

South Texas Presbytery,

After a busy General Assembly your Nominating Committee took August off as we had no urgent business. However, a couple things are worth mentioning by way of written report as the committee will be kicking into gear at the October meeting.

Below you will see an update on our presbytery committees, needed appointments for the Assembly's Nominating Committee and Review of Presbytery Records, the results from General Assembly on Permanent Committee nominations, and finally some individual reports from the men who represented South Texas on Committees of Commissioners.

Respectfully,

Joshua Torrey

## Presbytery Committees

In an effort to clean up our presbytery minutes and have more clarity about the business being voted on, your Nominating Committee would like to implement—as best we can—two things. 1) Fewer appointments to committees during the calendar year and 2) Clearer communication of classes that are being re-elected or rolling off. As a growing presbytery, we need to strive to keep our committee rosters accurate and filled with men able to serve.

In October the committee class of 2024 will have completed its term and the class of 2027 will be elected and voted on. If you are serving on a committee in the class of 2024 please confirm with your committee chair your desire to continue serving. Individuals can contact their committee chair or RE Joshua Torrey ([joshua.torrey@gmail.com](mailto:joshua.torrey@gmail.com)) for class information. If you are presently not serving on a committee but wish to serve please contact the committee chair prior to October so as to ensure they have time to communicate with us those intentions.

Committee chairs, please review and confirm your rosters so as to ensure we have correct names heading into the new class and new year.

## Nominating Committee and Review of Presbytery Records

South Texas has finished its three year class to both the Assembly's Nominating Committee (NC) and the Committee of Review of Presbytery Records (RPR). We want to thank TE Ben Hailey, RE Mike Simpson, RE Joshua Torrey, and RE Barry McBee for their service. It is our intent in October to recommend a Teaching Elder to RPR and Ruling Elder to NC. If you are interested in this please let us know.

## Permanent Committee Results from GA

South Texas did well at this year's General assembly. All of our candidates ran unopposed and were elected to Permanent Committees. TE Eric Landry was voted to the Standing Judicial Commission (Class of '28). Our other three men were voted to "alternate" positions this year. These men will be automatically considered by the Assembly's Nominating Committee next year. In total, South Texas Presbytery has seven men on permanent committees and agencies for this year. (Italics indicate newly elected.)

*TE Billy Crain, Committee on Reformed University Fellowship (Alternate)*

RE Tuan La, Board of Ridge Haven (Class of '28)

*TE Eric Landry, Standing Judicial Commission (Class of '28)*

RE John Fitch, Board of Covenant Theological Seminary (Class of '27)

*RE Joshua Torrey, Committee on Constitutional Business (Alternate)*

RE Jeremy Whitley, Committee on Discipleship Ministries (Class of '25)

*RE Mitch Young, Committee on Mission to North America (Alternate)*

## Committee of Commissioners Participation at GA

For the first time in its history, South Texas Presbytery sent a commissioner to every single Committee of Commissioners. We are excited about the interest in serving this way on behalf of our presbytery and seek to encourage more men to serve in the future. A summary of select reports from CoC members is contained below.

### RE Larry Laine (PCA Foundation)

This year I served on the PCA Foundation Committee of Commissioners for the meeting held on Tuesday morning of the General Assembly.

The interim Chairman, who was later confirmed as our Chairman CoC was Duncan Rankin from Houston Metro Presbytery.

The committee also heard a presentation from Tim Townsend the President of the foundation who discussed the 2025 Budget for the Foundation, the Board minutes from a mid-year meeting and description of the proposed Gift acceptance and Management Policy as adopted by the board. He also spent some time discussing the 2023 annual audit and discussed a proposal to add some language on better oversight of dollars managed by the same company year after year. Some great questions from the CoC and follow-up were suggested from the committee that was acknowledged by President Townsend.

As is the case with many committees the CoC meets as a way to accomplish a lot of work in a short timeframe. Chairman Rankin requested during the meeting we split into three subcommittees of commissions to review the board of directors' minutes, financials, and Gift acceptance proposal.

Many thanks for allowing me to serve on this committee that also led to some conversation with President Townsend while he spent time manning their booth. We touched on ways to educate those in our denomination about the many ways we have to donate to the Church.

Once again thanks! Yours respectfully.

### TE Bryant McGee (Mission to North America)

It was my privilege to serve on the MNA Committee of Commissioners for the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in Richmond, VA. Having served on other CoCs in the past, I always find it beneficial to meet with the Stated Clerk the morning of and be reminded of the work of these committees and how it all fits within our Presbyterian polity. The MNA CoC was pretty uneventful this year. We heard from the coordinator of how things are going in MNA and plans for the upcoming year. The CoC broke into a few subcommittees to review minutes of the permanent committee as well as review the budget. A couple of small corrections were made to the minutes and budget and we concluded our work within a couple of hours from beginning. It was my honor to serve South Texas Presbytery in this important work of our denomination.

### TE Allen Taha (Geneva Benefits)

This year I served on the Committee of Commissioners for Geneva Benefits. We heard a presentation from TE Ed Dunnington who serves as the president of Geneva Benefits. TE Paul

Joiner also presented. He is the Director of Ministerial Wellbeing and was a new hire for Geneva Benefits last year. It was good to hear the report and see that Geneva Benefits is interested in contributing to ministerial well being in addition to helping with the financial security of ministers through insurance products, retirement savings and the ministerial relief fund.

As a general recommendation for retirement savings, Geneva Benefits encourages contributing 10% of your salary+housing to their 403(b) plan. While the expenses for the plan are somewhat higher (0.74% of assets) than may be available elsewhere, if you retire as a Teacher Elder, you will be able to receive housing allowance distributions from your 403(b) and these distributions will be exempt from federal income tax like your housing allowance now (under current law). Please note, this is not investment advice. Even though we have this benefit, 73% of accounts have a balance under \$100,000. I know many of us plan on working until we drop dead in the pulpit, but we still need to take care of things financially and make sure you have the proper life and disability insurance so that you do not unduly burden the church, presbytery or denomination. Geneva Benefits offers free consultations regarding your retirement readiness, so please reach out to them if you need help.

During the meeting we split into three subcommittees of commissions to review the board of directors minutes, audit report and financials and budget and trustee fee agreement. Fortunately, we had lawyers and accountants who could help with the latter two. All appeared to be in good order and everything was approved after the review.

Overall, Geneva Benefits Committee of Commissioners is a good place for anyone to serve who is on the Ministerial Relations Committee. Thank you for appointing me to serve this year.

#### RE Joshua Torrey (Overtures Committee)

It was an honor to represent South Texas on the Overtures Committee for a second year. This year felt much like last year as the committee executed its work quickly and often opted to reject overtures outright instead of wordsmithing them on the floor. Though our background check overture was discussed to a greater degree, the prevailing attitude of the committee was that the legal dangers trumped a mandatory requirement in our BCO. However, the discussions did lead to multiple men reaching out for guidance on implementing policies in their presbyteries—something I am working on for South Texas as well.

I believe the PCA is experiencing “overture fatigue.” This fatigue coupled with the abundance of information available before the assembly (podcasts, voting guides, articles, etc.) is leading to less interest in debate and more established minds regarding how to vote. This is reflected in our second straight year of early conclusion to business. It is good that the PCA is not burdened with strenuous controversy, but it may have come at the cost of doing other good work.