

**Minutes of the  
Special Session**

**of the  
PRESBYTERY OF SHENANDOAH**

**February 23, 2016**

**Cooks Creek Presbyterian Church  
Harrisonburg, Virginia**

**NEXT STATED SESSION**

**Tuesday, May 10, 2016  
TBA**

**SHENANDOAH PRESBYTERY IS A COVENANT BODY WHERE:**

- » **congregations are empowered to be centers for mission,**
- » **lay persons are equipped to be Disciples of Christ in a challenging world,**
- » **church leaders and members are nurtured and strengthened for service,**
- » **open communication and information are used constructively and creatively to keep us connected.**

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**CANDIDATES FOR MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

Gwen Carr	Home Church – Tinkling Spring
Tom Forbes	Home Church – Bunker Hill
Jacob Kave	Home Church – Woodstock
Seth Lovell	Home Church – Tinkling Spring
Kristy Ray	Home Church – Tinkling Spring

**INQUIRERS FOR MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

Molly Morris	Home Church – Staunton First
Emily Peterson	Home Church - Covenant

## **GOVERNING BODIES**

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**PRESBYTERY OF SHENANDOAH  
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING**

The Special Meeting of the Presbytery of Shenandoah was held at Cooks Creek Presbyterian Church, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 23, 2016. The purpose for the meeting was to receive and act upon the report from the Administrative Commission for Warm Springs Presbyterian Church, following the protocols of the Shenandoah Presbytery Policy for Discernment Toward Reconciliation or Gracious Separation.. Moderator John Cushwa called the meeting to order with prayer.

**WORSHIP**

The worship service featured congregational hymns and a reflection from Teaching Elder Jonathan Ytterock.

**QUORUM AND ENROLLMENT**

The Stated Clerk reported that a quorum was present. The final enrollment was as follows:

Adm	Administrator	DYP	Director, Youth Program	P	Pastor
Asst	Assistant	ED	Educator	Prof	Professor
Assoc	Associate	HR	Honorably Retired	SS	Stated Supply
Chap	Chaplain	IA	Interim Associate	Stu	Student
CM	Campus Minister	IN	Inactive	T	Teacher
COP	Co-Pastors	IP	Interim Pastor	TM	Tent Making
Coun	Counselor	ML	Minister-at-Large	TP	Transitional Presbyter
DP	Designated Pastor	OM	Overseas Missionary	WC	Without Charge

(Description code for attendance: P = present E = excused A = absent)

P	Allamon, Karen H.	P	Staunton First	Stephany Morgan
A	Allen, Donald R., Jr.	HR		
A	Arnold, Timothy	Supply	Middletown	
A	Atwood, James E.	HR		
P	Atwood, Roxana M.	HR		
A	Barner, Ann Elizabeth	HR		
P	Barner, Fred Thomas	HR		
E	Baxter, John A.	HR		
P	Bethard, John T.	P	Charles Town	Absent
E	Biggs, Thomas T.	HR		
E	Boyer, Grace Jones	HR		
E	Brandon, Joseph C.	HR		
E	Bridgman, Stewart G.	HR		
A	Bromhead, Jonathan	ML		
P	Brownlee, J. Malcolm	HR		
E	Bucy, Ralph D.	HR		
P	Bunker, Jonathan W.	P	Berryville	Jim Green
P	Burton, Rufus T., III	P	Martinsburg First	Tom Horn
A	Cardot, Guy Richard	P	Petersburg	Absent
E	Carlsson, Charles M., Jr.	HR		
A	Carr, Phillips L.	HR		
P	Cathcart, C. Stevens	HR		
P	Chapman, George W.	P	Waynesboro First	Mark Henderson
E	Coffman, Donna B.	HR		
E	Cole, William A., Jr.	HR		
P	Coleman, Glenn M.	IP	Mossy Creek	
P	Condro, Joseph F.	HR		
P	Conrad, Scott A.	ML		
A	Corder, William "Lee"	ML		
A	Cornish, Homer T.	HR		
E	Cox, C. William	HR		
P	Craft, John K.	P	Bethany	Absent
P	Cranford, April H.	P	Westminster	Absent

A Crannell, J. Scott	ML		
P Crumley, Rachel	P	Tuscarora	Grace Mitchell
E Cushman, James E.	HR		
P Cushwa, John W.	HR		
P Dawkins, Edward C.	ML		
P Dax, Betty G.	IP	New Providence	
A Dent, William H., Jr.	HR		
A Dietrich, Richard S.	HR		
A Dobyons, Sharyl A.	ML		
A Donohoe, Patricia A.	HR		
A Dorn, Constance A.	ML		
A Douty, Horace D.	HR/IP	Oxford	
A Evans, Caroline B.	ML		
P Evans, George W.	P	Cooks Creek	Ken McNulty
A Everhart, William G.	Supply	Sunnyside	
P Farthing, Stanley H.	Supply	Zetta	
P Fetterman, Amy	IP	Finley Memorial	
E Field, Robert F.	HR		
E Fisher, Merle L., Jr.	HR		
E Fisher, Otis L.	HR		
E Forbes, Richard A., Jr.	HR		
P Foster, M. Kerry	P	Bridgewater	Carroll Chewning
E Franklin, John S.	HR		
E Garrison, John D.	HR		
E Garriss, K. Braxton	HR		
E Goodman, William R., Jr.	HR		
A Goshorn, Robert D.	HR		
A Habbersett, Bonnie D.	HR		
E Hahn-Campanella Kitty	ML		
P Hand, Kevin L.	P	Franklin Ruddle	Nancy Sites Absent
P Haney, John H.	P	Goshen Millboro Rocky Spring Mt. Carmel	Absent Absent Absent
P Haney, M. Olivia Kincaid	Supply		
P Harmon, Melissa L.	ML		
A Harrison, L. Randolph	HR		
E Hastings, John R. "Skip"	HR		
A Hay, Kevin W.	Assoc	Opequon	
E Hay, Thomas D.	Adm		
E Hayter, J. T., Jr.	HR		
E Held, Ann Reed	HR		
E Hellmuth, Barton L.	HR		
A Hendy, Susanna	ML		
E Hill, Robert S., Jr.	HR		
P Hill, Sarah L.	Assoc	Lexington	
P Holden, Thomas J., III	HR		
P Hopkins, E. Reed	P	Loch Willow	Ann Conway
P Howard, Carl D.	HR		
A Howard, David D.	P	Strasburg	Absent
A Hunt, Patricia	HR		
A Hunter, Tully J.	P	Tinkling Spring	Paul Dana Ann Gregory
A Inglis, J. Leslie	HR		
E Jackson, Katherine C.	ML		
E Johns, Harry E.	IP	Staunton Third	
E Johnson, Barbara R.	P	Romney	Excused
E Jones, Donald D. M.	HR		
A Kennedy, J. Whitner	HR		
P Klein, Deborah H.	ML		

