

## MINUTES

Stated Meeting of Presbytery de Cristo  
October 13, 2018

### CALL TO ORDER

Presbytery de Cristo of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) held its October Stated Meeting at St. John on the Desert Presbyterian Church in Tucson. Liz Lopshire-Kading, Moderator, opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m. with prayer and the lighting of the Peace Candle. Corrine Chavez, representing the Tohono O'odham Nation indigenous to the Tucson area, offered a prayer in the language of her tribe.

Bob Schulz, Stated Clerk/Associate, reported that a quorum was present, consisting of eight Teaching Elder members and eight Ruling Elder members, with at least eight churches being represented by Ruling Elders. Commissioners attending for the first time and other guests were welcomed. Corresponding members were introduced and approved for enrollment by the Presbytery for this meeting.

### ROLL

There were 23 Teaching Elder commissioners and 36 Ruling Elder commissioners, 6 Commissioned Ruling Elders, 2 Ruling Elder members of the Leadership Commission and 2 Ruling Elder ministry moderators present, for a total of 69 voting members. There were 7 registered visitors.

#### Corresponding Members Enrolled

Conrad Rocha (Synod of the Southwest)

Robin Thomas (Synod of the Southwest)

#### Teaching Elders Present – 23

Brown, Kenneth

Elgin, Paul

Norton, Bill

Smith, Michael

Cheek, John

Harrington, Allison

Pickens, Bailey

Srubas, Rachel

Christopher, Diane

Harris, Mary

Ross, Andrew

Thomas, Raymond

Cummings, Jennifer

McComb, Andrew

Seel, Robert

Ver Berg, Sara

Dixon, Jeff

Medina, Mark

Smith, Bart

Voigt, William

Dunham, John

Munroe, Brad

Smith, Elizabeth

#### Churches/Ruling Elder Commissioners Present – 36

Christ - Marian Rogerson, Doug Thompson

St. Andrew's - Frank Bouchard

Community Benson - Susan Adams

St. John on the Desert - Kim Patton

Faith - Fred Whitley

St. Mark's - Melinda Burke, Kerstin Miller,

First Casa Grande - Larry Pazier, Pete Vogel

Sarah McKasson

First Globe - Linda Clark, Michelle Smith

Superior - Richard Hing

First Silver City - Anne Sherrell

The Holy Way - Margarita McCrone,

Immanuel - Peggy Free, Amanda Leachet,

Joan Valenzuela

Joanne Patterson

Tortolita - Annette Trask

Mountain Shadows - Cassi Fraley, Jeff States

Trinity - Billie Holbrook, Leone Mahoney,

Northminster - Russ Amling, Don Burig,

Alice Smedley

Ray Sammons, Lori Woods

Valley - Eloise Frederickson, Liz Haynes,

Shepherd of the Valley - Glen Snider

Jim Nelson, Carol Peeler

Southside - Josefina Ahumada

#### Commissioned Ruling Elders Present – 6

Abrams, Lesley

Brownson, Steve

Munroe, Laura

Biehl, Larry

Heinle, Bill

Norton, Mary Jo

**RE Leadership Commission Present – 2**

Liz Lopshire-Kading                      Bob Schulz

**RE Committee/Commission Moderators Present – 2**

Cheryl Larson                              Janet Rowe

**Staff Members Present**

Beth Kath

**Teaching Elders Excused**

Barker, Lance	Davies, John	Lowe, Edmund	Shepherd, Don
Brown, William	De La Torre, Valerie	MacDonald, Robbin	Smith, Michael
Buchanan-Barrow, Dorothy	Easley, George	Moore, Della	St. John, Valerie
Buehler, William	Evans, Bill	Pennock, William	Stevenson, John
Chanslor, Don	Green, Thomas	Pike, George	Studer, Virginia
Chase, Lerry	Hervey, Jim	Reese, Bob	Williams, Carla
Clark, Walter	Hunt, Edward	Remer, Jim	Wilson, James
Cobb, Jim	Jenson, Jim	Ross, John	
Cole, Harry	Lloyd, Linda	Sankey, Lee	

**AGENDA**

Presbytery approved the agenda. The Rules of Decorum and Debate and Procedures for Voting were distributed with call materials for the meeting.

