

General Assembly Resolution

A couple of weeks ago, at our denomination's General Assembly, we passed a Resolution acknowledging and repenting of our denomination's corporate and historical sins in the area of racism, and sinful indifference. The PCA began in 1973, but most of the founding churches came out of its precursor, the Presbyterian Church U.S., or the Southern Presbyterian Church. The racism and indifference of many of our churches and leaders during the Civil Rights era and the years that followed have continued to cast their shadow over the current efforts of our denomination in the areas of Racial Reconciliation and diversity. I (Robert) am very pleased to have our denomination speak clearly to both our repudiation of racism, past and present, and to our desire for rich racial diversity in our churches that reflects the power of the gospel to heal and unite. Below is an excerpt from an article I read by a black PCA member whose thoughts I found helpful and insightful. Following that is the actual Resolution passed by the GA as Overture 43.

REFLECTIONS FROM A BLACK PRESBYTERIAN ON THE PCA'S OVERTURE ON RACIAL RECONCILIATION, by JEMAR TISBY — JUNE 27, 2016

This Statement Is Distinctive

Other statements on racial reconciliation have been made, but this one is different because it deals with the Civil Rights era. The PCA formally addressed slavery almost a decade and a half ago, but it failed to mention anything about the much more recent and close-to-home issue of the Civil Rights Movement. Overture 43 corrects that defect and says, "during the Civil Rights period, there were founding denominational leaders and churches who not only failed to pursue racial reconciliation but also actively worked against it in both church and society." This is important because many members of the denomination had fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other relatives who were alive during this important stage of America's history and are implicated in maintaining the segregated and unequal status quo. Passing Overture 43 demonstrates a willingness to adhere to biblical principles even if they put one at odds with family.

This Makes It Easier for Ethnic Minorities (at First)

The problem with not having an explicit statement repudiating racism, especially during the Civil Rights Movement, as a Southern Presbyterian denomination is that African Americans and other ethnic minorities will always wonder, "Are these folks still cool with racism?" That's putting it bluntly, but there's truth to it. As a black person in an overwhelmingly white branch of the church, I have to constantly evaluate whether I'm truly welcome here or not. A strong statement repenting, not just of racism generally, but the more recent lack of vocal support for racial equality during the Civil Rights Movement, is necessary because silence about the matter tacitly communicates either support or indifference. Now I can confidently say that the PCA is both aware of and remorseful for its historic connections with racism, especially from the mid-20th century to the present. But having this overture in the records only helps at first. The actual lived experience of ethnic minorities in churches and presbyteries will prove whether the denomination is truly ready to make room at the table for historically under-represented groups.

Overture 43

Therefore be it resolved, that the 44th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America does recognize, confess, condemn and repent of corporate and historical sins, including those committed during the Civil Rights era, and continuing racial sins of ourselves and our fathers such as the segregation of worshipers by race; the exclusion of persons from Church membership on the basis of race; the exclusion of churches, or elders, from membership in the Presbyteries on the basis of race; the teaching that the Bible sanctions racial segregation and discourages inter-racial marriage; the participation in and defense of white supremacist organizations; and the failure to live out the gospel imperative that “love does no wrong to a neighbor” (Romans 13:10); and

Be it further resolved, that this General Assembly does recognize, confess, condemn and repent of past failures to love brothers and sisters from minority cultures in accordance with what the Gospel requires, as well as failures to lovingly confront our brothers and sisters concerning racial sins and personal bigotry, and failing to “learn to do good, seek justice and correct oppression” (Isaiah 1:17); and

Be it further resolved, that this General Assembly praises and recommits itself to the gospel task of racial reconciliation, diligently seeking effective courses of action to further that goal, with humility, sincerity and zeal, for the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel; and

Be it further resolved, that the General Assembly urges the congregations and presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America to make this resolution known to their members in order that they may prayerfully confess their own racial sins as led by the Spirit and strive towards racial reconciliation for the advancement of the gospel, the love of Christ, and the glory of God; and

Be it further resolved, that the 44th General Assembly call the attention of churches and presbyteries to the pastoral letter contained in Overture 55 as an example of how a presbytery might provide shepherding leadership for its churches toward racial reconciliation; and

Be it finally resolved, that the 44th General Assembly remind the churches and presbyteries of the PCA that BCO 31-2 and 38-1 provide potent and readily available means for dealing with ones who have sinned or continue to sin in these areas

Women's Retreat 2016

It might seem strange to have a man write about the value of the women's retreat, but as you probably already know, I have an opinion about almost everything. Since I was asked, I am more than happy to share some of my thoughts on the topic. Most of them will be just as applicable to the Men's Retreat as to the Women's, so if you are a man, you should keep reading this. I have a couple of things to say to you as well...

