

**THE 236th STATED MEETING OF
THE SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

September 14-15, 2015
Ginter Park Presbyterian Church
Richmond, Virginia

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2015

Commissioners to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic gathered at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall of Ginter Park Presbyterian Church in Richmond Virginia for registration and coffee.

CONVENING PRAYER AND WELCOME

Moderator Laura Lupton convened the 236th Stated Meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic at 9:37 am with prayer. She welcomed commissioners, corresponding members and guests. Reading from the passage John 17:20-23, she reminded us of the Synod Theme, "Called as Partners in Christ's Service." The Moderator then invited all to place before God all worries by writing words or a phrase that characterizes our distractions.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The Moderator declared a quorum was present. Twenty-seven commissioners are in attendance including the moderator and vice-moderator. 14 Teaching Elders and 13 Ruling Elders represented all 14 presbyteries in the synod. The Procedural Guide states "the quorum for the Stated Meeting shall be fifty (50%) of the total number of voting commissioners, which is thirty, 28 presbytery commissioners, plus the moderator and vice moderator. Such a quorum shall be comprised of at least seven commissioners who are elders and at least seven who are ministers, and which is constituted such that at least five presbyteries are represented."

COMMISSIONERS

Parish, Bill
Simpson, Brad
Jun, Eun-Gee
Pak, James
Leslie, Louisa
Morgan, Brett
Burris, D. Lynn
Busby, Greg
Sanders, David (Vice Moderator)
Arnold, Franklin
Boyce, Ed
Lupton, Laura (Moderator)
Kirkpatrick, Jim
Peterson, Addie
Payne, Kenna

OFFICE

Ruling Elder
Teaching Elder
Teaching Elder
Ruling Elder
Ruling Elder
Teaching Elder
Ruling Elder
Teaching Elder
Ruling Elder
Ruling Elder
Teaching Elder
Teaching Elder
Ruling Elder
Teaching Elder
Ruling Elder

PRESBYTERY

Abingdon
Abingdon
AKAP
AKAP
Baltimore
Baltimore
Charlotte
Charlotte
Charlotte
Coastal Carolina
Coastal Carolina
Coastal Carolina
Eastern Virginia
Eastern Virginia
James

Rhyne, H. Carson	Teaching Elder	James
Jervis, Madeline	Teaching Elder	National Capital
Powell, Kevin	Teaching Elder	National Capital
Rowland, Nancy	Teaching Elder	New Castle
Etheredge, John	Ruling Elder	New Hope
Omokunde, Tolokun	Teaching Elder	New Hope
Eller, Sarah	Ruling Elder	Peaks
Rakes, Janet	Ruling Elder	Peaks
Sprinkle, Carolyn	Ruling Elder	Salem
Blose, Ellen R.	Ruling Elder	Shenandoah
Deas, Eddie	Teaching Elder	Western Carolina
Sellers, Sylvia	Ruling Elder	Western Carolina

Commissioners Excused

John Hartman
 John Cushwa

Office

Teaching Elder
 Teaching Elder

Presbytery

Salem
 Shenandoah

Absent Commissioner

Neeshard Ahamad

Office

Ruling Elder

Presbytery

New Castle

Seating of Corresponding Members

Moderator Lupton referred to the Procedural Guide Section II under Membership – 2.2: “The outgoing Moderator; the Synod Executive/Stated Clerk; the Treasurer; the chairs of the Permanent Committees on Nomination, Representation; the Board of Trustees Advisory Members of the Finance Committee, the Synod staff, and the executives and stated clerks of the constituent presbyteries of the synod of the Mid-Atlantic who are not commissioners shall be seated if they wish as corresponding members without vote. If they request the privilege of the floor, they may be granted voice by vote of the Assembly”.

Synod staff seated, as corresponding members, were Executive/Stated Clerk Warren Lesane, Jr., Cindy Hollingshead, Financial Manager; and Tami Scott, Synod Administrator. Visitors seated were Teaching Elders Ted Churn, New Hope Presbytery; Randy Webb, Abingdon Presbytery, and Jim Moseley, New Castle Presbytery and Discernment Committee Chair.

