

Stated Clerk
Executive Summary Report
to the 43rd General Assembly



Dean Weaver
Stated Clerk

*“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him **all things** were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities –**all things** were created through Him and for Him. He is before **all things**, and in Him **all things** hold together. He is the head of the body, the church.” - Colossians 1:15-18*

I love the doctrine of God’s Sovereignty! This is not simply a devotion to a matter of intellectual ascent, but a deep, deep affection for the Sovereign Himself, who holds “all things” together, including you, me, and all of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. He created the EPC; the EPC is for Him and He is the Head of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Well beyond that, as Abraham Kuyper is noted for saying, “*There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign overall, does not cry, Mine!*” Knowing that the Lord God is sovereign over all things in the EPC not only gives me great comfort, it gives me both confidence and hope. And from my vantage point, serving you as your Stated Clerk, the Sovereign is not only ruling and reigning, but advancing His Kingdom through the EPC.

A little over one year into our modest effort at an all-EPC podcast, *In All Things* – we have over 13,000 downloads including 42 different countries. We have hosted small church pastors, church planters, EPC authors and EPC leaders. Our conversations have been covering all aspects of the EPC including introducing the amazing servants in the Office of the General Assembly and how they love to serve our presbyteries and the local church; timely conversations with chaplains at times of great suffering; and now a series on each of our denomination’s Gospel Priorities. Each conversation has been rich, and I have loved getting to know so many gifted and dedicated leaders within our family of churches. If you haven’t joined the conversation yet, please check out our website www.epc.org/inallthings and check out how our sovereign God is at work in and through *All Things* EPC.

Much of the work of our national leadership is covered committee reports from our National Leadership Team Chair, Moderator, and others – so I will focus on a few things that may be unique to what I am seeing from my office as your Stated Clerk. First, I witnessed the Sovereign



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at work in our presbyteries. This year we have doubled the number of presbytery visits. This year Michael Davis, Tom Ricks, Bob Stauffer, Gabriel de Guia, Moderator Rosemary Lukens, CFO Pat Coelho and I have visited most of our 16 presbyteries (*which has become increasingly challenging to do, as we have grown in number and many of our presbyteries meet on the same weekends*). What I have seen firsthand is a renewed enthusiasm and engagement in each of our Gospel Priorities. Teams and leaders getting after Church Planting, evangelism training, sending, and supporting global workers to the places with the least access to the Gospel and a fresh determination to cultivate and develop effective Biblical leaders. At the end of the day, on each of the visits, our message is simple; we are here to serve you and help you live into the mission of the EPC.

If you have heard me speak at one of our presbytery meetings, you will have heard me preach on the mission of the EPC. *“The EPC exists to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus as a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations.”* When we talk about our mission, we have often focused on the four identity markers at the end, but this year I have been reclaiming the first part of our mission, which is that we are a Great Commission Denomination! My “stump” speech has been that we are “putting the “*E*” back in EPC!” We have rediscovered that our Book of Order, providing the governance for the mission the Lord has entrusted to us, actually anchors us in what is the primary responsibility of the local church. Sections such as G.4-3; 18-3.C; 19-4; and 20-4.B.1. let alone *Book of Discipline* 2-1 and *Book of Worship* 7-2 all point to the primary place of evangelism in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Downstream of this renewed emphasis, we are hearing dozens and dozens of stories of people coming to faith in Jesus Christ through the EPC’s Three Circles evangelism tool. Presbyteries and local congregations are training children, adults, and leadership to share the Gospel with people in their spheres of influence. The evangelistic culture of our presbyteries and congregations are growing and people are coming to Christ. That is our mission!

As we move forward in carrying out the Great Commission, living into the EPC’s mission, you will continue to hear calls to share the Gospel and a renewed emphasis to live out the Gospel. As a Great Commission family of churches, we are called to GO and make DISCIPLES of all nations! God is calling the EPC to be a Disciple making movement – disciples who make disciples who make disciples. It begins with evangelism, but being a disciple of Jesus is a whole life commitment that has built into our very DNA being sent with this good news to help others become disciples of the Savior. Sometimes we are sent to our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers in our own “Jerusalem” and sometimes we are sent out to larger areas beyond our home (think presbyteries) to share the gospel with others collaboratively; and sometimes the Lord calls and sends us to the very ends of the earth to the places with the least access to the gospel.

A disciple is called to be with Jesus and is sent out to be like Jesus. To be an effective Biblical Leader is to be a whole-life disciple of Jesus Christ who is sent to live and speak the Gospel.



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Finally, there were many beautiful and important other gatherings throughout this year that are helping to form and shape the EPC for our common mission. Among those committees, teams, leadership, and strategic meetings/retreats, the one that stands out for me this past year was our first ever Small Church Summit. This was a profound meeting of smaller church leaders who shared the struggles, challenges, and joys of serving smaller congregations. What we are learning is hard, but as a denomination with a majority of congregations under 200 members, we need to dig down deep on this and work together to address these crucial needs and come along side these dedicated servants of the Kingdom. To that end, we will be partnering with the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO) to focus on resourcing these vital missional outposts and their leaders including a first ever joint *Small Church Summit* November 7-9, 2023, in San Antonio, TX. In addition to another GA sponsored Pastor/Spouse Retreat and our Church Planter's Retreat, we will continue to serve our pastors, their families, and the congregations they are called to serve.

There is much Kingdom work to be done, and I know that we are better together. The work of the Great Commission is our mission. While that task itself can be overwhelming, I take great comfort and gain great confidence that the Sovereign One reminded us on the mountain top that He would always be with us, as He sends us out to make disciples...to the end of the age! It is a great joy and privilege to serve you as we together live into the EPC's mission!

Coram Deo!

-dean

Rev. Dr. D. Dean Weaver,
Stated Clerk/President

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www.epc.org/2023report-statedclerk