**Minutes for the March 6, 2021 Stated Meeting of Mission Presbytery**

**This meeting was held via Zoom**

The Stated Meeting of Mission Presbytery was called to order by Moderator Carlos Baladez (Ruling Elder) at 9:00 AM. A quorum was present and he opened the meeting with prayer.

Moderator Baladez welcomed first time Commissioners.

Corresponding Members were seated:

Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett, President and Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency

Ruling Elder Valerie Young, Synod of the Sun Leader and Stated Clerk

Ruling Elder Bok Soon Egbert, Moderator of the Synod of the Sun

Rev. Hailey Malcolm, Pastoral Presbyter, Tres Rios

Moderator Baladez introduced RE Tim Huchton, the new President and CEO of Mo Ranch.

Moderator Baladez took care of some housekeeping items, reminded Commissioners to have bread and cup available for Communion during worship, and he did a brief Zoom lesson.

**Vice Moderator Rev. Nancy McCranie welcomed us to worship**

Preached the sermon: Rev. Carolina Trevino based on John 2:13-22

Presided at the Table: Rev. Nancy Benson-Nicol

**Stated Clerk’s Report Rev. Rev. Laurie Palmer**

**The Stated Clerk had two proposed motions, taken together: To approve the docket for today’s presbytery meeting; and to approve excused absences received for today’s presbytery meeting. This was so moved, received a second, and was approved.**

A written report is attached to these minutes.

**Report of the General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson**

One hundred and sixty two years ago this month, Charles Dickens wrote his classic novel *A Tale of Two Cities.* The opening sentence could have been written this week to describe the past year of our lives. Listen to this:

# “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.” Doesn’t that describe the last twelve months? Only a year ago, we were all sitting right next to each other, no distance, no masks, no vaccines,enjoying a coffee break together, bellowing out hymns in that wonderful Westlake Hills sanctuary. And then less than two weeks later, we were all forced into isolation.

# In the space of three hundred and sixty five days, all of us have come to know one or more beloved family members or neighbors or friends who were stricken with Covid-19. There are people here in our meeting today who themselves have faced it and mostly recovered. Many of us have lost loved ones to Covid, as we observed in worship earlier today. And all of us have been affected, one way or another, by it. I’m not the same person I was a year ago, and I daresay you’re not either.

The hits just kept coming over the last twelve months, didn’t they? A pandemic. The murders and resulting violence which peeled back the thin veneer that we thought covered up our racist tendencies. Then more violence, an insurrection at the heart of our democracy. Snowmageddon, or as some call it, Snovid 21, which put our entire presbytery under snow and ice, not to mention the whole four-state Synod.We weren’t able to be together for Easter, we weren’t able to be together for Thanksgiving, we weren’t able to be together for Christmas, and here it is almost Easter again.

It just makes us tired, doesn’t it?

In so many ways, the last twelve months have felt like the worst of times. ***And*** in so very many ways, it’s actually been the best of times as well. Look at what we’ve learned. Look at what we’ve come through. Look at how we have improvised, and adapted, and at least to some degree, overcome. Many of us have learned that we’re stronger than we thought. We’ve learned the value of community, the value of doing our part to protect everyone. We’ve even had three presbytery meetings on Zoom now! The creativity you have displayed in worship has been amazing. So many of you have become video producers! You’ve come up with workarounds for choral anthems, for pastoral visits, for home offices which feature children and pets. You have used every ounce of your energy, intelligence, imagination and love, and it shows.

Thank you for maintaining your faithfulness and for continuing to show God’s love in all that you do.

I was talking to a colleague in Louisville recently. He said he received a call from some random pastor, who had just found his name probably in the planning calendar, and called him to share his fears. The pastor talked on for a good while, and finally he put words to what many of us have feared.He said,“It’s almost time for us to come back together, and I’m afraid that no one’s gonna come back.” After a pause, my friend said to him, “Well, they’re **not** going to come back to the way things ***were***.”

I think that’s true. All of us are different now, this side of the pandemic. All of our congregations are different. We’re **not** going to be able to go back to the way things were. And if we try, I think we are most to be pitied. Many of us are already planning to keep a virtual component, even when we come back to in-person worship. Many of us see our mission differently now. We’ve learned what is important, and what is, well, not so important after all.

It’s going to look different for each of our congregations, but I am convinced that we are going to be bringing something to our lives together that wasn’t there before. I’ve tried to express some of this in the goals I’ve set for the Presbytery for 2021. We have necessarily had to look ***inward*** for the past twelve months.But these goals, I hope, are ways that we can begin to reach ***outward*** as we move closer to the end of the pandemic I’m hoping for 3 things: an increase in the number of ***congregations which give to the presbytery,*** no matter how little or how much, so that we can continue to be better together; an increase in the number of ***congregations who sign on to become Matthew 25*** congregations, focused on congregational vitality while making a positive impact on racism and poverty; and, an increase in the number of ***congregations who take advantage of the MissionInsite*** demographic tool to get reacquainted with their neighborhoods post-pandemic. I’m hoping to get one hundred percent of you by the end of the year to try out MissionInsite, and to share with us three things that you’ve learned from doing it. This morning,

I’ve asked Dan Milford to be the first to share with us what he and Covenant church in San Antonio have learned.

(Dan spoke of what the congregation learned about the general area where the church sits, and the needs that MissionInsite uncovered for them as they seek to do meaningful ministry where they are).

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Beloveds, we’ve been through the *worst* of times, no doubt. But God in God’s providence has also shown us the ***best*** of times in this past year. I hope that you and your Session will take the opportunity to reflect on these things:

***How have we improvised? How have we adapted? How have we overcome?***

***What have we learned? Who are we now?***

I was reminded by a new church developer this week that “if the Holy Spirit is behind it, it’s going to work.”

I believe it was the apostle Paul who said “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Friends, we have the promise that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is with us. God has ***not*** deserted us, even during a pandemic. God has walked with us all the way. And God is ready to accompany us into this next phase of our life together. In all of this, I remain sinfully proud of Mission Presbytery, and sinfully proud to be on this journey with you.

**Greetings from the Synod of the Sun**

RE Valerie Young, Synod Leader and Stated Clerk introduced RE Bok Soon Egbert, our Synod Moderator. RE Egbert told us that the Synod of the Sun theme this year is “Let’s Go Together!” KATCHI KAPSIDA! / 같이 갑시다! She emphasized our unity as we work together as we follow in the steps of Jesus Christ.

RE Young brought greetings and updated us on the work of the Synod over the last year: $5000 worth of first-time Zoom subscriptions have been given to congregations; $1500 worth of coaching funds are available and two pastors in Mission Presbytery have taken advantage of that; there are funds available for emergency aid for pastors; on-line worship workshops have been offered--you may be put on a list for future workshops--email Valerie at valerie.young@synodsun.org. Anti-racism resources may be found at n4dr.org, and Valerie reminded us that we are a Matthew 25 Synod. 2021 is the year of anti-racism. Synod “Sun Spots, a podcast, began last year. Access it: <https://www.synodsun.org/sunspots>. The podcast highlights ministries throughout the synod. Valerie encouraged the presbytery to send ideas to her. The Synod provides communication services to Mission Presbytery and to the whole synod. Various grants are available to congregations, so do check in with her about them.

**Commission on Ministry Report Rev. Monica Smith**

1. **Examination of Andrew Lemlyn for Ordination. Andy has been called to serve as Pastor by First Presbyterian Church, Seguin.**

Mr. Lemlyn completed his studies at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and has been prepared for ministry by Mission Presbytery. Andy has been called to serve as pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Seguin. Andy was examined by the COM Exam team, and his examination was sustained by vote of the COM. The final step is examination at the presbytery meeting where it is your responsibility and privilege to examine him in the areas of Christian faith, theology, Sacraments, and government. I will ask the first question.

Rev. Smith presented Mr. Lemlyn for examination and asked the first examination question. Moderator Baladez opened the floor for questions.

**Rev Smith made this motion: “On behalf of the Commission on MInistry, I move that Andrew Lemlyn’s examination be sustained and he be enrolled, pending ordination, as a member of Mission Presbytery.” The motion passed.** Mr. Lemlyn’s Statement of Faith and Journey of Faith are attached to these minutes.

Rev. Smith acknowledged members from FPC, Seguin and offered congratulations.

II. Rev. Smith introduced new minister members of Mission Presbytery: Kris Crawford, The Presbyterian Church of Gonzales; Ryan Gaffney, St. John’s Presbyterian Church, Austn; and Rev. Brian Stamper, San Pedro Presbyterian Church, San Antonio. Statements of Faith and Faith Journeys are attached to these minutes.

**III. Motion Regarding Brady Presbyterian Church, Brady**

**COM moves that presbytery concurs with Brady Presbyterian Church, Brady, TX in its request to close as a congregation and to appoint an Administrative Commission to consider and conclude matters regarding the church. The AC duties shall include but shall not be limited to:**

**1. Inquiring into the current status of membership and all finances;**

**2. Assuming original jurisdiction of the Session, if needed;**

**3. Ascertaining what legal recourses may need to be taken;**

**4. Recommending to the presbytery a plan for the property.**

Rev. Smith spoke to the motion and Moderator Baladez asked if there were any questions from the floor. A vote was called and the motion passed.

Rev. Smith spoke of the accelerating pace of church closures and asked that the presbytery pray about that. The presbytery will honor the Brady congregation at the June or October meeting of presbytery. Rev. Smith prayed for the Brady church.

**IV. The Commission on Ministry, in its capacity as a commission of Mission Presbytery, has taken the following actions since the last Presbytery meeting:**

**Approved the following Terms of Call and Contracts**:

Ryan James Gaffney and St. John’s Presbyterian Church, Austin; Pastor

Compensation

Salary and Housing 54,000

Benefits

Board of Pensions 19,980

½ SECA     4,131

Moving Expenses up to   7,000

Reimbursed Expenses

Auto Allowance     1,200

Professional     2,150

Study Leave                   2,150

Jane Pettit and Community Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi; Interim Pastor; part time

Compensation

Salary     4,000

Housing   20,000

Benefits

½ SECA     3,888

Susan Montoya and First Presbyterian Church, Kerrville; Parish Associate

Compensation: $25/hour maximum 16 hours per week, no benefits

Carolina Trevino, Central Presbyterian Church, Austin; Associate Pastor

Compensation

Salary 37,000

Housing 22,000

Benefits

Board of Pensions, in full

½ SECA 2,257

Reimbursed Expenses

Professional and Study   2,500

Chad Lawson and Canyon Lake PC, effective 1/1/2021

Compensation

Salary 21,470

Housing 29,000

Benefits

BOP 18,674

½ SECA     3,861

Reimbursed Expenses

Auto     2,600

Continuing Ed/Books            1,500

Phone        980

Four weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Amy Meyer and FPC, Elgin, effective 1/1/2021

Compensation

Salary 19,935

Housing 31,379

Benefits

BOP       18,986.40

½ SECA             1,963

Reimbursed Expenses

Professional   4,620

Four weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Katy Walters and Forest Hills PC, Helotes; Designated, two years, effective 2/14/2021

Compensation

Salary 33,000

Housing 27,000

Benefits

BOP   5,100

PPO Ins 16,200

Death and Disability     600

Temporary Disability     300

½ SECA   2,295

Reimbursed Expenses

Auto     500

Cont Ed/Books     500

Moving expenses, up to 2,000

Four weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Kris Crawford and The PC of Gonzales, effective 1/1/2021

Compensation

Salary 25,000

Housing 25,000

Benefits

BOP       20,360.64

½ SECA             3,825

Reimbursed Expenses

Auto   5,000

Cont Ed/Books   1,000

Professional   2,500

Fours weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Martha Langford and FPC, LaGrange, effective 1/1/2021

Compensation

Salary 44,400

Manse value 18,000

Benefits

BOP 23,088

½ SECA         4,773.60

Reimbursed Expenses

Auto   2,400

Cont Ed/Books 2,900

Other                                    2,400

Four weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Jim DeMent and FPC, Victoria; F/T, 1/18/20 start, 12-month interim contract

Compensation

Salary 31,100

Housing 30,000

Benefits

Employer Contributions   4,800

½ SECA   5,041.35

Reimbursed Expenses

Auto     1,000

Continuing Ed/Books               100

Actual Move Out Expenses   Up to 3,000

Four weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Joan Carol Watson and  St Mark PC, Boerne, f/t, interim contract, effective 2/19/2021

Compensation

Salary 14,500

Housing 30,000

Employer Contribution 26,000

Medical Reimbursement   2,500

Benefits

½ SECA 5,164

Deferred Comp 421.50

Pension/Death             8,760

Reimbursed Expenses

Professional 5,000

Four weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Enid Ross and Faith, Austin; P/T;  interim contract, effective 12/18/20 for 12 months

Compensation

Salary 12,185

Housing   9,600

Additional Compensation     4,500

Benefits

½ SECA   2,011

Four weeks vacation

Efren Cruzada and Faith Community PC, Corpus Christi, stated supply, PT

Salary 18,000

IRA                 1,500

Rebecca Longino and New Covenant Fellowship, Austin, stated supply, PT

Salary                   24

Housing                   776

Employer Contributions      19,500

Cont. Ed/Books   1,170

Professional     500

Five weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

Monica Smith and FPC, Luling, stated supply, PT

Salary   18,125

Employer Contributions     5,975

Auto                   300

Cont. Ed/Books               700

Five weeks vacation, two weeks study leave

RE Leslie Hartman and FPC of Collegeport (pulpit supply only)

Lead worship and preach

for 16 Sundays 144.20 per week

Continuing Education       1,000

**Triennial Visits Completed**

* Everlasting Hope, Taylor, 10/11/20
* Treasure Hills, Harlingen, 1/24/21

**Ordination and Installation Commission Approved and Dismissed**

To install Rev. Abraham Tsai, Austin Taiwanese on Sunday, November 15, 2020 at 2:30 PM at the church and on-line:

Preside the Administrative Commission and propound constitutional questions:

Rev. Fred Morgan

Preach the sermon: Rev. Kent Miller

Constitutional questions to the congregation: Moderator Carlos Baladez

Charge the pastor: Rev. Fred Morgan

Charge the congregation: Rev. Sallie Watson

Lead Prayer of Installation: Ruling Elder Phil Barnes

Dismiss the Administrative Commssion to install Rev. Abraham Tsai.

