

First Press

A Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor
August 2018 ■ Volume 66, Number 7

Summer Youth Mission Trip to Baltimore



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Thanks to all that donated to the Lunches with Love Milestone project for our fifth graders, close to 600 lunches were delivered to Food Gatherers.

Dear Friends,

August is a busy and interesting month in Ann Arbor and at First Pres. The city, having celebrated Summer Festival and Art Fair, now turns to a big primary election and the return of thousands of University students. Those who live and work near campus – and near First Pres – can feel the growing bustle. By the time this month ends, dorms will be filled with students eager for fresh opportunities, excited to see friends and make new ones, and oblivious to the presence of cars on the streets. Drive carefully around church!

At First Pres, we are in serious planning and preparation mode for the fall. To have everything ready for September, much must be done this month. It is exciting to anticipate seeing everyone after summer vacations and travels and reconnecting as the people of God.

Speaking of reconnecting, Andy Spaulding – a member of First Pres, former Peer Minister, and current student at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Virginia – will be in town to preach for us August 26th. Also, Carson Smith – who joined First Pres while a student at U Mich and who has served the last twelve months in Colombia as a PCUSA Young Adult Volunteer – will be around much of the month of August

before serving a second YAV year, this time in New York with the PCUSA United Nations ministries. Look for Carson at worship August 5.

Parents, encourage your youth to get involved with First Pres. Essie Koenig-Reinke has an exciting week of service planned for this month. Participants will learn about and help with needs in this area, deepen friendships, and benefit from Essie's contagiously upbeat spirit. As youth consider college choices, don't overlook the fine institutions related to the Presbyterian Church. There are scholarships available to youth who are members of the PCUSA and I am happy to write recommendations on their behalf.

Grace and peace,

Fairfax F. Fair
Pastor/Head of Staff



All-Church Ice Cream Social

I scream, You scream, We all scream for Ice Cream!

Join us on September 2 for our annual Ice-Cream Social. Sponsored by the Congregational Life committee. At 10:30 a.m., during Coffee Hour, enjoy Washtenaw Dairy Ice Cream and lots of toppings. Celebrate the end of our summer break and the beginning of the new school year with Vanilla, Triple-Chocolate Overload, Superman, and Rainbow Sherbet. Want to help with set up, serving, or clean-up? Contact Lynne Lande, lynnelande@me.com, or Rev. Rogers, 662-4466, ext. 390.





Worship & Music

Richard Ingram Appointed Interim Director of Music Ministries



Long-time Huron High School choral director and music department chair Richard Ingram has accepted the position of Interim Director of Music Ministries at First Presbyterian Church. He starts work on July 23, overlapping with Tom Granum, in order to ensure a smooth transition. We will celebrate Tom and Doris' departure on Sunday, July 29 at Coffee Hour.

Rick Ingram retired in 2017 after a 42-year career in the Ann Arbor Public Schools, 39 of them teaching vocal music at Huron High, where his choirs won numerous regional and national awards. Under his leadership, the Huron High School Music Department was a five-time recipient of the Grammy in Our Schools Award as one of the top school music programs. As department chair, Rick led a variety of ensembles and was responsible for coordinating the work of four to six staff members. He also was involved in facilities planning for a new music wing at the school. Rick has extensive experience conducting instrumental groups both at Huron and as conductor of the Plymouth Oratorio Society, where he has served as Director since 2006.

For 25 years, Rick served as tenor soloist and assistant to the Choirmaster at Zion Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor. It was there, as a young person and college student, that he got his start as a choral conductor, inspired by Zion's music director, Donald Williams, who allowed him to assist with all of the choirs in a "cradle to grave" choir program. "This experience," he says, "helped me to realize that choral music was my passion" and "inspired me to make music my life's work"

A Pioneer High School graduate, Rick holds three degrees from the University of Michigan: a bachelor of music education (1974), master's degree in choral conducting (1975), and a doctorate in vocal music performance (1985). His parents, Eugene and Margaret Ingram, were both active members of First Pres. Last fall, Rick and his wife, Susan Froelich, joined. Rick's responsibilities will include overseeing the Music Ministries staff, budget, and schedule; working with pastoral staff on worship planning; and conducting the Chancel Choir and the church orchestra. Along with members of the Worship and Personnel Committees, Rick will lead a search for an interim organist in the coming weeks.

Prayers for our Schools - Join us!

Join the staff for a half-hour Morning Worship at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday September 5, in Monteith Hall. This brief service will give us a chance to worship God and lift up prayers to the Lord for our children and their teachers as they return to school the previous day, in Michigan. We will sing together, pray together, and hear a brief reflection as we unite our hearts and give the 2018 -19 school year to God. Those who come will be given the first name of a First Pres child, youth, or school teacher to pray for this year. All are welcome. For more information, contact Rev. Rogers, 734-355-2351, mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org.



Business of the Congregation

Look for A New First Pres Security System

A new security system is coming soon to better protect our staff, children and those who use First Pres during and after business hours. The new system, conceived by the Safety Work Group, has been approved by the Property Committee and Session. We expect installation and operation in August or September.