Guests:

Brian Blount (TE-President-Union Presbyterian Seminary), Beverly Bullock (TE-Discernment Committee), Jeff Chapman (Senior Portfolio Manager-RBC Wealth Management Investments), Patricia Clark (Presbyterian Women Moderator, WNC), George Goodman (TE-Discernment Committee), Helen Locklear (Board of Pensions), Debbie Reese (RE-Discernment Committee), Jacqueline Sanders (Guest-Charlotte Presbytery), Charles Sellers (Guest-WNC), Randy Smith (Massanetta Springs Board), Karen Thatcher (RE-Discernment Committee). Alice Tewell attended as vice moderator elect from National Capital Presbytery.

TEMPORARY CLERK ELECTION

The Moderator appointed Tami Scott as the recording clerk for the meeting.

ADOPTION OF DOCKET

The Moderator presented the proposed docket for the 236th Stated Meeting. It was approved as presented.

PROCEDURAL GUIDE

The Procedural Guide was approved by the body. It was clarified that the synod procedural guide is different from the synod standing rules.

235TH SYNOD MINUTES

The Minutes of the 235th Stated Meeting were presented for approval. Notation was made of one correction on page 10, Grants and Awards concerning Peacemaking was highlighted. Peacemaking is not new to the grants and awards review process. The word “new” was stricken. A motion was made to approve the 235th Synod Minutes with the described correction, seconded and approved.

INTRODUCTION

Moderator Lupton welcomed Commissioners, Stated Clerks, Presbytery Executives and guests. She gave an opportunity for each individual to introduce themselves by expressing skills they would like to master. At its conclusion, the Assembly voted the Synod Executive and Stated Clerk the privilege of the floor.

STATED CLERK AND EXECUTIVE REPORT

The Synod Stated Clerk welcomed everyone by sharing the words to the Hymn “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”, reminding the assembly that sometimes we are powerless to do anything about situations outside of our control, but we can always pray as he described a recent experience that the Synod Executive Committee had. Warren’s summary addressed a number of critical issues, all provided in a written report. See Appendix A -Executive & Stated Clerk Report.

- Thanked commissioners and committee members across the region for their service. Special thanks were offered to the Synod Discernment Committee for their great work.
- Commissioners ending their term at the 236th Assembly are asked to notify the clerk by noon.
- Requested excused absences were received from TE John Hartman (Salem) and TE John Cushwa (Shenandoah).
- Omnibus Motion: Business relating to the Jubilee Fund, Kate Reynolds and Speer Trust are listed under the Omnibus Motion. Any commissioner may remove item(s) prior to the vote.
- New Reporting Forms are provided for Designated and Permanent Committees. The format will lead to greater efficiency of time and resources.
- Lord’s Supper - The Executive Committee approved the celebration of the Lord’s Supper during 236th Assembly.
- General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission’s Decision - The General Assembly PJC has ruled in its Decision and Order on the Smith/Kappus vs Peak Presbytery Appeal in the May 2015 Trial. Their decision affirmed the Synod’s Decision and the case has been dismissed with a requirement to report this resolution at the first Synod Assembly after receipt and that a record be sent to Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. A motion was made to enter the result of Smith/Kappus vs Peaks Appeal into the 236th Synod Assembly Minutes with instructions that this record of the Synod minutes be sent to the General Assembly. The motion passed.
- Synod Permanent Judicial Commission – The SPJC has three complaints before it. One complaint is required to be heard in person, the other two may lead to trials in 2016. The Nominating

committee will recommend a remedy to bring the PJC in compliance with the Book of Order and the Synod Standing Rules of establishing three classes during this assembly.

- Emanuel Nine - the Synod Stated Clerk joined religious leaders across Virginia affirming a statement written by the Virginia Council of Churches and the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy in response to the murder of nine members of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston SC. Rev. Carolyn Winfred Gillette, member of the New Castle Presbytery was applauded for penning the words to the hymn, "They met to Read the Bible".
- Highlights and activities of the Executive/Stated Clerk:
 1. All Synod Committees are functional. The new chairperson for COR – CW Hargrave, National Capital Presbytery
 2. Presbytery Executive Training is provided for Presbytery Executives who are new in their positions. The training is funded by the Synod and provided for three years.
 3. Catawba Unit Celebration - 4 Historical African American Presbyteries with gather in Greensboro NC September 19, 2015.
 4. Baltimore's Presbytery's Response – To the Freddie Gray death and subsequent violence involved strategizing by community clergy, discussion groups during presbytery meetings and gathering/supporting prayer vigils.
 5. Executive/Stated Clerk's affiliations – Stated Clerk served on Abingdon Presbytery's commission to install Teaching Elder Randy Webb as Presbytery Shepherd Leader. He also is a Board Member of Massanetta Springs and the Governor's Council to Bridge the Nutritional Divide in Virginia. In July he served as Moderator of the PMA African American Advisory Committee.
 6. Synod Composition of 14 Presbyteries from the states of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, District of Columbia and West Virginia was shared. Membership totals 257,160 in 2014.