**Ministerial Changes**

* Kathy Anderson: Move to Stated Supply, El Divino Salvador, Corpus Christi
* Megan Hamilton McMillan: Transfer to Presbytery of Tampa Bay
* Laura Neely Villarreal: Dissolve the Associate Pastor relationship with Parkway, Corpus Christi, effective 12/31/20, and move to Member-at-Large
* Katy Walters: Dissolve the Associate Pastor relationship with New Braunfels, New Braunfels. Move to Designated Pastor, Forest Hills, Helotes, effective February 17, 2021
* Charles Walden: Dissolve the Pastor relationship with Jackson Woods, Corpus Christi, effective 6/17/21. Will move to Member-at-Large 6/17/21.
* Ed Boyce: Dissolve the Pastor relationship with First, Rockport, effective 2/7/2021 and move to Member-at-Large.

**Examinations**

* Andrew Lemlyn, for ordination, to serve First Presbyterian, Seguin, 11/19/20
* Bryan Stamper, to serve San Pedro, San Antonio, 12/10/20

(Included in the report are earlier examinees who will be introduced: Kris Crawford, Gonzales; and Ryan Gaffney, St. John’s Austin)

**Honorably Retired Status Granted**

* William Bischoff
* Richard Powell, Jr. from Mo Ranch (will be recognized in June)

**Permission to Serve Communion**

Commissioned Pastor Sheri Dittman at the PW Spring Event, April 9-10, 2021

**Deaths Reported**

Sam Lanham 11/29/20

**Report of the General Council Rev. Stacy Ikard**

**I. Child Protection Policy for Mission Presbytery**

**RE Caitlin Supcuff, TE Katy Walters**

(As reference, Book of Order G-3.0106 *All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy. A council may delegate aspects of its tasks to such entities as it deems appropriate, provided that those entities remain accountable to the council.)*

This policy is for Mission Presbytery events and can be used as a model for the congregations in Mission Presbytery. A motion to adopt the Child Protection Policy was made. Moderator Baladez opened the floor for discussion. A call for the vote was made. The motion passed. This policy is attached to the end of these minutes.

**II. Commissioned Pastor Task Force Report, CP Kris Bair**

**(**As reference, Book of Order G-2.10 *Commissioning Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service.)*

CP Kris Bair spoke to the rationale and history of this policy. She moved its approval. Moderator Baladez opened the floor to discussion. Moderator Baladez called for the vote and the motion passed. This policy is attached to the end of these minutes, which General Assembly PCUSA has called a model for other presbyteries.

**Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett, President and Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.** Rev. Moffett spoke on Matthew 25, specifically to eradicating poverty. She engaged the presbytery by answering questions submitted in “Chat.” Sallie Watson closed this part of the meeting with prayer.

**Committee on Preparation for Ministry Rev. Malcolm McQueen**

RE Meg McReynolds is co-chair with Rev. McQueen.

Since the last meeting of Mission Presbytery, the CPM met on November 13, 2020 and February 5, 2021. The following actions were taken:

1. Enrolled as Inquirers: **Natarsha Sanders** (FPC, Kerrville)

**Joshua Clapp** (FPC, El Campo)

2. Certified **Elias Carbarcas** (Northwood, San Antonio) ready for examination, pending a call.

3. In response to the Report of the Commissioned Pastor Task Force, approved a process for a Ruling Elder to become qualified in Mission Presbytery to receive authorization of a commission from the Commission on Ministry. This process will become an addition to the CPM Manual of Operations if Mission Presbytery adopts the report from the Task Force.

**CPM respectfully submits the following motions:**

**1. At her request, remove Julie Demaree (Shepherd of the Hills, Austin) from the roll of Candidates. The motion passed.**

**2. That Mission Presbytery approves Alan Constant (Hyde Park, Austin) as a**

**Candidate pending successful examination with respect to his Christian faith,**

**forms of Christian service undertaken and motives for seeking the ministry.**

Rev. McQueen introduced Inquirer Alan Constant (Hyde Park, Austin) for Candidacy. Mr. Constant gave his spiritual journey, and the floor was opened for questions. Hearing none, **Moderator Baladez called for the vote and the motion passed.**

Members from Hyde Park “gathered” around Mr. Constant. Moderator Baladez asked the candidacy questions, which Mr. Constant answered affirmatively. Rev. Emily Owen, Hyde Park, gave a charge to the new Candidate. Rev. James DeMent ended with prayer.

**Mission Outreach and Justice Committee Rev. Andries Coetzee**

1. Rev. Coetzee introduced Chad Lawson, MOJC Grants Subcommittee. Grants will go to nine applicants, as described in the report attached to these minutes.

**II. Rev. Coetzee made this motion: "MOJC moves that the Guatemala Partnership Team be authorized to partially fund their agreement for this year with the Seminario Evangelico Presbyteriano (approximately $3500) as we prepare to present the full agreement before the presbytery at its June meeting." Moderator Baladez opened the floor for discussion. There was a call to vote and the motion passed.**

**Youth Connections Committee Rev. Kay Walters**

RE Caitlin Supcoff gave the SouperBowl update: FPC, El Campo won last year’s SuperBowl Smackdown and passed the honors to the Shepherd of the Hills, Austin, this year.

75,000 food items collected this year by the presbytery.

Rev. Walters reported a great Mid-Winters youth conference via Zoom this year. Inquirer Natarsha Sanders and Rev. Dries Coetzee did the keynotes as dialogues, and those are posted on the Mission Presbytery YouTube page.

YCC continues with the once a month youth gatherings via Zoom to keep people connected.

**John Knox Ranch Rev. Sarah Allen**

JKR went above and beyond their campaign challenge. The challenge was to raise $400,000, and the camp raised $438,708! The goal was matched by a generous donor.

The new strategic plan will be ready in the next few weeks and will be made available to the presbytery.

Henry Owen spoke about the Conservation Easement project which Mission Presbytery approved at its October, 20202 stated meeting. The Hays County bond passed, and the money assigned to JKR won’t come in at the full value, so JKR is applying to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which is part of the USDA, for the balance of the funds.

JKR has 219 campers registered for this summer so far. JKR will follow CDC guidelines for COVID-19. Space is still available, scholarships are available. The report is attached to these minutes.

**Disaster Preparedness and Assistance Committee**

**RE Jennifer Rektorik and Rev Ed Sackett**

Rev. Sackett: We’ve just come out of the worst natural disaster in the state of Texas, the consequences are still being found out. There is a state registry for FEMA funds. It’s on the MP Facebook page. Two grants are available: IWC, refugees in SA; grant for Port Aransas to rebuild food pantry following Hurricane Harvey, and to expand the community garden.

COVID: Don’t rush back into sanctuaries, we’re at a precipice, six variants; stay safe: mask up, wash hands, remote worship.

DR: Planting a seed: we have portable showers etc, but no truck to haul them to disaster areas. We’d like to purchase our own truck. $60,000. More information to follow.

Disaster preparedness is front of mind right now, especially as we enter hurricane season. DPAC has a packet to send to congregations and all you need do is ask for it.

Volunteers are being sought for disaster response and recovery, including grant writing.

**Henrietta M King Trustees RE Kris Brown**

If you have an emergency need from the winter storm, HMK can help with a no interest loan,

three-year no pay grace period, and up to $25,000.

For other needs, HMK is making loans at 1.75%. Contact the presbytery or Kris Brown for more information.

**Stewardship and Fiscal Oversight Committee**

**RE Fred Gamble and Rev. Kevin Jones**

Rev. Jones: The “Better Together” grants fund is up to $54,000. These grants are especially for congregations who are working together on a specific ministry.

RE Fred Gamble entertained any questions about the financial report.

Reports are attached to these minutes.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

**Pastoral Care Committee Rev. Nancy McCranie**

We honor Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, San Antonio

The closing prayer for the meeting was offered during this time.

**Adjournment**

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Rev. Laurie Palmer, Stated Clerk.

**STATED CLERK’S REPORT**

**MISSION PRESBYTERY**

**MARCH 6, 2021**

1. Statistical Reports

Thank you all for your kind attention to your congregation’s Annual Statistical Reports. Many of you were prevented from finally submitting the form because the deadline was the week of the winter storm. I have received some of those to get into the system myself. 68 were completed and I expect more once I finish.

II. Per Capita

Just a reminder that per capita is $8.98 for 2021. Letters went out to churches in August, 2020. If you need a reminder, please contact either me at [statedclerk@missionpby.org](mailto:statedclerk@missionpby.org) or Melody Gonzales at [mission@missionpby.org](mailto:mission@missionpby.org).

III. Minutes Review

I am still receiving your 2020 minutes at the presbytery office. There are some minutes left from 2019 there. Some of you are sending them by email, and that’s a good way, too.

I would like to form a group to come together in the late summer, early fall to complete the review requirement. I hope that we are more free to gather by then, but we’ll have to see what the coming months bring.

IV. Mid-Council Orientation

I’ve been in place since November 9, 2020. You have taught me much, and I have retained some knowledge since my last temporary Stated Clerk position in Tampa Bay Presbytery and here years ago. I’m delighted to meet so many and reconnect with others. Zoom has lost its luster, as you well know. I look forward to the day when we can be together. We are looking to the October 22-23, 2021 as possibly in-person at John Knox Ranch.

As for learning more, I’ll participate in the Mid-Council Orientation sponsored by the General Assembly from Monday March 15, 2021-March 19. I will take that week as Continuing Education. I trust that it will help me be more efficient with a better understanding of the tasks ahead!

V. Goals in 2021

During my term as Stated Clerk I want to help the office move forward with digitalization. To that end, I am continuing to ask for advice regarding it. If you have a certain expertise, I am listening. I look forward to time in officer training and with Clerks of Sessions who are learning the ropes, and I re-acquaint myself in my role.

V. **Proposed motions: to approve excused absences from today’s meeting, and to approve the docket.**

The peace of Christ be with you,

Report submitted by Laurie Palmer, Stated Clerk, Mission Presbytery

**MEETING APPENDIX**

**The Stated Meeting of Mission Presbytery**

**Saturday, March 6, 2021 via Zoom Video Conferencing**

9:00 AM Call to Order, Declare a Quorum, and Opening Prayer Moderator Carlos Baladez

9:10 AM Opening Service of Word and Sacrament

*We remember loved ones in our churches who’ve died of COVID*

*Today’s offering is designated for the Mission Presbytery Pastoral Care Fund*

9:45 AM Report of the Stated Clerk Laurie Palmer

9:50 AM Report of the General Presbyter Sallie Watson

10:10 AM Greetings from Synod of the Sun Valerie Young, Synod Leader and Stated Clerk

Bok Soon Egbert, 2021 Synod Moderator

10:20 AM Commission on Ministry Monica Smith

Examination for Ordination: Andrew Lemlyn, Candidate, FPC, Seguin

10:40 AM Report of the General Council Stacy Ikard

Child Protection Policy

Commissioned Pastor Task Force Kris Bair

**11:00 AM Keynote: Rev. Diane Moffett, Presbyterian Mission Agency**

11:45 AM Committee on Preparation for Ministry Malcolm McQueen

Present Inquirer Alan Constant (Hyde Park, Austin) for Candidacy

12:00 PM Mission Outreach and Justice Committee Andries Coetzee

12:05 PM Youth Connections Committee Ellen Hensle

12:10 PM John Knox Ranch Sarah Allen

12:15 PM Disaster Preparedness and Assistance Committee Jennifer Rektorik

and Ed Sackett

12:25 PM Henrietta M King Trustees Kris Brown

12:30 PM Stewardship Committee Kevin Jones

12:35 PM Pastoral Care Committee Nancy McCranie

*We honor Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, San Antonio*

12:45 PM Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Andrew A. Lemlyn, Journey of Faith

Born in Anchorage, Alaska, and raised in Marble Falls, Texas, I was baptized and confirmed as a Methodist at the age of thirteen. Not growing up in a religious household, I came to embrace the Christian faith through the avenue of attending my local Methodist youth group. From there I became increasingly active in the life of the church, regularly attending Sunday school and worship in that congregation until the age of eighteen when I left to attend college. As an undergrad attending Schreiner University in Kerrville, TX I was first introduced to the people known as Presbyterians, and to Campus Minister Gini Norris-Lane who re-introduced me to a God who offered more grace to human beings than I could ever imagine.

I was a teenager when I first experienced God’s call in my life and as I have grown and matured so too has my perception of that call. Following college I worked for two years in the field of child protection, where I learned skills which have helped me to advocate for the most vulnerable.

In 2013 I began attending Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, where I earned a Master of Divinity. During my time in Seminary, I continued to explore and develop my personal theology – eventually choosing to join the PC(USA) following my Supervised Practice of Ministry with Faith Presbyterian Church in Austin, TX.

Following my graduation from Seminary in 2016, I began my work as Pastoral Resident at First Presbyterian Church in Cuero, TX. Working with Reverend Bill Cotman, I further honed my skills at pastoral ministry among the folks of Dewitt County and the oil field of the Eagleford Shale Reserve. In 2017 I was offered the change to become a full-time stated supply at First Presbyterian Church in the nearby city of Yorktown. For the next two years I would minister here, helping to build a youth group and organize relief to the town of Tivoli following the devastation left by Hurricane Harvey. It was during this period that I was accepted as a Candidate by Mission Presbytery, and that I completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Ministry with Baptist Health Systems in San Antonio.

In 2019 I began work as the full-time stated supply at First Presbyterian Church in Seguin, TX, where I currently serve. I have experienced great joy in my work of ministry with this faith community, where I have now been invited by the PNC to become their called Pastor. I am excited to see what God has in store for me, and the people of First Pres Seguin. In the midst of the challenge presented by COVID-19, we have continued to be the hands and feet of Christ together and to thrive in the midst of social distancing.

Andrew Lemlyn, Statement of Faith

I believe in One God, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit. Three distinct persons bound together in love, relational and interpenetrating, one, and yet distinct. I believe that all things have been created through this divine love, and that all created things are born out of the loving communion of the Triune God. Created in the image of God all creatures are meant to live and thrive in loving relationship with themselves, with one another, with creation, and with God. But humanity has become alienated from its true nature, prone to greed, abuse, destruction, and fear; we have become disconnected from our created purpose.

