

# SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

## 180<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:*

*"What do these stones mean?" Joshua 4:1-9*

### ORGANIZATION

1. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church met for worship on Sunday evening, preceding the opening of the General Assembly. The Reverend C. Williams Jones, West Tennessee Presbytery; was the Worship Director, the Reverend Chris Warren, Nashville Presbytery, was the Director of Music; and Elder Joy Wallace, Brazos River Presbytery served as liturgist. The Reverend R. Stan Wood, Huntsville Presbytery, read Joshua 4:1-9, then delivered a sermon entitled, "Looking Back With Gratitude, Moving Forward by Faith".
2. The General Assembly opened with worship, directed by the Reverend C. Williams Jones, Worship Director. The Retiring Moderator, Elder

Sam Suddarth, Jr., Columbia Presbytery, read John 14:26 and Acts 1:4,5, and 8, then delivered a sermon entitled, "We Have the Power."

3. Elected the Reverend Boyce Wallace, Cauca Valley Presbytery, as the Moderator.
4. Elected the Reverend Harry Chapman, Presbytery del Cristo, as the Vice Moderator.
5. Accepted the resignation of four members of the Board of Trustees of Memphis Theological Seminary, three members of the Ministry Council and one member of the Board of Trustees of the Cumberland Presbyterian Children's Home.
6. Accepted the resignation of the Stated Clerk, Reverend Robert D. Rush, to be effective September 30, 2010. The General Assembly adopted a resolution in honor of Robert D. Rush, presented him with a plaque, and gave him a standing ovation.
7. Elected the Reverend Michael G. Sharpe as the seventeenth Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.
8. Elected forty-nine persons to board/agency membership.
9. The Seikyo Gakuen School in Japan presented a video.
10. Mr. Mark Davis, Team Leader of the Communication Ministry Team, and Reverend Milton Ortiz, Team Leader of the Pastoral Development Ministry Team, were introduced.

### ADDITIONAL WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

11. At the celebration at Montgomery Bell State Park, the Reverend Daniel J. Earheart-Brown, Nashville

Presbytery, read Luke 19:36-40, then delivered a sermon entitled, "The Stones Will Cry Out." The Reverends Ted Acklin, Huntsville Presbytery, and C. William Jones, West Tennessee Presbytery, served as Co-Celebrants of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

12. At the chapel at Montgomery Bell State Park, brief devotionals were delivered by the following: Reverend Kenta Karasawa, Japan Presbytery; Reverend Willie Monteaque, New Hopewell Presbytery; Elder Adriana Ordonez Ruiz, Cauca Valley Presbytery; Elder Sallie Sain, Columbia Presbytery; Reverend Nathan Scott, Choctaw Presbytery; Reverend Buhram Yang, Tennessee-Georgia Presbytery.
13. The Reverend Geoff Knight, Trinity Presbytery, directed the dedication of the new monument listing the names of all congregations and presbyteries within the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.
14. Youth Advisory Delegate Jamie Sullivan, Murfreesboro Presbytery, read I Corinthians 3:10-13 and delivered a sermon entitled "The Church's One Foundation."
15. Reverend Chris Warren, Nashville Presbytery, read Joshua 4:1-7 and delivered a sermon entitled "What Do These Stones Mean?"

#### **ADOPTION OF RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT/RESOLUTIONS**

16. Adopted a reciprocal agreement with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, thus making it possible for ministers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and Cumberland Presbyterian Church to have dual membership (5.3 Constitution) for the duration of service in the other denomination. During the period of dual membership a minister may serve

on boards and agencies, be a commissioner to either General Assembly, however, he/she may not be elected the Moderator or Stated Clerk of the General Assembly in which the person has temporary membership.