MASSANETTA SPRINGS REPORT

Board member Randy Smith shared a report in the absences of Acting Director, Skip Cothran. Randy reported that the conference center is debt free for first time in 20 years. He thanked the synod for its continued support. Massanetta facility usage has increased because it is providing facility for events such as the August retreat and middle school conference of 1,000 students who came to participate in four different programs. Massanetta is involved in outreach to ethnic, men and women conferences, people of other faiths and those involved in community programs. Recently, Labyrinth in the Woods, an area on Massanetta's grounds was dedicated to Fred and Laura Holbrook, recently retired directors at Massanetta. Labyrinth in the Woods is a continuation of Massanetta's mission to provide a sanctuary for peace and prayer. Massanetta is involved in a job search to find the retreat's next Director. The assembly was provided with the position description and necessary applicant qualifications. See Appendix B - Massanetta Springs Job Description.

UNION PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARY

Teaching Elder Brian Blount, President of Union Presbyterian Seminary, greeted the assembly and introduced the seminary's Global Mission Initiative. Union Presbyterian Seminary was started in 1812 on the campus of Hampden Sydney. It shares in a number of partnerships with churches, one being a collaboration with Sharon Presbyterian Church, a 22,000 square foot facility on the seminary's Charlotte Campus. Union is in their fourth year of a Global Mission Initiative Campaign. With donations from Congregations and individuals, the seminary will be able to renovate Richmond Hall and construct the

Syngman Rhee Global Mission Center for Christian Education. This center will house a global mission office, an African American Womanist Studies program and a curriculum production facility. This will be a global center where missionaries and scholars can gather to equip Christian educators from developing countries and the United States. The estimated cost of building renovation and construction is 8 million dollars.

PLENARY SESSION ONE

REPORT OF THE DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE

Teaching Elder Jim Moseley, Moderator of the Synod Discernment Committee, reported that the committee has compiled a three part presentation comprised of: (1) A summary of the committee's process and findings, (2) Addressing of committee's recommendations and finally, (3) The presentation will include reflections and conversations of how we experience the mood and challenges of the synod. Moseley introduced the Committee Members who represented eight difference presbyteries: William "Pete" Brown (TE-Coastal Carolina), Beverly Bullock (TE - The James), George Goodman (TE-The Peaks), Jeffery Kim (TE-AKAP), Jim Moseley (TE-New Castle), Debbie Reese (RE-Baltimore), Karen Thatcher (RE-Shenandoah) and Ray Watson (RE-New Hope).

Discernment Part I

Moseley revisited the committee's charge and mission, spoke of the committee's process and offered the recommendation that the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic remain intact. He made clear that the committee's findings were not based on striving to answer the question about synod boundaries for all times, but for today. The information used to determine the committee's recommendation came from interviews with nine historic constituent groups, table top conversations with Synod Commissioners and an online survey targeted to the presbytery councils.

Discernment Part II

The Discernment Committee submitted seven recommendations with rationale for the assembly's review and approval. The recommendations are listed:

- 1) In response to the G.A. Overture, the committee recommended no change in the administrative boundaries of the synod of the Mid-Atlantic.
 - There is no energy, compulsion or identified champion to argue for an administrative change.
 - There is no argument that a merger or dissolution will create a stronger witness.
 - The unique and historical diversity to the Synod demonstrates a more complete community.
- 2) Recommended that the Synod's Assembly endorse the synod of the Mid-Atlantic's participation in the December gathering of all synods in Dallas, Texas. The discernment work can be shared and this synod can learn from other synods.
- 3) Recommended was that the Synod identify the accounts and trust funds whose designated purpose has become outdated and the money cannot be utilized as designated. After these funds are identified, the appropriate legal actions and steps should be taken to consolidate these accounts and funds into a unified stream of income.
- 4) Recommended that creating new strategies from promoting the work of Synod to its presbyteries, congregations and other supporters.
 - Our churches and congregants are continuing to adapt to social media.