I believe that the Christ, as the second person of the Trinity- truly human and truly God, lived in the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth. Through his life, death, and resurrection we have been restored into relationship with the Triune God. I believe in the Holy Spirit, who lives within and among us as the constant presence of God in our lives, transforming and recreating us into a new creation. I believe that the scriptures of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament are the inspired Word of God, a witness to the self revelation of God to those in a particular time and place, “a unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church Universal” (BoO W-4.4003b)

I believe that Jesus Christ proclaimed the Grace and Reign of God. Preaching good news to the poor and liberation to the oppressed. He healed the sick, ate with the outcast, forgave sin, and called all people to repentance and return from our common exile from God. He was unjustly condemned by civil and religious authorities as a rebel, and in suffering crucifixion and torture he truly died. In him, God descended to the deepest depths of darkness, touching the void with his love, and in rising from the dead redeemed all of creation to Godself. Liberating the world from sin and death, and delivering the faithful to eternal life.

Those who believe in, and confess faith in the redeeming love of God in Jesus Christ are called into the eternal fellowship that is the Church. Through the waters of Baptism we are initiated into the Church to share in the common life of the people of God. We proclaim the eternal fellowship of God through our common life and in our gathering around font and table. We seek to be the body of Christ in the world, through our compassionate service, our hunger for justice, our love of the poor and the oppressed. Proclaiming boldly the inherent worth of all people, standing in solidarity with those who are denied dignity. In the Lord’s Supper we are called to fellowship with God, with one another, and with all who hunger for wholeness. We are called to build the Lord’s table longer with each generation, including all who are called and included by the expansive love of God. I confess and believe in the tenets of the Reformed Faith, and accept the authority of the Confessions and the Book of Order as the essential guides and constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Rev. Kris Crawford, serving the Presbyterian Church of Gonzales

Faith Journey

I was ordained by Mission Presbytery on April 2, 1995, and quietly observed 25 years of ordained ministry this past spring 2020 in the midst of the Covid 19 pandemic. I have served 15-16 years as an installed pastor in Texas and Arkansas and 8-9 years as a transitional pastor in Arkansas and Pines Presbytery, and one (1) year as a chaplain at Grace Presbyterian Village, Dallas (Grace Presbytery). I am currently completing a covenant with Westover Hills Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Each call, every turn in the road has shaped my ministry and influenced how I move in the world. I am grateful for each opportunity to grow in God’s grace and every experience that has made me a better pastor. In recent years I have felt an increased sense of call to return to installed ministry and that call gained clarity in the very first conversation with the folks at Gonzales. I felt an immediate connection to them and I think they felt it too. Our conversation was relaxed, genuine, and heart-felt. Maybe because I consider Victoria my home and I have lived in Austin three different times in my life, including seminary, each time over and again I would drive back and forth through Gonzales. It is a lovely, historic community. It feels like home. I quickly found myself able to laugh and cry with members of the PNC about the wonder of life and the sadness of this pandemic.

Throughout my faith journey I seek to abide in God as God abides in me. I find joy in my faith in Jesus Christ, love of my family, and service to others. The opportunity to live, love and serve the people and congregation of Gonzales re-awakens in me gifts and skills that I have not consistently been called to use in transitional ministry. This excites me about the possibility of an installed call in Gonzales.

Statement of Faith (Grace), Rev. Kris Crawford

God’s grace is like a thread sewn throughout the tapestry of my life --constant and sure. I am a child of God, nurtured in a Christian home and strengthened in a faith community. I was taught God is love and that I was loved by God, yet as a teen during my parents’ divorce I felt judgment, not love. I found myself silently crying, “Where is that love when I need it the most!” I declared that I had no need for church to live out my baptism. I set myself adrift.

After college, God’s grace called me back into community in the Presbyterian Church. I felt like a lost sheep found or the prodigal child called home. Hearing the Word preached I learned that Christians are called into community, not isolation. Participation in the church wove within me an understanding of what it means to follow Christ. Participation in worship taught me prayer is a central act of corporate life and the heart of my spiritual practice. Scripture freshly revealed God's love and created in me a thirst for more.

Reaffirming my faith, acknowledging my sin, and affirming my reliance upon God’s grace, fueled within me a new sense of Jesus’ Lordship. I was awed at my children's baptism by the breadth and depth of God’s grace. Over and again when I come to the table I gain a sense of God’s sustaining presence through this sacramental meal.

Set apart for leadership as a Teaching Elder has been a joyful and humbling experience --filled with immeasurable growth. My life is full of integrative moments of joy fashioned by God’s renewing power, although I have pushed and pulled from God in anger and sin, only to return again and again in guilt and sadness, I always found grace abounds. Throughout my life God has forgiven me, loved me, and called me to service and new life.

I believe God is the sovereign Creator and the loving Redeemer exalted in the risen Lord. That Jesus Christ, God incarnate, is my Lord and Savior. God in Christ is separate and just and personal and gracious --fully human and fully divine. I believe that the Holy Spirit, God’s gift to us through Jesus Christ, is the dynamic, life-giving force of the Church in the world. I believe Scripture witnesses to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to the redeeming love of God for all of humanity. I believe the Christian life is an invitation to a relationship with the divine, to a life lived in community, and a call to respond in grateful praise and joyful obedience to almighty God.

God has embellished my life with a variety of vocations: daughter, sister, wife, mother, friend, teacher and pastor. Through the years I have come to see the church as a hope-filled, motley, and loveable bunch of forgiven sinners, reconciled by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ. I remain steadfast in my desire to be led by the Spirit to proclaim God’s redeeming grace in Jesus Christ for all people and all of creation.

**Journey of Faith, Rev. Ryan Gaffney**

My life began in Florida, I was born in Melbourne, but left with my family when I was only 6 years old. My father was an associate pastor at an evangelical church, and got another associate job at a much larger church in Southern California.  
  
The environment of the Southern California megachurch formed much of my early context, but I was dissatisfied by it. It felt overproduced and inauthentic, and the commitment to being non-denominational meant that there were many topics of doctrine and theology which were simply never discussed.  
  
When I joined the Presbyterian Church in college, I was particularly attracted to our commitment to the life of the mind as a part of the Christian experience. It felt like the right place to engage the faith during that time of my life which was so consumed by academics, a smarter kind of church.

Well after college, as I continued to discern my growing call to vocational ministry, the Presbyterian Church continued to make sense to me. I grew in sympathy for people broken by the church and harmed by cults and spiritual abuse. Presbyterian polity stood strongly and practically against such things, by ensuring things were done decently and in order.  
  
I moved to Kansas and began the preparation for ministry process there while working at Kansas State University to plant a college ministry. While I was there I met and fell in love with the person who would eventually be my wife and the mother of my daughter. She wouldn't marry me yet though, or even date me. That wouldn't be until we both ended up in Texas.  
  
I moved down to go to Austin Seminary, and was elated when she got a job near Austin a year later. We started dating just as I began to preach Pulpit Supply every week, and she would often come with me as we learned together what parish ministry might look like for us. She supported me through my CPE unit in San Antonio, and I supported her through her first three years as a 1st grade dual-language teacher.   
  
We were married a month after I graduated with my MDiv, adopted Obi-Wan our dog, and together began life as a pastor’s family as I accepted my first ordained call to College Park Presbyterian Church in Orlando, Florida. Parish ministry has certainly had its blessings as well as its challenges, but CPPC has proven itself to be a great church with which to “learn the ropes” of this pastoral role. I grew in innumerable ways: balanced the church budget, baptized new members, officiated weddings and performed funerals for people who had become dear friends. We added a new member to our family by childbirth. Now we believe it’s a great time now to say goodbye so that both of us (our family and the CPPC community) can proceed to a new chapter in the story of our lives.  
  
All four of us, Tiffany, baby Lydia, Obi, and I, look forward to our next adventure as we return to Central Texas.

**Statement of Faith – Ryan Gaffney**

I believe in only one God, the Creator of all things. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent and exists in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who are coequal and coeternal. To say that all things and all people are created by God entails the confession that they retain an element of holiness. There is nothing and no one that is unimportant or irrelevant to God who created it.

God the Father made himself known to humanity long ago through a relationship with Abraham and his descendants. Since that time God has been characterized by his covenant faithfulness, God is one who makes and keeps promises with humanity. These covenants provide for us security in our relationship with Him because they demonstrate that God can be trusted to do what He says. God says God will save.

The Holy Ghost is active and present in the lives of believers, being every bit as important and essential as the other persons of the Trinity. The Spirit is at work in the church, and the scriptures, having inspired the words written there. The Bible is the only book that is inspired this way, and is entirely trustworthy and authoritative. Through prayer the Holy Spirit is available also to aid in the work of biblical interpretation.

Jesus of Nazareth is a historic person who lived on Earth in the ancient near-east, taught about the Kingdom of God, and died a mortal death. He was raised to life and lives even now, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, because He is God incarnate. Jesus is both fully human and fully divine. He is a perfect example for us, and sacrificed Himself so that in His death we could live eternally. We, the faithful, are saved by grace entirely on account of what Jesus has done, not by anything we have done.

During his earthly ministry Jesus instituted two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper as a means to demonstrate the truth of God to all of God's people. They are physical signs and symbols of God's truth in our world. In Baptism we are cleansed and receive new life in Jesus Christ. It is a sensory reminder of our pure condition in the eyes of God and a declaration that we have been washed clean of sin by Jesus's righteousness. The Lord's Supper is the sacrament by which we as a global church join together with one another and with our Lord at the table for a feast. This feast is simultaneously a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice and an anticipation for Christ's eventual return in glory. Neither sacrament is rightly celebrated alone, but in community, as an action of the church.

The church is guided by the Bible and united by a set of common beliefs, living them out together. Empowered by God, the Church is able to guide people on the path of discipleship to function as Christ's hands and feet in the world.

Journey of Faith, Rev. Dr. Bryan Stamper

I was born in the states but my speech dialect developed in Scotland through my second and fifth birthdays. My father completed his PhD from Edinburgh, then a church called him back to the states for his first call as a Presbyterian pastor (now with the same congregation for over forty years!). My father, grandfather and two aunts are all Presbyterian pastors serving the kingdom in unique ways, so my roots in the PCUSA run deep.

My family instilled a deep love of reading and learning, with an appreciation for the creative arts coming from my mother. I play guitar and my sons play piano. Reading and outdoor activities still influence my approach to ministry - I write a daily devotional and any opportunity to connect faith in Christ with hands-on outdoor experiences is welcome.

I was a business major in college, blessed to live three years in Canada by starting an office for an American corporation before branching out to start my own company. I returned to the states to earn a MBA, but was called to the ministry while volunteering with a local church. My calling did not initiate with an inner directive; others suggested the path and supported a journey of discovery. I therefore have a deep sensitivity to mentor people exploring ministry as that is how God worked in my life. To date I have celebrated about a dozen people answering calls into ministry.

My walk with God has been steady and consistent from childhood to ordained ministry. Throughout seasons of both joy and sorrow, a deep sense of God’s presence remains. I have been a believer since childhood, embracing a catechism that flows from belonging to Christ’s church along the way.

My wife is a saint who has supported me from before my first ordained call. She is active in the church and shares her faith with friends in the community. She also grew up in the Presbyterian Church, so nurturing our children as Jesus followers is a central theme of our life together. Our boys are eleven and fifteen, the older lives with the challenges of being on the Autism spectrum. Both boys are sources of great joy for us, and we are fortunate to have a tight family bond that embraces activities together in faith and recreation.

I describe myself as a blessed person. Christ was introduced to me at an early age, with faith modeled by parents and extended family. At this stage in life, I embrace the perspective of maturing in Christ that involves empowering others by way of servant leadership. I still love to learn and serve in the local church, and I am trusting Holy Spirit to clarify how a new call might illuminate a new path of faithful service for our entire family.

Two life verses serve as guiding points of faith:

“Hear, Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! 5 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Deuteronomy 6:4-5

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord and not for people, knowing that it is from the Lord that you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.” Colossians 3:23-24

Statement of Faith, Rev. Dr. Bryan Stamper

I believe in God the Father, who created and continues to create all things out of love and compassion. Genesis 2:1

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s son, who has come as savior to live among us and teach us the ways of God and the way to full and holy life. This savior died a real death for us on a cross to reconcile us with God’s own self. Colossians 1:19-20; Romans 3:21-26, 6:6; Hebrews 10:10, 14

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the power of God available to us through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1-4

I believe all people are broken and separated from God by sin. Romans 3:23

I believe the Biblical canon is Holy Scripture, God-breathed, and as Christ’s will for the church is found within scripture, it is to be obeyed as the functioning rule for faith and life. Christians should pray that the Holy Spirit might reveal this will for us as found in the Bible. 2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 118:18-19, 119:105; Ephesians 1:17-18

I believe the importance of scripture that marks the beginning of the Reformation movement is still relevant today; not just as the rule for faith and life, but also as the means by which the church itself shall continually be reformed. 2 Timothy 3:17

I believe God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one, existing as one even before time began. Genesis 1:1; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe Christ loved the church and gave up his life for it. Ephesians 5:25

I believe salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God; it is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us security in the knowledge of our salvation. John 10:29; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:3-5

I believe all Christians are called to live simple, non-materialistic lives in submission to God, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, and with an eagerness to help each other and the poor. 1 Timothy 6:6-10; Acts 2:43-45

I believe ordained pastors have the ecclesiastical responsibility to involve the church body in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These are signs of the manifest presence, power and action of Christ in the church. In the sacraments we are sealed, united, renewed, and marked by God. Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:24; Romans 6:3-4

I believe ordained clergy should prepare people to be ministers and missionaries in the world. Ephesians 4:11-12