**COMMISSION REPORTS**

Presbytery received the Commission Reports as a record of actions taken on behalf of Presbytery de Cristo in accordance with the responsibilities granted to our commissions under the Bylaws and Manual of Operations:

10/13/18 Commission Reports

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**1. Leadership Team Report**

**Actions taken at the August 8, 2018 meeting**

Elected, on behalf of the Presbytery, the following persons as presented by the Nominations Committee:

<u>Class</u>	<u>COM</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Nominations</u>
2020	RE Monica Russell (Christ)	2020	Rechanda Chavez (Papago United)

Approved, acting as the Presbytery’s Board of Trustees, transferring \$62,000 from the New Church Development restricted fund (3165) to the restricted Church Revitalization fund (3166).

**2. Commission on Ministry Report**

**Actions taken at the September 6, 2018 meeting**

**Soule-Hill, Nathan**

Approved the transfer of membership of the Rev. Nate Soule-Hill from the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks to Presbytery de Cristo as a Member At-Large, effective September 6, 2018.

10/13/18 Commission Reports

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**Edwards, Denise**

Approved the temporary membership of the Rev. Denise Edwards, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in Presbytery de Cristo effective September 6, 2018, for one year in accordance with *Book of Order* (G-2.0505) and approved the nomination of Rev. Edwards to serve as Parish Associate at Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church.

**Biehl, Larry**

Approved renewal of the commission of Larry Biehl for three years to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to all the churches within Presbytery de Cristo, effective with his commissioning at the worship service at the October 13, 2018 Presbytery meeting.

**Cole, Harry**

Approved the transfer of the Rev. Harry Cole from Presbytery de Cristo to the Presbytery of Grand Canyon, effective October 1, 2018.

**3. Stated Clerk Report**

**REPORT ON REVIEW OF SESSION RECORDS**

In addition to those previously reported, the following Session records for 2017 were reviewed and approved:

August 25, 2018

St. Andrew's

St. Mark's

The Holy Way

Trinity

**SYNOD REVIEW OF PRESBYTERY MINUTES**

The Synod of the Southwest Executive/Stated Clerk, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca, the Administrator of the Presbytery of Santa Fe and the Administrative Associate of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon and Presbytery de Cristo met in Phoenix on September 18, 2018 and reviewed the minutes, rolls and registers of Sierra Blanca, Santa Fe, Grand Canyon and de Cristo. The Minutes of Presbytery de Cristo covering January 27, 2017 – October 21, 2017 were approved without exception.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Presbytery approved the Consent Agenda as a record of actions taken on behalf of Presbytery de Cristo in accordance with the responsibilities granted to our ministry committees under the Bylaws and Manual of Operations:

10/13/18 Consent Agenda

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**Actions taken at the September 13, 2018 meeting**

Approved the 2019 budget for recommendation to the Presbytery at the October 13, 2018 meeting.

Approved having all interest in Endowment accounts roll over, and approved transferring that interest income quantified amount to the Mission budget from the Presbytery's general account as long as the balance in the general account allows for such payment.

#### **APPROVAL OF PRESBYTERY MINUTES**

The minutes of the August 25, 2018 Stated Meeting were approved as presented.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

#### **WELCOME**

Pastor Lesley Abrams welcomed Presbytery to St. John on the Desert Presbyterian Church. Presbyters were invited to share the peace of Christ with each other.

#### **WORSHIP**

Lesley Abrams delivered the sermon based on Hebrews 11:8-13 and presided over the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Special music was provided by St. John musicians. The offering collected during the worship service, totaling \$908.10, was dedicated to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). The Cents-ability collection, a program of the Presbyterian Hunger Ministry, took place at lunch and totaled \$13.60.