P Klein, William M.	P	Lexington	David Dax Absent
P Lanaghan, Patrick R.	P	Burnt	Donna Lanaghan
A Langdon, J. Bradford	ML		
P LaPrade, Lester N., Jr.	HR		
P LaRue, H. Donald	ML		
P Leggett, John P.	P	Massanutten	Jim Oppy Absent
E Lewis, Elizabeth	Chap	Westminster-Canterbury	
E Lewis, Herbert T.	HR		
A Long, Karen J.	ML		
E Lowe, Emory G.	HR		
E Macbeth, Bruce A.	HR		
P Martin, Roy A.	TP		
A Mathison, John T.	HR		
E McClintock, Lynn	ML		
A McCoig, Dan M., Jr.	Assoc	Winchester First	
P McCrary, Elizabeth L.	P	Augusta Stone	Faye Bottenfield
P McDonald, John L.	IP	Buena Vista	
A McLean, Karen E.	ML		
A Miles, Larry C.	HR		
E Moore, William L.	OM		
E Muncy, Robert L.	HR		
E Newman, Howard A.	HR		
A Norville, Charles K.	HR		
P O'Gorek, Paul A.	Chaplain	Sunnyside Community	
P Osborne, Robert S.	P	Berkeley Springs	Paula Osborne
P Owen, Jan G.	HR/IP	Waynesboro Second	
P Painter, William L., Jr.	HR		
E Pancake, Joseph S.	HR		
P Pattison, Carl F.	IP	New Monmouth	
P Peterson, John C.	P	Covenant	Amy Diduch Sally Griffith
P Pettit, Ann R.	Assoc	Massanutten	
P Pettit, Patrick S.	IP	Smyrna	
A Poland, Ernest L. Jr.	Supply	Moorefield	
E Pollock, Richard	HR		
E Price, Norman G.	HR		
P Pyles, Elizabeth	P	McDowell	Jeanne Hull
P Reed, Charles K.	P	Warm Springs	William Fields
E Reifsnnyder, Richard W.	HR		
P Reller, Charles K.	HR		
E Rhyne, C. Thomas	HR		
P Robertson, Helen	P	Fairfield	Ken Hawkins
A Robinson, Sally O.	ML		
P Ross, Anne M.	HR		
P Sale, M. Anderson	HR		
E Sefcik, Joseph T.	HR		
P Shearer, J. David	P	Bethel	Laura B.
P Sherman, H. Wray	P	Hermitage	Fred Mader
P Sherrard, Robert L.	P	Windy Cove	GaryNair
P Sieck, Philip L.	HR		
E Slider, C. Richard II	HR		
E Sloop, John F.	HR		
A Smith, Evan R.	P	Staunton Second	Absent
A Smith, Nancy A.	ML		
E Snelson, Andrew L.	HR		
A Sommer, Philip W.	HR		
A Sonstegard-Spray, Maren	Assoc	Winchester First	
E Stanley, Arthur L.	HR		
E Stephens, Millard M.	HR		

P Stokes, Martin L.	HR		
E Swezey, Charles M.	HR		
A Symons, Charles D., Jr.	HR		
P Thomas, Aaron Lee	P	Olivet	Absent
P Thornton, Joel P.	DP	Ivanhoe	
		Wardensville	
E Tremba, Randall W.	P	Shepherdstown	Excused
P Tutterow, Christina B.	P	Bethesda	Absent
A Unger, Philip E.	ML		
E Vernon, Joseph H. J.	HR		
E von Oeyen, Jr., Robert	HR		
A Watkins, John M.	HR		
P Webb, Lisa M.	P	Woodstock	John Coleman
A Webster, Charles M.	IP	Winchester First	
P Whiteley, Nancy S.	HR		
E Wilkers, Jack B.	HR		
P Wilson, Joan M.	Supply	Broadway	
E Wilson, Stanton R.	HR		
E Wing, Stephanie S.	P	Trinity	Absent
P Witt, David R.	P	Opequon	William Burslem
			Absent
E Woodworth, Robert B.	HR		
P Wyche, Frank	P	Hebron	David Obenschain
A Young, Betty Jean	HR		
A Young, James R. M.	ML		
A Young, Philip H.	HR		
A Young, Richard O., Sr.	HR		
P Ytterrock, Jonathan A.	P	Mount Horeb	Ron Clements