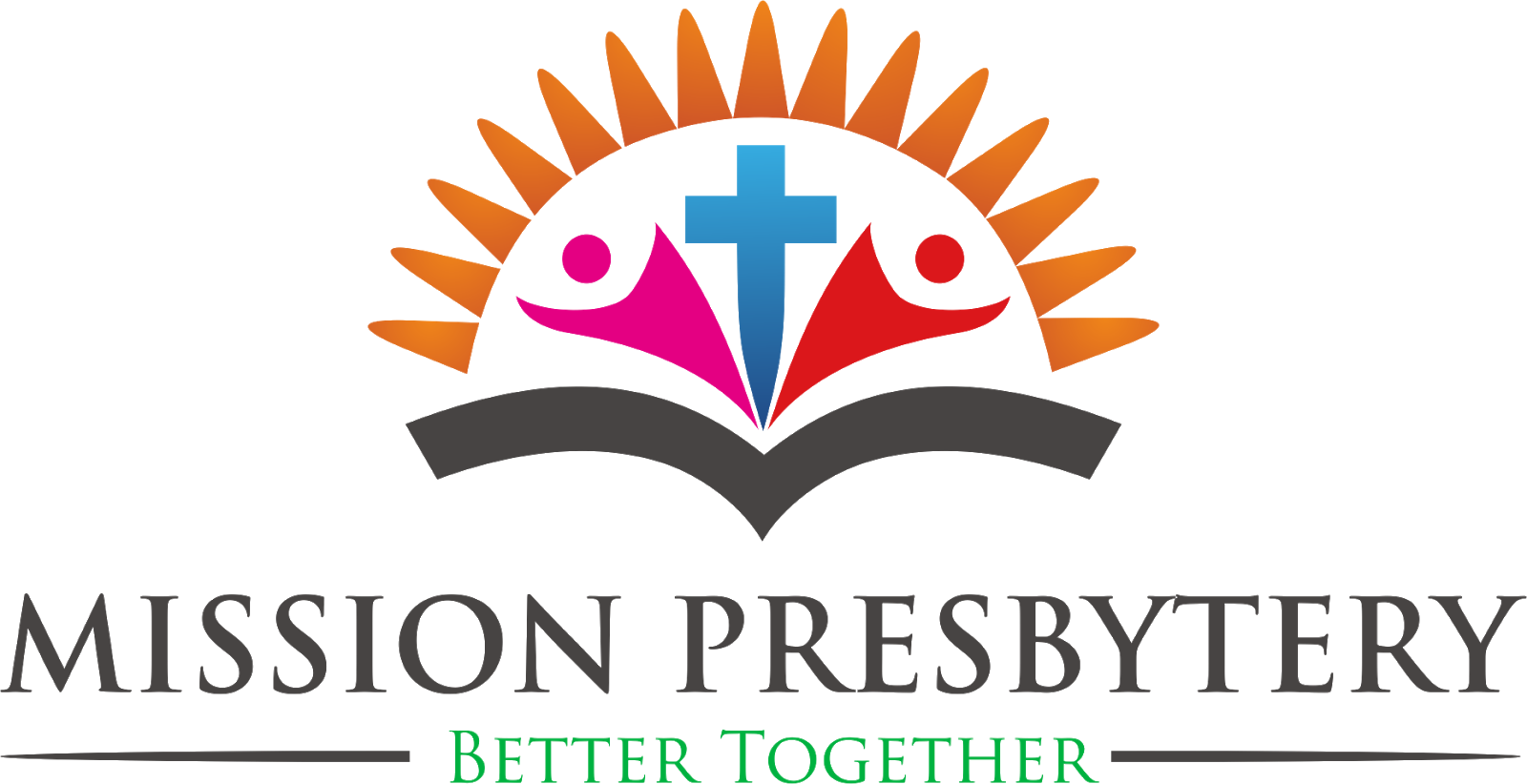
I believe all followers of Christ are called to minister to the Lord, to believers, and to nonbelievers. James 5:13-14; Hebrews 6:10; Matthew 5:13-16

I believe God works to bring good out of all the experiences of life. Isaiah 55:8; Romans 8:28

I believe we live in the in-between times, the already but not yet; and while I affirm that no person knows when Jesus shall come again, he shall return in glory. Mark 13:32; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

I believe the church exists to bring people from the world into relationship with Christ, other believers, and Christ’s church universal, lead those people to Christian maturity, help them discover their spiritual gifts, and release them back into the world to do mission and ministry. Ephesians 2:19; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Acts 1:8

I believe we are called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind; and I believe we are called to love all people. Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Matthew 22:36-40

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**Mission Presbytery Child and Youth Protection Policy | 2021**

**A Vision for Children and the Church, Adopted by the 205th General Assembly, 1993**

*Because we affirm that all children are a gift of God, created by God and created good;*

*all children are a gift to the whole of the human community:*

*all children have a real faith, and gifts for ministry;*

*all children have the right to be children;*

*and all children are not just tomorrow, they are today.*

*Because we believe that all children depend upon adults for safety and security in a world that does not always value children;*

*all children are affected first and most deeply by those things that work against health and wholeness;*

*where there is disease, children sicken and die;*

*where there is homelessness, children sleep on the streets and in other dangerous places;*

*where there is war, children are frightened and without a safe place;*

*where their air and water are polluted, children feel the effect in their bodies and in their futures;*

*where there is shame, children’s spirits are wounded.*

*Therefore we hope for a world where all children can find a safe place;*

*where all ages, races, genders, creeds, and abilities are recognized, valued, and celebrated;*

*where all adults hear the voices of children and speak with as well as for them;*

*where all children have “first call” on the world’s resources and first place in the minds and hearts of the world’s adults.*

*Because Jesus welcomed children and encouraged us to welcome them in his name;*

*Jesus lifted up a child as an example of what the realm of God is like;*

*Therefore, we hope for a church where we take seriously our baptismal vow to nurture all children committed to our care;*

*where we bring good news to all those places where children are in need;*

*where adults and children alike share in ministry.*

*We covenant to act so that this vision may be made real for all children,*

*now and in times to come.*

**Mission Presbytery Child and Youth Protection Policy**

**General Purpose Statement**

Mission Presbytery seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for minors who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the following practices, our goal is to protect minors within Mission Presbytery from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers (workers) from false accusations.

**Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, the term “**minor**” includes all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “**child**” generally applies to minors from birth until 5th grade. The term “**youth**” generally applies to minors in grades 6-12. The term “**worker**” includes both paid and unpaid persons who work with minors in any capacity including but not limited to overnight activities, counseling, or one-on-one interaction. The term “**child abuse**” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a minor’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. The terms “**member of YCC**” or “**member of MPT**” include adult members of the Youth Connection Committee and the Midwinter Planning Team, respectively.

**Selection of Workers**

The Presbytery strongly urges each local church to adopt its own screening procedure, which includes a security background check to ensure the safety and protection of its own children and youth. The Presbytery relies on the local church session to fulfill its own responsibility to its children and youth. Individual congregations will be responsible for screening the adult sponsors they send to any Mission Presbytery events in a capacity to supervise minors. Mission Presbytery will abide by its own screening procedure for all workers who will serve as members of YCC, MPT, small group leaders, and other adult leadership not attending an event with a congregation. This screening includes the following:

* **Six Month Rule:** Ordinarily, adult volunteers and advisors/sponsors will only be permitted to serve as sponsors or volunteers with minors at a Presbytery event if they have been active participants in a congregation or ministry (such as UKirk) of Mission Presbytery for a minimum of six (6) months. An exception may be made if the person is transferring from active membership in a church outside Mission Presbytery where references can be obtained or if the person is on staff at a Mission Presbytery congregation or ministry.
* **Volunteer Information Form (Appendix A):** All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written information form to be supplied by Mission Presbytery. The form will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, church affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The information form will be maintained in confidence on file at Mission Presbytery.
* **Criminal Background Check:** A national criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and “workers” as defined above. Mission Presbytery will run a background check on all persons who serve on YCC or MPT unless documentation is provided demonstrating that a background check has already been completed by their congregation or governing body within the last two years. Before a background check is run by Mission Presbytery, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing Mission Presbytery to run the check. This form will provide personal and confidential information necessary to perform a criminal background check on each applicant, which will be completed by the designated Presbytery staff person. Individuals who decline to sign the authorization form or provide verification of a background check from a church will be unable to work with minors.
* **Personal Interview:** Before working with minors, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss suitability for the position.
* **Reference Checks:** Before an applicant is permitted to work with minors within Mission Presbytery, at least one of the applicants’ references will be checked by Presbytery staff or YCC moderators. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file with Mission Presbytery.
* **Disqualifying Offense:** A disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with minors will be determined by adult members of Mission Presbytery’s Youth Connection Committee confidentially and on a case-by-case basis, in light of all the surrounding circumstances, including severity and period of time elapsed since the offense. Generally, convictions for an offense involving a minor and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.
* The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in confidence on file at Mission Presbytery.

**Preventative Measures and Expectations:**

* **Two Adult Rule:** It is our goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be present at all times when minors are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes and small groups may have only one adult worker in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult worker. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult during our events or in any sponsored activity. In the event that an adult needs to have a private conversation with a minor, the contact should take place in a public setting (such as the far end of a dining hall, or on the side of an activity area in view of others) and with the knowledge of another adult worker.
* **Open Door Policy:** Classroom and meeting space doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.
* **Transportation:** A congregation’s safeguarding policy is in effect during transportation to and during a YCC or Presbytery event. Mission Presbytery abides by the following guidelines when transporting minors and suggest that congregations do the same:
  + When adults are driving children and youth, all drivers shall abide by safe driving laws. Driving record history shall be obtained on all youth leaders and volunteers. Parents and guardians shall be informed of transportation plans, including who is driving.
  + Adults should avoid being in a vehicle with only one youth.
  + In the event that a one-on-one child/youth to adult scenario arises, e.g., unexpected transportation needs, parent permission shall be granted in writing, or by phone when necessary.

**Responding to Allegations of Outside Child Abuse**

* **Definition of Child Abuse:** For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a minor’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:
  + **Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a minor that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
  + **Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the minor is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and/or persistent teasing.
  + **Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a minor and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
  + **Neglect** – depriving a child of essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.
* **Knowledge of Outside Child Abuse:** Workers, small group leaders, and congregational sponsors may have the opportunity to become aware of child abuse that is occuring at home or elsewhere in a minor’s life. In the event that an adult worker becomes aware (during a Mission Presbytery event) of suspected abuse or neglect of a minor, this should be reported immediately to the Youth and Young Adult Advocate or YCC adult moderators for further action, including reporting to the host site and legal authorities as may be mandated by state law.
* All leaders working with minors at Presbytery sponsored events are encouraged to regularly review the incident reporting procedure and the requirements of state and local laws regarding the reporting of child abuse. (See Appendix B)

**Responding to Allegations of Abuse During a Mission Presbytery Event**

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred during a Mission Presbytery event or sponsored programs, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be suspended from their responsibilities with minors pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from Mission Presbytery youth events during the investigation. They should be instructed to have no contact with the victim or with witnesses.
3. All allegations of abuse should be reported to the civil authorities, and the organization will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse. Mission Presbytery will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
4. Mission Presbytery’s insurance company will be notified, and the organization will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
5. Mission Presbytery will designate a spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect. The advice of legal counsel will be sought before responding to media inquiries or releasing information about the situation to any party. All other representatives of the Presbytery should refrain from speaking to the media about the incident in question.
6. Pastoral care will be arranged for those who desire it. This should be for the purpose of providing pastoral support during the time of crisis and not for the purpose of investigating the incident or influencing the investigation.
7. If the investigation supports the accusations, the worker in question will be permanently removed from their position working with children or youth with Mission Presbytery.

**Childcare During Presbytery Meetings**

* **Screening and selection of childcare workers:** The screening and selection of childcare workers will be handled by the host church providing the childcare. Childcare provided at a presbytery meeting shall be in accordance with the Presbytery’s guidelines in this policy. Ordinarily, the Presbytery will not allow a Presbytery event involving care of or activities for children and youth to be held at a church unless the host church has a child protection policy in place.
* **Supervision of childcare workers:** The host church providing childcare workers will be responsible for the supervision of workers.
* **Ratios**: The “two adult rule” will be standard procedure (see page 3 of this policy). There should be a minimum of 2 childcare workers for every 4 children being cared for.
* **Teenage Workers:** We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for younger children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:
  + Must be at least age 14.
  + Must be screened as specified above.
  + Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.
* Check-in/Check-out Procedures: Children should be signed into and out of the child care room by a parent/guardian or a person authorized by the parent/guardian in writing. Host churches should have a check-in/check-out procedure. If the host church does not have a sign-in sheet they regularly use for their own child-care, they may use the one provided in Appendix C.

