

Third Session
Thursday, June 19, 2025

45-29 MORNING WORSHIP – MODERATORS COMMUNION SERVICE

Worship began at 9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary Ward Church. The court continued in worship as noted below:

Organ prelude: Variations on Amazing Grace

Music was led by the Ward Sanctuary Choir

Come Christians, Join to Sing
Great Is Thy Faithfulness
And Can It Be

Video on Sea Cucumber Project

Scripture

Matthew 16:15-18

Sermon

Who Do You Say That I Am?

RE Victor Jones

Benediction

The Assembly was dismissed after worship.

45-30 CALL TO ORDER

The Moderator, TE Dave Strunk (Southeast), called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. RE David Van Valkenburg, (West) shared about the E2025 Partnership of the Presbytery of the West (Sea Cucumber-Malay people group) and offered prayer to open today's Assembly.

The Moderator took a moment of personal privilege and prayer regarding the significance of June 19th.

45-31 APPROVAL OF DOCKET & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ON MOTION The docket was adopted as follows:

3.1 Business Convenes – Moderator TE Dave Strunk

3.2 Great Commission Share and Opening Prayer –RE David Van Valkenburg

E2025 Partnership of Presbytery of the West

- 3.3 Approval of the Docket and Announcements – TE Dean Weaver
 - 3.4 Report of the Fraternal Relations Committee – TE Brian Land
 - a. **Recommendation 45-08 and Recommendation 45-09**
 - Approve a formal Fraternal Relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
 - Approve Articles of Agreement with Presbyterian Church in Ireland
 - b. **Recommendation 45-07** -Revised Articles of Agreement with St. Andrews Presbytery, Argentina
 - c. Introduction of Fraternal Guests
 - 3.5 Introduction of Chaplains - TE Mark Ingles, Chaplain Endorser- TE Michael Davis
 - 3.6 Report of the Disaster Relief Committee – TE Anthony Rodriguez
 - 3.7 Report of the Effective Biblical Leadership Team - TE Annie Rose
 - 3.8 Revelation 7:9 Team - TE’s Rufus Smith and TE Andrew Smith
 - 3.9 Great Commission Share and Closing Prayer -RE Michael Sywulak
- E2025 Partnership of Presbytery of the East*

45-32 FRATERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Fraternal Relations Committee Chair, TE Brian Land (Mid-Atlantic) opened with prayer and along with TE Alan Trafford (Gulf South) presented the report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-08 to establish full fraternal relations with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-09 regarding preliminary articles of agreement with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in singing “The Church’s One Foundation”.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-07 regarding revised Articles of Agreement with St. Andrews Presbytery, Argentina was approved

The Assembly received greetings from our Fraternal Partners and delegates of prospective Fraternal Partners.

45-33 INTRODUCTION OF CHAPLAINS

TE Mark Ingles (West) Chaplain Endorser of the EPC opened with prayer and introduced our Chaplains and their important work to the Assembly. TE Michael Davis (Central South) offered prayer for our

Chaplains. Video: “Chaplains in Combat” was shown. Report was concluded with the gift to the chaplains the song “Your Labor Is Not in Vain” written and performed by a group of musicians from Faith Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Rochester Hills, MI.

45-34 REPORT OF THE DISASTER RELIEF COMMITTEE

TE Anthony Rodriguez (Central Carolinas) opened the report with prayer and shared the work of the committee assisted by Whitney Alexander (Gulf South) Chair of the Permanent Committee. TE Paul Gibson (Florida and the Caribbean) shared regarding the care for the pastors with secondary trauma concerns and the resources available from the committee.

The Moderator led the Assembly in singing, “I Need Thee Every Hour”.

45-35 REPORT OF THE EFFECTIVE BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

TE Annie Rose (Rivers and Lakes) opened with prayer and brought the committee report. RE Roy Yanke (Midwest) Director of PIR Ministry, shared about available resources: Sabbatical Tool Kit, Small Church Summit, Primmer on AI, and AI in Ministry.

45-36 REVELATION 7:9 REPORT

TE Andrew Smith (East) opened with prayer and with TE Rufus Smith (Central South) brought the committee report sharing additional emphasis on reaching out to persons with disabilities.