- Visits and reports from Commissioners are reported as welcomed and appreciated as stated in the survey.
 - Churches share that “print ready” inserts are great educational resources for addition to church bulletins.
- 5) Recommended was an annual Synod wide gathering of congregants and constituents for the purpose of fellowship, information and cultural exchange, worship and fellowship in the model of the “Big Tent”.
- Constituency groups unanimously are seeking a venue to gather for fellowship and interaction with other groups.
 - Multicultural gatherings are a vivid expression of the growing diversity of our church.
 - With visibility comes recognition, with recognition comes dignity, and with dignity comes self-determination.
- 6) Recommended was that the Synod continue conversation with other synods on specific mission partnerships.
- Geographical boundaries need not be boundaries to mission endeavors.
 - Collaboration and partnership engender creative thinking.
 - Community and relationships are created and strengthened when we help one another.
- 7) Recommended that the Synod’s Grants Committee extend assistance and opportunities to congregations by developing a matching funds initiative for new emergent ministries. See Appendix C - Discernment Report/Recommendations.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 12:30 pm to reconvene at 1:15 pm.

BOARD OF PENSIONS

Helen Locklear, Mid-Atlantic Region Representative from the Presbyterian Board of Pensions, reported on major changes to the benefits program. Frank Spencer has joined the organization as its new president. Church hiring practices have changed and changes have been made to the benefits plan. Demographic study says only 70% of clergy are participating in the plan. Lay staff, only 10% is participating in the benefits plan. Because of the high cost of health care, some churches have dropped staff to 19 or some churches have other coverage in another market. The Pension Plan is working to provide more flexibility and options for plan participants. The plan was designed years ago for clergy but now there is an attempt to be more inclusive of staff for their participation in the plan. Pension officials recently met in Philadelphia to see what a modified and more inclusive draft to the benefits package should look like. A number of drafts are on the table.

PLENARY SESSION TWO

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT PART 1

Nominating Committee Chair, Nancy Rowland, proposed, and the assembly confirmed the following persons and leadership to serve on the Synod’s Designated Committees.

Administration Committee

Commissioner	Presbytery	Designation
Ed Boyce	Coastal Carolina	WMTE
D. Lynn Burris	Charlotte	WMRE

John Cushwa	Shenandoah	WMTE
Madeline Jervis	National Capital	WFTE
Brett Morgan- Chair	Baltimore	WMTE
Bill Parish	Abingdon	WMRE
John Etheredge	New Hope	BMRE

Finance Committee

Commissioner	Presbytery	Designation
Franklin Arnold	Coastal Carolina	BMRE
Sarah Eller	Peaks	WFRE
Eun-Gee Jun	AKAP	AMTE
Kenna Payne	James	WFRE
Kevin Powell	National Capital	BMTE
Brad Simpson	Abingdon	WMTE
Carolyn Sprinkle – Chair	Salem	WFRE

Grants and Awards Committee

Commissioner	Presbytery	Designation
Ellen R. Blose	Shenandoah	WFRE
James Kirkpatrick	Eastern Virginia	WMRE
Tolokun Omokunde - Chair	New Hope	BMTE
Addie Peterson	Eastern Virginia	BFTE
H. Carson Rhyne	James	WMTE
Nancy Rowland	New Castle	WFTE
Sylvia Sellers	Western North Carolina	WFRE

Presbytery Initiatives

Commissioner	Presbytery	Designation
Neeshard Ahamad	New Castle	MMERE
Gregory Busby	Charlotte	BMTE
Eddie Deas - Chair	Western North Carolina	BMTE
John Hartman	Salem	WMTE
Louisa Leslie	Baltimore	WFRE
James Pak	AKAP	AMRE
Janet Rakes	Peaks	WFRE

Executive Committee

Commissioner	Presbytery	Designation
Greg Busby	Charlotte	BMTE
Laura Lupton	Coastal Carolina	WFTE
Brett Morgan	Baltimore	WMTE
Tolokun Omokunde	New Hope	BMTE
James Pak	AKAP	AMRE
Kevin Powell	National Capital	BMTE
Nancy Rowland	New Castle	WFTE

David Sanders - Chair	Charlotte	BMRE
Alice Tewell	National Capital	AFTE

Nancy Rowland recommended that the membership of the four designated committees (Admin, Finance, Grants & Awards, and Presbytery Initiatives) be accepted. Motion was approved. Nancy instructed Designated Committees during their meetings to elect their moderators but to pay attention to the recommendations of the Nominating Committee.