#### CHURCHES WITHOUT INSTALLED PASTORS

Ben Salem	Absent
Beulah	Mary Lou Cox
Bloomery	Joyce Omps
Broadway	Houston Lynch
Buckton	Judy Gribble
Buena Vista	Absent
Buffalo Gap	Jane Stogdale
Bunker Hill	Absent
Burlington	Absent
Circleville	Absent
Clear Brook	Absent
Collierstown	Absent
Craigsville	Absent
Elk Branch	Absent
Elkton	Sarah Smith
Falling Waters	John Fleagle
Finley Memorial	Christian Sykes
Front Royal	Absent
Gerrardstown	Stephen Zyrenda
Glen Kirk	Absent
Halltown	Absent
Hedgesville	Terry McDaniel
Highland Memorial	Absent
Hot Springs	Absent
Immanuel	Absent
Kearneysville	Absent
Keyser	Absent
Little Falls	William Moran
McCutchen	Absent
Middletown	Absent
Monterey	Absent



Moorefield	Tom Widder
Mossy Creek	Charles Blair
Mount Carmel	Linda Koogler
Mount Hope	Absent
Mount Joy	Absent
Mount Olive	Sarah Lange
Mount Storm	Absent
New Monmouth	Henry Schreiber
New Providence	Don Roll
Nineveh	Sandi Ey
Oxford	Absent
Piedmont	Absent
Pines Chapel	Absent
Pisgah	Absent
Second Opequon	Absent
Seneca Rocks	Absent
Sherando	Caroline Hastreiter
Slanesville	Absent
Smyrna	Absent
Springfield	Absent
Staunton Third	Absent
Sunnyside	Absent
Tabler	Edward McLaughline
Timber Ridge	Bill Peel
Tomahawk	David P.
Union	Absent
Warrenton	Absent
	Absent
Waynesboro Second	Absent
Williamsville	Pamela Webb
Winchester First	Absent
	Absent
	Absent
Zetta	LarryLawhorn

**VOTING RULING ELDERS:**

Commissioned Ruling Elders

A Deborah Barnett	P William Barnett	P James Boyette
A Michele Elliott	A Tom Forbes	E Judy Hensley
A William Moore	P Linda Reece	A Alvin Russell
A Bobby Spurgeon	P Ron Wilkes	P Paul Wolverton

Voting Ruling Elders of Presbytery Staff or Coordinating and Planning Commission (CPC):

P Mary Lou Cox, CPC (also Beulah commissioner)	P Doug Sensabaugh, Staff Ruling Elder
A Greg Trobaugh, CPC	

**NON-VOTING VISITORS:**

Presbytery Staff

Kim Stroupe

Visitors

Amy Blake	Tim Blake	Hannah Bush
Ken Campbell	Lea Campbell	Hank Coffey
Elizabeth Donohoe	Cathy Dray	Jan Dray
Wayne Hiner	Wendell Ombs	Dave Powell
Jeanette Powell	Diane Robertson	Scott Robertson

Teaching Elders = 67 Voting Ruling Elders = 58 Additional Guests = 20 TOTAL = 145

### **OPENING**

The meeting opened with worship. The Moderator then welcomed everyone, and the Parliamentarian gave instructions for the process for the meeting. The presbytery approved excusing from attendance from all or part of this special meeting those ministers who submitted such a request.

### **POINT OF ORDER**

Teaching Elder Rufus Burton raised a Point of Order objecting to consideration of the Administrative Commission's report and recommendations as a violation of Scripture and so out of order. The moderator dismissed the objection and ruled that the matter was appropriately before the presbytery and in order. The ruling of the moderator was appealed by Teaching Elder Burton and properly seconded. Following debate the ruling of the moderator was sustained by the Body by a vote of 84 to 30.

### **POINT OF ORDER**

Ruling Elder Commissioner from Warm Springs, Bill Fields, stated the proceedings were out of order according to section II.D.2.f. of the Policy for Discernment Toward Reconciliation or Gracious Separation. The Parliamentarian explained that according to section II.D.1. of the Policy, the procedure will not always lead to separation.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION REPORT**

Teaching Elder, Beth Pyles, chair of the Administrative Commission (AC) to Warm Spring Church, gave a verbal report on the process the AC followed under the presbytery's Policy for Discernment Toward Reconciliation or Gracious Separation. (See pages 67-78 for full written report) The floor was opened for questions about the process or the report.

After over 90 minutes of questions, the AC yielded the floor to Teaching Elder Charles Reed and Ruling Elder Bill Fields of Warm Springs Church. After a verbal report, the floor was opened for questions.

### **RECESS**

Due to the unexpected length of the meeting, the Body voted to adjourn for a light lunch reconvening at 1:55 p.m.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION REPORT continued**

The meeting resumed with additional questions to the Warm Springs Church.

The Parliamentarian gave instructions to the Body for the remainder of the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to refer this matter back to the AC for farther reconsideration.

A substitute motion was made and seconded to postpone any recommendations today and appointment a new AC. The substitute motion failed 38 for and 62 against.

The main motion to refer the matter back to the AC for farther reconsideration and to report back at a later date failed by a standing vote.

The AC moved the following concerning Teaching Elder Charles Reed as one recommendation:

1. That Teaching Elder Charles Reed, pursuant to his own request, be dismissed to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), immediately upon receipt from the EPC of a request to receive Rev. Reed to that denomination, but in any event, whether received by the EPC or not, that Rev. Reed be dismissed from the PC(USA) not later than February 28, 2016, at which time the pastoral relationship shall be dissolved with the Warm Springs Church.