45-37 GREAT COMMISSION SHARE & CLOSING PRAYER

RE Michael Sywulak (East) shared regarding the E2025 partnership with Presbytery of the East in the Russian North Caucasus people groups and adjourned the Assembly with prayer.

Business Session Four will begin at 1:15 p.m.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUSINESS SESSION 4

45-38 CALL TO ORDER

The Moderator, TE Dave Strunk (Southeast), called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. RE Rick Peacock (New River) shared about the E2025 Partnership of the Presbytery of New River in Uzbekistan and offered prayer to open the Assembly.

45-39 APPROVAL OF DOCKET & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ON MOTION The docket was adopted as follows:

- 4.1 Business Convenes – Moderator TE Dave Strunk
- 4.2 Great Commission Share and Opening Prayer –RE Rick Peacock
E2025 Partnership of Presbytery of New River
- 4.3 Approval of the Docket and Announcements – TE Dean Weaver
- 4.4 Report of the Ad-Interim Committee on Ordination Standards
TE's Julie Hawkins and Doug Ressler, Co-Chairs
 - a. **Recommendations 45-10; 45-12; 45-14; 45-16 45-18; 45-19; 45-20, 45-21; 45-22; 45-23; 45-24; 45-25;45-26**
 - b. **Each Recommendation to be voted on individually**
- 4.5 Report from the Theology Committee - TE Betsy Rumer
 - a. **Recommendation 45-27** (p.66) – Revise Pastoral Letter on Marriage and Divorce
- 4.6 Interim Report from the Task Force on the Book of Discipline - TE Ed McCallum
- 4.7 Report from Benefits Resource Inc. – RE Michael Busch
 - a. **Recommendation 45-28** (p.69)
- ~ BREAK ~
- 4.8 Report from Overtures and Resolutions Committee – TE Gerrit Dawson
 - a. **Recommendation 45-29; 45-30** (p.70) -Amend Rules for Assembly 7-3
 - b. **Recommendation 45-31; 45-32** (p.74) -Add to Rules for Assembly 7-5; 7-6; 7-7
 - c. **Recommendation 45-33;** (p. 78) -Edits to Rules for Assembly 13 from the PJC
- 4.9 Report from World Outreach -TE Dave Moody
 - a. **Recommendation 45-34** (p. 79)
- On Sending a Letter to the pc(USA) regarding missions
- 4.10 Report of the Church Planting Team – TE Tom Ricks
- 4.11 Report from the Church Health Team - TE Marc de Jeu
 - a. Bart Hess Award

- 4.12 Report of the Administration Committee – TE Josh Brown
 - a. **Recommendation 45-36** (p.82) – NLT to explore feasibility of digital voting
 - b. **Recommendation 45-37** (p.85) -Approval of Administrative Budget
 - c. **Recommendation 45-38** (p.88) – Approve of Special Projects
- 4.13 Report from the Next Generation Council -TE Mary Brown
- 4.14 Report from the Ministerial Vocation Committee -TE Marcos Ortega
 - a. **Recommendation 45-39;45-40** (p.90) -Ruling Elders able to serve as advisors to candidates under care
 - b. **Recommendation 45-41** (p.96) Changes to Pastors Terms of Call
- 4.15 Nominating Committee – Final Report – TE Mike Goolsby
 - a. **Recommendation 45-03** -2025-2026 Permanent Committees (p.31)
 - b. **Recommendation 45-04** -Permanent Nominating Committee & BRI Chair (pg.33)
- 4.16 Report from the Presbytery Review Committee -TE Ron Bengelink
 - a. **Recommendation 45-42** (p.98)
 - b. **Recommendation 45-43** (p.103)

