

MINUTES OF THE CALLED MEETING OF CHEROKEE PRESBYTERY
Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 12:00 p.m., First Presbyterian Church
Marietta, Georgia

Roll of Presbytery

ACTIVE TEACHING ELDERS:

Baker, Arch	P
Beltzner, Denise	Ex
Bogar, Fritz	P
Braga, Reginaldo	Unex
<i>Bridges, Sam</i>	Ex
<i>Dunn, Tim</i>	Ex
Coile Estes	Ex
Ferguson, Julie	P
Fuller, Julie	Unex
Gonzalez-Gertz, Edwin	P
Grove, David	Ex
Henderson, Sam	Unex
Richard Hill	Unex
Hittel, Maryellen	Ex
Jensen, Julie	Ex
<i>Jones, Ray</i>	Ex
Jordan, David	P
Josey, Camille	P
Lamberson, Zeta	P
Lee, Jennifer	P
Lund, Greg	P
MacMillan, Nikki	P
Martin, John	Unex
Mendes, Paulo	Unex
Meyer, Cathy	P
Moore, Greg	Unex
Moore-Keish, Chris	Unex
Parr, Cyndi	P
<i>Pezini, Jose</i>	Ex
Renken, Catherine	P
Scott, Carol	Unex
Scott, William	Unex
Scott, Katie	Unex
Simpson, Jim	Ex
Waddell, Bridget	Ex
Waddell, Kenneth	P
<i>Yoo, William</i>	Unex
(37)	

Corresponding Teaching Elders:

Jack Westlund (Gr. Atlanta)
Pete Paulsen(RCA) P
Nicole Lock (Atl)

37+ 51 = 88

[Excuses not required from Retired]

Italics = Laboring in mission field or out of bounds of presbytery 5

RETIRED TEACHING ELDERS:

Allen, Herschel	
Ballesteros, Tino	
Blackwell, Rebecca	
Brice, Joe	P
Bunkley, Jack	
Carmichael, Bert	
Cooley, Pem	
Craft, Ed	P
Edwards, Maxine	
Esa, Donald	
Feast, Charles	
Gantz, Robin	P
Garrett, Eleana	
Glauner, David	
Gonzalez, Catherine	
Guder, Darrell	
Gunter, Sid	
Hammett, Jenny	
Hunter, Rodney	
Jones, Walter	
Kim, Jin Hoon	
Kimmons, Homer	
Looby, Janet	
Martin, Roger	
McAliley, Elizabeth	
McDonald, David	P
Neelly, Dick	P
Nesbit, Van	P
Ottaviano, Dan	
Reggin, Susan	P
Rhodes, Jan	
Rogers, Tom	
Sapp, Frank	
Sapp, Mary Kay	
Smith, Cuyler	
Smith, Ted	P
Spangler, John	P
Speed, James	P
Stroup, George	
Tarrant, John	
Terrell, Ken	P
Wade, Carol	
Ward, Gil	
Waskey, Jack	
Weathersby, Frank	
Weaver, Charles	
Wells, Debbie	
Wells, John	
Wilson, Thurston	
Wood, Tom	
Wright, Donn	
(51)	

Acworth	
Beersheba	Nancy Bertrand
Brazilian Christian	
Calhoun	Connie Connell
Cartersville (3)	Jo Clark
	Bill Devine
	Velma Tilley
Cedartown	
Chickamauga	
Christ Fellowship	
Cohutta	
Covenant	Eva Whitaker
Dalton	
Deer Creek	
Faith Canton	
Faith Blue Ridge	Debbie Peterson
Grace	
Heritage (2)	Ben Hadaway
	Barbara Lee
John Knox	Erma Jones
Kirkwood	Susan Miles
LaFayette	Laura Wilson
Light of Hope	Pam June
Macland (2)	Freida St. Germain
Marietta (4)	Martie Moore
	Paul Phillips
	Cathy Lipsett
	Carol Callaway
Morton Memorial	
Ray-Thomas	Susan Monk
Rockmart	
Silver Creek	
Trinity	Teri Abercrombi
Westminster	Sarah Whitley
Woodstock	

Total Allocated Ruling Elder Commissioners: 36

OTHER RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS:

Anita Errickson
Coy Temples

Possible Ruling Elder total - 38

In attendance:

Teaching Elders	14
HR Teaching Elders	10
Ruling Elders	21
Corresponding Members	1
Visitors	6
Presbytery Lay Staff	0

Total attendance 52

Absent:

Excused Teaching Elders	11
Unexcused Teaching Elders	12
Excused Ruling Elders	0
Unexcused Ruling Elders	15

Call to Order

Following the Stated Clerk's confirmation that a quorum was present to do business, Moderator TE Greg Lund from Westminster called the called meeting of Cherokee Presbytery to order and led the council in prayer. He then read the scripture for the day.

Approval of the Docket

The Coordinating Team of Cherokee Presbytery has called a meeting of the presbytery on Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at 12pm for two purposes:

1. to examine Rev. Dr. Joan Gray for membership in the presbytery while she serves as Interim Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Marietta, and
2. to tend to matters relating to the Administrative Commission for Providence Presbyterian Church in Dallas, GA which will be dissolved on March 27, 2016

Stated Clerk Nikki MacMillan moved the approval of the docket. Seconded and **APPROVED**

Seat Corresponding Members

Pete Paulsen was recognized as a corresponding member, and, after a motion by the Stated Clerk and a second, he was given the privilege of the floor. **APPROVED**

Introduction of First Time Commissioners and Others

Various Teaching elders introduced Ruling elders attending Presbytery for the first time. A number of visitors were also welcomed.

