THE 243rd STATED MEETING OF
THE SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC (PCUSA)
GINTER PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RICHMOND, VA
MARCH 11-12, 2019

Synod Commissioners gathered for registration and coffee at 9:00 a.m. March 11, 2019 in Ginter Park PC Fellowship Hall Richmond, VA. Commissioners were asked to sign the attendance roll each day.

CONVENING PRAYER
The 243rd Assembly of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic convened at 9:30 a.m. with prayer by Moderator Susanne Taylor.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
Moderator Taylor gave a warm welcome to everyone. In her introduction, she acknowledged that the synod is meeting on land originally occupied by the Native American Monacan and Pamunkey tribes, and that these tribes are part of the Sioux nation. Commissioners, guests and visitors introduced themselves.

DECLARATION OF QUORUM
The Moderator declared a quorum with 27 commissioners in attendance. Sixteen Teaching Elders and eleven Ruling Elders represented fourteen 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, which is constituted such that at least five presbyteries are represented.”

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CLERK
The Moderator appointed Tami Scott, Synod Administrator, as the temporary clerk.

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<th>COMMISSIONERS</th>
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<th>PRESBYTERY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Privette</td>
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<td>Ben Cahoon</td>
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<td>Tolokun Omokunde</td>
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Dale Brown  
Teaching Elder  
Peaks (PEA)

William (WD) Hasty  
Teaching Elder  
Peaks (PEA)

Stephen Scott  
Teaching Elder  
Salem (SAL)

Kimberly Kline  
Ruling Elder  
Shenandoah (SHE)

Wing, Andy  
Teaching Elder  
Shenandoah (SHE)

Charles Davenport  
Teaching Elder  
Western North Carolina (WNC)

Dorothy Descieux  
Ruling Elder  
Western North Carolina (WNC)

Susanne Taylor  
Moderator  
Shenandoah (SHE)

Mawuna Gardesey  
Vice Moderator  
New Castle (NEW)

EXCUSED COMMISSIONERS
Jane Davis  
Ruling Elder  
Abingdon (ABI)

Lee Johnson  
Ruling Elder  
New Castle (NEW)

Mack Dagenhart  
Ruling Elder  
Salem (SAL)

OFFICE

SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS
Stated Clerk Warren Lesane, Administrator Tami Scott, Financial Manager Cindy Hollingshead, Harold Bennett (Jubilee Fund Chair), Fred Holbrook (JAM), David Kang (AKAP), Tracy Keenan (NEW), Jerrod Lowry (CCC), George Wilson (Nominating Chair) and were all seated.

PRESENTERS, GUESTS and VISTORS
Sue Brossart (Volunteer), Carrie Finch Burriss and Erik Burris (COLA), John Etheredge (NBPC), Danita Green (Coming to the Table-CTTT-RVA) Sy Hughes (PMA Mission Engagement), Forrest Kerns (Westminster Presbyterian Homes-Lynchburg), C.S. Kim (Visitor), Vera Lewers (Visitor), Jihyun Oh (Manager Presbyterian Church Leadership Connection-CLC), Clayton Rascoe (Massanetta Springs), Martha Reisner (Board of Pensions), (Martha Rollins –CTTT-RVA), Jayne Sneed (James Presbytery Women) and Doug Steele (CTTT-RVA).

ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET
The Moderator presented the 243rd proposed docket. It was approved by common consent.

ADOPTION OF PROCEDURAL GUIDE
The Procedural Guide was presented and adopted.

APPROVAL OF THE 242ND SYNOD MINUTES
The 242nd Stated Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.

STATED CLERK AND EXECUTIVE REPORT
The Stated Clerk Warren Lesane welcomed commissioners and guests. He introduced Corresponding Members and highlighted his report to the Assembly:

- Communications – (a) Denver Presbytery Stated Clerk communicated information about AKAP’s Stated Clerk’s Ecclesiastical status, (b) Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural request for nominations for leaders of color mentorship, (c) Big Tent Dates are 8/1-8/3/2019 in Baltimore, (d) Presbyterian Men Conference July 2019 at Massanetta Springs, (e) GA Announcement of Hand & Feet Initiative in Baltimore and Ending Cash Bail, (f) Advocacy letters to the President and legislatures detesting treatment of Refugees and resettlement, (g) Synod PJC Officers addressing concerns with AKAP and its Stated Clerk, (h) Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns to share

FINAL
information about the “Gender and Leadership” in PCUSA, (i) New Castle Presbytery to host a luncheon May 21, 2019 to meet J Herbert Nelson II, Kerry Rice and Tricia Dykers-Koenig and (j) notice that Rev. Shanae C. Leonard (Associate for Gender & Intercultural Ministries) is available to conduct workshops with churches, presbyteries and synods.

- **Pastoral Concerns** – The passing of the mother of Bronwen Boswell (SHE), the father of Jessica MacMillan (NEW), Stephen Scott (SAL) and the husband of Donna Bowers (NEW); The recovery from heart surgery of Richard Claterbaugh (PEA-past Synod Moderator); Medical Leave for Ted Churn (NHO); Salem Presbytery Staff and the adoption of a new staffing model. Death of Betsy Barton, wife of Jon Barton (former General Minister for the VA Council of Churches).

- **GAPJC –** Held a trial in Atlanta October 20-21, 2018 on the Remedial Complaint Appeal for AKAP/CHO v SOMA. The SOMA Committee of Counsel was composed of TE Wilbur Douglass II (Chair), RE Susanne Taylor & RE Bill Reinhold. SOMA counsel was TE Archibald Wallace III. See the Decision and Order under GAPJC Case 224-02.

