



SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

144TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

9 – 12 June 2019

Theme: “Walk in Love” Ephesians 5: 1 - 2

**Embassy Suites Hotel & Spa
800 Monroe Street
Huntsville, Alabama 35801**

Moderator
Vice Moderator
Stated Clerk
Engrossing Clerk
Administrative Director

Elder Lewis LEON Cole, Jr.
Reverend Michael L. Jones
Elder Craig A. White
Reverend Lela Fencher
Reverend Dr. G. Lynne Herring

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SUMMARY OF ACTIONS – 144th CPCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 10 – 12 JUN 19

This **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS (SOA)** is a brief summary of the actions taken by the 144th General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, which convened in Huntsville, Alabama from 9 - 12 June 2019. The **SOA** is not intended to be, nor is it the definitive authority on the complete actions of the General Assembly. Rather, the intent of the **SOA** is to provide a brief overview of the work of the General Assembly (GA). The annual MINUTES of the General Assembly serve as the definitive record, which is intended to capture the complete actions of the General Assembly relative to reports of standing boards and select committees. Finally, the **SOA** is provided as a courtesy by the General Assembly.

The 144th General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA) met concurrently with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC) 9 - 12 June 2019, in Huntsville, Alabama and included the following:

Host Presbytery: Huntsville

Host Moderator: The Reverend Terence Haley

Theme: “Walk in Love”, Ephesians 5: 1 -2

A. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS:

1. **CONSTITUTED the 144th GENERAL ASSEMBLY** with forty-four (46) commissioners, and four (4) Youth Advisory Delegates (YAD). Fourteen (14) of the fifteen (15) presbyteries were represented at the General Assembly, the exception was the Purchase Presbytery.
2. **AFFIRMED THE NATIONAL CHURCH YEAR THEME:** “Walk in Love”, Ephesians 5: 1 -2
3. **PARTICIPATED** in the Joint Opening Worship Service of both the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC) and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA) that was held Sunday, 9 June 2019 at 7:00 pm CT at the Von Braun Center (VBC), North Halls 1 and 2. The Reverend Dr. R. Stan Wood, Pastor of Mt Tabor Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, of the New Hopewell Presbytery, delivered the message emphasizing the theme, “*Walk in Love*”, Ephesians 5: 1 -2. Following a powerful message, communicants participated in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper by intinction, with the Reverend Dr. Mitchell M. Walker, Sr., (CPCA) and the Reverend Joy Warren (CPC) serving as a Co-Celebrants.
4. **PARTICIPATED** in the Joint Moderators’ reception hosted by the Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America located in Huntsville, Alabama, where the Reverend Dr. Mitchell M. Walker, Sr., is pastor.

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5. **PARTICIPATED** in joint CPCA/CPC worship services, devotions, and Women's celebrations.
6. **RECEIVED** excellent hospitality from the host Presbytery, the Huntsville Presbytery and its Moderator, the Reverend Terence Haley. ***The Report of the Select Committee on the Resolutions of Thanks*** included words of gratitude from the 144th General Assembly and its constituency to the Huntsville Presbytery for an excellent job in hosting.
7. **AFFIRMED** that the 145th General Assembly will convene in Louisville, Kentucky, at the Galt House, (<https://www.galthouse.com>) meeting concurrently with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The Ohio Valley Presbytery will serve as the host presbytery. In addition, the 146th General Assembly is scheduled to convene in/near Chicago, Illinois in 2021.
8. **THANKED** COL. David Lockhart for his exemplary service as the Cumberland Presbyterian Chaplain. He expressed thanks to the CPCA Church and asked that other CPCA constituents consider becoming a military chaplain.
9. **RECOGNIZED** and received words from our ecumenical participants from our sister church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC), the immediate past Moderator, the Rev. Jay Earheart-Brown, the Rev Shelia O'Mara, the Moderator elect of the CPC, the Rev Michael Sharpe, Stated Clerk of the CPC. The Rev Shelia O'Mara offered prayer for the CPCA. Moreover, the General Assembly received words from Mrs. Susan Knight Gore and Elder Patricia Ward of the Joint Historical Foundation making the GA aware of the many services the Historical Foundation offered.
10. **RECOGNIZED** the Office of the General Assembly Administrative Assistant, Ms. Andrea C. Brandon, with flowers and thanks for excellent work at the Office of the General Assembly.

B. ELECTIONS:

1. **ELECTED** by the 144th General Assembly the following person to serve as the chief officer of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America;
 - The Reverend Dr. Theodis Acklin, of the Huntsville Presbytery, elected Moderator for a first term, Class of 2021.