First, let me say that I think retreats can be an important part of our spiritual lives. Retreats are times of freedom and focus. Life is so busy and full, it is hard to be still and know that He is God. It's hard to find time listen and grow. This is especially true for young moms who are home with their children and running hither and thither (yes that's a real phrase) all the time. When do you stop and find the space and freedom to focus on your relationship with God? When do you pull away long enough to be refreshed and renewed? It is a very sad state of affairs when the reason someone doesn't go on a retreat is that their lives are too busy. This is exactly why you need a retreat. To go, like Jesus, up on the proverbial mountain to pray and connect with God. Sometimes, more progress can be made in our spiritual lives over one intense weekend than in six months or a year at home. When someone is willing to pull away from all other responsibilities of the home front with the express purpose of spending time with God, He often meets you in unique and extraordinary ways.

So, to the men, it is my strong opinion that husbands should encourage their wives to go and plan their calendar so that they can make it happen. If a man doesn't know how to take care of his own children for a weekend, it is time to learn. Real men change diapers. It is a great opportunity to learn to appreciate the work your wife does day in and day out. But more importantly, encouraging her to go away for the weekend is a way to love and serve her. It is a way for you to have focused time with your children. Don't begrudgingly say she can go if she wants, encourage her to go and step up as a husband and a father. This is something I have been committed to since the day my children were born.

This leads to the second reason I believe that ladies should go on the retreat -- Relationship. Relationships are the glue that hold a church together and make it a family. But relationships take time to grow. It can be slow work to build relationships in a church for the simple fact that we are together so infrequently and not for any real length of time. So the same is true here, more can happen relationally in a retreat weekend than sometimes happens in six months to a year at home. Retreats are an exceptional opportunity to meet people and actually have time to talk to them and get to know them. You will cross paths with people on a retreat who you may never talk to at church.

Now, you might be thinking, "I already have friends, so I don't need to meet new people." Then what if you went to serve others. Not everyone is as connected as you. If we all stick to our current click of friends, how will new people become part of our family? Maybe God has some new people to integrate into your life? Maybe there are people He wants you to bless and serve just by being there. We participate in the life of the church to make it strong, healthy, connected and growing. You have much to offer just by offering yourself, your presence, your willingness. And I believe that when you do, you will receive much as well. God meets us, uses us, blesses and fills us. Will you open your heart and life, and consider retreating with the other ladies of our church family?

Welcome to Our New Children's Ministry Director Alisa Gillis



Alisa lives in Hixson with her husband Jerry and daughter Mary Margaret. She comes to us from Hixson United Methodist Church where she served as the Children's Ministry Assistant for the last couple of years. When she isn't at church or being a mom/wife, Alisa enjoys volunteering at the Tennessee Aquarium, judging dance/winterguard competitions, and being outdoors. Originally from Mississippi, a nearby summer camp and a desire to minister to children is what brought Alisa to the Chattanooga area many years ago. She is looking forward to continuing that passion here at HPC.

Youth Ministry Summer Highlights

Summer Underground: Wednesday Evenings from 6:30 – 7:45

Each week, our Youth will meet on Wednesdays for games, fellowship, and a Bible Study and discussion. This summer we'll be working through "Tough Topics" by Sam Storms. Each week we'll present a tough topic like "Can God create a rock so big He can't move it?" or "What did Jesus mean when he said, 'Turn the other cheek?'" Our goal is to get students talking and thinking through how the Bible applies to all areas of life.

Other Summer Youth Events:

- Super Fly Night: Wednesday, July 13th after Underground
- Star Wars Lock-In: Friday, July 29th
- White Water Rafting: Sunday, August 7th right after church



Trail Life USA

Trail Life USA is a Christian Outdoor adventure program, similar to the Boy Scouts of America, that emphasizes and teaches biblical moral values. The Session of HPC has approved the forming of a steering committee to explore, develop and organize a future Trail Life USA ministry at our church. The Charter Organization is expected to own and operate the Troop through selecting its adult leaders and integrating the Troop into the life of the church by involving the boys in mission trips, service projects and other ministry or ceremonial purposes. A troop can be made up of three main units: Woodlands (K-5th grade), Navigators (6th-8th grade) and Adventurers (9th-12th). Anyone interested in being part of the exploratory committee, please contact Jim Swearingen at 432-0400. The next meeting will be July 7 at 6:30 pm at 1635 Rock Bluff Road, Hixson.