17. Adopted a resolution from West Tennessee Presbytery designating 2011 as the "Year of the Clergy" and establishing a "Clergy Crisis Fund" with the following guidelines:
  - a. The fund is to be established and managed through the Board of Stewardship, Foundation and Benefits, and under the direction of the Pastoral Development Ministry Team of the Ministry Council.
  - b. The purpose of the Clergy Crisis Fund is to provide financial support to clergy who are in crisis and in need of support and care.
  - c. The Pastoral Development Ministry Team shall be charged with the responsibility of setting up this program; establishing guidelines for potential recipients from the Fund, working with the respective presbyteries in determining needs and appropriate responses; ascertaining the abilities of the respective presbyteries to also provide financial assistance (perhaps on a matching basis) and exploring any need for counseling or additional support.
  - d. Invite congregations, presbyteries, Cumberland Presbyterian Women's Ministry, the General Assembly and other organizations within the Church to be invited to set a special time for prayers of thanksgiving, blessing and intercession for ordained ministers, and to take a special offering during 2011 to support clergy through the Clergy Crisis Fund.
  - e. The Ministry Council is to develop promotional and supportive resources to assist congregations and presbyteries in celebrating the Year of the Clergy and to raise awareness to and advocate for this special emphasis in 2011.

18. Approved a resolution from a commissioner that would allow for the use of technology in conducting meetings of presbyteries and its boards and agencies. Specifically, that these governing

bodies along with their boards and agencies be allowed to conduct meetings by means of computer/video/simulcast technology in such a way that those who are noted as present at remote locations, who through technology can hear and see business being conducted by said entities and who are likewise visible to the other members (specifically moderators, stated clerks and/or chairs of said entities) by means of same technology, be considered present and accounted for with full rights of discussion and voting privileges as attributed to those who physically and locally attend such meetings. *(Note by Stated Clerk: The Judiciary Committee may need to develop some guidelines for judicatories.)*

### **OUR UNITED OUTREACH**

19. Approved a goal of \$2,600,000 for Our United Outreach for 2011.
20. Beginning with the calendar year of 2012, the Our United Outreach Committee is to seek to allocate annually to the Contingency Fund a minimum of one half of one percent (.5) of the total of Our United Outreach allocation.

### **MINISTRY COUNCIL**

21. Approved the Church calendar for 2010-2011.
22. The 177<sup>th</sup> General Assembly adopted a no nepotism policy for future hires at the center; however, the policy could be set aside by a three-fourths vote of the Ministry Council. The 181<sup>st</sup> General Assembly rescinded the portion relating to setting aside the Policy.
23. The use of the Ministry Council Logo, which is similar to the Denominational Logo, may lead to some confusion.

### **DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY TEAM**

24. Encouraged congregations to take advantage of online ecumenical resources such as the “Opening

Doors to Discipleship and Gifts of God-the Sacraments” for leadership development.

25. Encouraged congregations to participate in the miniversity program as an important source for leadership development in the area of stewardship ministry.
26. Approved the following as the discipleship statement of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church: “Christian Discipleship is the life and practice of following Jesus Christ. One may know about Jesus and even believe in Jesus as an important historical and spiritual figure. However, one becomes a disciple of Jesus by entering into a personal relationship with Him and making Him the guiding force of one’s life. A disciple is not a “Jesus admirer,” but a servant who follows faithfully and willingly. A disciple is a student—a life-long learner. Christian disciples devote their lives to the reading and studying of God’s inspired Word as found in the Old and New Testaments, and come to know the teachings of Jesus through them and through interaction with others who share this identity. Prayer, worship, life experiences and God’s grace enable disciples to develop a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. By being totally committed to Christ, disciples find their primary identity in Him. Their faith is nurtured, shaped, and then expressed in and through the faith community called ‘the Church.’ Disciples exhibit joy, peace, humility, self control, and are guided in all things by love, God’s greatest command. Through love, disciples are peacemakers and seek to relate to others with kindness, integrity, generosity, and patience. Disciples follow the example of Jesus and give themselves--their time, energy, and money—to furthering God’s kingdom by witnessing to the Good News, ministering to and with persons who are poor and those who are marginalized. Above all, disciples share the love and grace of Jesus Christ with others, inviting them to a new life in Christ.”
27. Invite congregations and presbyteries to promote the Youth Worker Summit and seek to enable leaders who work in ministry with young people to attend.

