



SUMMARY OF ACTIONS
185th General Assembly
Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Michael Sharpe, Stated Clerk

The following summary is NOT the authoritative document for guiding the Church's action. Only the General Assembly Minutes can serve that purpose.



ORGANIZATION

1. The General Assembly opened with worship, directed by the Reverends Boyce Wallace and Jairo Rodriguez.. The Retiring Moderator, Reverend Lisa Anderson delivered a sermon entitled, “*Holy Confusion*” – Acts 2:1-21.
2. Elected the Reverend Michele Gentry, Andes Presbytery, as the Moderator.
3. Elected the Reverend Kip Rush, Nashville Presbytery, as the Vice Moderator.
4. Elected thirty-three persons to board/agency membership.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

5. Commissioners, YADs, Convention Delegates and all visitors, worshiped in the local churches of Cauca Valley Presbytery on Sunday Morning.
6. Mrs. Noriko Matsumoto, Japan Presbytery, delivered the Monday morning devotional.

7. A Communion service was held on Monday evening. The Reverends Jairo Rodriquez and Lisa Anderson served as Co-Celebrants of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Reverend John Jairo Correa, Andes Presbytery, delivered a sermon entitled “*Let Us Serve as Jesus Did.*”
8. Youth Advisory Delegate Caleb Rhodes, Missouri Presbytery, delivered the Tuesday morning devotional.

OUR UNITED OUTREACH

9. Approved a goal of \$2,800,000 for Our United Outreach in 2016.
10. Encouraged presbyteries, congregations, and individuals to invite the Our United Outreach Development Coordinator to meetings for the purpose of educating constituents on the importance of timely, consistent giving to Our United Outreach and explain the diverse ministries, missions and fiscal needs met by such giving across the denomination.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

11. Approved a change to Ministry Council bylaws, Article 3, section 3, regarding Advisory Members on the Ministry Council....to remove the Previous Past Moderator as an Advisory Member.

DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY TEAM

12. Asked that every presbytery appoint a person to serve as a youth and young adult contact person and send this person’s name and contact information to the Discipleship Ministry Team Coordinator of Youth and Young Adults.

MISSIONS MINISTRY TEAM

13. Encouraged all USA presbyteries to explore opportunities for Cross-Culture starts within their boundaries.
14. Affirmed that the CPC and all its judicatories and agencies are called to minister to all immigrants regardless of their nationality, race, social status, migration status or political preference, who are coming to live in countries where the CPC is present.

15. That the Missions Ministry Team, through the Cross-Culture Ministry USA Program, assist the judicatories of the CPC regarding immigration education and/or resources to embrace ministerial opportunities among communities made up of immigrants within all presbyteries and synods.

16. That all churches light 19 candles or display 19 Bibles (or some other appropriate symbol) on Mission Sunday/Pentecost Sunday to recognize the service of the 19 CP Missionaries, and that they set aside special time for prayer for the work of these missionaries who are carrying the light of Christ into our world.

17. That each presbytery's Committee on Ministry urge ministers/leaders who may be open to considering a call to create an online profile:
(<http://ministrycouncil.cumberland.org/leadershipreferral>).

18. That each presbytery's Board of Missions urge churches who are searching for a pastor to create an online church profile to maximize the effectiveness of the Leadership Referral Services process:
(<http://ministrycouncil.cumberland.org/leadershipreferral>).

19. Requested that all pastors provide brochures and information about the Stott-Wallace Missionary Offering to their churches, explain the importance of the offering, and invite their church to participate in supporting CP missionaries through this offering.

PASTORAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY TEAM

20. Expressed excitement to Reverend Chuck Brown (Pastoral Development Ministry Team Leader) for sharing plans for Minister Conferences and Leadership Development.

BETHEL UNIVERSITY

21. Commended President Walter Butler, the faculty and staff of Bethel University, which is completing its 172nd year of service.

22. Encouraged congregations and individuals to pray and provide financial support for Bethel University, and that names of prospective students from the churches be supplied to the University.

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

23. Expressed gratitude to staff of CPCH for the excellence with which they perform their jobs.

24. Encouraged all congregations to participate in Children's Home Sunday (April 10, 2016) by using the resources provided by the CPCH to educate their congregations and promote the ministry of the CPCH.

25. Encouraged churches and presbyteries to send teams of youth and adults to visit or volunteer at the CPCH.

COMMISSION ON MILITARY CHAPLAINS & PERSONNEL

26. Commend the members of the Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel as they represent the CPC on the Presbyterian Council of Military Chaplains and Personnel (PCCMP)

27. Authorized the Stated Clerk to designate the Presbytery Council on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PCCMP) as the official endorsing agency of the CPC for those seeking to serve as chaplains in the USA Federal Prison setting.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

28. Make congregations and presbyteries aware of the 1810 Circle, and encourage new members to support this endeavor annually.