- **Presbyteries and Staffs –** Presbytery Leadership Formation (PLF) is a three year program established for new general presbyters that includes initial orientation, annual residency training and 90 day companion and coaching. Current participants include David Kang (AKAP), Fred Holbrook (JAM), Jerrod Lowry (CCC), Jackie Taylor (BAL), Jan Edmiston (CHA), Carl Utley (PEA), Stephen Scott (SAL), Jessica MacMillan and Tracy Keenan (NEW).

- **Executive Activities –** Ecumenical activities included attendance at Faith Leader’s Summit with focus on Theological perspective on Organ/Tissue Donation; Synod Executives and Moderators participated in two-day immersion experience visiting sites in Montgomery, AL; participated in three phone calls with New Castle Presbytery regarding its change in approach to Speer Trust Funds, its impact to SOMA and the development of the Ignite Team and its new missional approach to funding; Projected to visit each of the 14 SOMA presbyteries either as a presenter or observer and to ensure that the Next Generation Initiative Task Group is adequately staffed; Has submitted the 2018 Annual Report of the Committee of Representation to GACOR; Has presented Executive Committee a Talking Paper on how he sees the Spirit of God at work across SOMA. During the St. Louis 221st General Assembly, the synod provided hospitality around a meal and 13 persons gathered for the same during the Association of Mid-Council Leaders (Chicago).

- **Presbyterian Mission Agency Board –** The Executive/Stated Clerk is Chair-Elect of the PMAB and a Corresponding Member of the COGA. He chairs the development of a new Mid Council Committee.

- **Conflict of Interest Policy –** Synod Commissioners were asked to turn in signed policies that were emailed to them for completion before assembly commencement.

- **Disaster Assistance Request –** A request by St. Andrews Covenant PC in Wilmington, NC is being issued for able hands to assist in the rebuild of four homes destroyed by Hurricane Florence. This will be done through Habitat for Humanity. Contact Lora Padula at 910-547-7445 for rebuild dates.

- **NC Campus Ministry –** the Presbyterian Collegiate Ministries of NC will spend June/July in preparation for January 2020 calendar funding cycle and starting academic year in the fall of 2020.

- **Overture –** Atlantic Korean American Presbytery sent an overture to the synod and it was referred to the Administration Committee. Notification of hearings will be provided to interested parties.

- **Video Production –** Plenaries one thru three will be videoed by Sherrard Solutions. These resources will be made available to presbyteries, churches and synods at no cost.

- **243rd Highlights –** These were published and distributed. (See attached)

- **See Appendix A – A-1 (Stated Clerk Report, Addendum & Attachments)**
GAPJC Case 224-02 – Decision and Order

Decision

Over the course of two days, this Commission considered the documentary evidence presented to it, evaluated the testimony of the witnesses, and carefully deliberated and voted on each alleged irregularity and disputed issue. This Commission is grieved by the long history of conflict and communication difficulties between the Synod and Presbytery, and between the councils’ leaders. A lack of clarity and understanding about certain processes and procedures, exacerbated by differences in language and culture, further complicates conflicted relationships, such as these.

Irregularity No. 1: The appointment of an Administrative Commission was an irregularity under G-3.0109b. (This issue was understood to include the complainants’ allegation that false information was presented to the synod.)

Councils have wide latitude in the appointment of administrative commissions. Except for a few specifically prohibited powers, many of their official functions may be delegated to duly appointed administrative commissions. The authority to delegate oversight of lower councils, and to inquire into councils “reported to be affected with disorder” (G-3.0109b(5)), is explicit.

In the present case, the Synod’s decision to appoint an administrative commission to inquire into reported difficulties in one of its constituent presbyteries did not violate any provisions of the Book of Order. No provision quantifies how severe the disorder must be to justify such an appointment. The facts in this case present sufficient justification, based on a history of reported conflict in the Presbytery, for Synod reasonably to act.

However, G-3.0109 also states, “The designating council shall state specifically the scope of the commission’s power and any restrictions on those powers.” On March 13, 2018, the Synod approved a motion to appoint an administrative commission: “That the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic appoint an Administrative Commission of no more than seven persons to address concerns in AKAP according to the Book of Order G-3.0109b, and that the Synod Moderator and Stated Clerk be given the authority to appoint an AC with at least one half of the commission representing Koreans.” This motion fails to specify the powers and limitations given to the AC by the omission of any language to define the scope of the AC’s authority to “address concerns” or any language defining the restrictions of the AC’s authority. Such a generic charge is insufficient. The conflicting testimony at trial from the Respondent’s own witnesses about the intended scope of the action demonstrates the potential for confusion. So, too, does
the conflict in language between the approved motion and its description in the Synod Stated Clerk’s March 21 letter to the Presbytery. Because of this insufficiency, the Synod must delegate specific powers prior to the AC taking any actions on behalf of the Synod (see Hoy, et al., v. Presbytery of Tropical Florida 1991, 203-1; Sundquist v. Heartland Presbytery 2008, 219-03; Lee, et al., v. Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi 2008, 219-05).

Unless or until additional powers are delegated, the AC would only have authority to make recommendations to the Synod, not to take any actions. Any final actions (e.g., any assumption of origination jurisdiction), would require providing the Presbytery and its representatives the opportunity to be heard on the matter before a final decision is made. And such actions, whether taken by the Synod or delegated to an AC, would be subject to administrative or judicial review. Any power not specifically delegated remains with the Synod (Sundquist v. Heartland Presbytery, 2008).