### **MISSIONS MINISTRY TEAM**

28. The General Assembly will move forward with an evangelism and church planting and mission field expansion initiative by charging the Ministry

Council to name a task force consisting of Ministry Team members experienced in evangelism and church planting to develop a ten-year global evangelism, missions and church planting plan, providing goals, staffing expectations and funding estimates to accomplish the initiative. The Ministry Council will present the completed proposal at the 2011 General Assembly as the decanal evangelism and church planting initiative.

29. Instructed the Ministry Council to use all available means to advertise the summer missionary position in Colombia and the teaching English as a second language position at Colegio Americano.

### **PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

30. Referred the Handbook for Presbyterial Committees on the Ministry or Preparation for Ministry back to the Pastoral Development Ministry Team to clarify the following areas of concern with the instruction to make corrections and bring the revised handbook to the 181<sup>st</sup> General Assembly.

- a. A lack of definition and clarity regarding the term "Provisional"

- b. An inaccurate definition of "ordained"

- c. Lack of clarity regarding the committee's responsibility on page 18 (Handbook)

- d. Lack of clarity that the elder serving on an ordination commission should be a member of presbytery in addition to the church session. *(Note by Stated Clerk: In 2002 the General Assembly determined that every Commission shall have a quorum of the judiciary since it is empowered to act for the body. That at the time a commission is elected elders must be members of the body. To become a member of the body, an elder must be elected by the session and enrolled at the meeting of the duly constituted judicatory.) (General Assembly Minutes, pages 170,171)*

- e. Correct typographical and grammatical errors.

### **BETHEL COLLEGE**

31. Noted that Bethel University has over 3,000 enrolled including undergraduate and graduate

Studies.

32. Noted that Bethel University is growing at a rate of 20% per year, which makes it the fastest growing private university in the state of Tennessee.
33. Encourage congregations to participate in Bethel University Sunday.

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

34. Encourage congregations to receive a special offering for the Children's Home on Children's Home Sunday as this offering is a major source of funding.
35. Encourage each congregation to set aside one Sunday each month to pray for children and families. Especially remembering the children and families served by the Children's Home.
36. A chapel has been built in the Gilbert Parr Activities Building.

### **COMMISSION ON CHAPLAINS/MILITARY PERSONNEL**

37. Encourage regular prayer for chaplains serving in military and veteran's administration hospitals.

### **HISTORICAL FOUNDATION**

38. Approved a new charter for the Historical Foundation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.
39. Encourage congregations and presbyteries to promote the 1810 Circle, which requests a minimum gift of \$25 per annum to support the work of the Historical Foundation.
40. Encourage congregations to have a special offering on the Sunday designated as Denomination Day to help support the programs of the Historical Foundation.
41. Expressed appreciation to the Historical Foundation for the new monument listing congregations and presbyteries in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; to the planning

committees, and to State Park Officials for the success of the celebration at Montgomery Bell State Park on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

### JUDICIARY

42. Approved sending a Constitutional Amendment to presbyteries affecting the number of commissioners to the General Assembly by deleting 1,250 and inserting 1,000 in Section 9.2a making the section to read “A presbytery having an active membership (including ordained clergy) of 1-1000 shall be entitled to send one minister and one elder.” and in Section 9.2b deleting 1,251-2,500 and inserting 1,001-2,000 making the section to read “A presbytery having an active membership (including ordained clergy) of 1,001 to 2,000 shall be entitled to send two ministers and two elders.”
43. Referred to the Judiciary Committee and the Joint Committee on Amendments a request to prepare a constitutional amendment on section 3.32, 3.33 and 3.34 by adding the words Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America to each section and report to the 181<sup>st</sup> General Assembly.
44. Bylaw 11.01 was amended by deleting the words Program Planning Committee and inserting Chaplains/Missions/Pastoral Development Committee and Ministry Council/Communication/Discipleship Committee.
45. Amended Bylaw 10.02 by adding the words “including Chief Executive, Vice-President, Team Leader, Director or equivalent” making the Bylaw to read “No person who is employed in an executive capacity including Chief Executive, Vice-President, Team Leader, Director, or equivalent, in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church is eligible to serve on a denominational entity. No employee of a denominational entity is eligible for service on the same denominational entity.”
46. Bylaw 15.03 was amended to delete the words Ministry Council, and inserting “Our United Outreach Committee,” thus making the final sentence to read “Organizations requesting funds from Our United Outreach shall submit multi-year program budgets to the Our United Outreach Committee.”
47. Bylaw 8.02 was amended by deleting the words

