

MINUTES
OF THE
GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE
ASSOCIATE REFORMED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(arpchurch.org)

TWO HUNDRED THIRTEENTH STATED MEETING



JUNE 6-8, 2017

BONCLARKEN CONFERENCE CENTER
FLAT ROCK, NC

PROCEEDINGS

BONCLARKEN, FLAT ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA

The 213th Annual Meeting of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) was held at the Bonclarken Conference Center, Flat Rock, NC, June 6-8, 2017.

MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2017

Registration for the General Synod 2017 was held in the Patrick Meeting Room of the Lodge at 2:00 P.M.

The Pre-Synod Conference was held in the Chapel at 7:00 P.M. and featured Dr. Ed Stetzer speaking on the subject "The State of Evangelism in North America."

SPECIAL SYNOD WEEK DENOMINATIONAL
ACTIVITIES

World Witness hosted a golf tournament on Monday, June 5. The *Synod's Kid's Camp* for ages 7-18 was held Tuesday through Thursday at various times. Free child care was offered each day for infants to 6 years old at the Maryalice Cottage.

Reformed Theological Seminary hosted a lunch on Tuesday in the Bonclarken Dining Hall.

On Wednesday, Erskine Seminary hosted a breakfast at 7:00 A.M. and a BBQ lunch at noon in the Headspring Pavilion. In addition, a Pastors' Wives Gathering was held at 9:30 A.M. and ARP Women's Ministries hosted "*Oasis*" at 2:00 P.M.

Outreach North America's "*Church Planting Breakfast*" was held Thursday morning at 7:00 A.M. ARPWM also hosted a breakfast in Synodical Hall for wives of church planters and missionaries.

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2017

Earl and Harriet Linderman led in the informal "Coffee and Psalm Sing" on the Dining Room porch at 7:10 A.M.

Registration continued at 9:00 A.M. in the Patrick Room of the Lodge.

The *Orientation for New Ministers and Delegates* was held at 9:00 A.M. followed by presbytery meetings at 10:00 A.M.

Lunch was served at 12:15 P.M.

The Opening Worship and Communion began at 2:00 P.M.

**OPENING WORSHIP
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2017
Youth Activities Building**

Informal Psalm Sing	C. Earl Linderman
	Harriet S. Linderman, Accompanist
Prelude	Anne Katherine Ragsdale
*Call to Worship	Phil Williams, Moderator
*Song: "Let Them Praise His Name"	
*Invocation and the Lord's Prayer	Phil Williams, Moderator
*The Constituting of the General Synod	Phil Williams, Moderator
Memorial Service	Patrick Malphrus, Vice Moderator
The Listing of Deceased Ministers	
The Listing of Deceased Ruling Elders	
*Song: "Be Thou My Vision"	
Sermon	Patrick Malphrus
"Going Into Battle"	
Text: (I Samuel 4: 1-11)	
*Song: "And Can It Be?"	
The Administration of the Lord's Table	Leslie Holmes
*Song: "How Deep the Father's Love For Us"	
*Benediction	
Postlude	Anne Katherine Ragsdale
(See <i>Appendix</i> for the tributes and the list of deceased Elders.)	

The President of Bonclarken Conference Center, Joseph H. (Chip) Sherer, welcomed the delegates to Bonclarken.

Retiring Moderator Phil Williams addressed the Synod.

Providence (Perseverance of the Saints)

"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedi-

ence - among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:1-7)

Many years ago following a tragic event in my life - due in part to actions taken in a church in which I was a new Christian member- I was compelled to just walk away from the Christian life-quit and deny Christ. After all, being Christ-like just wasn't within my grasp. This Christian stuff hurt too much. On an overnight business trip, I was at a crossroads with my life full of inconsistencies, turmoil, tension and difficulties. The thought entered my mind that being a Christian and depending on others did not work. I vividly remember sitting in the hotel room preparing for the next day; and right before bedtime, I told God that I quit. No more would I pray, read the Bible, try to be a Christian or have anything to do with Him or other Christians. I just simply could not meet the required expectations.

Early the next morning I steeled my mind not to think about prayer, reading my Bible or having any thoughts of Jesus. I was finished with this Christian thing. I was willing to be dead to Christ. As I walked toward the door to leave, the Spirit of God checked me and I fell to my knees in tears praying for his forgiveness, mercy, love and help.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.” (Ephesians 2)

In the Providence of God, you and I were (and are) saved to serve Him with “all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all of our strength.” Life is hard and our ministry is a journey; yet, we are called, justified and equipped to serve. In His providence He has set a task before each of us: pastor, ruling elder, wife, mom, dad, Sunday School teacher, missionary, student, professor, witnesses. All of us whom he called are loved with so great a love that He selected us to serve Him and minister in His kingdom. After all, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? “Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?” (Romans 8:35)

In His Providence, each of the members that comprise our Synod agencies, boards, committees and Central Services has continued to work tirelessly and with great effort to serve the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Our ruling elders, pastors, laymen and women of the church have each likely had a similar time in their lives when they have stopped, and given pause to doubt due to the difficulties in taking up their cross and following Jesus. "But God (in His Providence), being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ." (Ephesians 2)

In the past two years I have witnessed those of you who have served His church exhibiting great diligence, love and respect for each other and devotion to Jesus Christ. I thank you for your leadership, work ethic, and the great affection you have shown to me and my family.

I leave the office of Moderator with a charge to each you. Do not wait to be asked; just serve His Church, serve your presbytery, and serve your Synod. Never forget you are always "Coram Deo" (before the face of God). Thank you for the great joy, privilege and honor of serving you, His people.

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

"Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules - that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:1-9)

Phil Williams

Retiring Moderator Phil Williams presented the Moderator-Elect, Lee Shelnuitt, to the Synod. Mr. Shelnuitt was escorted to the podium where Retiring Moderator Williams transferred the Moderator's Shield to Mr. Shelnuitt with brief remarks. Moderator Shelnuitt presented the Retiring Moderator's Bible to Mr. Williams.

Moderator Shelnuitt presented his Moderator's Challenge to the Synod.

Don't Despise the Day of Small Things

What major anniversary do we as Protestants, as Associate Reformed Presbyterians, celebrate this year? The 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, right?

Imagine with me this scene. The year was 1521. Huge crowds greet Martin Luther as he entered into the city of Worms, for the Diet (a major meeting of both political and ecclesiastical officials). The very Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire himself, Charles V, was there in great part to hear the testimony of Luther. While Luther thought he would have an opportunity to make a case for his views, the Roman Catholic Church and the Emperor had other things in mind. He had been summoned there either to recant or be condemned as a heretic and burned at the stake. After a painful delay, a moment of weakness, a dark night of the soul, when pressed and forced to give his answer — would he recant his writings? — he famously responded in Latin:

"Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience."

Then it is said by some that Luther added in German these famous lines:

"Here I stand, I can do no other. May God help me. Amen."

Spanish soldiers of Charles cried, "El Fuego" - the fire!

As officials conferred, Luther was swept out of the room through the crowded streets and shouting crowds, where he was abducted by "bandits," a.k.a., servants of Luther's friend and German ruler, Frederick the Elector. They covered his head and face and raced in horse and wagon on a circuitous route through forests to finally pull into Wartburg Castle where Luther would go into disguise and hiding, protected from being burned at the stake as a heretic and there given the time and opportunity to translate the New Testament into German, putting God's Word into the language of Martin's people!

It's the stuff of epic Hollywood movies. It is a grand story! It was a big deal! The Reformation was on!

Now, you may be saying to yourself, "but you said that was in the year 1521. If that's the case, why are we celebrating the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in 2017 and not in 2021?"

Ahh, you've been paying attention! Good! Because we mark the beginning of the Reformation not by this momentous, big, powerful, sweeping moment upon which there was no turning back, but rather by another moment, an earlier one, a seemingly insignificant, small moment, when an inquisitive scholar-monk with a troubled conscience wanted to have an intellectual debate on problems he was having with the Roman Catholic practice of indulgences. He walked to the door of the University of Wittenberg's Cathedral door with parchment, nail, and mallet in hand and did something akin to tacking up a "Yard Sale" notice on the local community notice board, or a making a post on your Church's Facebook page. He simply tacked his 95 theses to that door and walked off. But you see, it was that small, quiet, un-extraordinary, seemingly insignificant act that truly marked the beginning of the Reformation, the Reformation that in God's providence in great part gives birth to who we are today!

Over the past few months that historical example and so many more present examples have illustrated for me a pervasive and persistent truth of Holy Scripture. Once you begin noticing it, you can see it everywhere. You soon find it to be like a surprising and beautiful thread woven all throughout a grand tapestry. And that truth is this:

Our glorious, majestic, sovereign God so often exercises His omnipotence in a counter-intuitive way. He uses what Luther himself would describe as left-handed power. Our God so often exercises His omnipotence through the small, the weak, the seemingly insignificant, the foolish, the poor... Or as my main text puts it - He exercises it through the Day of Small Things.

Zechariah 4 is a classic text. Here's the setting. The Jewish exiles who had been in Babylonian captivity, in God's providence, working through the actions of Cyrus, the Persian ruler, had returned home to the Promised Land, to Mt. Zion, to Jerusalem, where the walls of the city and the Temple needed to be rebuilt. As that work began and as they faced opposition from the inhabitants of the land, and as the older Israelites remembered the glory and splendor and impressiveness of the old Temple, their hearts sank at what they saw. It hurt emotionally. It was a bleak time economically and spiritually. What hope was there to have a magnificent Temple like in the day of Solomon?

It is at this point that our gracious LORD sent to His people of old, gracious words, words of assurance and encouragement.

4 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. 3 And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." 4 And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. 7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"

8 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. 10 For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. Zechariah 4:1-10a (ESV)

The rebuilding wouldn't be by the power of a mighty man. It would not be by brute right-handed power. No, it would be by the power of the Spirit and it would happen. Zerubbabel's hands would complete it. They could bank on it and know that they would be joyful when it came to pass before their eyes. Yes, they were financially strained. Yes, they faced opposition. Yes, they were weak. They were a small people in a world of the likes of the Persians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, and a parade of human empires. Yet, they were to trust God and be patient, for one day they would rejoice. They were the sort of people in the very kind of situation in which Yahweh relished to work, in His counter-intuitive, left-handed power sort of way.

For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

Some versions put the verse in the form of a rhetorical question.

For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.

In other words, don't despise the day of small things! There is no need. The LORD is at work, by His Spirit, and one day you will rejoice when you see what He has in store!

Think about this biblical truth and theme. You see it throughout the Bible. Just consider a few instances in the Old Testament. Wasn't it one man and his sons who built the ark? One man who would become the Father of nations? One young slave and prisoner in Egypt would save that nation and his family in the years of famine? Wasn't Gideon commanded to reduce his force to 300 men and then and only then would he gain the victory? Wasn't

the young shepherd son David chosen over his more impressive brothers? Again and again, we see God's left-handed power at work. And that's the message we need to hear, for we are so prone to be like the Israelites in the day of Zechariah. We pine for the good old days. We are discouraged by our smallness, our weakness, our seeming insignificance.

I have been an ARP for 30 years and I dearly love our denomination, but there is something it's hard not to pick up on if you've been an ARP for long, and it's that we get the fact that we are a small denomination. Right? Sure, I suspect there have been some who sometimes, take pride — an unhealthy pride — in being small, as if that's a de facto proof of being more faithful. We know that attitude don't we? And if we find that sort of sentiment in our hearts there's nothing to do but to repent of such sinful foolishness.

But that's really not the dominate sentiment I've noted through the years when we are self-conscious of our size and strength as a denomination. No, the sentiment I have encountered is more like embarrassment with a tint of hopelessness. It is a "poor, poor pitiful us mentality." Yet, through my time as a minister, and my service in Presbytery and Synod, my travels and blessed involvement with World Witness, and through my work this past year as Moderator-Elect, I have witnessed many amazing ways in which God has and is exercising His left-handed power in building and revealing his kingdom! Think about these:

- A father leading his family in prayer and family devotionals;*
- A faithful pastor preparing his messages week after week with love in his heart for God, God's people, and God's Word - steadily committed to the means of grace;*
- A youth minister listening, loving, counseling and putting resources into the hands of a young person struggling with doubts in this antagonistic world;*
- A mother tenderly caring for children in the church's nursery;*
- A senior citizen at a nursing home praying regularly for her church family;*
- Loving tributes given in honor of a beloved spouse, parent, co-laborer who has gone from the Church militant to the Church triumphant, encouraging the grieving;*
- An older congregation reaching out to refugees despite the difficulties and this not being the vision and ministry of the church of their youth;*
- A camp counselor at work revealing the love of Christ to those she works with at Camp Joy, a camp that works so well because of the untold small acts of a whole cadre of disciples of Christ;*
- A young family parachuting into a new community with the hopes of beginning a new church plant;*

- *Accounting minds pouring over budgets at all levels of our denomination, seeking to be good stewards of our resources and our laborers;*
- *A retired minister making sure a Moderator-Elect was encouraged each and every week through handwritten notes, typed letters, and a kind gift;*
- *A college professor with a high view of Special Revelation faithfully loving students as he teaches them of General Revelation;*
- *A seminary professor faithfully encouraging seminarians to consider service in the ARP;*
- *An Army chaplain willing to jump out of airplanes and go to the battlefield to proclaim the Gospel as he lives it to fellow servicemen and women;*
- *Missionary families serving far from home in dangerous situations with the love of Christ and doing so for His glory;*
- *Personnel in a hospital and nursing school, and in schools ministering in the name of Jesus in the very heart of a Muslim stronghold.*

Dear ones, I could go on and on. I am here to tell you that what are seen through natural eyes and a worldly heart as nothing, as small, as insignificant, or even as foolish, I'm convinced are nothing less than examples of the left-handed power of God at work in and through the ARP Church, building and revealing his kingdom. Just as God was with our forefathers of ancient Israel, as they worked at building the kingdom of God, He is with us today.

Let us dare not despise the day of small things! We don't glory in small for the sake of being small but we also don't despise humble, small, weak, beginnings for we know that our God loves to display His power through our weakness and smallness. You see, He calls on us not to trust in our own strength and give glory to our own names but rather to depend upon Him and give Him the glory.

Don't despise the day of small things. After all, wasn't the Lord of the Universe and our Savior veiled in human flesh and laid in a manger? Wasn't the King of kings, nailed to the cross, and seen as a broken, humiliated, criminal with no power at all? Didn't this same Jesus turn the world upside down through a small, rag-tag, band of Galilean fishermen, a tax collector, a zealot, and a former terrorist?

For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

Let's pick up our parchment, nail, and mallet and see what God does! One day we will rejoice!

Lee Shelnutt

Moderator Shelnutt introduced the Vice-Moderator, Bill McKay, to the Synod.

Vice-Moderator McKay presented the proposed program for the 2017 meeting of the General Synod. After a few changes were announced, the program was adopted as amended.

Vice-Moderator McKay made the following formal introductions to the Synod:

Moderator Shelnutt's wife, Joni; daughter, Neidin; Assistant, Heidi Reckard, Jim Curtis, Jim Todd, Michael Cochran and Anthony Navarro. Vice-Moderator McKay also introduced his wife, Janet.

Pages serving this year: Madison Prince, Gresham Smith and Rob Smith.

Videographer: Ben Scott

Sound Technician: Lee Lane

Psalm Sing Leaders: Earl and Harriet Linderman

Musician: Anne Katherine Ragsdale

New ministers who have been received and ordained since the 2016 Meeting of General Synod introduced themselves.

Carolyn Taylor, President of the ARP Women's Ministries, brought greetings from Women's Ministries.

A motion carried to print the greetings in the 2017 Minutes of Synod.

Mr. Moderator, it is an honor to be invited to this meeting of General Synod. On behalf of the Women's Ministries of the ARP Church, I bring you greetings and thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

The vision of ARP Women's Ministries is to encourage, equip, and connect the community of ARP women to minister together for God's glory and purpose. How we as a Women's Ministry organization seek to accomplish the goals of our vision are detailed in my written report to Synod. I'd like to take this opportunity to outline how you as church leaders can partner with us in realizing this vision.

1. *We would ask you as church leaders to encourage women in your congregation to become involved in women's ministries. This goal can be greatly helped by your showing that you value the contribu-*

tions of women in ministry in your church. I ask you to get to know your Women's Ministry officers. These women would be most willing to keep you informed about their activities, just as I have done in my report to Synod. We especially ask you to pray for the work of women's ministries in your church and on the Presbyterian and Synodical levels. Ask your women how you may best pray for them and also what specific support they may need for effective ministry and service. Knowing that the leaders of ARP churches are committed to the work of Women's Ministry is an encouragement to us all.

2. In ARP Women's Ministries, we often find that women feel inadequate to serve in women's ministry leadership roles. While ARP Women's Ministries does provide opportunities to not only grow spiritually but also develop in leadership, we would like to see leadership training for women increase at the local church level, to involve more women and encourage them to develop their leadership ability and give them a godly confidence to serve. The women in your churches may be a vastly under-utilized group who can provide many possibly overlooked avenues of ministry on the local, Presbyterian, and Synodical levels.
3. We would ask you to facilitate and encourage your local women's ministries to participate in Presbyterian and Synodical Women's Ministries events. These events are excellent opportunities to share ideas, discuss common challenges, and offer support to sisters in Christ as they build relationships. At the March Board meeting of ARP Women's Ministries, we were greatly encouraged to hear that Virginia and Tennessee/Alabama Presbyteries have agreed to support their Women's Ministries financially by covering the cost of speaker fees for Presbyterian Women's Ministries retreats. We appreciate the commitment your support demonstrates, and this example of the value you place on women's ministry.
4. Lastly, if your church does not currently have an active and distinct women's ministry, we would ask you as church leaders to prayerfully consider helping your women to begin one. Women Ministries are not "one size fits all," but unique and appropriate to each local church. For local church leadership to promote and facilitate

the formation of a women's ministry would show the value that church places on such a ministry, and would encourage women to become involved. ARP Women's Ministries desires for all women in the ARP church to embrace their God given abilities and roles, and promote interest in service and ministry, finding joy in serving the Lord in their churches and on the Presbyterian and Synodical levels.

In conclusion, I would ask you: will you support us in our vision for ARP Women's Ministries? Will you work with us to realize our goals? Will you commit to women's ministry in your churches, supporting your Women's Ministries officers and encouraging growth among your church's women both spiritually and in leadership and service? We ask for your prayers and support for Women's Ministries on all levels in the coming year. Thank you.

Carolyn Taylor

Principal Clerk C.R. Beard constituted the roll of Synod (see *Appendix* for the Official Roll of Synod.)

The result of the presbytery votes on the *Form of Government* 5:11 proposed revision was announced. The majority of those voting in the various presbyteries voted to approve the revision.

The Principal Clerk called for the official reports of the boards for reference to the Moderator's Committees. All memorials from the presbyteries were referred to the Moderator's Committee on Memorials. Without reading, Moderator Shelnutt's appointments to the Moderator's Committees were considered to be made as circulated.

Synod's afternoon session closed with the blessing and closing prayer by Mansour Khajehpour.

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, EVENING ACTIVITY

The Moderator's Committees met during the evening hours.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, MORNING SESSION

Earl and Harriet Linderman led the informal “Coffee and Psalm Sing” on the Dining Room porch.

James McManus and Bob Cara led the morning devotional.

The Moderator asked all those who have studied under Bob Cara to stand. To honor Bob, all ministers were given a copy of his book, *“Cracking the Foundation of the New Perspective on Paul.”* William Duncan also spoke to honor Mr. Cara. Mr. Cara’s son and daughter were recognized. The Synod was led in prayer by Kyle Sims.

Following a break, the morning business session began at 10:05 A.M.

Kyle Sims, representing the Committee on Inter-Church Relations, introduced the RPCNA fraternal delegate, Bruce Backensto, who addressed the Synod. Mr. Sims led in prayer for the RPCNA

Elder Jeff Temple was introduced as a fraternal visitor from the Canadian Reformed Church.

New Missions/Congregations which have joined the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church since the 2016 meeting introduced themselves.

Seminary and special students who are Under Care of Presbytery introduced themselves.

Special prayer was offered for the new congregations, ministers, and students.

John (Jack) Hill presided over Synod’s recognition of retired minister, retired non-ordained Synod employees and retired missionaries.

The Moderator informed Synod of his 16 methodologies regarding his chairing of the meeting.

The report of the **Special Committee to Review the Form of Government (FOG) Amendments** was presented and adopted.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT AMENDMENTS

In the 2016-17 year, the Special Committee to Review *Form of Government (FOG) Amendments* was not called upon to address any amendments or revisions to ARPC governmental documents. However, the committee was engaged by its chairman, Jim Klukow, to give input into a memorial from the Canadian Presbytery sent to the Theological and Social Concerns Committee of Synod. The insights of the committee members were presented to the Theological and Social Concerns Committee of Synod as information regarding the reasoning behind word changes in the ARPC suggested vows of membership and how those vows related to membership subscription (FOG 4.5 (6)). No action was taken.

The Special Committee to Review *FOG Amendments* would like to remind Synod of the procedure for amending and revising the ARPC *Form of Government*, *Book of Worship*, *Book of Discipline* and its authorized confession of faith and catechisms. This process is explained in CHAPTER 14, REGULATIONS GOVERNING AMENDMENTS. They are as follows:

14.8 All amendments of substance shall be sent to a standing Revision Committee for review. This committee shall report on how the material affects other provisions throughout the *Form of Government*.

14.9 This review by the Revision Committee will take place before the material comes to the floor for approval. Material presented on the floor will be referred to the committee before being acted upon by the court.

The Special Committee to Review *FOG Amendments* operated its first year as appointees of the Moderator. Membership in this committee in subsequent years will follow the normal nominations procedures beginning the 2017-18 year as stated in Synod's *Manual of Authorities and Duties* as approved at Synod 2016.

Since the Special Committee to Review *FOG Amendments* has been able to serve Synod through electronic means regarding its reports, correspondence, meetings, and other business, at this time there is no need to budget funds for its operations.

Recommendations:

1. To remind Synod of the above process for *Form of Government* amendments and revisions. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. To receive and approve this report as a whole. **Synod APPROVED.**

Submitted by:

Jim Klukow, Chairman

The report of the **Special Committee to Revise the *Book of Discipline*** was presented and adopted.

Special Committee to Revise the *Book of Discipline*

- A. At General Synod 2016, the Report of the Special Committee to Review the Judicial Process of the Ecclesiastical Commission on Judiciary Affairs was referred to the Special Committee to Revise the *Book of Discipline* (hereinafter the *BoD* Committee.)

The *BoD* Committee is not aware of any instructions or requests in connection with that referral. The *BoD* Committee did note that in Recommendation #1, the Special Committee to Review the Judicial Process stated that “there is no provision in our *Book of Discipline* for one court of the church to complain against the actions of another court...”

The *BoD* Committee has discussed at length the wisdom of allowing Complaints to be filed concerning a disciplinary matter. Under our present book, “[a]n appeal can normally be made only by an accused party, called the appellant, who has submitted to a regular trial.” (*Book of Discipline*, X.D.2.) Complaints, on the other hand, may be brought “only where the complainants do not have the right of appeal...” (*Book of Discipline*, X.E.3.) In other words, any person under the jurisdiction of the court, other than the alleged offender, may ask a higher court to review the procedures and decisions of a lower court.

In reviewing the purpose of both appeals and complaints, the *BoD* Committee’s desire is to protect the time-honored tradition of keeping open the means whereby the decisions and

actions of a lower court can be subjected to the corrective judgment of a higher court. The current provision for complaints opens a wide door to drawn out and contentious actions that delay the finality of a decision, and thereby potentially damage the peace, purity and unity of the body. The Committee's aim is to craft language and procedures that will both clarify and appropriately narrow this process. (Psalm 15:1-5)

- B. The draft of the revised *Book of Discipline* is being made available to members, churches, and presbyteries for study and comment.

Recommendations:

1. That the draft of the revised *Book of Discipline* be received as information, and made available to members, churches, and presbyteries for study and comment. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That all comments on the *Book of Discipline* draft revision be submitted to the Committee, in care of Leland Beaudrot in Central Services, in Word format, no later than November 15, 2017. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That the Special Committee to Revise *Book of Discipline* submit a final draft to the June 2018 General Synod. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That the Revision Committee study the *Form of Government* Chapter 4 to address the issue of members who withdraw from membership. **Synod APPROVED.**
5. That the Revision Committee study the *Form of Government* Chapter 12.24 to address most of the provisions of the current *Book of Discipline* Chapter X.B. as they appear to be more administrative than disciplinary. **Synod APPROVED.**
6. That the Revision Committee study the *Form of Government* to provide a mechanism whereby one church court may complain against the action or inaction of another court. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted
Eric Wm. Ruschky, Chairman

The *Book of Discipline* draft available at ARP Center, Greenville, SC.

Paul Matthews presented the **Recommended 2018 Allocation of Synod's Unrestricted Funds**. The allocation was **ADOPTED**.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

2018 Denominational Ministries allocations
(Amounts shown in \$000 thousands)

AGENCY	2017 Approved	2018 Requested	2018 Recommended	% of Total Based on Recommended 2018
<u>Boards and Agencies</u>				
Central Services	\$ 314	\$ 326	\$ 326	12.3%
Benefits (covers board expenses)	6.5	6.5	6.5	0.2%
ARP Center Facility	22	22	22	0.8%
Executive Board & Contingency	170	171	171	6.4%
The ARP	88	102	102	3.8%
Stewardship/Foundation	102	99	99	3.7%
<u>Commission & Committees</u>				
Inter-Church Relations	4.6	7.6	7.6	0.3%
Worship	15	15	15	0.6%
Other Committees (1)	27	27	27	1.0%
Sub-Total for Non-Program	\$ 749	\$ 777	\$ 777	29.3%
Bonclarken	\$ 112	\$ 112	\$ 113	4.2%
Christian Education Ministries	205	205	206	7.8%
Erskine (*)	421	439	422	15.9%
ARP Student Union	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.0%
ONA Operations	565	565	566	21.4%
World Witness	565	565	566	21.4%
Program Sub-Total	\$ 1,868	\$ 1,887	\$ 1,874	70.7%
TOTALS	\$ 2,618	\$ 2,664	\$ 2,651	100.0%

(1) Other committees include: Investment, Minister and His Work, Nominations, Ecclesiastical Commission and Special Committees

(*) 2017 Allocation all to Erskine Seminary.

David Sides rose to a point of personal privilege and spoke with regard to the lack of ruling elders chairing Moderator's Committees and leading in prayer on the floor of Synod.

The report of the **Committee on Worship** was presented and adopted.

COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP

The Committee on Worship continues to operate under the purposes and duties it received from the General Synod in 2005, revised in 2009.

In accordance with duties 2 and 4 in the *Manual of Authorities and Duties*, the Committee devotes itself, though not solely or entirely, to the studying of *The Directory of Public Worship*. We have been seeking to equip local congregations for the right worship of God on the Lord's Day.

To this end, we have worked in conjunction with the ARP Center to make our resources more accessible to our congregations. If you visit www.arpchurch.org, you will now find a 'Worship' section under the 'About' tab. This landing page introduces no new material. However, it provides helpful links to our *Directory*, as well as the list of *Recommended Psalters and Hymnals*. We have also collated, though not published, many useful resources regarding worship and worship planning and are encouraging local sessions to work with their presbyteries in these endeavors.

As we have been seeking to equip local congregations for the right worship of God on the Lord's Day, particularly in the planning process, we were pleased to receive help from many local sessions over the past year. It was very encouraging to see so many orders of worship across our denomination effectively modeling the principles laid forth in our *Directory of Public Worship*. In keeping with our third mandate from the *Manual of Authorities and Duties*, the Worship Committee encourages local sessions to review the *Directory of Public Worship* annually and consider their own Lord's Day public worship in light of the *Directory's* teaching. We specifically encourage local sessions to work with their presbyteries for further equipping. However, as always, we welcome any valuable resources that you may find.

In accordance with duty 3, the Committee continues to appoint and provide oversight to its subcommittee for the Bonclarken Music Conference. The conference continues to further musical excel-

lence and spiritual edification. Trip McGill and Lynn Grimsley consistently provide a forum for musical education, as well as ample fellowship and worship for believers. The Committee on Worship sincerely honors their service.

The Committee has also been discussing the merits of a *Directory of Private/Family Worship* and is including the attached paper for Synod's consideration. The paper outlines some of the history surrounding our own *Directory of Private/Family Worship* before it left our *Standards*. Having studied it along with our *Directory of Public Worship*, we are making the recommendation below and awaiting further instruction in this matter.