Complainants have also alleged that Synod’s decision to appoint an AC was based, in part, on false information orally presented by the Synod Executive/Stated Clerk at the Synod assembly. This remedial case did not provide an appropriate framework to investigate or adjudicate all of the Complainant’s allegations, and this Commission did not find sufficient evidence to prove or disprove those claims.

_Irruarity No. 2: The synod treated the presbytery improperly under F-1.0403._

F-1.0403 establishes important principles that lie at the heart of what it means to be the Church. The Constitution establishes an expectation of intentionality in representation in every council of the Church.

The existence of non-geographic presbyteries within synods, and of presbyteries where the language and culture are not shared by the majority in the synod, places a special responsibility on the synod to ensure representation, fairness, and equal access in decision-making. No council should take lightly its responsibility to ensure diverse voices are given opportunity to speak and be heard in the councils of the church.

In this case, this Commission finds the Synod has met its responsibility. Being heard is not the same as being agreed with. While members of the Presbytery were displeased by the Synod’s action to appoint an AC, there is no evidence that they were excluded from the decision-making process. Indeed, the presbytery’s two commissioners and Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk (as a corresponding member) were present during the Meeting on the motion in question and had opportunity to speak. At least one of them did so.

The Presbytery has raised broader questions of racial representation on Synod entities. It is not within this Commission’s purview to conduct an administrative review of the Synod’s efforts, or lack thereof, to ensure diversity and representation on its committees and boards. But no evidence has been presented that Asian persons (or those of Korean descent, specifically) are being deliberately underrepresented. Synod Standing Rules intentionally place representatives of all presbyteries, including AKAP, on Synod entities. An Asian-American woman (from another presbytery) served as Synod moderator in 2015.
Irregularity No. 3: The complainants have not been afforded “fundamental fairness” or “due process” in the appointment of an Administrative Commission.

Complainants have also raised concerns about whether “fundamental fairness” was shown to the Presbytery. This Commission held in Sundquist, et al., v. Heartland Presbytery 2008, 219-03, that an administrative commission may be appointed without hearing or advance notice.

In fact, the Presbytery did have some advance notice of an action being considered to form an AC. The minutes of the September 2017 Synod Meeting anticipate the formation of a commission to conduct special administrative review of the conflict issues in the Presbytery. On March 12, 2018, the Presbytery’s Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk was advised of the Synod Executive Committee’s recommendation to form an AC. At the Synod Meeting, AKAP commissioners had opportunity to speak on the motion, as did the Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk (as a corresponding member). Additionally, attention was given in the action creating the AC to ensure that Korean voices would make up at least half of the AC.

Throughout its consideration of this case, this Commission has heard an earnest desire from the Presbytery’s representatives to be heard and fully included in the life and mission of the Synod. Through its witnesses and counsel, the Presbytery has expressed a sense of injustice, of a history of unfair treatment, and of not being heard. This Commission has also heard testimony that Presbytery leadership has not submitted minutes or other documents for regular review and has been unresponsive to some outreach efforts from the Synod. In seeking reconciliation, judicial process is often a poor substitute for deeper investment in relationships and shared mission. The Synod and its staff are encouraged—perhaps even through the work of the AC at issue in this case—to consider how best to achieve a different tone and spirit in the ongoing relationship between the councils and their leadership.
Order

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Synod action of March 13, 2018, establishing an Administrative Commission is hereby suspended, pending modification of the action to delineate the powers of that Administrative Commission consistent with this decision and in compliance with G-3.0109, “The designating council shall state specifically the scope of the commission’s powers and any restrictions on those powers.”

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic report this Decision and Order to the Synod at its first stated meeting following the date of this Order, that the Synod enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from the Synod's minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic deliver a copy of this Decision and Order to its Administrative Commission addressing concerns in the Atlantic Korean American Presbytery.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Stated Clerk of the Atlantic Korean American Presbytery report this Decision and Order to the Atlantic Korean American Presbytery at the first stated meeting after receipt, that the Atlantic Korean American Presbytery enter the full Decision and Order upon its minutes, and that an excerpt from those minutes showing entry of the Decision and Order be sent to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

REPORTS

TE Clayton Rascoe, Executive Director presented updates of Massanetta’s activities and improvements. Upcoming programs to the camp will be the 2019 Day Camp, a wrapping up of the Living Waters Campaign and several events/fundraisers directed toward Massanetta’s development. There have been a number of capital improvements and purchases that were proudly shared, those being: A new playground in front of the pool, a new sidewalk from Richardson Hall to the Massanetta historic hotel, an automatic door for Calvin and Stewart Halls and a ventilation hood for the kitchen. Challenges incurred have been due to recent wind and water storms, namely flooding issues and a windstorm that caused major damage to Rosser Pavilion. Massanetta is requesting disaster assistance from the synod to help with repairs due to these occurrences. Lastly, Clayton’s presentation brandished a new idea by asking assembly attendees to note Massanetta’s availability for family reunions.

TE Carrie Finch Burriss, Chair of the Local Planning Committee (COLA) for Baltimore Presbytery, shared plans for the 2020 General Assembly in Baltimore June 20-27, 2020. The theme will focus on Romans 12:2; Discerning God’s will from institution to movement. Preparations for next summer’s gathering will include a number of exciting meetings and relevant activities. Synod’s assistance is solicited through prayer; volunteerism and financial support as hosting cost will range from ($115,000-$150,000). COLA is looking to do a “Welcome to the Mid-Atlantic” event which will serve as a way to get more persons involved.