**Health and Wellness Policies:**

* **Medical Release Form:** Minors and adults participating in Mission Presbytery youth activities will have a completed and signed medical release form. (See Appendix D and E)
* **Medications Policy:** Mission Presbytery leadership is not responsible for the administration of prescription medication. Directions for prescription medications for minors should be clearly communicated to congregational youth sponsors. In the absence of congregational sponsors, youth are responsible for their own medication.
* **Accidental Injuries to Minors:** In the event that a minor is injured during a Mission Presbytery youth event or meeting, the following steps should be followed:
  + For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide first aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the minor’s parent or guardian of the injury at the time the minor is picked up from our care.
  + For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be contacted in addition to the event leadership. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
  + Once the minor has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional. (See Appendix F)

**Discipline Policy**

It is the policy of Mission Presbytery not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children or youth. Verbal abuse is also a prohibited form of punishment or discipline. Workers should consult with Mission Presbytery if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

**Training**

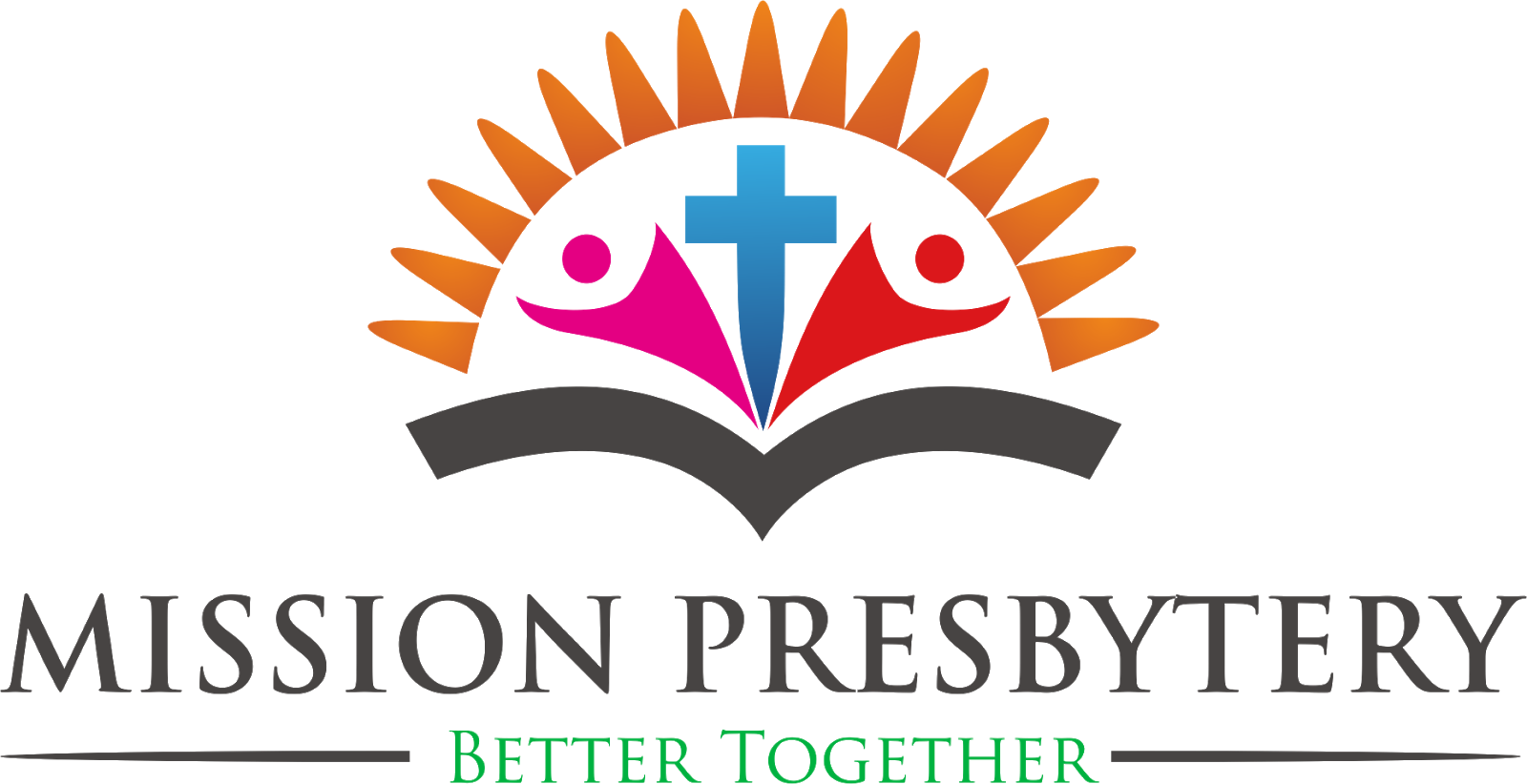
Mission Presbytery will provide training on this safeguarding policy to all new workers and volunteers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

**Social Media Policy**

When communicating with minors via digital messaging and social media, adult workers will make every effort to follow the social media and digital communication best practices as outlined in Appendix G.

**Photo Release**

Permission to post photos of minors is assumed unless the parent/guardian opts out in writing. Care is taken not to identify children by name, although parents and youth sometimes share, tag, or post identifying information themselves.

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**Appendix A | Mission Presbytery VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET**

Full Name of Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current Church/Ministry of Membership\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Years Active \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Church/Ministry \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Years Active \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Experience with Children/Youth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

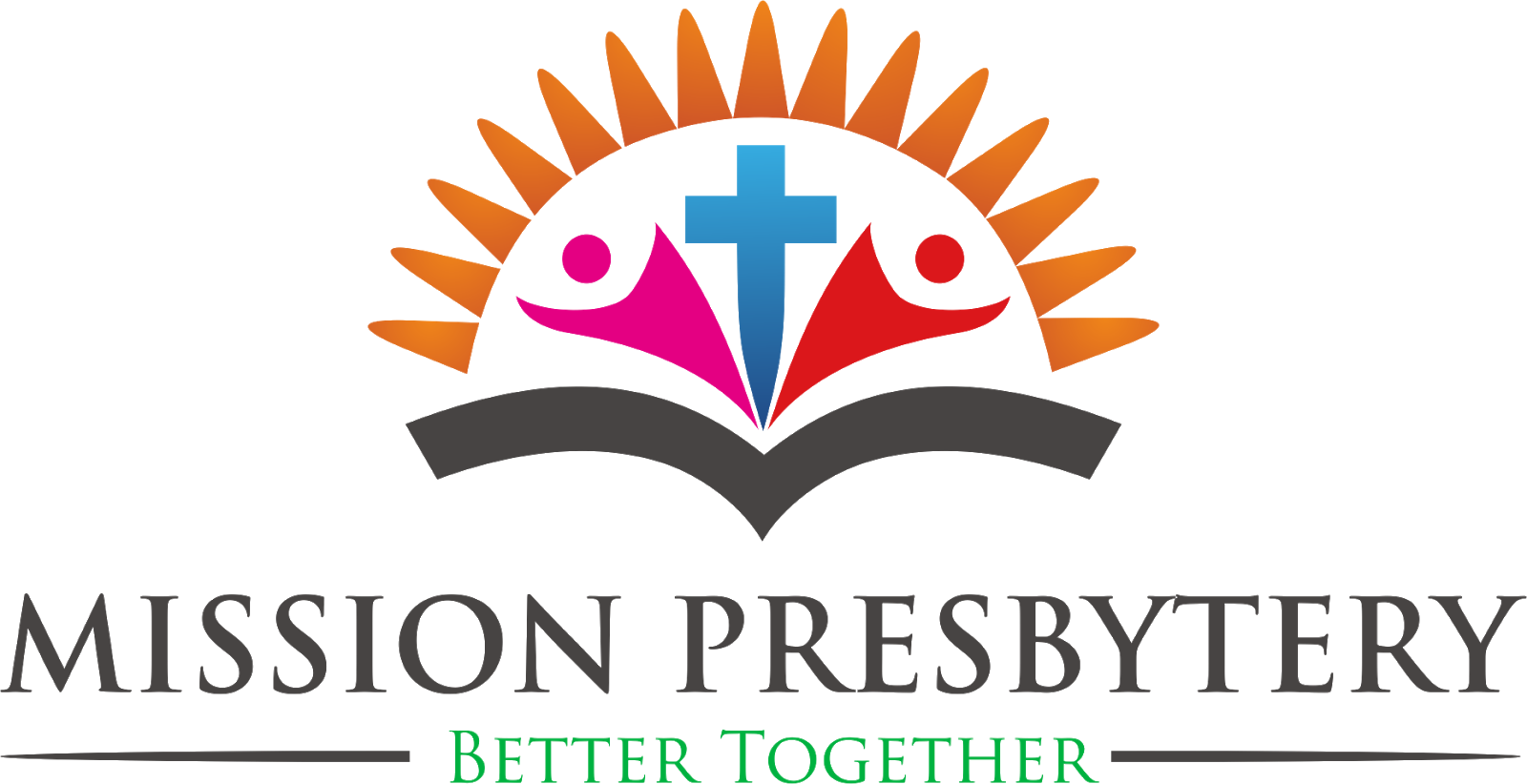
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Reference Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ How long known? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I affirm that the above information is accurate and I authorize Mission Presbytery to use that information to run a background check and check references in accordance with Mission Presbytery’s Child Protection Policy. I understand that this information will be kept securely at the Presbytery office.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix B | Indications of Abuse**

*What is an “abused, neglected, or dependent child”?*

The definition of an abused, neglected, or dependent child is very broad.

**Sexual abuse** includes:

* Sexual indecency, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault.
* Failing to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct to a child.
* Using the child for the creation of obscene or pornographic material.

***How can children be at risk in a “safe” place like church?***

There may be several reasons children can be at risk even in safe places like a church.

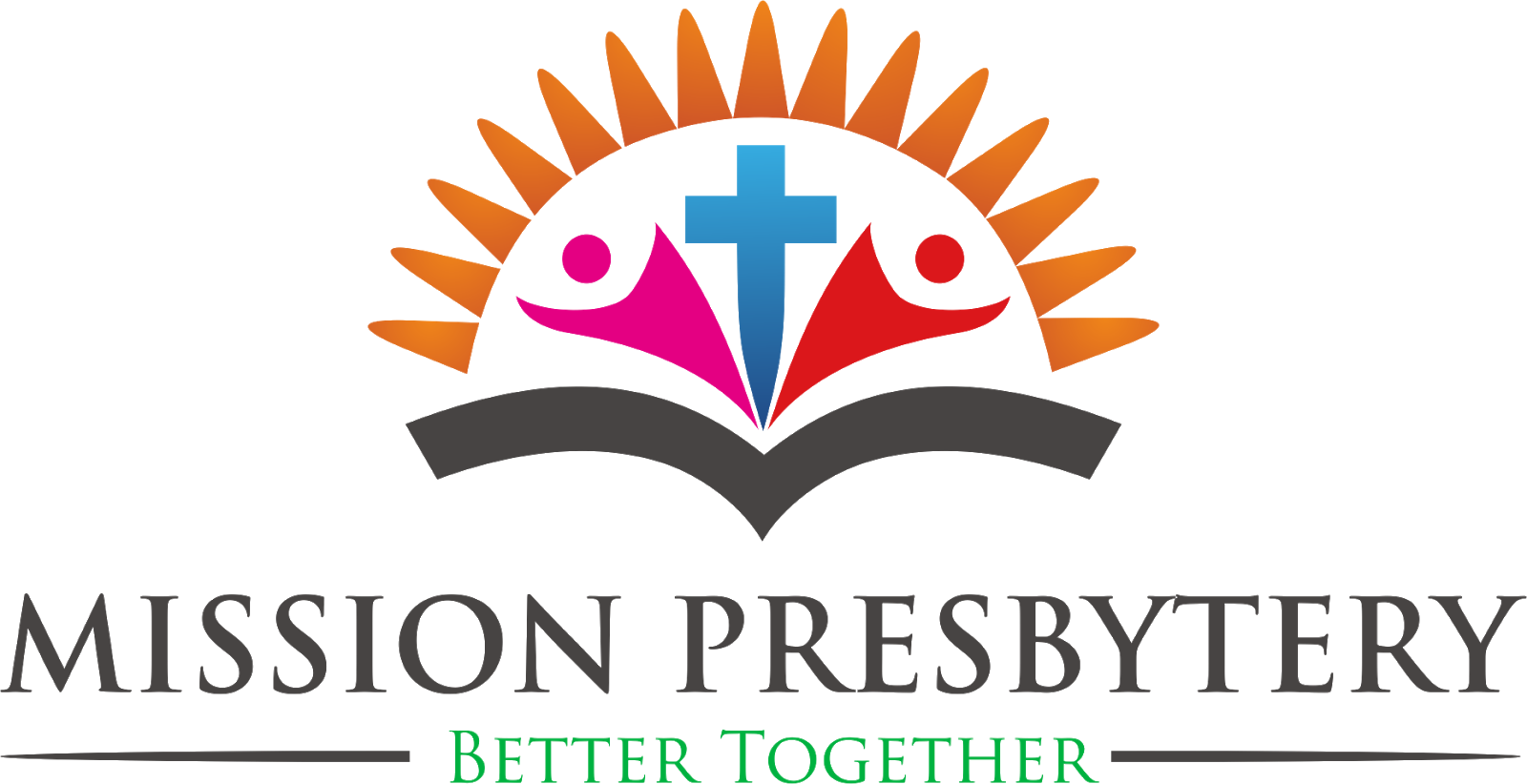
**The following factors may contribute to the risk in a church setting:**

* Ready access to children
* Institutional surprise: “We’re good people”
* Many churches have historically failed to prosecute
* Fewer external barriers than other youth-serving organizations
* Challenges coordinating child protection strategies

**Potential indicators of sexual abuse may include:**

* Child does not want to go to a certain place or be around a particular person
* Child shows sexual knowledge or behavior beyond that expected for their age
* Child is overly affectionate and seems seductive with peers and adults
* Child has recurring genital infections or pain in the genital area
* Child has difficulty in walking or sitting
* Child has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
* Child shows reluctance to change clothes
* Child is withdrawn, chronically depressed, or displays infantile behavior
* Child has exceptionally poor peer relationships
* Child is threatened by physical contact
* Child has unexplained money or “gifts”

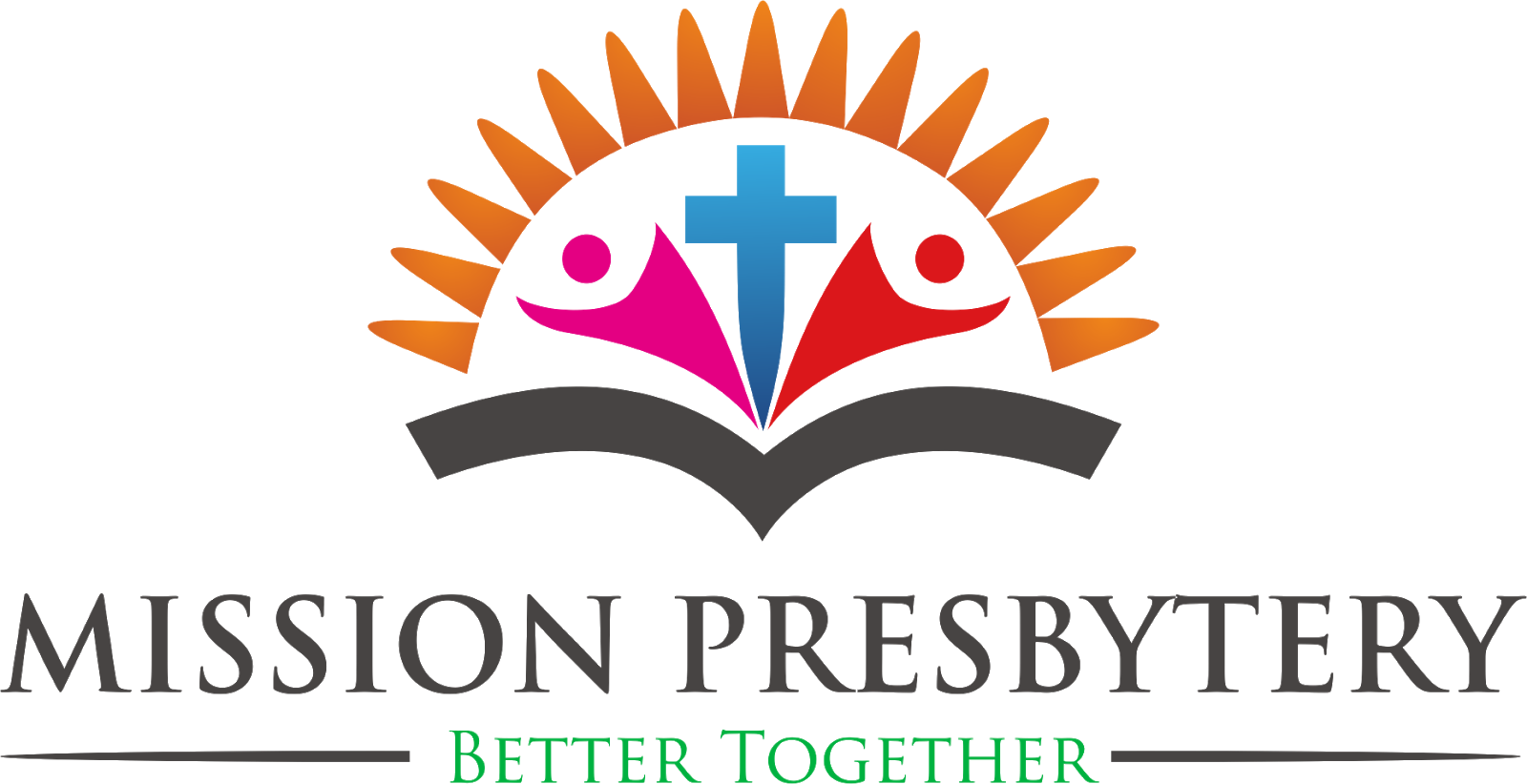
For more information, please visit Prevent Child Abuse America at [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org/)

