



SUMMARY OF ACTIONS
191st 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. Elected the Reverend Mike Wilkinson, Presbytery of East Tennessee, as the Moderator.
2. Elected the Reverend Joe Butler, Murfreesboro Presbytery, as the Vice Moderator.
3. Elected thirty-five people to serve on denominational boards and entities.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

4. The opening worship & communion service was held on Monday evening. Retiring Moderator Reverend Duawn Mearns, Red River Presbytery, delivered a sermon entitled, "*First Love*", based on Revelations 2:1-4. The Reverends Duawn Mearns and Mary Anna Townsend (GA Worship Director, Missouri Presbytery) served as co-celebrants of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. A brief service of installation of the newly elected moderator was part of the worship service.

5. Ms. Ava Jacks, Youth Advisory Delegate from Grace Presbytery, brought the devotional on Thursday morning.
6. Reverend Mary Anna Townsend, worship director for General Assembly, delivered the closing devotional entitled, "Revive Us, Again", based on Hosea 6:1-6.

OUR UNITED OUTREACH

7. Approved a goal of \$2,500,000 for Our United Outreach (OUO) for 2023.
8. Approved the proposed transition to a less than full-time Director and voluntary presbytery advocates for Our United Outreach.
9. Requested that the day of prayer for Our United Outreach also include education on OUO and giving to OUO be encouraged throughout the church.
10. Held an *OUO Lunch and Learn* meal during GA week.

MINISTRY COUNCIL

11. Prayed for immigrant ministries in the United States and around the world, giving thanks for the grace of God reflected in the great cultural diversity of the body of Christ around the world and reflected in the CPC today.
12. Approved that Continuing Education Units (CEUs) can be earned by participating in any event/seminary related to ministry (including degree programs).
13. Declared that the year 2025 as the year of celebration of 100 yrs. of missions in Colombia. Encouraged support of celebratory plans being developed in Colombia and in the USA for this 100th Anniversary of missions in Colombia.

COMMISSION ON FEDERAL CHAPLAINS

14. Instructed presbyteries in the United States to encourage each congregation to receive an offering on the last Sunday of May, or another special day, to support our ministry through Presbyterian Council for Federal Chaplains.

15. Encouraged Clergy and Presbytery Committees on Probationer Care, to include in their discussions of a call for a ministerial candidate, the call to chaplaincy as a call to pastoral ministry.
16. Requested that the Missions Ministry Team work in conjunction with the CFC to work with the three presbyteries in Colombia, South America to develop a chaplaincy training program.
17. Recognized Captain Lyman M. Smith, CHC, USN, retired, for his dedicated and faithful service as Executive Director of the Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies (formerly Presbyterian Council on Chaplains and Military Personnel).

MEMPHIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

18. Approved that the third Sunday in August (August 21, 2022 and August 20, 2023) be observed as Seminary/PAS Sunday. And that all churches be encouraged to share information about Memphis Theological Seminary (MTS) and the Program of Alternate Studies (PAS) and receive an offering on that day, or a on a more convenient day of the session's choosing. MTS leadership has committed to focusing these annual funds on growing the Baird-Buck Endowment of CP Studies until the chair in CP studies is fully funded.
19. Requested that the Permanent Committee on Judiciary review and clarify the constitutionality of the seminary's Pre-seminary Program in light of Constitution 6.202.

BETHEL UNIVERSITY

20. Urged presbyteries worldwide to support Bethel University in prayers, financial support and in recommending students.

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

21. Noted a name change to *Cumberland Youth and Family Services* and an increased number on the Board of

Directors (from 18 to 23, with majority being CP).

22. Commended the Cumberland Youth and Family Services staff for their continued work in the care, support and transformation of lives of children and families in all walks of life. Their work to enrich the lives of children and families in crisis situations deserves our continued prayer and financial support.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

23. Expressed appreciation of the dedication and passion of our Historical Foundation Team for the ongoing work of archiving our church history.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS

24. Approved a memorial from Arkansas Presbytery and a Commissioner from Covenant Presbytery, sending the following proposed Constitutional Amendments to the Joint Committee on Amendments for consideration: That the following paragraphs be added to the Constitution as 2.92, 4.2, 6.35, and 7.02 and the numbering of Sections 2.90, 4.0, 6.30 and 7.0 be renumber to include their insertion be amended to read:

2.92 *When a person is in a sexual relationship that is outside the boundaries of marriage as described in the Confession of Faith 6.17, then such a situation makes that person ineligible to be ordained to the office of elder.*

4.2 *When a person is in a sexual relationship that is outside the boundaries of marriage as described in the Confession of Faith 6.17, then such a situation makes that person ineligible to serve as an elder on the session of a church.*

6.35 *No licentiate shall be ordained that is in a sexual relationship that is outside the boundaries of marriage as described in the Confession of Faith 6.17. Such a situation makes that person ineligible to be ordained as a minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.*

7.02 *When a person is in a sexual relationship that is outside the boundaries of marriage as described in the Confession of Faith 6.17, then such a situation makes that person ineligible to serve a church in any of the relationships stated in 7.01.*

(NOTE: To review the Constitutional Amendment process, please see section 11.0 of the Constitution in the Confession of Faith).