Martha Reisner - Board of Pension Consultant, reported that the Board of Pensions administers the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and serves ministers of Word and Sacrament and other employees, and the congregations and other PC (USA)-affiliated institutions that employ them. It provides pension, medical, death and disability benefits; financial assistance; and educational programs to support a ministry of wholeness, which promotes spiritual, health, financial and vocational well-being. Martha offered her
assistance with any questions that meeting goers may have and also encouraged attendees to visit the website to familiarize themselves with benefits and offerings of informational gatherings.

Sy Hughes - Mission Engagement Advisor for Presbyterian Mission Agency greeted the assembly and highlighted the work he is currently engaging in the region. Sy works with Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic Synods. His goal is to connect the passion, leadership and excitement of congregations, individuals and presbyteries to the mission and ministries of the wider Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

PLENARY ONE

Danita Green, Co-Founder of Coming to the Table-RVA (CTTT), set the atmosphere for courageous conversations imbedded in a story entitled, “Crossing the Line.” She greeted the assembly with an introduction to this national organization that was formed twelve years ago by Eastern Mennonites with the purpose of inviting descendants of the enslaved and enslavers to dig deep into the facts of our shared history. It provides leadership, resources, and a supportive environment for all who wish to acknowledge and heal from wounds that are rooted in the United States’ history of slavery. The assembly was invited into a big circle to listen to and process Ms. Green’s personal story of her childhood experience of racism and self-awakening of the differences between Whites and Blacks. After her moving story was told, the circle was asked to share a time in life when they had to cross the line or a time when they had to defend themselves or someone else to right a wrong. Danita’s story would augment further dialogues during the assembly and lead into The Doctrine of Discovery Video.

Mark Charles - Doctrine of Discovery Video - Ted Talk helped to broaden the conversation. It forced commissioners and guests to view racism through a different set of lenses. The Doctrine of Discovery was an official edict from the church in Europe written by Pope Nicholas V in 1452-1493. It declared to nations that whatever lands that were found or discovered, (that were not ruled by Christian rulers), those inhabitants are less than human and that their land would be for the taking. This doctrine allowed European nations to colonize and it assumes the dehumanization of the people of color. Charles cites that the Declaration of Independence, signed by the founding fathers of the United States on July 4, 1776 upholds the Doctrine of Discovery and that it doesn’t seek freedom/independence for every man (as cited in its content) if every man is not considered equal. “We the people” (Preamble to the Constitution) hasn’t applied to all people because people of color were not considered human. Not mentioned or protected in the Constitution are the interests of: Women, Native Americans and Africans. The constitution was drafted to protect the interest of White, Landowning Men. Charles encourages us to acknowledge and discuss racism, sexism, colonization and white supremacy.

PLENARY TWO

Jihyun Oh – Manager of Call Process Support for the Office of the General Assembly was masterful in guiding participants on a thoughtful examination of privilege, politics, religion, systemic racism and power. These are nonpartisan issues. Attendees were asked how they felt and what all of this means to the church. Later she asked what needs to be done to overcome the Doctrine of Discovery, an edict that serves as the basis of common dehumanization sewing a thread of hate and oppression to people of color. As commissioners, corresponding members and visitors pondered and expressed their interpretations, this conversation’s purpose was meant for further reflection and discussions on Race, Power, Gender Exclusion and more beyond the walls of the assembly.
**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT I**

Nominating Committee Co-Moderator, George Wilson, provided Designated Committee recommendations for the Administration, Finance, Grants & Awards, and Presbytery Initiatives Committees.

### ADMINISTRATION

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<td>Helen Bessent-Byrd (Chair)</td>
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### GRANTS AND AWARDS

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### PRESBYTERY INITIATIVES

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Helen Bessent-Byrd</td>
<td>BFTE</td>
<td>(EVA)</td>
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<td>2021</td>
<td>Riley Burgess</td>
<td>WMRE</td>
<td>(CHA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>At-Large</td>
<td>Richard Claterbaugh (Moderator)</td>
<td>WMRE</td>
<td>(PEA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Mawuna Gardesey</td>
<td>BMRE</td>
<td>(NEW)</td>
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</table>
The Designated Committee recommendations were approved. See Appendix B - Nominating Report Part 1.

RE FORREST KERNS, President of Westminster Presbyterian Homes Inc., requested that the synod assume the functions of its board. Some years ago Westminster and the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia joined forces and Westminster Canterbury Presbyterian Homes Inc. was established in Richmond, Lynchburg, Virginia Beach Rappahannock, Winchester and Charlottesville to provide homes for the aging, including nursing homes. The request for the synod to assume Westminster Board’s responsibilities comes from the diminished responsibilities that the organization currently has which is “To evaluate and approve the Presbyterian Board Members for three remaining facilities and to evaluate and approve changes in the facilities’ bylaws”. The Administration Committee will review this request and report back to assembly at a future date.

DESIGNATED COMMITTEES
Designated Committee Chairs were provided a flash drive containing Meeting Minutes and Report templates to record meeting actions. They were asked to submit their flash drives to the Synod Administrator upon completion. The Assembly recessed for committee meetings.

WORSHIP AND COMMUNION
The Assembly reconvened for worship and communion at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of Ginter Park Presbyterian Church. TE Jerrod Lowry delivered the opening sermon and was assisted in administering communion by TE Robbie Phillips. Jerrod’s message “Things are Changing” from Romans 12:1-2 resounded as it underscored topics discussed during plenaries earlier in the day.

DINNER AND RECESS
Dinner was provided. The meal was blessed by TE Jerrod Lowry at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The Synod Executive Committee met for business during dinner. The moderator recessed the assembly with prayer to reconvene at 8:45 a.m. Tuesday.