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**Appendix C | Child-care Attendance Sheet**

**Host Church \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Event Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

| **Child’s Name** | **Time In** | **Signature** | **Time Out** | **Signature** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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**Appendix D | Mission Presbytery EVENT PARTICIPATION and MEDICAL RELEASE FORM (Minor)**

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_DOB:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Emergency Contact\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone ( \_\_\_ )\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current medications or medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies (food and/or medicine): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Activity Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance Co. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Policy # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As the parent/guardian of the above named youth, I hereby give my permission for my child to participate in all activities (minus restrictions listed above) with our church youth group attending (event) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on (date) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at (location) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

I also give permission to the adult leaders of the Youth Connection Committee and to the designated chaperones or sponsors from our home church to administer the community covenant and all appropriate rules of conduct that will apply to my child. I understand that if my child’s behavior is disruptive to the event, they will be sent home at my expense.

In the event of an emergency during the said event, I hereby authorize the designated chaperones/sponsors from our home church or YCC leadership to consent to and arrange for emergency medical treatment in the event, after reasonable efforts are made to obtain my consent, that I cannot be reached.

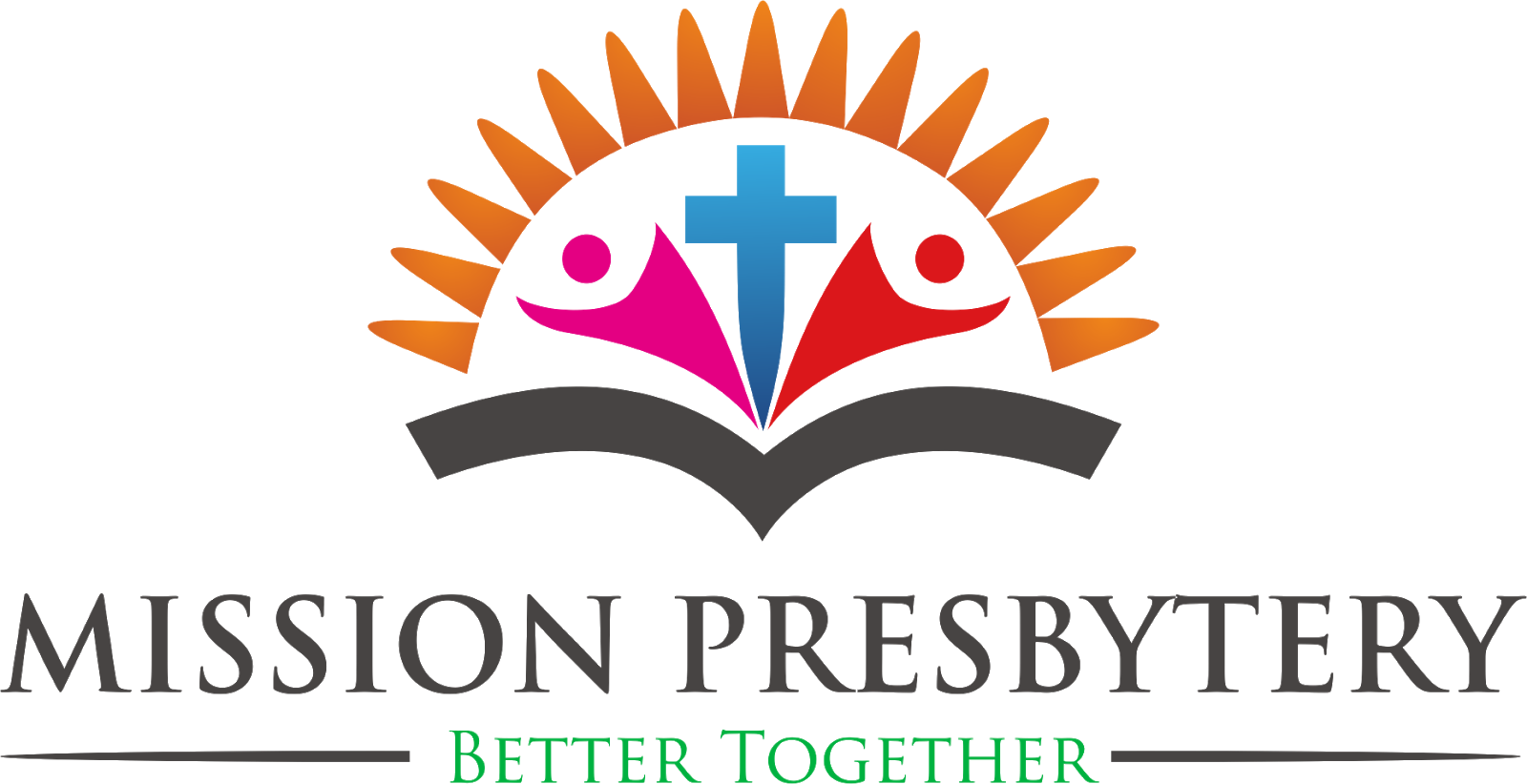
I hereby release Mission Presbytery and its staff, event leaders, our sponsoring church, the designated chaperones/sponsors, and the host site for this event from any responsibility and liability for any injury or illness that my child may sustain during this event.

I give permission for my child’s image and likeness from this event to be used on Mission Presbytery social media, newsletter, and website in promotional and information materials.

I declare that all the information stated above is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

**Signature of Parent or Guardian of Minor Participant:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Appendix E | Mission Presbytery EVENT PARTICIPATION and MEDICAL RELEASE FORM (Adult)**

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_DOB:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone ( \_\_\_ )\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current medications or medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies (food and/or medicine): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Activity Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance Co. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Policy # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I will be attending

(event) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on (date) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at (location)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

I agree to abide by the community covenant and all appropriate rules of conduct.

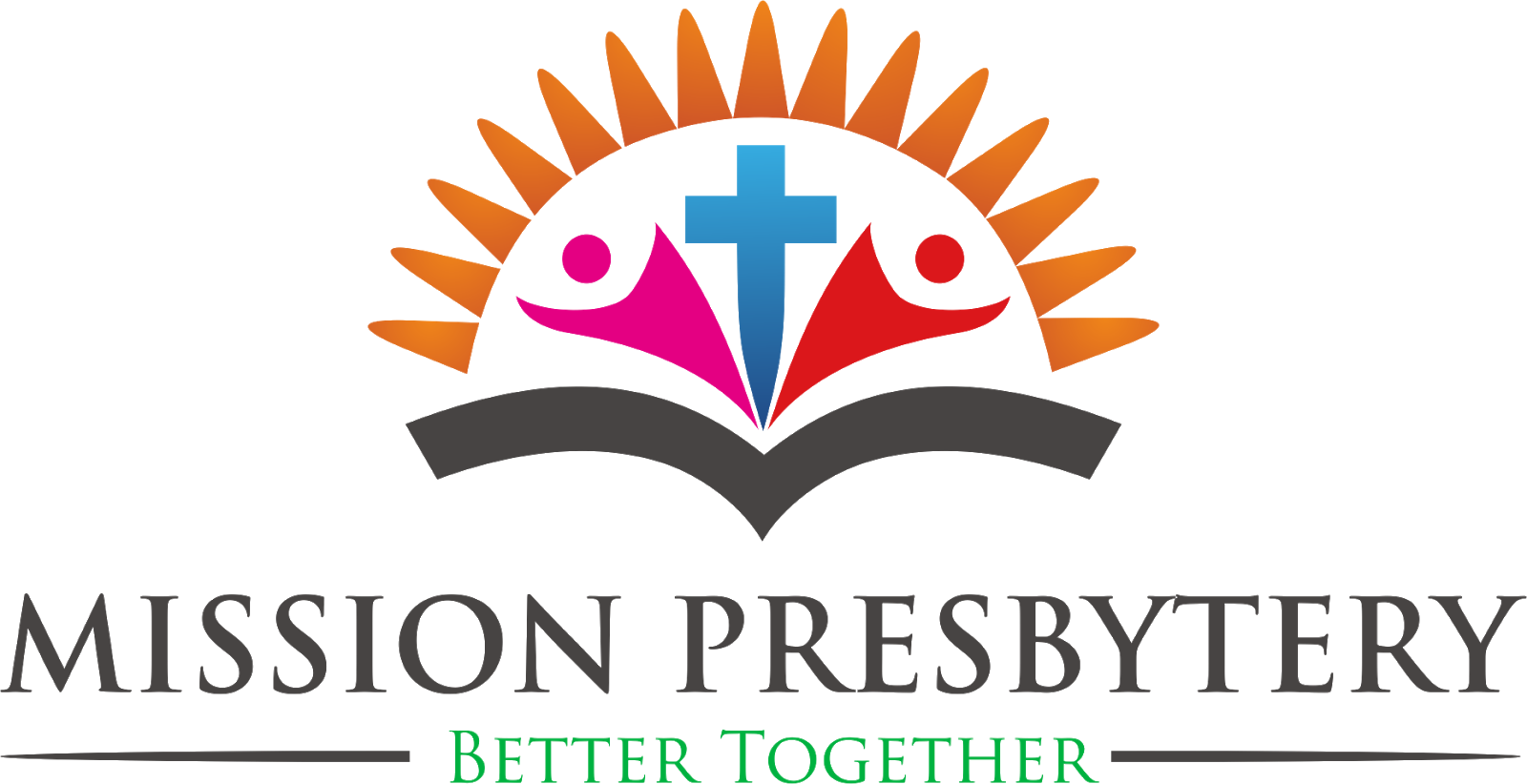
I hereby release Mission Presbytery and its staff, my sponsoring church, the designated leaders, and the host site for this event from any responsibility and liability for any injury or illness that I may sustain during this event.

I give permission for my image and likeness from this event to be used on Mission Presbytery social media, newsletter, and website in promotional and information materials.

I declare that all the information stated above is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

**Signature of Participant:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Appendix F | Incident Report Form**

**Date of Incident:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Name and address of person(s) involved:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Involved Party’s Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident occur (Be specific to inside or outside of church, which rooms, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What type of incident (Circle One):

Physical Emotional Property Damage Sexual

Describe incident in detail, providing dates, times, and surrounding events:

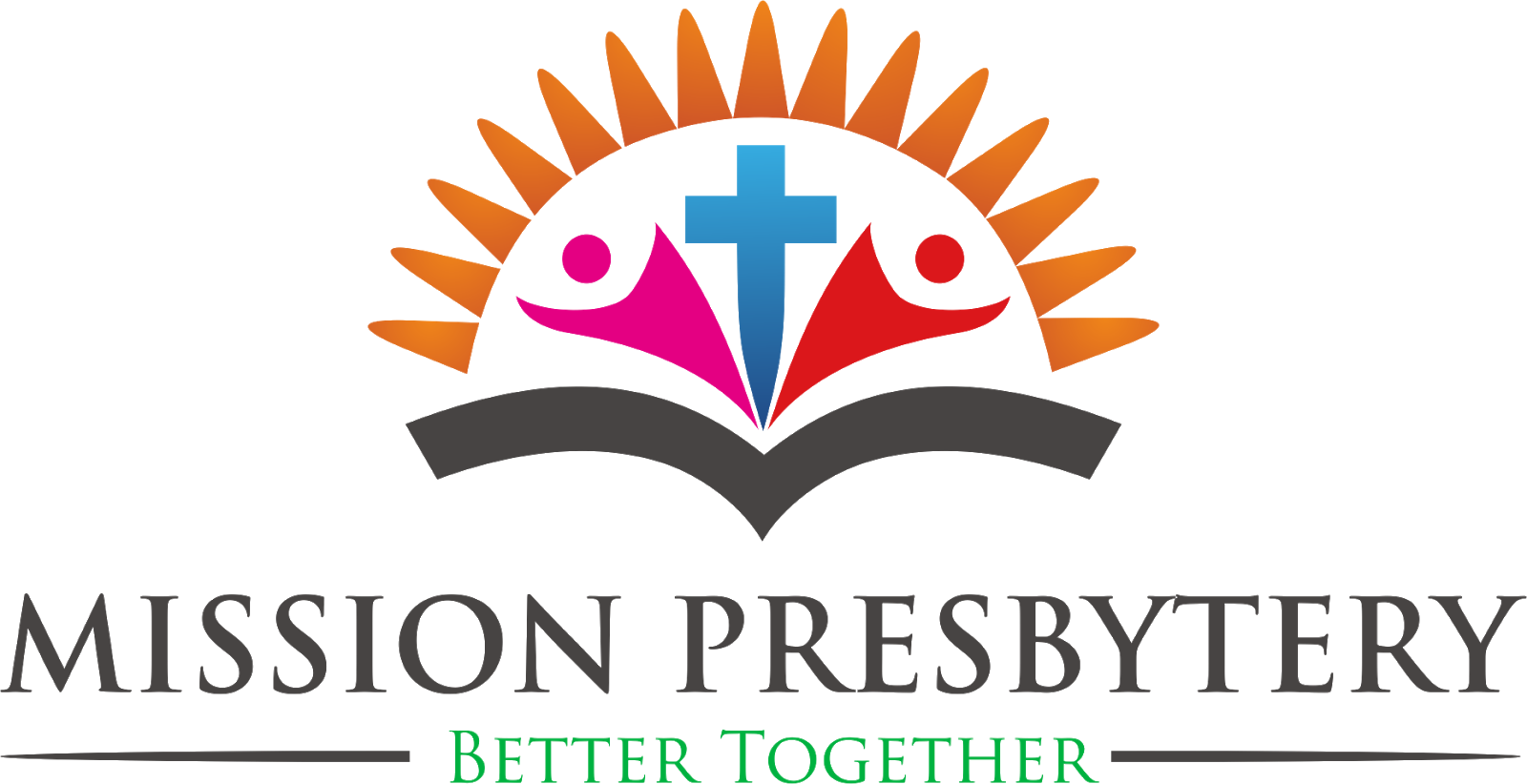
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Witnesses to incident and phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Remarks by the involved party: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Reporting Position Date

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**Appendix G | Best Practices for Online Communication**

Engaging with youth using digital messaging and social media\* can be a healthy way to cultivate positive relationships and maintain communications using the tools that youth are using. Yet social media is a rapidly changing communication tool, and the risk of inappropriate sharing or the blurring of appropriate boundaries between minors and adults is ever-present.