2. That Rev. Reed receive a severance package from Warm Springs Presbyterian Church consisting of up to six (6) months salary and benefits at levels current as of January 1, 2016, commencing with the date of his dismissal and in any event, commencing not later than March 1, 2016 and continuing for a period of six (6) months or until such time as Rev. Reed obtains gainful employment, whichever soonest occurs.
3. That in addition, Rev. Reed and his family have the right of continued occupancy of the manse they currently live in for a period of up to three (3) months following the date of dismissal or until such time as they vacate the manse, whichever soonest occurs.
4. That Charles Reed shall be asked to not labor within the geographic boundaries of the Shenandoah Presbytery in any capacity with any denomination, church or worshiping community for a period of five (5) years from the date of this agreement.

Before discussion could ensue, Teaching Elder John Bethard made the following substitute motion:

*As an exception to the policy of which denominations Shenandoah Presbytery can dismiss, that the Warm Springs Presbyterian Church be granted their request to seek fellowship with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and that their pastor, the Rev. Charles Reed, be dismissed to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church along with the Warm Springs congregation; and that Presbytery dismiss the administrative commission, with thanks, and that a new administrative commission with new members be formed for the sole purpose of working with the Warm Springs Session to recommend a plan of disbursement of the Warm Springs Church property and assets, reporting to a called meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery no later than April 15, 2016.*

The Moderator ruled the substitute motion out of order and Teaching Elder Bethard appealed the Moderator's ruling. The Body sustained the ruling 83 for and 19 against.

An amendment was made and seconded to remove item #4. The amendment failed 45 for and 46 against.

After prayer and a written ballot, the recommendation from the AC to approve items 1-4 concerning Teaching Elder Charles Reed failed 41 for and 67 against.

In light of the failure of the recommendation regarding Teaching Elder Charles Reed, an amendment was made, seconded and approved to strike items #1 and #4 from the original recommendation.

The AC moved the following concerning Warm Springs Church as one recommendation:

1. ~~That CRM and CPT of the Shenandoah Presbytery work together to provide as quickly as possible an interim pastor skilled in conflict resolution and transitional ministry.~~
2. That the matter of dismissal be set aside for a period of not less than five (5) years, during which it is anticipated that Presbytery will work with members and others in Warm Springs to reestablish a viable worshiping community.
3. That any requests to transfer membership from Warm Springs to any other church be handled in accordance with the Book of Order and with all due dispatch.
4. ~~That until such time as an Interim is appointed, the AC or one of its number act as Moderator of Session at Warm Springs and determine whether the current Session is willing and able to continue in that capacity or whether the AC must act as Session as well as Moderator.~~

After prayer and a written ballot, the recommendation from the AC to approve items 2-3 concerning the Warm Springs Church failed 47 and 61 against.

A motion was made from the floor, seconded and approved to add four members to the Administrative Commission.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. with the Moderator leading in prayer. Presbytery will meet in stated session on Tuesday, May 10, 2016, time and location to be announced.

John Cushwa, Moderator

M. Kerry Foster, Stated Clerk

Kim Stroupe, Recording Clerk

## **DOCKET**

**(Members of Presbytery are urged to be registered and seated by 10:00a.m.)**

- 9:00 a.m.        REGISTRATION BEGINS
- 10:00 a.m.        Call to Order and Opening Devotion
- 10:15 a.m.        Purpose of Special Session - The purpose of today's special session is to hear and act upon the report from the Administrative Commission to Warm Springs Presbyterian Church
- Determining a Quorum  
Procedural Rules  
Appointments of Assistant Clerks  
Seating corresponding members  
Adoption of the Docket
- 10:25 a.m.        Report of the Administrative Commission to Warm Springs Presbyterian Church

## *Report of Administrative Commission for Warm Springs Presbyterian Church*

### *Regarding Teaching Elder Charles Reed*

Prior to being constituted as an Administrative Commission, Commission members served as the LRT (Listening Response Team) to Warm Springs Presbyterian Church and Rev. Charles Reed, the teaching elder called to serve the Warm Springs congregation.

While acting as an LRT, the AC members herein met with Rev. Reed alone and as moderator of Session, with Session, and with some members and others interested in the life and work of the congregation on several different occasions.

During these meetings, it emerged relative to Rev. Reed that:

1. Rev. Reed desires to be dismissed from the PC(USA) to the EPC (Evangelical Presbyterian Church).
2. Rev. Reed's desire to be dismissed from the PC(USA) to the EPC is constant whether the congregation at Warm Springs is dismissed or not.
3. Rev. Reed was informed in detail regarding the likely impact on employment benefits and ordination status by members of the then LRT during the LRT phase, during which he indicated a complete awareness of and comfort with any changes in those regards.
4. Rev. Reed, in response to questions from congregants during a worship service in October of 2014, when departing the PC(USA) was discussed and a straw vote taken, responded that regardless of whether the congregation sought dismissal or not, he (Rev. Reed) was seeking to be dismissed and would not remain with the PC(USA) whether the congregation did or not.
5. Rev. Reed's informing the local worshiping community of his own intentions occurred prior to the invocation of the *Gracious Dismissal Policy* or direct involvement by Presbytery with the local congregation.
6. Rev. Reed reported to the LRT that he has had informal conversations with representatives of the EPC and believes that that denomination will receive him upon dismissal from the PC(USA). No formal request from the EPC as the proposed receiving denomination has, as yet, been sought or received.

The Administrative Commission concludes from the above that Rev. Reed's desire to be dismissed from the PC(USA) to the EPC is (a) constant; (b) long-standing; (c) unlikely to change in the foreseeable future; (d) arises from what Rev. Reed perceives as conflicts which cannot be resolved with the PC(USA); and (e) is independent of the outcome of proceedings involving the Warm Springs Church.

Thus, the Administrative Commission recommends that Rev. Reed be dismissed from the PC(USA) to the EPC immediately upon formal request from the EPC and under the terms and conditions and for the reasons set forth more fully below.

