

Recommended Docket for the Twelfth Stated Meeting of the Lowcountry Presbytery

To be held: 9:00 a.m., Thursday, November 1, 2018 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 – Church Planting Workshop 1 hour
- 11:45 Business & Reports
 - Approval of Eleventh Lowcountry Presbytery minutes for July 28, 2018
 - 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: RE Rich Wyly rhwyly@gmail.com 843-412-9090
- 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 1, 2018). The Administrative Committee has taken input from each committee is presenting to you today with a recommended budget for 2019.

1. **Report of Stated Clerk**
 - Stated Clerk's report
2. **Report of the Treasurer**
 - Treasurer's report
 - Presentation of Proposed Budgets for 2019
See Attached: Proposed Balanced Budget 2019

Motions:

From Treasurer's Report:

Motion to approve the BALANCED budget for 2019 as presented.

Elections:

We will need to elect men to replace the Class of 2018 at this Presbytery meeting so that they will be ready to serve in 2019. These men have been nominated:

- RE David Walters, Sr. – Administration Committee
- RE Mike Slay – Campus Ministries
- TE Craig Bailey – MNA & MTW
- RE Rich Wyllly – MNA & MTW
- RE Bob Brinson – MNA & MTW
- RE David Walters, Jr. MNA & MTW
- TE David Donovan – Judicial Committee
- TE Jon Payne – C&C (been re-nominated)
- RE Dean Ezell – C&C (been re-nominated)
- TE Alex Mark – C&C (been re-nominated)
- RE Rich Wyllly – C&C
- RE Jason Suddeth- C&C RE from Hilton Head PCA
- TE Ben Konopa – Shepherding & Church Vitality
- RE Jim Abbott-- Shepherding & Church Vitality
- TE John Mark Patrick -- Shepherding & Church Vitality
- RE Jim Rowland – Trustee
- Stated Clerk – Ross Hodges – LCP Standing Rules 3.3.1 – 3 year term
- Treasurer – David Walters, Sr.– LCP Standing Rules 3.5.1 3 year term up
- Check Signer – RE Rick Raybon, Eastbridge PCA

If these men are elected they will be the class of 2021.

Election of Moderator – Nominations: TE for 2019

Nominations: TE David Donovan, TE Michael Walters

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.

Election of Trustees – Jim Rowland 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)

MNA & MTW Committee

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

- Response from Savannah River Presbytery – attached
- Further info on church planting status in Cain Hoy

Campus Ministries Committee

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

- Brief campus ministry report from TE Danny Clark
- Approval of TE Clark's Housing allowance for 2019

Motion Whereas TE Danny Clark is compensated as a minister of the Gospel through a call issued by Lowcountry Presbytery and the presbytery does not provide a parsonage, it is hereby resolved that \$34,289 of Danny Clark's compensation is hereby designated as Housing Allowance for 2019 and all future years unless otherwise provided.

- Report on South Carolina State University/Claflin State University

Judicial Committee

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

TE David Donovan will give a brief report.

Candidates and Credentials Committee (C&C)

TE Alex Mark, Chairman, First Scots PCA, [amark@firstscotsbeaufort.org].

Examination for Licensure (Bible Content, Theology, Church Government, written and preached sermon evaluation). **Mr. Nate Arnold** – (Moderator: See BCO 19-3 & 19-4).

Personal Testimony of Mr. Nate Arnold: My father and mother were both followers of Christ when I was an infant. I do have some memories (mental flashes) of churches in those early years. At some point my father (and I assume also my mother) turned back into the world during my early childhood. Therefore, I grew up in a non-Christian home. My first introduction to Jesus Christ was in the fifth grade by a visiting preacher who held a service at our school auditorium. As the evangelist preached I became convicted of sin and when he gave the invitation to pray for salvation, I asked Christ to save me. My father had apparently turned back to Christ around the same timeframe. We attended the Argyle Church Of God which was a Pentecostal, Arminian church. My training was sparse and consisted mostly of getting saved each week with almost no in depth bible study. I began to stray from the Lord about 6-8 months later mostly due to peer pressure and lack of biblical training. In my teenage years, I strayed completely from the Lord, became rebellious, fought (literally) on a continual basis with my father, quit high school after the 10th grade and joined the US Navy at age 17 (1978).