Rowland reviewed Nominating Committee items docketed for Tuesday. These items include class terms limitations for chairpersons and a proposal to bring the SPJC classes into compliance.

Discernment Part III

Discernment Committee Members, Debbie Reese and Beverly Bullock, shared feedback from the various Synod constituent groups interviewed. What did the Discernment Committee learn from the surveys?

- Community and relationships are valued at every level within Synod. Individuals still want the face to face at some time.
- Widespread appreciation for Synod is expressed for funding ministry needs and opportunities throughout the 14 presbyteries. (Example of synod giving money to those people who Discernment met with, this money was appreciated).
- Presbyteries feel compelled to respond to increased congregational needs and challenges.
- Constituency Groups, Racial Ethnic and Immigrant Fellowships desire visibility and a voice in Synod work.
- The Synod enjoys a legacy of great size and diversity.

Moseley shared glass shards that had been discarded and thrown into a river. These shards had been used to create works of art. He compared the shards to the synod explaining that the synod has beauty in it too. There is a part of the Synod that has been broken and tumbled. The broken and shattered can be used to create something; just as the art had been created from pieces of glass found in the river. He challenged the synod to do the good work, but also help us make a work of art and beauty in our congregations and members. It is okay that we are broken, we can still be made beautiful.

DESIGNATED COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Each committee was provided a meeting template, a report form and flash drive to record its meeting minutes and final report. Committees were instructed to complete their work by 5:15 pm. Commissioners were dismissed to join their committees in the assigned rooms and to return completed reports to the synod administrator prior to the days end.

WORSHIP AND HOLY COMMUNION

Commissioners and guests gathered at 5:30 pm in the Chapel of Ginter Park Presbyterian Church for worship and Holy Communion. Vice Moderator Sanders presided. TE Elder Larry James from Charlotte Presbytery offered the sermon. Moderator Lupton and James provided communion. The Moderator offered the benediction.

DINNER RECESS

At the conclusion of worship, commissioners gathered for dinner at 6:30 pm. in the Fellowship Hall. A blessing was provided by Eddie Deas. After dinner, the assembly was in recess until Tuesday Morning.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2015

RECONVENING

Moderator Lupton called the Assembly to order at 9:00 am with an opening prayer and group exercise. Commissioners were gathered in threes. Each group received a card with a prayer topic. Instructions were that prayers would be offered by each group with reference to the topic noted on the card, then the card was past to another group for their prayers on the topic.

PLENARY SESSION THREE

ACTIONS ON THE DISCERNMENT REPORT

Plenary session three offered an opportunity for the Discernment Committee to summarize its presentation, survey findings, to reiterate the recommendations and for the commissioners to vote on the recommendations. See Appendix C (Discernment Report/Recommendations)

Recommendation 1: In response to the G.A. Overture, the committee recommended no change in the administrative boundaries of the synod of the Mid-Atlantic. Motion to accept the recommendation and approved. The 236th Synod Assembly wishes to affirm and agree with the current Administrative boundaries and keep them the same.

Recommendation 2: That the assembly endorses the Synod's participation in the December synod boundary consultation in Dallas, Texas and that Laura Lupton (graduating moderator), David Sanders (Moderator elect), Jim Mosely (Discernment Committee Moderator) and Alice Tewell (Vice Moderator elect) represent the synod at the synod's expense. Expenses will be taken from the Discernment Committee Budget line item. The motion was approved.

Recommendation 3: It was motioned and seconded that items 3-7 be approved and referred to the Executive Committee for further study and implementation. Motion approved.

The Synod Assembly expressed its grateful appreciation to the Discernment Committee and dismissed it with our sincerest gratitude. The motion was approved.