Finally, the Committee always solicits and welcomes cooperation for the accomplishing of our chief end, be it of the committee or of our individual persons: *to glorify God and enjoy Him forever*.

Recommendations:

1. That the General Synod encourage individuals and sessions to submit nominations of individuals qualified and willing to serve on the Committee on Worship to Synod's Committee on Nominations. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That the General Synod encourage local sessions to review the *Directory of Public Worship* annually and consider their own Lord's Day public worship in light of the *Directory's* teaching. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That a special committee be appointed by the Moderator of General Synod to consider the merits of retrieving or composing a *Directory of Private and Family Worship* and report back with their recommendations at the 2018 Meeting of General Synod. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That the 2017 budget for the Committee on Worship be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**

Paper on *Directory of Private/Family Worship*

Per the *Manual of Authorities and Duties*, the Committee on Worship is charged with seven mandates. Three of these mandates are to "educate on issues encompassing biblical worship and its implications for life and godliness," "encourage family worship and personal devotions," and "provide resources that enhance worship." While fulfilling these duties, the committee has found biblical, creedal, and historical merit to the consideration of a *Directory of Private and Family Worship*.

Biblically, the statement of **Deuteronomy 6:6-7** holds much weight: “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” Likewise, Joshua’s household worship in **Joshua 24:15**, the emphasis on God’s people’s children in **Psalms 78:1-8**, Paul’s command in **Ephesians 6:4**, and Peter’s clear emphasis on family prayer in **1 Peter 3:7** all point to the biblical merit of the practice of family and private devotion. Alongside these specific scriptural instances is the covenantal theme, the principles of family, and God’s faithfulness to generations.

Because of this biblical foundation, the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) states specifically, “But God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth; as in private families daily, and in secret each one by himself” (21.6). It is worth noting that we as presbyters in this denomination confess this as a doctrine unless exception is taken.

Lastly, the history of a *Directory of Private and Family Worship* needs to be discussed. This section will trace the history of the document itself. This is no new idea. The Church of Scotland adopted a *Directory for Family Worship* to be a companion to the WCF in August of 1647 (immediately after the completion of the confession). Though wording, content, and placement within the Constitution of the church changes through the years, the document remains in publication all the way through the Associate years in Scotland, into America before the Synod of the South requested release from the General Assembly, and all the way to the early 2000s in what is now the ARPC. Substantively, it remained the same until 1888. In 1888, two issues came before Synod in the very same memorial. The first was a request to remove the disciplinary clause from the Private Worship chapter (that is, censuring those neglectful of this duty), and the other was a request to remove a clause dealing with instruments in public worship (that is, the request was to allow the use of instruments). This was the start of the ten-year instrument controversy that ended in 1903. This is also what dominated the conversation until the passing of the amendment to the Constitution, which also did away with the disciplinary clause for Private Worship. From 1903 through 2006, Private Worship survived in name within our documents on worship but slowly dwindled to four sentences in a chapter titled “Forms of Worship.” Our Book of Worship had become exactly what the drafters of the 2007 document named it: *The Directory of Public Worship*.

But there is a word of caution and a word of encouragement to be found in our current *Directory of Public Worship*. The word of caution is to be wary of prescriptive language and desirous of descriptive language (DPW Preamble, p. 282). In other words, there is a difference in “prescribing set liturgical forms” and providing a “guide in worship.” This would be of great necessity if a *Directory of Private and Family Worship* were to be considered so as not to fall into legalism. The authors of the current DPW go on to say this of private worship, “we must recognize that public worship flows most beautifully when the people of God also meet with the Lord in private, as individuals or families” (DPW Preamble, p. 284). Also, “Regular individual and family worship are essential expressions of Christian worship” (DPW 3.5, emphasis added). In the committee’s opinion, this is very strong language.

In closing, it is worth noting that the committee does not find that the absence of a *Directory of Private and Family Worship* leaves our standards totally silent on this critical matter; rather, we recognize that what was previously expounded on explicitly in a directory of private and family worship is now mentioned only briefly in our current *Directory of Public Worship*. We note that our denomination concluded that public worship was important enough to merit a document that sets forth public worship according to God’s word. Why would we not do the same for private and family worship? Our Standards as they are now give no further direction on private and family worship. On a key facet of the Christian life for the laity, we are silent, and this leaves a gaping hole for elders who are seeking to shepherd the flock.

IN LIGHT OF THIS, THE COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP RECOMMENDS A SPECIAL COMMITTEE BE APPOINTED BY THE MODERATOR OF GENERAL SYNOD TO CONSIDER THE MERITS OF RETRIEVING OR COMPOSING A *DIRECTORY OF PRIVATE AND FAMILY WORSHIP* AND REPORT BACK WITH THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS AT THE 2018 MEETING OF GENERAL SYNOD. *

*Included in recommendations above

For God’s Glory,
Philip Bunch, Jr., Chairman

COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP

Acct Description	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
Worship Committee		
Revenues		
Worship Committee DM Allocation	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Expenses		
Worship Committee Meeting Exp	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Worship Comm Misc Expenses	0	0
Total Expenses	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Net income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

MUSIC CONFERENCE

<u>Acct Description</u>	<u>2017 Synod Approved</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
<u>Music Conference</u>		
<u>Revenues</u>		
Worship Committee DM Allocation	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000
Music Conf Special Offering	1,200	1,200
Music Conf T-Shirt Sales	900	1,500
Music Conference Registration	56,870	68,800
Total Revenues	\$ 71,970	\$ 84,500
<u>Expenses</u>		
Music Conf Room & Board-See below	\$ 17,495	\$ 21,000
Music Conf Honorariums/Fees-see bel	20,725	24,000
Music Conference Travel	3,400	4,500
Music Conference Supplies-see below	13,150	13,500
Music Conference Fees	16,000	20,300
MC Special Offering Expense	1,200	1,200
Total Expenses	\$ 71,970	\$ 84,500
Net income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

The Vice Moderator assumed the chair. The report of the **Ecclesiastical Commission on Judiciary Affairs** was presented. A motion was offered which would commit the entire situation to a new commission appointed by the Vice Moderator. Discussion ensued and the motion failed. The report of the Ecclesiastical Commission on Judiciary Affairs **was ADOPTED**.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION ON JUDICIARY AFFAIRS

At its 2016 meeting, General Synod referred two complaints to the Ecclesiastical Commission on Judiciary Affairs (ECJA). The first complaint was from Rev. Vaughn Hathaway and the second from Messrs. Ron Berst, Hans Baker and Buddy Murrow. Both complaints were against the actions of First Presbytery at its meeting of April 12, 2016, in which Messrs. Baker, Berst and Murrow were deposed from the office of elder at Lakeside Fellowship.

The ECJA met on July 21, 2016, at the Greenville ARP Church, with several members joining by conference call to consider these complaints. Members present were: Bob Wilson, Bob Illman, James Kidd, Peter Lee, David Rockness, Tim Watson, Craig Woods, Warren Harvey. Also present as advisory members were Lee Shelnutt and Moderator of Synod Phil Williams. Absent were: John Moerman, Derek Thomas and advisory member, Roger Wiles.

The issue of recusal was discussed, and the question was posed as to each member's ability and willingness to participate in an objective, unbiased manner. There were no requests for individuals on the commission to recuse themselves.

The ECJA reviewed the record of the case which included the two complaints referred to it by General Synod and all documents pertaining to the case received from the Stated Clerk of First Presbytery. (See attachment). It was agreed that this was the record of the case.

The ECJA then reviewed the two complaints to see if they were in order. The complaints were read. The question was raised as to whether the complaints had been properly filed with the General Synod since both were addressed to the Stated Clerk of First Presbytery, and in the case of the complaint of Messrs. Berst, Baker and Murrow, the statement expressed an "intent to file" with Synod.

The ECJA determined Mr. Hathaway's complaint in order and agreed to consider it. The ECJA determined that the complaint of

Messrs. Berst, Baker and Murrow was out of order and agreed not to consider it.

Attention was then turned to the complaint from Mr. Hathaway. Each of the numbered reasons in the complaint were read and considered. Discussion was focused on the question of reason #8 in the complaint which states that "The accused never confessed or acknowledged their guilt. The Presbytery could not therefore censure the accused without process. BOD V.A.8" It was noted that the merit of this particular reason in the complaint would affect the merit of the majority of other reasons related to proper procedure in the judicial process.

It was agreed by the ECJA that based on the record of the case at hand, there is sufficient evidence that there was a confession by the three elders in the presence of witnesses at the January 21, 2016, meeting of the First Presbytery Commission to six charges presented by the First Presbytery Commission.

The ECJA then adopted the following:

1. That points #1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8, not be sustained on the basis of there being no requirement for judicial process after the confession of the three elders. BOD, V.A.8
2. That point #2 not be sustained because there is no evidence that the Presbytery viewed the investigative committee as having misunderstood the grounds for censure for filing false charges.
3. That point #7 not be sustained because there is no record that anyone on the investigative committee should have recused themselves and the accused did not challenge any member's participation at the time.
4. That point #9 be sustained, but that the censure of deposition not be changed because of the confession to other charges.

Based upon these findings, the ECJA recommends the following:

Recommendations:

1. That the General Synod sustain the actions of the ECJA as contained in this report. **Synod APPROVED.**

ATTACHMENTS: On file at the ARP Center, Greenville, SC.

Prayer was offered on behalf of the Lakeside Church, First Presbytery and the General Synod.

A request to be recorded as voting against the Commission report was submitted.

The undersigned delegate hereby requests that his negative vote against the action of the General Synod of 2017 in sustaining the report of the ECJA pertaining to the deposition of Mssrs. Ron Berst, Buddy Murrow, and Hans Baker be recorded.

Vaughn Hathaway

The report of the **Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight** was presented.

COMMITTEE ON CAMPUS MINISTRY OVERSIGHT

The Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight met Tuesday, October 7, 2016, and Thursday, March 3, 2017, at King's Cross Church in Charlotte under the leadership of Chairman Bob Stone, Vice Chairman Nathan M. Frazier, and Secretary Mackay Smith.

Campus Ministry for the Future of the Church and the Present

It is important to remember the purpose and vision informing any area of ministry: God has called us "to make disciples of the nations" (Matthew 28:18-2). Campus ministry is significant, both generally as a dimension of the Church *pursuing obedience to the Great Commission*, and specifically as a *strategic* ministry for the future of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. The fruit of campus ministry is seen as our Synod is now being and will be impacted by various Reformed University Ministries. The number of ARP ministries impacted today from the RUF campus ministry at Erskine has been outstanding! There are numerous pastors in our ranks impacted by RUF. Many others impacted from campus ministry now serve throughout our agencies, and especially within our congregations as elders, deacons, and faithful church members. Campus ministry is spiritually nourishing our Synod. Our continued prayerful engagement of, and personal and financial investment in Reformed University Ministries such as Erskine College and Queen's University remains a marvelous way for us to faithfully pursue obedience to the Great Commission for the fu-

ture of the Church and presently experience its quality fruits of growing our Synod.

RUF Campus Ministry at Erskine

RUF at Erskine is grateful to God for another busy year of productive ministry. We have been blessed by two years of faithful service from our married interns, Mr. Alden and Mrs. Taylor Groves. They have worked hard to meet, greet and enfold Erskine freshmen into the avenues of RUF's ministry and community.

We are grateful that we will receive two new interns in August 2017 to continue this outreach to freshmen. Mr. Joshua Harper (Samford) and Ms. Emma Carter (Belhaven) will forge a new RUF intern team of ministry on the Erskine campus.

At the beginning of the Fall semester, freshmen are greeted at move-in day with a welcome and invitation to participate in our large group fellowship and cookouts at the Barn on Sunday evenings. At the Barn in the Fall of 2016, we studied the Gospel of John in a series titled "Come and See!". Then, in the Spring of 2017, we provided a series on *Dating, Marriage and Sexuality: Let's Get Serious*. These avenues of ministry continue to be a highlight in the RUF Erskine experience. Small group Bible studies are also provided each semester, led by the campus minister, the interns and sometimes by upperclassmen.

Our annual participation in the Southeastern RUF Fall Conference at Camp Greystone continues to be a blessing to our students, as was our return to the RUF National Summer Conference at Panama City Beach after missing two consecutive years due to the length of Erskine's Spring semester.

A few highlights from outreach events beyond our weekly offering of ministry events we offered the campus this year were:

The Fall BBQ and Hymn Sing was led by Mr. Will Milks and Mr. David Conley. This event is well received and creates a welcoming environment to host youth groups and prospective Erskine students.

The Barn-K "for JOY!" run (or walk) from the Erskine campus to the Barn to raise money to send local Due West resident Warren Sullivan to Camp Joy continues to be an effective way for students to learn and participate in ministry and service to others. Students are then invited to remain at the Barn for a pizza dinner and for large group fellowship and Bible study.

All our ministry events and activities are purposed to reach and equip students with the Gospel. We are grateful to be able to contribute healthy avenues of ministry and community for Erskine students through our relationship with Reformed University Fellowship, and

pray for God's continued blessings and favor on Erskine and her students in the years to come!

RUF Campus Ministry at Queens University of Charlotte

In the midst of great spiritual need at Queens University of Charlotte it has been exciting to see how God has been at work through RUF to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve. This gospel work has been possible through the prayers and support of individuals, churches, and presbyteries in our denomination.

First, *God has been at work in the gathering of students*. Going into the fall we had one student contact. In answer to prayer, through a variety of outreach efforts by mid-October our student group was officially registered with 20 students. Throughout the spring, visitors continued to come to RUF through advertising on campus, outreach events (we sponsored several free food events as a way to establish common ground, meet new students, and tell them about RUF), and students inviting their friends; many of these visitors become regularly involved in RUF. The majority of our students were either freshmen or sophomores, which is exciting for the future of the ministry.

Second, *God has been at work in the reaching and equipping of students through our avenues of ministry*. Our new avenues of ministry were small group Bible studies and one-to-one meetings between students and the campus minister. In the fall, we studied the Lord's Prayer, and in the spring, we studied the "I Am" Sayings of Jesus and "How to Read the Bible." Queens has a formal affiliation with the PC (USA), and most of our students come from either mainline Protestant or non-denominational backgrounds, so there have been many discipleship opportunities to share the clarity of the grace of the gospel and the sufficiency and applicability of Scripture. It is clear from feedback that RUF became a place of spiritual refreshment for our students. We were also blessed with evangelistic opportunities with students who came to RUF and do not yet profess faith in Christ.

As the spring semester ended, we began developing the core group of a ministry team which will engage students in ministering to their fellow students next year under the leadership of the campus minister. This ministry team will be part of our efforts to explore adding a large group avenue of ministry in the coming school year. We ended this first year of ministry by taking a group of students to RUF's National Summer Conference in Panama City Beach.

We look forward to seeing how God will continue to be at work through the ministry of RUF at Queens!

Future Prospects

The Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight has been approached this past year by those interested in partnering with the General Synod to establish other RUF campus affiliations. We see this as the Lord's blessing of our current ministries at Erskine and Queens. However, we have encouraged all such endeavors and/or conversations to begin within our standard presbytery structure of authority over Gospel ministries.

Our Committee is greatly encouraged by the faithful ministries of Mr. Paul Patrick at Erskine College and Mr. Josh Grimm at Queens University. We are also encouraged by the continued interest among our congregations in partnering with both of these ministries and others. We recognize that the original design of the committee itself at the time necessitated only Erskine College. As a committee of only a few members, we have felt the strain of overseeing and encouraging two ministries to encourage instead of one. We have accepted this challenge but seek the help of an additional member to be added to the committee in the coming year of nominations.

Recommendations:

1. That Synod approve the addition of one minister to the Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight beginning July 2018 and that the *Manual of Authorities and Duties* (in the section on Campus Ministry Oversight) be amended as follows:

Membership: At Large: ~~(5)~~ (6) members. ~~Three (3)~~ Four (4) shall be ~~teaching elders~~ ministers and two (2) shall be ruling elders. **Synod APPROVED.**

2. That the General Synod give thanks to God for our partnership with the Reformed University Ministries of the PCA and offer prayers of thanksgiving and supplication to God for successful Gospel ministry to continue in the coming years. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Stone

Note: Budget information for Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight is included in the Executive Board report.

A motion carried

That the term "teaching elder" in recommendation #1 be changed to "minister."

Recommendation #1, as amended, was approved. Recommendation #2 was approved.

Prayer was offered on behalf of campus ministries everywhere.

Moderator Shelnutt assumed the chair. Synod recessed for lunch with the blessing and closing prayer by Dan Layman. The Synod members dismissed to the lake embankment for a photograph of the entire membership.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon devotional was led by Stephen Richardson and Keith Ackerman.

Jack Sawyer spoke on behalf of OPC. EPC fraternal delegate, John Dorr, addressed Synod.

Billy Barron prayed for Andrew Brunson and family. Larry Littlejohn prayed for Ron Brunson and his wife. Kyle Sims prayed for OPC and EPC.

The report of the **Committee on Investment** was presented and adopted.

COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT

The Investment Committee oversees various investments owned by General Synod, presbyteries, agencies, congregations, and individuals. The committee meets at least quarterly with its investment consultants to review portfolio performance and asset allocation and make any necessary changes in investment managers or investment strategies. Representatives of Synod agencies and boards with funds

invested under the oversight of the committee are invited to participate in Investment Committee meetings in an advisory capacity.

Duties as prescribed in the *Manual of Authorities and Duties* are:

a. Developing guidelines for the work of the committee.

The Investment Committee reviews their Investment Policy Statement on an annual basis to revise as needed.

b. Management of all investment funds under the oversight of the ARP Foundation/Stewardship (including the funds of the General Synod) and the Board of Benefits.

These funds represent three distinct types of investments: The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Retirement Plan Trust, Endowment and Endowment-type Funds, and Charitable Remainder Trusts and Gift Annuities.

(1) Associate Reformed Presbyterian Retirement Plan Trust. The Investment Committee meets on a quarterly basis with financial advisor The Corpening Group (Alex.Brown a subsidiary of Raymond James) to receive reports, evaluate the performance of the Trust Fund, and make recommendations as to the management of our portfolio.

The value of the Trust Fund as of December 31, 2016, was approximately \$51,725,000. The value of the Trust Fund as of December 31, 2015, was approximately \$49,158,000.

(2) Endowments and Endowment-type Funds and Various Managed Funds. The Investment Committee also meets on a regular basis with financial advisor Cornerstone Management to receive reports, evaluate the performance of these funds, and make recommendations as to the management of our portfolio. These individual accounts belong to churches, presbyteries, agencies and organizations of the General Synod. Conservative, Moderate, Moderate Aggressive, and Aggressive investment options are available based upon the risk profile and fund selection made by each account holder. As of December 31, 2016, in aggregate the fund values totaled approximately \$18,813,000. For the year prior, as of December 31, 2015, fund values totaled approximately \$20,727,000.

(3) Charitable Remainder Trusts and Gift Annuities. The Investment Committee provides investment oversight over the ARP Foundation's charitable remainder trusts and gift annuities on behalf of the

ARP Foundation Board of Directors. Each charitable trust is a separately invested entity, with a combined total value on December 31, 2016, of approximately \$306,400.00. The balance in the Gift Annuity Fund on the same date was \$125,700.00. The total sum of funds under the management of Cornerstone Management as of December 31, 2016, was \$432,100.00. The total sum of funds under the management of Cornerstone Management as of December 31, 2015, was \$471,700.00.

c. Reviewing all current investment relationships for funds currently invested under the oversight of the ARP Foundation/Stewardship and funds of the Board of Benefits.

As stated above, The Corpening Group serves as the investment consultant on the ARP Retirement Plan Trust and Cornerstone Management, Inc. serves as consultant for the endowment and endowment-type funds as well as the charitable remainder trusts and gift annuities.

Consideration of national and international economic factors brought a better than expected return in 2016 than was reported last year.

The Corpening Group reported on the performance of the Retirement Fund investments. The overall report was positive and encouraging in all aspects evidenced by a 7.45% annual return for 2016.

Cornerstone reported that individual portfolio allocations were good, yielding between 4% and 9%, exceeding model benchmarks for the respective investment models.

d. Discuss with other boards and agencies the possibility of including their funds in those under management.

The committee is available to assist any church, presbytery, agency or organization of the General Synod both in an advisory capacity and to exercise responsibilities authorized by asset owners. Contact the Executive Director of Central Services with your questions regarding the financial services, including account set-up, management, and individual on-line account monitoring that may be available to your respective church, presbytery, or agency.

Important considerations for the Synod:

The Investment Committee recognizes that 2016 was a good year for ARP investments. It should be remembered, however, that the investment model of our financial advisors and money managers is

not based upon the short-term volatility difficulties of financial markets but upon long-term strategies. Historic considerations show years when investments do very well and years like 2016 when investments are reasonably good. Long term financial strategy is the focus of our considerations and not the volatility of the markets.

Officers for 2017–2018:

Matt Wylie	Chairman
Michael Noel	Vice Chairman
Chip Smith	Treasurer
Roger Wiles	Secretary/Administrative Officer

Recommendations:

1. That this report be received as information. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That the committee be granted \$5,500 for committee travel and expenses. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted,
Kenneth Richey, Chairman

COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT

	<u>2017</u> <u>Synod</u> <u>Approved</u>	<u>2018</u> <u>Proposed</u>
Revenues		
Denominational Ministry Allocation	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500
Total Revenues	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500
Expenses		
Committee Travel & Meeting	\$ 5,300	\$ 5,300
General Office-Copy, Etc	200	200
Total Expenses	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

Prayer was offered for the work of the committee.

The report of the **Committee on Minister and His Work** was presented and adopted.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTER AND HIS WORK

The Committee on Minister and His Work (MHW) met on April 6, 2017, at Bonclarken. Charles Edgar gave a report on the Presbyterian and Reformed Council on Chaplains (PRCC). As of September 1, 2017, Jim Carter will be the new Executive Director for the PRCC. The PRCC continues to provide excellent care for our chaplains and for that we are grateful. The three ARP representatives to the PRCC are: Charles Edgar, Mike Yarman and John Rogers.

The 2017 fees for our chaplains are \$800.00 per chaplain. This cost has incrementally increased from \$500 per chaplain and will increase until it is \$1000.00 per chaplain. Synod pays \$600.00 and each Presbytery will be responsible to pay the additional \$200.00 for each of their chaplains this year. Payment is to be coordinated through Central Services.

The following were listed as expenses to be figured into the 2018 budget:

\$14,500.00	Net PRCC Chaplain fees*
410.00	Room and meals for 3 delegates to PRCC
600.00	Travel to the PRCC
1,000.00	Committee Travel & Meetings
<u>100.00</u>	General Office
\$16,610.00	Total net budget

Roger Wiles, Executive Director of Central Services, pointed out that each Student of Theology in our presbyteries must be offered participation in Synod's Health Insurance program. If he refuses, he must sign a waiver refusing Synod's Health Insurance and return it to Central Services. Waiver forms may be secured from the website:

<http://arpchurch.org/central-services/#benefits>.

The officers elected to serve on the Committee on Minister and His Work for the coming year are: John Rogers, Chairman, Kent Moorlach, Vice-Chairman, and Bob Gordon, Secretary.

Recommendations:

1. That the following be designated as representatives to the PRCC for 2018: Charles Edgar, Mike Yarman and John Rogers with Bob Gordon as an alternate. Synod **APPROVED**.
2. That the budget for 2018 for Minister and His Work be \$16, 610.00*. Synod **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted,
John M. Rogers, Chairman

COMMITTEE ON MINISTER AND HIS WORK

	<u>2017</u> <u>Synod</u> <u>Approved</u>	<u>2018</u> <u>Proposed</u>
Revenues		
Denominational Ministry Allocation	\$ 15,700	\$ 15,700
Presbytery-PRJC above \$600/minister	1,900	6,600
Total Revenues	\$ 17,600	\$ 22,300
Expenses		
Committee Travel & Meeting	\$ 4,300	\$ 2,500
Presbyterian and Reformed Joint Com	\$ 13,300	\$ 19,800
Total Expenses	\$ 17,600	\$ 22,300
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

*The actual figure is \$23,810. Each chaplain's fees are \$900.00 in 2018. Synod pays \$600.00 for each chaplain. The additional \$300.00 is made up by the presbyteries.

Prayer was offered for the work of the committee.

Mike Yarman introduced Doug Lee, representing PRCCMP. John Rogers offered prayer for ministers, chaplains, and active military.

Lee Shelnutt called Allen Derrick forward to thank him for sending personal notes of encouragement throughout the year.

The report of the **Committee on Theological and Social Concerns** was presented.

COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

INTRODUCTION:

At the 2016 meeting of the General Synod, the Canadian Presbytery memorialized the General Synod as follows:

CANADIAN PRESBYTERY MEMORIAL #1:

***Preamble:** The challenge to keep the ARPC on a path that embraces a meaningful confessional foundation needs to be kept in the foreground. In that regard, the Canadian Presbytery has reviewed the membership vows each prospective member is required to affirm. Of particular interest has been the old #5¹, and the new #6².*

***Whereas,** we believe the intent of rewording the vows of membership was to safeguard the doctrinal integrity of the ARP Church, and to allow for a substantive organic union amongst her members, and*

***Whereas** it is the considered view of Canadian Presbytery that, in seeking to strengthen our confessional commitment, we have actually weakened it with the adoption of the new #6³, and*

***Whereas** the church is well served by the opportunity to grapple with the meaning of membership subscription, and what being confessional looks like at the membership level.*

***Be it resolved** that General Synod take appropriate action to reinstate the edited version of the old #5 in place of the new #6. The vow would thus read: Do you accept the doctrines and principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, so far as you understand them, as agreeable to and founded on the Word of God, and are you willing to submit to them as a member of this church?*

***Be it further resolved** that General Synod emphatically remind each congregation's session that it is a violation of the Form of Government to tamper with the meaning and intent of any of the vows, including the subscription vow; and that when allowance is made in chapter 4.5 A to use "the following or equivalent questions," the word equivalent does not allow for any substantive changes.*

A motion carried to refer this Memorial to the Committee on Theological and Social Concerns. The following is the Committee's response.

Biblical Considerations

Given that the Scriptures do not directly address the issue of membership subscription or provide a list of membership vows, the Committee has proceeded under the provisions of *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WCF) 1.6, referring to matters that are “either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture,” and “that there are some circumstances concerning... the government of the Church..., which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word.”

Membership in the Old Testament church was essentially conterminous with membership in the commonwealth of Israel. The sign of the covenant was to be placed on all male children “whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not your offspring” (Gen. 17:12). Those who had been circumcised as well as, presumably, the female members of the covenant were required to observe the Passover as a memorial of their deliverance from captivity (Exod. 12:14). Provision was also made for foreigners to participate in the Passover meal in becoming a member of the covenant community. “If a stranger would sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. ...There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you” (Exod. 12:48-49).

In addition to circumcision and the Passover, all members of the covenant community were to bear witness to their faith in the God of Israel by obedience to his commandments. “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord” (Deut. 10:12-13).

The criteria for membership in the OT church were a profession of belief in the God of Israel, evidenced by males receiving the sign of circumcision, and a commitment to obey what God commanded. Those were the terms under which both ethnic Israel and foreigners such as Rahab (Joshua 2:8-13, 6:25-26) and Ruth (Ruth 1:15-17) were considered members of the OT church. Teaching God’s will and ways to the OT church was the responsibility of the priests and prophets authorized by God, and the organic union of the church was maintained by submission to God, to his word, and to the government and

discipline of the “church under age” (WCF 19.3).

The New Testament church presents both continuity with, and change from, the OT church. The church is no longer conterminous with the ethnic commonwealth of Israel, but the pattern for admission to and remaining in the church is strikingly similar. In launching the NT church, Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20). Following Peter’s evangelistic sermon on Pentecost we read, “So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:41-42). The prerequisites for membership in the NT church were faith in Christ, baptism, and submission to the Lordship of Christ and to the authority of the church.

Following admission to the NT church, the unity of the church was maintained by willingness “...to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...” (Eph. 4:1), by growing in the faith (“and he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (Eph. 4:11-14), and by submission to the government and discipline of the church (“obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls...” (Heb. 13:17)).

Theological and Ethical Considerations

The current wording of Question 6 requires a prospective communicant member to “accept that the doctrines and principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church are founded upon the Scriptures.” The Canadian Presbytery memorial adds the qualifier, “so far as you understand them,” but also requires a willingness to “submit to them.” In both cases, this requires the prospective member at least know what the “doctrines and principles” are and what the Scriptures teach regarding them. Given the size and complexity of the ARP Standards, this requirement constitutes a substantial burden for Chris-

tians with experience in Presbyterian and Reformed churches—more so for new(er) believers, for transfers from non-Reformed backgrounds, and for those with mental limitations. Without such knowledge, the prospective member would be in violation of the following:

- WCF 20.2: “God alone is lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship. So that to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience, and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.”
- WCF 22.3: “Whoever taketh an oath, ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act, and therein to avouch nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the truth.”
- WCF 22.5: “A vow is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and ought to be made with like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness.”