Excerpt of Applicable Policy

*Policy for Discernment toward Reconciliation or Gracious Separation  
of Congregations in Shenandoah Presbytery  
Approved by the Presbytery on August 23, 2014*

II. C. *Discernment Phase: Administrative Commission*

1. The following powers are granted to an AC dealing with a congregation considering dismissal to another Reformed body:
  - a. . . .
    - vi. to propose to the presbytery any recommendation for resolution of the issues within the congregation, including the dissolution or dismissal of the church, the disposition of property held by or for the church, ***the status or transfer of any teaching elders related to the congregation seeking dismissal***, [emphasis added] and the transfer of members wishing to remain in the PCUSA after the dismissal of the congregation.

II. D. *Resolution Phase: Recommendations of the Administrative Commission*

2.
  - c. Status of the Teaching Elder

As a congregation decides on its future, ***the teaching elder(s) serving that congregation must decide if they will remain with the PCUSA or separate from the denomination to another denomination.*** [emphasis added] The AC shall work with the teaching elder(s) in reaching a decision, recognizing that dismissal of a congregation to another Reformed body terminates the call of the pastor(s) of that congregation within the PCUSA.

- i. ***In the case of a teaching elder serving in any installed position within a congregation which requests dismissal, the teaching elder's relationship with that congregation shall be dissolved at a time to be negotiated and specified in the plan of separation.*** [emphasis added] Teachings elders who decide to stay in the PCUSA shall be provided, by the departing congregation, a severance package that is in accord with the presbytery's policy.
- ii. ***Teaching elders who request dismissal from the PCUSA shall be dismissed to the receiving denomination upon request from the receiving denomination.*** [emphasis added]

Facts and Observations from the Administrative Commission

Rev. Reed has, as a sincere matter of conscience, effectively withdrawn from his ordination as a teaching elder of the PC(USA) in all but name for more than a year.

a. Rev. Reed has voiced a number of genuine and heartfelt concerns, the issue of gay marriage merely constituting what was, for him, a tipping point from which there was no going back.

b. From the moment the PC(USA) through its General Assembly voted to allow for the possibility of same-sex marriage, Rev. Reed ceased being a teaching elder of the PC(USA) from his own point of view.

c. Prior to the passage of the same-sex marriage provision, Rev. Reed had grave theological concerns that brought him into conflict with the PC(USA), which concerns were likely to result in his departure even without the same-sex marriage issue. Those concerns have not been resolved in a fashion Rev. Reed can be reconciled to and are not likely to be in the foreseeable future. 68

d. While he was perhaps put in a bit of a box by a question from a congregant during a discussion period during worship in October of 2014 when those present were asked to participate in a survey (what has been variously characterized as a straw poll or vote) on the matter of departing the denomination, Rev. Reed was asked at that time if he would stay if the congregation stayed and he told them at the time either that he would or could not (stay), the point being that this has been, as Rev. Reed has told the then-LRT on a number of occasions, an issue of long-standing for him.

e. This is a matter of conscience for Rev. Reed and the AC has no doubt that it is genuine. Thus, Rev. Reed has been unable to receive communion from any PC(USA) minister since at least the General Assembly vote on same-sex marriage.

f. Rev. Reed is unable to rely upon guidance or counsel from any PC(USA) pastor who does not reject the GA vote on same-sex marriage.

From the above, the Administrative Commission concludes that:

1. Rev. Reed stopped being a teaching elder of the PC(USA) the moment General Assembly voted to allow for the possibility of same-sex marriage, both spiritually and practically:
  - a. spiritually, Rev. Reed finds that he cannot be in full communion with his fellow teaching elders of the PC(USA), so that he may not receive communion from their hands.
  - b. While it may well be a matter of conscience (the AC fully believes that for Rev. Reed, it is), to remain outside communion with fellow Christians is not to be in fellowship within a denomination, a fact which Rev. Reed himself recognizes, by his seeking dismissal from the PC(USA) to a body more consonant with his understanding of the fundamental tenets of the faith (how Rev. Reed himself characterizes the impasse in which he finds himself).
  - c. as a practical matter, Rev. Reed has withdrawn from any Presbytery activities save presbytery meetings themselves (he was formerly quite active in presbytery affairs).
2. None of this is offered as indictment, but rather as observation: Rev. Reed desires to be dismissed and the AC agrees with him that he should be.
3. In terms of the particular denomination (EPC), the AC recognizes that this presbytery previously established a group to recommend to presbytery as a whole which Reformed denominations would, as a matter of policy, be recognized by Shenandoah Presbytery to receive those seeking dismissal from the PC(USA) and that group has yet to make its report and recommendations. The AC herein believes Rev. Reed's request should be granted to the EPC as he has requested, regardless of what the ultimate action of presbytery may be as to the EPC, because:
  - a. The AC makes a distinction between teaching elders and congregations/local worshiping communities when it comes to the matter of what Reformed denominations we will recognize;
  - b. Rev. Reed's desired dismissal should not be delayed while presbytery comes up with a policy;
  - c. this is not precedent; rather, this is making a case-by-case decision pending the development of a policy not yet in place; and



d. the EPC is a Reformed denomination. The AC would be of a different mind entirely regarding the congregation; but when it comes to the individual choice of a single teaching elder, whether we agree or not, it seemed best to acquiesce in Rev. Reed's own sense of call – Rev. Reed identified to the then-LRT his vision and sense of call being to serve in the leadership of the EPC.

