

Recommended Docket for the Eighth Stated Meeting of the Lowcountry Presbytery

To be held: 9:00 a.m., Thursday, November 2, 2017 at Hilton Head PCA, Hilton Head, SC

Recommended Docket submitted by the Administration Committee:

That the following docket be approved for the Eighth Stated Meeting of the Palmetto Presbytery scheduled for November 2, 2016 at Hilton Head PCA, Hilton Head, SC:

- 9:00 Worship with Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- 10:00 Break
- 10:15 Call to Order & Opening Business
 1. Welcome
 2. Roll Call (by registration sign in sheets)
 3. Clerk's declaration of quorum
 4. Adoption of docket
 5. Introduction of Special Guests & First Time Commissioners
 6. Presentation of Memorials
- 10:30 Prayer Time – led by Shepherding & Church Vitality Committee
- 10:45 Ministry Equipping Time – Review & debrief of Reformation Worship Service
- 11:00 Business & Reports
 - Approval of Seventh Lowcountry Presbytery minutes for July 22, 2017
 - Administration Committee
 - Report of Stated Clerk
 - Report of the Treasurer
 - Campus Ministries Committee
 - Church Planting & Outreach Committee
 - Judicial Committee – no report
 - Leadership Development Committee
 - Shepherding & Church Vitality Committee
 - Additional Business if needed & Adjournment targeted before 2:30
- 12:00 Order of the Day – Lunch

Administration Committee

TE Mark Turner, Chairman, Oakbrook PCA, Summerville [mturner@oakbrookpca.org]

Important Information:

- The mailing address for Lowcountry Presbytery is P.O. Box 31775, Charleston, SC 29417-1775. The website address is www.lowcountrypresbytery.org
- Stated Clerk: TE Chris Bennett statedclerk@lowcountrypresbytery.org 843-202-0655
- Treasurer: TE Chris Bennett treasurer@lowcountrypresbytery.org 843-202-0655
- Recording Clerk: TE Mark Turner recordingclerk@lowcountrypresbytery.org 843-224-9337
- Moderator: TE Ross Hodges ross@christchurchcharleston.org (334) 391-4931
- Health Insurance is cooperatively provided among the 3 multiplied Presbyteries through the *Stewart and Monroe Health Insurance Agency*.
- **Budget Requests:** It is the job of the Administrative Committee to present a budget at the November Stated meeting (Nov 2, 2017). The Administrative Committee has taken input from each committee is presenting to you today with a recommended budget for 2018.

1. **Report of Stated Clerk**
 - Stated Clerk's report
2. **Report of the Treasurer**
 - Treasurer's report
 - Presentation of Proposed Budgets for 2018
See Attached: Proposed Balanced Budget 2018

Motions:

From Treasurer's Report:

We will entertain motions from the floor to approve the BALANCED budget for 2018.

Elections:

Election of Moderator – Nominations:

RE Rich Wylly from Eastbridge PCA, Mt. Pleasant
 RE David Walters, Sr. from Church Creek Presbyterian, Charleston
 (distribute ballots – majority gets elected)

Motion: Elect RE _____ to serve as moderator of Lowcountry Presbytery for 2018.

Vice Moderator: Our Standing Rules 3.2.1 state: Vice Moderator shall ordinarily be the immediate past Moderator and shall serve at the request of the Moderator, or when the Moderator is unable to serve.

Motion: Elect TE Ross Hodges to serve as vice-moderator of Lowcountry Presbytery for 2018.

Election of Trustees – This will be our 1st election since being formed as a presbytery. Nate Arnold has agreed to continue to serve as Trustee.

RE Nate Arnold (Class of 2017)	RE Matt King (Class of 2019)
RE Jim Rowland (Class of 2018)	RE David Walters, Sr. (Class of 2019)

Motion: Re-elect RE Nate Arnold to serve as a Lowcountry Presbytery Trustee in the Class of 2020.

Committee Positions which are expiring:

- TE Mark Turner – Administrative Committee (2017)
- RE Kurt Brewer – Church Planting & Outreach (2017)
- TE Phil Stogner – Church Planting & Outreach (2017)
- RE Yates Jarvis – Campus ministries (2017)
- TE Howard Cole – Leadership Development (2017)
- TE Tim Pitzer – Leadership Development (2017)
- TE Ron Steel – Shepherding & Church Vitality (2017)
- RE David Walters, Sr. - Shepherding & Church Vitality (2017)
- TE Michael Walters - Shepherding & Church Vitality (2017)

Motions:

Re-elect Yates (Chris) Jarvis to serve on the Campus Ministries Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect TE Mark Turner to serve on the Administrative Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect RE Kurt Brewer to serve on the Church Planting and Outreach Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect TE Phil Stogner to serve on the Church Planting and Outreach Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect TE Howard Cole to serve on the Leadership Development Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect TE Tim Pitzer to serve on the Leadership Development Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect TE Ron Steel to serve on the Shepherding and Church Vitality Committee in the Class of 2020.