#### **RECOMMISSIONING OF CRE**

CRE Larry Biehl was recommissioned during the worship service to continue his ministry as a Commissioned Ruling Elder on call to serve at the request of a named congregation or its Teaching Elder, made directly or through COM, and subsequently reported by Larry to COM, to moderate a session or congregational meeting and/or administer the sacraments at the following churches: Community Presbyterian Church, Benson; Covenant Presbyterian Church, Bisbee; Trinity Presbyterian Church, Cliff; Community Presbyterian Church, Coolidge; First Presbyterian Church, Douglas; First Presbyterian Church, Florence; First Presbyterian Church, Globe; Divine Grace Presbyterian Church, Miami; Community Presbyterian Church, San Manuel; Papago United Presbyterian Church, Sells; First Presbyterian Church, Silver City; Presbyterian Church, Superior; Korean Presbyterian Church, Tucson; and Tortolita Presbyterian Church, Tucson, with appropriate compensation to be paid by each church. The commission was to be for three years, effective October 13, 2018, and was renewable. Brad Munroe led a prayer of thanksgiving for Larry's service among our congregations.

#### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONERS REPORT**

Our commissioners to the 223<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly held June 16-23, 2018 in St. Louis, Missouri reported on their experiences while representing the Presbytery. RE Eloise Fredrickson commented on the diversity of those attending, the joy of worshipping with over 1,000 fellow Presbyterians and the gorgeous music. YAAD Michael Tuohy was assigned to the Way Forward committee and came away from GA feeling he as a young person could make a difference. TE Bart Smith served on the Mid-Councils committee which

offered an overview of what is going on throughout the denomination. Bart was also encouraged by the interest in social justice issues, including passage of an overture speaking out against the recent practice of separation of children from migrant parents.

### **2019 BUDGET APPROVAL**

Janet Rowe introduced the proposed Connecting budget on behalf of the Administration Committee. There were no questions and the following was approved:

**MOTION:** To approve the 2019 Presbytery de Cristo Connecting Budget as presented by the Administration Committee.

Cheryl Larson introduced the proposed Mission budget. It was noted letters would be going out to churches requesting 2019 mission support. There was a reminder that our fiscal year end was changed from January 31 to December 31, meaning 2018 donations needed to be received by December 31, 2018. The following was approved:

**MOTION:** To approve the 2019 Presbytery de Cristo Mission Budget as presented by the Mission Committee.

### **STATED CLERK REPORT**

Bob Schulz reported that an overture cosponsored by Presbytery de Cristo and the Presbytery of Grand Canyon to provide support for needed repairs for PC(USA) churches on Native American lands had passed at the General Assembly. This included a standard inventory process to follow nationwide. Bob announced that the list of 223<sup>rd</sup> GA proposed amendments would be posted to the Presbytery website, along with a list of non-constitutional proposals. Bob reported he had attended the denomination's annual meetings for Mid-Council leaders and Stated Clerks. There had been efforts to streamline the agenda and show respect for differing opinions. The annual Board of Pensions meeting was held at the same time. The recent expansion of BOP options for health care had allowed more churches to offer health care coverage to their employees.

### **YAV UPDATE**

Alison Wood, Site Coordinator for the Tucson Borderlands YAV (Young Adult Volunteer) program, reported that the four YAVs for 2018-2019 had begun their work. Alison, a former YAV herself, noted that over the past sixteen years Tucson area YAVs had contributed more than 100,000 hours of service.

### **COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT**

Inquirer Stephanie Quintana-Martinez was presented for examination to move to the Candidacy stage of her preparation process. She spoke about her Christian faith, forms of service and sense of Call, then fielded several questions from the floor. There was an approved motion to arrest the examination. Stephanie was escorted from the room for the vote and, as recommended by CPM, the following was approved:

**MOTION:** To enroll Inquirer Stephanie Quintana-Martinez of Southside Presbyterian Church as a Candidate for Teaching Elder.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Peggy Free presented nominations. There being no nominations from the floor, the following were approved:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Leadership Commission</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Commission on Ministry</u>
2019	RE Josefina Ahumada (Pres Mod)	2019	TE Stephanie Hamilton (At Large)
2020	RE Martha Ashton (Valley)	2021	TE Jennifer Cummins (Tortolita)
2021	TE John Tittle (Immanuel)	2021	TE Bart Smith (St. Mark’s)
		2021	RE Doug Thompson (Christ)
<u>Class</u>	<u>Administrative Committee</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Mission Committee</u>
2021	TE John Dunham (HR)	2019	RE Bonnie Thompson (Northminster)
<u>Class</u>	<u>Synod of the Southwest</u>	2020	RE Cheryl Larson (Tortolita)
2020	RE Eloise Fredrickson (Valley)	2021	RE Ruth Van Otten (Faith)
2020	TE Bill Voigt (Trinity)		

**PRESBYTERIAN CAMPUS MINISTRY UPDATE**

Bailey Pickens, Director of PCM at ASU, reported that her ministry was more like “mission work” than she expected. She was working to bring students into the fellowship.

**PRESBYTERY PASTOR REPORT**

Brad Munroe announced that his Advent devotional was available for download via the Presbytery website.

**DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY**

Bob Schulz reported the 223<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly had discussed the Doctrine of Discovery, a concept that originated with a position taken by Pope Alexander VI in 1493. A description of the Doctrine and its undermining of the right of indigenous peoples to inhabit and govern their own lands was distributed with materials for this meeting. The Doctrine was the basis for what later became the concept of Manifest Destiny within U.S. law. Bob explained that in order to recognize the reality of lands acquired due to the Doctrine of Discovery the Presbytery was adopting a GA recommendation to begin our meetings with a greeting from the indigenous people currently living on the land.

**SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION REPORT**

The Report of the Administrative Commission (see pp. 9-13) for the dissolution of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church (SOTV) had been posted to the Presbytery website with materials for the meeting. The report included five motions for consideration. Counters for paper ballots were Paul Elgin, Jim Nelson, Mary Jo Norton and Janet Rowe.

The Administrative Commission (AC) members included TE John Cheek, TE Mary Harris RE John Lacy, TE Elizabeth Smith and RE Bonnie Thompson.

John Cheek, Moderator, presented the following on behalf of the AC which was approved:

**MOTION:** To grant voice but not vote to three non-commissioner visitors from the Shepherd of the Valley congregation

The following, Motion 1 in the AC Report, was made by the Commission. After a time of discussion there was a motion approved by voice vote to call the question. The following was approved by voice vote:

**MOTION:** That Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church (SOTV) be dissolved as a congregation of the PC(USA), but not before the satisfactory resolution of questions concerning the disposition of the property currently in use by SOTV, with gratitude to God and to all SOTV's past and present members and pastors for the faithful service of the church; and that, as near as possible to the actual date of dissolution, a representative of Presbytery de Cristo will, at a mutually-convenient time, examine the records of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, retain and deliver to Presbytery de Cristo those he/she deems necessary, and arrange for the destruction of the remaining records.

Members of the SOTV congregation brought two handouts to the meeting disputing the appraised value of the property in the AC Report and indicating the City of Safford suggested the property not be subdivided due to drainage issues. There was a proposal that the two parcels outlined in the Administrative Committee Report be considered as a transfer in whole to True Hope Fellowship.

Brad Munroe reported information had been received indicating True Hope Fellowship was willing to increase its gift to Presbytery de Cristo missions from \$50,000 to \$110,000 if it received the whole SOTV property. After discussion the following was approved by ballot vote indicating 46 yes, 3 no, 1 abstention:

**MOTION:** That the entire acreage of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, including the property and building, be transferred to True Hope Fellowship with the stipulation that \$110,000 be given to Presbytery de Cristo.

Since the combined acreage transfer was approved, the Administrative Commission withdrew its original Motions 2 and 4.

