

**MINUTES
of the
44th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
Evangelical Presbyterian Church**

TUESDAY

**First Session
June 18, 2024**

44-01 OPENING WORSHIP

Worship began at 9:00 a.m. with leadership from the Hope Church Praise Team. The court continued in worship as noted below.

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
Tuesday morning, June 18, 2024
9:00 am**

Stated Clerk Dean Weaver welcomed the Assembly and TE Rufus Smith opened with prayer and called the Assembly to worship.

Today's Music

Glorious Day
Trust In God

Time of Prayer

Daniel Oppenhuizen

Kids Chat and Prayer

TE Keith Weiss

Scripture

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Sermon

Say It Again!

TE Tim Johnson

Benediction song:

This I Believe

Hope Church Praise Team

The Assembly was dismissed after worship.

44-02 CONVENING OF THE 44th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 44th General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Moderator, TE Joe Kim (East). The constituting prayer was offered by TE Michael Davis (Central South).

Almighty God, we thank you and we praise you this day for the opportunity to serve you as commissioners and guests of the 44th General Assembly and Gospel Priorities Summit of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

We are grateful for your kindness to us...your love for us...and the calling that you have placed on all of our lives.

Most importantly, Lord, we thank you that while we were yet sinners, your son Jesus Christ died for us. I pray that during this General Assembly we may become more aware of your amazing grace and more fully equipped to share your grace with the world that you love so much.

Forgive us, Lord, for the fits and starts of our obedience, our lukewarm faith, and our fear in sharing the gospel. Create in us, this week, in Jesus' name, a dynamic enthusiasm for serving you and opportunities to do your will in a way that will glorify and magnify your name.

At this General Assembly, we lift up to you particularly our Stated Clerk Dean Weaver and his supporting staff. Lord encourage the hearts and minds of your people so we will build up the church and glorify your name.

We pray this day, Lord, for President Biden and Vice-President Harris. We pray that their work will be fruitful and fulfill your purposes for our country and the world.

We ask that you give your grace and wisdom to our president, his advisors and all elected officials. Grant that the decisions they make will bless the nation and the world and add to the flourishing of all humanity.

We pray also for our military personnel and their families—especially those who are deployed and in harm's way. We are thankful for the sacrifices they make to ensure the freedoms we enjoy. We pray for their safety, their courage, and their well-being, not only while they are serving, but also when their service has concluded, and they need to be served by us.

We pray for Governor Bill Lee of the Great State of Tennessee, and we ask that you guide his hand and encourage him in his work that is pleasing to you.

We thank you Lord for the hospitality shown to us by the coalition of volunteers serving this year's assembly at Hope Church—we thank you for Pastor Rufus and his staff team and we ask for your blessings on all our volunteers, church leaders and the congregations they serve. Guide us now, as we seek your wisdom and discernment, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Stated Clerk Dean Weaver prayed, welcomed the Assembly, and designated TE Bob Garment (Florida & Caribbean) parliamentarian.

44-03 INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. For ALL who wish to speak: Please prepare by reading all the information related to the motion.
- b. Step to one of the microphones on the floor.
 1. When you are acknowledged, state your name and your presbytery before making your remarks.
 2. You have 3 minutes to speak; you may not speak a second time until all others have had a chance to speak.
 3. If you intend to propose an amendment (or a substitute) to a motion, please prepare it as an email to dean.weaver@epc.org before you present it. This gives time to make your amendment available on the screen to everyone.
- c. When a motion is considered, to ensure fairness, both speakers in favor of the motion and those not in favor of the motion will be chosen to speak in alternating order to the Assembly.
- d. Debate on a motion will not exceed 15 minutes; debate may be extended in 5 minute segments.
- e. The chair of the committee making the report may make the final statement as the debate ends.
- f. When debate ends, the motion will be presented and the opportunity to vote in favor of or not in favor of the motion. Ordinarily we will vote by voice or the raising of hands.

44-04 ADOPTION OF DOCKET

The Stated Clerk recommended the Adoption of the Docket.

ON MOTION The docket was adopted as follows:

43rd General Assembly – Session 1

- 1.1 Business Convenes – Moderator TE Joe Kim
 - 1.2 Constituting Prayer – TE Michael Davis
 - 1.4 Approval of the Docket and Announcements – TE Dean Weaver
 - 1.5 Local Arrangements / Announcements (if needed) – (Hope Church)
 - 1.6 Election: Recording Clerks/Minutes Readers – Moderator TE Joe Kim
 - 1.7 Opening Items – TE Dean Weaver
- a. Call for the quorum

b. Enroll corresponding members –TE Dr. Samuel Sesay (EPC of Sierra Leone), RE Terence Roberts (St. Andrews Presbytery, Argentina), TE Dr. Davi Gomes (Presbyterian Church of Brazil), TE Ed Norton (Presbyterian Church of America -PCA), TE Stephane Kouyo, RE Nathalie Kouyo, TE Clemence Bury (UNEPREF – National Union of Protestant Reformed Evangelical Churches of France), TE Tim Philips (Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church - ARP) and Dr. Rev. Dr. Maqsood Kamil (Presbyterian Church of Pakistan).

