

Recommended Docket for the Twenty First Stated Meeting of the Lowcountry Presbytery

To be held: 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at First Scots Presbyterian Church, Beaufort, SC.

Recommended Docket submitted by the Administration Committee:

That the following docket be approved for the Twenty First Stated Meeting of the Palmetto Presbytery scheduled for April 27, 2021 at First Scots Presbyterian Church in Beaufort, 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 Ministry Equipping Time
 - MTW Missionary & Lifeline Christian Services presentations
- 10:50 Prayer Time – led by Shepherding & Church Vitality Committee
- 11:10 Business & Reports
 - Approval of 20th Lowcountry Presbytery minutes from January 23, 2021
 - **Motion** to form a Committee as a whole to review the Session minutes of the churches. Please be prepared to have one of your commissioners' review the minutes of another church during the Presbytery meeting. **The following churches have not yet submitted their 2020 minutes for review: Hilton Head Presbyterian, Redeemer Presbyterian, Two Rivers Presbyterian.** Additionally Oakbrook needs to submit additional supporting documentation for their minutes previously reviewed.
 - Candidates and Credentials Committee (20 minutes)
 - Campus Ministries Committee (15 minutes)
 - MNA & MTW Committee (10 minutes)
 - Judicial Committee (No report)
 - Shepherding & Church Vitality Committee (10 minutes)
 - Administration Committee (15 minutes)
 - Report of Stated Clerk
 - Report of the Treasurer
 - Additional Business if needed & Adjournment targeted before 2:30
- 12:00 Order of the Day – Lunch

**Candidates &
Credentials
Committee:**

TE Alex Mark. First Scots Presbyterian Church, Beaufort
[amark@firstscotsbeaufort.org]

Under Care: Mr. Joel Brown. New City Fellowship, Orangeburg, SC.

1. Testimony of Joel Brown

I grew up in a Christian home, my church denomination was African Methodist Episcopal (AME). The summer of 1985, at the age of 5, my mother introduced me to Christ. Though I was saved, I didn't understand the gospel. I believed my salvation was based on works. I believed my sin was a result of a lack of good deeds. At the age of 24, I came to finally to the understanding the gospel. I came to the realization that I was sinful and the only thing that could help me was Jesus. Till this day it is only by the grace and mercy of God that I am here today.

2. Sense of Call

My sense of call came in Dec of 1997. During the Christmas break, I was watching a talk show where a man claimed to be delivered from homosexuality. The crowd that was listening to his testimony became greatly skeptical and begin to mock him. There was only person in the crowd who believed and defended him. That is when I heard the Holy Spirit speak to me. I remember the Lord telling me, "People don't know me." That is right then and there I knew I was called to preach the gospel so that people can come to know Christ. My call was confirmed by the steward and trustee of my church. I gave my trial sermon March 28th, 1998. The title of the sermon was "He is Unstoppable." For years I was trained up in ministry through the AME church. In 2004 was when I came to joined the PCA church.

Motion: The Candidates and Credentials Committee recommends to receive **Mr. Joel Brown** under care at New City Fellowship in Orangeburg.

Motion: The Candidates and Credentials Committee recommends to initiate Joel Brown's internship at New City Fellowship in Orangeburg.

Transfer of Ordination: TE Richard Downs (Christian Experience, views in theology, sacraments, and church government, BCO 13-6). Rev. Downs is currently in the Southern New England Presbytery and is being called to serve as Interim Pastor of Grace Coastal Church. Please READ the attached Ministerial Review on TE Downs before presbytery.

Transfer Examination of TE Richard Downs.

Motion: The Candidates and Credentials Committee recommends that Lowcountry Presbytery receive Richard Downs by transfer from Southern New England Presbytery to serve as Interim Pastor of Grace Coastal Church.

Rev. Downs recognizes the following differences from the Westminster Standards :

Concerning the Westminster Standards' position on the Sabbath:

I have happily existed under the umbrella of the WCF and its Catechisms for nearly 40 years. At my ordination exam I took exceptions to the Puritan Sabbath

expressed in WCF XXI-7, 8 and an exception to XIX-1, 2 wherein is implied, if not asserted, that the Ten Commandments were, in some fashion, in the possession of Adam. Any exception now would be less strenuous. I'm more inclined these days to acknowledge that the Confession is wiser than I.