RECONVENING
The Moderator reconvened the Assembly at 8:50 a.m. with prayer. Announcements and reminders were projected on the screen. The Stated Clerk shared appreciation for the presentations and facilitators from the previous day. Commissioners were reminded of the Attendance Sign-In sheets. Evaluation forms were requested to be completed to offer feedback online or by way of hard copy.

NEW CASTLE PRESBYTERY - New Missional Presbyter, Tracy Keenan, assisted by commissioner, Donna Bowers, presented a $30,000 check to the synod from the Ignite Team to engage in generative and missional ministry. NEW has launched a new model (IGNITE) helping churches, presbyteries and synods to: spark new and expanding ministry, embolden and inspire congregations to try something new and build partnerships with other congregations, service agencies, denominations and visionaries and to encourage congregations to engage in discernment of their call and of the needs present in their community. The check was gifted to the synod as Ignite phases out previous funding awarded through the Speer Trust Fund. Donna Bowers commented that Ignite is a major change in the presbytery and that change works as an example of what can happen when we dream and God leads us.

FINAL
**RECOVERY FROM HURRICANE FLORENCE** - Ben Cahoon (NHO) is the Mayor of Nags Head NC. He reported on disaster warnings provided via texts, police, fire and other methods to call for evacuation. He stressed the value of partnering with community services and being as transparent as possible with residents. After the storm, officials and workers met to evaluate actions taken, total costs from destruction and to develop effective evacuation communication methods for future storms. The town has experienced higher water levels and is changing development rules as they pay special attention to off shore drilling. Churches have worked with PDA assistance on recovery.

Robbie Phillips (CCC) commented that although her community was not in the “eye of the storm” it did receive unimaginable winds and rain. She admits to having “survival guilt” as her family fared better than others as she took in her community’s loss. The church that she pastors received significant damage; the roof was mostly torn away and the sanctuary was destroyed. Fortunately, the church is insured; a public adjuster was hired and the cost of repairs will total in excess of $200,000. They reached out to PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) who also put them in touch with NC Voad (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters), FEMA, and a Long Term recovery group; all of which have responded quickly but the rebuild will be slow. Long Term Recovery is the focus for those in the community who did not have insurance or who were underinsured. High profile businesses and people had their needs met first but Robbie proudly noted that Presbyterians are in the forefront of putting the “last first” (giving praise to PDA). Robbie provided a number of ways that we can help with rebuilding, starting in the spring of 2019: 1) Contact PDA and take a work group to NC (volunteer); 2) Financial Assistance (bridging the gap of people who need and the people who have; and 3) Prayer. It will take 5-7 years for recovery but out of chaos comes hope. The synod Executive Committee spoke with Jim Kirk (PDA) to obtain information and protocol on providing assistance. Both Commissioners Benjamin Cahoon and Robbie Phillips updated the assembly on Disaster Recovery efforts in North Carolina. They brought sobering perspectives to the effects of Hurricane Florence as it bore down on the coast of North Carolina in September 2018.

**PLENARY THREE**

Susanne Taylor gave the Moderator’s gavel to Vice Moderator Mawuna Gardesey. She would present one of four riveting accounts of the emotional and psychological impact of visiting The Legacy Museum from Enslavement to Mass Incarceration and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice (The Lynching Tree) in Montgomery, AL January 13-16, 2019. Each presentation focused on transforming into missional actions.

Cindy Privette, the most recent of the presenters to return from a life changing experience in Montgomery, was the first commentator to share her pilgrimage to the museum’s “From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration”. For 6 hours she was immersed in the pain and agony of our history of discrimination, ignorance, prejudice and White Supremacy and commented that, “it was a trip like no other” as the song “Killing me softly with your song” ran through her soul. Little by little she died and emerged a different person. She was moved by a story of the August 15, 1926 lynching of Raymond Byrd, a black man in Wythe Co, VA, a community in which she serves and where people continue to be closed mouthed about that day. Byrd was a farmhand of Grover Grubb and was accused of having a relationship with Grubb’s daughter. A baby girl was born and Grubb and a group of townsmen fetched Byrd from the jail and then shot, dragged and hung his body from a tree. It is said that about 500 people, some came from as far away as Ohio to witness the atrocity. Law enforcement was a part of the good ole clan and also knew of the plan to lynch Byrd. As details of this story were shared, assembly attendees listened intently and squirmed in discomfort. Cindy reminded everyone of Scripture when God came for Cain as his brother’s blood was crying out from the soil; she affirmed that the blood of Raymond Byrd cries out. Cindy committed to collecting the soil under Raymond Byrd’s feet and returning it to Montgomery, AL. With passion, strength and
determination, Cindy spoke of her planned return to Montgomery to retrieve the Raymond Byrd Marker and display it in her community as a reminder of the muted hatred and oppression that the town has silenced and the need to acknowledge, apologize and learn from the injustices in order to begin forward movement.

Susanne Taylor echoed Cindy Privette’s experience and pain as she walked into the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Born in Nashville, TN she recounted her childhood and the tone in the environment as her father (a minister) took a call in Birmingham, AL. She recalls his spirit for justice in a city plagued with injustice and prejudice. She walked out of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice feeling changed and guilty. Leaving the memorial made her realize her commitment to make a difference and to do what she can to make us united people. Her pledge is to be a voice for peace and she invited assembly goers to join her.