Consideration turned to the AC's Motion 3 which was revised to reflect that the "fund" was actually a "trust fund." The following was approved by ballot vote indicating 49 yes and 2 no:

**MOTION:** That an existing \$18,000 trust fund maintained by Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church be transferred from Shepherd of the Valley to True Hope Fellowship for the maintenance of the Columbarium on the property of Shepherd of the Valley.

There was discussion of whether the Administrative Commission should be dissolved, as proposed in their report's Motion 5, or whether the AC should continue its work until the property transfer was complete. The following was approved by ballot vote indicating 43 yes and 6 no:

**MOTION:** That the Administrative Commission for Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church be dissolved, having discharged its responsibilities to the best of its ability, with all transactions required to dissolve the congregation and subsequent property action(s) including Shephard of the Valley records and finances to transfer to the Presbytery de Cristo Board of Trustees and/or Leadership Commission as appropriate to fulfill 1) the Corporate requirements specified in the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation and 2) the requirements of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Presbytery de Cristo specified in the *Book of Order*; and that, in accordance with this action, authority to execute documents be granted to the Secretary of the Corporation (Stated Clerk/Associate).

A prayer was offered for Shepherd of the Valley, with thanksgiving for its past ministry in the Safford area and asking God to bless the members as they sought to begin worshipping within another faith community.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the St. John on the Desert congregation was thanked for its hospitality. The motion was made to adjourn and the meeting was closed in prayer at 3:05 p.m. The next Stated Meeting of Presbytery was scheduled for January 25-26, 2019, at First Presbyterian Church in Mesa.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the October 13, 2018 Stated Meeting of Presbytery de Cristo were approved by the Presbytery at its Stated Meeting on January 25, 2019.

S/Robert S. Schulz

Robert S. Schulz, Stated Clerk/Associate

January 25, 2019

Date

**Report of the Administrative Commission  
for the Dissolution of  
Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, Safford, Arizona**

Administrative Commission Members

Rev. John Cheek  
Rev. Mary Harris  
Elder John Lacy

Rev. Elizabeth Smith  
Elder Bonnie Thompson

Meeting, Discerning and Listening Dates

February 17, 2018  
February 28, 2018  
April 8, 2018

April 9, 2018  
April 18, 2018  
July 16, 2018

**History of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church**

Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church sees themselves as “the church that was never supposed to be and yet persisted.” They describe themselves this way because from the beginning they were a small and yet mighty group of Presbyterians. Eight members from Morenci, Arizona started meeting in the house of a woman named Opal. In time, they purchased five acres and began to grow a larger membership. Over the years SOTV reached out to the community, often through meals, special events and Vacation Bible School but, while they drew interest from some, they never grew beyond 77 members. Now there are 12 members. Only two charter members remain active in the church.

Robbin MacDonald served as pastor of the church from 1991 until the end of December 2014, when he was honorably retired. To help with the transition, Elder Glen Snider took over preparation for the Sunday service in mid-December 2014. SOTV created a Ministry Information Form (MIF) in hopes of finding a new pastor, but the MIF went nowhere. After this, Glen Snider stepped forward to serve as pulpit supply without compensation. Glen has described the church as having a “tremendously loyal core group of people of 15-20” but over time the group has diminished due to death, people moving away, etc. In October 2017 Glen announced he would retire in December 2018 which initiated discernment conversations. As the Session prayed and discussed, the “overwhelming consensus” was for the church property and facilities to still be used by a church.

**Current situation of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church**

Weekly services are being held led by Elder Glen Snider. Elder Snider provides pastoral care, as well. He receives no compensation from congregation funds for this work. Music and maintenance receive minimal compensation. There are about six people in attendance on Sunday and sixteen people on the membership rolls, according to Clerk of Session Dr. Robin Dutt.

The church members feel the membership is so small, and that the burden of being a functioning PC(USA) congregation has become too heavy to continue bearing. The members are delighted with what God has done through this congregation in the past, and they feel that their physical property will continue to be used to the glory of God. However, they have concluded that the time has arrived to be dissolved as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).