“Ministry Council” and inserting the words “Corporate Board,” thus making the second sentence to read, “If the Nominating Committee declines to nominate the serving Stated Clerk for re-election, or if the Stated Clerk has vacated the office, resigned, or declined to be re-nominated, then the Corporate Board shall conduct a search for and nominate a candidate to the General Assembly.”

48. The Synod of Great Rivers had submitted a memorial asking “Is it a constitutional requirement that a person have a letter of recommendation from their local church session in order for them to be accepted by the Committee on Probationer Care and/or be recommended to presbytery for candidacy?” The Memorial was denied, as the question is answered in 6.14 “A written statement concerning the candidate from the session of his or her church shall also be heard at the time of reception, along with written or verbal testimonials from others who may desire to express themselves on behalf of the candidate.”

### MEMPHIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

49. Noted that the Seminary has cut \$500,000 from its operating budget, due to current economic conditions.
50. Granted a request by the seminary to express appreciation to the following persons: Mr. Chester Dickson, Reverend Rebecca Salisbury, who have completed their terms of service on the Board of Trustees; Mr. Mark Davis, Mr. William Nelms, and Reverend Amy Howe who have resigned; Dr. Barbara Holmes, for her five years of service as Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Dean; and Reverend Thomas D. Campbell for the faithful service he has given to the preparation of ministers through the Program of Alternate Studies.
51. Commended the President, Reverend Daniel J. Earheart-Brown and the faculty for making the seminary an ecumenical institution.
52. Encourage all congregations to participate in Seminary Sunday.
53. New programs at the seminary include education for youth ministers through the Center for Youth Ministry Training, Drug/Alcohol Addiction Counseling program will begin this fall and a

Korean Doctor of Ministry program is under consideration

### THEOLOGY & SOCIAL CONCERNS

54. Requested the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to write a letter of appreciation to the Reverend Lanny Johnson and his family for his time and commitment to the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns.
55. Commended Ms. Debby Marston for her paper on "Let's Not Wait for the Next Catastrophe" and directed that the paper be sent to each presbytery.
56. Encouraged each commissioner to share the above paper with their congregation.
57. Encouraged congregations to seek ways to minister to orphans around the world, and to seek ways to strengthen families through supporting the Cumberland Presbyterian Children's Home.
58. Adopted the following statement as a way for Cumberland Presbyterians to witness to our faith and oppose the spread of violence in the world:  
WHEREAS, Cumberland Presbyterians are followers of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and;  
WHEREAS, we have been commanded to love our enemy (Matthew 5:44), and;  
WHEREAS, we have been told to do unto others as we would have them do to you (Matthew 7:12), and;  
WHEREAS, we have been commanded to live at peace with everyone as far as it is possible, (Romans 12:18), and;  
WHEREAS, the Savior has told us that all men will know that you are my disciples by your love for one another, (John 13:35), and;  
WHEREAS, we are told that we will be required to give an account of every careless word (Matthew 12:36);  
THEREFORE, the Committee on Theology and Social Concerns believes that a first step to witnessing our commitment to following the Prince of Peace is to continue to examine our thoughts, words, and deeds, ensuring they conform to scripture and show love to both our enemies and to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

### MISCELLANEOUS

59. Accepted the invitation of Murfreesboro Presbytery to host the 183<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly.
60. Accepted the invitation of Tennessee-Georgia Presbytery to host the 184<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.
61. Adrianna Ordonez Ruiz stated that the Andes and Cauca Valley Presbyteries plan to invite the 185<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.
62. 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.
63. Adopted a resolution of appreciation.

*The meeting was adjourned  
to meet in  
Springfield, Missouri on June 20-24, 2011.*