While it could be argued that membership classes might provide sufficient knowledge to meet the criteria of Question 6 and the Canadian memorial, neither the Scriptures nor the Westminster Standards require such knowledge, and the question, “How much knowledge is sufficient?” still would remain. Rather, the approach to membership supported by Scripture and by the Westminster Standards is to profess faith in Christ, to be baptized (if not already), to submit to the government and discipline of the church, to be added to the visible church, and then to be taught the “doctrines and principles” of the faith. Consider, for example:

- WCF 25.2: “The visible church...consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children...”
- Westminster Larger Catechism 63: “The visible church... offers grace by Christ to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying that whoever believes in him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come to him.”
- WCF 25.3: “Unto this catholic visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life...”

Ecclesiastical and Historical Considerations

Membership Vows of Similar Presbyterian Churches

A survey of the membership vows required in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in America, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America reveals that they contain questions similar to vows 1-5 and 7 in the ARPC *Form of Government*. However, none of them requires acceptance of its doctrines and principles as founded on the Word of God, or a willingness to submit to such doctrines and principles, as a prerequisite for church membership.

History of Membership Subscription and Related Issues in the ARPC

A member of an assembly is defined in a parliamentary sense as: “a person having the rights to full participation in its proceedings.”⁴ This definition allows for members ordinarily and freely to “act within the assembly according to their own judgment.”⁵ The previous quotation indicates there are no tiers of membership—either a person is in good standing with full privileges, or he or she is not. Privileges such as the right to vote cannot be assigned to one tier of membership and not to another. The second quotation acknowledges that differences of opinion are allowed within that membership. Matters of conscience are judgment calls, distinct from general expectations or from membership requirements.

Robert's Rules of Order (RRO) also states that bylaw articles for membership usually include sections covering classes of membership as well as qualifications of membership. Classes of membership can include active, associate, and the like. Qualifications—or eligibility for membership—define the procedures of application and acceptance for becoming a member. RRO recognizes that the qualifications or eligibility for a member differ in degree from that of an officer in an association. These differences may (and do) vary as vows relate to heightened expectation and to duties within the association.

Member commitments include two types of duties: compulsory and non-compulsory. Non-compulsory duties include serving on a committee or writing a paper for the association. Compulsory duties include items such as attendance requirements and the payment of dues. If there are specific duties or expectations of a member, in order for those expectations to be valid, they must be specified beforehand. Furthermore, if membership requirements are changed after a period of time and those requirements become more specific or enhanced, the

association will have created a two-tiered membership: those who accepted the previous standards of membership and those newer members who are required to meet the new (possibly more stringent) standards.

This brings us to the matter of membership subscription within the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC). Has it changed in any significant way during its history going as far back as its Scottish roots? What issues have influenced the ARPC views on membership subscription in the past? And, do the current membership vows of the ARPC support, strengthen, or diminish its position on membership requirements and expectations? Below are a few examples within Presbyterian history of attempts to adjust membership subscription requirements.

As far back as the 13th century in Scotland there is no indication that membership subscription was an issue as almost all of Europe was Roman Catholic. By the end of the 14th century the Reformation had reached Scotland, and the Scottish population became associated with Presbyterianism.⁶ During the reigns of Charles II and James II, some Presbyterian ministers deserted the Presbyterian Church and joined the Prelacy or became Episcopal. When the Scottish Presbyterians re-organized under the reign of William III, the Prince of Orange, both those who became Roman Catholic and those who joined the Church of England were received without having to denounce their recent past membership and/or to answer more stringent questions to insure they would not abandon the National Church again. These previously defecting Presbyterians were willing to subscribe to anything in order to keep their jobs in the newly organized National Church of Scotland, yet they were never asked to subscribe to church membership vows beyond what had been commonly used in the past.⁷

It was not until the Auchterarder (1717) and Marrow Controversies (1718), which sought to impose higher moral and theological standards for membership, that subscription issues surfaced in the Church of Scotland. The key proposition of the Auchterarder Controversy was the removal of the potential member's sins as a prerequisite before he could become a member. Within the Marrow Controversy there arose the concept of a potential member needing to prepare for grace in order to be redeemed. The Seceders held that "a sinner was unable to make any preparations and none was required" for salvation.⁸ The Seceders' view became the standard used for membership in the Presbyterian Church.

A later development concerning membership related to the Burgess Oath.⁹ A potential member was examined to determine if he believed

in the right to extend the borough vote to a non-Protestant (Roman Catholic), thus allowing that person to have influence in civic issues. This oath, connected to church membership, was designed to renounce the Roman Catholic religion, which in turn denied a Roman Catholic access to Scottish citizenship, leaving him with no political power.

Neither the Auchterarder, Marrow, nor Burgess-oath issues proved to enhance church membership. To the contrary, the addition of issues unrelated to conversion appears to have lessened the concern for a person's faith and moral behavior.

In 1820 the two Synods reunited and were named "The United Associate Synod." In the debates between the Old Side and the New Side, subscription issues related to *ordination* arose, but these debates did not include stricter membership-subscription vows.¹⁰ The Old Side's concern was for candidates for ordination rigidly subscribing to the whole Westminster Confession of Faith, especially the chapters on civil government. The Old Side also required the candidate to be thoroughly educated, yet held to a culpable indifference regarding the candidate's piety. The Old Side accused the New Side of having little respect for a candidate's intellectual and educational qualifications. The New Side was more concerned with the candidate's subjective piety than with his formal theological training.

Membership requirements in Presbyterian denominations have regularly been seen as similar to the requirements for admittance to communion, as was and is the case in the ARPC. The "Little Constitution" of 1782, sections 6 and 7, articulated the terms of admission to communion. They were as follows: 1) "soundness of faith" as defined by the Confession and Catechisms; 2) "submission to the Government and discipline of the Church"; and 3) to live a "holy conversation."¹¹ These terms were general, which allowed individual Sessions to define the degree to which they were understood and practiced. They were not absolutely restrictive nor were they absolutely catholic in nature. The general rule appears to be that if sinners cannot make preparation for salvation, and none was required, then admittance to communion was also open to anyone who was a member in good standing within a recognized Christian church. Being in good standing meant membership in a congregation that required the minimums of the three terms listed above. As the years progressed, the ARPC moved from closed (restrictive) communion to what is now known as open communion.¹²

Two caveats developed from the “Little Constitution.” The first was that one set of terms was used to admit people to what was called a “fixed” communion, which referred to the regularly scheduled serving of communion in the local church. There was a second set of terms (with lower doctrinal and pietistic-behavioral expectations) used for what was called “occasional” communion. Occasional communion was similar to the current ecumenical community services experienced today in which communion may be served to whomever is present without any direct spiritual oversight by elders. In the 19th century, occasional communion was rarely participated in by the ARPC. However, fixed communion, as was the bi-annual practice of most ARP churches, only required a member to be in good standing with his membership vows for admittance to the Lord’s Table--nothing more.¹³

From 1799 to the present day the *Book of Government* for the ARPC has undergone such radical changes as to create new standing committees, to alter the structure of Synod and the procedures of ecclesiastical courts, and to affirm teachings on such matters as the nature of Scripture and eligibility for ordination. It is striking that since the Scottish Covenants of the 18th century, however, there is no record of debates about altering the three general categories of examination for Church membership (as listed above for acceptance to communion). Even today most denominations still use the structure of the three basic categories related to conversion to examine the acceptability of a candidate for membership in the church.

The ARPC Constitution of 1953 in Section II, under the heading “Admission of Membership,” reflects the consistent, general, historic view of membership requirements. This position was held as long ago as the 1782 “Little Constitution.” There, the 1953 document enumerated the general requirements of membership as “(a person’s) knowledge, faith [sic] and purpose of obedience to Christ.” There is no indication in this introductory statement or in the membership vows that followed of an expected depth or degree of understanding of Presbyterian polity, of the potential member’s theological training, or of his current convictions in matters of conscience. The three membership vows conspicuously omit a requirement for a commitment beyond what would be expected of a new convert.

The current ARPC *Form of Government* adopted in 2014 follows an identical pattern as that of the “Little Constitution” of 1782 regarding requirements for communicant membership (4.5). It requires that a person be privately examined by the Session: 1) “with regard to a knowledge of their spiritual need;” 2) “their faith in Jesus Christ;” and

3) "their intention to be obedient to Him."

The 1953 membership vows that follow the introductory statement on membership deliberately do not address the extent of the candidate's theological knowledge, nor do they probe the consistency by which he practices his convictions. Paragraph two states, "The purpose of this examination is not to find out the extent of the applicant's knowledge, but to ascertain whether he has correct views of the way to be saved and has in heart accepted the Lord Jesus as his Savior" (4.2.2).¹⁴ These comments within the ARPC Constitution of 1953 thus describe the level of theological commitment required for membership. That commitment relates to the issues surrounding conversion, including the grounds for salvation and reception of Jesus as Savior. The assumption appears to be that the conversion-and-confession model in the NT is the extent to which church membership requirements are to be established in the ARPC (cf. Acts 16:14; 18; 30).

This brief summary of membership requirements in the ARPC reveals that on a number of occasions Presbyterians have attempted to increase the level of commitment of potential members by adding additional or more-stringent requirements to membership vows. These additions went beyond what was described in Scripture concerning conversion, baptism, and communion. These changes have not proven to be effective in maintaining the peace or purity of the Church. To the contrary, they reflected controversies that split the Church as they overreached into matters of conscience or demanded a spiritual maturity beyond the examples of those who were accepted into the Apostolic Church.

This summary underscores three trends in the history of the ARPC concerning its membership vows. First, the ARPC has repeatedly aligned its membership vows to its requirements for admittance to the Lord's Table, which have been and are general in nature and relate to a person's profession of faith upon conversion to Christianity. Those expectations have been restricted to a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as one's Savior and Lord. Second, there is no historical evidence that heightened spiritual, theological, or moral conditions, when added to membership vows, have substantially improved the spiritual quality of the Church. An argument from history can be made that additional and more stringent expectation of officers does affect (and has affected) the health of the Church, but such practice has not translated well when applied to communicant membership. Third, membership subscription in the ARPC has consistently limited itself to fundamental salvific issues related to: 1) a sinner believing in salvation

by grace through faith alone; 2) that Jesus is the only Savior; and 3) that regeneration includes a noticeable change in lifestyle from self-orientation to acceptance of God's moral standards.

It is notable that for more than 235 years the three categories of vows (soundness of faith, submission to Church government, and holy behavior) and the degree to which those vows address the piety of a prospective member (in terms of the expectations for a sincere convert) have not changed. They have remained for the most part minimal, straightforward, and centered upon an authentic confession of faith rather than the candidate's theological understanding of doctrines and ecclesiastical practices.

Related Statements from the ARPC *Form of Government*

Returning to the present day, and to gain further clarity in the matter, it is helpful to reflect also on statements within our current *Form of Government*:

- ARPC *Form of Government* 3.1: "A congregation is a company of Christians, with their children, associated together according to the Scriptures for worship and ministry in the name of Christ, subscribing to a form of church government, and choosing and ordaining some to perform selected ministries."
- 3.2: "The purpose of a congregation is to glorify God by conducting public worship, bringing the lost to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, building them up in the Christian faith, and preparing them for Christian service."
- 4.1: "A communicant church member is one who has made public his profession of faith in Jesus Christ, who has been baptized, and who has submitted to Christ's Lordship and to the authority of the Church. The communicant member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of the congregation..."
- 4.4: "Church members are required to: A. Make diligent use of the means of grace. B. Share faithfully in the worship and service of the church. C. Give of their substance as the Lord may prosper them. D. Render wholehearted service to Christ and His kingdom throughout the world. E. Continue in the peace and fellowship of the people of God. F. Submit to the authority of the elders. G. Live so as to bear faithful witness to the Gospel."

- 4.5: “Applicants received by a profession of faith into church membership shall be examined by the Session in private with regard to a knowledge of their spiritual need, their faith in Jesus Christ, and their intention to be obedient to Him.”

Conclusion

The Committee on Theological and Social Concerns respectfully believes that the crafters of the memorial erred in their belief that “... the intent of rewording the vows of membership was to safeguard the doctrinal integrity of the ARP Church, and to allow for a substantive organic union amongst her members.” The safeguarding of the doctrinal integrity of the ARP Church is the responsibility of the government of the church in its adherence to the Standards of the church; and the organic unity of the church is achieved by the Holy Spirit working through the teaching, fellowship, and government and discipline of the church to equip the members for the work of ministry and to build them up into full maturity in Christ.

Our survey of the Scriptures, the Westminster Standards, the practice of similar denominations, the history of the ARP Church, and the ARPC *Form of Government* reveals that there is no basis for requiring any form of subscription to the “doctrines and principles” of the ARP Church as a prerequisite for communicant church membership. As described in the ARPC *Form of Government*, the only prerequisites for membership in the ARP Church are faith in Christ, baptism, and submission to Christ’s Lordship and to the authority of the Church. The vows for communicant membership are based on those prerequisites.

Furthermore, the Committee finds that Question 6, even in its current form, could be considered a requirement for subscription and therefore would not be consistent with *Form of Government* 4.1, 4.4 and 4.5.

Finally, the Committee is not aware of any reports of sessions tampering with the “meaning and intent of any of the vows,” nor did the makers of the memorial provide any evidence of such tampering. The Committee therefore finds no reason for Synod to issue a special warning against such tampering at this time.

¹Do you accept the doctrines and principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, so far as you understand them, as agreeable to and founded on the Word of God? (2008 FOG, p. 192)

²Do you accept that the doctrines and principles of the Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church are founded upon the Scriptures? (2014 FOG 4.5.A.6)

³There are two reasons we (the makers of the memorial--Ed.) believe that the old vow is superior: 1) because the old vow emphasizes that the doctrines and principles are not only founded on the Word, but also agreeable to it, and 2) because the old vow includes the phrase "as far as you understand them."

⁴Henry M. Robert and William J. Evans, *The Scott, Foresman Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (9th ed., New York: Scott, Foresman, 1990), 2.

⁵Ibid., 3.

⁶Robert Lathan, *History of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South 1782-1882* (Harrisburg: Author, 1882), 15.

⁷Ibid., 12.

⁸Ibid., 31, 151.

⁹Ibid., 135.

¹⁰Ibid., 140.

¹¹Ibid., 195.

¹²James W. Gettys, *The Second Century: A History of the Associate Reformed Presbyterians 1882-1982* (Greenville: ARPC Synod, 1982), 71.

¹³Ibid., 71.

¹⁴*Constitution of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* (Due West: A.R. Presbyterian Publishing Co., 1953), 38.

Recommendations:

1. That the Canadian Presbytery Memorial on Question 6 of the membership vows not be adopted.
2. That the Report of the Committee and Theological Concerns be received as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph E. Rolison, Chairman

A motion carried

that Index 26 be referred back to Committee on Theological and Social Concerns for further study and simplification.

A motion carried

that the Moderator appoint a special committee to study the matter of domain names, the committee to include Tony Locke and Sal Macaluso, and that Roger Wiles be advisor to the committee. The committee may report to the Executive Board its findings, conclusions and motions. If the Executive Board determines that the matter is of an emergency nature, it may act to adopt the motions. If not, the committee will report to General Synod 2018.

A new CEM event was announced—Camp Joy Florida at Lake Placid. Two videos were presented at this time, one on the work of CEM and the other on Camp Joy.

The report of **Christian Education Ministries** was presented.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRIES

No matter what the weather, we all want our homes to withstand the storm. Ultimately, bad weather becomes a test of the foundation. Will it stand or collapse, leak or stay dry? In New England, most of our nation's oldest houses are built upon a foundation of stones, stacked to form the walls of the basement. Nothing fancy about it, but incredibly effective in its simplicity. Carefully selected stones are gathered and placed in a way that brings strength and carries the weight of everything that stands above it.

At Christian Education Ministries, our goal is to be the provider of some of the ministry supports the church needs as it reaches the community for Jesus and builds disciples who are making disciples. Whether it is a book in the ARP Bookstore, a Bible study guide or a camp or conference, CEM wants to provide the stones of faith upon which lives are built for the kingdom of God. Today's society is filled with turbulent weather as the Gospel and the Christian lifestyle are under assault daily. CEM's goal is to come alongside the local church in providing some select stones which, when brought together, form a foundation for life which withstands whatever the cultural weather throws at it. Please let us know how we can help you.

Organization:

Officers:	Chairman - Rev. Bob Whittet
	Vice-Chairman – Rev. Ike Hughes
	Secretary – Jane Frazier
Committees:	Executive Committee
	Events Committee
	Resource Committee
	Training Committee

Board Meetings:

The Board of Christian Education Ministries has held two meetings since Synod of 2016. These meetings were held September 19-20, 2016 and February 27-28, 2017.

Authority:

Christian Education Ministries of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church is the agency of the General Synod which shall plan, organize, administer, and promote the teaching ministry of the Church, except for that higher education provided by Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary; and shall carry out its responsibilities in relation to the presbyteries and congregations in cooperation with the other boards and committees of the General Synod.

In the exercise of its authority the Board shall comply with the *Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*, and its policies and programs shall be consistent with the purpose of the General Synod.

The format of this report is based on the duties and work as defined in the *Manual of Authorities and Duties for Officers and Agencies and Rules of Order of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*.

Duties and Work Underway:

1. *To employ such administrators and staff as are necessary for the work of the Board and to supervise the execution of the Board policies.*

- CEM is working on hiring a Media/Graphic specialist.
- CEM has hired Mrs. Pam Black on a part-time basis as the overall Camp Joy Nurse administrator. (This position will ensure all Camp Joy campers are properly medically in-check.)
- CEM has contracted the work of Mrs. Darcia Munroe to direct the work of Camp Joy Florida (Lake Placid).

2. *To prepare and recommend to Synod each year, a budget to do the work of the Board and to oversee the use of financial resources designated by the Synod for these purposes. (MAD 2009)* (See budget at the end of this report)

3. *To initiate, develop, promote, coordinate, and evaluate comprehensive programs of Christian Education for Synod, presbyteries, and congregations that will help to equip the saints for their ministries in the world. (Ephesians 4:12) (MAD 2009)*

Training leaders in our churches continues to be an important area of our work in the CEM office. The need for training of Sunday School

teachers, leaders and staff is vital to the well-being and healthy growth of our churches and their members. Through individual consultation, online training, local workshops, resourcing materials and regional conferences, our CEM staff has served a number of our churches and continues to seek opportunity and methods which will make training accessible to all those who request it.

Some highlights of this year have been:

- multiple opportunities to work with our presbyteries and churches to promote child safety and protection policies leading to a significant increase in preparedness by our churches;
- continued development of video recording of training and its posting on our websites for easier access by churches; (ex.: recording and broadcast of the Synod addresses, the ARPWM Annual Business meeting, series of financial training seminars; evangelism conferences and Christian Education workshops);
- over a dozen live webinars have been attended by church leaders who have not had easy access to training resources before;
- onsite training by CEM staff has taken place at churches in Virginia, Northeast, Florida, Tennessee-Alabama, First, Catawba, Second and Mississippi Valley presbyteries;
- close cooperative work with the ARPWM and ONA to develop seminars and training that benefit their ministry objectives;
- the emphasis of a "cluster approach" in offering training to groups of churches to share costs and increase effectiveness;
- and working closely with the Family Bible Conference Committee to further develop its potential.

4. *To provide and recommend curriculum and other materials necessary for the teaching ministry (i.e., Sunday School, catechism training, mid-week programming, Vacation Bible School, etc.). (MAD 2009).*

- CEM continues to operate bookstores in the Greenville office, Bonclarken and online, providing people an opportunity to

obtain Board approved resources. The bookstore in the new ARP Center now provides a great avenue to browse, read and purchase books/dvds. With the addition of Erskine Seminary classes at the ARP Center, CEM will be offering to assist the Seminary with the purchase of books. CEM traveled with the bookstore to many churches, conferences, Synod and Family Bible Conference.

- CEM continues to expand the *The Quarterly*, edited by Dr. Mark Ross. The Teacher's online help material has been a great addition. *The Quarterly* continues to grow in subscriptions as the number of ARP churches and PCA churches using the material grows.
- CEM is constantly expanding the list of resources to equip churches for Word-centered ministry, to promote daily Bible reading and to enable evangelism. We continue to work with ONA in getting resources out to churches for help in evangelism and church growth.
- CEM is working with the Women's Ministries leaders to promote and provide their selected resources for the Women's Ministries.

Suggested Curriculum Resources

A wide variety of curriculum resource materials are currently available for churches. Materials considered need to be studied to make sure they conform to Reformed theology. It is the responsibility of each session to select materials which the session feels are best suited to the needs of the congregation. The following materials have been endorsed and recommended by the Board of Christian Education Ministries as being in doctrinal conformity with the ARP *Standards* and of excellent quality:

1. *The Quarterly* of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (Order from the ARP Center, Office of Christian Education, 918 S. Pleasantburg Dr., Ste. 106, Greenville, SC 29607, (864) 233-2491.) Edited by Dr. Mark Ross.
2. Great Commissions Publications (Great Commission Publications, 3640 Windsor Park Dr., Suite 100, Suwanee, GA 30174-1800, (800) 695-3387). Sponsored by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in America, based in the view that Christian

education is for evangelism and personal commitment. Materials are available for preschoolers through adults.

3. ARP Bookstore. The ARP bookstore has available a wide range of thirteen-week studies, youth curriculum and other curriculum resources.

5. *To inform Synod, presbyteries pastors, sessions, DCE's, superintendents, and chairmen of local Christian education committees concerning trends and developments in Christian Education.*

- CEM continues to research, review and use discernment in finding and acquiring new Reformed sources for curriculum and teaching materials. CEM makes every effort to recommend and provide Reformed curriculum based on the enquiring church's needs and interests, such as age, level of spiritual maturity, make-up of the group, leadership style and budget. This includes working with the ARPWM in finding Bible study materials and materials for events such as the Family Bible Conference.
- As publication sources for Reformed curriculum have decreased *The Quarterly* has found new subscribers as other Reformed denominations were made aware of its quality and reasonable cost. Many have expressed thankfulness for this excellent 6 year through-the-Bible material.
- CEM has sought to make every church aware of the need and the steps necessary to have adequate Child Safety and Protection Policies and Procedures in place. A number of individual churches have hosted CEM staffers for training and others have requested and received materials and resources to help them to update current policies or to put these into place. An hour-long live webinar was attended by 14 churches, recorded and posted on our website. A full presentation on this information was well received by the Mississippi Valley Presbytery spring meeting. We continue to schedule these seminars and to make resources available with the goal of 100% of our churches having current, adequate and active policies and procedures in place.
- To make training resources and denominational events more easily accessible to everyone, CEM has recorded onsite events, seminars & conferences, as well as online webinars. These have

been edited and posted at www.arpcem.org, our CEM website, at no charge for use in training and informing church leaders:

- A seven-part series on Financial Matters, Benefits and Retirement, and the Role of a Treasurer for churches was presented live at several locations and then recorded as an online course.
- Webinars on *Child Safety and Protection Policies and Procedures*, *Vacation Bible School as Outreach*, *Having a Vibrant Children's Ministry*, *Recruiting, Training and Retaining Volunteers*, *Backyard Bible Clubs*, *Small Budget Ideas*, *Partnering with Parents*, *Ultra-Local Missions for Teens*, *A Primer in Polity*. Additional webinars are being planned and scheduled for the summer and fall.
- The following conferences have been recorded and are available online or from CEM:
 - Conference on Evangelism for the whole Church at three locations
 - Loving Greenville for the Gospel (three addresses)
 - 2016 Synod: addresses and sermons
 - 2016 Family Bible Conference: Bible teaching, worship sermons, seminars
 - 2016 ARPWM annual business meeting: full meeting, special teaching and music
- In addition, other conferences and training from previous years have also been added to the website, including
 - Dr. Mark Ross, Training for Elders and Deacons
 - The Conference on Biblical Personhood
- Onsite training has been held at a number of churches at their request on topics such as *Parenting*, *Learning Styles*, *A Covenantal View of Children's Ministry*, *Managing Your Classroom*, *Becoming a Treasured Teacher*, *Preparing a Life-Changing Lesson*, *Helping Your Ministry Team Identify and Use Their Spiritual Gifts in Ministry*, *Stages of Faith Development in Children*.
- CEM staff has responded to requests for input through review and consultation on current CE programs and ministries that have

encouraged and equipped local leaders to continue to grow their ministries.

- CEM staff attended national conferences and reported the relevant trends and challenges to its committees as well as incorporated the information that impacts our ministries in training and resources.

6. *To develop and supervise a full program of camps, conferences, retreats, etc. and when requested to assist presbyteries in these areas.*

The Board reports the following participation in these events:

Horizon conference (Sr. High Conference) attendance:

26 churches .. 260 students .. 62 leaders ...

Quest conference (Jr. High Conference) attendance:

28 churches .. 275 students .. 75 leaders

Camp Joy NC (4 full sessions at Bonclarken) attendance:

174 campers .. 191 counselors

Camp Joy FL - Attendance – 26 campers

Camp Joy SC - Attendance- 23 campers

Appalachia Mission: 30 churches.. 387 participants .. 21 sites

Family Bible Conference: 238 participants

The CEM Board also is seeking to promote the future of Camp Joy (Special Needs Ministry). This unique ministry has been an amazing piece within the ARP denomination for over 35 years. We are currently promoting informative and fundraising dinners across the United States to raise funds for Camp Joy for the future stability and organization of this ministry. Dinners have currently been held in Columbia, SC; Winter Haven, FL; Flat Rock, NC; and Rock Hill, SC.

7. *To cooperate with other Christian denominations in carrying out all phases of the teaching ministry.*

- CEM continues to work closely with Great Commissions Publications (PCA and OPC), Christian Education and Publications (PCA) and with other denominations. CEM is currently working with GCP in the possibility of expanding *The Quarterly*.

- CEM seeks to identify and recruit well-qualified reformed teachers and trainers to serve with us in providing the best possible regional training and resources.
- CEM offers participation in our events to all area churches as presented from a Reformed world and life view.

8. *To help local congregations to plan, promote, and execute the best possible teaching ministry by:*

- a. *providing and promoting opportunities for leadership training;*
- b. *developing and promoting Christian education activities for congregations;*
- c. *assisting, when requested, in the development of congregational libraries;*
- d. *making available relevant media resources for purchase from the office of Christian Education Ministries.*

Examples of this cooperative effort are:

- Teacher training seminars were conducted for White Oak ARP and Old Providence ARP.
- CEM works closely with the Family Bible Conference Committee to provide a full program for the whole family.
- CEM provided elder and deacon training for Adams Farm, Crowders Creek and Covenant of Grace Churches.
- CEM staff visited Virginia Presbytery and several individual churches to provide consulting and training services.
- CEM conducted onsite child safety seminars for White Oak, Crowders Creek and surrounding area churches.
- CEM is supporting ARP Women's Ministries through the research and development of training resources for their leaders, as well as through speaking at area events.
- CEM has made many of their training seminars available online through Right Now Media and the ARPCEM.ORG website.

9. *To promote job opportunities for those who may be called in the ministry of Christian Education.*

- CEM continues to promote job opportunities as presented on the CEM website.
- CEM assists churches seeking to hire Christian education staff.

10. *To collect annual reports from congregations on their teaching ministries and to make summary reports available to the General Synod and to Ppesbytery committees on the status of Christian Education Ministries in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.*

- Annual reports were collected via internet, mail and at Synod and summary reports were made available where needed.

