

Reports to the Presbytery of Florida Special Called Meeting

June 8, 2013 – 10 a.m. CDT/11 a.m. EDT



First Presbyterian Church, Chipley
658 5th Street
Chipley, Florida 324283

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DOCKET OF THE PRESBYTERY OF FLORIDA

CALLED MEETING

June 8, 2013

10:00 a.m. CDT/11 a.m. EDT

First Presbyterian Church

Chipley, Florida

*The Presbytery of Florida is called to serve God using our gifts and skills to **Excite, Encourage, Equip** and **Empower** our congregations and clergy in mission and ministry.*

9:00– 9:55 **Registration**

10:00 Called Meeting Convenes
• Declaration of a Quorum John Lown
• Announcements Stephen Yates
• Introductions John Lown
 • First time ruling elders, teaching elders, corresponding members, and visitors

10:15 – Report and Recommendations of the Presbytery Leadership Team Jean Norman

- **Recommendation #1:** That the presbytery officially terminate the GP search and disband the committee with the presbytery's thanks.
- **Recommendation #2:** That the Presbytery change Kevin Veldhuisen's job title to Director of Outdoor Ministries and Spiritual Development so that it will not be assumed he is to fulfill the primary duties of an EP/GP in the absence of one.
- **Recommendation #3:** That Presbytery extend Jean Silva's position as Head of Staff, with current pay and previously-agreed-upon severance, through December 31, 2013, while also helping the PLT develop a job description for a part-time administrator to begin in January of 2014.
- **Recommendation #4:** That Presbytery grant the PLT authorization to name persons for a task force to explore possible reconfiguration of the Presbytery and/or realignment with other surrounding presbyteries.
- **Recommendation #5:** Take other actions deemed relevant to recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Next Meeting: September 10, 2013
First Presbyterian Church
Marianna, FL
9:00 a.m. CDT



PRESBYTERY OF FLORIDA

...to Excite, Encourage, Equip and Empower...

www.presbyteryofflorida.com

May 14, 2013

NOTICE OF A CALLED MEETING FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF FLORIDA

In accordance with the Manual of Operations, a called meeting for the Presbytery of Florida has been scheduled for June 8, 2013 (Saturday) at First Presbyterian Church, Chipley, Florida, at 10:00 am CDT. The purpose of meeting is to hear the following recommendations from the Presbytery Leadership Team (PLT):

- 1) That the Presbytery officially terminate the GP search and disband the committee with its thanks.
- 2) That the Presbytery change Kevin Veldhuisen's job title to Director of Outdoor Ministries and Spiritual Development so that it will not be assumed he is to fulfill the primary duties of an EP/GP in the absence of one.
- 3) That Presbytery extend Jean Silva's position as Head of Staff, with current pay, and previously agreed upon severance, through December 31, 2013 while also helping the PLT develop a job description for a part-time administrator to begin in January of 2014.
- 4) That Presbytery grant the PLT authorization to name persons for a task force to explore possible reconfiguration of the Presbytery and/or realignment with other surrounding presbyteries.
- 5) To take other actions deemed relevant to issues 1, 2, 3 and 4.

A docket with a detailed report regarding the above matters will be electronically mailed no later than May 29, 2013.

Victoria M. Jacobs
Teaching Elder

David E. L. Marwick
Teaching Elder

B. J. Green - Trinity Presbyterian
Ruling Elder

Paul W. Mealy - Gulf Breeze Pres
Ruling Elder

Sincerely,

Stephen G. Yates

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Rationale for Recommendations from the Presbytery Leadership Team

At its meeting on May 11, 2013, the PLT, along with the Budget, Finance, and Stewardship (BFS) Team, reviewed a broad range of options in light of the Presbytery's current fiscal situation. Our recommendations are based in large part on the fact that the Presbytery is facing a shortfall of \$110,000 with respect to the budget approved for 2013. If unaddressed, the current financial path would see the Presbytery's reserves drop to roughly \$40,000 within three years.

The PLT also received input following the April 30, 2013, Presbytery meeting. We are grateful to those who forwarded their ideas to us in writing and via telephone. Everything we received informed our discussion and helped to shape our proposed solutions.

The first three recommendations are focused on the Presbytery's short-term stability and continuity. The fourth and fifth recommendations pertain to the Presbytery's future. The PLT remains committed to promoting the Presbytery's two goals: (1) strengthening churches that are failing to thrive while developing healthy and vital congregations; and (2) developing Dogwood Acres as a vital part of the life of our Presbytery. The PLT believes that Presbytery's two primary goals will best be served by these recommendations.

The following is intended to explain the PLT's thought process for each recommendation. We ask that you review this information carefully in advance of the called Presbytery meeting on June 8, 2013. We trust that each rationale provided will prove helpful in enlightening our discussion during the meeting.