5:15 pm Order of the Day

- 4.17 Report of Memorials and Appreciations Committee - TE Weston Blaha
- 4.18 Report from the Permanent Judicial Commission -RE Brian Wyatt
 - a. **Recommendation 45-44** (p.104)
 - To receive the PJC’s rulings related to Beverly Heights Church
- 4.19 Omnibus Motion - **Recommendation 45-48** (p.108)
 - a. **Recommendation 45-35** (p.81) -Digitize Minutes of GA’s #1-26
 - b. **Recommendation 45-45** (p.105) -Approve Crossworld as a Cooperative Agency
 - c. **Recommendation 45-46** (p.106) -Withdraw from Fraternal Relationship of Church of Jesus Christ of Madagascar
 - d. **Recommendation 45-47** (p.107) -Approve 44th GA Minutes
 - e. **Permanent Committee Minutes** (CWCC, MVC, NLT, DRC, Fraternal, Next Gen, WO)
- 4.20 Great Commission Share and Closing Prayer – RE Gabriel de Guia
E2025 Partnership of Presbytery of Florida and the Caribbean
- 4:21 Adjournment and Closing Remarks -Moderator TE Dave Strunk

45-40 REPORT OF THE AD-INTERIM COMMITTEE ON ORDINATION STANDARDS

After opening with prayer, Co-Chairs, TE Julie Hawkins (Pacific Northwest) and Doug Resler (West) brought the Report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-10 Proposed amendments to *The Book of Government* 11-2 was approved. TE Zach Hopkins (Rivers and Lakes) spoke to the recommendation.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-12 Proposed amendments to *The Book of Government* 18-3 E was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-14 Proposed amendments to *The Book of Government* 19-4 B was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-16 Proposed amendments to *The Book of Government* 21-2 D.1 was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-18 Amendment to revise the *Rules for Assembly* X.C.5 and X.C.7 was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-19 Amendment to the *Acts of Assembly* 82-07 was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-20 New *Acts of Assembly* superseding *Acts of Assembly* 12-12 was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-21 Regarding candidate's criminal background checks being required within a 3-year window was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-22 Regarding candidate's standardized National Background Checks being required was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-23 Regarding "Application for Candidacy" and "Preliminary Questionnaire" being required as approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-24 Regarding candidate's physical and psychological exams being required was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-25 Regarding submitting a completed and current Personal Information Form (PIF) was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-26 Approved a third year for the Ad-Interim Committee on Ordination Standards.

45-41 REPORT OF THE THEOLOGY COMMITTEE

TE Betsy Rumer (Alleghenies) opened with prayer and presented the report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-27 Directing the Permanent Committee on Theology to review the EPC Position Paper on Marriage and Divorce was approved.

45-42 TASK FORCE ON THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE-INTERIM REPORT

TE Ed McCallum (West) opened with prayer and updated the Assembly on the work of the committee.

45-43 REPORT FROM BENEFITS RESOURCE INC.

RE Mike Busch (Alleghenies) opened with prayer and brought the report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-28 That the 45th General Assembly approve ordained ministers drawing retirement income from the EPC 403(b)(9) Defined Contribution Retirement plan be allowed to designate up to 100% of their retirement income for housing allowance as permitted by applicable regulations, adopted pursuant to the internal revenue code was approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in the singing of “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”.

45-44 REPORT FROM OVERTURES AND RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

TE Gerrit Dawson (Gulf South) opened with prayer and presented the report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-29 answering **Recommendation 45-30** related to clarifying *Rules for Assembly* section 7-3 was approved. TE Zach Hopkins (Rivers and Lakes) spoke to the recommendation.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-31 Answering **Recommendation 45-32** related to adding to *Rules for Assembly VII* section 7-5, 6,7 was approved. TE Zach Hopkins (Rivers and Lakes) spoke to the recommendation.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-33 *Edits to the Rules for Assembly XIII* 13 was approved. RE Brian Wyatt (Pacific Southwest) spoke to the recommendation.

45-45 REPORT FROM WORLD OUTREACH

TE Dave Moody (Pacific Northwest) opened with prayer and brought the WO Report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-34 regarding a letter to the PCUSA regarding missions was not approved.

RE Gabriel de Guia (Florida and the Caribbean), Executive Director of EPC World Outreach gave additional input to the WO report.

The Moderator led the Assembly in singing “O For A Thousand Tongues”.

45-46 REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL CHURCH PLANTING TEAM

TE Tom Ricks (Mid-America) opened with prayer and shared highlights of the committee’s report including a video highlighting EPC Church Planters. TE Alfredo Forhans (Gulf South) closed in prayer.