11. *To make an annual report to the General Synod. (MAD 2009)*

Recommendations:

1. CEM recommends that the 2017 budget be approved. **The Moderator's Committee recommended approval. Synod ADOPTED.**
2. CEM asks that Synod continue to pray for the work of the Appalachia trip as the location of housing and meals has changed from Lincoln Memorial University to Camp Jubilee. **The Moderator's Committee recommended approval. Synod ADOPTED.**
3. CEM recommends that Synod encourage presbyteries to take full advantage of CEM's training opportunities and make use of the ARP Bookstore for equipping the saints. **The Moderator's Committee recommended approval. Synod ADOPTED.**
4. CEM asks Synod to continue to pray for and support the expansion of the Camp Joy ministry. **The Moderator's Committee recommended approval. Synod ADOPTED.**

Respectfully submitted
Bob Whittet, Chairman

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Revenues	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed Budget
Use of Reserve	\$ (9,768)	\$ -
Denominational Ministry Allocation	\$205,346	\$205,346
Easter Offering Allocation	\$8,500	\$8,200
Contributions for Ministry	12,600	13,100
Registration and Fees	255,370	249,910
Sales & Subscriptions	102,100	88,800
Special Endowment Fund Gift	18,800	18,020
Total Revenues	\$ 592,948	\$ 583,376
Expenses		
Total Salary & Benefits	221,463	219,856
Staff Expenses	9,750	10,150
Board/Committee Expenses	8,500	8,000
General Office		
Promotional Expenses	1,000	1,000
Equipment	500	500
Communications	5,700	3,700
Rent	13,250	13,650
Office Expenses	7,200	6,000
Total General Office	27,650	24,850
Facility Management	2,050	3,000
Publications		
Adult Quarterly	33,850	38,300
Adult Quarterly Editor	17,500	17,500
Book Store Purchases	38,500	27,550
Other Publications Expenses	1,000	1,000
Total Publications	90,850	84,350
Conferences and Training		
Room & Board Expenses	137,680	126,600
Honorariums & Fees	60,730	60,755
Travel	6,850	5,150
Planning	2,550	3,150
Supplies	22,500	28,850
Promotional	2,375	2,300
Total Conferences and Training	232,685	226,805
Total Expenses	\$ 592,948	\$ 583,376
Change in Fund Balance	\$ -	\$ -
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 97,293	\$ 146,148
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 97,293	\$ 146,148

Prayer was offered for the work of Christian Education Ministries.

Jan Sattlem addressed the Synod on the work of Outreach North America and presented videos of their work.

The report of **Outreach North America** was presented.

OUTREACH NORTH AMERICA

Our General Synod has charged Outreach North America with a strategic mission that is critical to the life and growth of our beloved denomination.

In the wisdom and the providence of our Lord, General Synod has entrusted to us the areas of

- **New church development**
- **Church vitality**
- **Evangelism/multi-ethnic ministry**
- **Sustaining a national presence for our denomination**

While each area is somewhat independent in their delivery systems, each is quite interdependent strategically and perpetually. In other words, to support new church plants, the ARPC must have churches that are vital. To fulfill our Lord's commission of all believers (Matt. 28:19) as well as to have vital churches and church plants, evangelism must be a priority. Likewise, to position the ARPC to receive new churches and to continue to recruit gifted church planters, the ARPC must have a winsome national presence. Given the interplay of our charge and the wisdom of our Synod in crafting our commission, we have introduced initiatives to create momentum and impact in each of these areas and have sought to promote, administer, and refine them as we have progressed. This report seeks to update delegates to the 213th meeting of our General Synod on these initiatives as well as the ongoing work of Outreach North America.

National Presence:

At times, the emphases of our commission will overlap. Such is the case with our latest initiative which intersects church vitality, new

church development and especially, national presence. In conjunction with Dr. Michael Milton, ONA is blessed with a wonderful opportunity to host the D. James Kennedy Institute of Reformed Leadership (DJKIRL).

Dr. Milton is well known in many circles:

- Academically, he is former chancellor of Reformed Theological Seminary. He is also former president of the Jackson and Orlando campuses of RTS as well as former President of the Knox Theological Seminary. Currently, he is the Ragsdale Chair of Mission and Evangelism at Erskine Theological Seminary.
- Pastorally, Dr. Milton is the former pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga, TN, as the successor of Dr. Ben Haden, one of the founding and prominent voices of the PCA. Dr. Milton is also a church planter, having planted two PCA churches in both Kansas and Georgia and he will soon plant an ARP Church in First Presbytery.
- As a Chaplain (Col.) in the US Army, he is a teacher and strategist on the national level.
- As a Christian, he was introduced to Christ and discipled by Dr. D. James Kennedy. Upon the graduation of Dr. Kennedy to the physical presence of our Lord, the Kennedy family gave full rights and permission to affix the D. James Kennedy Institute name and legacy to any project that Dr. Milton deemed worthy in scope, impact and excellence.

The D. James Kennedy Institute of Reformed Leadership is envisioned as a 12 month “finishing school” for pastors who have recently graduated from seminary with useful knowledge, but often, with very few pastoral or “shepherding” skills. Through this mentoring and training regime, Dr. Milton and other ministry practitioners will pour into these new pastors shepherding skills and will help develop the gifts that are too often underdeveloped. Recognizing that ruling elders too are called to be shepherds of the flock (1 Pet. 5:2), we will also extend this training and mentoring program to ruling elders who are

serving as provisional elders in ARPC church plants. The vision of the institute is to expand the fellowship and mentoring to include other ruling elders both within the ARPC and into other like-minded churches and denominations. As the fellowship of graduates grows, and as they fulfill their commitment to mentor others, the impact of the institute will grow exponentially.

Church Vitality:

In the area of church vitality, in conjunction with Erskine Theological Seminary, we have hosted our first two semesters of the DMin/Certificate track in church vitality. The response has been quite positive and we hope that the recently produced promotional video will help to engage more pastors in this opportunity for training and strategic planning. We ask that each delegate utilize the promotional video in your presbytery meetings and as you interact with one another so that our pastors and sessions will know the advantages and availability of the program. Within the DMin or Certificate program, we are utilizing a strategy to bring together cohorts of students to work together throughout their experience at ETS/ONA.

The Dare to Dream grant program is still available. For more information, please visit our website (www.ona-arp.org), visit the ONA informational table at Synod, or speak to an ONA staff or board member.

We are also pleased to have Rev. Wayne Frazier serve as our vitality coach, albeit part-time. Rev. Frazier has served the ARPC as a church planter, a revitalizing pastor and as the moderator of our General Synod. Rev. Frazier is working tirelessly and passionately to coach pastors and inspire churches to be vitalized through the power of the Gospel.

In conjunction with First Presbytery, ONA presented to the Synod at large an ARPC-specific Embers to a Flame (ETF) revitalization conference. Rev. Frazier is in training to become an ETF “fanning the flame” coach which will allow him to administer the benefits of this vitality strategy to any church in the ARPC. ONA is working with ETF to authorize the ARPC to be an official partner denomination.

New Church Development:

ONA has adopted a realistic and sustainable fair and flexible funding model. This funding paradigm allows us to plant 6 new churches

per year over a four-year funding cycle. Not only has this paradigm been fiscally responsible, it has also encouraged presbyteries to consider planting churches that in the past had been barred due to the intimidation of providing matching funds. According to missiologist and church planting authority, Dr. Ed Stetzer, to remain healthy, a denomination should plant 3 percent of her national size. In our case, that translates to about 6 new churches per year.

Currently, for perhaps the first time in our history, there are active church plants in eight of our nine Presbyteries. The Lord is gracious to bring us planters, opportunities, resources, and vision to start new churches. We are blessed to be able to train our church planters through our explorer training curriculum as well as offer opportunities to gather our planters to fellowship and encourage one another. In years past, we have sought to bless the families with a retreat with the hopes of granting them time off the field to fellowship and learn. In reality, we discovered that this strategy did little to accomplish our goals. This year, we hosted the men for a three day retreat and the wives in a separate four day retreat. This allowed the spouses to care for their children at home with minimal disruption. It also allowed the men to learn from our staff and each other skills and trends important to their ministry and the women to share together the unique stresses, blessings and demands of being church planters' wives. By all accounts this strategy accomplished our goals much more effectively than in the past. We look forward to repeating this for years to come.

The following mission congregations or explorers received funding from General Synod during all or part of the period since last Synod meeting.

Catawba Presbytery:

Shem Creek, Charleston, SC	Rev. Ben Carver
Arsenal Hill, Columbia, SC	Rev. Rob Turner
Irmo, Columbia, SC	Rev. Matt Awtrey

First Presbytery:

Grace Reformed, Clayton, NC	Rev. Ken Kunkel
City Church, Asheville, NC	Rev. Duff James
Trinity Chapel, Weddington, NC	Dr. Michael Milton

Florida Presbytery:

Trinity, Norman, OK	Rev. Justin Westmorland
SW Florida, Exploratory	Rev. Brooks Pipher
Lake Placid Hispanic, Exploratory	Rev. Tim Sewell

Mississippi Valley:

Little Rock, AR, Exploratory	Rev. Howard Wheeler
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Northeast Presbytery:

Christ Presbyterian, Philadelphia, PA	Dr. Iain Duiguid
Holy Trinity, Grand Rapids, MI	Rev. Andrew Savill
Flushing/Queens, NY , Exploratory	Rev. Andrew Bang

Second Presbytery:

Verdae Presbyterian, Greenville, SC	Rev. Jay Crout
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Virginia Presbytery:

Christ Central, Charlottesville, VA	Rev. Nathan Scholl
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Canadian Presbytery: (Received funding from Canadian Presbytery DMF)

Hope, Kingston, Ontario	Rev. Kevin Carter
Faith, Tillsonburg, Ontario	Rev. Stephen Richardson

In keeping with the example of Matthew 25 and our desire to be good stewards of the resources invested in ONA by our denomination, we have established a church planting foundation. This investment account, managed by Cornerstone financial management, is envisioned to produce enough annual income to fund the entire 6 churches per year paradigm into perpetuity. Opportunities like the DJKIRL, as well as prayerfully recruiting new churches into the ARPC family, will greatly increase the exposure of the good kingdom work in which the ARPC is involved. The ONA Board also administers the Revolving Loan Fund to make capital investment funds available to ARP churches and mission congregations.

ONA is blessed to continue the ARPC membership in the Church Planters Leaders Fellowship (CPLF). The next meeting will be in mid-November and will be hosted by Dr. Tim Keller. The emphasis will be training on Urban (city to city) church planting.

We will most likely be hosting a Church Planters Assessment Center in the Fall of this year. We would ask the Synod's continued prayers as we seek to work with presbyteries to recruit, train and resource church planters throughout North America.

Evangelism/Multi-Cultural Ministries

Initiatives introduced in evangelism and multi-cultural ministry include our E3 strategy of evangelism, discipleship, and service. The key to this strategy is equipping ARPC saints with the simple gospel presentation outline of John 3:16 and suggesting a simple and practical strategy by which to engage others. This three-hour seminar focuses on three questions: Are we motivated to share the Gospel? Are we equipped to share the gospel? And are we available to share the gospel? By motivated, we mean, do we know who is around us? ONA Executive Director, Rev. Mike Jones, leads the churches through a brief profile of the county in which the church is located. Rev. Jones then shares the results of recent studies concerning the openness to the Gospel of unreached in the USA and Canada. The saints are then led through several strategies of sharing the Gospel story, highlighting the simple gospel outline of John 3:16, the strategy of our E3 plan. The focus then shifts to strategic engagement methods of literally loving our neighbors. The net result of this information has been a renewed passion to reach the lost with the Gospel, and subsequently, to build up the local church.

ONA is also excited to offer to any of our USA churches a detailed "map" of their area. We have partnered with Missioninsite, a national church mapping/demographic reporting company which allows us to look into a wide variety of reports concerning the demographics of those living near our churches. These reports may include growth trends, spiritual receptivity, preferred media methods and other demographic information. Please contact the ONA office for more details. (Note: At present, Missioninsite does not offer this service for Canada. ONA is actively seeking a similar service for Canada.)

The ONA Board is asking that the Synod consider revising the statistical data form. As our charge includes multi-cultural ministries, and since the last recorded statistic for the racial and generational composition of our denomination was recorded in 1922, we would like to determine an updated picture of our ethnic and generational disper-

sion. To this end, we would recommend that Synod revise the statistical data form to include the following: ethnicity, generational grouping and regular attendance.

Last December, ONA was invited to join the National Evangelism Leaders Fellowship based at the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism. Other members of this Fellowship include Franklin Graham, Luis Palau and Tim Keller.

The ONA Board has been encouraged with the response to our two, one-month daily devotionals. In September, the theme was evangelism and in March, the theme was multi-cultural ministry. God is gracious to give so many passionate hearts within the ARPC family to share through these devotionals. Much appreciation goes to Tessa Taylor for her excellent presentation and delivery of these devotionals, and to our Board members, pastors and ARPC members for your excellent devotional content.

Multi-cultural ministries are growing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Board; Ali Mitchell and Ken Lotze of ARP Connect; and our Refugee Ministry Coordinator, Elinor Griffin. We are blessed to have these servants and resources dedicated to the furtherance of multi-cultural outreach and impact. We are particularly blessed to have Elinor Griffin serve ONA as a spokesperson and catalyst for ministry in our churches and presbyteries. She has done an exemplary job of instilling passion, awareness, commitment and strategies to engage churches and individuals and to awaken them to minister to the refugees within our borders. We believe that the Lord has opened this field of ministry to us in His sovereign timing. Her work with our churches has already led to several refugee families being adopted by USA families and churches and we are hopeful for many others to follow suit. She has presented in many of our presbyteries and has “done us proud” with her professionalism, presentation abilities and passion for her ministry. We encourage each of our churches to avail themselves of this wonderful gospel opportunity.

National Presence

As alluded to earlier in this report, the areas of responsibility given to ONA by our Synod are strategic. By seeking to raise the visibility of the ARPC, not only do we seek other like-minded churches to join our

sweet fellowship, but we also position the ARPC to bless the world with the training, affiliation, synergy and inter-church cooperation we offer. To that end, ONA has been blessed to be invited to represent the ARPC in a variety of venues, including the National Evangelism Leaders Fellowship to the Church Planters Leadership Fellowship hosted by the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Wheaton College. One of the fruits of this relationship is that Dr. Ed Stetzer, a well-known missiologist, church planter, author, pastor, preacher, leader and thinker was our guest at the Pre-Synod conference on evangelism this year. Dr. Stetzer is also the executive director of the Billy Graham Institute of Evangelism at Wheaton College and upon taking that prestigious position, learned that Billy Graham had been raised in the ARPC. At a recent meeting, Dr. Stetzer asked if he could come speak to our Synod as a way of saying thank you for the profound impact the ARPC had upon Billy Graham who has in turn had a profound impact on so many, including Dr. Stetzer.

We are also blessed to host the Dr. D. James Kennedy Institute for Reformed Leadership at ONA headquartered at the ARP Center in Greenville. This too will be a wonderful entrée to many churches and individuals who have been touched by the wonderful ministry of Dr. Kennedy and will be introduced to the ARPC through this relationship. The Lord be praised for this outstanding opportunity!

Closing Remarks

The Board of ONA is excited about the future of the ARPC and the impact that ONA is having. We are blessed to have the support of our General Synod, the DMF funding, the visionary leadership of Rev. Jones and a talented and high functioning staff. We are also blessed to have excellent board members and church extension committees serving within our presbyteries with passion, commitment and most of all, prayerful wisdom. Our Lord has graciously allowed us to introduce significant initiatives in each of the five areas of ministry entrusted to us by our General Synod. As we continue to invest our resources and hone our implementation, we are confident that we will be faithful in fulfilling our vision of “helping you reach your community for Christ” well into the future. These initiatives will also keep the ONA Board and staff quite busy over the next few years as we implement, perfect and position them for maximum impact.

As Chairman of the Board, I would personally like to thank each of you again for your prayers, your encouragement and your diligence in serving our Lord in your ministries within the ARPC as well as your support as we labor to serve the ARPC through our work at ONA.

Recommendations:

1. That Synod encourage churches to include home missions as part of their total missions' responsibility and program, and to look for ways to include Outreach North America and the ARPC missions and developers in their budgets. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That Synod encourage each ARP church to take advantage of church renewal training, strategic demographic mapping as procured through the ONA staff, and coaching offered by Rev. Wayne Frazier. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That pastors and sessions of plateaued churches plead with their congregations to take advantage of the training and education offered by ONA and Erskine Theological Seminary through the DMin or Certificate program in Church Vitality. Send your pastor! **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That Synod revise the statistical data form to designate the following: ethnicity, generational grouping and regular attenders. **Synod DID NOT APPROVE.**
5. That Synod receive as submitted the ONA Board response to the 2016 memorial from Canadian Presbytery (see Appendix A attached). **Synod APPROVED.**
6. That the proposed ONA budget be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
7. That Synod thank the ARPC Women's Ministries for the support they have given to mission developers and their wives this year. **Synod APPROVED.**
8. That Synod encourage ongoing support of Denominational Ministry Fund giving from each church and mission of the ARPC General Synod. **Synod APPROVED.**
9. That churches and presbyteries set aside time to specifically pray for congregational and personal evangelistic fervor, church planter recruitment and intentional church vitality within the ARPC. **Synod APPROVED.**

In addition, the Moderator's Committee recommended:

10. That Synod commend Rev. Mike Jones, the ONA staff and Board for renewed vision and vitality. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted

Jan Sattem, Chairman

APPENDIX A

ONA Board Response to the 2016 Canadian Presbytery Memorial to the 212th General Synod

A brief examination of church planting models that are being used in the USA and Canada:

Introduction

When our current executive director, Rev. Michael Jones, assumed his role at ONA, he was asked by the ONA Board to investigate what models of church planting were currently being used by other denominations and church movements across the USA and Canada. Rev. Jones presented ten models to the board. The board did not approve or endorse these models.

The Canadian Presbytery memorialized the 212th meeting of the General Synod under the title “Regarding Church Planting Paradigms Implemented by Outreach North America” (*underlining added*), and the memorial reproduced in Appendix 1 the “Notes, Comments, & Questions” regarding each paradigm. If the intent of the Memorial was to gain clarity as to ONA’s intentions to implement or plant churches based on any or all of these paradigms, then it is important to point out at the beginning that ONA does not plant churches; presbyteries do. The ONA Policy Book states explicitly, “Presbytery’s church extension committee, with the assistance of the Board, will implement strategies for evangelism, multi-ethnic ministries, church vitality, new church development, and ARP expansion” (*underlining added*). The Board discussion summarized in Appendix 1 of the Memorial was to help presbytery church extension committees conduct their own critical evaluation of the paradigms currently used in the United States and Canada.

The General Synod referred the Canadian Memorial to the Board of ONA “to determine if each paradigm is grounded in the Word of God and agreeable to the ecclesiastical standards of the ARP Church.” In

this report, to be presented at the 213th General Synod, each paradigm is examined based on the following criteria:

1. **Is the model Scriptural?**
2. **Is the model congruent with our polity and *Form of Government (FOG)*?**
3. **What are the relative strengths of this model?**
4. **What are the potential liabilities of this model?**
5. **Are there any examples of this model currently being planted in the ARP?**

A large body of literature has been published on church planting, and it has grown in recent years as many denominations have been investing considerable resources. With this new urgency and investment there is also the realization that new church development (or church planting) strategies and paradigms are as numerous and may be as unique as the communities in which they are planted. This report is not an exhaustive study of these strategies or paradigms. We do, however, offer to the General Synod this brief report examining the ten church planting paradigms that were listed in the Memorial. While not all of these paradigms are appropriate to the ARPC, they are currently being utilized in a variety of denominations and movements. The Board of Outreach North America has endeavored to evaluate these paradigms in light of Scripture and ARPC polity. We also have included a very brief description of the perceived benefits and liabilities for each paradigm. Finally, for those paradigms that are faithful to Scripture and fit our ecclesiastical standards, we have provided examples of current church plants in the General Synod. If any presbyter would like to discuss further the merits of any of these paradigms, we would refer them to Rev. Jones, the ONA's Executive Director.

Current Church Planting Paradigms in use by Denominations and Movements in the USA and Canada:

1. Parachute Model / Presbytery Daughter Church

This model of church planting, sometimes called a "cold start," is currently the main method employed by presbyteries in the ARPC. The presbytery acts as the mother church; thus, every ARP church planted is a daughter church of a presbytery of our General Synod. This relationship is maintained through the provision of resources, training, leadership by a provisional session, and oversight by the presbytery's church extension committee. The Board of ONA assists presbyteries by sponsoring training, helping to recruit quali-

fied church planters, assessing potential planters for the requisite gifts, and supporting the church planter through fellowship, prayer, communication and financial resources.

Biblical justification: After establishing a church that could carry on the work of evangelism and church planting in one area, the Apostles could move on to another area (Rom. 15:23). The church in each city would grow and multiply until there were many congregations (Rom. 16:5-15, 1 Cor. 16:19) under the government of a local presbytery (Acts 11:30, 21:18, 20:17, 28, Rev. 2:1-6), whose elders also labored to establish churches in other locations (e.g. Acts 8:14, 11:22).

Ecclesiological considerations: This model of church planting is squarely within the spirit and letter of our *FOG* chapter 11:4.

Relative strengths/benefits: This model allows each presbytery to expand within its borders to reach areas and groups of people that are under-reached by the current congregations of the presbytery. This model also allows presbyteries to expand their geographical borders, with Synod approval, to extend to areas not yet claimed by other presbyteries. Also, presbyteries and church planters can target strategic areas and encourage “fishing where the fish are gathering,” such as urban areas.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: The cold start/parachute drop paradigm is labor and resource intensive. There is a high potential for a slow beginning and long gestation period as the church planting family makes connections within the new community. Current cultural trends are often averse to start up churches unless there is a strong missional ministry component. If the cold start location is too far from other churches within the presbytery, connection, oversight and accountability may suffer. Providing provisional elders may become logistically difficult.

Current examples in the ARP: Justin Westmoreland, Florida Presbytery, planting Trinity ARP in Norman OK; Nathan Scholl, Virginia Presbytery, planting Christ Central Church in Charlottesville VA; Ben Carver, Catawba Presbytery, planting Shem Creek ARP in Mount Pleasant, SC; Kevin Carter, Canadian Presbytery, planting Hope ARPC in Kingston, Ontario.

2. Multicultural

There are many ways denominations and groups are addressing the multicultural dynamics in communities. Missiologists such as Dr. James White have noted that multiracial communities constitute up

to 80% of all communities in the USA and Canada. There are several strategies in use by churches to address this reality.

An ideal strategy is to gather many ethnicities in one church congregation, integrated in worship, service, discipleship, community life and ministry. As noted missiologist, writer, church planter and pastor, Dr. Ed Stetzer has noted, “the ultimate expression of the Church, found in Revelation, is not monoethnic but multiethnic as evidenced in Rev 5: 9; 7: 9–10; 15: 4; 21: 24; 22: 2” (Stetzer, Ed; Im, Daniel. *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches that Multiply*, pg. 103). While this is ideal and certainly Biblical, it has proven quite difficult for a variety of reasons (for an excellent treatment of this topic, see *Planting Missional Churches*, second edition, Stetzer and Im, chapter 8). Enculturation versus acculturation has been an ongoing struggle across racial and generational lines, as have been the barriers of ministry style and expectations. Clearly, a proactive strategy is in order as we seek to reach the nations and the neighborhoods -- as well as the generations -- with the Gospel. One strategy that has been effective in some denominations is the “many churches, one campus” model. In this model, a church encourages many ethnic churches to use their campus for meeting and programming space. The church’s diaconate has physical oversight of the congregations that meet on the property; but usually, as long as the congregation is Christian and evangelical, there is less theological interaction with the tenant. While this “tenant” approach is pragmatic, it is not a church planting strategy per se. It is, however, a powerful testimony to the community of gospel unity.

However, a multicultural church planting strategy is defined as a presbytery calling a church planter to lead a church planting effort that is intentionally multi-racial. This ideal of multicultural church planting is not simple or common, but certainly one to which we should aspire.

Another variation on this strategy is to approach the planting process in stages. This approach has gained some traction in the Vineyard movement of churches as well as some Acts 29 communities. In this strategy, multi-ethnic church planting teams and/or ministry interns (not yet ordained ministers), work under an ordained pastor’s direct supervision. In the ARPC, a presbytery and a particular church might aspire to plant a multiethnic church that will one day become an ARP Mission Congregation. The host church may provide leadership, governance, and pastoral responsi-

bility to facilitate the work until a local ethnic pastor is ordainable or the group calls an ordained pastor.

Biblical justification: The Apostles were commissioned to preach the gospel to “all the nations” (Matt. 28:19), and they labored to create united congregations “where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all” (Col. 3:11). They taught that Christ himself “has broken down the middle wall of separation ... that He might reconcile [Jews and Gentiles] to God in one body through the cross” (Eph. 2:15-16). Such congregations were a dramatic display of the power and peace of Christ “to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places” (Eph. 3:10). The church is destined to be “a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were robed in white with palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Rev. 7: 9–10).

Ecclesiological considerations: FOG 11:2 states that a mission church’s goal “is to provide worship, pastoral care, and fellowship for a group of people in a specific geographical area” (emphasis added). This geographic area does not preclude any ethnicities.

Relative strengths/benefits: The multi-racial congregation is a Biblical community that reflects the multi-cultural call of the church. By utilizing a multi-ethnic model, or by incorporating the previously mentioned host model, the local church will be able to reach the nations as they are represented in the neighborhoods.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: Recruiting multi-ethnic church planting teams has been difficult. In the host model, oversight by the senior pastor and session may be difficult, especially if there is a language barrier.

Current examples in the ARPC: While there are many, several come to mind as particularly effective and intentionally multi-ethnic (not all of these congregations are currently church plants): Korean Bethel, First Presbytery; Church of the Atonement, Northeast Presbytery; Back Creek, First Presbytery; Arsenal Hill mission church, Catawba Presbytery.

Host churches with multi-ethnic ministries: Trinity Church and the Tampa Chinese Church, Florida Presbytery; The Church of the Atonement and the Iranian Christian Church of Washington DC,

Northeast Presbytery; Sherwood Forest Church and the IBC Hispanic mission, Catawba.

3. **Core Group** (also known as a “Hot Start”)

Occasionally, core groups that feel led to start a church in their community approach presbyteries for help. In these cases, Presbytery Church Extension Committees must work closely with the core group to discern their potential to develop a church. After prayerful consideration and sufficient progress towards community development, the presbytery may call a qualified and gifted church planter to further the work already begun.

Biblical justification: After there arose a “great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, [the believers] were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria” (Acts 8:1), and they preached the word as they went. This dispersal of evangelistic believers became the catalyst for many new churches, as the elders of the presbytery in Jerusalem time and again assisted various groups of scattered believers to establish churches in their cities. For example: “The report of [many new believers in Antioch] came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch” (Acts 11:22). “Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John” (Acts 8:14, cf. Acts 9:30-32). This pattern continued as the church spread from city to city and new presbyteries were established: “I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city” (Titus 1:5).

Ecclesiological considerations: This paradigm is well within the dictates of *FOG* Chapter 11.

Relative strengths/benefits: There is an established, motivated core of disciples who have roots in the community, passion to begin a gospel ministry, and resources.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: Presbytery’s Church Extension Committee must evaluate each core group’s strengths and weaknesses to find the best church planting and provisional leadership match for the group.

Current examples in the ARPC: Bethany Mission, First Presbytery; The Church of Little Rock (Howard Wheeler, developer), Mississippi Valley Presbytery; Grace Reformed Church, First Presbytery.

4. **Church of Opportunity**

There are times when presbyteries consider it advantageous for the advance of Christ’s kingdom to plant a church outside — sometimes

far outside — its geographical boundaries. When an opportunity or need presents itself, such proposals should be duly considered.

Biblical justification: The elders [presbytery] of the church of Antioch were led by the Spirit to set apart Barnabas, Paul, and later others for the work of going out into new regions and planting churches (Acts 13:1-3). The Lord guided them to establish churches in areas in which there was a particular need or opportunity for effective work (1 Cor. 16:7, compare the Macedonian call in Acts 16:6-10). These men reported on the work to the presbytery that had laid hands on them (Acts 14:21-28).

Ecclesiological considerations: Presbyteries are encouraged by the *FOG* to consider new geographical areas (*FOG* 11:3 and 11:8). The church planter will, of course, be required to meet the same qualifications as any other ARPC planter.

Relative strengths/benefits: The expansion of the Kingdom through gifted and called church planters. The expansion of the ARPC fellowship to new, unreached areas of the USA and Canada.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: In order to fully support a church plant outside the geographical boundaries of a presbytery, leadership and connection is critical. By the Lord's providence and grace, we have had great success in the past with breaking new ground for the ARPC in Texas (Catawba Presbytery). However, we have also had many remote church plants that have suffered, in part, because of their distance from fellowship and the active, on-site participation of a provisional session. While planting outside the contiguous presbytery boundaries is rife with potential, it is typically difficult to maintain adequate provisional leadership as well as presbytery connection.

Current examples in the ARPC: Justin Westmoreland, Norman, OK. Examples of churches that have suffered, in part, due to distance: Sojourners, Los Angeles, Florida Presbytery; Trinity, Grand Rapids, Northeast Presbytery; Good News, Gilbert AZ, Northeast Presbytery.