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 25.** Declared the following Constitutional Amendments from the 190th General Assembly to be ratified:

- That Constitution 3.071 be amended to read:

“The following persons shall be seated by a judicatory as advisory member with full privilege of speaking to any issue before the judicatory, but no vote:

- a. In sessions, assistant and associate pastors approved and installed by the presbytery.*

- b. In middle judicatories, elected officers of the judicatory, (for example, stated clerk, engrossing clerk, and treasurer), and other official representatives from the judicatory’s standing committees or boards.*

- That Constitution 3.072 be amended to read:

“The following persons may, with the approval of the judicatory, be seated as advisory members of the judicatory upon their introduction by the moderator:

- a. In middle judicatories, visiting ordained Cumberland Presbyterian ministers and elders.*

- b. Elected youth advisory delegates.*

- c. Representatives from higher judicatories.*

- d. Visiting ministers or leaders from other denominations with which the judicatory is in partnership.*

- e. Any other person whose presence would, in the judgment of the judicatory,*

serve the mission and ministry of the judicatory.”

- 26.** Encouraged presbyteries and churches to fill out and return the Visioning Process survey slated to be distributed from the General Assembly Office this fall 2022.

- 27.** That the 192nd General Assembly set aside time to finalize the Visioning Process with input from the Commissioners.

- 28.** Approved the Church Calendar dates for 2022-2023.

- 29.** Adopted the following change to the GA Bylaw 7.01:

Nomination and Election. At the beginning of each annual meeting the General Assembly shall elect a Commissioner to serve as Moderator assuming office immediately upon installation during the worship service the evening of the first day until the next annual meeting. Nominations for Moderator shall come from the floor. One nominating speech, not to exceed ten minutes, shall be permitted on behalf of each nominee. If there is more than one nominee, the election shall be conducted by written ballot. A committee appointed and supervised by the Stated Clerk shall receive the ballots, count them, and certify the election. If no nominee receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election shall be conducted. Only those leading nominees who together received a majority of the votes cast on the preceding ballot shall be included in the run-off election.”

- 30.** Adopted the following change in the GA Bylaws regarding age requirements for Youth Advisory Members who serve on the Ministry Council and the Our United Outreach Committee. The change to GA Bylaw - 10.07 Ministry Council 03 and 11.06 Our United Outreach Committee will now read: *Youth Advisory Members who shall be between the ages of 15-19.*

THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

31. Referred a *Resolution Formally Requesting Congress and the President of the United States to Act on Reasonable Firearm Legislation*, to the Permanent Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns for an in-depth response, to be reported back to the 192nd General Assembly.
32. Approved a memorial from Grace Presbytery that affirms the 1996 statement about homosexuality, and states - *that homosexuality as a practice is not in keeping with the Christian lifestyle and the ordination of church of church leaders who are practicing homosexuals is not compatible with the CP Church's theology and moral values.*

MISCELLANEOUS

33. A Joint Banquet and Program, sponsored by Cumberland Youth and Family Services (formerly known as the Children's Home), Bethel University and Memphis Theological Seminary was held on Wednesday evening. Ms. Courtney Banatoski, Cumberland Youth and Family Services President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Walter Butler, Bethel University President, Reverend Dr. Jody Hill, Memphis Theological Seminary President, brought greetings, video presentations on their respective institutions, and their continuing appreciation for the prayers and mission support given by Cumberland Presbyterians. Reverend Dr. Michael Qualls, Director of the Program of Alternate Studies spoke briefly about the origins of the Program of Alternate Studies in 1983 and the role played by Reverend Norlan Scrudder (Red River Presbytery) who served as the second director of PAS from 1990-1994. Rev. Scrudder was presented with a special plaque of recognition for his service to congregations, presbyteries and the denomination.
34. The Cumberland Presbyterian Women's Convention Luncheon was held on

Thursday. Ms. Autumn White was awarded the 2021-2022 Bethel University Scholarship. New Scholarships were also awarded: Andreas Correa received the Bethel University International Scholarship and Jana Cowgill received the MTS Scholarship. Reverend Socorro Delgado Pejendino, Missionary to Guatemala made a presentation on her work. Ms. Veronica Ent, 2022-2023 President, gave the benediction.

35. Adopted a *Resolution of Thanks* presented by Rev. David Sprenkle, West Tennessee Presbytery.

NEXT MEETING

36. The General Assembly adjourned to meet in Denton, TX on June 18-23, 2023.

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 Center (901-276-4581)
- Copies of the Minutes on flash drive will also be available from the General Assembly Office. Contact Elizabeth Vaughn at: 901-276-4572 or eav@cumberland.org

