

Presbytery in Brief

July 30th, 2019

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina gathered to do the work of the church, worship and discernment, on Tuesday, July 30th. The people who are Brevard-Davidson River Presbyterian Church welcomed us into their home, showing hospitality and love to all who attended this gathering of our extended family of faith.

After Moderator Rev. Lauren Vanacore opened the meeting with prayer, Stated Clerk Dr. Cam Murchison highlighted the proposed Child/Youth Protection Policy, which will be voted on at a later date. Questions, comments, and potential changes are welcome.

In a break from tradition, immediately following the Stated Clerk's report, we broke for lunch. The meal was a delightful reminder that the work of the Church is to gather together and break bread, and the room was filled with the loving conversations of brothers and sisters in Christ from across the Presbytery.

We reconvened after lunch to hear a report from Ebenezer School in Malawi. This school currently enrolls over 400 students from preschool to seventh grade. This school is an ongoing ministry of our Presbytery, lifting students, and therefore communities, out of poverty through education.

Following the recognition of this important missional effort, we turned our hearts and minds to the service of worship. Rev. Noah McIntee preached a sermon on II Samuel 14:28-33 and John 4:31-38, sharing from his experience with UKirk in Cullowhee.

We then had a bit of an adventure into Roberts Rules of Order! The General Presbyter Nominating Committee presented a motion asking for approval to focus "...on nominating an installed General Presbyter with skills and aptitude for the transitional work needed, with the flexibility of nominating instead either an interim General Presbyter or a designated General Presbyter if one of these alternatives promises to best accomplish the required transitional work." A substitute motion was presented, and lively and loving discussion ensued. The substitute motion did not replace the main motion, and the main motion was approved.

The General Council made a report to the Presbytery, which included formal approval of the Advocate program, which is a new way of maintaining connection throughout our Presbytery. It replaces the old COM Liaison system.

The Committee on Ministry presented several new members of the Presbytery who will be serving congregations across the Presbytery, and one who is honorably retired. They also recommended the approval of Alex McNeill for ordination and validation of his ministry as executive director of More Light Presbyterians. This recommendation was unanimously and enthusiastically approved. First Lenoir also saw their Interim Pastor become their Pastor for a designated term.

The afternoon continued with celebrations and information. Christian Education presented online resources, and lifted up the upcoming Pastor's Retreat. The Youth Committee pointed out the applications for the Presbytery Youth Council and showed a video from their recent adventure at Triennium. The Guatemala Partnership highlighted upcoming trips to Guatemala, and that we will soon celebrate 25 years of partnership! The Mission Committee lifted their work, including several upcoming trips. The Peace and Justice Committee exhibited the Matthew 25 initiative and provided a report from two members who recently spent two weeks assisting in a refugee ministry at the U.S./Mexico border. Our beloved General Presbyter, Bobbi White, reflected on her time in this Presbytery and the many ministries which were hitting major milestones this year.

The Teaching Elders and congregations who make up our extended family of faith, the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, will next gather on Saturday, October 26th, at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Asheville, NC.

Your Brother in Christ,

Rev. Joseph W. Taber IV,
Pastor, Presbyterian Church of Lowell