29. Make presbyteries, congregations and individuals aware that the Historical Foundation is interested and has funds to publish books on topics concerning the CPC and CPCA.

30. Encouraged congregations to have a special offering on the Sunday designated as Denomination Day to help support the special project designated for that year.

31. Encouraged presbyteries, congregations, and individuals active on the internet to join the Historical Foundation of the CPC & CPCA Facebook group.
32. Encouraged all congregations to preserve their session records by depositing them in the Historical Foundation.
33. Instructed each synod and presbytery to deposit their minutes in a timely fashion with the Historical Foundation.
34. Instructed presbyteries to locate the session records when closing a church and then deposit them in the Historical Foundation.
35. Expressed gratitude to the Historical Foundation for their work in preservation and education of the heritage of the CPC and CPCA.

JUDICIARY

36. Strongly encouraged the Permanent Committee on Judiciary to have the constitutional amendment referred to them by the 184th GA (which read: *That the Permanent Committee on Judiciary work in concert with the Missions Ministry Team , in the development of a constitutional amendment(s), empowering the MMT (or its successor) to develop new churches outside of the United States.*) ready for the 186th GA.
37. Requested that Synods be more diligent in the examination of presbyterial records to see that the records of ordination are complete and in order.

MEMPHIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

38. Expressed gratitude to Reverend Jody Hill, Mrs. Jan Holmes, Mrs. Pat Meeks, and Dr. Robert M. Shelton for faithful service to MTS and the CPC.
39. Encouraged churches and presbyteries to recognize and support PAS-Colombia. The GA recognized the outstanding progress of PAS-Colombia with a standing applause.
40. Commended the administration, staff, and faculty of MTS for their fine work.
41. Noted with special appreciation that Dr. Earheart-Brown has marked his tenth anniversary at MTS.

42. Encouraged all churches to recognize and support Seminary Sunday (September 25, 2016).

THEOLOGY & SOCIAL CONCERNS

43. Adopted the study paper "*Come Let Us Reason Together, Being Faithful in the Midst of Conflict*" and that it be used to initiate thought and discussion within the CPC & CPCA.
44. Requested the Office of the General Assembly of both denominations make this available to churches through the Stated Clerks of Presbyteries.
45. Requested that the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns find a means to make all theological and social statements from the General Assembly easily accessible for anyone to read.

UNIFICATION

46. Commended the work of the Unification Task Force and applaud their efforts to develop a proposed plan of union that would allow for ownership on the congregational level.
47. Directed presbyteries to allow the Unification Task Force time at the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 presbytery meetings to present updates on unification and communicate feedback on the proposed plan for union.
48. Recommended that joint clusters of churches also schedule a time for a presentation on unification, by a member of the task force unification advocates and/or other leaders within both denominations.
49. Approved adding \$20,000 in the OUO allocation for 2016, plus an additional \$5,000 to cover the meeting/ program expenses and communication purposes of the Unification Task Force.
50. Recommended that clergy, elders and laity make all efforts to attend a regional meeting.

STEWARDSHIP

51. Commended Reverend Robert Heflin and the Board of Stewardship, Foundation and Benefits for their diligent work.

52. Requested that the Board of Stewardship and the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns have joint responsibility to properly answer the 184th GA's inquiry pertaining to what is currently covered by health insurance benefits and clarify anything that might conflict with the *Confession of Faith* and previous actions of the GA statements regarding sanctify of life. The jointly tasked responsibilities along with findings will be reported to the 186th GA.

53. Encouraged all church employees to actively communicate with the Board of Stewardship, Foundation and Benefits regarding the Retirement Program.

MISCELLANEOUS

54. Elder Leon Cole, Moderator of the CPCA, brought greetings to the assembly in the name of the CPCA.

55. Dr. Michael Qualls, PAS Director presented a plaque of appreciation to Moderator Michele Gentry who serves as the first dean of PAS-Colombia.

56. Adopted a *Resolution of Gratitude*, presented by Reverend Tommy Jobe, Murfreesboro Presbytery.

NEXT MEETING

General Assembly adjourned to meet concurrently with the General Assembly of the CPCA, at the Sheraton Music City Center Hotel, in Nashville, Tennessee on June 20-24, 2016.

Copies of the General Assembly Minutes (when completed) will be made available in the following formats:

Online: www.cumberland.org/gao

A limited supply of printed copies will be made available through the Cumberland Presbyterian Resource Distribution at: 901-276-4581

Digital copies of the Minutes on CD format will also be available from the General Assembly Office. Contact Elizabeth Vaughn at: 901-276-4572 or eav@cumberland.org