My father gave me a Thompson Chain Reference Bible as a present when I joined the navy. I carried the bible in its original box for years until the box began to fall apart. During a Mediterranean cruise (9 month deployment) in 1984 I began reading the bible at night in my bunk. Of course, this consistent contact with God's word brought massive conviction and one night I sought a private place to pray. This happened while underway, onboard the USS Biddle, CG-34. I located a fan room and sought God for some time. I asked the Lord to forgive me of my sins and to fill my heart with Jesus Christ. The date was Oct 26, 1984, which I wrote in the front of the Armed Forces New Testament that I was given in Boot Camp. This is the date that I count for my salvation. I have not turned aside from serving God since that date. I read and studied continually. My ship returned to the United States and immediately went into the shipyard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Kate (my wife) who had already given her life to Christ some years earlier, joined me in locating a church, which turned out to be the Wilmington Church of God in Wilmington, Delaware. Here I began to grow and to feel God's call on my life. I approached the Pastor with this information. He worked with me during several counseling sessions and recommended that I try teaching a young boy's Wednesday night bible class. I took the class and taught it until classes let out for the summer. I felt particularly attracted to teaching but struggled with teaching children.

We transferred to Pensacola, Florida where we joined the Warrington Assembly of God. I began to work in the church and was soon asked to teach the Adult Sunday School class. I found this very rewarding but felt like God was equipping me to do something else. I did not want to preach but explored the idea with the Pastor. He worked with me a while and then allowed me to preach my first sermon. Wow! I had fifteen pages of notes and

the sermon lasted maybe five minutes. I began to do pulpit supply in my local church and taught in other churches as the need arose. I also led a home bible study group for a couple of years. I sought preaching credentials in the Assemblies of God but was turned down because of Kate's former marriages. This really shook my ideas concerning God's call with respect to preaching.

We were transferred to Winter Harbor, Maine where we joined the local (read "only") church. This was an Independent, Fundamental Baptist Church. My time there was a "theological transition period" where I had to work through many of the doctrinal issues that I believe today. I began to teach Adult Sunday School and also did pulpit supply as required. Over time, the church licensed me to preach the gospel. The issue of my wife's previous marriages caused consternation, but we were well accepted. The pastor left the church a few years later and I served as interim pastor for approximately 4 months until we were transferred.

My next duty station was an unaccompanied tour. We had planned to settle the family in Georgia while I was away. While home on leave, I was badly injured and out of commission/convalescing for about six months. We decided against the local Pentecostal church (the church I grew up in) immediately. We visited many churches but decided to attend a small United Methodist (yes Methodist) circuit church. As I began to teach and preach, I soon learned why God had placed us there. This stretched me both theologically and in love. By this time I was moving heavily toward Calvinism. The problem was, how to teach Arminian believers what I believe is biblical truth while maintaining the correct attitudes within the denomination? Basically, I was in the wrong denomination. I don't think that I was able to change many people's minds (that's the Spirit's job anyway) but the experience definitely gave me a different view on teaching.

The following years are kind of a blur. I received a commission, served at sea for two years and spent my last tour of duty in London, UK as a staff action officer. At sea, I worked one on one where the opportunity presented itself and in London, I became the Sunday School Director for the Protestant side of the base chapel. During this period, my spirituality seemed to languish, partially due to the extreme requirements of the job and partially due to personal neglect and lack of direction. I often felt alone, unmotivated and somehow like God had placed me on a shelf.

After retiring from the navy, we took a job here and really took our time searching for a church. We wanted a place to grow, to serve and to be exactly where God wanted us to be (though I'm still a little unsure how to determine that). I had never considered a Presbyterian church but decided to visit Metro North (after exhausting other viable, local church options). Several visits later, and after much prayer, we decided to attend Metro North Church. I'm still not sure what God has in store but we are following His leadership and direction. I have found that wherever I go I seem compelled to teach. If I don't follow that direction I seem to languish spiritually similar to my tenure at sea and in London.