Mission Presbytery takes care to protect the safety and privacy of youth in digital communication by recommending the following best practices:

* Use good sense in all communications. Think twice before saying or sharing anything via social media or digital communications. Could this comment be misconstrued? Would you be comfortable if it were shared or read by others?
* Online communications with minors should be with the knowledge and approval of parents/guardians.
* Avoid platforms that automatically delete content (like SnapChat).
* A youth might openly share thoughts and feelings online, but take great care when responding. Be a good listener, but be careful in expressing your own feelings via digital communication. A good rule of thumb is to limit what you share to factual information.
* Mission Presbytery pledges not to share any potentially sensitive or compromising photographs or information about minors on social media or in digital communications.
* We recognize that social media is a rapidly shifting technology, and we resolve to pay close attention to its development and advise volunteers and staff on its use accordingly.

\*Social media refers to any digital communication, including email, texting, digital messaging, and connections through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, and any other online or mobile application-based platform.

**Report of the Commissioned Pastor Task Force of Mission Presbytery**

**Revised Report for Mission Presbytery, March 6, 2021**

**Presented to General Council on February 6, 2021**

*After reviewing suggestions from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, we have updated the terminology and made several changes to our protocols. We now ask presbytery to consider our motions based on the revised program in this report.*

**Report of the Commissioned Pastor Task Force of Mission Presbytery**

**February 6, 2021**

Task Force members Andy Anzaldua, Kris Bair, LaVerne (Sam) Baublit, Ann Brizendine, Bill Cotman, Linda Bourianoff, Duane Manning, and Sallie Watson reviewed the present program in Mission Presbytery, as well as those in other presbyteries, notably the Presbytery of Northern Kansas. We have wrestled with definitions, requirements and protocols, keeping the core curriculum of the present program, but setting up clear boundaries and guidelines.

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) would have oversight of Mission Presbytery’s new Commissioned Pastors Program and be responsible for training participants in the program. Upon completion of the program, Certified Ruling Elder graduates would be transferred into the care of the Commission on Ministry (COM). This would allow Commissioned Pastors to serve the presbytery-at-large, under care of the COM.

This plan provides a protocol for the certification of Ruling Elders who have trained, or partially trained, to be in similar positions in another presbytery, and who wish to transfer into Mission Presbytery. We bring five motions to enable the program, wherein you will find definitions of the terms we use in our motions.

**Motions**

General Council member Kris Bair **moves** on behalf of the Commissioned Pastor Task Force:

1. that CertifiedRuling Elders (CREs) who have previously served as Commissioned Pastors (CPs) may also, *at the recommendation of Commission on Ministry (COM)*, be commissioned-at-large to the presbytery to serve as *pulpit supply* to various congregations. In addition, they mayadminister the sacraments to the congregation being supplied and serve presbytery functions in the same way, with approval of the appropriate COM liaison for each function. CPs-at-Large shall have their names placed on presbytery’s pulpit supply list.
2. that Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) be charged with the training and certification of Ruling Elder candidates desiring to become Certified Ruling Elders (CREs).
3. that COM be charged with the care and oversight of CREs who have completed the program and been authorized by CPM to receive a commission, and to maintain a roster of active CREs, coordinating with CREs and congregations to facilitate placement.
4. and that General Council adopt the *Commissioned Pastor Training Program* presented by the Commissioned Pastor Task Force for training and utilizing CREs in Mission Presbytery, along with the Guidelines for Transferring Ruling Elders from the Commissioned Pastor Trainingprograms of other presbyteries or denominations into the Commissioned Pastor TrainingProgram of Mission Presbytery.
5. Should all, or the last three, motions above be adopted, we move that the CP Task Force be dissolved.

**Commissioned Pastor Training Program**

**Definitions of Terms**

**Certified Ruling Elders (CRE)** in Mission Presbytery are those individuals who have completed a Ruling Elder certification program recognized and approved by Mission Presbytery (MP). A CRE is not currently commissioned to a church or the presbytery-at-large.

     a)  CREs may preach in any church when invited by the session.

     b)  CREs may administer sacraments during worship if the Session has received approval from the Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison to that church.

     c)  CREs may moderate Session meetings if invited by the current moderator for that Session and the COM Liaison to that congregation has concurred.

d) CREs may be appointed by COM to moderate Sessions lacking a moderator.

**Commissioned Pastors (CPs)** are CREs commissioned by Mission Presbytery to a particular church. CPs may moderate Sessions and serve the sacraments, but only for the church to which they are commissioned. If requested to serve additional churches during that time, they will follow the protocols above for CREs.

**CPs-at-Large**

CREs who have previously served as CPs may also, at the recommendation of COM, be commissioned-at-large to the presbytery to serve as pulpit supply to various congregations. In addition, they mayadminister the sacraments to the congregation being supplied and serve presbytery functions in the same way, with approval of the appropriate COM liaison for each function. CPs-at-Large shall have their names placed on presbytery’s pulpit supply list.

**Statement of Purpose**

Mission Presbytery joyfully affirms the need for Ruling Elders to be certified and commissioned for ministry in our congregations.  *Hearing the calling of God through the Great Ends of the Church, Mission Presbytery commits itself to meeting this need.* Commissioned Pastors (CPs) share their gifts, as they serve the congregations to which they are called. The CP program provides an academic track to prepare Ruling Elders for a commission to a particular congregation, and continuing educational opportunities that allow CPs to grow in their pastoral identity while serving a congregation. This program also has procedures to welcome and examine Ruling Elders who join Mission Presbytery from CP Programs inother presbyteries or denominations, and protocols for calling CREs as CPs to a congregation or to the presbytery-at-large.

**Oversight of the Program and the CPs**

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) is charged with the training and certification of Ruling Elder candidates desiring to become Certified Ruling Elders (CREs).

COM is charged with the care and oversight of CREs who have completed the program and been authorized by CPM to receive a commission, and will maintain a roster of CREs, coordinating with CREs and congregations to facilitate placement.

**Admission and Funding Protocols** for the program are the responsibility of CPM. Mission Presbytery will make information about the program available in newsletters and at presbytery meetings.

**Curriculum—**these may meet face-to-face or by virtual meetings

1. CREs must complete coursework from an approved seminary (Union, Dubuque, or Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminaries; others approved on a case-by-case basis), to include the following or their equivalencies:

Old Testament New Testament

PCUSA Polity Reformed Theology

Worship and Preaching Pastoral Care

Christian Education Church History

History/Multi Ethnicity of MP--could be completed by working with assigned Mentor

Basic Church Management -----could be completed by working with assigned Mentor

**2**. CPM will provide each candidate with a **mentor** to supervise coursework and provide advice and encouragement during the process. CPM determines parameters for completion of coursework and standards expected, and shall communicate these clearly to candidates (see attached flow charts).

**Evaluation for Certification**

After coursework and practicums are completed to the satisfaction of CPM, candidates are expected to

* Preach a sermon, turning in a written copy with a complete bibliography of works consulted;
* Write and submit a Statement of Faith;
* Provide a resume;
* Complete a written exam, if required by CPM;
* Complete a psychological evaluation.

CPM is responsible for administering and scoring these requirements, and determining pass/fail status for each candidate.

**Post-Certification**

In addition to maintaining a list of active CREs available for a call, and facilitating such calls in apt situations, COM will:

* Assign each CP a mentor (through the appropriate COM regional representative) at the time of commissioning, with expectations for monthly contact between the CP and mentor for mutual support and problem solving. The CP and mentor assume mutual responsibility for monthly contact.
* Evaluate the CP as any other pastor in service to a congregation, keeping in mind any limitations in the call itself and the nature of the CP classification.
* Require CPs to take Boundary Awareness Training and any other training required of active Teaching Elders in Mission Presbytery.
* Ensure that CPs are active in the presbytery, attending presbytery meetings with some regularity, attending regional cluster meetings, and serving on presbytery committees according to their gifts and abilities.
* Like Teaching Elders, CPs must take advantage of continuing education opportunities, which may includeTheocademy courses (online, many available in Spanish, and free); Interim Training; workshops at presbytery meetings, conferences and pastors’ retreats; APTS Midwinters, Association of Presbyterian Church Educators, Festival of Homiletics, the Big Tent, etc. Their COM mentor should provide guidance for Continuing Education choices.

**Guidelines for Transferring Ruling Elders**

**from the programs of other presbyteries or denominations into the**

**Commissioned Pastor Program of Mission Presbytery**

Ruling Elders trained in other presbyteries andtransferring into Mission Presbytery (MP) who wish to be considered “available for commissioning,” or whodesire to apply for admittance to the MP CRE Program, will:

1. Complete and submit the Mission Presbytert CRE application.
2. Provide written documentation from the institution/instructor/presbytery that provided any previous education/training for which the individual is requesting CRE credit. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) will evaluate the documentation in order to determine the status of the candidate.
3. Provide references from the last congregation(s) served, if applicable.
4. Wait while Presbytery leaders consult the leadership of the presbytery in which the CRE trained and/or last served as to the candidate’s status.  If the report is good, complete a criminal background check.
5. Meet with the CPM for the required initial interview, during which questions about faith journey and sense of call will be asked. CREs who have served as CPs will also be asked questions about their previous calls.
6. Complete all requirements of the Commissioned Pastor Training Program as outlined by the CPM.  Requirements will be evaluated on a candidate-by-candidate basis, and some may be waived, or substitutions accepted, in the case of CREs with CP experience.
7. Complete a psychological evaluation.

When the candidate has met the requirements, and the committee certifies him or her as ready to serve, Commission on Ministry (COM) will be notified the CRE is ready for a call and becomes responsible for that CRE as they would be for a TE.

**The Rev. Dr. Diane L. Givens Moffett**

**Keynoter for the March 6, 2021 Mission Presbytery Meeting**

The Rev. Dr. Diane L. Givens Moffett serves as the president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency — the mission arm of the Presbyterian Church (USA). She has held this role since June 2018.

Prior to that she served as senior pastor of St. James Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, North Carolina. While there, she also served on several boards, became a candidate for mayor of the city, and was co-chair of the Greensboro Interfaith Clergy Council and vice president of the Pulpit Forum. Along with numerous other awards and recognitions, in April 2018, Diane received the Sojourner Truth Award, the highest honor of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, for her commitment to serving others.

Diane’s service to the denomination includes over 33 years in pastoral ministry. She served as the first woman pastor at Elmhurst Presbyterian Church in Oakland, California, and associate pastor of evangelism, discipleship and ministry at Elmwood United Presbyterian Church in East Orange, New Jersey. She also served as coordinator of the Korean and African-American Pastors Reconciliation Project and executive director at Harbor House Ministries in Oakland. She currently serves as a board member for the Louisville Urban League.

Diane holds a bachelor of arts degree in sociology and social welfare from the University of California at Berkeley, and both a master of divinity and doctorate of ministry from San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Diane is married to Mondre Moffett, a trumpeter and professor of music at Simmons College of Kentucky and director of Trinity Jazz Decree and ssclivetv show, Black Music Footprints. They have three married daughters and five grandchildren.

**Mission and Justice Committee Report to Mission Presbytery 3/6/2021**

Greetings Mission Presbytery –Grace and peace be with you all.

Over the course of the past 6 months, the Mission Outreach and Justice Grants Committee gathered to pray, review, discuss and discern the applications of nine organizations requesting financial assistance from the Presbytery. As our Presbytery meeting preacher, Carolina Trevino, reminded us Saturday morning, “as God’s people we know what to do in a crisis.” Within the pages of MOJC grant applications we saw nine concrete examples that demonstrate the truth of Carolina’s statement: God’s people do know what to do in a crisis. God’s grace compelled them to reach out more, serve more, and give more, lodging themselves at the gates of despair, feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, stewarding the land, reaching out to those living with mental illness and their families, providing opportunities for education and recreation, and protecting and nurturing families.

  We were able to award all nine applicants a portion of the grant money requested.