Martha Rollins, Co-founder of “Coming to the Table” and a descendant of Robert E. Lee gave a brief summary of her lineage and her mission for justice. She reminded everyone of the number of people who died fighting for justice (Blacks and Whites) over the years. Growing up in Martinsville on Plantation Rd., Martha’s grandmother was president with the United Women of the Confederacy. Rollins, a life-long Presbyterian has been struck over the years of the lack of power from the pulpit because there were many people in the church who expressed their prejudice and ignorance. Having grown up on a plantation, she is on the journey of escaping the darkness of its history, its ignorance, prejudice and its pain. She recommends that curriculum of the Presbytery of the James “Dismantling Racism” be taught to the whole church instead of to those who just attend Sunday school so that many people can deal with and learn from the past. Briefly, she spoke of the purpose of “Coming to the Table”; of connecting people intentionally, taking healing steps and taking action to change the system built by White supremacy.

Warren Lesane reminded the Assembly that in 1983 the two bodies of Presbyterianism reunited. The Synod of the Mid-Atlantic was birthed from this reunion. During the reuniting, five “all black” governing bodies had to be dissolved in order to restructure the new presbyteries and synods. God has given us a time of redemption. Transforming from institutional beings to people of action, he challenged the entire synod body to step out of their comfortableness. He shared slides of his January 2019 visit to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Museum from Enslavement to Mass Incarceration. He offered his inner-most thoughts during the immersion experience. He prayed that he didn’t see any of his family names on the lynching stones. He then asked the assembly, “What would happen if the SOMA is known for aggressively taking the next steps in this immersion experience by establishing a pilgrimage to Montgomery; Caravan of Love? What would happen if the SOMA would help presbyteries arrange caravans to Montgomery, AL? What would it be like if SOMA makes as one of its mission priorities addressing Racism, Power, Privilege and Gender Equality? Warren asked attendees and presbyteries if this might be something that they would be interested in, if so, we want to partner with you.

PLENARY FOUR – COMMITTEE REPORTS

OMNIBUS MOTION
This motion includes minutes and reports from Jubilee and Kate Bitting Reynolds Funds. The motion was approved. See Appendices C, C-1

SYNOD PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION - RE Carol Haas gave the report. She addressed the assembly by identifying commission members from 13 presbyteries. AKAP is without representation. RE Bill Parish is clerk to the commission. Only Remedial cases have been before the SPJC since their last report to assembly.
(September 2016). In the last 30 months, 11 cases have been completed, 5 cases went to trial, 3 cases were settled, 3 failed to meet criteria, 1 was not timely filed. Details of cases that have come before the commission are provided in the SPJC written report with the majority of them involving Atlantic Korean American Presbytery (AKAP). Carol reviewed the four criteria/questions that must be met in order for a case to go to trial; 1) Does the Council have Jurisdiction? 2) Does the complainant have standing to file the case? 3) Was the complaint filed timely? 4) Does the complaint state a claim upon which relief can be granted? All four criteria must be met with an affirmative answer for the case to be heard. Currently, the SPJC has 1 complaint in which a challenge deadline is approaching. If not challenged, then this case will be closed without any further action. It is important that a session has a moderator present to take action (either a pastor or person appointed to be the moderator). The report was summed up by referring to The Book of Order as a good reference guide to following the details in carrying out actions. See Appendix D-SPJC Report

COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION –TE Cherry Peters gave the report. She noted that the COR met last on February 11, 2019 in Richmond, VA. COR G-3.0103 & F-1.0403 states that “According to history and the Book of Order COR was created to ensure & track that African-American leadership was equally represented in the PCUSA after reunification occurred.” The work has been expanded to include; gender, age, sex and disability. Henceforth in 2019, the synod COR will continue the work of addressing race, sex & gender inequities in the PCUSA, where possible. The goals of the SCOR are to: (1) re-examine the committee purpose, (2) redesign the Presbytery reporting requirements, (3) meet twice a year (via Zoom Video conferencing/face to face) and (4) to increase presbytery reporting compliance to 100%.

RECOMMENDATION:

- That the Synod Assembly establish a policy that gives the Synod COR authorization to respond to individual churches regarding their annual reports in an effort to increase compliance and the ability to provide feedback, “best practices” and encouragement. The Recommendation of the Synod Committee on Representation was approved and the report was received as information. See Appendix E – SCOR Report

PRESBYTERY INITIATIVES report was presented by TE Cindy Privette. She thanked her committee members for their hard work. The committee entertained discussion on possible consolidation of grant committees to review and fund grants and also reviewed two applications requesting funding. The committee unanimously approved the two initiatives:

1) **Mid-Atlantic Black Caucus** in the amount of $4,700 to support the nurturing of African American youth for retreats and meetings.

2) **Triennium Scholarships** (for African American or youth of color) in the amount of $10,000 ($2,000 for each Presbytery) of Western NC, Coastal Carolina, Salem, Charlotte, and New Hope. The purpose of this award is to enable youth of color from each Presbytery to attend the Triennium and/or attend camps, retreats, and meetings with other youth. The goal is to strengthen these youth in Christian formation and leadership.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- That the Mid-Atlantic Black Caucus be awarded $4,700 for youth retreats and meetings
- That the Western North Carolina, Coastal Carolina, Salem, Charlotte and New Hope presbyteries each be awarded $2000 for Triennium Scholarships for African American or Youth of Color.

