463</p>
<p>MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH† 350 Franklin Blvd./Somerset S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (732)846-8777</p>	<p>COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 515 West County Line Road/Hatboro S.S., 9:45 AM (Sum., 9:00); Worship, 11:00 AM (Sum., 10:00) (215)675-9688</p>	<p>COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2701 N. 7th Street/Harlingen S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM Midweek service, 7:00 PM Wednesday (956)425-3136</p>	<p>REFORMATION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH† Aurora Medical Center, I-94 at Highway 164/Waukesha Bible Study, 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM Wednesday Prayer Service, 7:00 PM (262)246-2421</p>
<p>EMMANUEL ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH† 325 Whippany Road/Whippany S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11 AM/6:15 PM (973)539-1171</p>	<p>ROCKY SPRINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 123 Rocky Springs Road/Harrisville S.S., 10:00 AM Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (724)735-2743</p>	<p>COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SDA Church, 1209 S. John Redditt Rd./ Lufkin S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 10:45 AM/5:30 PM (409)637-6043</p>	<p>LAKESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Seventh Day Adventist Church, 21380 W. Cleveland Ave./New Berlin S.S., 10:45 AM; Worship, 9:30 AM (262)968-6769</p>
<p>NEW YORK AFFIRMATION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Routes 100 and 139/Somers S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (914)232-0546</p>	<p>HILLCREST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Route 19, three miles south of Leesburg/ Volant S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship 10:55 AM/6:30 PM (724)533-4315</p>	<p>CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1620 E. Common Street/New Braunfels S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 10:45 AM (830)629-0405</p>	<p>GRIEVING WITH HOPE The Rev. James Alexander PO Box 7100 Florence, SC 29502-7100 (843)664-9759 Website: www.griefwithhope.com Email: griefwithhope@abac.com</p>
<p>NORTH CAROLINA DILLINGHAM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 16 Stoney Fork Road/Barnardsville S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (828)626-3668</p>	<p>SOUTH CAROLINA LIBERTY SPRINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 200 West Liberty Springs Street/Cross Hill S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM Wed. Bible Study and Prayer Mtg. 7:00 PM (864)998-4884</p>	<p>PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 3510 Austin Parkway/Sugar Land S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM and 6:00 PM (except 1st Sun.) (281)980-2522</p>	<p>WE are pleased to have congregations and organizations join us as cosponsors of this venture. If you would like to become a sponsor, just let us know: PINS Financial Office, P. O. Box 60, Coeburn, VA 24230. Checks should be made payable to Presbyterian International News Service. † Indicates a non-PCA church.</p>
<p>COUNTRYSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 127 Ponderosa Road/Cameron S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (919)499-2362</p>	<p>GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1955 Riverside Drive/Conway S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 10:45 AM (843)347-5550</p>	<p>COEBURN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 220 Second Street SW/Coeburn S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:30 PM Wednesday Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM (276)395-2866</p>	<p>NEW HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Fairfax Fire Station #3 (Williams Memorial Hall), 4081 University Blvd./Fairfax S.S., 11:15 AM Worship, 9:30 AM/5:30 PM (703)385-9056</p>
<p>WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Highway 74/Cashiers S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM Wednesday, 7:00 PM Prayer Meeting (828)743-2122</p>	<p>FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1800 Third Loop Road/Florence S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (843)665-9235</p>	<p>CALVARY REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 403 Whealton Road/Hampton S.S. 10:00 AM; Worship: 8:30 AM/11:00 AM Evening Gathering: 6:00 PM (757)826-5942</p>	<p>DICKENSON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Main Street/Haysi and Big Ridge S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 10:00 AM (Big Ridge Chapel), 11:15 AM (Haysi Chapel) (276)865-5650</p>
<p>WHITE OAK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 699 Polly Watson Road/Fremont S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM (919)284-4196</p>	<p>BEECH STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1403 Beech Street/Gaffney S.S., 10:00 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:00 PM (864)489-2014</p>	<p>NEW HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Fairfax Fire Station #3 (Williams Memorial Hall), 4081 University Blvd./Fairfax S.S., 11:15 AM Worship, 9:30 AM/5:30 PM (703)385-9056</p>	<p>HAZELWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 117 E. Main Street/Hazelwood S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:15 PM Wednesday, 7:00 PM (828)456-3912</p>
<p>HAZELWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 117 E. Main Street/Hazelwood S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:15 PM Wednesday, 7:00 PM (828)456-3912</p>	<p>SHEARER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 684 Presbyterian Road/Mooresville S.S., 9:45 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/5:00 PM Wednesday, 7:00 PM (704)892-8866</p>	<p>NEW HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Fairfax Fire Station #3 (Williams Memorial Hall), 4081 University Blvd./Fairfax S.S., 11:15 AM Worship, 9:30 AM/5:30 PM (703)385-9056</p>	<p>HAZELWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 117 E. Main Street/Hazelwood S.S., 9:30 AM; Worship, 11:00 AM/6:15 PM Wednesday, 7:00 PM (828)456-3912</p>