



Highlights of 2017 Fall Stated Presbytery Meeting
Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center
By: Alexandra (Sandra) Hedrick, Presbytery Stated Clerk
October 3, 2017

The mission of the Presbytery of St. Augustine is to support our faith community, so that together we may witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We held our Fall Stated Meeting on October 3, 2017 at Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center. Fall was truly in the air, with morning temperatures in the low 70s and a wonderful breeze all day! Over 150 persons attended, including guests and MPCC staff. Friendships were renewed, and new friendships have begun.

Our morning preacher was Ron Watson, who changed his text to Psalm 34 in light of the previous day's news of a mass shooting at a concert in Las Vegas. Ron spoke of the senseless suffering of God's people in Las Vegas and in other recent times of pain and disaster, including devastating hurricanes. He reminded us that the Lord "is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." Jesus is still the Lord of the world, and the Holy Spirit can still be trusted. We are called to engage the events of the world in service and as people of peace. After Ron's message of hope, we celebrated the Lord's Supper, led by new presbytery members Joyce and Chris Lieberman. Our wonderful musician was once again Rick Roberts, Director of Music at Fort King Presbyterian Church. The offering taken for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program was \$1,120.

Highlights of the presentations and actions during the meeting that was opened by our Presbytery Council Moderator Ralph Moulder and continued after worship by our Moderator Jeff Welch included:

- We welcomed new minister members: Roger Dunnavan (Memorial parish associate), Joyce Lieberman (synod stated clerk and executive), and Chris Lieberman (Fort King interim pastor). The chair of First Ocala's pastor nominating committee spoke regarding the church's call to Ron Watson as its new head of staff. New member Debra Henning, who serves as the stated supply pastor at First Crescent City, was unable to be present.
- Larry Green (Westminster) offered a tribute to the life and ministry of the Rev. Dr. Marvin Lutz, who died on April 23, 2017.
- Leslie Cox (Memorial) was received as a candidate for ministry under the care of our presbytery. Leslie attends Columbia Theological Seminary.
- We elected commissioners and a young adult advisory delegate for the 223rd General Assembly to be held in St. Louis in June 2018. Sandra Hedrick was elected to a new three-year term as stated clerk, and Ed Kelly was elected as assistant stated clerk.

- Also on the recommendation of our hard-working Nominating and Representation Committees, we elected synod commissioners and more than 125 individuals to initially serve on the commissions and teams that make up our new presbytery structure.
- We recognized our ministers serving in validated ministries outside of a Presbyterian congregation, and we welcomed two newest Certified Christian Educators, Debbie Abbott (Hodges Boulevard) and Anne Reid Broos (Memorial). We also participated in the commissioning of ruling elder Bea Newhart for continued pastoral service to the First Presbyterian Church of Reddick.
- We received the 2018 Asking Budget and amended it to include increased support to the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN).
- We clarified and approved the recommendations of the Administrative Commission (AC) for the Nueva Esperanza Presbyterian Church. Under the plan, the congregation members will apply to become a part of the 1001 Worshipping Communities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The AC will remain in place until the necessary steps are taken and the congregation is dissolved.
- We heard reports from MPCC's Executive Director and the chair of its Executive Board and the moderator of the special task force appointed by the Trustees and Presbytery Council. The new date and time for the capital campaign kick-off dinner is Thursday, October 12 at 6:00 p.m. The presbytery voted to express its intent to the task force that the date for the goal of raising firm pledges of \$700,000 be extended four additional months, to April 30, 2018.
- We approved revisions to the Manual of Operations relating to Mutual Mission, the St. Augustine Disaster Assistance Commission, and the staff positions of Relationship Coordination Director and Bookkeeper.
- The four area relationship coordinators (Gary Hardesty, Joe Rigsby, Earle Sickels, and Sheryl Sumlin-Walker) met over the lunch break with the churches and ministers in their areas.
- We received reports from Mutual Mission, Presbyterian Women, the Permanent Judicial Commission, and others. Clark Simmons made a report on behalf of the Board of Pensions. Other presbytery action was taken as recommended in the published reports provided in the docket.
- We enjoyed lunch on the grounds, including caramelized pork loin with apple, scalloped potatoes, green bean casserole, spinach and cranberry salad, cornbread muffins, and dessert (apple bites, cookies and ice cream).

Next Meeting: The 2018 Winter Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of St. Augustine will be held at South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church on February 3, 2018, at 9:00 a.m.