

# SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

## 179<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Cumberland Presbyterian Church Robert D. Rush, 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.*

BYLAWS 8.04 "The Stated Clerk shall make copies of the General Assembly minutes available to ordained ministers, licentiates, candidates, commissioners, clerks of sessions, members of denominational entities, schools of the Church, synods and presbytery clerks, to the Stated Clerk's exchanges and other persons in order to encourage lower judicatories and persons in the Church to implement the actions of the General Assembly."

### *Theme:*

*"Casting the .NET" John 21:4-6 & Luke 5:1-11*

### ORGANIZATION

1. Opened the General Assembly with worship directed by the Reverend Aaron McMillan, Worship Director. A feature of all worship services was a video connection with a Missionary outside the United States participating in a portion of the litany. The Retiring Moderator, the Reverend Jonathan Clark, Murfreesboro Presbytery, read John 21: 4-6 and delivered a sermon entitled "Casting the.NET" A prayer of blessing for the Assembly was prayed by the Reverend Daniel Jang, Philippines.
2. Elected Elder Sam Suddarth, Jr., Columbia Presbytery, as the Moderator.
3. Elected the Reverend Cliff Hudson, Tennessee-Georgia Presbytery, as the Vice Moderator.
4. Commissioned Ms. Anay Ortega, Andes Presbytery, as a missionary to Guatemala. The Reverend Bob Watkins prayed the prayer of dedication in English; the Reverend Ricardo Franco, Arkansas Presbytery, provided the translation into Spanish.
5. Accepted the resignations of: one member of the Communications Ministry Team, one member of the Judiciary Committee; one member of the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns, one member of the 2010 Planning Committee and one of the Youth Advisory Members on the Ministry Council.
6. Elected fifty-five persons to board/agency membership.
7. Established a new Our United Outreach Committee consisting of one person from each synod, one elected representative of each of the following boards: Ministry Council; Board of Stewardship, Foundation and Benefits; Cumberland Presbyterian Children's Home; Bethel College; Historical Foundation; Memphis Theological Seminary; and the Corporation Board. Executives of these boards will be non voting Resource/Advocacy members only.
8. Ms. Edith Gholson, Director of Ministries, was introduced to the Assembly.
9. Ms. Pat White, Editor of the Cumberland Presbyterian, was presented a plaque in recognition of her retirement in September. The Assembly gave Ms. White a standing ovation.
10. Reaffirmed our commitment as Cumberland Presbyterians in reaching people for Christ by instructing our presbyteries, churches and

ministers to make this the number one priority.

### **ADDITIONAL WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

11. Luke 5:1-11 was read after which Elder Sam Suddarth, Jr., Columbia Presbytery delivered a sermon entitled, "Casting the.NET, New Evangelism Today." Participants joined in a litany of remembrance for the Denominational Center on Union Avenue and dedication of the current Center. Ms. Anay Ortega, Andes Presbytery, prayed the closing prayer.
12. Luke 5:1-11 was read in Chinese by the Reverend Amos Yuen, Tao Hsien Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Hong Kong, after which the Reverend Doctor Barbara Holmes, Academic Dean of Memphis Theological Seminary, delivered the sermon, "Jesus Saves". The Reverend Doctor Yoong Kim, West Tennessee Presbytery, and the Reverend Aaron McMillan, Presbytery del Cristo, served as Co-Celebrants of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
13. Youth Advisory Delegate, C. J. Cassell, Nashville Presbytery, read Luke 5:1-11, then preached a sermon entitled "Casting the.NET Evangelism." The Reverend Jaime Ortiz, Andes Presbytery, led in prayer. The benediction was pronounced by the Reverend John Sweigart, missionary in Seoul, South Korea.
14. The Reverend Aaron McMillan, Presbytery del Cristo, read a portion of Luke 5, beginning with verse 12, then delivered a sermon entitled, "Casting the.NET."

### **OUR UNITED OUTREACH**

15. Directed presbyteries to remind their congregations to re-emphasize Our United Outreach Responsibilities and how Our United Outreach benefits the Denomination.

16. Requested that Our United Outreach committee be aware that some offices/boards have a deficit condition and must have more funding.
17. Approved the changes in Our United Outreach allocations for 2009.
18. Approved Our United Outreach allocations for 2010.

### **MINISTRY COUNCIL**

19. Approved the Church calendar for 2009-2010. Directed that future Church calendars include the dates for the Youth Evangelism Conference (in the conference years) and the Memorial Day offering for the Presbyterian Council on Chaplains and Military Personnel.
20. Approved annual evaluations for the Ministry Council Staff.

### **COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY TEAM**

21. Changed the sentence in the job description of the team leader of Communication which read "must be an active member of the Reformed Faith" to "the Communication Team leader must be an active member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (preferred) or of another Church of the Reformed Faith Tradition and be a committed person of faith who exemplifies the love God and neighbor."
22. With the exception of Memphis Theological Seminary, the Historical Foundation, the Children's Home, and Bethel College, the denomination will adopt the branding standard to be developed and maintained by the Communication Team leader and approved by the Center Inter-Agency Team.
23. Determined to continue to publish the Cumberland Presbyterian in its traditional media as well as expanding into new means of media distribution.