The recommendations of Presbytery Initiatives Committee were approved and the report was received as information. See Appendix F – Presbytery Initiatives Report
FINANCE COMMITTEE – was presented by Co-Chairs RE Riley Burgess and TE Robbie Phillips. The committee met and reviewed the 2018 Budget. There was an anticipated deficit of $84,034. This deficit was covered by a transfer of monies from gains and investments in 2017 & 2018. The projected 2019 budget deficit is $109,548 and will be covered by a transfer of monies from gains and investments in 2017 & 2018. The committee is exploring other funding sources other than Per Capita (i.e. Mission Sharing pledges from Presbyteries, Grants and Philanthropists etc.). The committee is working on a mission interpretation plan for presbyteries and a request for pledges from presbyteries to support the plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That Synod Per Capita be increased from $.85 to $1.15 effective January 2020
- That the Finance committee work with the Executive Committee to revise spending policies to make more funds available. Current policy is 4% of 20 quarter rolling average

The recommendations of the Synod Finance Committee were approved and the report was received as information. See—Appendix G—Finance Committee Report

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – report was coordinated by TE Helen Bessent-Byrd who thanked her committee. She asked each member to present one aspect of the report. The committee discussed proposed changes in the Jubilee Fund Guidelines, the proposed policy relating to requests from presbyteries for reduction to their per capita payments, proposal from Westminster Presbyterian Homes for the synod to assume responsibilities for that entity, proposed goals of the Synod Executive and the submission of an overture from AKAP.

- Jubilee Committee proposed adding a fifth purpose to its guidelines. Currently, the income from the Fund is to be used for four purposes: 1) African-American clergy recruitment; 2) African-American Christian Education; 3) African-American congregational leadership and development; and 4) African-American youth ministry. The proposed fifth purpose is for any New Initiatives, projects, monetary support for advocacy interest groups, and ministries that will preserve and increase the longevity and presence of African American churches or congregations in the Mid-Atlantic Synod. Funding will be provided and disbursed based on available funds during a given fund cycle. It was suggested that the phrase “disbursed at an equal amount that any other grantee would receive” might be unduly limiting. TE Harold Bennett (Jubilee Moderator) agreed to deleting this phrase and replacing it with “Funding will be provided and disbursed based on available funds during a given fund cycle”.

- Per Capita Policy was addressed because often, when presbyteries petition GA for relief from their per capita payments, they do not inform the Synod and the Synod learns of the reduction in the payment after GA has approved it. The policy would require presbyteries to request a reduction in their per capita payment to the Synod as well as GA. Reduction requests would have to be sent to the Synod before March 1 of the year involved (i.e. – relief from payments to be made in 2019 would have to be sought by March 1, 2019). The Synod’s Executive Committee would consider each request. (See attached first reading of policy)

- Westminster Presbyterian Homes proposed that the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic assume the functions of their Board.

- Goals & Objectives for the Synod Executive/Stated Clerk are being developed in collaboration with the Synod Executive focusing on the next 12-18 months. The performance evaluations would be based on these goals. Goals focus on developing good relationships with member presbyteries, caucuses and other synod relations. (See attached Goals/Objectives of Executive)
AKAP Overture was referred to the Administration Committee in its request to establish a mentoring committee to work alongside AKAP. The 242nd Synod Assembly approved an Administrative Commission for AKAP. The members of the Commission have been identified and the Executive committee is working on defining the Commission’s mandate. The Administration Committee referred the overture to the Executive Committee with the recommendation that the Commission “be empowered to mentor the leadership of AKAP to enhance AKAP’s life, ministry and growth, working toward reconciliation and to address revolving issues between the leaderships of the SOMA and the AKAP”.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the proposed change in the Jubilee Fund Guidelines with the addition of a fifth purpose for the fund be approved (Any New Initiatives, projects, monetary support for advocacy interest groups, and ministries that will preserve and increase the longevity and presence of African American churches or congregations in the Mid-Atlantic Synod. Funding will be provided and disbursed at an equal amount that any other grantee would receive from the Jubilee committee, based on available funds during a given fund cycle).
- That additional research be done on Westminster Presbyterian Home’s Trustees request for synod to assume their function in order to ascertain obligations. After a thorough investigation has been completed, the findings will be reported to a subsequent assembly.

The recommendations of the Administration Committee were approved and the report was received as information. See Appendix H-H1 – Administration Committee Report, and SC Goals

GRANTS & AWARDS COMMITTEE - was presented by RE Jim Kirkpatrick who reported that on September 21, 2018 SOMA set aside $100,000 from the Peacemaking and Global Witness fund to address disaster relief requests for financial assistance from Coastal Carolina and New Hope Presbyteries, both affected by Hurricane Florence. On October 9, 2018, the Executive Committee authorized two committee members, Jim Kirkpatrick and Cindy Privette to receive and approve grant requests up to $5,000. Requests exceeding $5,000 will require the Executive Committee’s approval. All applications must have the approval of its presbytery prior to submission.

- Milner Memorial PC returned a check on November 29, 2018, SOMA in the amount of $2,500 as they reported that their situation had changed and they were no longer in need of funds.
- Grants brochure was reviewed and final approval given on deleting the Small Church and Manse Loan section after consultation with the synod Financial Manager. The committee also considered establishing an amount to be used for scholarships for persons and presbyteries needing funds for youth and persons of color to attend particular conferences and events as several presbyteries have inquired about funds to help Native Americans and underrepresented persons.

Recommendations listed below are for applications received indicating their amount and purpose:

- DISASTER RELIEF APPLICATIONS- Neuse Forest PC ($2,500) for volunteer hosting site building repair and Charlotte Presbytery ($3,200) to build, transport and set up showers for relief groups to the area.
- EULER SCHOLARSHIPS – approved Daniel Heath in the amount of $6,000 to attend Princeton Seminary. Emma Warman is currently attending Princeton Seminary, but will be attending Union NY. Because Union is a non-PCUSA Seminary, Emma was not approved for future scholarship.
- STULTZ SCHOLARSHIP – approved Alexander J. Freeman a scholarship in the amount of $5,000 to attend Presbyterian College.
• **VISIONARY GRANT** approved a grant to WNC for Volunteer Advocating Training in the amount of $5,000 to be used for African American Churches.