Re-elect RE David Walters, Sr. to serve on the Shepherding and Church Vitality Committee in the Class of 2020

Re-elect TE Michael Walters to serve on the Shepherding and Church Vitality Committee in the Class of 2020

Invitations for upcoming meetings are needed: Please volunteer your church to host the Lowcountry Presbytery on one of these dates:

8th – Nov 2nd, 2017 – Hilton Head Presbyterian, Hilton Head, SC

9th – Jan 27th, 2018 – Redeemer Presbyterian, Charleston, SC

10th – Apr 24th, 2018 – Location needed

11th – Jul 28th, 2018 – Location needed

12th – Nov 1st, 2018 – Location needed

Church Planting and Outreach Committee

TE Craig Bailey, Chairman, Redeemer PCA, Charleston [craig@redeemer-charleston.org].

Campus Ministries Committee

TE Sam Joyner, Chairman, Grace Coastal PCA, Okatie [sam@gracecoastalchurch.com].

Brief campus ministry report.

See RUF CofC report at end after Omnibus motion.

Judicial Committee

TE David Donovan, Chairman, Church Creek PCA, Charleston [pastordavid@church-creek.org].

No Report. Let us pray that this committee remains without work.

Leadership Development Committee (LDT)

TE Jon Payne, Chairman, Christ Church PCA, [jdpcchristchurch@icloud.com].

No Report submitted.

Shepherding and Church Vitality

TE Ron Steel, Chairman, Eastbridge PCA, Mt. Pleasant [ron.steel48@gmail.com].

Motion: Having received their LOB reports, that Lowcountry Presbytery affirm that the ministries of TE Chris Brown and TE Bill Schweitzer are approved and they may continue to labor out of bounds per the terms of BCO 13-2.

LOB Reports

Chris Brown, Chaplain, MUSC Charleston, SC

2017 Report to Lowcountry Presbytery (BCO 8-7)

TE Christopher (Chris) Brown, LOB

I currently serve as a chaplain at MUSC Hospital in Charleston, a position I've held since 2007. I am free to maintain the Reformed faith and MUSC places no restrictions on my ministry. I provide spiritual support and counsel to patients, families, and staff at the hospital. Hospital ministry is very much a counseling ministry, and I have many opportunities to teach and proclaim the Word and the Reformed faith.

Praises and positives

- It is a great blessing to bring the Word of God and the hope of Christ to the sick and suffering at the hospital. For most of my life I've had a bent toward "mercy ministry"; that is, ministry to the "least of these". I am privileged to visit the sick each day and bring them true hope.
- Hospital ministry has forced me to sharpen my counseling skills—a good thing!
- After 10 years it seems that God has called and gifted me to serve as a hospital chaplain, and it's hard to see myself doing any other kind of ministry (though of course I must always submit to God's sovereign will and providence!)
- I enjoy working around doctors and nurses in the hospital's "culture".
- I receive good benefits as an employee of MUSC—salary, health insurance, vacation, and retirement.

Significant challenges

- Long hours—I work 12 hour shifts which can be physically tiring.
- Stress—I work in a high stress environment and I see death and suffering every day. I have to carefully watch myself to make sure I'm resting well. I also must watch my personal devotional time with God so I don't burn out. This is more challenging than it sounds!
- Changes in healthcare at the state and national level are altering how hospitals get paid. This indirectly affects staffing levels and whether or not I have a job at MUSC. MUSC has had to tighten its belt the last few years but thankfully no staff have been laid off.

I am blessed to serve as a hospital chaplain at MUSC. I request that Lowcountry Presbytery approve me to labor out of bounds for 2018 in my current call.

Respectfully submitted,

TE Chris Brown

GPC Pastoral Letter May 2017

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (Jer 29:11)

Dearly beloved,

I want to write to you regarding my plans for the next year. I and the session love you, and we think it important that you understand as much as possible the several factors which have led to these plans.

As some of you may be aware, there are immigration regulations requiring citizens of other nations living here to periodically to reset their connection to their homeland. In addition, our missionary sending agency has a requirement for home deputation that equates roughly to the same pattern of six months after every four years abroad. This is only reasonable; the numerous gospel partnerships we have with American churches—partnerships which allow us to pursue Kingdom opportunities far disproportionate to our congregation’s size—come with the natural but costly expectation of ongoing personal visitation.