We have been at MNC for approximately 15 years, during which time I have taught numerous Sunday Morning Bible Studies, facilitated Uniquely You, assisted in facilitating Theological Foundations for Leaders (TFL), been a FOCUS leader, been a leader for Men's Ministry, preached on occasion (at Metro and other churches) and have served as a Ruling Elder since 2005. It has been a great joy serving MNC.

I have a desire to get out of debt completely (almost there) and possibly free myself to work more directly in the Lord's service. I'm not really sure what that looks like but am exploring planting an inter-racial church in St. George, SC. I'm going through the licensure process with Low Country Presbytery to see where the Lord leads me. If licensed, I intend to go back to school and get a biblical degree. I very much look forward to freeing myself of the things that are holding us back from "grass roots" service and get to work teaching in the local community. Please pray for me in this regard.

Coram Deo,
Nate Arnold

Examination for Transfer of Ordination: TE Chris Bowen -- (Christian Experience, views in theology, sacraments, and church government, BCO 13-6). Rev. Chris Brown is currently pastor of Pastor of Discipleship and Outreach at First Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, TN.

Bio: Chris Bowen is a graduate of the University of Tennessee (B.S.) and Dallas Theological Seminary (Th.M) and was ordained in 2006 in the Northwest Georgia Presbytery. He spent eight years on staff as a campus pastor with Reformed University Fellowship at Kennesaw State University and Winthrop University. For the past four and half years, he has served as the Pastor of Discipleship and Outreach at First Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, TN. Chris and his wife Jen have three daughters: Phoebe (7), Haddie Grace (5), and Leland (3).

TE Christ Bowen's statements on the Westminster Standards:

1. **WCF IV.1; LC 15, SC 9: Exception to the view of the Westminster Standards that "in the space of six days" referred to the Calendar Day View** – In attempts to be clear where I am in agreement with the Westminster Standards, I believe God created all things *ex nihilo* (cf. Gen. 1:1-2) and He uniquely and specially created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden on the sixth day (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 2:4-25). I believe God created all things in the span of six sequential days as it is recorded in Genesis and that He rested on the seventh day (cf. Gen. 1:1- 2:3). My exception to the Westminster Standards is related to actual length of these six Creations days. The reason for this exception is that humanity counts time based on the revolution of the Earth on its axis with respect to the Sun. According to the plain and literal reading of Genesis 1, the Sun was not created until the fourth day. Therefore, I have wrestled with how the first days of Creation could be literal Calendar Days in the absence of the ordinary process used for marking time. My view of the days of Creation is the Analogical Day Theory, which hold that there is an *analogy* between God's work days and humanity's work days and that it does not necessary require the specific identity of the length of those days. In essence, God's workdays are analogous to human workdays, but it is not necessarily the same length as the human days.
2. **WCF XXI.8; LC 117, 119; SC 60, 61: Exception to abstaining from recreation on the Sabbath.** First of all, let me affirm that I believe that the Lord has set apart the Sabbath as one day in seven when God's people should refrain from gainful work (cf. Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15) with the exception of acts of mercy or necessity (cf. Matt. 12:11-13). Some examples of those exceptional acts of mercy or necessity, I believe, would be medical professionals, the fire department, and military or law enforcement personnel. I affirm that it is good and right and edifying for God's people to assemble together for Lord's Day worship (cf. Lev. 23:3; Heb. 10:24-25), however, I do not find Scripture to provide a clear prohibition for God's people to refrain from enjoying mild forms of recreation, whether in action, thought, or speech, that does not replace, inhibit, or displace Lord's Day worship from its primary and central role. I am persuaded to believe that mild forms of recreation can serve as legitimate means of refreshment and relaxation for God's people (cf. Mark 2:27).
3. **LC 109: Exception to representation on God, of all or any of the three persons, either inwardly or outwardly** – While I affirm that the Second Commandment prohibits worshipping God through mediate images and forms, I have reservations about the unnecessary forbiddance of representations of the second person of the Godhead, God, the Son Jesus Christ in educational materials (i.e. The Jesus Storybook Bible, etc.). Also, the prohibition to refrain from making any kind of image of the second person of the Godhead, Jesus Christ inwardly is virtually impossible, if for no other reason than we are rational beings with vivid imaginations, which are prone to formulate mental pictures of Jesus. I am convinced that the Second Commandment forbids

making images of God, the Father and God, the Holy Spirit as they are entirely spiritual and invisible in substance (cf. John 4:24) but believe that reasonable images that are an artistic expression, used for pedagogical purposes, as well as inward mental pictures are permissible and are a tremendous resource for the Church.