1.8 Outgoing Moderator’s Remarks – Moderator TE Joe Kim

1.9 Presentation to Outgoing Moderator – TE Dean Weaver

1.10 Nominating Committee (I) partial report – TE SJ Winter

a. Election of Moderator of the 44th EPC General Assembly

(1) **Recommendation 44-01** – Introduction and Nomination of Moderator of the 44th General Assembly

(2) Nominating speech – TE Brian Evans

(3) Election of the Moderator – Moderator TE Joe Kim

(4) Investiture of the Moderator – Moderator TE Joe Kim

(5) Prayer for the Moderator – RE Mike Racey

(6) Remarks by Incoming Moderator – Moderator RE Victor Jones

b. Election of Moderator-Elect of the 44th GA

(1) **Recommendation 44-02** -Introduction and Nomination of Moderator-elect of the 44th General Assembly -TE SJ Winter

(2) Nominating Speech -TE Ben Ruyack

(3) Election of the Moderator-elect

(4) Investiture of the Moderator-elect

(5) Prayer for the Moderator-elect - TE Brad Strait

(6) Remarks by Incoming Moderator-elect

1.11 Reminder of Deadline for New Business -*noon Wednesday* - TE Dean Weaver

1.12 Introduction of Fraternal Guests -TE Alan Trafford

1.13 Report of the National Leadership Team -Partial report – RE Rosemary Lukens

a. **Recommendation 44-03** Election of Stated Clerk

1.14 Ad-Interim Committee: Pastoral Letter of Racial Lament & Hope -Partial Report – TE’s Gerrit Dawson/Joe Kim

1.15 Revelation 7:9 Task Force – TE Rufus Smith/ TE Andrew Smith

1.16 Update from the Ad-Interim Committee on Ordination Standards TE Doug Ressler and TE Julie Hawkins

1.17 Closing Prayer and Great Commission Share – TE Cole Lescher

1.18 Assembly Adjourns

44-05 ELECTION OF RECORDING CLERKS AND MINUTES READERS

Stated Clerk, Dean Weaver presented the following motions to elect Recording Clerks and Minutes Readers of the Assembly.

ON MOTION Elected RE Dexter Kuhlman (Mid-America) and TE Kermit Oppriecht (Great Plains) to serve as Recording Clerks for the 44th General Assembly. Elected RE Ron Bengelink (Pacific Northwest) TE Nathan Arnold (Mid America) and TE Zach Hopkins (Rivers and Lakes) as Minutes Readers for the 44th General Assembly as provided for in *Rules for Assembly §9-13*.

44-06 DECLARATION OF QUORUM AND ASSEMBLY ENROLLMENT

Stated Clerk Dean Weaver, declared a quorum to be present with 686 Commissioners and 9 Corresponding Members) with registration in excess of the required quorum (G.16-24, “at least five Ministers and five Ruling Elders representing at least three Presbyteries”). The roll of the Assembly follows:

[Insert enrollment]

44-07 ENROLLMENT OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

ON MOTION Seated the following as Corresponding Members: TE Dr. Samuel Sesay (EPC of Sierra Leone), RE Terence Roberts (St. Andrews Presbytery, Argentina), TE Dr. Davi Gomes (Presbyterian Church of Brazil), TE Ed Norton (Presbyterian Church of America -PCA), TE Stephane Kouyo, RE Nathalie Kouyo, TE Clemence Bury (UNEPREF – National Union of Protestant Reformed Evangelical Churches of France), TE Tim Philips (Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church -ARP) and Rev. Dr. Maqsood Kamil (Presbyterian Church of Pakistan).

44-08 OUTGOING MODERATOR’S REMARKS

[Insert remarks]

44-09 PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING MODERATOR

Stated Clerk, Dean Weaver shared words of appreciation and presented the retiring Moderator with tokens of his office to celebrate his year of service.

44-10 NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT (Partial)

TE SJ Winter (Midwest) opened the report with prayer and on behalf of the Nominating Committee, nominated RE Victor Jones (Gulf South) to serve as Moderator of the 44th General Assembly.

Recommendation 44-01: That RE Victor Jones be elected as Moderator of the 44th General Assembly.

Following a Point of Order being raised and dismissed, a Letter of Protest was received by the Recording Clerk:

June 18, 2024 received by the Recording Clerks at 4 pm
44th General Assembly

I, Rufus Burton, Stated Clerk of New River Presbytery. A TE Commissioner to the 44th General Assembly wish to protest the failure of the Moderator, Clerk, Parliamentarian and the Assembly to properly superintend the Permanent Judicial Commission.