PLENARY SESSION FOUR

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Omnibus Motion: Jubilee Fund Committee, Kate B Reynold Fund, Speer Trust Fund minutes and reports were approved

Nominating Committee Report Part II

Nancy Rowland reported the following Designated Committees chairperson's election:

- TE Kevin Powell - Chair of Finance Committee effective at the end of the 236th Synod Assembly.
- TE Greg Busby - Chair of Presbytery Initiatives at the conclusion of the 236th Synod Assembly

Nomination Committee Membership

Executive Committee Member David Sanders presented the names for the Nominating Committee as required by the synod Standing Rules.

Class of 2018

Diana "D" Askins	WFRE2	Coastal Carolina
Patrick Dennis	WMTE1	James
Gerry Hendershot	WMRE1	National Capital

The floor was opened for additional nominations. There being none, nominations were closed on the names listed and all were elected by acclamation.

Synod Moderator and Vice Moderator

Nancy Rowland presented the names for the office of synod Moderator and Vice Moderator.

Moderator – David Sanders	BMRE	Charlotte
Vice Moderator – Alice Tewell	AFTE	National Capital

The floor was opened for additional nominations. There being none, nominations were closed on the names listed and all were elected by acclamation.

Committee on Representation

Nancy Rowland presented the names for the Committee on Representation.

Class of 2018

Kathy Haga	WFTE1	Abingdon
Donna Fair	BFRE1	Charlotte
A.W. Dickerson	WMRE1	James

The floor was opened for additional nominations. There being none, nominations were closed on the names listed and all were elected by acclamation.

Permanent Judicial Commission

Nancy Rowland presented the Nominating Committee Report for the Permanent Judicial Commission. She urged the assembly to vote this report down so that a new report could be presented. The Assembly defeated the Synod Nominations Committee Report. Nancy then presented the following process and procedures to bring the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission in compliance with the Synod Standing Rules and the Book of Order effective 2016. Four classes of commission members will function in 2016. Beginning in 2017 through attrition, the SPJC will have only three classes of commissioners. Brett Morgan offered additional clarification and support for this action.

Class of 2016:

John Kazanjian	WMTE	Baltimore
Wilbur Douglass	BMTE	Eastern Virginia
Beth Pyles	WFTE	Shenandoah

Class of 2017:

Freddie Peaco	BFRE	National Capital
John Goodman	WMTE	Coastal Carolina

Class of 2019

Carol Haas	WFRE	New Castle
Terry Sholar	WMRE	Charlotte
James Pak	AMRE	AKAP
William Millsaps	WMRE	James
Bill Parish	WMRE	Abingdon
Bill Pittman	WMRE	New Hope

Class of 2021

Helen Dean	BFRE	Peaks
Bob Riddle	WMRE	Western North Carolina

Jubilee Fund Grant Committee

Class of 2017

Nancy Rowland presented the names for the Jubilee Fund Committee.

John Etheredge	BMRE1	Black Caucus
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Class of 2018

Julius Jackson	BMRE1	New Castle
Janice Wells	BFRE2	Peaks
Dorothy Descieux	WFRE2	Western Carolina

The floor was opened for additional nominations. There being none, the nominees were elected by acclamation.

Speer Trust Fund Committee

Nancy Rowland presented the names for the Speer Trust Fund Committee

Class of 2018

Matlynn Yeoman	BFRE2	Coastal Carolina
George Conway	WMTE1	James
Ray Williams	BMRE	Peaks

The floor was opened for additional nominations. There being none, nominations were closed and the nominees were elected by acclamation.

Nominating Committee Recommendations:

The Nominating Committee Chair recommended a way to address vacancies on the Synod Nominating Committee. A motion was made and seconded, “That Synod Commissioners, with no presbytery representation on the committee on Nominations, assist the Synod Nominating Committee by identifying Teaching and Ruling Elders from their presbyteries that are willing to fill the vacancies on Synod Permanent Committees.” Approved.

The Nominating Committee Moderator offered changes to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic by-laws in collaboration with the Administration Committee to become effective January 1, 2016. This recommendation is an effort to define what the classes are and their start/ending periods.

1. Addition of 5.1.2: **“For all synod committees, with the exception of six year terms for PJC, committee members shall consist of three classes serving three year terms, which shall commence at the first of the new calendar year. If a committee member is elected to fill a vacancy, they may begin to serve immediately. Members shall not be eligible to serve consecutive terms, full or partial, totaling more than six years.”** The motion was approved.
2. Addition of a new sentence to 5.1.3 Officers: **“Committee officers shall serve for no more than three consecutive years.”** The motion was approved. See Appendix D, page 3 (Nominating Report).

