SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
August 23, 2014

NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY

Moderator Cleda Locey called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and opened the meeting with prayer. Stated Clerk Joe Berry indicated that a quorum was present. He further indicated that the Recording Clerk was not able to attend and as a result, if elected, he would be willing also to serve as Recording Clerk. Following a motion and second, Joe was so elected.

PRESENTATION OF CALL

At the request of the undersigned persons, Moderator Cleda Locey called for a special meeting of Northeast Georgia Presbytery to convene at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 23, 2014 at the Friendship Presbyterian Church in Athens, Georgia.

Teaching and Ruling Elders requesting this meeting are:

1. Ruling Elder Bill Cravens, Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church
2. Rev. Glen Kohlhagen, Co-Chair, Committee on Ministry, Washington Presbyterian Church.
3. Ruling Elder Helen Epps, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA.
4. Rev. Hilary Neufeld Shuford, Transitional General Presbyter

The meeting is called for the following purposes:

1. To receive a report from the chair of the Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC), Ruling Elder Bill Cravens, and take requested action to correct class terms of the PJC. See attached, Proposal to Resolve the PJC Current Class structure.

2. To address Committee on Ministry (COM) items:

   b. To dissolve the pastoral relationship between Rev. Melvin G. Lowry and Belle Terrace Presbyterian Church.
   c. To receive certain ministers, if the way be clear.
   d. Receive a report from COM and take requested action regarding the incorporation of additional policy into existing Presbytery Policy. See attached Northeast Georgia Presbytery Committee on Ministry.
3. To hear a report from the Rev. Hilary Neufeld Shuford, Transitional General Presbyter.

4. To hear announcements regarding upcoming events.

ROLL OF ATTENDEES

Teaching Elder Commissioners

K. Travis Adams
Cheryl T. Barnes
Joseph W. Berry
Scarlette Bostick
James E. Bowden
Tara Bulger
R. Brock Burnett
Roe Callaway, Jr.
Boone Clayton
Frank G. Colladay, Jr.
Andrew Cooke
Allen Cross III
Karla Daniels
W. Glenn Doak, Jr.
Jason Edwards
Evelyn Ellis
Teresa Franklin
Lisa L. Graves
Mark C. Harper
Jennifer Horton
George C. Kaulbach
Glen Kohlhagen

Melvin G. Lowry
M. Beecher Mathes
Matthew McGowan
Stephen L. Nelms
R. Montgomery Nelson
James B. Oudom
David Powers
Robert W. Prim
Joy White Pruett
Joyce Rife
Holly Shoaf-O’Kula
W. Alexander Stevens
Joan A. Stevens
Jill Tolbert
Joel Tolbert
Craig Topple
Rindy Trouteaud
Marianne Turner
Haruko N. Ward
Janet Williams
Theodore S. Worley

Ruling Elder Commissioners

Athens First
Belle Terrace
Calvary
Christ

Kathy Bangle
Paige Simmons
Charles Grant
Lynda O. Farmer
Wanda C. Butler
Cheryl Evans Jones
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Ruling Elder Commissioners continued

Clarkesville First
Commerce
“Covenant, Athens
Covenant, Augusta
Dahlonega
Eatonton
Gainesville First
“Homer
Madison
Milledgeville First
Nacoochee
Oconee
Pleasant Hill
Saint Andrew
Sardis
Trinity
Washington
Westminster
Winder First

David Rife
Irma Johnson
Mary Smisson
Giss Schimmel
Joseph W. Griffin
Ms. Siso
Susan C. Paulin
Jack Spencer
Marvin Locey
Maxwell Etris
Patricia DuBose
Sam J. McChesney
Bill Jackson
Marc Galvin
Marilyn McKendrick
Bill Cravens
Faye Aker
Tom Fox
Adele Seymour
Alberta B. Clark
Rick Mechtly

Moderator, Ministry Team Chair

Cleda Locey
Jan Lewis

Presbytery Moderator
Co-Chair, Committee on Ministry

Commissioning Lay Pastor to a particular service

Fred DiMaio

Clayton

Visitors

Helen Epps, Covenant, Athens; Julia Alesbury, Elberton First; John Gregg, Oconee; Margaret F. Davis, North Alabama Presbytery; Peter H. Ward, Greater Atlanta Presbytery; Linda Turner, Anita Green, Presbytery Staff.
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WELCOME FROM HOST PASTOR

The Rev. Tara Bulger, pastor of Friendship Presbyterian Church, welcomed the attendees.

The meeting continued with a meditation led by Reverend Jason Edwards, new pastor of the Cornelia First Church. The theme of the message was – hope.

As a first item of business, the Rev. Glen Kohlhagen, Chair of the Committee on Ministry (COM), moved MOTION #1 – That the relationship between the Rev. Melvin G. Lowry and the Belle Terrace Church of Augusta, GA be dissolved. This motion passed. It was noted that the congregation and Melvin have agreed upon a severance arrangement. Melvin Lowry will be serving as director of an organization in Augusta.