• PEACEMAKING Grants totaling $16,635 were approved for three projects. They include: Coming to the Table (JAM) - Racial healing/reconciliation (C. Rhyne recused) - $5,000; Dismantling Racism (JAM) - Continued Ministry Support (C. Rhyne recused) - $7,635; and Bott Memorial (JAM) – Children’s school supplies (C. Rhyne recused) - $4,000.

**SMALL CHURCH GRANTS: Recommendations - $23,250**

1. Mt. Olive PC (NHO) – Provide backpacks/free school lunches $1,500
   (Approved provided that money is taken from Hunger Action Funds)
2. Genito (JAM) – Replace old with new sign (C. Rhyne recused) $1,000
3. First Presbyterian, Milford (NEW) - New Air Conditioner $2,850
4. Calvary PC (WNC) – Water/Plumbing Repair $4,000
5. Marshall PC (WNC) – Remediate Manse $4,000
6. Little River PC (NHO) – Mold Damage (for materials only) $2,200
7. Knox PC (BAL) – Digital Media Project Assistance(K. Paige recused) $2,850
8. Faith PC (NHO) – Parking Lot repair $2,850
9. Bethlehem PC (JAM) – HVAC Repair (C. Rhyne recused) $2,000
10. New Vision (WNC) – Repair of Church Roof/Steeple (Denied) Building to be sold and congregation planning to leave denomination

The recommendations of Grants and Awards, Disaster Relief, Euler & Stultz Scholarships, Visionary & Peacemaking Grants were approved. See Appendix I – Grants and Awards Report

**NOMINATION COMMITTEE Part 2** – Co-Moderator George Wilson presented the slate for approval

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

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<th>Designation</th>
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<td>2021-1 (Co-Chair)</td>
<td>George Wilson</td>
<td>BMRE</td>
<td>CCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021-1</td>
<td>Sarah Schutte</td>
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<td>JAM</td>
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<td>Gerry Hendershot</td>
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<td>Mae Hall</td>
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<td>2021-2</td>
<td>Delores Parker</td>
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Nominations were opened from the floor. There being none, the Assembly moved to the next report.

**COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION**

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<td>Donna Fair</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Steve Mabie</td>
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Nominations were opened from the floor. There being none, the Assembly moved to the next report.

**JUBILEE FUND**

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<td>Rourke Moore</td>
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<td>2021-2</td>
<td>Frances Turner</td>
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Nominations were opened from the floor. There being none, the Assembly moved to the next report.

**SPEER TRUST FUND**

FINAL
Nominations were opened from the floor. There being none, the nominations were closed. The assembly approved all of the nominations and received the full report of the Nominating Committee. See Appendix J - Nominating Report II.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee discussed several items for information or for action. It refined and approved the powers and authority to be given to AKAP’s Administrative Commission. It authorized the Stated Clerk to make appropriate revisions. Five persons are confirmed to serve on the Administrative Commission. Those persons are: TE Archibald Wallace (JAM), TE Paul Min (ABI), RE Roxie Holder (EVA), TE Hyun Chan Bae (JAM) and TE Tara Spuhler McCabe (NAT).

The Executive Committee approved the Administrative Commission membership for AKAP.

The Speer Trust Fund Committee will be dissolved effective December 31, 2019 as New Castle has implemented a new Model (IGNITE). An update was received concerning the Next Generation Initiative. Verbal reports from Grants and Awards and Presbytery Initiatives Committees were received concerning restructuring as well as the future possibility of the two committees working as one designated committee. It debated a recommendation from the Administration Committee which addressed an overture submitted by AKAP. Testimony was received from Commissioner Nam Cho and AKAP’s Presbytery Executive David Kang. The Executive Committee voted not to move the Overture forward to the Assembly.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- That the Synod Speer Trust Fund Committee be dissolved effective December 31, 2019
- That the powers and authority of the Synod Administrative Commission addressing the concerns in AKAP be affirmed as written in the attachment. (See Attached Administrative Commission Report)

There was a motion and approval to accept all reports

See Appendix K- Executive Committee Report

**CLOSING WORSHIP**

With all business items concluded, the assembly convened in the Fellowship Hall with Worship led by Tracy Keenan and accompanied by Robbie Phillips. Tracy summoned attendees to listen to the word that she received from God. The lesson highlighted topics of prejudice and racism that were addressed during the past two days of assembly. She shared a conversation that God had with her saying that she was ignoring the pleas of her brothers and sisters out there at the gate (unacceptable) and that no one can ignore what was going on. He told her that the things that were invisible have become visible and told her that she was a racist. She challenged everyone to look at the diversity in us and the ugliness of prejudice and denial that has reared its head. Jesus said that you are racist because you are a white person who has grown up in America where the white culture is dominant, there is a secret place inside of you that thinks that white is normal which means that non-white is not normal. Tracy shared the Lord’s warning that we have to learn to tolerate some discomfort if we are going to be redeemed. The Lord promised that there will be a blessing in this struggle. She closed her sermon with the same immense energy displayed in her shared word; she played “Blessing in the Struggle” and offered a closing prayer.

**ADJOURNMENT**
Moderator Susanne Taylor adjourned the assembly with prayer at 12:38 p.m. The 244th Synod Assembly will convene September 13-14, 2019 in Richmond, VA.

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

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