I do understand the Ten Commandments to be essentially Mosaic and part, rightly speaking, of the Mosaic Covenant. That Joseph acknowledges, pre-Moses, the seventh commandment, and that the second table is replicated in the New Testament affirms that there is a transcendent moral law that bridges the covenants. Adam was likely aware of such, but it seems to me a stretch to say that he had the Ten Commandments. The complexity of Jesus' interactions with Jewish leaders on the Sabbath as well as the ease with which the church moved from the seventh day to the first as the Lord's Day speak to me of the Fourth Commandment being a little different from the others. I'm certainly inclined to embrace the wisdom of the Fourth Commandment, but I understand its moral force to be different from the other nine.

I am not a libertine on the Sabbath. I have encouraged students to avoid studying and workaholics to rest on Sunday. I take Sabbath observance in some fashion to be essential and an increasingly counter-cultural demonstration of faith. I question moving public worship to Saturday night or other days in the week. I like the evening service and would like a Sunday bracketed by morning and evening worship. I puzzle over brothers and sisters who claim fealty to the confession but somehow justify shopping and going to restaurants.

The committee recommends that this exception be permitted as “more than semantic, but not out of accord.”

Concerning the Westminster Standards position on Creation:

If anything, I would favor a framework view. I have preached on Genesis 1 and mentioned different views without advocating for one or the other. I think a good exegesis of the chapter would seek not to impose upon it questions it itself does not deign to answer. There are so many helpful things, one could say ‘more important’ things, to be gleaned from the creation account.

The committee recommends that this exception be permitted as “more than semantic, but not out of accord.”

Rev Downs also acknowledges the following difference from the PCA Book of Church Order:

I think that the office of deacon should not be gender-specific. Romans 16 indicates that Phoebe was a deaconess and 1 Timothy 3.11 seems best understood as describing female deacons. It seems to me that the gender-specific authority asserted in 1 Timothy 2.12 does not extend to the office of deacon. The BCO's vow that the congregation should honor the authority of officers (24.6) would best be limited to the office of elder. Deacons should be honored and encouraged, not obeyed in the same way elders are obeyed.

This being said, I think that the convictions held by many against female

deacons should be honored. I do not seek to change the BCO and am content with the provision in it for deacon assistants of both genders.

The committee acknowledges that such a position is contrary to the PCA Book of Church Order, and therefore this position may not be taught or practiced within the bounds of our presbytery.

Transfer of Ordination: TE Nick Batzig (Christian Experience, views in theology, sacraments, and church government, BCO 13-6). Rev. Batzig is currently in the Tennessee Valley Presbytery and is being called to serve as Senior Pastor of Church Creek Presbyterian in Charleston, SC. Please READ the attached Ministerial Review on TE Batzig before presbytery.

Transfer Examination of TE Nick Batzig.

The Candidates and Credentials Committee recommends that Lowcountry Presbytery receive Nick Batzig by transfer from Tennessee River Presbytery to serve as Senior Pastor of Church Creek.

Rev. Batzig has no differences with the Westminster Standards or the PCA Book of Church Order.

The Candidates and Credentials Committee was also asked to define the parameters of how frequently a man who is not licensed may preach in our presbytery. See the following:

Motion from the Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Lowcountry Presbytery for 4.27.2021 Stated Meeting:

In PCA BCO 19-1, we are instructed that, "To preserve the purity of the preaching of the Gospel, no man is permitted to preach in the pulpits of the Presbyterian Church in America on a regular basis without proper licensure from the Presbytery having jurisdiction where he will preach."

Many presbyteries have sought to define how often preaching "on a regular basis" is. We believe that it would be useful to do the same, and thus offer the following motion:

Motion: The Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Lowcountry Presbytery moves to define "regular basis" as six Lord's Days throughout the span of one year.

Rationale:

- **The power and authority of the Word:** In the preaching of the Word, God's Word is proclaimed with God's authority. For this reason, the BCO holds the ministry of the Word in high esteem, and it is incumbent upon us to uphold such a standard as well. Therefore, men who will preach "on a regular basis" to the

bride of Christ ought to be examined to be sure that they “follow the pattern of the sound words” (2 Timothy 1:13).