**MOJC Grant Applications – January 2021**

| **Name of Church/ Organization/Ministry** | **Contact Person** | **Purpose of Grant** | **Area in Mission Presbytery** | **Amount Requested/Awarded** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Central Pres Church 10k | Rev. Carolina Treviño | Feeding approximately 300 – 400 homeless people twice a week. They would like to add another day of deliveries and compensation for volunteers delivering meals. | Austin | $10,000  $10,000 |
| Lake Travis Pres Church 5k | Rev. Jack Barden | Hudson Bend Mission project provide food security, education, and assistance to access greater Austin resources. | Austin | $5,000  $5,000 |
| Canyon Lake Pres Church 5k | Nancy Ney | Increase mental health awareness and reduce mental health stigma through a collaborative networking and educational campaign in rural Comal County. | Canyon Lake | $5,000  $5,000 |
| John Knox Ranch 3k | Andy Watson | Peace Camp is a day camp that will partner JK Ranch and be held at Divine Redeemer Pres Church. If unable to have camp money will be added to JK Ranch scholarship fund. | San Antonio | $3,000  $3,000 |
| Pan American School, Kingsville 5k | Rev. Ruth Aimeé | Monies for their pathway scholarship program targeting south Texas Latino community and at-risk students. | Kingsville | $10,000  $5,000 |
| Lampasas Community Gardens 2k | Janet Crozier | The funds requested are to enable us to provide the startup materials to bring our community garden operational. We are asking for funds for a shed, water catchment, soil material and tools. | Lampasas | $5,000  $2,000 |
| Puentes de Cristo, Hidalgo 5k | Caly Fernandez | Funds to create a Community Garden at Puentes as an extension of our Healthy Lifestyles Program classes. | Hidalgo | $5,000  $5,000 |
| Presby Children’s Home – 5K | Banner Huggins 5k | Child & family in home family preservation programs in San Antonio. This program prevents families from breaking apart. PCHAS helps to preserve families through education, training, counseling, therapy, and other community resources. | San Antonio | $5,000  $5,000 |
| New Hope Pres Church, La Feria 2K | Rev. Paula Sanders | Funds to expand it’s 2020 trial offering to a Saturday evening worship service. Grant funds will pay for many one-time expenditures, build a side-yard pavilion, and also purchase a sound system. | La Feria | $8,000  $2,000 |

Congratulations to all of our grant recipients. And thank you to my fellow committee persons for your hard work on this process. Respectfully,

Rev. Chad Lawson, Moderator MOJC Grants

**John Knox Ranch Report to Mission Presbytery, March 6, 2021**

**We “Lit the Match” Together!** We are so grateful and excited to announce our "Light the Match" campaign total. Our matching challenge was to raise $400,000 before the end of 2020. Together, we raised $438,708 !! Thank you, thank you to everyone who donated, shared, and supported JKR. With the match our total raised is $838,708 !

By the numbers:

* 434 Individuals made 702 individual donations
* 144 individuals donated more than once
* 302 were new donors to JKR
* Individuals donated 38% of the total $438,708
* $234 was the average donation from an individual
* 35 churches donated
* 6 foundations approved grants

Progress so far!

* Reserve Fund with Texas Presbyterian Foundation Established 
* Dining Hall updated: Sealed concrete floor, new audio-visual system
* Walk in cooler and freezer installed in Dining Hall kitchen
* Sent Camp Care Packages to all 2020 registered campers when summer camp was cancelled
* New outdoor furniture at various locations around camp
* Volleyball court installed
* Renovated bathroom facilities in oak commons, the main shower house, and red oak cabin
* Main automatic gate repaired
* Treehouse and suspension bridge near Blue Hole renovated
* Pool filters replaced
* Camp scholarship fund ready for 2021!!

**Conservation Easement Update.** We are waiting to hear the funding offer from the Hays County Bond. Our partner at Hill Country Conservancy anticipates that the county will make a less than full value offer and therefore suggested that we apply for supplemental funding for the easement through the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) program. We are working on completing that application.

**Summer Camp Registration is Live!** We all need time outside, building relationships in a loving community. We don't know how Coronavirus cases will look this summer but we are planning an amazing summer of outdoor adventures, fresh air, faith development, and friendships. We will develop a safety plan that is appropriate for whatever the reality is when we get to summer 2021 and we will keep our camp families posted. Register at no financial risk to you. You can request a full refund at any time. All the info is at [johnknoxranch.org](http://johnknoxranch.org/).

**Designated Scholarship Funding for Campers.** The “Light the Match” campaign helped rebuild our scholarship fund. Now its time to get kids to camp! We believe financial challenges should never be the reason a kid misses out on a summer camp experience. Please encourage people to apply.

**Summer Camp Rally Day. Saturday March 27, 2021. 10am to 3pm.** A perfect way to get to know John Knox Ranch and get excited for the summer: meet camp staff, free lunch, camp tours, archery, canoeing, and more! Learn more and RSVP (limited spots available). Masks are required for all inside buildings or anytime within 6 feet of someone outside your family. Plan to be outside in the fresh air all day. [johnknoxranch.org/rallyday2021](https://www.johnknoxranch.org/rallyday2021)

**Summer Staff.** It is time to recruit an amazing group of young leaders to serve camp ministry this summer. We need Junior Counselors (unpaid, rising juniors and seniors), counselors (graduating seniors and college age), and upper leadership staff. All the info is on the website, please forward it to a young person/college age young adult who you know would be excellent.

**Family reservations.** Instead of retreats this year we have been focusing on family cabin rentals. We self-limit to 6 family groups spread across the site at any one time and set up a “no touch” check in/check out procedure. Many families have loved getting out of their house and spending time outdoors in a safe way. Please encourage church families to make a reservation.

**DISASTER PREPARATION AND ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE (DPAC)**

**REPORT TO MISSION PRESBYTERY March 2021**

**MISSION PRESBYTERY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS GUIDELINES**

This comprehensive document has been developed by DPAC and sent to all congregations in Mission Presbytery. Each congregation is encouraged to make this part of their Manual of Operations.

**THANK YOU FOR DONATIONS** Several churches and individuals have donated funds and equipment and we are grateful. We especially appreciate the monetary gifts from Sinton Presbyterian and Gonzalez Presbyterian Women. Our tools and equipment are being stored at our storage facility at Mo-Ranch.

**PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE GRANT FOR MISSION PRESBYTERY** PDA sent two $100,000 grants to Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group (CBDRG) specifically for the Tierra de Esperanza development in Woodsboro, TX. These PDA grants are remaining funds in the Hurricane Harvey Recovery account. Mennonite Disaster Services is leading the coalition that is building homes for 23 families who are Harvey survivors. CBDRG purchased the property and is providing local resources and case management. Pictures of the project can be found at the CBDRG website. Look for the pictures of the Amish women in their long dresses, white bonnets and power nail guns! Truly a picture of **Better Together!**

**COVID-19 RESPONSE** Churches are encouraged to follow the pandemic guidelines at the Mission Presbytery website. All congregations are encouraged to share best practices during this pandemic.

**FIREARMS POLICY FOR MISSION PRESBYTERY EVENTS** The Committee has proposed a Firearms Policy for Mission Presbytery events. The proposed policy is with the General Council for approval.

**DPAC DISPLAY TABLE AT EACH PRESBYTERY MEETING** As soon as we are meeting in person again, we plan to have a display table at Presbytery meetings to provide information about the work of DPAC.

**HYGIENE KITS AND CLEAN-UP BUCKETS** All congregations are encouraged to build a supply of hygiene kits and clean-up buckets to keep in storage for future disasters. Ed is setting up a Google Doc at the Presbytery website. Congregations will be able to update the supplies they have so that we can know at a glance who has what.

**CHANGES AT THE BORDER** We have requested 2000 blankets and hygiene kits for Team Brownsville from Church World Services as they are again seeing refugees being released at the bus station.**COMMITTEE MEMBERS INVITED** If interested in being a part of this Committee, please go to the Presbytery website and find the Committee on Representation and Participation (CORP) Nomination Form, fill it out and email to the office. We are forming sub-committees: Communication, Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Financial, Equipment and Training.

**NEXT DPAC MEETING March 8, Monday, Noon, via ZOOM videoconference. We usually meet the second Monday of each month at noon. Join us!**

**DPAC Members:** Jennifer Rektorik-Chair, Ben Henderson-Treasurer, Sandy Pinaire-Secretary, Alan Ford, Charlie Felts, Charlie Dismore, Rev. Jim Barker, Linda Davis, Kathy Kerr Kubatzky (PDA trainer), Rev. Babs Miller (PDA trainer), Danita Nelson (PDA trainer), Rev. Ed Sackett, MP Disaster Recovery Coordinator.

**Stewardship Committee Report to Mission Presbytery**

**March 6, 2021**

**BETTER TOGETHER GRANTS**

Dear Clerk of Session,

**APRIL 15TH** is fast approaching. No, your congregation does not have to worry about filing income tax returns, but if you want to benefit from the **Mission Presbytery Better Together Grant** for 2021. Mark your calendar for April 15, as this is the deadline to apply.

2020 taught us a lot of things, among them is that we are truly “Better Together.”

In the first three years of this program, we limited the distributions to $24,000 a year. Good news! For 2021 The distribution pool for 2021 is $54,000!! (No, that is not a misprint).

Over the past three years, several congregations have benefited by partnering with other churches or Mission Partners--small churches and large churches, worshiping communities and Mission Presbytery Partners, long-term efforts and one-time events. You are only limited by the size of the distribution pool and your imagination.

Who might you work together with, and together what might you accomplish to improve your church, your community or God’s children anywhere in the world? The application and guidelines are on the Mission Presbytery website: <https://www.mission-presbytery.org/stewardship-fiscal>

There is also a link to the application in a fillable word document.

If you have any questions about the Better Together Grant process, please contact me, Kevin Jones, at fpcturtle@gmail.com.

Please do not overlook this opportunity to work Better Together.

Kevin Jones, Chair, Mission Presbytery Stewardship Team

**Better Together Fund Grant Guidelines (BTF)**

**Read Carefully**

1. Go to the Mission presbytery home page: <https://www.mission-presbytery.org/>

2. Under “Committees” click on “Stewardship and Financial Oversight”

3. Click on “Better Together Fund: Application and Deadlines”

**Some grants from 2018-2020: Churches working together to provide:**

> Retreat for returning college students at John Knox Ranch

> Assisting refugees in the country with transport, ICE, courts, etc.

> Solar power in Central America

> Retreat for adoptive families at MO-Ranch

> Hurricane Harvey Benefit Concert

> Helping kids in RGV go to church camp

> Creating program to empower young Latina Christian leaders

> Teaching cooking and nutrition skills to people in RGV

> Providing backpacks and school supplies for children

> Connecting youth groups of different churches in local mission projects

**Grant Tips**

1. Provide a meaningful name for the grant.

2. Be sure to clearly show how this is a collaborative effort. Several congregations working together is a big plus, especially when it helps kickstart a long-term relationship. Remember: we are promoting working together!

3. We expect a lot of grants to compete for the $54,000 this year. On your application, make it detailed enough for grant readers to apprehend what you are trying to do, but as parsimonious as you can. Lots of extraneous photocopied information is generally not helpful. Remember: the readers will be a handful of Ruling and Teaching Elders from Mission Presbytery.

4. If you can, start these ideas and explorations and conversations with other churches in the fall, anticipating the BTF grant process in the Spring, with the April 15 deadline. The intention is to have at least $54,000 every year.

5. The process: all of the BTF grants received by April 15 will be copied and forwarded to the Stewardship Team. The Stewardship Team will evaluate the grants and make recommendations to send to GC, who will look at the recommendations and make the final decision.

Let’s work together – we are better that way!

**REPORT TO MISSION PRESBYTERY**

**From: Stewardship and Fiscal Oversight Committee**

**March 6, 2021**

There are no items for action for Mission Presbytery. For your information and review, the following items are included:

* A copy of the letter sent to Sessions about the Better Together Grants for 2021 (of note the grant total for 2021 is $54,000, up from $24,000 the past three years)
* A summarized copy of the 2020 Income Statement for Mission Presbytery. Please do not get too excited about the million-dollar surplus. It is entirely driven by revenue from properties sold and the transfer of Settlement Funds from prior years
* A resolution from Stewardship and Fiscal Oversight in memory and honor of Carl Spinner.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred L. Gamble

**Report of the Committee on Representation and Participation (CORP)**

**Mission Presbytery Report**

**Stated Meeting, March 6, 2021**

**Report on Representation**

After specific training in January 2020, and discussion in February 2021, CORP has reworded parts of our Handbook to make clear our commitment to representation and diversity in our presbytery, and to ensure that we are in line with the *Book of Order*. Those Handbook changes will be placed before the General Council at its next meeting.

In the meantime, CORP works hard to balance, in particular, Teaching Elders to Ruling Elders and males to females. We also strive to ensure that geographic regions are fairly represented, noting that Zoom has made it easier for us to ensure geographic representation without creating a hardship for members in the outlying regions of the presbytery. We have created a new worksheet to equip and enable presbytery committee chairs to keep track of their members, as well as see a balance sheet of how diverse the committee actually is, in *all* the ways identified in the *Book of Order*. Chair feedback on this worksheet is a vital part of our process of calling nominees who will bring many different gifts to their service, and it helps our Stated Clerk keep track of who is where—and why.

**FYI Only**

We will bring to the summer presbytery meeting a process for determining nominees for GA Commissioners. As part of that process, we will put limits on the frequency that commissioners can serve—applicants must not have served within the past 10 years, e.g. However, because of COVID, our last GA’s commissioners did not get the full experience of being a commissioner, and some have petitioned us for another chance to serve. We will ask the presbytery to consider an exemption that will allow them to re-apply to be commissioners to the 2022 GA. This exemption will not guarantee them a nomination, but it will allow them to re-apply. Please consider this ahead of our summer meeting.

**Pastoral Care Report for March Presbytery Meeting 2021**

*Members:* TE David Marx, TE Emily Owen, RE Peggy Shepherd, RE Ada Castle, TE Nancy Benson-Nichol, RE Susan Lewis, TE Kristin Huffman, RE Mary Lee, RE Phil Barnes, RE Barbie Haberer, TE Charles Walden, TE Marsha Brown, chair.

Our committee provided a “Longest Night” service on Dec. 21, 2020 for pastors and CREs in the presbytery. It provided a time and place for self care after a difficult year for all pastors with COVID precautions requiring virtual or filmed worship and relationships. The Christmas season can be difficult for those who do not feel “holly/jolly” and stressful for pastors. It was received well and another service will be planned for Dec. 2021.

*Our purpose:* We provide ongoing private and pastoral care to pastors, families and leaders in the presbytery by sending cards, emails, calls, prayers on the phone, special services, retreats, and continuing to follow up as needed**. All contacts are confidential** **between the person seeking care and the person on PCC who is providing it.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Marsha E. Brown, chair