

Highlights of 2018 Winter Stated Presbytery Meeting

Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center

By: Alexandra (Sandra) Hedrick, Presbytery Stated Clerk

May 1, 2018

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.

The Presbytery of St. Augustine met on May 1, 2018 at Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center (Montgomery). For me, this meeting brought two beautiful words to mind: creation and community! The day was sunny and warm. About 120 persons were in attendance. Our new Moderator, Mary Mickel (Woodlawn), set a tone of hope and respect.

Morning Worship (Gen. 50:15-23 and Col. 3:12-13)

Morning worship was Spirit-filled! Forrest Foxworth (First Fernandina) was our liturgist. Holly Inglis (Palms) brought the morning message: "Bury the Hatchet." The message is that "we need forgiveness, and we need to practice it right now in our life together." We were challenged with all the reasons we do not forgive, including the truth that it is "just plain hard." Looking for inspiration in the Native American/First People's tradition of burying the hatchet, Holly invited us to let God's grace flow through us as we forgive and ask for forgiveness from specific people.

After the sermon, we met at the Lord's Table, where Gary Hardesty (First Alachua) and Diane Wilson (St. Giles) served. Moderator Mickel led the commissioning of all who will serve our presbytery at the 223rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Our commissioners and advisory delegates are: David Lee (Highlands United), Paige Porter-Buhl (Covenant), Mary Brown (Woodlawn), Ed Kelly (First Green Cove Springs), Emma Cottrell (Community), and Forrest Foxworth (First Fernandina Beach). Joe Rigsby (area relationship coordinator) and Sandra Hedrick (stated clerk) will be there to serve us as well. Finally, we thank Sandra Chandler (Woodlawn) for her musical accompaniment. The offering taken for Montgomery totaled \$963.35.

Area Relationship Coordinators

The Action Agenda began with greetings from our four area relationship coordinators: Gary Hardesty, Joe Rigsby, Earle Sickels, and Sheryl Sumlin-Walker. Ministers and commissioners gathered with their area representatives after worship for a time of encouragement and building-up.

New Ministers Welcomed

We welcomed new minister members James Kendrick and Ana Lugo-Berrios. James is serving as stated supply pastor of our Mayport church and will be ordained at the Palms church on May 27, 2018. Ana serves in a validated ministry as a gift planner with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Special Resolutions

Sam Souers offered a memorial tribute to James Lloyd in addition to the written resolution in the meeting packet. Rev. Lloyd died on February 26. Peyton Hopkins read a poetic resolution for Gabe Goodman's retirement this summer. Gabe has been the Pastor of our Community church in Atlantic Beach for more than 30 years!

Our Newest Candidates for Ministry

We have 15 individuals under our care who are discerning and moving towards a call to ministry as a teaching elder of the PC(USA). Forrest Foxworth (First Fernandina) and CJ Dates (Palms) were most recently received as “candidates for ministry” under our care. We met Forrest and CJ at this meeting and gave them our encouragement and support as they continue on their journey to ordination.

Other Presbytery & Montgomery Business

We elected all of the nominees for presbytery office offered by Patti Phillips, chair of our Nominating Team. We heard a report on our presbytery’s transition and approved an amended 2018 Operating Budget. Montgomery’s updates came from Lexi Green (new Interim Executive Director) and Ralph Moulder (an Executive Operating Board member). A board motion to continue capital fund-raising during the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 was approved, with the clarification that this motion/action does not require the presbytery to provide funding to Montgomery for budget shortfalls and does not mean that the presbytery cannot make other strategic decisions about Montgomery’s future. Bill Hoff also gave a report on the work of the task force.

Mutual Mission Trip to Cuba

While sharing updates, the Mutual Mission Team asked for (and received on the spot) volunteer leaders for this summer’s youth trip. Wain Wesberry (First Fernandina) gave a stirring presentation on the “Cuba mission adventure” that took place in February. The photos showed Christian friends meeting, getting to know each other, and worshipping together.

Presbyterian Women

Gayle Anne Bone shared news from our Presbyterian Women, including the much-anticipated trip to the Churchwide Gathering to be held this summer in Louisville.

Presbytery Disaster Assistance Commission

Jim Pellot reminded us of the work and support provided by the commission. Also, hurricane season is coming! We will continue to update our website with resources.

Westminster Communities

Walk Jones and Vickie Bossuot shared good news from the Westminster Communities in our presbytery, including information about the newest property in St. Augustine.

Thanks to our Host!

The Montgomery staff did a great job hosting our meeting! We also thank you for the nourishing spring menu for the lunch on the grounds: Italian chicken and Philly cheese steak sandwiches, potato chips, roasted green beans, tiramisu brownies, and pineapple delight cake.

Upcoming Meetings

A special called meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 25, at 9:30 a.m. at the St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Orange Park. The purpose of the meeting is to consider and make strategic decisions concerning the future of Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center. Our next stated meeting will be held on October 2, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at Montgomery.