Therefore, the Administrative Commission of the Shenandoah Presbytery

**Recommends**

2. That Teaching Elder Charles Reed, pursuant to his own request, be dismissed to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), immediately upon receipt from the EPC of a request to receive Rev. Reed to that denomination, but in any event, whether received by the EPC or not, that Rev. Reed be dismissed from the PC(USA) not later than February 28, 2016, at which time the pastoral relationship shall be dissolved with the Warm Springs Church.
2. That Rev. Reed receive a severance package from Warm Springs Presbyterian Church consisting of up to six (6) months salary and benefits at levels current as of January 1, 2016, commencing with the date of his dismissal and in any event, commencing not later than March 1, 2016 and continuing for a period of six (6) months or until such time as Rev. Reed obtains gainful employment, whichever soonest occurs.
3. That in addition, Rev. Reed and his family have the right of continued occupancy of the manse they currently live in for a period of up to three (3) months following the date of dismissal or until such time as they vacate the manse, whichever soonest occurs.
4. That Charles Reed shall be asked to not labor within the geographic boundaries of the Shenandoah Presbytery in any capacity with any denomination, church or worshiping community for a period of five (5) years from the date of this agreement.

I have received a copy of this report and its recommendations and they have been reviewed with me.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Reed, Teaching Elder

## *Findings as to the Worshiping Community at Warm Springs*

The Administrative Commission bases its findings below upon its work as a Listening Response Team with Warm Springs.

It is the conclusion of the Administrative Commission that whether ‘they’ (whoever ‘they’ may end up being) stay or go to EPC (or any other denomination, for that matter), there is no current viable worshiping community at Warm Springs without this pastor, absent intervention or assistance from some outside source. This conclusion is based upon a number of factors, including (in no particular order of importance), but not necessarily limited to:

1. Session records are a shambles, with numerous gaps, inaccuracies, and incompletions, making it difficult if not impossible for an insider, let alone an outsider, to determine such things as membership; active and inactive status; and the composition of Session itself, to name but a few.
2. Ruling elders are all disengaged from and inactive in presbytery and have been for some time.
3. Only one member of the current session has e-mail or electronic means of communication. The result has been that virtually all communication has been channeled through the pastor and all information sought by the then-LRT was channeled through the pastor and his informal notes and records (all records requests were answered not by the Clerk or the Treasurer but by the pastor).
4. Session members and virtually all of those present in congregational meetings had no understanding of PC(USA) polity in general or of presbytery procedures regarding the disposition of property in the event of a dismissal.
5. Session members displayed a passive role, both in person and in their records, ceding all leadership to the pastor and exhibiting virtually no leadership themselves.
6. The vast majority of current members actively participating in LRT events have joined since the current pastor came to the church and virtually all of them come from other than Reformed denominations. Their articulated polity seems most closely to resemble that of the Baptists/Congregationalists.
7. Session members, in describing what they valued about this particular worshiping community, all said they valued the pastor. Some spoke of the worshiping space/the church building. None spoke of the worshiping community.
8. Formerly vibrant ministries, such as Presbyterian Women, no longer exist and no one can explain why.
9. In meetings aimed at the congregation as a whole, two women (the only ordained women to attend meetings with the then-LRT) and all the men and women present, ordained or otherwise, indicated a complete willingness to surrender the women’s ordination as ruling elders in order to go from the PC(USA) to the EPC (which allows its presbyteries to determine whether they will allow for the ordination of women). No one objected or even asked what it might mean theologically or practically or spiritually to be stripped of one’s ordination.
10. Organized meetings by the then LRT to meet one-on-one with folks not in attendance at group meetings resulted in not a single person attending.
11. At meetings, when the issue of pastoral care for those who might not wish to go was raised, those saying anything at all voiced total indifference to downright hostility, saying “that’s their problem; not ours.”

12. At least part of Session was surprised to learn that whether to conduct same-sex marriage ceremonies or not was left to the individual conscience and decision of the local worshipping community.
13. There are members who have left since this process began. It appears that other than what the pastor may have done, no efforts were made by anyone else to reconcile with or provide pastorally for those folks.

Based on these and numerous other observations, the Administrative Commission has concluded relative to the people worshipping at Warm Springs Presbyterian Church that during this particular season in their life and work, the worshipping community has ceded all its authority and responsibility to the pastor. Session acts as a rubber stamp, if at all.

Remove the pastor and the session would appear to have absolutely no idea how to proceed in the life and work of the church. Remove the pastor and the congregation, likewise, has no leadership to come forward.

Thus, the Administrative Commission finds itself in the position of being unable to make a recommendation to grant dismissal, while recognizing that there are members who do wish to leave the PC(USA), but also that a significant number of members have remained entirely silent on the matter.

Further, the Administrative Commission concludes that whether in the PC(USA), the EPC or anywhere else, without this pastor, this worshipping community has no leadership at all, having allowed themselves to become entirely dependent upon his leading. Thus, when and if Rev. Reed were to depart, this community as currently constituted will, absent the active intervention of some external source, cease to exist.

Because they have substantial financial resources, they may be able to find such help; but the AC cannot envision who would even be in charge within the congregation of such an effort.

Thus it can well be seen as an act of cruelty to separate Warm Springs from its pastor rather than deal with them together (as has been the case in the cases of the two previous departing congregations this presbytery has dealt with in recent years), because there is the very real risk that in the absence of Rev. Reed, Warm Springs will simply dissolve as (we speculate) some leave with him, some go to other churches and some simply stop attending church entirely.

In good conscience, however, whatever we may think of dismissal or retention, this Administrative Commission has concluded that we cannot send this congregation as it currently exists off to another denomination any more than we can recommend that it continue as is within the PC(USA).

Thus, recognizing Rev. Reed's strongly expressed desire and sense of call to leave the denomination, this Commission has recommended that:

1. His request be granted;
2. In order to avoid increased conflict and dysfunction, that his request be granted quickly so as not to allow the matter to fester and create even more resentment and anger;
3. Rev. Reed's request be considered separate and apart from the request of the congregation;
4. The congregation's request be denied; and
5. That the congregation be dealt with according to the terms and conditions set forth below.