Greetings from the Host Church

TE Joan Gray, interim pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Marietta, brought greetings from the host church.

Committee on Ministry

COM Moderator TE Camille Josey moved that following examination, TE Joan Gray, member of Greater Atlanta Presbytery, be received into membership of Cherokee Presbytery, to serve as Interim Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Marietta. **APPROVED**

The Moderator led the council in prayer for Joan and her ministry.

Documents: Joan Gray's statements – Attachment A

Coordinating Team

Coordinating Team Moderator RE Susan Monk moved that the Administrative Commission for Providence Presbytery be dissolved and dismissed with the presbytery's thanks. **APPROVED** She then moved that a new Administrative Commission for Providence be elected to handle all matters related to the dissolution of that church. The members of the Commission are: TE Zeta Lamberson, RE Peggy Rollins (Dalton), and RE Marlene Michalke (Macland). **APPROVED**

Adjournment

TE Ted Smith moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and **APPROVED**.

The Moderator called on RE Erma Jones (John Knox), who closed the meeting with prayer at 12:33p.m. The council then moved into the Great Hall for a Bar-B-Que luncheon.

Kenneth J. Terrell

Assistant to the Stated Clerk
Cherokee Presbytery

Faith Journey Joan S. Gray

My faith journey started off when I was predestined by God before the foundation of the world. The next event was my birth to a praying, God-loving, church-going mother. The first memory I have of anything related to God is of memorizing a Bible verse in Sunday school: “All we like sheep have gone astray.” (Isaiah 60:1) At age eight I realized this meant me, and following the custom of our church I told my mother I wanted to accept Jesus and be baptized. After this things rocked along pretty well until I became a teenager. Then I started asking questions about what I heard in Sunday School and from the pulpit. This questioning was generally frowned upon and my mother remembers asking the preacher if he thought I had lost my salvation.

One of the best things that ever happened to me was going to Presbyterian College. There I discovered a brand of Christianity that not only allowed questions but encouraged them. I had found my church and never looked back. At PC I had what I think of as my adult conversion experience. After breaking up with my first love, I realized that I needed something more reliable than men at the center of my life, and that God was the most reliable thing there was. I can't remember exactly what all went on with that, but the outcome was that by graduation I had a religion major and a scholarship to Columbia Seminary. (I also met my husband Bill there and he is God's best earthly gift to me.) I entered seminary planning to be a pastoral counselor, but in January of 1976 a little UPCUSA church meeting in Sprayberry High School on Sandy Plains Road asked me to preach for them. I have been preaching and pastoring ever since.

In 1978 I was ordained to pastor a small church in rural Butts County, Georgia. After three years of a difficult relationship, I resigned shortly before they were going to ask me to leave. By that time I was totally burned out. I also realized that if I was going to be a professional Christian, I really needed a deeper, more intentional relationship with God. I had no idea where to look for this, but ended up stopping on the way to work two or three mornings a week and sitting in the back of the church during Mass at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Buckhead. After several months, my shriveled soul began to revive. This whole experience started me off on a God adventure that has lasted over the last thirty plus years.

Books have been very important to my faith journey. It seems a miracle to me that people who have been dead for hundreds of years can speak faith into my life. Some of those people and books are

John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress* I read the children's version many times growing up.

Leslie D. Weatherhead, *Prescription for Anxiety* Catalyst for my college conversion

Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*

Jürgen Moltmann, *Experiences of God*

Carlo Carretto, *Letters from the Desert*

Andrew Murray, *Absolute Surrender* and *The True Vine*

Marjorie H. Suchochi, *In God's Presence*

Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart*

Jim Cymbala, *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*

Marcus Borg, *The Heart of Christianity*

Craig Barnes, *The Pastor as Minor Poet*

I look forward to continuing this adventure with God until one day I see God face to face.

Call Statement

Joan Gray

Over the years I have generally practiced an open door – closed door method of discernment. This involves a daily giving my life to God. Then if/when a door opens, I pay attention, do due diligence, and if the door closes so be it. If the door stays open and the three parts of a call fall into place, I go ahead. After that sometimes things are easier, sometimes harder. If it works out well, I give thanks to God. If it doesn't, I learn things about myself and depend on God to bring me through. Through the worst, most challenging experiences of my ministry I have learned the most about God's faithfulness.

After conversations with the AC at First Marietta the way seemed clear so I received their invitation (along with that of the session) as a call. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know these people who have been through many troubles. We are exploring some hard questions together, but I trust that the Lord will provide what we need to do this difficult work.

The goals of our interim relationship are that:

- There is a high level of vitality in worship, mission, programming, and the overall life of the congregation during the interim time and beyond
- Church leaders and staff have the resources and support they need to excel in their work
- The congregation experiences healing from effects of the recent conflict and loss of members
- The church is brought to good financial health and achieves a staffing pattern appropriate to its needs and available finances
- The officers of the church engage the congregation in a process to discern the church's call going forward and develop a strategic plan for mission in the Marietta community and beyond
- The congregation is successful in its search for new leadership
- The people of First Marietta are prepared for the arrival of their next pastor

If the presbytery confirms this call and accepts me into membership, I will look forward to enjoying your fellowship during my time serving the First Presbyterian Church of Marietta.