The reasons for my protest are: That the PJC failed in its duty to process a properly filed overture from the NRP. The PJC failed in its duty to G.21.3.D.2. The PJC failed to make a “three C” determination and failed to send the NRP overture to the Standing Committee and the floor.

Further, as the Stated Clerk’s suggestion, RFA 9.1, not a part of the constitution, was used to trump BoG 21.3.D.2. violating the constitution of the church.

TE Rufus T. Burton (New River)

TE Brian Evans (Midwest) brought the nominating speech.

ON MOTION Nominations were closed with the required two thirds of the Assembly voting in favor.

ON MOTION RE Victor Jones was elected as Moderator of the 44th General Assembly.

TE Joe Kim prayed for RE Victor Jones and asked the constitutional investiture questions of RE Victor Jones and the Assembly which all were answered in the affirmative. He then passed Victor the Gavel and Moderator’s Cross, symbols of the office of Moderator, after which RE Mike Racey (Gulf South) asked all past Moderators present to lay hands-on RE Victor Jones as he offered prayer for the incoming Moderator.

The newly elected Moderator offered remarks that challenged the Assembly to action for the coming year.

TE SJ Winter (Midwest) on behalf of the Nominating Committee, nominated TE Dave Strunk (Southeast) to serve as Moderator-Elect of the 44th General Assembly.

Recommendation 44-02: That TE Dave Strunk (Southeast) be elected as Moderator-elect of the 44th General Assembly.

TE Ben Ruyack (Southeast) brought the nominating speech.

ON MOTION Nominations were closed with the required two thirds of the Assembly voting in favor.

ON MOTION TE Dave Strunk (Southeast) was elected as Moderator-Elect of the 44th General Assembly.

TE Brad Strait (West) offered prayer for the Moderator-Elect.

The newly elected Moderator-Elect offered remarks that challenged the Assembly to action for the coming year.

44-11 REMINDER OF NEW BUSINESS

Stated Clerk Dean Weaver reminded the Assembly the deadline for new business is noon Wednesday.

44-12 INTRODUCTION OF FRATERNAL GUESTS

TE Alan Trafford (Gulf South) introduced our Fraternal Guests

44-13 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT (Partial)

RE Rosemary Lukens (Pacific Northwest) opened the report with prayer and introduced the following recommendation to the Assembly.

Recommendation 43-03 –That 44th General Assembly approve the Re-election of Stated Clerk TE Dean Weaver for another three -year term.

ON MOTION Following a challenge to a ruling by the Moderator, the Moderator’s ruling was sustained by the Assembly.

ON MOTION Stated Clerk Dean Weaver was elected to another three-year term.

44-14 Ad-Interim Committee: Pastoral Letter of Racial Lament and Hope Report

TE Gerrit Dawson (Gulf South) opened with prayer and reported for the committee giving the background to GA’s formation of the committee and the committee’s process for producing the “Pastoral Letter”. TE Joe Kim also added insights regarding the process.

44-15 Revelation 7:9 Task Force

Committee Member TE Andrew Smith (East) opened with prayer.

TE Rufus Smith (Central South) presented an update on the work of the Rev. 7:9 Committee and Introduced TE Greg Eli (Great Plains) and TE Mark Potter (Great Plains) who shared ways Colonial Presbyterian Church, Kansas and Missouri, is putting the concepts of Rev. 7:9 into practice.

44-16 Ad-Interim Committee on Ordination Standards

TE Julie Hawkins (Pacific Northwest) opened the report with prayer.

TE Doug Resler (West) and TE Julie Hawkins (Pacific Northwest) brought a report highlighting issues surrounding Ordination Standards. The Committee hopes to bring recommendations to next year's Assembly.

44-17 GREAT COMMISSION SHARING

TE Cole Leshar (Mid-America) shared NextGen issues and led the Assembly in a closing prayer.

44-18 ADJOURNMENT

44-19 WORSHIP

The Assembly was welcomed to welcomed by Daniel Oppenhuizen Hope Church Worship leader at 7:15 p.m. in the sanctuary of Hope Presbyterian Church.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Tonight's Music was led by Hope Church Praise Team

That's My King
You're Already Won
What A Beautiful Name

Offering for Global Worker Health Fund TE Vincent Joplin
To be designated for the World Outreach Care Fund. Helping our EPC Global workers in crisis and tending to their emotional and spiritual health.

Scripture Reading Acts 20: 20-27 Aria Ortega

Sermon Proclaiming the Kingdom of Jesus TE Marcus Ortega

Presentation and Commissioning of World Outreach Missionaries

Closing Song

Firm Foundation (He Won't)

Benediction

TE Eli Morris