

Rev. Dr. David N. Rollins

Presbytery of St. Augustine

Lead Presbyter's Report

January 2024

I have been engaged in the ministry of St. Augustine for a about four months. I continue to join with several of the presbytery's committees and the call commission. I am meeting with the ARC's on a monthly basis via zoom. Most weeks the presbytery staff and I have a Monday morning zoom meeting to let each other know what we are currently working on, collaborate, and share prayer concerns and celebrations.

One of my goals for the first year is to get into as many churches as possible for worship and get to know the members of the presbytery. So far, I have visited 19 churches so far for worship and had 17 one-on-one meetings with pastors. I am in touch with Rebekah Rodgers at Camp Montgomery, and Charlie Evans, our stated clerk on a regular basis. In every organization communication can be enhanced and improved. I am doing my best to enhance the presbytery's level of communication and believe this is something that will steadily improve over time.

Much like a pastor in a local congregation there is a great deal of my ministry that is not public. That is to say there are numerous conversations with elders, churches, and pastors asking for advice, and sharing concerns that will never be part of a report or newsletter. As I have shared with the council, I regularly receive emails and phone calls from pastors and churches facing a wide variety of challenges. I do my best to listen well, to offer prayer, and when appropriate provide some guidance. Part of my call is to equip the presbytery to be the very best steward of all of our resources including but not limited to, people, churches, camp, finances, etc. When I see opportunities for churches or the presbytery as a whole to better steward God's resources, I will be lifting those up for collective discernment.

I recently shared with the council that I thought it would be beneficial to have a theme for each of our presbytery meetings. We have 3 over-arching and overlapping circles on our strategic plan, Matthew 25, Youth, and Congregational Vitality. We have 3 stated meetings each year. I believe intentionally highlighting

one of those at each of the meetings helps to keep the overall mission in front of us and gives us some focus.

In early January, I had the opportunity to join with the other presbytery leaders in our synod for a time of study and fellowship. I give thanks to God that I have such amazing colloquies that have profound wisdom and are readily available for council and advice. As a new presbytery leader, the role requires my attendance at the Mid Council Leader Orientation in March and my participation in the Presbyterian Leader Formation (PLF) process. PLF is a 3-year course of study. Each leader is placed in a cohort with other leaders that started at roughly the same time. The first week in May we gather and participate in workshops, lectures, and reflection groups to strengthen our skills and effectiveness. I consider myself a life-long student and am excited about this requirement.

Personally, the sale of our house in Virginia Beach closed on Friday January 26, 2024. It is impossible to put into words the amount of stress this relieves and the amount of excitement it brings. My wife (Libby) and I are purchasing a home in the St. Augustine area, and we are scheduled to close on it in February. I am eagerly looking forward to this for multiple reasons. It will be nice to be more settled. It will be incredible once Libby finishes her interim position and is able to join me. The length of time this has taken has added to the stress of moving and entering a new call. However, Libby & I both know how fortunate we have been as people have given us a place to lay our heads during the transition.

I am still learning (drinking from the fire hose) about the people, churches, places, and various mission projects throughout the presbytery, and I am still learning about this part of Florida. However, I continue to give thanks to God for the opportunity to serve as the Lead Presbyter. I know God has great things in store for us.

Peace,

David Rollins