**Recommendations Regarding Warm Springs Presbyterian Church:**

1. That CRM and CPT of the Shenandoah Presbytery work together to provide as quickly as possible an interim pastor skilled in conflict resolution and transitional ministry.
2. That the matter of dismissal be set aside for a period of not less than five (5) years, during which it is anticipated that Presbytery will work with members and others in Warm Springs to reestablish a viable worshiping community.
3. That any requests to transfer membership from Warm Springs to any other church be handled in accordance with the Book of Order and with all due dispatch.
4. That until such time as an Interim is appointed, the AC or one of its number act as Moderator of Session at Warm Springs and determine whether the current Session is willing and able to continue in that capacity or whether the AC must act as Session as well as Moderator.

Respectfully submitted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth A. Pyles

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phil Sieck

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ken Campbell

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faye Bottenfield

*It is noted that copies of this report were provided for each member of the Session of Warm Springs Presbyterian Church at a meeting between Session and the Administrative Commission on Wednesday, January 27, 2016 held at Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church in Fort Defiance, Virginia, within the bounds of the Shenandoah Presbytery, on whose behalf said Administrative Commission is acting, and as indicated by their signatures below:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Charles Reed, Moderator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Robertson, Clerk of Session

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_ (print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_

*Statement of Desire to Be Dismissed from the PC(USA)*

I, Charles Reed, teaching elder ordained and installed by the PC(USA) to serve the congregation of the Warm Springs Presbyterian Church, do hereby state:

As a matter of conscience, it is my desire to be dismissed from the PC(USA).

It is my intention and desire to be dismissed to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), a Reformed denomination.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2016.

---

Charles Reed, Teaching Elder

## ***ADDENDUM TO REPORT***

Your Administrative Commission met with Rev. Reed individually and with Session as a whole in the evening of January 27, 2016 at Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church, who receives our thanks for their ongoing gracious hospitality. The purpose of the meeting was to review the AC's proposed report to presbytery and seek input from all parties.

During the meeting with Rev. Reed, a statement seeking dismissal from the PCUSA (page 10 of the report) was first reviewed with him.

Rev. Reed received the form for further reflection and consideration. No deadline was imposed regarding the form.

Next pages 1-5 of the report were reviewed with Rev. Reed, with some discussion. Rev. Reed was then given time to further review the report with the agreement that he would make any responses, particularly regarding any factual inaccuracies, via e-mail the following day (January 28).

Rev. Reed signed this section of the report as indicated, reflecting that he had been provided with a copy of the report.

The meeting with Rev. Reed began at 5:00 p.m. and concluded at approximately 6:15 p.m., with roughly half that time given over to Rev. Reed's private review of the portion of the report provided to him at that time (AC having noted to him that the report as to Warm Springs would be reviewed with Session as a whole).

The AC met with Session as a whole starting at 6:30 p.m.

The AC reviewed the general process that would govern the AC report and recommendations.

The AC then reviewed pages 6-9 of the report with Session, having indicated that there was another section pertaining to Rev. Reed alone which would be reviewed with them following the discussion of the section pertaining to Warm Springs' request for dismissal.

Following this review, Session received a 25-minute recess to further review the section of the report among themselves, at which time the parties were to reconvene for further information, discussion and action.

Throughout the evening, Session requested and received additional times for their private discussion, for a total of roughly 1.5 hours, at which time, Rev. Reed came to the room where the AC had retired to, stating that Session members had left and that there was a letter from Session in the meeting room.

Session requested of the AC in the letter that a copy of it be provided to Presbytery.

The letter reads as follows:

January 27, 2016

To the Administrative Commission,

*With all due respect, the Session of Warm Springs Presbyterian Church finds the contents and direction of tonight's meeting with the AC of Shenandoah Presbytery to be harsh, grievous, and disappointing. We believe their recommendations go beyond their granted authority.*

*The manner in which their recommendations were presented to our pastor, and then Session, was piecemeal and disingenuous. There were several misrepresentations of the congregation, session, and pastor in the documents presented tonight.*

*As a Session representing WSPC, we decline to sign the documents presented by the AC\* or assign any merit to them. We sincerely doubt that the Presbytery could successfully seek civil court enforcement of the AC recommendations.*

*It is our heartfelt prayer that a truly gracious dismissal can be achieved. We request that you share this document with the Presbytery and will continue in prayer for each of you.*

<i>Ruling Elders:</i>	<i>Jan Dray</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>J. R. Dray</i>
	<i>Tim Tuning</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>Tim Tuning</i>
	<i>Tim Blake</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>Timothy Blake</i>
	<i>Joe Tuning</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>Joseph Tuning</i>
	<i>Scott Robertson</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>Scott Robertson</i>
	<i>Wayne Hiner</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>Wayne Hiner</i>
	<i>Bill Fields</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>William A. Fields</i>
<i>Teaching Elder &amp; Moderator</i>	<i>Rev. Charles K. Reed</i>	<i>[signed]</i>	<i>Rev. Charles K. Reed</i>

\*As with Rev. Reed, Session members were asked to sign indicating that they had received a copy of the report.

\*\*\*

The AC was unable to review with Session the portion of the report dealing with Rev. Reed's request for dismissal, although it is referenced in summary fashion in the portion of the report provided to Session.

The AC has received no further communication from either Rev. Reed individually or from Session as a whole as of the time of the submission of this report (Friday, January 29, 2016 at 12:36 p.m.).

AC has sent a letter to the households of the congregation advising them of AC's recommendations, the upcoming Presbytery meeting and the link where they might find a copy of the complete report.