We were last away for six months in 2014 so we are due to be away again in 2018. Even last time, it was no easy task to carry on the children’s schooling over this awkward (too long to complete the school year here, too short to be established there) period of time. However, the complexity involved in the older children being away for half the year has grown greatly since then. For this reason we had initially considered using an aspect of my situation as a reserve military chaplain to solve the problem: any time that I serve on active duty technically counts as if the entire family were with me in America. The idea would have been that I would go alone for the six months, enabling Pam and the children to remain here.

I thus circulated my name looking for suitable short-term assignments. However, three things soon became clear:

- a) Six-month active duty positions, if they exist at all, are exceedingly rare.
- b) My month at the chaplain school reminded us that, whilst there may be good reasons for families to be separated for long periods, such separations are not to be chosen lightly if there are other viable options.
- c) Finally, and most importantly, our parents miss us more than we were aware. With no time difference to complicate things, I ended up speaking to my mother on a near daily basis. I found myself sympathizing more with her situation (she is in her 80s and in poor health) and thinking in terms of the Golden Rule: what would I wish were our positions reversed? More broadly, I considered what example we are setting for our children regarding our Fifth Commandment duties. Although we were careful not to say that we would return after the completion of our commitment, we did tell our parents that we were officially committed to eight years of church planting work. Those eight years expired in February, and our families have harboured some implicit expectations related to it.

As these things began to dawn on me, two opportunities were laid before me. One was a return to permanent active duty, *which I declined*. The other was a one-year situation with MARSOC. The Marine Corps has recently established a special operations branch akin to the SAS or Navy SEALs called Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC). Marines are sent to the Raider Training Center in North Carolina, where they are put through a grueling selection process and, if chosen, are given advanced weapons, tactics, survival, delivery (jumping, diving, etc.), language and communications training. The Training Center lacks a permanent active duty chaplain but has established a recurring one-year position for reserve chaplains.

Hypothetically, were some private person to approach the session asking us to send me to preach the Word and administer the sacraments at MARSOC chapel services, to be the official representative of the Christian faith to the Marine Raider Training Center, to share that faith privately whenever opportunity presents, to pray publically at various command ceremonies and before dangerous training exercises, to shepherd those going through the most demanding school in the US military and to teach ethics (right and wrong) to those who are perhaps most in need of this, we would surely have considered it. As it is, the organisation itself has made the

approach on official terms. Given this, and in light of the other factors already involved, I brought the matter to the session. Thereafter, I approached the men of the regional group of EPCEW churches that meet periodically for advice and counsel and finally, the leadership of MTW. There has been unanimity of affirmation at every point. On this basis, I have accepted the position in conjunction with a year away in America.

No doubt some questions come to your mind, as they did to me. The most important of these would surely be pastoral provision for the church whilst I am away. I think it fair to say that, were this ever to happen, this coming year would be the best time for it. We have not one but two highly gifted ministerial assistants in Nathan and Florian. By adjusting their seminary schedules they will be able to cover three full services out of every four in the autumn and summer terms. The remaining services will be filled either by one of the three former ministers in the congregation or by one of the many fine (EPCEW and Banner of Truth) guest preachers we have come to know. In the spring term, our well-beloved Revd Maurice Roberts will come to minister for twelve Sundays.

Some may also wonder how we will manage the children's education. Mark, who turns 18 in June, will remain to complete his final year of A-levels at Emmanuel College. He will continue to live in our house, joined for this time by Benjamin Mitchell. The other children would come with Pam and me to the States. Bethany, having just finished her GCSEs at Emmanuel, is at a natural break point and will continue her studies online with the objective of taking the SAT entrance exams accepted at UK as well as US universities. As for Mary, Anna, James and Rebecca, there is a half-time Christian school very much like NCS, numerous home school cooperatives and a plethora of online providers to chose from.

Concerning dates, I was already returning to America to finish the chaplain school on the 4th of July, 2017 and I will now simply stay on from that point. The family will join me on 25th July, and we would all return in August, 2018.

I should acknowledge that the same factors that led to this decision might possibly lead to a similar stint in the future. But as to any thought that this year might morph into my permanent departure, let me put such fears to rest. The position is inherently temporary. My secondary calling to be a reserve military chaplain is just that: a calling to be fulfilled on a minority basis compared to my full-time calling to the ministry. More importantly, neither Pam nor I feel any pull to return permanently to America. I already have the ideal job, serving in the perfect situation for me. Indeed, I consider that the things I have discussed are the best way to prolong our relationship and safeguard our church in the long-term.

Please let me know of any questions, and may the Lord richly bless you.

His servant and yours,

Pastor Bill