45-47 REPORT FROM THE CHURCH HEALTH TEAM

TE Marc de Jeu (Alleghenies) opened the report with prayer and shared highlights of the committee’s work and shared a video praising the ministry of TE (Alleghenies) Bob Staffer.

The Assembly honored TE Bob Staffer (Alleghenies) and his wife Deb with a plaque honoring his many years of service.

45-48 REPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

TE Josh Brown (Alleghenies) prayed and brought report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-36 Requesting the OGA/NLT explore the feasibility of digital voting at future Assemblies was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-37 To approve the FY26 Administrative Budget was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-38 To approve the FY26 Special Projects was approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in singing “Take My Life, and Let It Be”.

45-49 REPORT FROM THE NEXT GENERATION COUNCIL

TE Mary Brown (Great Plains) opened with prayer and brought the NextGen council report. The NextGen Summit will be held April 21-23, 2026, hosted by Hope Church in Memphis, TN. TE Mary Brown prayed for the NextGen Council.

45-50 REPORT FROM THE MINISTERIAL VOCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

TE Marcos Ortega (Pacific Southwest) opened with prayer and brought the report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-39 from the Permanent Judicial Commission answering **Recommendation 45-40** with reference to affirming that only Teaching Elders should serve as Advisors to Candidates under care of the Presbytery was approved. the only Teaching Elders should serve as Advisors to Candidates under care of Presbytery was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-41 regarding approval and recording of Pastor's Terms of Call be adopted as amended.

45-51 REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

TE Mike Goolsby (Great Plains) opened the report with prayer and brought the Committee's recommendations.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-03 Electing those nominated to serve on GA Permanent Committees, commissions, and Boards was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-04 Electing the 2025-2026 Chairman for the BRI Board of Directors, the slate of nominees to fill vacancies on the Permanent Nominating Committee, and the Chaplain Endorser was approved.

45-51 REPORT FROM THE PRESBYTERY REVIEW COMMITTEE

RE Ron Bengelink (Pacific NW) opened with prayer and brought the report.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-42 Which approves the exceptions requiring a response found in the 2024 Presbytery Minutes was approved.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-43 Which approves the responses from the Presbyteries cited by the 44th General Assembly was approved.

45-52 REPORT OF MEMORIALS AND APPRECIATION COMMITTEE

TE Weston Blaha (Gulf South) opened the report with prayer and led the Assembly in expressing appreciation to volunteers and staff of Ward Church who served us so well.

45-53 REPORT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION

RE Brian Wyatt (Pacific Southwest) opened the report with prayer.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-44 That the 45th GA sustain the PJC's rulings related to Beverly Heights Church was approved.

45-54 OMNIBUS MOTION

Stated Clerk, Dean Weaver opened the report with prayer.

ON MOTION Recommendation 45-48 was approved.

- a. **Recommendation 45-35** Instructing the OGA to digitize the minutes of the EPC's first 26 General Assemblies.
- b. **Recommendation 45-45** To approve Crossworld as a Cooperative Agency
- c. **Recommendation 45-46** To withdraw from the fraternal relationship with Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar.
- d. **Recommendation 45-47** To approve the minutes of 44th General Assembly.
- e. Approved Permanent Committee Minutes (CWCC, MVC, NLT, DRC, Fraternal, NEXT GEN, WO).

45-55 GREAT COMMISSION SHARE

RE Gabriel de Guia (Florida and the Caribbean) opened his report with prayer, shared the E2025 Partnership of the Presbytery of Florida and the Caribbean and closed his report with prayer.

45-56 ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING REMARKS

Moderator TE Dave Strunk (Southeast) adjourned" the 45th EPC General Assembly by singing "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty".

Worship began at 7 p.m.

45-57 EVENING WORSHIP

Organ prelude: It Is Well With My Soul

All Hail The Power of Jesus Name

Blessed Assurance Jesus Is Mine
Praise to The Lord, The Almighty
Amazing Grace

Memorial slides were shown reminding the Assembly of the EPC Saints who have joined the Church Triumphant since the 44th Assembly. During this time the Ward Church Choir sang the memorial hymn “For All the Saints”.

Scripture 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Sermon Grace Changes Everything TE Scott McKee

The Assembly was dismissed with a blessing following worship.