The property has been appraised by Steven R. Cole, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, Certified General Real Estate Appraiser #31330 and Thomas Kral, MAI, SRA Certified General Real Estate Appraiser #30960. The values of the two parcels are the Church Improvements on 1.72 acres at \$300,000 and Excess Land of 3.28 acres at \$165,000 for a total value of \$420,000.

**Desire of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church regarding the disposition of the property**

It is the desire of SOTV that their property be gifted to True Hope Fellowship, a non-denominational Christian fellowship which has been, and continues to be, a vibrant worshipping community in Safford. In 2018 members of SOTV have been energized by connecting with True Hope Fellowship through two events, Souper Bowl Sunday and an Easter egg hunt. Members have expressed the joy they now feel at hearing children's voices and laughter filling the building again.

An SOTV timeline provided by the SOTV Session Members Dorothea Bailey, Robin Dutt, Richard Dutt, J.R. Given, Kathy Sansom, Ray Sansom and Glen Snider:

In mid-December 2104, Glen took over preparation for the Sunday service for a smooth transition from Robbin's ministry.

At the end of December 2104 Robbin MacDonald was honorably retired.

On January 18, 2015 SOTV, the Session was attended by Rev. Brad Munroe and Rev. Ed Lowe.

On March 15, 2105, the SOTV Session mentions the work of Rev. Bill Evans who filled in three times and was able to administer Communion. Our Session appreciated Bill's encouraging attitude and willingness to serve. The Session voted to pay Bill a stipend of 50 dollars plus travel accommodations.

During the Spring of 2015, the Session completed some of the MIF documents. When submitted, the Session was informed they were not complete. During this period, Rev. John Johnston assisted SOTV in the preparation in the completion of the MIF documents. In addition, at this time the Session prepared an accompanying Power Point describing the Gila Valley and the challenges and opportunities of ministry in Safford, Arizona.

The completed MIF and Power Point were submitted to COM and accepted by early summer 2015.

In July 2015, inquiries were made as to COM's process and effectiveness of this MIF and Power Point.

On May 24, 2015, Glen Snider was affirmed to administer communion by Rev. Ed Lowe and Rev. Brad Munroe.

From late summer 2015 until Glen's recent communication with Rev. Brad Munroe requesting a meeting with him and our Session, there had been limited additional communication. Our purpose of this requested meeting was to inform or update Rev. Munroe of our Session's discernment process prior to formal communications. Rather than an informal meeting our Session was informed by Rev. Munroe that an AC had been formed per the *Book of Order*. We were also told that to make communication more transparent he was assigning a new moderator and our Session was not allowed to meet without this moderator. The only contact with Presbytery between these two times concerned retirement dues in lieu of having a pastor. Additionally, in Glen's role as a member of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board (PMAGB), Glen communicated with Brad Munroe about RFOS grants and follow up evaluations for 2015 and 2016.

**History and current situation of True Hope as expressed by Kevin West, Pastor**

There is a quote that I believe I heard from Pastor Robert Morris, which says, "I do what I do not to become what I am, I do what I do because of who I am." As the pastor of True Hope Fellowship, my goal is to equip the body with a deeper understanding of the Scriptures, and to help them grow in their relationship with the Lord. As we have done this, our body has grown in numbers from both young and old. We are experiencing within the body what the unconditional Love of Christ can do in a man's heart. People are finding their "identity" in who they are in Christ and with identity comes a purpose and a passion to share with others in our community. This passion has in turn caused a "ripple effect," resulting in tremendous growth within our local body.

I have been humbled by what the Lord can do with a simple police officer from Safford, Arizona. Our meeting started about seven years ago in a home in Thatcher, Arizona, with approximately eight to ten individuals attending. It grew very slowly over the next couple of years and we had to eventually rent a

building in Safford to hold our Sunday services. Three years ago, we purchased a modest building that we were able to remodel (twice) to attain a total capacity of 162 seats. The meeting has experienced rapid growth and now we have around 150 attendees every Sunday, all packed in very closely, but all loving the adventure.