Finance Committee

Committee Chair, Carolyn Sprinkle presented the Finance Committee report.

1. The 2014 Financial Review report was presented by Russell Coleman, representative from Cherry Bekaert, CPA firm. An audit of 16 statements will be performed in 2017. All is in order.
2. Jeff chapman from RCB Wealth Management presented the August 31, 2015 Portfolio Review and entertained questions from the Finance Committee.
3. The Year to Date 8/31/15 financial reports were provided by Synod Financial Manager, Cindy Hollingshead. They were reviewed and discussed. Expenses are on target. Some presbyteries are paying on a monthly basis.
4. The committee reviewed the Synod Insurance Policies and found insurance coverage was current and adequate.
5. The 2016 proposed budget was reviewed and completed. Current information of census figures were used to calculate the per capital income; \$6,500 was added to the Synod Assembly budget expense and \$2,147.25 was added to the Executive Director’s terms of call. There was a motion to accept the budget. Approved. See Appendix E - Finance Report.

Greetings from Presbytery Shepherd

TE Randy Webb, Presbytery Executive from Abingdon Presbytery introduced himself and offered Greetings from Abingdon Presby. Because Abingdon has 38 churches with primarily small

congregations, the presbytery is putting efforts toward reimagining small church ministries. Webb encouraged mission trips to Abingdon to witness and address the poverty in their area but also to encourage use of their area that offers many trails for mission trips and recreation opportunities.

Committee on Representation

RE - CW Hargrave from National Capital Presbytery was introduced as the Synod's new Moderator for the Committee on Representation. Hargrave informed the assembly of the work that the committee is committed to achieving. COR met on July 28, 2015 in Richmond at which time presbytery COR reports were reviewed. Four presbytery reports were outstanding. Presbytery reports will be requested earlier in 2016 so that the committee can get an early start. April of 2016 has already been targeted as the next meeting date to review reports; with the assumption that presbytery COR reports have been received. Hargrave made a request that presbyteries include their statistical information with their COR reports.

Grants and Awards Committee

Grants and Awards Moderator, Tolokun Omokunde, addressed the assembly with a report from his committee and recommendations. He requested that all recommendations be included in an Omnibus motion. \$21,580.50 was made available for allocation (up to \$5,000 per grant).

New & Small Church Grants Committee

New and Small Church Grants were received from the following churches: New Friendship (Charlotte), Pineola (Western NC), Colonial Heights (James), Saint Paul (Charlotte), Falling Waters (Shenandoah), Franklin (Eastern VA), The Bridge (Coastal Carolina), Vision PC of Washington (AKAP), Hagerstown (Baltimore), National Vietnamese (Charlotte) and Grace (Western NC).

After meeting the criteria established for the committee, awards in the amount of \$2500 were given to the following churches: New Friendship (Charlotte), Pineola (Western NC), Colonial Heights (James), Saint Paul (Charlotte), Falling Waters (Shenandoah), Franklin (Eastern VA), The Bridge (Coastal Carolina) and Vision PC of Washington (AKAP). A motion was made and seconded to approve the New and Small Church Fund applications. Motion Approved.

A recommendation from Grants and Awards was to fund an application from Good Hope Church in Western North Carolina in the amount of \$2,500.00 from the Visionary Fund. Approved.

Deadlines - Applications for Grants and Awards will be considered by the committee only if the application is postmarked/email dated or fax dated with all of the supporting documents by the deadline. Deadline dates for (New and Small Grants, Visionary, Peacemaking and Scholarships are due February 1, 2016 (for 237th Assembly) and August 1, 2016 (for 238th Assembly). See Appendix F - Grants/Awards Report.

Administration Committee

TE Brett Morgan, Moderator for the Administration Committee, brought to the assembly the following action items and recommendations with reference to language and policies of the Standing Rules, Procedural Guide and Synod Guidelines:

Recommendation 1: Change the title of Standing Rules/Procedures to Standing Rules. Approved.

Recommendation 2: Bring the language of the Standing Rules and Procedural Guide up to current standard because other language comes from old book of order. (i.e. Minister of the Word and Sacrament change to Teaching Elder and Elder to Ruling Elder). Recommending that specific reference from Old book of order is removed. Approved.