C. COMMUNICATIONS:

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1. **REQUEST** from Elder William “Nick” Underwood, CPCA Legal Counsel, to be excused from the 144th General Assembly due to illness. Dr. Herring asked the Commissioners from each of the represented presbyteries, along with the GAEB, to sign cards that she will mail to Elder Underwood to express support and love for him.
2. **ANNOUNCEMENT** from the Elk River Presbytery relative to its Sesquicentennial Celebration, which will take place on Saturday, 20 July 2019 at Montgomery Bell State Park in Dickson, Tennessee.

D. Reports of Boards and Select Committees:

1. Report of Joint Committee on Amendments:

- **ADOPTED** the report and that the proposed amendment(s) referred to the 144th General Assembly.

2. Report of the Select Committee on Christian Education:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on Christian Education, which included approval of the *Course Catalog & Presbytery Committee on Ministry Manual (rev. May 2019)* for use throughout all judicatories and entities of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in American (CPCA).

3. Report of the Select Committee on Executive Board Review:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on Executive Board Review, which included;
- **APPROVAL** of the Reports of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Administrative Director and the General Assembly Executive Board (GAEB), which included adoption of the following four (4) recommendations:
 - **Recommendation 1:** That the General Assembly approves the revised School of Continuing Education (SCE) *Program of Alternative Studies Course Catalog*.
 - **Recommendation 2:** That the CPCA continues its corporate relationships with, (1) the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, (2) the Coalition of Appalachian Ministries, (3) the Presbyterian Chaplains and Military Personnel, and (4) the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

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- **Recommendation 3:** That the General Assembly approves Louisville, Kentucky as the site of the 145th meeting of the General Assembly in June 2020, with the Ohio Valley Presbytery serving as host.
- **Recommendation 4:** That the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America ceases providing funds for presbytery delegates/representatives to the National Sunday School Convention (NSSC). Moreover, the presbyteries will be delegated the task/responsibility of providing the funds for their respective delegates/representatives to attend the NSSC; and/or delegates/representatives will rely upon their personal resources to attend the NSSC. However, if neither the presbyteries nor the delegates provide funding, the National Sunday School Convention be dissolved.
- **APPROVAL** of dividing the Select Committee on Ecumenical Relations/Theological and Social Concerns into two separate select committees.

4. Report of the General Assembly Permanent Board of the Judiciary:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the General Assembly Permanent Board of the Judiciary, which included;
 - **NOTIFICATION** that 14 of the 15 CPCA Presbyteries approved the changes to 11.4.b. and c. of the *Constitution*.
 - **APPROVAL** of the following: (1) that the use of Official Records Books/ Record Book filler paper is optional, (2) that all Synod Minutes shall be housed and secured in actual binder, and (3) that Synod Record Books submitted for its annual review by the Board of the Judiciary (BOJ) will contain only the current year's Minutes.
 - **NOTIFICATION** that the Board of the Judiciary reviewed the Synod record books of the Alabama, Kentucky States, Tennessee, and Texas Synods, the BOJ reported that the records books were in good order.
- **ADOPTED** the Board of Judiciary's response to the question referred by the 144th General Assembly, determining that it is the inherent right of the General Assembly to make changes as needed so long as the rules are followed.

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5. Report of the Select Committee on the Memorial:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on the Memorial.
- **MEMORIALIZED and CONDUCTED A SERVICE** for the life and the legacy of seven (7) ordained ministers and of thirteen (13) ordained elders who transitioned during the intervening period since the 143rd General Assembly. A Memorial Service was held to commemorate the lives of the following individuals in the 144th meeting of the General Assembly:
 - Birmingham Presbytery Elder Algene Smith
Elder Thomasina Raye
 - East Texas Presbytery Elder Lizzie Nash
 - Florence Presbytery Elder John Jackson
Elder Lander Watkins
 - Huntsville Presbytery Elder Louella Battle
Reverend Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr.
Elder Robert Drake
Elder Frank Robinson
Reverend Ronald Thatch
Reverend Terry Ragland
Reverend Brian Winston
 - Hiwassee Presbytery Elder Mary Caudle
Elder Howard McClure
Elder Robert McKinley
 - Ohio Valley Presbytery Reverend Mary Bailey
 - South Alabama Presbytery Reverend Felix Baker
Reverend William Olds
Elder Joe Owen
 - Tennessee Valley Presbytery Elder William Paige

6. Report of the Select Committee on Resolution of Thanks:

- **APOPTED** the Resolution of Thanks presented to the Moderator, the General Assembly, and the Huntsville Presbytery for coordinating the 144th General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.