It saddens me when I hear ones tell me, “I would have come, but I was running late and I knew that you would not have room for me,” thus they did not attend. This breaks my heart and I yearn for an answer for this problem. My ultimate desire is that all who would like to attend our meeting be able to, and to continue to have plenty of room for future growth.

My dad, who for 26 years pastored a church in Willcox, Arizona, has often said that a fish will only grow to the size of its fishbowl, and I believe we have exceeded our fishbowl. This is not only a problem we have in the chapel, but also in the children’s Sunday school classes and the nursery. There is another statistic that states that once a church gets to 80 percent capacity, it is time to build or get a larger building. Within our current location we have no more room to build or expand in any direction and most times we have no additional room for parking. I’ve been told, “this is a good problem to have.” I often question their reasoning, but rest in the fact that I know God has a solution for us. With that being said, it is my heart’s continued desire that none be turned away from coming and experiencing what God is doing in our midst.

Tomorrow, for example, I will be conducting a funeral service for one of our members and dear friend. He was a veteran of the Vietnam War and was a part of the Army 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade. Today we will be preparing for it and attempting to arrange room for the casket as well as seating for everyone that would like to attend the funeral. I realize due to the size of our chapel, there will be people who will not be able to attend and honor this fallen hero.

### **Proposed use of the property by True Hope as expressed by Kevin West, Pastor**

I realize that the chapel/fellowship hall where the Shepherd of the Valley Church meets is probably not any bigger than the chapel we are currently in. What the Shepherd of the Valley property would provide for us immediately is additional Sunday school rooms, a nursery and a place to have potlucks and community outreaches. The land that the church sits on could also allow us to build a larger chapel to accommodate our growing needs, money and financing permitting, as well as much needed parking.

I don’t look for sympathy in the situation we are in, because I know we are in the place of God and He ultimately has an answer for us. We have continued to pray and trust Him for a solution to this problem. I do sincerely thank you for reaching out to us and considering us for the possible acquisition of the Shepherd of the Valley church in Safford, Arizona.

### **Administrative Commission’s Deliberations**

A rationale for dealing with the 2 parts of the property separately:

The appraisal of the property placed the value in two distinct segments, the “Church” segment and “excess land.” The appraisal implies that the excess land is not needed for the church as presently constituted and therefore represents a distinct separate value. Further discussions with the appraiser confirmed that the land is appropriately zoned to permit the split of the present parcel.

A rationale for not simply “realizing these assets”:

SOTV is requesting that Presbytery de Cristo transfer ownership of the church property to New Hope Fellowship. It is their firm belief that the act of bestowing such a valuable gift to another Christian community will be a powerful witness to the grace and love of Jesus Christ, reflected in this gift.

It is perfectly reasonable to ask why the presbytery should not, upon dissolution of SOTV as a congregation of the PC(USA) take possession of the property of the church, sell it, and use the proceeds for the good work of the Presbytery. There is a fiscal soundness to this idea.

However, it is the view of the AC that the decision concerning the property of SOTV involves more issues than just fiscal soundness. In the same way that the most efficient course is not always the best course for a church, the AC believes the action that is most fiscally beneficial to the Presbytery may not be the decision which is best for the Kingdom of God. It is the belief of the AC that it would be better to honor the desires of the members of SOTV, as well as to provide a space for True Hope Fellowship which will be sufficient to accommodate their worshipping community and allow rooms for Christian education for children and adults and the space which True Hope Fellowship desires but does not currently have.

A second reasonable concern:

What if True Hope were to vacate the property, sell it, and use the proceeds for their purposes somewhere else, taking advantage of the generosity of SOTV and Presbytery de Cristo? The AC is aware of this concern. We recommend that the transfer of the property include a provision by which, should True Hope disband and/or vacate the property, then ownership would revert to Presbytery de Cristo.

A third reasonable concern:

If the Presbytery were to simply reacquire the property and the financial assets of Shepherd of the Valley, full responsibility would fall to the PC(USA) and Presbytery de Cristo to dispose of the property and other assets. There would be a need to find a buyer. This would mean hiring someone to market and to handle real estate transactions. This would necessarily be handled long distance, not an impossibility, but certainly an inconvenience.

