

**Stated Clerk**  
Executive Summary Report  
to the 44<sup>th</sup> General Assembly



Dean Weaver  
Stated Clerk

Grace and peace to you in our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. I hope, trust, and pray as you read this you and your family are well and blessed in the Lord. This greeting, or some form thereof, is normally how I have begun my hundreds (if not thousands) of emails this past year. I have done this for two reasons: (1) Influenced by Paul’s epistles, beginning a communication in the context of the grace and peace of God in Jesus Christ seems right to me. It also includes a prayer, that I typically stop as I am typing and pray for the person to whom I am writing. (2) The EPC is a family of churches, and we are always at our best when we lean into our relationships that we share because of our blessed and merciful Savior.

Concluding my first three-year term as your Stated Clerk and going through my first full 360-Performance Review, this time has afforded me the opportunity for some reflection, both looking back and looking forward. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve you these last three years, and there is much to celebrate. And if the Assembly approves another term, there is much ahead of us to consider and accomplish, all by God’s grace!

The past three years have been a time of mission clarity and mission alignment that has begun to lead to missional effectiveness. Every opportunity I have been given to speak or present, I have emphasized the “E” in EPC...reminding us of our core mission, which is that as a family of churches, we’re formed and called to carry out the Great Commission. Simply connecting the four Gospel Priorities (which are embedded in our Vision Statement) as the ways in which we seek together to carry out Jesus’ Great Commission has been an ongoing exercise in “mission clarity.” The restructure of the 43<sup>rd</sup> GA to include our Gospel Priority Summit is a prime example of this...and the post-GA survey comments were overwhelmingly positive. In fact, in my visits to our presbyteries these past three years, I have observed that our “middle courts” are now structuring themselves around the Gospel Priorities and seeking to equip our congregations to help them carry out the Great Commission in their communities, regions, and around the world. This is an important step in what organizational leaders refer to as “mission alignment.”



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Of course, mission clarity and mission alignment, while important, are not the endpoint. The hope and prayer are that mission clarity and mission alignment will lead to *missional effectiveness*. All praise to the Lord, there appears to be some early signs of fruit being born that might be considered missional effectiveness. In the last three years in the areas of Church Health we have trained more than 3,000 people to share the Gospel using the EPC's Three-Circles evangelism tool. And while it is impossible to draw a direct correlation, we have also during the same three-year period recorded 5,400 first-time professions of faith in our congregations. We think the number of people coming to Christ through the EPC is much higher, but each of those professions of faith at least represents someone who came to Christ and joined one of our churches. Praise God! We have also witnessed 2,900 infant baptisms and over 1,000 adult baptisms. In Church Planting we have birthed over 25 new congregations in the last three years, and now 6.7% of the EPC are now actually church plants. Internationally, over 190 new churches have been planted through our WO Global workers, and we know of at least another 1,800 first-time professions of faith. Our emphasis on Biblical Leaders has born fruit as well, as hundreds of pastors, church planters, chaplains and global workers and spouses have attended retreats, seminars, cohorts and received counseling support as well. The Effective Biblical Leadership team successfully conducted four (4) webinars just this semester, providing training and equipping to over 200 individuals. We have doubled down on our investment in the wellbeing of our pastors, the health of our congregations and the multiplication (individually in evangelism and corporately in church planting) of disciples. The early signs are that as we have renewed our commitment to join in the Lord's Great Co-mission that He is blessing the EPC with some significant fruit.

The next three years, Lord willing, might very well be a time to catalyze this gospel momentum and sustain this gospel work of the advancing Kingdom. Missional effectiveness will require and necessitate *missional engagement*. As a Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical and *Missional* family of churches, it will be essential that we find creative ways to grow and sustain the mission without growing an institutional bureaucracy. As a missional body, our focus must always be on the local congregation as the place where the Kingdom breaks in and the world is changed (on earth as it is in heaven). To carry out the Great Commission and hopefully cooperate with the movement and the Holy Spirit in His work of multiplication, we will need, each of us, to be "Disciples who make Disciples." In light of this, one of the next movements in our shared fellowship will need to be to develop, nurture, and promote a robust approach to discipleship. Damien Gerke's definition of discipleship in his book, *In the Way: The Church as We Know It Can Be a Discipleship Movement (Again)* is: "A disciple is someone who lives as Jesus lived, deliberately and faithfully practicing His teachings and way of life." That's not a bad place to begin!

Yes, being the Stated Clerk involves meetings, meetings, and more meetings. Resourcing the General Assembly's Permanent Committees, which carry on the work of the Assembly between our meetings, as well as serving the leaders of our lower courts (presbyteries and sessions) is a full-time job. Much time is spent caring for and helping those in crisis, with medical needs and in wake of disaster relief...and much more. Speaking, preaching, and



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traveling to presbyteries and churches of the EPC is demanding work. Like a pastor of a local congregation, I could spend all my time on the internal challenges and needs which are paramount. As a called servant leader of a family of churches like the EPC, the committee that recommended me three years ago recognized the importance of maintaining our outward focus on the Great Commission. The National Leadership Team continues to hold me accountable to this essential aspect of my calling as your Stated Clerk. If asked to serve another three years, I promise upon the grace of God to offer all that I am in service of the beloved Bride of Christ found in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. I am grateful for each of you and the opportunity to serve together as we carry out the Great Commission.

Coram Deo!

-dean

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

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