4. **LC 156: Exception that more than ordained men may read Scripture in public worship** – If I am reading LC 156 correctly, the implication is that only ordained men are encouraged to read Scripture in the context of public worship (cf. Deut. 31:9, 11-13; Neh. 8:2-3; 9:3-5). The session should exercise wisdom, prudence, and discernment in deciding who should be permitted to read Scripture in public worship gatherings, but I am persuaded to believe that person(s) other than those ordained are permitted to read the Word publicly to the congregation including women and even children who are members in good standing with the local church.

TE Chris Bowen stated that he had no differences from our Book of Church Order.

WCF Exception Options: As a presbytery we must determine and record for each candidate: a) the candidate stated that he had no differences, b) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic, or c) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamentals of our system of doctrine.” BCO21-4 or d) the court judged the stated difference to be “out of accord,” that is “hostile to the system” or “striking at the vitals of religion.”

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.

Note: TE Bill Shweitzer’s Report – approved at 11th Stated meeting of Lowcountry Presbytery

Approval of Phil Stogner’s Call from MTW

Motion that if the way be clear, the call be approved of the Session of Hilton Head Presbyterian Church, Hilton Head, SC to **TE Chris Bowen** as assistant pastor with the following terms: total annual package of \$, which includes housing allowance of \$, retirement insurance \$, four weeks vacation, and \$ in moving expenses; and that the following Commission to Install TE Chris Bowen as Assistant Pastor at Hilton Head Presbyterian Church, be approved for Hilton Head Presbyterian Church, ____ at __:00 A/PM;

LOB Reports

Chris Brown, Chaplain, MUSC Charleston, SC

2018 Report to Lowcountry Presbytery (BCO 8-7, 13-2)

TE Christopher (Chris) Brown, LOB

I currently serve as a chaplain at MUSC Hospital in Charleston, a position I've held since 2007. I provide spiritual care and support to the patients, families, and staff at MUSC. I am free to maintain the Reformed faith and I have no restrictions on my ministry. I have many opportunities to proclaim the Gospel and the Reformed faith in my work as a hospital chaplain.

Praises and Positives

I am blessed and privileged to serve as a hospital chaplain—each day I bring the hope of Christ to suffering patients and their families. I do this in many ways, primarily through pastoral counseling, Scripture reading, and prayer. Illness and suffering cause people to ask questions such as *What is God's purpose in my sickness? Can I be forgiven for my past? Does God still hear my prayers? Where in the Bible can I find comfort?* These are just a few of the questions I hear from my patients and their families.

Another blessing is to serve alongside the staff at the hospital—doctors, nurses, therapists, technicians. Hospitals are high stress, high pressure environments, so part of my ministry is supporting their work as their chaplain. I make myself available as often as I can to talk and listen with the staff if they need to process.

Significant challenges

After 11 years I've learned (though not perfectly) ways to handle the stress of hospital ministry—the long hours and dealing with suffering and death on a daily basis. I carefully guard my days off to ensure that I rest both physically and spiritually. This is an ongoing challenge for me!

Another challenge is the current state of healthcare in the U.S. Money is tight all across the healthcare industry—many hospitals operate at a bare minimum financially, which means staffing is limited (and this includes staffing for chaplains). Large urban hospitals like MUSC that receive a lot of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement are also feeling the squeeze. Much of this involves decisions at the state and federal government level—far outside of my control or influence. I've drawn comfort in the stories of Daniel and Nehemiah who both served their governments; I work for a large public institution that receives government support. I pray and trust that God will prosper me as He did Daniel and Nehemiah.

I am blessed to serve as a hospital chaplain and I request that Lowcountry Presbytery approve me to labor out of bounds for 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

TE Chris Brown