### **DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY TEAM**

24. The Cumberland Presbyterian Handbook, a new manual for the Denomination, was presented. The Handbook is available to any congregation regarding it.
25. Encouraged congregations to use the online leadership training resources, "Opening Doors to Discipleship".
26. Recognized and honored Ms. Christine Tyler for 40 years of courageous, efficient, and faithful service to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

### **MISSIONS MINISTRY TEAM**

27. A video showing the Cumberland Presbyterian international missionaries serving in seventeen countries was shown. A copy can be secured through the Missions Ministry team.

### **PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

28. Directed Committees on Ministry to report to the Pastoral Leadership Team new candidates and licentiates scheduled for ordination.
29. Requested that every presbytery without a separate committee for ordained clergy consider adding a Committee for Clergy Care.
30. Directed that Clergy Care Committees report to the Pastoral Development Team when clergy retire.

### **BETHEL COLLEGE**

31. Judge Ben Cantrell, President of the Board of Trustees of Bethel College, announced that Bethel College will become Bethel University this summer.
32. Recognized that every Cumberland Presbyterian who has financially supported a church has

supported Our United Outreach and is a contributor to the success of Bethel College.

33. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church is to maintain, strengthen and enrich the foundational relationship between the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Bethel College.

### **CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S HOME**

34. Encouraged each congregation to set aside one Sunday each month to pray for children and families, especially remembering the children and families served by the Cumberland Presbyterian Children's Home.
35. Encouraged congregations to adopt a "Pay for a Day" program, either individually or as groups, to raise funds for the Children's Home, and to contact the Children's Home for additional fund raising ideas.
36. Encouraged congregations to emphasize Cumberland Presbyterian Children's Home Sunday and the importance of receiving an offering as a significant source of funding.
37. Commended the Children's Home Board of Trustees, Administration and Staff for their Faithful handling of funds and resources during the recent difficult economic times.

### **HISTORICAL FOUNDATION**

38. That the General Assembly, through its minutes and summary of actions, make congregations and presbyteries aware of the 1810 Circle and encourage new members to support this endeavor annually.
39. Under the direction of the presbyterial stated clerks, encourage presbyteries which have not compiled a comprehensive directory of the congregations within its bounds, to do so. If

possible these directories need to include maps, a photograph of each Church and a brief church history. Upon completion of the directories, place two copies in the Historical Library and Archives by December 31, 2009, prior to the bicentennial celebration of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 2010.

40. Encouraged congregations to receive a special offering on Denominational Sunday to help support the programs of the Historical Foundation.
41. Through its minutes and summary of actions, the General Assembly is to encourage Congregations to consider the need for proper preservation of their session records and to contact the Historical Foundation for assistance.
42. Commended the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director, staff, and volunteers, for the successful transfer of the Archives to the new Cumberland Presbyterian Center; as well as their willingness and efforts to make the information accessible to both scholars and the general public.
43. Directed the Historical Foundation to produce a manual or pamphlet or guidelines for Presbyterial Heritage Committees and other interested persons providing information regarding the standards involved in archival and electronic quality copying, storage, etc. and how to get documents or other information to the Archives

#### **MEMPHIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

44. Expressed gratitude to Joseph Butler, Kevin Colvard, and John David Hall for their faithful service to the Seminary and the Church.
45. A special prayer of thanks was offered for the life and ministry of Hubert Morrow.
46. Expressed appreciation for the creation of the Baird-Buck Chair of Cumberland Presbyterian

Studies that includes history, theology, church administration, and the practice of ministry that is particular to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and encouraged churches and individuals to give to this endowment.

#### **CENTER TASK FORCE**

47. The Center Task Force was dissolved and discharged.
48. Directed that proceeds to the Center Campaign received in the future apply on the debt to the Board of Stewardship, Foundation and Benefits.
49. Invite congregations and individuals to contribute gifts as memorials or in honor of persons or church entities to reduce the debt.
50. Directed the Board of Directors to distribute future contributions to the Center Campaign to a building maintenance fund after the note is paid to the Board of Stewardship.
51. Approved a campaign of six months to invite persons to name an office in the new center for a minimum contribution of \$10,000. Reverend J. David Hester and Mr. Bob Rutledge will be contact persons for these contributions.

#### **STEWARDSHIP**

52. Commended the Board of Stewardship for their management of the benefits such as insurance, and retirement funds.

#### **JUDICIARY**

53. Designated the Corporate Board of Directors to perform the oversight function of the Stated Clerk's Office. This would include a performance evaluation in odd numbered years, establishment of the salary for the position, and review of the budget for the office.
54. Approved a charter change for the Memphis

Theological Seminary.