7. Report of the Select Committee on Ecumenical Relations/Committee on Theology and Social Concerns:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on Ecumenical Relations/Committee on Theology and Social Concerns, including;

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- **APPROVAL** of allowing the Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns (UCTSC) more time to consider other pertinent information from various perspectives in order to set forth a loving, Biblical and theological sound response. The Select Committee further concurs relative to the UCTSC developing a position on the issues of sexual matters.
- **APPROVAL** of referring the *Proposed Plan of Union* to the presbyteries of both the CPC and the CPCA for approval during the 2019-2020 year. Each CPCA Presbytery will submit the decision of each respective to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly for collating and reporting.
- **NON-CURRED** with the CPCA GA establishing an Implementation Task Force for the *Proposed Plan of Union*; and that the General Assembly empowers this Implementation Task Force that work may begin immediately to enhance the transition towards unification, anticipating ratification by the presbyteries in both current denominations.

8. Report of the Select Committee on Missions and Evangelism:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on Missions and Evangelism, which included;
- **APPROVING** the Office of the General Assembly to develop and to coordinate an Education Conference in the fall of 2019, and a Women's Conference in the spring of 2020.

9. Report of Part II of the Nominating Committee Report:

- **ADOPTED** Part II of the Nominating Committee Report, which included electing the following to serve on boards and committees of the CPCA.
- **ELECTED** the following;
 - Elder Willie Lynk, Board of Trustees of Historical Foundation (Kentucky States Synod), (1st Term) Class of 2021.
 - Rev Jimmie Dodd, Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns (Tennessee Synod), (2nd term) Class of 2021.
 - Elder Joy Wallace, Unified Committee on Theology and Social Concerns (Texas Synod), (3rd term) Class of 2022

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- **NOTED** that Elder Wallace is completing the remainder of the term of Rev Robert Earl Thomas due to illness.

10. Report of the Select Committee on Finance and Budget Distribution:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on Finance and Distribution, which included;
 - **APPROVING** the Administrative Director's plan to sponsor and to develop a CPCA-wide Tier Giving Campaign Fund Drive.
 - **APPROVING** the institution of an annual CPCA Leadership Conference.
 - **APPROVING** the changes in the *Report of Change* and the proposed budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Some of the major changes highlighted in this Summary of Action include **(1)** Eliminating the Ministerial Relief and Widows Fund, **(2)** Reducing the honorariums of the Moderator/Stated Clerk from \$1000 to \$500, and the Vice Moderator/Engrossing Clerk from \$500 to \$250, **(3)** Increasing the salary of the administrative assistant by \$3000 per year, and reducing the salary of the Administrative Director by \$9000 and approving two days of telework, **(4)** Reducing GAEB meetings to one face to face meeting, and **(5)** Reducing the Administrative Director's travel.

11. Report of the Select Committee the Commission on Military Chaplains and Personnel:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on the Commission on Military Chaplains and Personnel, which include the following,
 - **APPROVING** that the Cumberland Presbytery denominations provide an opportunity for their congregations to receive an offering on the last Sunday of May or another special day, to support our ministry through the PCCMP. Moreover, that an offering be received on the last Sunday in May or the second Sunday in November (Veteran's Day Eve) to support the ministry through the PCCMP and that offering be sent to the denominational office, and ask that the Stated Clerk of the GA to send a letter of reminder in each of those months to the congregations.
 - **APPROVING** that individual congregations of the CPC and the CPCA determine and designate a special day through the year

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to hold up chaplains and their United States families in the service to which they have been endorsed.

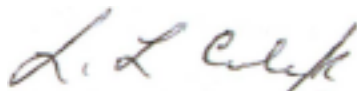
- **APPROVING** of encouraging 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students and ordained ministers to consider going into the military chaplaincy.

12. Report of the Select Committee on Historical Foundation:

- **ADOPTED** the Report of the Select Committee on Historical Foundation, which included;
 - **APPROVING** that the General Assembly instructs presbyteries to obtain session records if a congregation at the time the church is closed and then deposit in the Historical Foundation.
 - **APPROVING** the CPCA to become very active in preserving our history in the archives to accomplish this the Moderator was asked for a volunteer or to appoint a person to lead this project throughout the denomination. Rev. Dr. Nancy Fuqua volunteered and was approved by the 144th General Assembly.
 - **APPROVING** the formation of a plan of action to include but not limited to making contact with all agencies and persons in the denomination to assist them in providing the historical facts on persons and organizations to gather additional history of the CPCA denominations and families.
 - **APPROVING** a budget of \$300, which the Historical Foundation will provide a matching grant.
 - **APPROVING** that a full report is forwarded to the GAEB and the GA regarding the progress of the project.

ADJOURNED until the 145th General Assembly, scheduled to convene June 2019 in Louisville, Kentucky with the Ohio Valley Presbytery serving as the host presbytery.

Humbly submitted,



Elder Lewis Leon Cole, Jr., Moderator



Elder Craig A. White, Stated Clerk