- **Opportunity for Training:** Some of our churches are blessed to have interns/ candidates under care. While these men rightly ought not preach regularly, six Lord’s Day per year does give sufficient opportunity for them to hone gifts, receive feedback, and meet internship requirements. Furthermore, for churches that have morning and evening worship, such a candidate may preach both services, and would thus be able to preach 12 times per year.
- **The availability of licensed men who do not have Sunday obligations:** There are licensed men in the presbytery who do not preach regularly on Sundays, and many have expressed a strong to fill pulpits regularly as needed. This would give them an opportunity to improve their preaching, and could also have a uniting effect on churches in our presbytery.
- **Everything done decently and in order:** As we consider this issue proactively, we can avoid finding ourselves in the position that other presbyteries have experienced: men filling pulpits regularly who are not under the oversight of the Presbytery (and may not even be members of the church in which they are preaching/ exhorting). This has inadvertently become a way for churches to circumvent the structures of authority that are established in our governance.

Furthermore, the Candidates and Credentials Committee exhorts the Sessions of Lowcountry Presbytery to practice close oversight over the ministry of the Word in their pulpits. Per Paul’s instructions in Timothy you, through the work of the Spirit, are charged to “guard the good deposit entrusted to you” (2 Timothy 1:14).

**MNA/MTW
Committee**

Craig Bailey, Redeemer PCA, craig@redeemer-charleston.org
Brief report covering the Vision Mission Fund and church planting.
J.P. Sibley and Joel Brown will give an update on New City Fellowship.

**Campus
Ministries
Committee**

Rob Hamby, Point Hope Presbyterian, rob@pointhopepres.com

- Update on the Ministry of RUF at the College of Charleston
- Update on the Work of the Committee in Identifying the Next RUF Minister for the College of Charleston
- Update on the Plan for RUF at the College of Charleston this Fall
- Report from Joel Brown – SC State and Claflin.

**Judicial
Committee:**

TE Michael Walters. Church Creek PCA, Charleston [m.allenwalters@gmail.com].
No report

**Shepherding
& Church
Vitality
Committee:**

TE Ron Steel, Chairman, Eastbridge PCA, Mt. Pleasant [ron.steel48@gmail.com].
Motion to designate today’s offering of \$xxx from the worship service to be given.
Lifeline Children’s Services

Motion: That the Report of the Commission to install TE John Schley as Senior Pastor at Metro North held on January 31, 2021 be approved.

Motion (needs 2nd) that the presbytery approve the change of call status of TE Walton of First Scots from Assistant Pastor to Associate Pastor per the request of the congregation of First Sctos Presbyterian Church of Beaufort, SC.

Motion: The Shepherding Committee recommends that we approve the call package of TE Nick Batzig from Church Creek Presbyterian, Charleston.

**Administrative
Committee**
10 minutes

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: RE Rich Wylly statedclerk@lowcountrypresbytery.org 843-606-0572
- Treasurer: RE David Walters, Sr. treasurer@lowcountrypresbytery.org 843-297-2517
- Recording Clerk: TE Mark Turner recordingclerk@lowcountrypresbytery.org 843-224-9337
- Moderator: TE JP Sibley jsibley@gmail.com 803-747-4935
- REMINDER: churches are asked to submit their annual statistical reports either via signed original or through the web to be received by the PCA Administrative Committee by February 15, 2021.

RE Rich Wylly gave the Report of the Stated Clerk and the Treasurer:

1. **Report of Stated Clerk**

- Stated Clerk's report
Presbytery minutes from 2020 were submitted to the PCA Admin Committee in February 2021.

2. Nominations for G.A.:

- Volunteers for Floor Clerks
- Permanent Committees (1 TE and 1 RE)
- Nominating Committee
- RPR Committee
- Commissioners
 - D.B. Cummings
 - ????

2. **Report of the Treasurer**

- Treasurer's report

The Stated clerk reminded presbyters of Upcoming Stated Meetings:

22nd – 7/24/2021 – Location needed

23rd – 11/4/2021 – Location needed

Attachments: Please read over attached documents for TE Downs and TE Batzig **before** Presbytery.