55. Directed the Judiciary Committee and the Joint Committee on Amendments to prepare a Constitutional Amendment to increase the representation of each presbytery based on 1,000 active members rather than 1,250 active members.

56. Approved a new set of Bylaws which replace the General Regulations. Some of the changes are as follows:

Added an Our United Outreach Committee

10.03 If a person elected to serve on a denominational entity, where residence in a particular synod is a qualification for election, shall move to another synod while in office, the term to which he or she was elected shall terminate at the close of the next meeting of the General Assembly.

16.01 Manner of amendment. Except as provided below, these Bylaws may be amended or repealed only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the votes cast in a duly constituted meeting of the General Assembly. No portion of the Bylaws may be amended or repealed by the Board of Directors. Fair and reasonable notice of any proposed amendment shall be provided as required by state law.

16.02 Extraordinary actions. In order to be effective the following actions must be approved by (1) the affirmative vote of two consecutive General Assemblies, or (2) a ninety percent (90%) vote of a single General Assembly.

.01 Terminating the existence of a denominational entity named in Bylaw 10.01.

.02 Creating a new denominational entity other than a temporary committee or Task force.

.03 Decreasing the Our United Outreach budget allocation to a denominational entity by more than 40% of the amount distributed to it during the previous calendar year; or

.04 Taking any other action which would cause a drastic change in the mission or structure of

the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

57. Denied a memorial from Cullman Presbytery in regard to church property, but referred the matter to the Committee on Judiciary to address some of the concerns expressed.

58. Denied a memorial from Missouri Presbytery requesting waivers on constitutional requirements for the Certified Lay Minister if the Constitutional Amendments were approved.

59. Affirmed that the Constitutional Amendments were not approved.

60. Renamed the Committee on Stewardship by adding the words Elected Officers.

61. Rescinded the action of the 178<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in regard to changes in the Directory of Worship which were related to the Constitutional Amendments.

62. Denied a resolution by a commissioner requesting changes in the Directory of Worship.

### **PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

63. Approved referring all suggestions and requests for future General Assemblies to the Program Committee.

64. Directed that the four representatives designated by the Ministry Council to serve on the program committee be elected team members.

65. Directed the Program Committee to begin no later than September 15, 2009 to creatively Plan for General Assembly and that subsequent Program Committees begin planning on a two year cycle.

66. Decided not to make any changes to the existing historical General Assembly format.

### **THEOLOGY & SOCIAL CONCERNS**

67. Commended Japan Presbytery for their struggle in faith, for their adherence to the Confession of Faith, and for the listening to the mandates of

the Holy Scripture.

68. Directed that the paper entitled “Christians to serve this world, contributing to the Society as a response to grace based on the Cumberland Presbyterian Church Confession of Faith” be made available to all presbyteries as a study document demonstrating the need for all Cumberland Presbyterians to study, learn, and understand Cumberland Presbyterian doctrine, practices, and beliefs; and to possess the ability to struggle in faith with issues confronting our world today, including possibilities of how we can reconcile with those with whom have come into conflict.
69. Urge presbyteries to encourage congregations to study immigration issues, and provide the papers, “Stuck at the Traffic Light; the Red Tape for the Green Card” by Ricardo Franco, and “Immigrant Challenges in the USA” by Lynn Thomas, to help with the study.
70. Affirmed the need of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to minister to immigrants by befriending and assisting them in adapting to their new culture by exercising Christian hospitality and that immigrants be encouraged, with the assistance of the Church, to begin or continue the process of becoming legalized residents of the United States of America.
71. Referred the issue of global warming to the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for further study, clarification, and editing, adding information regarding Global Stewardship, in the expectation of a final video production to be reviewed by that body.
72. Referred to the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns the following Papers: “How to Help Orphans” by Roger Olson; “From Faith to Action” prepared by The Firelight Foundation, and “A Last Resort: the Growing Concern about Children in Residential

Care” prepared by Save the Children. A paper on immigration issues written by Chris Warren.

### MISCELLANEOUS

73. Concurred in the place of meeting report.
74. Minutes of the General Assembly will be placed on the website and a disc will be mailed to persons requesting a copy of the Minutes.
75. Authorized the Stated Clerk to work with the Ministry Council and/or individuals interested in attending the organizational meeting of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, provided that the persons be responsible for their own expenses.
76. Denied a memorial from Tennessee-Georgia Presbytery requesting a task force be named to explore the possibilities of a publicity and promotion campaign for the Denomination, but referred the concerns to the Communication Team of the Ministry Council and the Office of the General Assembly.
77. Reaffirmed an action of the 178<sup>th</sup> General Assembly which directed ‘that each presbytery request that its Board of Missions or similar agency, as they minister to the needs of the churches within their presbyteries, remind the churches that it is important that they submit annual reports which are part of our history and offer assistance in preparation of these reports.
78. Observed a period of silence in memory of former Moderator Lewis Wynn.
79. Adopted a resolution of appreciation.

*The meeting was adjourned  
to meet in  
Dickson, Tennessee on June 13-18, 2010.*