Recommendation 3: That the wording be changed in the Standing Rules to say that celebration of communion will be held at all Stated Meetings of the Synod Assembly. Approved.

Recommendation 4: That the meeting recording templates will be attached to procedural guide as appendices. Approved.

Recommendation 5: Those sections of the Operation Manual (not Procedural Manual) having to do with the former synod facilities that are no longer occupied are deleted. Approved.

Recommendation 6: The committee reviewed the suitability of the current Sexual Misconduct policy and moves that it be readopted. Approved.

Recommendation 7: That the changes to the Standing Rules requested by the Nominating Committee be approved. – to include a new section 5.1.2; ***“For all synod committees, with the exception of six year terms for PJC, committee members shall consist of three classes serving three year terms, which shall commence at the first of the new calendar year. If a committee member is elected to fill a vacancy, they may begin to serve immediately. Members shall not be eligible to serve consecutive terms, full or partial, totaling more than six years.”*** Approved.

Recommendation 8: Standing Rules current 5.1.3 – removal of contradictory language (see Standing Rules section 5-Permanent committee) Move the inclusion of a new section 5.1.2 in between 5.1.1 and current 5.1.2 – Reads for all synod committees with the exception...(see SPJC). – Committee officers shall serve no more than three consecutive years. Cleaning up class terms. Approved.

Recommendation 9: Standing Rules current 5.1.3 - Motion to include the sentence “Committee officers shall serve for no more than 3 consecutive years.” Approved.

Recommendation 10: a) Motion from Administration Committee is that the Synod Executive’s terms of call be increased to reflect a salary of \$25,500 and housing allowance to remain the same at \$24,000: b) Motion – Synod Executive’s Housing allowance remains at \$24,000.- and other necessary adjustments due to the change in effective salary. Approved. See Appendix G - Administration Report.

Presbytery Initiatives

TE Eddie Deas made the following recommendations on behalf of the Presbytery Initiatives Committee.

Recommend the funding of the following 5 grants: **1)** New Pastor Training (National Capital/Baltimore) - \$2,000.00, **2)** Synod Black Caucus - \$5,355.00, **3)** PW Moms and Kids Mission (National Capital/Charlotte) - \$3,800.00, **4)** Protestant Center for Pastoral Education (CEDEPCA) (Peaks/James) - \$10,000.00, **5)** Charlotte Youth Ministry Consortium (Charlotte/New Hope) - \$8,000.00. Approved.

The Presbytery Initiative Committee moved to suspend the granting of awards at March 2016 Synod Assembly as it engages in the process of self-assessment. Motion failed.

Executive Committee

Moderator Laura Lupton reported on behalf of the Synod Executive Committee about work the committee was doing with Atlantic Korean American Presbytery in reference to an instruction letter. The Executive Committee reviewed AKAP's reply and found it helpful. The synod office has received information from AKAP but needs more information as requested. A thorough review of the entire list of documents requested from AKAP is to be done.

TIME OF WORSHIP AND INSTALLATION

Moderator Laura Lupton led the assembly in prayer and officiated the Installation of David Sanders-Moderator and Alice Tewell-Vice Moderator. Jacqueline Sanders, wife of newly installed Moderator, offered prayer for the synod, its Moderator and Vice Moderator. Moderator David Sanders received the gavel and thanked the body for placing their confidence in him. He presented Past Moderator Lupton a framed picture showing the delegation that stood with her as she was installed as moderator a year earlier. He then preceded to present appreciation certificates to those commissioners whose terms were ending with the 236th synod assembly.

CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

With all business having been addressed, a motion was called for the 236th Synod Assembly to be adjourned. Second and approved. Moderator, David Sanders, adjourned the assembly with prayer at 12:00 p.m. and the assembly was invited to remain and celebrate its new Moderator (David Sanders) and Vice Moderator (Alice Tewell) over cake and refreshments.

The next synod assembly will be March 14-15, 2016 in Richmond, Virginia.

ATTESTATION

This is a true and accurate copy of the Minutes of the Synod Stated Meeting as reviewed by the Executive Committee

Dated: _____



Warren J. Lesane, Jr.
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic
Executive/Stated Clerk