A second item of business was to receive a report from the chair of the Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC), Ruling Elder Bill Cravens, and take requested action to correct class terms of the PJC. MOTION #2 – That the current improper class structure be resolved with the following reassignment:

- Place Mary Carden in the class of 2015. Mary Carden has agreed to resign her position at the end of 2014 so that there are not 10 members at the beginning of 2015.

- Place Glenn Doak in the class of 2017. Putting Glenn in 2017 helps maintain a parity of clergy when the class of 2015 rotates off. At the beginning of 2015 there will be 3 in the class of 2015, 3 in the class of 2017, and 1 in 2019.

- Elect, at the fall presbytery meeting of 2014, 2 members (1 clergy & 1 elder) to the class of 2019 to start service at the beginning of 2015 and rotating off in 2019. With that election, at the beginning of 2015, we would have 9 members on the PJC, 3 in 2015, 3 in 2017 & 3 in 2019.

This motion passed.

Note: below is how the elections and class make up would look from 2015 through 2025:

Susan Spearman (2015), Greensboro First, Female elder, South Central Area
Bill Cravens (2015), Saint Andrew, Male elder, Greater Augusta Area
Joy Pruett (2015) Member-at-Large, Female clergy, Mountain Area
Frank Colladay (2017) Honorably Retired, Male clergy, Mountain Area
Mary Smisson (2017) Commerce, Female elder, North Central Area
Glenn Doak (2017) Athens First, Male clergy, Greater Athens Area
Holly Shoaf-O’Kula (2019), Minister for Mission, Female clergy, Greater Augusta Area

If a member could not serve a full term, that spot would have to be replaced with someone serving a shorter term. Whoever is elected to fill an unexpired term would start working at the time of election until the end of the class term. Class 2021 (Start serving 2016)

At the fall 2015 Presbytery meeting 3 new members would be elected to replace the outgoing class of 2015.

New elder
New elder
New clergy
Class of 2023 (Start serving 2018)

At the fall 2017 Presbytery meeting 3 new members would be elected to replace the outgoing class of 2017.

New clergy
New clergy
New elder
Class of 2025 (Start serving 2020)

At the fall 2019 Presbytery meeting 3 new members would be elected to replace the outgoing class of 2019.

New elder
New clergy
New elder

And so on, and so on………..

A third item of business was to receive a report from the Committee on Ministry (COM) and take requested action regarding incorporating additional policy into existing Presbytery Policy. Here is the additional material, Motion #3: The following shall be the policy of Northeast Georgia Presbytery:
1. Churches that have pastors who are members of Traditional Benefits Plan of the Board of Pensions of the PCUSA shall make sure that all eligible partners and dependents of those pastors have medical coverage under the same plan unless they have comparable coverage from another source.

2. Churches in which the pastors’ partners and dependents are included in the medical part of the Traditional Benefits Plan of the Board of Pensions of the PCUSA shall be responsible for the full cost of that coverage without cost sharing.

3. While churches that have lay employees who are members of the Traditional Benefits Plan of the Board of Pensions of the PCUSA are encouraged to follow the same policy as for pastors, they may or may not provide medical coverage for partners and dependents and may or may not implement cost sharing following the processes set up by the Board of Pensions.

Approved by the Committee on Ministry on May 8, 2014. This motion was approved.

Subsequently, Presbytery received a report from Transitional Executive Presbyter, Hilary Shuford. Her report included the following items:

- Appreciation for those who have served presbytery in special ways during this time of transition especially regarding changing office sites and the elected leadership of Northeast Georgia Presbytery.
- She mentioned the Goodbye reception and recognition of Edie Covert which will be part of the October Stated Meeting.
- She mentioned her plans, along with others to participate in a Georgia Cluster study and conversation regarding boundaries and the future of presbyteries in Georgia.
- She called attention to recently published General Assembly material regarding proposed constitutional changes.
- She announced that the Coordinating Team appointed a new Temporary Treasurer, the Rev. Bob Googe.
- She announced January 31, 2015 as the date of the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training, during the Officer Training Event at Central Presbyterian Church in Athens.
- Mentioned that the Bills and Overtures (B&O) Committee is planning educational seminars in early November to prepare commissioners to vote on proposed constitutional changes at the February 25, 2015 Stated Meeting.
Following Hilary’s presentation, Joe Berry commented on lack of need, though part of presbytery tradition, for teaching elders to request excused absences if unable to attend presbytery meetings. Further, he indicated that the Coordinating Team has approved a policy regarding the issue of bringing weapons into presbytery’s facilities. If anyone would like a copy, contact Joe.

The meeting closed with prayer about 3:00 p.m.

Joseph W. Berry
Acting Recording Clerk