5. Multi-site Model

A multi-site church is one that "branches" to multiple campuses. This model has become popular within many non-denominational "mega" churches. The impetus for this type of ministry is often cited as pragmatic: the message and ministry of the first campus seems to resonate beyond the physical and geographical limitations of that campus, so why not franchise and take the church to the people? The satellite campuses often provide a local pastor and

worship staff; but the message, leadership, and resources are vested with the main campus. The “product” is packaged at the main campus and “shipped” to the satellite campuses via a pre-recorded sermon. While there is typically a campus pastor and staff assigned to lead the location, that pastor rarely brings the Word to his congregation. Therefore, the message may be generic without consideration for the uniqueness of the particular campus. Also, the multi-site, video venue, often creates a disconnect and perceived hierarchy between the “main” teaching pastor and the local campus pastor — which at best might inspire an episcopal form of government, and at worst often creates a celebrity culture within the organization.

Biblical justification: None. There may be times when a pre-recorded, broadcasted, or written sermon read aloud may be temporarily useful for core groups that are meeting together on the Lord’s Day when there is no one available to minister the Word to them personally; but this should not become a permanent arrangement. This model violates the biblical pattern appointing elders who are responsible to instruct each congregation and whose godly lives are known to be exemplary by those who receive the word (Titus 1:3-9). Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, knows his sheep (John 10:3). So should his under-shepherds. There were occasions in the Bible when the church had a shortage of gifted and ordained leadership in an area and one man temporarily ministered the word in many congregations. In Crete, for example, many cities lacked a settled ministry and eldership so Titus preached the Word to many congregations in the meantime (Titus 1:3, 2:1ff; later others came to take over Titus’s work, see 3:12-13). The Apostle Paul approved of this approach to church planting only as a temporary expedient, commanding Titus to “set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city” (Titus 1:5).

Ecclesiological considerations: The *FOG* does not have a category for a campus pastor.

Relative strengths/benefits: Allows a church to expand to an area without officially “planting” a new congregation.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: It risks creating a celebrity culture and does not promote community within a congregation with its own government (Philippians 1:1).

Current examples in the ARPC: None

6. Area Church Plant

In this model, several churches in one area combine resources, leadership and people to corporately plant a church. This model has proven quite successful in the Acts 29 network of churches. Often described as “Reformed Baptists,” Acts 29 churches typically have a loose connectional polity. In their version of this model, individual churches set aside nine percent of their overall budget, train church planting interns over an at least two-year apprenticeship in the local church network, commit people to go with the planter, and then launch a new church. This differs from a daughter church model in that the core group, resources, planter and oversight come from all the Acts 29 churches in the area. This strategy has resulted in what many would describe as exponential growth in the number of Acts 29 churches. Other denominations have adopted a similar strategy in church planting, often with mixed results.

Biblical justification: Paul and his co-laborers from the church in Antioch mention how they also received financial assistance from the church at Philippi to advance their work of planting in cities to the west (e.g. Phil. 4:15-16). Sometimes the Apostles encouraged brethren from one church to join with them to plant others; other times, they encouraged brethren to go and assist in a church planting work going on elsewhere (e.g. Titus 3:12-13, Acts 15:37-16:3, 19:22). In such instances, the Apostles coordinated the efforts and contributions of churches to advance the work in an area of need (although the Apostles were working within a presbyterian system of government).

Ecclesiological considerations: Congruent with the *FOG* Chapter 11.

Relative strengths/benefits: When approached well, this model can be an excellent “hot start” in that there are resources, a core group of interested individuals, leadership, prayer support and other tangible community assets available to the church plant.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: Gelling a “family” of step-siblings has often been cited as a weakness of this model. As we will see in the discussion of the next model, the DNA, the ethos, pathos and logos of a mother church are transmitted to the daughter church through planting. In the area church plant the core group often combines the shared DNA of several mother churches, which often proves to be difficult.

Current examples in the ARPC: Hill City Church, Andy Stager/ Daniel Wells, mission developers; Rock Hill Collective, David Stover, mission developer, Catawba Presbytery.

7. “Direct Daughter Church”

In this model, a healthy mother church plants a daughter church. There is a direct connection to the mother through people, leadership, finances and vision casting. For the purposes of this paper, daughter-church reproduction is the intentional reproduction of a church’s ethos, pathos, and logos into a different spiritual community:

- **Ethos is the church’s ethics, ideals, DNA, vision, and core values. Mosaic Pastor, Erwin McManus, says that ethos is “the fundamental character or spirit of a culture.”**
- **The pathos of a congregation refers to a church’s passion, “feel,” and desires.**
- **The logos is a church’s doctrine, teachings, and beliefs.**

One can plant a church without these elements being transferred; however, most churches will seek to reproduce these values in the new churches to some degree if they are going to leverage their resources and time in the church plant. The closer the connection, relationship, resource investment, and long-term ties with the sending church, the greater chance that the ethos, pathos, and logos will transfer to the daughter church.

“But churches can, do, and should plant churches. The most effective church planting occurs when a sponsor / mother church is actively involved, a model historically called “church extension” where a mother church “extends” itself into another location. Today we call this “church multiplication” (Stetzer and Im, p. 98).

“Perhaps the best example of a church that reproduced itself through planting daughter churches was the church located in the city of Antioch in Syria. The missionary journeys described in the Book of Acts were vital to the spread of Christianity. However, these were largely church planting ventures that came out of the church at Antioch. What is important to observe here is how the early churches, such as the one at Antioch, understood the Great Commission mandate. Jesus said, ‘Make disciples!’ The Antioch church accomplished this by sending out two missionary church

planters who started a number of daughter churches in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. What better way to spread the gospel than to plant a number of significant churches in the areas targeted for evangelism” (Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches*, p. 25).

Biblical justification: This multiplication of congregations took place in city after city (Rom. 16:5-15). In addition to Antioch, mentioned above, the church at Ephesus soon had a great many believers congregating in a variety of locations, including the house of Priscilla and Aquila (1 Cor. 16:19, Acts 19:17-18, 20). Likewise in Jerusalem, the church had begun as one congregation of 120 believers meeting together in a single location. Soon there were thousands of believers; and there must have been many congregations because all the Apostles as well as others were soon very busily employed ministering the word in increasingly private venues (Acts 6:2, 7, even after the persecution, Acts 12:24, 15:4, 21:20). Although Scripture provides few specifics about how a single congregation multiplied itself in a city, it is clear that they did under Apostolic governance.

Ecclesiological considerations: The relationship between a pastor, session and church in good standing with the presbytery and General Synod will transfer through the ARP ordained church planter and leadership of the daughter church.

Relative strengths/benefits: A daughter church provides a “hot start” with people, resources, prayer support, DNA transfer and accountability. There is also a strong sense of Kingdom building and mission both for the daughter church and the mother/sending church.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: Some common concerns are addressed in Appendix A. However, the preponderance of evidence shows that any perceived liabilities are indeed short-sighted. It cannot be overstated that while not necessarily direct daughter planting, every ARP church is involved in church daughtering through giving to the Denominational Ministry Fund and by providing leadership through the service of provisional elders.

Current examples in the ARP: While no current ARPC church plants fit precisely this model, Grace Church in Columbia, SC, a daughter of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, is a recent successful example.

8. Surrogate Model (Multi-Congregation)

In this model, a healthy church sends a group to a new neighborhood area under her care, support, leadership and resources. This is not a core group for a New Church Development. Rather, it is a multi-location church in which each congregation has its own pastor and campus; however, each congregation intentionally remains directly tied to the mother church. This may also be referred to as a multi-congregational model. It differs from a multi-campus model in that in the multi-congregational church, each congregation has its own worship, staff and preacher. An example of a multi-congregational church is Redeemer PCA in NYC. In this model, although there is one senior leadership team and Rev. Tim Keller is the senior pastor, each campus has its own assistant pastor, staff and particular sermon each week usually delivered by the assistant pastor. Dr. Keller recently announced that the campuses of Redeemer PCA will become particularized upon his retirement later this year.

Biblical justification: None. Until a daughter congregation is constituted as a particular church, this situation may temporarily exist; however, this should not be embraced as a permanent or desirable arrangement. Many congregations in a city or geographical region should be united under the government of a Presbytery, not a congregation (Acts 11:30, 15:4, 6, 22, 21:18).

Ecclesiological considerations: The stated goal of *FOG* 11:2 is that the congregation become an organized congregation with its own session.

Relative strengths/benefits: The original church retains direct connection, leadership and vision of each congregation. The home church provides resources, training, leadership and exposure to resources for the surrogate congregation.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: While seemingly presbyterian in its connection, it may be more Episcopal in its application. The local congregations do have final electoral authority, but that authority is diluted through many congregations. An elder at one congregation will have positional authority in all related congregations; however, he will likely not have relational authority.

Examples within the ARPC: None.

9. Host Church

Often, an established congregation is effectively reaching a segment of a community, but just as often, there are other groups in the community that seem out of the grasp of that established con-

gregation. For example, a church in a university town that has little connection to or impact on that university may have a burden to connect with students, but it may not have the ministerial capacity to do so. In this case, the established church, in conjunction with the presbytery and ONA may consider sharing their facilities with a church planter who has a vision and passion to reach the student community. This would not be a mission congregation of the church. Instead, the host church and mission church would work closely together to share space without “competing” with each other. Though they share a space they are intentionally reaching a different demographic target. This planting strategy will have many of the dynamics of a church plant but with the benefit of having a host church for meeting space and other fiscal resources.

Another example of the host church planting model is refugee or immigrant church planting methods utilizing the host church model. Gospel opportunity presents itself to established churches that are willing to open their facilities to host “alternate” congregations within their facilities. Many ARP churches are located in areas with immigrant and displaced (refugee and asylum seeking) ethnic populations. While the multi-ethnic church planting paradigm is handled earlier in this paper, in the host church model of Kingdom ministry, ARP churches are encouraged to consider hosting congregations that share confessional congruency but not necessarily ethnic homogeneity.

The goal of the host church and the church that meets and utilizes the resources of leadership and meeting space is ecclesiastical autonomy and the particularization of the guest church. But even in the process, the Kingdom proclamation of Revelation 7 will not go unnoticed in the community.

Biblical justification: Whatever property the Lord has been pleased to give a congregation should be viewed as a stewardship to be wisely employed for the advance of the kingdom of God among all peoples. “It is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:2, see 1 Pet. 4:10).

Ecclesiological considerations: In order to plant in the host church model, the “guest” planting/pastor and the host church must have a clear understanding of the relationship as well as the ongoing ministry models of each. This model is not “tenant based.” That is, the host church is not the landlord of the second congregation. Rather, it is an extension of the host church in order

to reach the area for Christ. For the host paradigm to produce a legitimate church plant, the planting pastor must meet all the requirements of ordination and be demonstrably gifted by the Spirit for the work of church planting.

Relative strengths/benefits: Beyond the benefits of “bricks and mortar,” the host church paradigm allows church plants to focus their efforts on those in the community not currently reached by the host church.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: This model may lead to schisms within both congregations should the allocation of resources and shared space guidelines not be well established and maintained. It may lead to “burn out” of the host congregation should the surrogate congregation be slow to materialize. It may lead to a program versus planting mentality for the planter and the host congregation. For example, the church planter may feel more like a youth or ethnic pastor, rather than a visionary, prophetic evangelist seeking to begin a new church.

Some current ARP examples: The Tampa Chinese Church and Trinity Church, Florida Presbytery; the Iranian Christian Church of Washington DC; the Church of the Atonement, Northeast Presbytery.

10. Multiplying Cell Groups or House Church Model

This model typically encourages members to meet primarily in cell groups or house churches rather than to gather in “traditional” church congregations. Many proponents of the model believe they are returning to a New Testament, apostolic model of ministry. While the desire to advance the church is noble, it is a false dichotomy to dictate one or the other -- the “underground/invisible/incarnational” church versus the “visible/missional” church. History and current church ministry models support the “both/and” approach to church planting and ministry. Yes, we need church plants and churches to meet in homes and practice incarnational ministry, and yes, we need church plants to have visible, missional gatherings and ministries.

Biblical justification: The Apostles and the churches they planted multiplied congregations in a city, and these congregations often met in homes (Rom. 16:5, 15, Col. 4:15, Phlm. 2). However, they had no aversion to using public facilities or to having public meetings. The church Paul planted at Ephesus, for example, soon had a great many believers congregating in a variety of locations including the house of Priscilla and Aquila (1 Cor. 16:19, Acts 19:17-18, 20;

note also that the congregations in Ephesus were under the united governance of one presbytery, Acts 20:17, 28-30, Rev. 2:1-6). However, Paul also rented a public venue, the school of Tyrannus, through which “all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:9-10). Paul therefore could say that he taught the Ephesians both “publicly and from house to house” (Acts 20:20).

Ecclesiological considerations: Generally this model is not congruent with FOG 11. In the North American context, many proponents would be at odds with our standards. Among the many concerns are the administration of the sacraments, the role of the pastor/elders, oversight and accountability of each house church.

Relative strengths/benefits: In some countries where Christianity is illegal or particularly dangerous, the house church is being used by the Holy Spirit to grow the Kingdom. China and some Muslim countries are prime examples. The USA and Canada do not face this type of public oppression.

Relative weaknesses/liabilities: In the USA and Canada, the house church movement seems more reactive than proactive. It seems to be an anti-visible church model that is in competition with the church gathered. The movement seems to take offense at professional clergy, visible church communities with buildings and cooperate ministry, and holds a low view of sacraments and preaching.

Current examples in the ARPC: None.

OUTREACH NORTH AMERICA

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
Revenues		
Denominational Ministry Funds	\$ 564,595	\$ 564,595
Contributions for Ministry	167,156	352,860
Invested Fund Transfers for Operations	29,810	22,099
Total Revenues for Operations	\$ 761,561	\$ 939,554

Expenses		
<u>New Church Development (NCD)</u>		
Total Explorers Supplement Expenses	58,500	108,000
Total Church Plant Supplements	291,791	275,415
Total NCD Support Expense	74,300	72,000
Total New Church Development (NCD)	424,591	455,415
Total Evangelism Expenses	45,850	60,100
Total Church Vitality	33,500	78,020
Total National Presence	19,600	19,000
<u>Administration Expenses</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>2%</u>
Total Payroll & Benefits	255,497	281,894
Total Adm. Support Exp (includes Board Exp)	60,424	82,024
Total Administration Expenses	315,921	363,918
Total Expenses	\$ 839,462	\$ 976,453
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (77,901)	\$ (36,899)
	-	
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 267,824	106,071
Ending Operating Fund Balance	\$ 189,923	\$ 69,171

The report of the **Moderator's Committee on Outreach North America** was presented. The Moderator's Committee recommended the adoption of all recommendations except recommendations #4 of the Board. Synod did not adopt recommendation #4 of the ONA report. All other recommendations of ONA were adopted. An additional recommendation #10 from the Moderator's Committee was adopted.

Prayer was offered for the work of ONA.

A motion **carried**:

That Catawba Presbytery be granted permission to begin an exploratory mission work in the Phoenix, AZ metro area.

Synod's afternoon session closed with the blessing and closing prayer by Zach Keuthan.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7 EVENING SESSION

The evening worship service was led by Mike Milton and Rob Turner.

The Kennedy Fellows program between the Kennedy Foundation, ONA and Erskine Seminary was announced.

Kyle Sims introduced the fraternal delegate from the Free Church of Scotland, Iver Martin, who addressed the Synod. Jeff Kingswood led in prayer for the Free Church of Scotland.

Kyle Sims introduced the fraternal delegate from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales, Stephen Dantzler, who addressed the Synod. Phil Williams led in prayer for the EPCEW.

The Vice Moderator assumed the chair. The members of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations were granted the privilege of the floor.

The report of the **Committee on Inter-Church Relations** was presented. All recommendations of the report were adopted.

COMMITTEE ON INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS

The Committee on Inter-Church Relations met via conference call on March 24, 2017, and has communicated via email on a number of issues since the 2016 meeting of our General Synod.

Ecumenical Organizations

The ARP Church currently holds membership in three (3) ecumenical organizations: The North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC), The World Reformed Fellowship (WRF), and the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC).

NAPARC - The 2016 meeting of NAPARC was held in Pompton Plains, NJ. Kyle Sims, Patrick Malphrus, Rob Patrick, and Billy Barron represented the ARPC at this meeting. We had private discussion with the RPCNA, OPC, and the Canadian Reformed Church. The next meeting of NAPARC will be held in Grand Rapids, MI, on November 14-16, 2017. The NAPARC constitution, bylaws, member churches, and minutes of the most recent meeting are available at www.naparc.org.

WRF - The WRF is an organization that is made up of denominations, churches, and individuals from around the world. There have

been some changes in the organization with one being the model of funding. They are asking us to increase our giving based on membership size. This is not required, but it is being asked as a volunteer commitment much like our own Denominational Ministry Fund. We have asked for our budget to be increased to support this request. The WRF is hosting an event this October to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Wittenburg, Germany. More information on WRF can be found at www.wrfnet.org.

ICRC - The next meeting of ICRC will be held July 12-19, 2017, in Jordan, Ontario. More information on ICRC can be found at www.icrconline.com.

Churches in Fraternal Relations

North American churches in fraternal fellowship with the ARPC are the Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA), and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). It has been our practice to exchange delegates annually with the RPCNA and the OPC. Our practice is to alternate years of sending and receiving with the other North American churches.

The RPCNA voted to invite the ARPC to join them for another concurrent Synod meeting in the Summer of 2019. We as a committee are excited about this opportunity to further our relationship with what we see as one of the most similar denominations to the ARPC. Given our common history and similar size, expanding and deepening our relationship with the RPCNA makes good sense. Like our own denomination, they operate a college, a seminary, and a denominational magazine. They also have a strong record of church planting. There are many places where we can learn from and support each other in ministry. There is no desire or discussion of merger, just a desire for a closer and mutually beneficial relationship. The committee is recommending that we accept this invitation to a concurrent synod. We understand there will be small inconveniences and some added cost, but the value of another concurrent synod with the RPCNA, as well as expanding our horizons by meeting outside the Carolinas for the first time in recent years, outweighs the drawbacks. We hope to have a supplemental report to hand out at the meeting of Synod.

The OPC has long wanted to come to Bonclarken to have their General Assembly. If we accept the invitation of the RPCNA, the OPC is

planning on taking the slot that is usually reserved for our Synod meeting. We continue to have a growing relationship with the OPC.

We continue to encourage presbyteries and churches to invite their local NAPARC churches and other sister denominations to their meetings and events. We believe that this may foster a stronger sense of fellowship and connection in our shared labors in the Gospel.

Fraternal Delegates/Representatives

In 2017, we intend to send as fraternal delegates: Billy Barron to the OPC, Kyle Sims to the RPCNA, and David Smith to the PCA. Delegates to ICRC and NAPARC are still to be determined. This year we have extended invitations as delegates to the OPC, RPCNA, EPC, and Free Church of Scotland.

We have extended invitations as fraternal observers to The Bible Presbyterian Church, The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales, and the Free Reformed Church of Canada.

Corresponding Synods

The ARP Church has relationships with two ARP synods overseas: Synod of Pakistan and Synod of Mexico. The main connection between these synods and the ARPC is through World Witness which has a long history of mission work with these churches. We have included a letter from the ARP Synod of Mexico as an appendix to this report.

Other Relationships

In 2010, we were tasked by the General Synod to work with World Witness to "...investigate establishing relationship with at least one national church in all countries where we have missionaries serving" (Minutes of Synod 2010, p. 366). Last year, we approved a formal fraternal relationship with the Free Church of Scotland (FCoS). We have continued to explore relationships with churches in Wales, England, Spain, and Lithuania. We have had many discussions over the years with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales. We have two World Witness approved families that are working with the EPCEW in Wales. The Goodman family is already serving in Wales. The Cochran family hopes to be on the field in England this summer. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to bless this denomination. There are many relationships between the ARPC and EPCEW at the personal and church level. In light of this already close working relationship, we recommend that our Synod approve an invitation to

the EPCEW to enter into a formal Fraternal Fellowship with our Synod. More information about the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales can be found in Appendix B of this report.

Officers for 2017 – 2018:

Kyle E. Sims	Chairman
Billy Barron	Vice Chairman
Tim Phillips	Secretary

Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive fraternal delegates at the 2017 meeting from the OPC, RPCNA, EPC, and FCoS. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That the Synod authorize the following ministers to serve as fraternal delegates this Summer: Billy Barron, OPC; David Smith, PCA; and Kyle Sims, RPCNA. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That the Synod authorize the Committee on Inter-Church Relations to assign fraternal delegates for the meeting of the ICRC, NAPARC, and any other fraternal situation as needed. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That the Synod invite the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales to enter into Fraternal Fellowship with us. **Synod APPROVED.**
5. That the Synod accept the invitation of the RPCNA to a concurrent synod meeting hosted by them in 2019. **Synod APPROVED.**
6. That all other actions herein reported be sustained. **Synod APPROVED.**

COMMITTEE ON INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS

	<u>Approved</u> <u>2017 Budget</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>2018 Budget</u>
Denominational Ministry Allocation	\$ 4,600	\$ 7,600
<u>Expenses:</u>		
General Office Expense	\$ 50	\$ 50
Committee Travel	450	450
Synod 2019 Planning		1,000
ARP Fraternal Delegates/Representatives	3,000	4,000
Hosting Fraternal Delegates	600	600
WRF Dues	0	500
NAPARC Dues	500	1,000
ICRC Dues	0	0
Total Expenses	\$ 4,600	\$ 7,600
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

Appendix A - Letter from Synod of Mexico (IPAR)

God bless you, brother Jim,

It is a pleasure to hear from you. At present there is nothing official to communicate.

As the ARPC of Mexico, we had our Synod meeting a few weeks ago and we are preparing to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in the month of October.

We pray for God's blessing on your reunion. Receive a cordial greeting from the ARPC of Mexico.

In Christ,

Rev. Isaac Daniel Meraz

Appendix B - Information about the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales

A brief history of EPCEW from their website:

We are a young denomination with roots that go back hundreds of years. It was formed in two stages. In 1986 the London Presbyterian Conference drew together a

group of ministers and other active Christians who wanted to see a new Presbyterian Church in England. From that conference arose the Presbyterian Association in England (PAE). From 1987, a group of ministers and other men formed a council and started to meet in London on a regular basis. This was the time when a nascent Presbyterianism started to take root. Three small congregations started Sunday meetings, and two of these three, Cambridge and Durham, became EPCEW churches in due course.

In 1991, an interim Presbytery was established consisting of elders from five congregations; Blackburn, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Durham and East Hull. In 1996 these churches declared themselves to be a Presbytery, taking the name 'Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales'.

Some notable members of EPCEW:

Rev. Dr. Ian Hamilton just retired from the congregation at Cambridge, England. Rev. Hamilton is a trustee for the Banner of Truth Trust. He is a noted conference speaker and author.

Mark Johnston is pastor in Cardiff, Wales. He formerly pastored the Proclamation PCA church in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. He is also a trustee for the Banner of Truth Trust and has authored several commentaries in the *Let's Study* Series.

Richard Holst is "Pastor Emeritus" of Bethel in Cardiff (Mark Johnston's church; he was the founding church planting pastor). He is active in the work of the presbytery. His sons serving in the OPC are Matthew Holst in the Raleigh, NC area, and Jonathan Holst in Connecticut. He has contributed an essay on hermeneutics in the book *Engaging with Keller: Thinking Through the Theology of an Influential Evangelical*.

ARP Interactions:

The Shem Creek ARP Mission Church spent a week at the EPCEW Bury St. Edmunds' congregation last summer. This was a full mission week where ARPs worked alongside those in this local congregation conducting a VBS, Sports Camp, and Evening Evangelical Dinners. They were able to interact with several of the EPCEW ministers during this time. Charlie Phillips, Church Planting Apprentice at **Shem Creek**,

said they were “Extremely warm, extremely theological, and extremely bent towards outreach.”

The Rev. Drew Goodman serves as an ARP in a EPCEW church in Wales. We asked him to provide some information and thoughts about our entering into formal fraternal relationships with EPCEW. This was his response:

- The EPCEW is a growing international presbytery with 17 congregations, two of which are in Sweden and Germany, and a little over 1,000 members. It was founded in the 1990s with a vision for establishing winsomely reformed churches that are presbyterian in polity and confessional in practice in strategic locations of gospel need throughout the UK.
- The EPCEW is like-minded with the ARP and our other sister churches with whom we have fraternal relations. Like us, they are committed to the *Westminster Standards*, the inerrancy of Scripture, loving devotion to Christ, and obedience to the Great Commission.
- In our commitment as ARPs to the Great Commission, the EPCEW is especially a good choice of partner in missions. With only three initial congregations, most of the growth of the EPCEW has come through new church planting. The EPCEW is currently pursuing one church plant in Manchester, two exploratory works in Oxford and the Greater Newcastle area, and two church revitalizations in Cheltenham and Wales. There is also an existing church revitalization opportunity in eastern Yorkshire. The EPCEW recently had four men trained and seeking a call; all have or will soon be called. They are raising up their own men, but the need is great for more workers and resources that come through partnership. Almost every major population center in the UK is a church planting possibility, and we as ARPs can play a role in supporting the witness of the gospel with the EPCEW.
- We have one ARP World Witness missionary, Drew Goodman, serving as an installed pastor in an EPCEW congregation for church revitalization in Barry, Wales. Drew is a member of the ARP First Presbytery, and has dual membership in the EPCEW presbytery.
- We have one ARP World Witness missionary, Michael Cochran, planning to serve at another EPCEW congregation in Cheltenham, England.

- The EPCEW has warmly received these existing ARP partnerships through World Witness, and there may be possibilities for our students, licentiates, retired ministers, or others looking for a sabbatical, to go on mission in the UK through deeper ties with the EPCEW.

Further Information:

The Committee thinks that there is no better church in England and Wales for us to come into a formal fraternal relationship with, seeing our similar theological understanding, desire for Gospel proclamation, and already strong connections in ministry and friendships.

Those who would like to do more research on the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales can visit their website (www.epcew.org.uk).

A motion carried:

That the Moderator form a planning committee to assist with the organization and logistics of the 2019 Concurrent Synod meeting with RPCNA.

The report the **William H. Dunlap Orphanage, Inc.** was presented.

WILLIAM H. DUNLAP ORPHANAGE, INC.

Officers for 2017 - 2018:

William Kidd - Chairman

Holly Moore – Vice-Chairman

Mary Nell Coblentz - Secretary

The William H. Dunlap Orphanage, Inc., is a long standing ministry of the ARP Church. The orphanage was founded in 1905 in the West Tennessee town of Brighton by Annie Bell Dunlap to honor the memory of her father, William H. Dunlap, and her aunt, Elizabeth Dunlap Spain. The orphanage cared for children until 1978 when it was closed by Synod. Assets and proceeds from the sale of the property were turned over to General Synod and invested to provide continuing financial means to provide for the care of orphans. We were

blessed this year in receiving \$10,000 from Mississippi Valley Presbytery.

The purpose for Dunlap is stated in the bylaws, which read that the "object of the corporation is to provide care, support, maintenance, and education of orphaned, or fatherless, or helpless, or needy children, and to support projects related to such children." The William H. Dunlap Orphanage, Inc., fulfills this duty through its board of trustees. Synod's Treasurer serves as Treasurer to the corporation, and the Executive Director of Central Services serves as Administrative Officer for the Board. The board meets two times each year. The March meeting is devoted to receiving updates from our homes which have ongoing relationships with Dunlap and to also consider grant applications from other ministries for the upcoming fiscal year. Grants are effective from April 1 through March 31 of the following year. The board meets again in November by telephone conference call to receive updates on our ministries and consider any interim business.

Dunlap grants are provided in a three-tiered manner.

1. Erskine College receives \$20,000 per year (\$10,000 per Fall and Spring Semester) to be given to orphaned students.
2. The Dunlap Board has established ongoing relationships (guaranteed yearly funding) with the following homes as funds are available:

Collins Children's Home - Seneca, SC
 Palmer Home for Children - Columbus, MS
 French Camp Academy - French Camp, MS

These homes make a report to the Dunlap Board at our March meeting, and a member of the Dunlap Board serves as a liaison on their board. It is always uplifting to hear the reports of what these organizations are doing to impact children's lives. Your Chairman was able to visit these three with ongoing status and others in 2016.

3. Other ministries to orphans submit grant applications each year and are considered on a year to year basis.

All ministries must agree with the Dunlap Statement of Biblical Christian Belief. All supported ministries for the coming year have the involvement of ARP members or our churches which aid in their work.