### **The Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church Administrative Commission moves the following:**

#### **Motion #1**

It is moved that Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church be dissolved as a congregation of the PC(USA) no later than November 30, 2018, with gratitude to God and to all SOTV's past and present members and pastors for the faithful service of the church. As near as possible to the actual date of dissolution, a representative of Presbytery de Cristo will, at a mutually-convenient time, examine the records of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church, retain and deliver to Presbytery de Cristo those he/she deems necessary, and arrange the destruction of the remaining records.

#### **Rationale for Motion #1**

The current membership of SOTV does not feel that it can continue to function as a congregation, due to the loss of membership and the age of the current membership.

#### **Motion #2**

That the 1.78 acre church parcel/building of Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church be transferred to True Hope Fellowship with the stipulation that \$50,000, a combination of funds from True Hope Fellowship and SOTV, be given to the Presbytery de Cristo Mission Committee and that there be a deed restriction that if the property ceases to be a church, or if True Hope decides to vacate the property, then the 1.78 acres parcel/building would revert of Presbytery de Cristo or its successor with a sunset of 50 years. The property described here includes the columbarium.

#### **Rationale for Motion #2**

The church building, and associated improvements were paid for by the SOTV congregation and represent a significant Protestant presence in what is generally an LDS and Catholic community. Its presence can continue as an ecumenical balance in the community and the support of the True Hope Fellowship is believed by the SOTV members to demonstrate this ecumenical effort.

The AC feels strongly that any substantial donation for the benefit of True Hope Fellowship should include the assurance that the property would continue to be used as a Christian church. Accordingly, it was deemed appropriate to guarantee this use through a deed restriction. The 50-year limitation was used to avoid any possibility of avoidance of the restriction as a violation of the "rule against perpetuities," a common-law restriction on the remote vesting of title.

**Motion #3**

That an existing \$18,000 fund maintained by SOTV be transferred from Shepherd of the Valley PC to True Hope Fellowship for the maintenance of the Columbarium on the property of SOTV.

Rationale for Motion #3

SOTV members have set aside and designated \$18,000 for the maintenance of the Columbarium as a Presbyterian columbarium for those who have purchased space(s) for future use. This fund is indicated as being restricted for the benefit of the columbarium and should be used to reconfigure the columbarium to be accessible from the outdoor patio of the church, as opposed to the inside of the church as presently configured, and otherwise to provide for needed maintenance and security.

**Motion #4**

That the 3.28 acres of excess land be retained by Presbytery de Cristo for use as it sees fit, including but not limited to leasing or selling the property to True Hope Fellowship.

Rationale for Motion #4

The excess land represents a value separate from the church and it is felt that the conveyance of this land would only present the possibility of disposition by the True Hope Fellowship to secure income not associated with the use of the 1.78-acre parcel as a church. The demographics of the area indicate that it could be used for apartments or other uses not associated with the church. The AC believes that the preferred use of the parcel would be for additional parking to accommodate the expansion of the church. Accordingly, the AC has no problem with post-closing arrangements being made with True Hope Fellowship to purchase the land in the future for its then appraised value should that be affordable by True Hope Fellowship if its congregation continues to grow.

**Motion #5**

Irrespective of action taken by Presbytery de Cristo on Motions 1-4, it is moved that the Administrative Commission for Shepherd of the Valley Presbyterian Church be dissolved, having discharged its responsibilities to the best of its ability. All transactions required to dissolve the congregation and subsequent property action(s) including Shephard of the Valley records and finances shall transfer to the Presbytery de Cristo Board of Trustees and/or the Leadership Commission as appropriate to fulfill 1) the Corporate requirements specified in the Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation and 2) the requirements of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Presbytery de Cristo specified in the *Book of Order*. In accordance with this action, authority to execute documents shall be granted to the Secretary of the Corporation (Stated Clerk/Associate).