Finally, regardless of the future direction of AC's recommendations, AC finds that it could use further assistance and to that end, requests that Presbytery's leadership appoint at least two other persons to its number to assist with its duties.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth A. Pyles, Teaching Elder  
Phil Seick, Teaching Elder  
Faye Bottenfeld, Ruling Elder  
Ken Campbell, Ruling Elder



## Warm Springs Presbyterian Church

February 7, 2016

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To All Concerned,

On Wednesday, 1/27/16, the Session of Warm Springs Presbyterian Church (WSPC) met with an Administrative Commission (AC) from Shenandoah Presbytery at the Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church in Verona, VA. We, the Session, came with hopes of reaching a peaceable and mutually beneficial agreement for the transfer of WSPC from the PCUSA to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). Unfortunately, we were met with a report from the AC containing several gross misrepresentations of our pastor, Session, and congregation. This report also included the AC's recommendations that shepherd and flock be separated, and that the AC itself be given authority to govern and direct the life of our congregation.

We found this report, and the manner in which it was presented, to be appalling. Together we authored a brief statement of dissent, respectfully thanked the AC for their time, and left the meeting.

Our congregation entered the dismissal process prayerfully, and with a commitment to honor our brothers and sisters in Shenandoah Presbytery by submitting to the requirements of the Presbytery's gracious dismissal policy. We have answered every question and every request from the LRT/AC. From the beginning of this process, we've made all of our records freely available to them and presented our documents in an organized fashion. Likewise, we are willing to share copies of our records with anyone in the presbytery who requests them, and to answer any questions as they arise.

Though we are a small church in a far corner of the Presbytery, WSPC is a strong worshipping community dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are known for excellent music, faithful preaching, a growing midweek discipleship program, our wonderful TOTS preschool, leadership of the local fuel fund, a great Vacation Bible School, and gifts of mercy to many of our neighbors in need. We have about 70 members on the roll, and average about 50 in worship each Sunday.

The AC's report portrays us an inept Session, with a hodgepodge of senseless members, all under the deceiving spell of an autocratic, pied-piper type of pastor. Our reality is quite the opposite. We are a congregation of accomplished leaders from many different backgrounds and vocations. Our Session is committed to Biblical faith and Presbyterian polity. We respect Rev. Reed and the Lord's gift to him for preaching, and we are also keenly aware of his flaws. It is a testament to the work of the Holy Spirit – not the pastor or any particular person or group – that we are united in faith and in our convictions.

You will please note that, unlike the reports of other LRT's and AC's to presbytery, this AC report contains no numbers or percentages of members wanting to remain in the PCUSA. The simple reason for this is that no one – not a single member or attender – has expressed a desire to us or the AC to remain in the PCUSA. Nor is it surprising that no one came for individual meetings with AC during the "listening" phase of our process. We heard multiple comments from members at the preceding congregational hearings that the way in which the LRT/AC chair spoke to our congregation was caustic and demeaning. Further, we are disappointed but not surprised by the gulf between our self-understanding and the AC's description of us in this report. Throughout the dismissal process, the LRT/AC did very little in the way of actual *listening*, and instead *talked* for 95% of our time together.

We find it regrettable, but necessary as a matter of principle, to break institutional bonds with the PCUSA. Though the AC report falsely indicates a fixation on the issue of same-sex marriage, we've



repeatedly expressed concerns about the denomination's positions on this and other issues including abortion, sanctions against Israel, and property rights. However, our core disagreements are not about any one social issue, but rather about our fundamental understandings of Biblical authority and the necessity of well-articulated confessional standards for ministry. It is to these ends – a common understanding of Scripture and essential tenets of faith - that we are pursuing affiliation with the EPC. As per the gracious dismissal policy, we intend to honor “the intentions of Presbyterians now dead” by teaching the Westminster Confession of Faith and requiring our pastors and elders to subscribe to its statements. We intend “to safeguard church life for Presbyterians not yet born” by our obedience to Scripture and its faithful exposition in Westminster, and by making a payment to Shenandoah Presbytery upon successful completion of the dismissal process.

Please know that, while we find ourselves at odds with the positions of the PCUSA, we are appreciative of our sister churches in Shenandoah Presbytery and deeply grateful for our PCUSA colleagues in ministry.

We sincerely and respectfully ask that Shenandoah Presbytery grant our request for transfer to the EPC in agreement with the Presbytery's gracious dismissal policy, and that our pastor, Session, and congregation be dismissed together at the same time. At no point has our pastor requested personal, individual dismissal to the EPC. Why would Presbytery dismiss our pastor without the EPC's request, when this plainly contradicts Section II.D.2.c.ii. of the gracious dismissal policy? Why try to separate our congregation from the pastor? Does the Presbytery really believe it should violate the United States Constitution and attempt to prohibit Rev. Reed from working “within the geographic bounds of Shenandoah Presbytery in any capacity with any denomination, church or worshiping community for a period of five years” as seen on p.5 of the AC report? Why deny WSPC's unanimous request for transfer to the EPC when we are asking to do so in accord with the Presbytery's own policy? Why entertain any of the AC's recommendations when they are, in the words of the AC chair herself, “unprecedented”?

We humbly ask that the Presbytery leadership and, indeed the Presbytery itself, intervene in the dismissal process to prevent any further contention or disruption. It remains our heartfelt prayer that WSPC could be transferred to the EPC in a truly gracious manner that would bring blessings to both the Presbytery and our congregation, and that the resolution of this matter would glorify Jesus Christ by demonstrating God's love to everyone watching these proceedings in our communities.

Sincerely,

Ruling Elders:  
Tim Blake  
Jan Dray  
Bill Fields  
Wayne Hiner  
Joe Tuning  
Tim Tuning

Teaching Elder:  
Rev. Charles K. Reed

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