For the year 2017 – 2018, the Dunlap Board of Trustees is grateful to be able to provide financial assistance to the following:

Erschine College	\$20,000
Collins Children's Home (Seneca, SC)	\$25,586
French Camp Academy (French Camp, MS)	\$25,586
Palmer Home for Children (Columbus, MS)	\$25,586
Mabel Lowry Pressly Home (Sahiwal, Pakistan)	\$18,000
Calvary Home for Children (Anderson, SC)	\$10,000
Boys Farm (Newberry, SC)	\$15,000
Miracle Hill Ministries (Greenville, SC)	\$10,000
Hope Ministries for the Fatherless (Ethiopia)	\$ 6,000
Moriah Home at French Camp	\$10,000
Total	\$165,758

The Board is thankful to have the financial resources to provide this support for children. Dunlap is unique in its ministry, in that it receives no assistance from General Synod's Denominational Ministry Fund. Resources for Dunlap's work are provided from gifts, endowment earnings, and income from trusts and restricted endowments which name Dunlap as a beneficiary. In today's society with the problem of family breakups and increased substance abuse leading to orphaned children, the need is great to give these children a safe Christian environment to live in. The board wants to encourage ARPs to give to this ministry and to consider the services of these children's homes for needy children they may encounter.

The Board is pleased to accept a generous gift of \$50,000 from the Rob Roy McGregor family in honor of his late wife for the benefit of the Dunlap Orphanage ministries. The "Kathryn A. McGregor Memorial Fund" is a permanent endowment fund of the Dunlap Foundation and may be added to at any time (by anyone).

Dunlap has two other funds that are in the process of being funded to provide assistance for orphans and adoptions.

The Dunlap Adoption Assistance Fund was started in 2011 to assist families of ARP ministers, ARP elders, and members in good standing who are in the process of adoption. This fund will be able to help ARP families with the long and expensive process of adoption. The fund currently has a balance of \$37,250.

The Jim Barker Fund was established in memory of ARP minister, Jim Barker, who served on the Dunlap Board for a number of years. It will provide a scholarship for an Erskine College student who is orphaned and exhibits characteristics of Christian leadership. This fund currently has a balance of \$5,630.

Recommendations:

1. That Synod give thanks to God for His provision of resources for Dunlap Orphanage and its long history of service to orphans, and that prayer be offered for children in need of Christian love and assistance. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That Sessions make their congregations aware of the services and assistance offered to children by William H. Dunlap Orphanage, Inc. and to seek their financial support each year. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That the Dunlap Adoption Assistance Fund be made available to ARPs in good standing with ministers being given priority. The fund has been established. It is ready to receive funds for this purpose and to grant assistance. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That it be announced that the Jim Barker Fund is in need of additional donations in order to grant a scholarship to an ARP orphan student who exhibits characteristics of Christian leadership at Erskine College. **Synod APPROVED.**
5. That the budget for April 2017 - March 2018 be approved as shown. **Synod APPROVED.**

In addition, the Moderator's Committee recommends:

6. That Synod commend the Board of William H. Dunlap Orphanage, Inc., for their diligent work in providing funds to care for orphans and that Synod encourage sessions to highlight ministry to orphans and opportunities for adoption. **Synod APPROVED.**

Sincerely,

Michael S. Evans, Chairman

WILLIAM H. DUNLAP ORPHANAGE, INC.

<u>Description</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
<u>Executive Summary</u>		
Anticipated Revenue	\$ 171,377	\$ 170,816
Beginning Fund Balance	47,880	8,600
Total Available	\$ 219,257	\$ 179,416
Less:		
Reserve for Potential Revenue Shortfalls	(8,600)	(8,500)
Percentage of Revenue	5.0%	5.0%
Administration	(9,725)	(9,725)
Erskine	(20,000)	(20,000)
Remaining for Allocation	\$ 180,932	\$ 141,191
<u>Supporting Detail</u>		
<u>Anticipated Income</u>		
Denominational Ministry	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous Gifts	1,000	-
B. J. Wade	103,746	103,630
Ola B. Hunter	3,300	3,500
McGregor Memorial	831	1,686
Orphanage Fund	46,700	46,600
Will Ministry Fund (min bal of \$255,022)	15,800	15,400
Total Anticipated Income	\$ 171,377	\$ 170,816
<u>Ministry Expenditures</u>		
Erskine-guaranteed	20,000	20,000
Collins Home	26,497	6,397
Palmer Home	26,497	6,397
French Camp Academy	26,497	6,397
World Witness-Mabel Lowery Pressley home Girls' Hostel	18,000	4,500
Calvary Home	10,000	2,500
Boys Farm	15,000	3,750
Miracle Hill	10,000	2,500
Hope for the Fatherless	6,000	-
French Camp-Moriah Home	10,000	
Committed for 1st Qrt next year	32,440	
Remaining for allocation	2	108,752
Sub-Total Ministry Expenditures	\$ 200,932	\$ 161,191

<u>Description</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
Administration		
Central Services	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500
Board	3,900	3,900
Promotional	1,000	1,000
General Office	200	200
Bank Fees	125	125
Total Ministry Expenditures	\$ 210,657	\$ 170,916
Net Income over/(under) expenditures	\$ (39,280)	\$ (100)
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 47,880	\$ 8,600
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 8,600	\$ 8,500

The **Moderator's Committee on William H. Dunlap Orphanage, Inc.**, recommended adoption of all recommendations. All recommendations were adopted.

Andrew Shoger led the Synod in prayer for the work of the Dunlap Board.

Synod adjourned with the closing prayer by Dean Turbeville.

THURSDAY, JUNE 8 MORNING SESSION

Earl and Harriet Linderman led in the informal "Coffee and Psalm Sing" on the Dining Room porch.

The devotional was led by Rob Gustafson and Matt Miller.

The Moderator spoke to the Synod with regard to the work done by the ruling elders of the church, mentioning a number of ruling elders who have meant much to him during his ministry. Friends of the Moderator and Erskine Theological Seminary provided a copy of *Why the Reformation Still Matters* for each congregation.

An announcement concerning the new Erskine Seminary adjunct opening in the ARP Center in Greenville, SC, was made by Seminary Provost Leslie Holmes who then led in prayer for the ruling elders of the church.

Synod took a morning break.

A motion **carried**:

*That the testimony given by the Rev. Matt Miller
be put in print and circulated to every session in the
ARP Church for prayer and consideration.*

Representatives of Erskine College and Seminary addressed the Synod on behalf of the work of the institution.

The report of **Erskine College and Seminary** was presented.

ERSKINE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

Introduction

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Erskine College and Theological Seminary respectfully submits this report to the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. The authority given to the Board as an arm of the Church and, under the board's supervision, the responsibility given to the administration of the College and Seminary, are mandates we embrace in our desire to serve Christ and His Church. We take seriously the guidance prescribed in the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education, and intend to implement the principles of this document in a thoroughly Christian way on the campus in Due West and at the Seminary extension sites.

Accreditation and Financial Stability Plan

The 2016 Report to the Synod noted Erskine's significant financial progress during the 2015 and 2016 fiscal years, which resulted in the reaffirmation of accreditation and removal from probation by the institution's accreditor, SACSCOC. This wonderful good news has afforded Erskine College and Seminary a fresh opportunity to move forward with a continued resolve to strengthen and enhance the school's mission and financial stability.

Currently, the Board of Trustees and the senior administration are exploring and evaluating opportunities to further streamline operations, and in some cases, reengineer programs, to transition Erskine from financially "stabilizing" to financially "stable" for the long term. Programs under evaluation include College and Seminary admissions, leveraging financial aid in an era of compressed margins, new majors (including a Master's program in Athletic Training), ex-

panded on-line undergraduate offerings during the summer in the College, and the restructuring of Winter Term in the College. The goal of these efforts is to provide additional revenue sources while effectively managing expenses.

Financial Stewardship

Erskine's operating budget for fiscal year 2016-17 is \$32.4 million, including instructional and academic support, student services, institutional support, auxiliary enterprises, and operational and facility maintenance expenditures. Erskine, like many small liberal arts colleges, is tuition-driven; therefore, student recruitment and successful retention of these students are essential.

Augmenting the revenue from tuition are the funds raised through the Advancement Office and the resources from the Endowment Fund, with assets of approximately \$36.8 million as of March 23, 2017. The endowment is a key component of the financial stability and future viability of Erskine College. While Erskine has depended too heavily on her endowment in recent years, the current spend rate is 5%, and the senior administration is exploring reducing the draw even further. Earnings to date for fiscal year 2017 are in excess of 8%.

Advancement

The Annual Fund for the fiscal year ending June, 2016, exceeded the goal of \$1.6 million raising a total of \$1,743,017. This amounted to \$8932 more than the impressive results of 2015-2016. College unrestricted giving had an impressive \$76,572 increase in support. The Advancement team continued to strive to reach donors from all spectrums of the Erskine family.

God continues to bless Erskine with generous alumni and friends who sacrificially support the College and Seminary with their generous donations and prayers. The number of individual and group donors declined, which is a concern of the Advancement team.

An ambitious goal of \$1.65 million in unrestricted giving was set for the 2016-2017 academic year, and the first six months of the fiscal year (July 2016 through December 2016) showed donations totaling \$828,778 which is 50% of the goal.

While this fiscal year shows a marked increase in overall giving, prayers are coveted for success in unrestricted giving to the Annual Fund.

Erskine College

In the fall of 2016, Erskine College welcomed 248 new students, including 32 transfer students. This incoming class, along with attrition from fall to spring achieves an annual average Full Time Equivalent student enrollment (FTEs) at 597 for the year.

After the departure of Dr. N. Bradley Christie as Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs in January, 2017, Mr. Dan Corsi was given the task of leading the academic office until a permanent replacement was named. Early in 2017, numerous individuals and committees were charged with investigating and updating various components of Erskine College's academic programming to identify better ways to meet the needs of students and thus increase retention through more efficient instruction, scheduling, and degree completion requirements. Additionally, these initiatives will benefit the faculty and staff of Erskine College in the creation of more flexibility in course offerings and teaching loads. Despite these improvements, additional full-time instructional faculty will be needed across the institution in the coming years. The addition of faculty should be the primary focus for the College regarding the academic programming. The Academic Office, in conjunction with the President and Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations, will carefully consider additional staffing needs based upon input from the relevant institutional stakeholders.

With regard to staffing, Ms. Jessie Estep returned to Erskine College in November, 2016, to fill the newly created position of Assistant Dean of Student Success. This position was created to improve student retention rates experienced by the College, a critical component of Erskine College's future academic and financial strength.

Most recently, Interim President Dr. Robert Gustafson announced the hiring of Dr. John Basie as the Provost of Erskine College to replace the position of Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Basie arrived in March, and provisions were put in place to ensure a smooth transition. Dr. Basie's leadership, experience, and knowledge of Erskine will be a valuable resource in solidifying the college's future as the only four-year liberal arts institution of higher education affiliated with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

ARP Campus Ministry (Reformed University Fellowship)

Rev. Paul Patrick continues to serve as the chaplain and campus minister for the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod at Erskine College. Rev. Patrick also continues to serve on the President's Senior Team. The presence of RUF on campus as a ministry of the Gospel to

our students is fostered not only through the campus minister, but also through the presence of RUF interns who assist in reaching out to freshman each year.

In addition to the ordinary RUF ministries of a weekly large-group fellowship, small groups, and one-to-one meetings, Erskine also benefits from the provision of a weekly Chapel service for our campus community. Together, these avenues of ministry provide a context for evangelism and discipleship of our students as RUF demonstrates a commitment to *“Reach Students for Christ and Equip Students to Serve.”*

Erskine remains grateful for Synod’s provision of our chaplain and campus minister, for our affiliation with Reformed University Ministries, and for the blessing RUF has been to many Erskine students.

Student Development

Dr. Wendi Santee has continued to lead the department of Student Services during the 2016-2017 academic year. A significant development that occurred in the fall of 2016 was the change in the department name. “Student Services” is now known as “Student Development.” This change came as the result of a change in philosophy and approach to working with students. Rather than a “business transactional” relationship with students, we desire to have a relationship with students in which they come to know the office as a place for support, help, accountability, and development.

The 2017 spring semester will see some personnel changes. Mr. Jim Van Stensel, who has served as the Assistant Dean for Residential Learning and Development, has resigned so that he and his family can return to Michigan. And Mr. David Miller, the Coordinator for Campus Life, has also resigned. The position in Residence Life has been restructured. The new title is Coordinator of Residence Life and Housing. The person serving in this role will also serve as a live-in resident director of an upperclassmen male residence hall. Combining these roles into one will allow the department to continue moving forward in its focus on, and investment in, the residence halls and to move a step closer toward the goal of having full-time resident directors living in the residence halls.

The focus this year has been to continue working toward a model of residential life leadership that reflects a Christian world view and aligns with best practices across the country in the field of student development and residential life at similar Christian college campuses. This strategy also remains an area of emphasis through the student judicial system.

Additionally, it has been a focus this year to create a vibrant residential experience through high quality campus events and activities. The 2016 fall semester saw a significant improvement in communication with the student body as well as the entire campus community regarding student activities and events. Our events, more frequent and of better quality, have drawn more student participation.

A search for both the positions of Coordinator of Residence Life and Housing and the Coordinator of Campus Life are currently underway.

Erskine Theological Seminary

As we celebrate the 180th anniversary of our ministry, Erskine Theological Seminary has experienced a year of God's blessings in many ways. This report will be restricted to four specific highlights:

First, this has been a year of rebuilding in personnel matters. Dr. Leslie Holmes, who has been on Erskine's faculty for almost a decade, was named Provost of the Seminary beginning January 1, 2017. As Provost, Dr. Holmes will effectively serve as the Seminary CEO with oversight of all campuses and extension sites. He will continue to teach in a limited capacity. At the same time, Dr. R.J. Gore resumed his duties as (Acting) Dean of the Seminary. Dr. Dale Johnson returned to full-time teaching as Professor of Church History on February 1. Ms. Robin Broome has done significant work promoting the Seminary and in the spring was named Director of Seminary Enrollment.

Second, this has been a year of progress in many Seminary programs. Overall, the Seminary experienced a 20% increase in student enrollment in the spring semester (2017). We are now in our second year of offering an online Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATs), and we expect to graduate our first class of students in May, 2017. Our Doctor of Ministry (DMin) enrollment continues to grow, and we are now halfway through our first cohort of students in the joint ONA-Erskine Seminary Certificate in Church Vitality. Students are required to complete five (5) doctoral level courses for this certificate, and these courses all count towards the DMin degree.

Third, Erskine has rearranged our Master of Theology (ThM) program to make it more accessible to students who live at a distance from the Due West campus. Students may take the required ThM seminar courses (one offered each in the fall and spring) using a "book-

ends” format, which will require 2.5 days of residence work (in a seminar setting) at the beginning and end of each semester. In between, students will do research and engage with their professors and peers in an online, hybrid classroom. Elective courses are offered in January and July as weeklong intensives and students may take up to two (2) courses completely online. Depending on research needs, students may also arrange to take course work as a Directed Study.

Fourth, Erskine Seminary has notified our accrediting agency that we are relocating our Greenville classes to the new ARP Center on Pleasantburg Drive where we have offices and classroom space to accommodate a growing enrollment in the Greenville area. Beginning in July, the Seminary will also have a full-time admissions office on-site at the ARP Center. We believe our presence in Greenville, as the only regionally and fully professionally accredited Presbyterian seminary, will be a significant opportunity for Erskine and for the Greenville community. To kick off our presence this summer, Dr. Dale Johnson is teaching a course on Luther and the German Reformation, just in time to celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the start of the Protestant Reformation.

We praise God for every blessing and are thankful for the ongoing support of the church and numerous individuals. We ask each congregation and every member of our Synod for their ongoing prayers on our behalf as we continue to serve Christ and His Church as the only official seminary of the ARP denomination, and that you consider Erskine Seminary in your personal and congregational giving as well as in planning your estate.

Board Development

Our Board of Trustees continues to implement educational programs to strengthen its effectiveness. The Board seems to be acting in a cohesive manner and, in general, there is a great feeling of unity and consensus.

To assist in maintaining better oversight of the organization, we have developed regular reporting of key performance indicators. Our committees also now meet between board meetings and make recommendations so that these can be received by the board prior to our meetings. This procedure has helped us be more effective and efficient.

As noted last year, we are downsizing the Board to 17 members. That process was approved, and the implementation began as we selected members for next year's class. Again, we are not removing members, we are simply changing the size as we place fewer people on each year.

We encourage the Synod to continue its work of selecting only faithful, capable members for the Erskine College Board of Trustees.

Statement of Philosophy of Christian Higher Education

The College and Seminary embrace a renewed interest in, and commitment to, the church regarding the expectations of Synod for the Christian education offered at Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary. The Interim President, in speaking to the faculty during the first week of his tenure, highlighted the importance of the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education in determining the parameters of how the College and Seminary represent the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church "as an arm of the Church in Christian higher education in carrying out the mandate to redeem all of life, especially man's moral and intellectual life, under the authority and Lordship of Jesus Christ." Furthermore, the leaders of both the College and the Seminary recognize that the administration and faculty "must be in harmony with the principles and goals of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church." If, in the past, this commitment to the church waned, the new administration will give careful attention to fulfill the guidelines of this Philosophy in every aspect of an Erskine education. We are particularly focused on and guided by the following statements in the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education:

1. "Taking their perspective for the Biblical view of God, man and the world, as expressed in *The Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*, our institutions of Christian higher education have a responsibility to stress Christian doctrine, as well as Christian ethics; Christian commitment as well as academic excellence."
2. "The carrying out of such a philosophy requires careful planning in several areas in accordance with the *Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* and under the guidance of the principles of this statement (PCHE)."
3. "Erskine College represents the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in higher education . . . Erskine College is related to the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as the arm of the Church in Christian higher edu-

cation in carrying out the Biblical mandate to redeem all of life, especially man's moral and intellectual life, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ."

4. "In order for the goals and purposes of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Christian higher education to be realized, Erskine College, through its Board of Trustees, must be in harmony with the principles and goals of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church."
5. "As an arm of the Church, Erskine College exists to enlarge and help sustain the mission of the Church."

Therefore, since the College exists as an arm of the Church "to enlarge and help sustain the mission of the Church," every faculty member hired will need to embrace fully the principles of this Philosophy including the definition of an evangelical Christian. The tenets of this definition include a commitment to the full authority and inerrancy of the Biblical text, a vibrant and maturing personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a clear understanding of the "vicarious and atoning death through the shed blood," the reality of Christ's bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and "His personal return in power and glory." Finally, each faculty member and administrator must understand that "the salvation of lost and sinful man" requires "regeneration by the Holy Spirit," and subsequently the ministry of the Holy Spirit "by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life."

The student body of Erskine College will continue to be diverse although there will be a renewed effort to seek out students who are members of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. This past fall the admissions office held an ARP admissions Saturday with over thirty ARP students in attendance. The goal for the counselors in the admissions office is to be present in our church youth groups and worship services, to be involved in the high school and middle school retreats held at Bonclarken, and to encourage all ARP students to consider Erskine as the best place for their college education. The PCHE states, "The purpose of Erskine College should be to provide sound training in a campus environment where Christian influence is pervasive." If in the past Erskine has fallen short of this goal, it is the expressed desire of the present administration to build a college community where Christ is honored in all that we do by providing a place where all students, and particularly the children of the ARP Church, will flourish both academically and spiritually. To this end, the present

administration envisions the College placing an increased emphasis on the integration of faith and learning in every classroom. This integration needs to be content rich, addressing the critical issues of the culture from a Christian perspective and enabling our students to develop a Christian world and life view. The PCHE encourages the faculty to develop a curriculum that has “the Christian perspective as the positive integrating factor for all the disciplines. Emphasis should be on the arts, sciences, vocations, and our cultural heritage. **Significant emphasis** should be placed on the study of the Bible and Christian ethics as a requirement for graduation” (PCHE III.e) as we uphold the Lordship of Christ in all that we do.

Summary

As the 2016-17 school year unfolded, it brought difficult challenges and wonderful opportunities. New leadership brings change, and patience with new leadership is essential, particularly since leadership changes at Erskine have come in rapid succession with very little time to settle into a pattern of adjustment and realignment. But even with the changes, God’s faithfulness resounds across the campus through our chapel program directed by Paul Patrick, strong teaching in the classroom, and caring relationships exhibited student-to-student and faculty-to-student. The admissions process remains strong, and stakeholders continue to invest sacrificially in Erskine.

With the addition of a new College Provost, Dr. John Basie, the mission of Erskine is in good hands. Dr. Basie is a graduate of Erskine and brings an array of skills and experience that match the needs of the College. Dr. Leslie Holmes, the new Provost of the Seminary, brings academic strength and a pastor’s perspective to the work of training the next generation of leaders for the ARP Church and the broader evangelical world. Mr. Bobby Duran, our new College admissions director, understands Erskine both as a graduate of the College and as one who grew up in the ARP Church. These three new leaders love the Church and are committed to developing programs that honor Christ and that are aligned with the goals and purposes of the ARP.

The generous financial support of the Synod for the College and the Seminary through many decades strengthens our ability to offer the very best in Christian education to Christian families as well as to students who come to Erskine for various other reasons. The designation of these funds solely for the Seminary during this fiscal year allowed us to provide leadership and administrative coherence to the Seminary that were much needed. It also afforded the Seminary the opportunity to establish a stronger presence in the Greenville area with the leasing

of office space at the new ARP Center and with new course offerings for those seeking graduate Seminary education. With this new presence in Greenville, Erskine Theological Seminary becomes the first ATS accredited seminary in the greater Greenville area, and we are already seeing interest in the summer courses we will offer beginning in July.

Finally, we continue to depend on God's grace as He provides direction and vision for the future. At the beginning of our Board meetings, we spend critical time in prayer, and we continue that prayer for Erskine throughout the academic year. As those who love the Lord and cherish the opportunity to pray for Erskine, we ask that each of you lift the Seminary and College to the Lord on a consistent basis both in the churches, at Presbytery meetings, and at our annual Synod meeting. Only with His help will the efforts of the Seminary and College be blessed for the furtherance of His Kingdom.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel S. James, Chairman

SUPPLEMENT:

Since his appointment as Interim President on October 21, 2016 and as President on May 26, 2017, Rob Gustafson has recognized that to lead Erskine College as an agency of the ARPC, it is incumbent upon him to understand Synod's design for the institution. In the 1977/78 Statement of the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education (PCHE) Dr. Gustafson was delighted to find a blueprint for operation which declared General Synod's expectations for both college and seminary education.

However, recent reviews of the Statement by the president and the board gave rise to questions of interpretation in different areas of the document. For a 40 year-old document, it wouldn't be uncommon to expect that what was clear to the original authors and to the body of Synod which approved the PCHE in 1977/78, would not be as clear to its readers in 2017.

Therefore, in February, Board Chairman, Sam James, appointed an ad hoc committee to address certain areas in the PCHE that seemed vague or ambiguous so that the Board of Trustees, as well as Dr. Gustafson and future presidents, would have a clearer understanding of

what is expected of them by the ARPC. Voting members of the committee are: Gordon Query, chairman, Johnathan Arnold, Clint Davis, and Tom Hellams. Advisory members are: RJ Gore, Rob Gustafson, Paul Patrick, and Lee Shelnutt.

The ad hoc committee's purpose is not an attempt to rewrite the Statement, but only to clarify specific areas within the PCHE by suggesting revisions for Synod's consideration. Additionally, the committee will suggest a list of editorial revisions for references to the PCHE in the *Manual of Authorities and Duties* and elsewhere, if appropriate.

The following plan provides a reasonable opportunity for both direct input from Synod and ultimate approval by Synod.

- The ad hoc committee reports its findings and provides a First Draft of recommended revisions to the PCHE for approval at the Erskine Board of Trustees Meeting on May 26, 2017.
- This First Draft will be distributed as a supplement to the Erskine Report to all Synod delegates at the June 6 – 8, 2017, Meeting of Synod. Delegates will be asked to review the First Draft and suggest other revisions of the PCHE to the ad hoc committee by January 1, 2018. (This will allow the committee to begin reviewing Synod's input ahead of Erskine's Board Meeting in February.)
- At Erskine's February 15, 2018, Board Meeting, the ad hoc committee will present a Final Draft of recommended revisions to the PCHE for approval.
- The Final Draft of revisions to the PCHE will be included in Synod packets distributed to all delegates in early May, 2018.
- At its June, 2018, Meeting, General Synod votes to approve the Final Draft of the revised PCHE.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordon Query
Chairman of the PCHE
Ad Hoc Committee

Draft of revised Statement of the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church is on file at the ARP Center, Greenville, SC. Recommendations included in the draft are as follows:

Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive the First Draft of revisions to the PCHE as information.
2. That delegates be requested to review the First Draft and suggest other revisions of the PCHE to the ad hoc committee by January 1, 2018. (See note below.)
3. That Synod approve the timeline that plans to present the Final Draft of the revised PCHE at the June, 2018, meeting of General Synod.

NOTE:

Suggestions for further revisions to the PCHE can be emailed to any of the following:

Gordon Query, Chairman of the PCHE ad hoc committee
gquery@bellsouth.net

Sam James, Chairman of the Erskine Board of Trustees
samuelsjames@yahoo.com

Dena Hodge, Assistant to the President of Erskine College
hodge@erskine.edu

The Moderator's Committee on Erskine College and Seminary recommended that Synod approve the following **regarding the first draft of Synod's Philosophy of Christian Higher Education:**

1. Recommendation Number 1 (*That Synod receive the First Draft of revisions to the PCHE as information.*) **Synod APPROVED.**
2. Recommendation Number 2 (*That delegates be requested to review the First Draft and suggest other revisions of the PCHE to the ad hoc committee by January 1, 2018.*) **Synod APPROVED.**
3. Recommendation Number 3 (*That Synod approve the timeline that plans to present the Final Draft of the revised PCHE at the June, 2018 meeting of General Synod.*) **Synod APPROVED.**

In addition, your committee recommends (**regarding the first draft of Synod's Philosophy of Christian Higher Education (PCHE)**):

4. That Synod commend and express appreciation to Dr. Robert Gustafson and the board and faculty who have invested time, thought and energy in seeking to align Erskine with Synod's Statement of Philosophy of Christian Higher Education. **Synod APPROVED.**

In addition, your committee recommends **regarding Index 33** (Report of Erskine College and Seminary):

5. That the ARP churches, presbyteries and General Synod pray often and regularly for Erskine College and Seminary's board, faculty, staff and student body as they incorporate the gospel into all of their actions and activities. **Synod APPROVED.**
6. That Synod praise or ask God in prayer for:
 - a. the reaffirmation of accreditation by SACS COC.
 - b. Erskine's financial condition improving to "stabilizing" and for it to become long-term "stable."
 - c. Erskine's endowment to grow and for its donor base to increase in numbers.
 - d. Erskine's new administrators to be effective and for godly full-time faculty to be found and hired.
 - e. the spiritual climate at Erskine to continue to develop a biblical worldview that influences each student with the implications of the gospel.
 - f. that God would bless Erskine College and Seminary as it strives to fulfill the Great Commission. **Synod APPROVED.**
7. That Synod receive this report as a whole. **Synod APPROVED.**

ERSKINE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY
Master Cash Operating Budget
For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017

	COLLEGE	SEMINARY	INSTITUTION
REVENUE AND OTHER ADDITIONS			
Tuition, fees, room, and board	\$ 27,241,550	\$ 861,622	\$ 28,103,172
Less: scholarships and financial aid	\$ 15,100,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 15,325,000
Net tuition, fees, room, and board	\$ 12,141,550	\$ 636,622	\$ 12,778,172
Endowment income (5% draw on endowment funds and unrestricted investments)	\$ 1,566,013	\$ 353,866	\$ 1,919,879
Annual fund	\$ 1,058,750	\$ 591,250	\$ 1,650,000
Bookstore	\$ 325,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 328,000
Other income (Athletic fundraising, rental income, etc...)	\$ 417,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 425,000
	\$ 15,508,313	\$ 1,592,738	\$ 17,101,051
EXPENSES AND OTHER DEDUCTIONS			
Salaries and benefits	\$ 6,980,081	\$ 1,181,135	\$ 8,161,216
Operating expenses - (instructional & institutional)	\$ 6,981,075	\$ 570,234	\$ 7,551,309
Bookstore	\$ 253,500	\$ 2,340	\$ 255,840
Debt service	\$ 1,130,686	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,132,686
	\$ 15,345,342	\$ 1,755,709	\$ 17,101,051
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 162,971	\$ (162,971)	\$ -
ESTIMATED CASH SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$ 162,971	\$ (162,971)	\$ -

NOTE: Annual Fund goal includes the annual allocation from the General Synod of the ARP Church.

