

Presbytery Meeting Summary July 25, 2023 Stated Meeting

The Beaver-Butler Presbytery held its stated meeting at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, July 25, 2023, using a Hybrid format, in-person and via Zoom. Moderator was Elder Carolyn Paulsen, Vice-Moderator Rev. Jamie Fowler; the meeting was hosted by the Hill Presbyterian Church, Butler, where Rev. Leigh Benish serves as Pastor.

OPENING WORSHIP:

Hill Church Pastor Rev. Leigh Benish spoke from Matthew 18, Jesus' instructions regarding handling differences in the community. Her message, "Talk It Out," encouraged everyone to think differently regarding Jesus' words – instead of thinking of ourselves as one who is *wronged*, let's imagine we are the one who *committed the offence*. As church leaders, we have authority, but we also have increased responsibility to interact appropriately with others in the Body of Christ.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE PRESBYTERY:

- *Approved* the Presbytery Meeting Minutes, May 23, 2023
- *Received* the Coordinating Team Minutes, May 3 & June 7, 2023
- *Received* the Stated Clerk Report, May – June 2023
- *Received* the Treasurer's Report, Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss, May 31, 2023
- *Recognized and honored* the ministry and retirement of Rev. Dr. James W. Kirk, Valencia Presbyterian Church, Valencia
- *Received* Rev. Richard C. Klein, Jr., H.R., (Redstone Presbytery), as a member of Beaver-Butler Presbytery
- *Commissioned* Timothy Casey (Mt. Pleasant, Darlington) to Pastoral Service as Commissioned Ruling Elder

COORDINATING TEAM (CT):

CT Chair Elder Andrew Why reported on the final actions from the Synod Special Administrative Review Commission Report. He reviewed the reasons for the formation of the Commission and its work, which was reported to the Presbytery in January 2023.

One of the concluding recommendations was for the CT to continue further development in cultural awareness and sensitivity. In May, The Coordinating Team received *Intercultural Development Inventory* training with assistance from staff members of the Office of the General Assembly. Additional remarks were made by CT members regarding *Cultural Awareness Development*; the Presbyters gathered together to discuss cultural challenges facing churches and members today.

FROM THE STATED CLERK, REV. RANDALL CLOW:

Randall informed the Presbyters of recent happenings in the denomination, and noted that the 2023-2025 *Book of Order* is now available for ordering. He also highlighted recent changes in the Constitution. The Clerk's office is preparing resources for responding to these changes.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FROM MINISTRY & VOCATION:

1. Approved the transfer of Rev. Ron Schermerhorn to the Charlotte Presbytery to serve the First Presbyterian Church, Rockingham, NC.
2. Approved and appointed Ordination Exam Readers for October 2-6, 2023: Carmen Shullo (Ruling Elder) & Jason Sinagra (Teaching Elder)

EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER REPORT:

Rev. Dr. Thomas Harmon gave an enlightening report on churches that conclude their ministries and close their buildings. What will happen to those buildings, and will they be used for *good*? Tom suggests that instead of being closed forever, the Holy Spirit can intervene and the buildings can end up being closed for *good* (a play on words!)

COLLABORATION, FELLOWSHIP, & YOUTH MINISTRY UNIT:

Rev. Leigh Benish reminded the Presbyters about the new Grant, “**Strengthening Congregational Connections.**” Congregations can join forces for ministry and outreach, and receive financial support from the Presbytery. Leigh encouraged churches to join forces to apply!

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, September 26, 4:00 P.M, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Butler, “hybrid” format – In-person and Zoom. ***Dinner hosted by the Exploratory Mission Team.*** (*Presbytery office will close early that day.*)

ADDITIONAL DATES OF IMPORTANCE:

- **Sunday, August 13:** CRE Picnic sponsored by the Encouraging Churches to Flourish Ministry Unit for CRE Graduates (and Current Candidates), Seminary Graduates, and their families @ Quality Gardens’ Bloom Café, 5:00 PM
- **Wednesday, August 16:** Pastors’ Picnic sponsored by the Collaboration, Fellowship & Youth Ministry Unit – Rotary Shelter, Zelienople Community Park
- **Wednesday, August 30:** *Book of Order* Bulk Order Deadline
- **September 21-27:** International Peacemaker Visit
- **Monday, October 9 – Wednesday, October 11:** **Wee Kirk Conference**, Laurelville. ECF is willing to help pay \$75.00 per person for attendees.

OTHER INFORMATION:

- There were a total of 94 participants at the meeting:
 - 28 Teaching Elders
 - 29 Ruling Elders from 24 Churches
 - 1 Corresponding Member
 - 4 Ruling Elders who are officers, CT, or Chair of a Committee or Unit
 - 32 Visitors