Recommendation #1. That the Presbytery officially terminate the GP search and disband the committee with its thanks. Given the rapidity with which the Presbytery's reserve funds would be depleted in order to support a GP in the near term, the PLT did not feel that the Presbytery could responsibly offer the position at present. This particular recommendation is based solely on finances. The PLT did not discuss at length the merits of having a GP, only that we felt it would be unfair and unethical to bring a candidate on board within the next year without being sure whether we could sustain his or her employment.

Recommendation #2. That the Presbytery change Kevin Veldhuisen's job title to Director of Outdoor Ministries and Spiritual Development so that it will not be assumed he is to fulfill the primary duties of an EP/GP in the absence of one. With the position of AEP for Church Development and Education going away after August of this year, Kevin as our other AEP could conceivably be looked to as head of staff, performing the range of executive functions which Jean currently fulfills. However, the PLT felt that this was not a practical solution, given Kevin's location and numerous duties at Dogwood Acres. Re-designating Kevin's position as Director retains the same focus on outdoor ministries and spiritual development without implying responsibility for other tasks that are not germane to his call. At the conclusion of our meeting on May 11, the PLT presented this recommendation to Kevin for his input, and he concurred with the change. Relative to some of the other executive functions Jean currently fulfills, it was agreed that the Stated Clerk could handle background checks with other presbyteries, with the Chair of the Ministry Team serving as the secondary point of contact.

Recommendation #3. That Presbytery extend Jean Silva's position as Head of Staff, with current pay, and previously agreed upon severance, through December 31, 2013, while also helping the PLT develop a job description for a part-time administrator to begin in January of 2014. Along the same lines as Recommendation #2, the PLT was concerned that adequate staff supervision take place after August 31, 2013. If no GP is on board after Jean's tenure as AEP ends,

1 there would be no one at the Presbytery office to provide guidance for the administrative assistant or
2 the bookkeeper regarding distribution of communications to churches, coordination and prioritizing
3 of tasks, and general issues related to day-to-day operations. Additionally, staff leadership for the
4 Congregational Mission Support Team (CMST) and the Ministry Team (MT) will be essential to
5 assist these two groups in moving forward with their current initiatives. The PLT discussed the
6 merits of hiring a part-time administrator to fulfill these functions, but did not feel that there was
7 sufficient time to develop a job description or to advertise the position prior to the end of August.
8 Therefore, for purposes of continuity, the PLT asked Jean whether she would be willing to extend
9 her tenure through December 31, 2013. The additional four months would enable the PLT to develop
10 a job description and hire an administrator, ideally with a period of turnover with Jean. Jean is
11 agreeable to staying through December.

12 **Recommendation #4. That Presbytery grant the PLT authorization to name persons for a task**
13 **force to explore possible reconfiguration of the Presbytery and/or realignment with other**
14 **surrounding presbyteries.** In the course of our meeting, the PLT was briefed by Joe Dobson (Chair
15 of the BFS Team) on the varying percentages of financial gain that would accrue to the Presbyteries
16 of South Alabama, Flint River, and/or St. Augustine if Florida Presbytery were incorporated as a
17 whole or in part into all or one of them. If such a move took place, our churches would be served by
18 viable Presbytery structures and staffs to which in some cases they would be located closer
19 geographically. The PLT also discussed subdividing Florida Presbytery into two smaller
20 presbyteries. Because presbyteries and synods throughout our denomination are faced with the same
21 issues and are discussing similar strategies for governance, it seemed prudent to assign a task force
22 to evaluate the full range of reconfiguration and realignment possibilities, and to receive its findings
23 and recommendations at the December 3, 2013, stated meeting. Any proposed merger or
24 reconfiguration would likely take a few years to implement fully, therefore an interim plan would
25 need to be considered as well. Depending on the report of the task force, the Presbytery could then
26 consider selling the current office building or liquidating other assets. It was felt that at the present
27 time, given that the office building in Chipley is paid for, there would be no financial advantage in
28 trying to sell it until a broader future strategy for the Presbytery's structure is in place. If approved,
29 the following will serve on the task force: Joe Dobson-Central Dist.-chair, West Dist. - Joan
30 Wooten-TE, Leslie Yandle-RE, Dottie Sherling-RE, Central Dist.-Michael Moore – TE, Eastern
31 Dist. - Bill Bess-TE, Laura Beth Faragasso-RE.

32 **Recommendation #5. Take other actions deemed relevant to issues 1, 2, 3, and 4.** Presbytery
33 may wish to take additional actions prompted by the above four recommendations. Should this be
34 the case, the agenda for the called meeting would allow it.

35 Respectfully submitted,
36 Joan Wooten, Vice-Chair, PLT

37 **Team members:** Jean Norman - Chair, Joan Wooten-Vice-Chair, Bill Bess, Beulah Brinson, Jae Wan
38 Chung, Danny Dieth, Hugh Hamilton-Presbytery Moderator-Elect, Andy Jackson, Bill Kerrell, Debbie
39 Layton, John Lown - Presbytery Moderator, Sandra Macon, Sharon Schuler, Ruth White, Stephen Yates
40 – Stated Clerk