Jim Klukow led the Synod in prayer for Erskine.

Michael Evans spoke on behalf of the Dunlap Board.

Prayers were offered on behalf of ministers, their wives and families who are presently experiencing health problems.

The **report of the Executive Board** was presented.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board of the General Synod is the agency empowered to carry out the work of the General Synod in the interim period between meetings of Synod. It provides oversight for the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Center Facility, Central Services, and the promotional work of the General Synod.

The Board met twice since the 2016 meeting of the General Synod. One meeting was by telephone conference and one full meeting

was at the ARP Center in Greenville. This report reflects its activities and presents the recommendations of the Executive Board to the General Synod. In its duty to implement directives of the General Synod, coordinate the work of the Synod and supervise Central Services and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Center Facility, the Executive Board reports the following:

Actions of the board

A Florida Presbytery request with regard to the planting of an ARP Church in Norman, Oklahoma, was granted.

A Rules of Procedure change with regard to the day and time of Moderator's Committees meetings at General Synod was approved.

A request from Reformed Heritage Books was referred to CEM.

Synod's Archivist, Edith Brawley presented an updated report to the Board. The amount of material being sent to the Presbyterian Heritage Foundation amounts to a significant increase in storage size necessary. As a result, a recommendation from the Executive Board with regard to financing will be included in the recommendations to Synod.

An Erskine College ad hoc committee statement with regard to its study of the Philosophy of Christian Higher Education was presented. As a result, a statement from this committee will be written by its chair and appended to the report of the Executive Board.

The report to the Board of its Committee on Administration was made, noting with appreciation the continuing professionalism of the director and the staff and the upgrading of all aspects of Central Services.

The Boards and Agency reports as well as reports from the presbyteries were shared with the Board.

Recommendations:

1. That the proposed budgets for the ARP Center Facility, Central Services, *The ARP Magazine* and the Executive Board be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That the Moderator's proposed Theme and Monthly Emphases be endorsed for emphasis in the denomination. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That the schedule for the Annual Meeting of Synod 2017 be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That the annual payment to the Presbyterian Heritage Center be increased by \$500. **Synod APPROVED.**

5. That the actions of the Executive Board reported herein be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Moderator Phil Williams
Principal Clerk Ron Beard

The **Moderator's Committee on Executive Board** recommended approval of all recommendations. All recommendations were Synod approved. In addition, the Moderator's Committee recommended:

6. That the actions of the ad hoc committee clarifying the ARPC Statement of Philosophy of Christian Higher Education be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
7. That Synod express its appreciation to the staff of the ARP Center, Central Services and *The ARP Magazine* for their faithful service to the denomination and the Church of Christ. **Synod APPROVED.**

CENTRAL SERVICES

	<u>2017 Synod Approved</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
Revenues		
Current Funds	0.0%	3.8%
Denominational Ministry Funds	\$ 313,846	\$ 325,626
Miscellaneous Gifts	4,200	4,200
Total Current Funds	\$ 318,046	\$ 329,826
Agency Support		
Board of Benefits	\$ 179,984	\$ 177,837
ARP Foundation	5,250	5,000
W. H. Dunlap Fund	4,500	4,500
Total Agency Support	\$ 189,734	\$ 187,337
Total Revenues	\$ 507,780	\$ 517,163

CENTRAL SERVICES—continued

	<u>2017 Synod Approved</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
Expenses	3.00%	
Total Salary and Benefits	\$ 493,816	\$ 490,414
Staff & Program		
Worker's Compensation	\$ 2,019	\$ 1,931
Director Travel & Expenses	1,500	3,000
Staff Travel & Expenses	700	1,200
Training	1,500	1,000
Contract Employees		4,800
Dues/Subscriptions	800	1,000
Total Staff & Program	\$ 6,519	\$ 12,931
Total Equipment	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,200
Agency Support		
Agency Support Revenue	\$ (20,500)	\$ (10,100)
Copier Lease	8,250	6,651
Postage Meter/Scales	3,300	1,205
Postage	9,500	1,000
Paper Purchases	500	500
Net Agency Support Expense	\$ 1,050	\$ (744)
General Office		
Software Maintenance	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
Internet Services	200	200
Bank Fees-Net	6,000	4,000
Bank Fees Allocated	(6,000)	(4,000)
Communication	3,320	4,800
ARP Synod Web Page design & n	2,800	3,000
Office Supplies	9,000	9,000
Total General Office	\$ 22,320	\$ 24,000
Total Expenses	\$ 524,905	\$ 528,801
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (17,125)	\$ (11,638)
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 28,763	\$ 11,638
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 11,638	\$ 0

CENTER FACILITY

	<u>2017</u> <u>Forecast</u>	<u>2018</u> <u>Proposed</u>
<u>RECEIPTS</u>		
General Synod Allocation	\$ 22,402	\$ 22,402
Rent - ARP Entities	64,641	70,194
Rent - External Entities	50,428	90,937
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 137,471	\$ 183,532
<u>Expenses</u>		
Facility Repair	24,000	24,600
Facility Maintenance	49,540	59,420
Utilities	38,753	43,815
Sinking Fund/Major Replacements	24,800	41,600
Contingency	0	13,700
TOTAL Expenses	\$ 137,093	\$ 183,135
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 377	\$ 397
Beginning Facility Fund Balance	\$2,600	\$2,977
Ending Facility Fund Balance	\$ 2,977	\$ 3,375
	-	-
Plant Sinking Fund		
Beginning Balance	\$ 48,000	\$ 30,300
Contributions	24,800	41,600
Expenses	(42,500)	(15,000)
Ending Plant Sinking Fund Balance	\$ 30,300	\$ 56,900

EXECUTIVE BOARD

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
<u>Revenues</u>		<u>0.3%</u>
General Synod Allocation	\$ 171,820	\$ 172,290
Minutes of Synod Sales Income	50	50
Plan Book Sales	50	50
Standards Book Sales	50	50
General Synod Registration	24,960	25,880
Total Revenues	\$ 196,930	\$ 198,320
<u>Expenses</u>		
<u>General Synod Officers</u>		
Moderator	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Vice-Moderator	500	500
Moderator-Elect	1,000	1,000
Vice-Moderator Elect	500	500
Principal Clerk	5,000	5,000
Treasurer	3,675	3,675
Total General Synod Officers	\$ 14,675	\$ 14,675
<u>General Synod Meeting</u>		
Program & Preparation	\$ 10,080	9,500
Honorariums	1,500	2,000
Staff Expenses	550	550
Synod Planning	100	50
Synod Room & Board	5,000	5,000
Synod Service Fee	14,820	14,630
Total General Synod Meeting	\$ 32,050	\$ 31,730
<u>Executive Board Meeting & Office</u>		
Board Travel & Meeting Expense	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500
General Office & Miscellaneous	800	400
Executive Board-Legal	1,000	1,000
Committee to Oversee Campus Ministry	500	500
Total Executive Board	\$ 6,800	\$ 6,400
<u>General Synod Contingency</u>		
Unallocated	25,000	\$ 25,000
Special Committee-Book of Discipline	1,500	1,500
Total General Synod Contingency	\$ 26,500	\$ 26,500

EXECUTIVE BOARD—continued

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
<u>Promotion & Services</u>		
Insurance		
Workers Compensation	\$ 15	\$ 15
Umbrella Liability	1,600	1,600
Total Insurance	\$ 1,615	\$ 1,615
Orientation Program	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
<u>Historical Concerns</u>		
Archive Honorarium	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Curator of ARP Materials	500	500
Historical Records-materials preservati	2,400	2,400
Total Historical Concerns	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900
New Mission Subscriptions-THE ARP	\$ 500	\$ 500
Total Promotion & Services	\$ 13,015	\$ 13,015
<u>Minutes of Synod</u>		
Preparation & Distribution	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Printing	6,000	6,000
Total Minutes of Synod	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000
<u>Plan Book</u>		
Preparation & Distribution	\$ 250	\$ 250
Transfer to ECM from DM Allocation	\$ 94,640	\$ 96,750
Total Expenses	\$ 196,930	\$ 198,320
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 0	\$ 0
<u>Erskine Campus Ministry</u>		
<u>ECM Revenues</u>		
ECM Contributions	37,250	43,800
ECM Transfer from Exec. Board DM Alloc.	94,640	96,750
Total ECM Revenues	\$ 131,890	\$ 140,550
<u>ECM Expenses</u>		
<u>ECM Salary & Benefits</u>	3%	2.0%
ECM Salary & Benefits	\$ 94,640	\$ 96,750
Total ECM Other Expenses	37,250	43,800
Total Erskine Campus Ministry Expenses	\$ 131,890	\$ 140,550
Net Income (Loss)-ECM	\$ -	\$ -

EXECUTIVE BOARD—continued

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
Beginning Fund Balance-ECM	\$ 25,273	\$ 25,273
Ending Fund Balance-ECM	\$ 25,273	\$ 25,273
Net Income (Loss) Summary		
Executive Board Revenue	\$ 171,970	\$ 172,440
Executive Board Expenses	(164,880)	(166,590)
General Synod Meeting Net after Registration	(7,090)	(5,850)
Erskine Campus Ministry-Summary		
ECM-Revenue	131,890	140,550
ECM-Director Salary & Benefits	(94,640)	(96,750)
ECM-Director Expenses	(37,250)	(43,800)
Erskine Campus Ministry-Interns Net	-	-
Erskine Campus Ministry Net Income (Loss)	-	-
Total Net Income (Loss)	-	-

THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
REVENUES	9.9%	-0.5%
Denominational Ministries Alloc	\$ 87,904	\$ 101,515
Miscellaneous Gifts	500	500
ARPWM Contributions	3,500	3,500
ARP Subscription Income	32,400	25,200
ARP Advertisement Income	6,000	5,000
Misc Income	120	120
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 130,424	\$ 135,835
EXPENSES		
SALARY & STAFF BENEFITS	\$ 88,193	\$ 101,712

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian—continued

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
STAFF & BOARD EXPENSES		
Editor Expenses	1,400	800
Staff Expenses	400	300
Dues & Membership Fees	200	200
Total Staff & Board Expenses	\$2,000	\$1,300
PUBLICITY & PROMOTION		
Publicity & Promotion	700	700
"The ARP" Web Page	740	740
Total Publicity & Promotion	\$1,440	\$1,440
EQUIPMENT		
Total Equipment	\$500	\$500
COMMUNICATIONS		
Total Communications	\$720	\$1,650
Office Expenses		
Rent	3,440	3,473
Office Supplies & Misc	1,500	1,567
Bank Fees	50	0
Total Office Expenses	\$4,990	\$5,040
PRODUCTION EXPENSES	19.1%	-12.0%
Preparation & Printing	20,981	13,182
Labels and Postage	6,000	5,422
P2P Subscription Software	1,700	1,889
Materials and Supplies	300	300
Photography Expenses	400	200
Design Services	3,200	3,200
Total Production Expenses	\$32,581	\$24,193
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$130,424	\$135,835
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	\$0	\$0
Beginning Fund Balance	\$0	\$0
Ending Fund Balance	\$0	\$0

Prayer was offered by Harper Price for the work of the Executive Board and the staff of Central Services.

Paul Matthews spoke to the Synod on behalf of the Board of Stewardship.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

General Synod has given the Board of Stewardship “responsibility for working cooperatively with the congregations and agencies of General Synod to develop and administer programs and ministries to secure financial resources to meet the operating needs of the General Synod; to present to the General Synod a recommended allocation of those resources; and to receive, maintain, and administer funds given to the General Synod and/or the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Foundation, Inc., and to expend income for the furtherance of the work of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church” (*Manual of Authorities and Duties*).

The members of the Board of Stewardship also serve as the board of directors of the ARP Foundation. Synod’s Investment Committee serves as Investment Advisor to the Foundation board.

Duties and responsibilities as delineated in the *Manual of Authorities and Duties* (MAD) are grouped in this report according to the impact of issues on the denomination rather than in numerical order as they are listed in the MAD.

Authorities and Duties

Duty 1. Promote the general ministries and programs of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

The Board of Stewardship works to promote and support all the ministry and programs of General Synod through the following:

- Agencies: Bonclarken, Central Services, Christian Education Ministries, Erskine College & Theological Seminary, Outreach North America, World Witness.
- Boards: Executive Board, Board of Stewardship/ARP Foundation Board of Directors, Board of Benefits.
- Standing Committees: Worship, Minister & His Work, Investment, Theological & Social Concerns, Inter-Church Relations, Campus Ministry Oversight.

- Special Commissions and Committees: Ecclesiastical Commission on Judiciary Affairs, Special Committee to Revise *Book of Discipline*, Special Committee to Review FOG Amendments.

General Synod created these agencies, boards, and committees to serve the entire Church in the proclamation of the Gospel of God by every means possible. **Every agency, board, and committee is dependent upon the free-will giving of every member of every congregation to the Denominational Ministry Fund in the financial support of our Mother Church.**

<u>Easter Offering</u>	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Stewardship/						
Foundation	7,567	6,716	6,822	7,112	8,249	8,484
Bonclarken	10,693	9,906	7,744	8,465	11,400	10,198
CEM	8,179	8,112	7,681	7,661	8,906	8,054
Erskine College	11,399	10,227	7,672	8,316	10,300	9,012
World Witness	18,020	17,994	16,927	14,986	18,711	16,563
Subtotal	55,858	52,956	46,846	46,540	57,566	52,311

<u>Thanksgiving</u>						
Erskine Sem.	6,187	6,648	5,358	6,300	5,411	6,483
Amer. Bible Soc.	3,742	3,306	3,016	3,010	2,741	3,561
ONA	7,458	6,396	6,516	6,636	5,714	7,700
Christmas Ben.	50,995	51,108	46,681	43,760	33,557	34,807
Subtotal	68,382	67,458	61,571	59,706	47,443	52,551

Duty 2. develop and/or identify, and keep current, resources that can be used for the teaching of biblical stewardship in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church;

Members of the Board of Stewardship are available to speak to presbyteries and congregations regarding the Denominational Ministry Fund and the work of General Synod. These presentations demonstrate the impact and scope of faithful giving to the Denominational Ministry Fund.

The board has published *Guidelines for Church Finance*, a brochure of suggested internal controls to ensure shared responsibilities within the system of receiving and disbursing monies in the life of the congregation.

For books and publications on stewardship please consider the resources from the ARP Bookstore.

Duty 3. assist in developing financial stewardship models for presbyteries, congregations, and agencies of the General Synod;

The Board of Stewardship continues to support and recommend the Financial Seminars for church and presbytery treasurers and other individuals involved in financial ministry in the Church. Topics include: financial job descriptions, not-for-profit organization issues, budgeting and financial reporting, healthy financial practices for church finances, payroll, gifts and charitable deductions, General Synod employee benefit programs, and “12 Simple Ways to Cultivate Generosity in your Church.” If you are interested, please contact Judi Hodges in Christian Education Ministries.

Duty 4. develop and implement programs for securing the funds required to meet the operating needs of the General Synod;

The Denominational Ministry Fund (DMF) remains the primary tool by which the work of General Synod is sustained. The Board of Stewardship stresses that this fund is *denominational* in nature; it impacts the work of every board, committee and agency, with the exception of the William H. Dunlap Orphanage Board of Directors. **The Board of Stewardship expresses its appreciation to every congregation contributing to the work of the ARP Church through the Denominational Ministry Fund.**

Notice a slight decrease in giving to the Denominational Ministry Fund 2016 (See Denominational Ministry Fund Statistics). **Please purpose to give something, no matter how small your congregation, to the broader support of our denomination – missions, church planting, education, benefits, benevolence, etc.**

In addition to the DMF, the Board of Stewardship supports special Easter and Thanksgiving Offerings collected annually in our churches. The Easter Offering gives additional financial support to the Stewardship Foundation, Bonclarken, Christian Education Ministries, Erskine

College and World Witness. The Thanksgiving Offering does the same for Erskine Seminary, American Bible Society, Outreach North America and the Christmas Benevolent Fund.

These offerings are so very encouraging to the respective ministries and essential to the ongoing work of the greater Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. **The Board encourages every minister and treasurer to be sure their congregations have the opportunity to participate in these collections.**

Duty 5. prepare for presentation at the annual meeting of the General Synod a recommended allocation of Synod's anticipated unrestricted income.

The recommended allocations of Denominational Ministry funds are presented separately as "Allocations for Synod's Unrestricted Income" and will be considered at the first business session during the General Synod meeting (See Denominational Ministries Allocations).

Duty 6. prepare and maintain denominational budget preparation guidelines.

Every agency, board, and committee of the ARPC prepares and approves their respective budgets. The Office of Central Services then coordinates, compiles, and completes the budgetary process for approval by the Board and presentation to Synod.

Duty 7. receive and maintain a fund or funds of real and personal property and to use, make donations of, and apply the whole or any part of the income therefrom and the principal exclusively for religious, charitable, literary, scientific and educational purposes and for no other purpose;

Duty 8. initiate and carry out programs in support of the religious, charitable, missionary, and educational programs of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, or its successor;

Duty 9. solicit and accept by gift, grant, devise, bequest, purchase or otherwise and to hold for investment or reinvestment and to sell, donate, lend or otherwise dispose of money, real estate, personal property, stocks, bonds, or other securities or any other kind of property;

Duties 7, 8, and 9 pertain to the functions of the ARP Foundation.

The ARP Foundation holds the non-retirement financial assets of the ARPC. ARP Foundation is authorized to receive donations, including, but not limited to, wills/bequests, Charitable Remainder Trusts, Donor Advised Funds, Church Advised Funds, gifts of real property, and special endowments.

Duty 10. refrain from engaging, either directly or indirectly, in any activity that would

(1) prevent it from obtaining exemption from federal income taxation as a corporation described in section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or

(2) cause it to lose such exempt status;

Under the oversight of the Executive Board of Synod, the Office of Central Services serves as an accounting and finance resource for all agencies of the denomination, particularly Synod's committees, Board of Benefits, William H. Dunlap Board of Directors, Board of Stewardship, *The ARP Magazine*, Christian Education Ministries, and Outreach North America. Procedures are in place to insure compliance as a non-profit and 501(c)(3) religious organization.

Duty 11. invest endowment-type funds and other long term investments of the General Synod and of those agencies of Synod which commit funds to the Foundation, in accordance with guidelines approved by the General Synod.

The Board of Stewardship, in conjunction with Synod's Investment Committee, sets investment allocations for endowment-type funds belonging to General Synod and funds given to the Foundation. General Synod's Investment Committee monitors the investment programs and has been given the authority by the board to make decisions on investment managers.

Duty 12. serve as the Audit Committee for the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church:

- (1) To receive and review audit reports and management letters for all entities audited. (Synod 2007)
- (2) To select the audit firm to recommend for use by all agencies. (2006)

The Board has engaged the independent auditing firm Scott & Company, Columbia, SC, for the December 31, 2016, audit which includes the books of the Treasurer of Synod, the ARP Foundation's custodial funds, the ARP Foundation's gift annuity funds, and Outreach North America's revolving loan fund. The audit is available online at www.arpchurch.org.

Administrative Information
Officers for July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

Mike Thomason, Chairman
Brian Howard, Vice Chairman
Chuck Wilson, Secretary
Roger N. Wiles, Administrative Officer

Recommendations:

1. That General Synod pause for prayer, thanking God for His provision for our denomination and asking that all current and future ministry needs be met. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That the proposed 2018 budget for the Board of Stewardship be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That the Thanksgiving and Easter offerings be continued for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. **Synod APPROVED.**

The Moderator's Committee on Board of Stewardship recommended the approval of all recommendations. All recommendations of the Board were adopted. An additional recommendation from the Moderator's Committee was adopted.

4. That Synod give thanks for the Board of Stewardship's work and ministry. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted
Paul Matthews, Chairman

Denominational Ministry Fund Statistics

April 2017

Category	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Churches meeting goal of 20%	5	5	2	2	1	5
Churches giving 10% - 19%	31	31	28	30	37	32
Giving percentage not determined	70	72	57	77	0	2
Remaining at same percentage	132	130	113	113	184	175
Increased percentage level	55	64	79	73	74	71
Increased by at least 1%	42	43	57	50	48	45
Decreased percentage level	37	34	104	124	101	106
Decreased giving but at 10% or above	7	8	39	17	19	19
Submitted a report but did not pledge support	56	51	56	41		65
Churches who have not submitted reports as of April 24, 2017	53	168	57	77	33	39

The figures for 2017, as compared to the previous year, are based on information recorded in Statistical Reports from individual congregations. Total churches = 283.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
Revenue		
General Synod Allocation-Stewardship	\$ 19,100	\$ 19,675
General Synod Allocation-Foundation	83,013	79,465
Special Offering	6,800	6,800
Transfers for Ministry	37,705	43,836
Total Revenue	\$ 184,323	\$ 193,611
Expenses		
Total Director of Gift Planning Expenses	\$ 120,718	\$ 123,300
Board Travel & Expenses	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Administrative Support	5,000	5,000
Promotional	2,400	2,400
General Synod Audit & Legal	11,000	11,000
Ministry Contribution to DM Fund	37,705	43,836
General Office	1,500	2,075
Bank Fees		
Total Expenses	\$ 184,323	\$ 193,611
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -
Beginning Fund Reserve	-	-
Ending Fund Balance	-	-

Stewardship— Supplemental Information

Synod 2015 directed the Board to contact all congregations not participating in/supporting the Denominational Ministry Fund (DMF). This contact was for the purpose of understanding why they don't contribute and to encourage them to do so as we are a connectional church.

In late fall 2016, the Board sent out a letter to the 56 congregations in that had not financially supported the DMF in 2015. The letter was pastoral in tone and not formulated from the perspective of a bill collector. The Chairman of the Board and Moderator of the Synod composed a letter that was sent out under their names. Congregations that did not respond by email or an online link were followed up by telephone contacts from members of the Board.

It was concluded that most of these congregations were either small and struggling to make ends meet, or that they still do not fully grasp what the DMF is or how DMF serves the local church. Some congregations that do not support DMF are very generous with the Easter/Thanksgiving offerings. Other congregations designate gifts to particular ministries within the ARPC. Some newer congregations to the ARPC are still on a learning curve as to how we work together as congregations, presbyteries and Synod. What the Board also learned was that there does not seem to be any significant resistance to, or disagreement over, the need and value of the DMF, or the desire to become supportive.

The Board was also reminded that congregations are often actively supporting the larger church with their prayers and participation with volunteer service. Stewardship does encompass all of our resources of which our finances are but a part of a larger whole.

In conclusion, the Board is committed to ongoing encouragement to our member congregations to participate in and support the DMF. We affirm that each congregation has an obligation/commitment to participate but we also recognize the voluntary nature of that commitment. It is our desire and prayer that participation comes from being well informed from the Board and that the congregations be moved to participate with gratitude and joy in the furtherance of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Prayer was offered thanking God for his provisions and asking God that future ministry needs be met.

The report of the **Board of Benefits** was presented.

BOARD OF BENEFITS

The Board of Benefits oversees the benefit programs of the ARPC. The Board works to provide opportunities for security for eligible individuals and families primarily in the areas of benevolence, insurance, and retirement administered through the Office of Central Services.

Benevolence

The ARPC has a long history of benevolence to our retired ministers, their widows, families of ARPC ministers who died while serving a congregation, and retired ARPC agency employees. These faithful servants of God are not to be forgotten by the church they loved and served.

The Christmas Benevolent Fund distribution is funded by the annual Thanksgiving Offering, income from the J. C. Lott Endowment, the Helen W. Carson Fund and by special gifts and offerings. A full 100% of the money collected is distributed annually to qualified recipients. The Christmas Benevolent Fund distribution for 2016 was as follows:

Need-Based Assistance	\$16,817.00
Christmas Gifts	\$46,749.00
Total Distribution	\$63,566.00

The Board of Benefits appreciates all who contributed to the Christmas Benevolent Fund last year to assist those who have faithfully served our denomination. Please continue your generous contributions.

InsuranceMedical Plan

The ARPC medical insurance plan is self-funded. Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina serves as Third Party Administrator of the plan. While the cost of coverage is high, the benefits are comparable to "platinum" plans available through the federal insurance exchanges.

As a self-funded church plan under the Affordable Care Act, we are required to give all eligible employees the opportunity to enroll in the insurance program and to file forms 1094C and 1095C with the federal government to verify compliance. The Office of Central Services provides compliance support for this federal mandate.

The Board and Central Services works closely with NFP Corporate Benefits (NFP) to monitor compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The Board has authorized NFP to review and recommend design changes in the plan. In addition, NFP evaluates potential providers and competitive bids on an annual basis to control the cost of premiums.

Eligible employees include all full-time ministers working at least 30 hours per week serving under terms of a Call, employees of local churches, Synod agency employees, qualified retired employees, and enrolled ARPC seminary students under the care of a presbytery.

Dental Plan

Synod's dental program is also a self-insured plan. Meritain serves as the Third-Party Administrator for claims.

Life, Accidental Death & Dismemberment, and Long Term Disability

These three benefits are *fully insured* and *mandatory* for all full-time employees. The employing church or agency pays for the coverage. This premium is mandatory even in the event the employee waives medical and/or dental coverage. There are no exceptions.

HIPAA Privacy

As a self-insured plan, the primary privacy focus is on the protection of Personal Health Information. Plan participants are given a Privacy Notice and Plan Document. Security policies and procedures are in place, including Business Associate Agreements that conform to HIPAA requirements.

Enrollment

Medical and dental coverage is conditional on eligible employees enrolling within the first 31 days of eligibility. Late enrollment is not allowed under the Plan and will result in the denial of benefits. Eligible employees who desire to enroll after the annual "open enrollment" period, may do so upon a "qualifying event". Contact the Human Resource Administrator at Central Services for specific eligibility and enrollment policies.

General Synod's medical and dental coverage terminates at retirement for those who qualify at the age of Medicare eligibility. Persons retiring prior to attaining Medicare eligibility may continue coverage pursuant to certain requirements outlined in the plan.

Termination of Insurance Benefits

Pursuant to policy adopted by the Board of Benefits, when insurance premiums of an employee are 60 days in arrears, Central Services will write to the appropriate church or agency stating that the account is delinquent giving that church or agency 120 days from the date of the notice to bring the account current. *If the account balance is not a zero (0) within the 120 days, insurance coverage for the employee of the church or agency will be terminated.* The employee's insurance coverage may **only** be reinstated secondary to a qualifying event as stated in the insurance plan plus payments of all past due premiums.

Insurance Premiums, Fees, and Reserve Balance

	2014	2015	2016
Total Ins. Premiums Collected	\$4,351,275	\$4,271,584	\$4,370,509
Fees Paid to Third Party			
Administrators	\$ 618,718	\$ 810,554	\$ 858,349
Paid Insurance Benefit Claims	\$3,217,291	\$3,714,326	\$3,766,394
Administrative Costs	\$ 73,427	\$ 83,191	\$ 83,191
Balance of Claim Reserve	\$2,417,635	\$2,069,990	\$1,858,674

Retirement

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Plan (Plan) is a qualified, noncontributory, defined benefit plan. The Board of Benefits Retirement Committee serves as Administrator for the Plan. Copies of the Plan are available through the Office of Central Services.

The Board of Benefits (Board) monitors the financial health of the Retirement Plan Trust on an ongoing basis by reviewing changes in the demographics of the Plan's participants, investment outlook, and refinement of actuarial methods used to determine the value of assets and costs. Stanley, Hunt, Dupree, & Rhine (SHDR) of Greensboro, North Carolina serve as actuary to the Board.

The Investment Committee of Synod manages the ARP Retirement Plan Trust portfolio. SunTrust Bank of Atlanta serves as Trustee and Custodian of the Plan assets. The Board works closely with the Investment Committee concerning portfolio performance and setting target rates of return on investments. The Chairman of the Board of Benefits serves as an advisory member of the Investment Committee.

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Actuarial Value of Assets	\$46,274,000	\$49,808,000	\$52,291,000	\$52,503,000
Actual Liability	\$52,594,000	\$54,632,000	\$57,393,000	\$60,214,000
Unfunded Actuarial Liability	(\$6,320,000)	(\$4,824,000)	(\$5,102,000)	(\$7,711,000)
Percentage Funded	87.98%	91.2%	91.1%	87.2%

The *Form of Government* requires a Call to have provisions for the church to make contributions at the current 12% of a participant's earnings to the General Synod in support of the ARP Retirement Plan. Contributions to the Plan are not voluntary.