Beyond Our Walls by Loren Watson

Looking Outward

If the dictionary doesn't list the word "extrospective", it should. It would be the opposite of introspective, which conveys the idea of looking inward, concentrating on one's own life.

Churches, as well as individuals, can become introspective, concentrating on themselves, focusing only on their own programs, ministries and groups. Picture a group of people sitting in a circle, facing each other, talking about their own lives. Contrast that with a group in a circle, all facing outward, discussing the problems "out there". The first is introspective, the other extrospective.

When we are saved we are called to reach out. We have often heard it said from the pulpit that the work of the church isn't taking place as we corporately worship on the Lord's Day, but after we get into the rough and tumble world where we meet all kinds of people. This begins at home and extends to the workplace, schoolroom, shopping mall, Disney World or wherever we go.

As a church, therefore, we cannot afford to be merely introspective in any of our activities. This would include Sunday School classes, small groups, youth meetings, WIC events or any of the many other things we do together. There must always be the awareness that we are to prepare ourselves to touch the lives of those outside our walls. In some churches with small groups, their purpose is to use the meetings as a tool for evangelism, connecting with people who have no church home and perhaps no saving faith.

This summer we are looking outward by sending missions teams to Charlotte (middle schoolers) to Chicago (high schoolers) and Uganda (a mixture), with chaperones for the youth. Earlier, we sent a team to Acapulco. Those of us not going can pray according to requests they have made.

God is the great example of "extrospectivity" (another new word). He reached out and down to us through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. As His witnesses, we now do His reaching out here and now.

Thank You

HPC Family,

Thank you all for your love and prayers in regards to the recent passing of my sister.

It was a joyous occasion for all who knew her because about five years ago she came out of the darkness and into God's great light. And now she is in His presence.

Thanks again, and all praises to God.

In His Love,

Floyd and Deborah Richardson

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Summer Sunday School Class

Learning 4 Change, HPC's adult education program, will be offering the following class this summer:

How to Read the Bible

July 3 – August 7: Have you ever read through a specific passage of scripture and wondered, what does this mean? How can I possibly understand what is being said? How does this verse relate to what is taught in other parts of the Bible? Is this history, poetry, prophecy or a command? If so, plan to attend a class designed to equip the layman with tools essential to the individual study and understanding of scripture. *Taught by Josh Huff*

Birthdays & Anniversaries

July Birthdays

2 - Bonnie Davis & Sydney Beard
4 - Valerie Farris, *Asher Entrekin, & Bev Fitzpatrick*
7 - Jill Chambless
9 - Laverne Bultema, Janet Davey, *John Freeman & Ethan Runkle*
10 - *David Stoddard*
12 - Vance Marlin & Edie Mogg
13 - David Crowe
14 - Mike Weaver
15 - Abigail Mullins
18 - Ed Averett
19 - Julie Armstrong, Leah Dean & *Joey Fitzpatrick*
21 - Shirl Smies
22 - Christine Parker
23 - Derek Ball & Bobby Boulware
24 - Arch Brown, Owen Dean, & Ruth Stimart
26 - Christa Mullins
27 - Kirby Johnson
28 - Donna Jones
29 - Becky Moore
30 - David Jackson
31 - Clay Haas

July Anniversaries

1 - Jimmy & Leigh Anne Grant
3 - Frank & Janet Davey
8 - Mark & Jennifer Bennett
9 - Roger & Debra Franks
Steve & Kay Lewis
16 - Fred & Valerie Thompson
18 - Chris & Jane Varnell
20 - David & Keri Young

**Those in Italics are our missionaries.*

July 2016



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

					1	2
3 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	4 Happy Independence Day Office is closed	5 6:30 Men's Study 8:30 Ladies Prayer Walk 7:00 Joint Session Meeting	6 10:00—11:30 Women's Study 6:30—7:45 Summer Book Discussion	7 6:30 pm Trail Life USA Meeting 7:00 pm Bridge	8 7:00 to 9:00 Ladies Craft Night	9
10 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship 12:30 Visitor's lunch	11	12 6:30 Men's Study 8:30 Ladies Prayer Walk	13 10:00—11:30 Women's Study 6:30—7:45 Summer Book Discussion	14	15	16
17 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	18 Middle School Charlotte Mission Trip 6/20-6/24	19 6:30 Men's Study 8:30 Ladies Prayer Walk	20 10:00—11:30 Women's Study 6:30—7:45 Summer Book Discussion	21	22	23
24/31 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Worship	25	26 6:30 Men's Study 8:30 Ladies Prayer Walk	27 10:00—11:30 Women's Study 6:30—7:45 Summer Book Discussion	28	29	30