Suspension of Retirement Benefits

Pursuant to policy adopted by the Board of Benefits, when retirement contributions on behalf of an employee are 60 days in arrears, Central Services will write to the appropriate church or agency stating that the account is delinquent giving that church or agency 120 days from the date of the notice to bring the account current. If the account balance is not a zero (0) within the 120 days, retirement accrual for the employee of the church or agency will be suspended. The employee may *only* be reinstated with the payment of all past due contributions plus interest based upon the discount rate that would have accrued during the suspension.

Miscellaneous

Restatement of Section 1.21

The Board of Benefits has considered and approved a recommendation to Synod to restate Section 1.21 on participant eligibility in the ARP Retirement Plan. The Section has gotten more complex over the years. The restatement does not affect payouts at all. It is restated for clarity, simplicity, and to correct the eligibility of a few individuals who are currently left out of the Plan.

Current Section 1.21 -

"Employee" means a salaried, ordained minister of the Church serving in a pastoral or administrative ministry of the Church under the provisions of a Call approved by the Pres-

bytery of the Church, or a career missionary appointed by World Witness, or a salaried employee of the Synod or Synod Agency serving in a supervisory capacity, but excluding employees of Erskine College or Erskine Theological Seminary. Provided however:

(a) for service on or after January 1, 2004, the term "Employee" shall exclude as salaried, ordained minister of the Church serving in a pastoral ministry outside the United States;

(b) for service on or after January 1, 2004, the term "Employee" shall exclude a salaried, ordained minister of the Church whose Call has been terminated in accordance with *The Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* and the Participant will not accrue additional credit for Service or Earnings;

(c) after June 12, 2005, the term "Employee" shall exclude a salaried, ordained minister of the Church whose Call is an evangelist in accordance with *The Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*;

(d) effective July 1, 2010, the term "Employee" shall include any employee whose regularly scheduled service is at least 20 hours per week and who is: (1) an ordained pastor serving a congregation of the Church pursuant to the terms of a Call, or (2) a career missionary appointed by World Witness, or (3) an employee of a Presbytery or Synod Agency in a supervisory capacity.

Restated Section 1.21 -

"Employee" means a salaried, ordained minister of the Church, serving under the provisions of a Call approved by a Presbytery of the Church, or a career missionary appointed by World Witness, or a salaried employee of a Presbytery, or a salaried employee of the Synod or Synod Agency serving in a supervisory capacity, who regularly work at least 20 hours per week.

The term “employee” *does not* include employees of Erskine College or Erskine Theological Seminary, ministers serving as Stated Supply, salaried ordained ministers serving in a pastoral ministry outside the United States, salaried ordained ministers whose call has been terminated, or chaplains in military service.

Previous definitions and exceptions of the term “employee” under Section 1.21 are hereby restated and replaced *in toto* effective July 1, 2017.

Financial Audit

Scott & Company of Columbia, South Carolina, an independent certified public accounting firm, conducts a formal audit of the Plan annually. The financial activities of the Board of Benefits are included in the audit of General Synod.

Role of Central Services

Central Services is responsible for the administration of the benevolence, insurance, and retirement benefits for eligible employees. Central Services receives, records, and disburses gifts for benevolent purposes, insurance premiums, and retirement contributions. Central Services provides each church with a detailed invoice for insurance premiums and Plan contributions monthly.

Officers for 2017-2018

Chairman: Ed Lamb

Vice-Chairman: Earl Linderman

Secretary: Guy Smith

Treasurer: Guy H. (Chip) Smith, Treasurer of Synod

Administrative Officer: Roger N. Wiles, Executive Director of Central Services

Recommendations:

1. That Synod give thanks to God for his provision to fund the benevolence, insurance and retirement benefits referenced in this report. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That the Christmas Benevolent Fund Offering continue to be taken during Thanksgiving and that the churches encourage the members of each congregation to support those in need who have served the Church so well. **Synod APPROVED.**

3. That presbyteries direct their congregations to enroll and pay premiums for all eligible employees to participate in the life, accidental death and dismemberment, and long term disability plans. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That presbyteries direct all their churches (except Canadian Presbytery) to offer General Synod medical and dental insurance coverage to all eligible employees in compliance with the Affordable Care Act. **Synod APPROVED.**
5. That Synod direct agencies to enroll and pay premiums for all eligible employees to participate in the life, accidental death and dismemberment, and long term disability plans. **Synod APPROVED.**
6. That Synod direct all agencies to offer General Synod medical and dental insurance coverage to all eligible employees in compliance with the Affordable Care Act. **Synod APPROVED.**
7. That the proposed budget for 2018 be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
8. That the proposed Restatement of Section 1.2 of the ARP Retirement Plan be approved. **Synod APPROVED.**
9. That all other actions of the Board of Benefits as reported herein be affirmed. **Synod APPROVED.**

The **Moderator's Committee on Benefits** recommended the approval of all recommendations. All recommendations were adopted. An additional recommendation from the Moderator's Committee was adopted.

10. That the Board of Benefits, along with the Executive Director and staff of Central Services be thanked for their diligent efforts in maintaining our excellent benefits program. **Synod APPROVED.**

BOARD OF BENEFITS

	2017 Synod Approved	2018 Proposed
Revenues		
Unrestricted for Operations		
General Synod Allocation	6,500	6,500
Total Unrestricted	6,500	6,500
Designated Estimates for Benevolence		
Benevolent Fund Special Offering	48,900	51,100
Christmas Benevolence	1,200	2,600
J. C. Lott Trust	4,400	5,300
Total Benevolent	54,500	59,000
Group Insurance Resources		
Group Insurance Premiums	5,017,292	5,071,119
Group Insurance Interest	100	100
Interest on Claim Reserve-ACI Fund	38,100	33,200
Total Group Insurance	5,055,492	5,104,419
Retirement Plan Resources		
Ola B. Hunter Trust for Retirement	3,800	3,800
ARP Retirement Plan	1,772,400	1,805,100
Retirement Past Due Interest		
Total Retirement Plan	1,776,200	1,808,900
Total Revenues	\$ 6,892,692	\$ 6,978,819
Expenses		
Board and General		
Board Travel & Meeting	5,000	5,000
Office and Miscellaneous	1,500	1,500
Total Board and General	6,500	6,500
Benevolence		
Benevolence	54,500	59,000
Group Insurance		
Group Insurance Premiums, Claims, Reserve	4,957,000	5,007,000
Group Insurance Administrative Support	89,992	88,919
Fees-A&R Claim Reserve-ACI Fund	8,500	8,500
Total Group Insurance	5,055,492	5,104,419
ARP Retirement Plan		
Audit	8,000	8,000
Actuarial Fees	10,000	10,000
Legal	5,000	5,000
Administrative Support	89,992	88,919
Miscellaneous Expenses	1,300	1,300
Transfer to Trustee	1,661,908	1,695,682
Total ARP Retirement Plan	1,776,200	1,808,900
Total Expenses	\$ 6,892,692	\$ 6,978,819
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ -

Prayer for the ministry of the Board of Benefits was offered.

The President of Bonclarken, Chip Sherer, was thanked for the hospitality to the Synod.

The report of the **Board of Bonclarken** was presented.

BOARD OF BONCLARKEN

Dear Gentlemen:

Bonclarken is honored to serve as the Conference Center of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and appreciates the opportunity to serve thousands of ARP guests each year.

The purpose of this report is to update Synod on the activities of the Bonclarken Board since our last annual report to Synod, as well as to share the ministry impact of Bonclarken and make recommendations for consideration by Synod.

During 2016, our Board spent considerable time and effort developing and finalizing a long-range Strategic Plan---the sole focus of which is to sustain our mission of "providing and promoting a Christian environment for inspiration and renewal" for generations to come. Run River Consultants, widely respected leaders in the field of Christian conference center ministry, were employed to aid in our planning in the areas of facilities, finances, and marketing. Our Board worked diligently to make certain that all these areas support our mission.

Our Board realized that in order to sustain our mission, we needed long-term plans to maintain the quality of our facilities and the stability of our finances. We also needed a comprehensive marketing plan to help generate revenue from additional guests. Our Board then identified key items for a campaign to increase our endowment and upgrade our facilities. The Strategic Plan, adopted in May 2016, included provisions for all these needs, and many of the recommendations from this Plan are already being implemented by the administration.

The Board thanks Synod and the many churches that support Bonclarken through their giving to the Denominational Ministry Fund.

We also thank the hundreds of volunteers who assist with our ministry each year. The Bonclarken staff is always encouraged by the willingness of our volunteers to help in such important ways.

The Board of Bonclarken is responsible for the overall management of the Conference Center, which includes all properties owned. In the

exercise of this responsibility, the Board implements the five duties as reflected in the *Manual of Authorities and Duties*.

These duties are:

Duty #1:

“To be responsible for carrying out the PURPOSE of Bonclarken: ‘To serve God through the ministry of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod by providing for the denominational opportunities for Christian worship, education, recreation, and fellowship; by assuring a wholesome atmosphere for Christian development; and by making facilities available to the agencies and institutions of Synod, its presbyteries, and local congregations to fulfill their missions and goals.’ In the interest of oneness with God, the facilities may be shared with other Christian and educational groups when scheduling permits.”

Response to this duty:

Providing *opportunities for Christian worship, education, recreation, and fellowship* is the primary mission of Bonclarken. The Board reviews plans from the administration for keeping this mission foremost in our efforts.

Each Monday morning, Bonclarken President Joseph (Chip) Sherer sends an email to our Board (and other individuals) asking for prayer for two things: that our guests will be receptive to the call of the Holy Spirit and that the staff’s work will glorify Christ. *Christian development* is fostered when guests are open to the call of the Holy Spirit, and the Bonclarken staff works diligently to *assure a wholesome atmosphere* for this development.

Bonclarken is open year-round, thereby *making facilities available to the agencies and institutions of Synod, its presbyteries, and local congregations to fulfill their missions and goals*. In 2016, Bonclarken hosted numerous ARP events, including General Synod, Family Bible Conference, Women’s Ministries, Horizon, Quest, Music Conference, Camp Bonclarken, Camp Joy, Music Drama Camp, various boards of Synod, presbytery youth retreats and individual ARP church retreats.

In the interest of oneness with God, the facilities may be shared with other Christian and educational groups when scheduling permits. Bonclarken hosted numerous events for other Christian and educational groups in 2016.

Duty #2:

"To elect officers and employ and supervise the president of Bonclarken, who in turn will employ and supervise such persons as may be necessary for carrying on the work of Bonclarken in accordance with the policies established by the Board."

Response to this duty:

The following officers were elected to serve in 2016-17: Elise Horton, Chairman; David Brunt, Vice Chairman; Paul Bell, Secretary; John Moore, Treasurer. Committee Chairs: Jim Ashburn, Administration Committee; Max Smith, Buildings and Grounds Committee; Calvin Draffin, Promotion and Services Committee.

The Board employs and supervises Joseph (Chip) Sherer as President of Bonclarken. The Board entrusts Mr. Sherer with the duty of carrying out the policies of the Board and managing the day-to-day operations of the Conference Center.

Duty #3:

"To make such rules and regulations for its own government as may be consistent with the Constitution of Bonclarken Conference Center and the policies of Synod."

Response to this duty:

The Board regularly reviews its By-Laws and Board policies as to current applicability and makes **revisions when deemed necessary**.

Duty #4:

"To manage, sell, or lease any of the property under its control."

Response to this duty:

The Board continues to ensure that all property owned by Bonclarken is appropriately managed and took the following significant actions from April 2016 through March 2017:

Actions taken at and after the May 2016 Board meeting:

- Approved a long-range Strategic Plan which focuses on sustaining Bonclarken's mission of "providing and promoting a Christian environment for inspiration and renewal."
- Authorized the Administration to add a new staff marketing position to implement marketing initiatives developed as part of the Strategic Plan.

- Appointed a Campaign Committee to work with the President to plan and implement a campaign.

Actions taken at the October 2016 Board meeting:

- Approved a goal of \$1,500,000 for the Campaign divided as \$750,000 for endowment growth and \$750,000 for four projects (new youth gathering facility, redesign of main parking area, enhancement to our front entrance, and improved lighting in our Chapel).

Actions taken at the January 2017 Board meeting:

- Approved the proposed 2017 Operating budget.
- Approved the proposed 2017 Endowment Income budget.
- Approved a committee of Jim Ashburn and Paul Bell to work with the Administration to review and approve a revised Personnel Policy.

Duty #5:

“To make an annual report to the General Synod.”

Recommendations:

1. Concerning the meeting of General Synod for 2019, we understand that the RPCNA is considering inviting our General Synod be held concurrently with their Synod at a location to be determined. Should this invitation not be issued or issued and not accepted, we recommend General Synod for 2019 be held at Bonclarken beginning Tuesday, June 11, 2019. (*The meeting of General Synod for 2018 was approved by the 2016 Synod to be held at Bonclarken beginning Tuesday, June 5, 2018.*) **Synod deemed this to be moot due to prior action.**
2. That General Synod continue to support Bonclarken through the allocation of funds from the Denominational Ministry Fund and through the annual Easter offering. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That General Synod encourage all presbyteries, boards, and churches to encourage and assist their members in attending the various camps/conferences/retreats hosted by Bonclarken during the year. **Synod APPROVED.**

The **Moderator’s Committee on Bonclarken** recommended approval of all recommendations. Recommendations 2 and 3 of the Board were adopted. Recommendation #1 was deemed to be moot

due to a prior action. The Moderator's Committee made an additional recommendation:

4. That Synod extend thanks to Chip Sherer, the staff and Board of Bonclarken for its labors this past year. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Elise Horton, Chairman

BONCLARKEN CONFERENCE CENTER

	<u>2017 Approved</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
<u>Revenue</u>		
Operating Revenue:		
Rooms	\$ 1,101,000	\$ 1,218,440
Meeting Room	24,000	22,000
Food Service	593,000	629,840
Service Fee	79,000	71,000
Programs	30,000	30,000
Camps	59,000	62,000
Gift Shop/Nibble Nook	32,500	33,000
Property Owners	40,000	40,000
Miscellaneous	29,000	31,000
Total Op. Revenue	\$ 1,987,500	\$ 2,137,280
Non-Operating Revenue:		
Synod's DMF	\$ 112,336	\$ 112,336
ARPWM	5,000	4,500
Mountain Club/Churches	230,000	200,000
Easter Offering	12,556	8,000
Other	27,608	-
Total Non-Op. Rev.	\$ 387,500	\$ 324,836
Total Revenue	\$ 2,375,000	\$ 2,462,116

	<u>2017 Approved</u>	<u>2018 Proposed</u>
<u>Expenses</u>		
Cost of Sales:		
Food - Revenue Meals	\$ 225,000	\$ 245,638
Food - Nonrevenue Meals	\$ 41,000	\$ 39,000
Gift Shop/Nibble Nook	14,000	15,000
Total Cost of Sales	\$ 280,000	\$ 299,638
Payroll & Benefits:		
Total Pysl/Benefits	\$ 1,361,000	\$ 1,400,800
Other Expenses:		
Administration	\$ 127,000	\$ 128,000
Camps	\$ 49,000	\$ 49,000
Financial fees	\$ 27,000	\$ 30,000
Food Service	\$ 22,000	\$ 24,000
Guest Services	\$ 67,000	\$ 69,000
Prop and Liab Insurance	\$ 68,000	\$ 69,000
Maintenance	\$ 123,000	\$ 124,000
Marketing	\$ 70,000	\$ 38,120
Recreation	\$ 19,000	\$ 20,000
Utilities	\$ 162,000	\$ 168,000
Total Other Expenses	\$ 734,000	\$ 719,120
Total Op. Expenses	\$ 2,375,000	\$ 2,419,558
Net Surplus (Loss)	\$ -	\$ 42,558

Prayer for the ministry of Bonclarken was offered.

Following an announcement regarding World Focus 2018, Mansour Khajehpour was introduced to the Synod. Videos were shown as an overview of the work.

The report of the **Board of World Witness** was presented.

**WORLD WITNESS REPORT
NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE**

For more information,
Contact 864-233-5226

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Prayer for the ministry of World Witness and for Andrew Brunson were offered.

The morning session closed with blessing and closing prayer by Jim Curtis.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, AFTERNOON SESSION

The morning worship service was led by Tanner Cline and Mark Ross.

The Moderator opened the floor for nominations for the office of Moderator of the General Synod 2018. Patrick Malphrus nominated Phillip Malphrus, Sr. Mark Miller seconded the nomination on behalf of Jamie Hunt. Phillip Malphrus, Sr. was elected to the office of Moderator-Elect by acclamation.

The Moderator opened the floor for nominations for the office of Vice Moderator of the General Synod 2018. Moderator-Elect Malphrus nominated Kyle Sims. Mr. Sims was elected by acclamation.

Mrs. Phillip Malphrus, Sr. was recognized.

A motion carried:

That digital recordings of the sermons and testimonies of the 2017 Meeting of General Synod be made available to the churches of the ARPC.

The report of the **Committee on Nominations** was presented and adopted.

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

The Committee on Nominations (CON) met on Wednesday, February 22, 2017, at the ARP Center in Greenville, SC and again by teleconference on April 20, 2017. During these meetings several items of business were addressed.

The following officers were elected for the Committee on Nominations 2017-2018:

Paul Patrick, Chairman
Ike Hughes, Vice Chairman
Dean Turbeville, Secretary

The 2018 stated meeting of the Committee on Nominations is scheduled for Wednesday, February 21, 2018, at 9:00 am at the ARP Center, Greenville, SC.

The deadline for submitting names to the Committee on Nominations (excluding Erskine) will be Friday, January 5, 2018.

The committee appointed Rev. Joey Donahue to serve on the 2017-2018 Sub-Committee on Erskine Nominations (SCONE) to replace Rev. Tim Phillips. Rev. Ike Hughes and Rev. Jac Coad will continue to serve on the SCONE.

The Committee on Nominations, by consensus, presents to the Synod the persons listed in our report as nominees to serve on Synod's boards, committees, the Ecclesiastical Commission on Judiciary Affairs, and as officers or representatives of the General Synod. The terms of service will begin July 1, 2017, and will expire June 30 of the year indicated. All nominees have indicated a willingness to serve, if elected.

The committee expresses appreciation for those who submitted nominations, and for those who were nominated and are willing to serve.

Recommendations:

1. That those persons listed in this report be approved for service in the positions indicated. **Synod APPROVED.**
2. That each presbytery consider appointing an alternate representative to Synod's Committee on Nominations in the event that the chairman of a presbytery's committee on nominations is not able to attend Synod's committee meeting. **Synod APPROVED.**
3. That presbyteries consider making recommendations for service during their fall meetings. **Synod APPROVED.**
4. That sessions consider making recommendations for service during their November and December meetings. **Synod APPROVED.**
5. That recommendations for the Board of Erskine College and Seminary be made by Friday, October 13, 2017. **Synod APPROVED.**
6. That those making Recommendations for Service to the Committee on Nominations (by mail or online) use the proper form and provide helpful information concerning qualifications for each person recommended. **Synod APPROVED.**
7. That various boards, committees and commissions of Synod provide a clear and concise needs analysis and recommendations for service to the CON following their Fall stated meetings and that they clearly communicate their ministry and needs to pastors, sessions and presbyteries through in-person presentations, video,

or other social media in order to educate the larger connectional church regarding opportunities to serve. **Synod APPROVED.**

8. That all persons resigning from Synod Boards and Agencies be reminded to submit their resignation request to the Principal Clerk of General Synod and the chairman of the board or committee from which they are resigning. **Synod APPROVED.**
9. That General Synod be mindful that Synod's Officers currently serving as Reading Clerk and Assistant Clerk are in their second consecutive term, making them ineligible to serve after their term expires in 2018. New persons will need to be nominated Fall, 2017, and will be voted upon at the 2018 meeting of Synod. In addition, Principal Clerk, Bill Clerk, Treasurer and Archivist are in their second terms, making them ineligible to serve after their term expires in 2020. New persons will need to be nominated Fall, 2019, and will be voted upon at the 2020 Synod meeting. **Synod APPROVED.**
10. That the General Synod ask the Erskine Board to consider reducing the number of official advisory members to reflect the reduction in voting members of the Board. **Synod APPROVED.**
11. That the General Synod authorize \$4,000.00 for committee expenses for 2018. **Synod APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Paul G. Patrick, Chairman

<i>Board/Committee/Commission</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Nominee</i>
Benefits	2023	Leo Markwat
Benefits	2023	Adam Bloom
Benefits	PR (A)	
Benefits	PR (S)	
Bonclarken	2019	Jim Bradford
Bonclarken	2023	Bill Patrick
Bonclarken	2023	Lamar Robinson
Bonclarken	2023	Mark Tankersly
Bonclarken	ARPWM - 2021	Barbara Sherrill
CEM	2021	Jane Frazier
CEM	2018	Kelly Noonoo
CEM	PR (A)	
CEM	PR (C) – 2021	Bob Elliott
CEM	PR (L)	
Dunlap	PR (A) – 2023	
Dunlap	PR (C) – 2021	James Sherrill
Erskine	2021	Alan Broyles
Erskine	2021	Marshall Davis, III
Erskine	2021	David P. Smith
Executive Board	PR-2020	Henry Bartsch
Executive Board	PR-2020	Wes Spring
Executive Board	PR-2020	Tim Phillips
Executive Board	PR-2020	Curt Young
Outreach North America	2022	Greg Conover
Outreach North America	2023	
Outreach North America	PR (C) – 2021	James McManus
Outreach North America	PR (F)	Morrie Lawing
Outreach North America	PR (M)	John Tucker
Outreach North America	ARPWM-2023	Laura Lebeouf
Stewardship	2023	Bob Wilson
Stewardship	2021	
Stewardship	2021	
Stewardship	2021	
Stewardship	2022	Dan Layman
Stewardship	PR (F)	Harper Price
Stewardship	PR (N)	Paul Matthews
Stewardship	PR (T)	
Stewardship	PR (V)	David Warf
Stewardship	ARPWM-2018	Judy Kovacs

World Witness	2023	Tim Watson
World Witness	2023	Matt Joldersma
World Witness	ARPWM-2023	Julaine Harding
World Witness	PR (A)	Stephen Richardson
World Witness	PR (C) – 2021	Jimmy Z. McLaughlin
World Witness	PR (L)	Tim Osterlund
World Witness	PR (M)	-----
World Witness	PR (T)	
World Witness	PR (V)	-----
Ecclesiastical	2020	Jim Mitchell
Ecclesiastical	2020	Tom Roper
Ecclesiastical	2020	
Ecclesiastical	Alternate	
Ecclesiastical	Alternate	
Campus Ministry Oversight	2022	Phil Williams
Inter-Church	2023	Patrick Malphrus
Inter-Church	2023 (ARPWM)	Susan Cavin
Investment	2022	John Windley
Investment	2022	Stewart Hurst
Minister & His Work	PR (A)	
Minister & His Work	PR (S)	
Nominations	PR (A)	Bill Van Doodewaard
Nominations	PR (C) – 2021	Andy Putnam
Nominations	PR (M) – 2019	Joey Donahue
Nominations	PR (S)	Paul Patrick
Revision Committee	2020	Jim Curtis
Revision Committee	2020	
Revision Committee	2021	Rob Patrick
Revision Committee	2021	
Revision Committee	2022	Ray Cameron
Revision Committee	2022	
Revision Committee	2023	Jonathan Kuciemba
Revision Committee	2023	
Revision Committee	Alternate	
Revision Committee	Alternate	
Theological & Social	2019	Stephen Myers
Theological & Social	2021	Mark Wright
Theological & Social	2021	Mike Chipman

Worship	2021	Greg Slater
Worship	2021	
Worship	2021	Richard Brueck
Worship	2020	
Worship	2020	

A motion carried:

That in order to maintain continuity between the new Committee on Revisions with the temporary committee (Special Committee to Review FOG Amendments) which has served the last two years, that the Rev. Jim Klukow be added as an Ex-Officio member of the Committee on Revisions for at least one year.

The report on **Memorials** was presented.

MEMORIALS

SECOND PRESBYTERY MEMORIAL: (REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS FOR FURTHER STUDY)

WHEREAS, God gave the Presbyterian form of church governance to the Church for his glory and so that the Church may do all things decently and in order;

AND WHEREAS, The *Form of Government* in 2.10 and 2.12 states:

2.10 Ministers and elders serve together in the courts of the Church as presbyters. While they hold different offices they maintain, as presbyters, parity of voice and authority in church courts;

2.12 The officers of the Church exist to complement one another for the sake of the ministry within the Body of Christ. No one office shall be construed to be of any less importance than another, nor a prerequisite to service in another office. Nor should they be seen as existing in a hierarchy;

AND WHEREAS, parity between ministers and and elders is desirable for faithfulness to God's command for church governance;

AND WHEREAS, a careful reading of church history shows that a lack of parity between elders and ministers can lead to various calamities including but not limited to:

- The advancement of liberal agendas which violate God's commands, thus compromising purity.
- General discord, strife, and division between elders and ministers, thus compromising peace.
- A lack of representation for congregations and presbyteries resulting in denominational decline, thus compromising prosperity.
- Denominational schism, thus destroying unity;

AND WHEREAS, generally speaking there are many more voting ministers than voting elders at presbytery and General Synod meetings, and true parity through a balanced number votes of ministers and elders cannot be achieved numerically or practically;

THEREFORE, Second Presbytery memorializes the General Synod to amend *The Form of Government*, Chapter 2 adding 2.13 to read as follows:

2.13 In order to promote the unity, peace, purity, and prosperity of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, presbyters have the right to invoke "Parity Challenge" at all presbytery and General Synod meetings. A "Parity Challenge" may be called as a point of order immediately after any action of the court. When challenge is called, the court's action is delayed until subsequent, immediate votes are taken of both elders and ministers by group. A simple majority vote of both groups is required for the challenged action to stand, otherwise the challenged action is revoked.

TENNESSEE-ALABAMA PRESBYTERY MEMORIAL: (SYNOD DID NOT ADOPT)

That Outreach North America serve as a servant, a resource and a liaison to assist in overcoming language barriers, ordination matters, reception of pastors and churches into the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and to be a support for overcoming cultural issues for the incoming Korean community, and all others where English is not the first language.

CATAWBA PRESBYTERY MEMORIAL: (SYNOD ADOPTED)

WHEREAS in the providence of God, Catawba Presbytery has an opportunity to invest itself in Gospel ministry among international college students in Columbia, SC, at the University of South Carolina and has agreed to call a minister to develop a campus ministry focused on evangelism and discipleship, and

WHEREAS the ARP Synod has witnessed its sister denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), invested in campus ministry for many years in the form of Reformed University Ministries (RUM), and

WHEREAS the PCA has experienced significant spiritual and numerical growth from such a faithful and Gospel ministry, and

WHEREAS RUM has agreed to partner with the ARPC in a campus ministry to internationals at the University of South Carolina (RUF) directly affiliated with RUM as are the RUF chapters at Erskine College and Queens University, and

WHEREAS the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church has established a committee of Synod to oversee the faithful and successful ministries of the RUF chapters at Erskine College and Queens University, and

WHEREAS the Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight is best suited to coordinate and oversee existing and future campus ministries,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that Catawba Presbytery memorializes Synod to direct its Committee on Campus Ministry Oversight to oversee a new Gospel work known as RUF1 University of South Carolina at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC.

The Moderator's Committee on Memorials recommended that Recommendation #1 (Memorial from Second Presbytery) be **referred** to the Committee on Theological and Social Concerns for further study, that Recommendation #2 (Memorial from Tennessee-Alabama Presbytery) **not be approved**, and that Recommendation #3 (Memorial from Catawba Presbytery) **be approved**.

The Memorial from Second Presbytery was **referred** to the Committee on Theological and Social Concerns for further study.

The Memorial from Tennessee-Alabama Presbytery was **not adopted**.

The Memorial from Catawba Presbytery **was adopted**.

A motion carried

That Synod commission Central Services to explore and recommend an online donation web page (or service) that could serve our churches wishing to utilize online donations.

Vice Moderator McKay addressed the Synod and presented a gift to the Moderator.

A motion carried that the Minutes be adopted without reading, and that the final roll call be waived.

The motion to adjourn by Rob Roy McGregor prevailed.

The Synod joined in singing the song of Christian Unity, Psalm 133.

Synod adjourned with the scriptural benediction pronounced by Lee Shelnutt, Moderator.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Shelnutt, Moderator

Bill McKay, Vice Moderator

C. Ron Beard, Principal Clerk

Charles F. Edgar, Reading Clerk

Leland R. Beaudrot, Bill Clerk