Why are we installing a security system? We have recognized our vulnerabilities with a building not designed for 21st century threats and have designed a plan which will increase security while being intentionally welcoming.

What is this new system, you ask? The doors currently open during business hours will be locked with entry gained using a key fob or intercom call in monitored by volunteers. A camera will show a security volunteer who would like admittance. That volunteer will remotely open the door and provide intentional welcome and assistance to all who enter. More information about key fob availability will come as we near operational status. We recognize there will be a learning curve as we become accustomed to increased security. Your patience and understanding will be greatly appreciated.





Youth Connection



MIDS in Mission 2018 (Day Camp)

- Who:** Rising 6th graders- rising 9th graders
- When:** Monday, August 20 - August 23
- Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Daily (Thursday till 7:00 p.m.)
- Cost:** \$40 per student

All middle school students are invited to join us for four days of mission and service in Detroit metro area! We will be hosting a middle school mission camp, and we want you to join us! We'll be partnering with ministries like The Heidelberg Project, Howell Nature Center, the Second Mile Center and more! We'll also celebrate the end of the week with a group trip to Jump Island in Brighton. Drop off and pick up will be in the Social Hall at First Pres each day. Scholarships are available upon request. We hope you'll join us for a week of service together! Contact Essie Koenig-Reinke (essie@firstpresbyterian.org) with any questions or to sign up. Adults, please sign up to be a volunteer with us!

Looking Back at BELIEVE!

In April our middle school youth went to the BELIEVE conference at Hope College. Through worship, small groups and lots of GaGaBall our youth spent time learning, growing and exploring together. Check out what rising 8th grader, Lana Smith has to say about her experience at BELIEVE.

“Whether it was blasting Taylor Swift on full volume or listening to Drake’s new songs, music has always played a big part in my life. But before BELIEVE, I had never guessed how powerful it could be to listen to music about God’s love. Imagine a gymnasium full of middle school aged teens singing along at the top of their lungs to songs about Jesus. The sight seems pretty bizarre, but when you see it yourself it’s just all the more amazing. From people randomly screaming ‘I love Jesus!’ to the oddly intense Gaga ball games, BELIEVE truly is a rare and wonderful experience.”

Something else extraordinary about the trip was the chance to spend time with other kids in the First Pres youth ministry program. My best friends have always been girls from church, and this was a great opportunity to have fun and worship with them. It was great to have a group of eight because it allowed us to get to know everybody in our group a little better (and engage in some epic prank wars). Overall, the experience was amazing, and I’d recommend it to any middle school aged student.”



Congregational Life



Attention Deacons! Summer Picnic Is August 19

Deacons serving on the Board at this time — Thank you for continuing to take care of your chapel members over the summer months doing the ministry of “sympathy, witness, and service.” Our annual picnic for officers and their families will be Sunday, August 19, at the home of Peggy and Carter Hodgson. Please make a dish to pass and join us for an afternoon of lovely weather, great hospitality, shared stories of ministry, and perhaps a dip in the pool! Questions? Contact Sandy Talbott or Mel Rogers. Our next regular meeting is Wednesday, September 12, at 7:00 p.m. See you soon!

Mature Ministries Adventures Await!

While the field trip to Belle Isle and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum is closed, mark these other dates on your calendar!

A History of the Great Lakes

All are invited to attend a special Adult Education class on Sunday, August 26, a lecture by First Pres member Jennifer Day, "From Backdoor to Front Door: A history of degradation and the restoration of the Great Lakes." Jennifer serves as Great Lakes Regional Coordinator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Join us at 11 in the Social Hall. This class is open to all, and is a great precursor to the Mature Ministries trip to the Dossin Museum on August 30. For more information, contact Rev. Rogers, mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org.

Field Trip to Ford Piquette Avenue Plant in Detroit on October 4



Long before cars were mass-produced using the assembly line, they were built one at a time in Henry Ford's first purpose-built factory (1904-1910). A Detroit non-profit has been slowly restoring the plant to help tell the story of the creation of the Model T, the car that transformed American transportation. Join us to tour the plant over 100 years later and connect directly with the hundreds of men and thousands of cars that wore the plank floors smooth at the Piquette Plant. Adjourn for lunch at Ford's Garage in Dearborn, a 21st century celebration of all things Ford. After a morning of car making, you'll be ready to enjoy a buffet style burger bar complete with sides, soft drinks, and a nice big piece of bumpy cake to reward your morning efforts! Our day together will be an unforgettable drive into the past, Henry's way, Cost: \$40.00. Includes transportation, admission and tour, and inclusive lunch at Ford's Garage. Register by contacting the Church Office or Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers. Payable in full no later than September 27.

Save the Date for New Member Classes

Are you a regular guest at our church but have never joined? Our New Member Classes for fall will be held Sunday, September 23, from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., with joining on September 30 at 8:00 a.m., and on Tuesdays, October 30 and November 6, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., with joining on November 11 at 8:00 a.m. You can attend either the September or November set of classes. Unite with our church family – you already belong, now make it official. We will welcome you with open arms!



Financial Stewardship

STEWARDSHIP 2019: Living God's Love – Love, Grow, Share

Greetings from your 2019 Stewardship team! As we prepare for the 2019 annual giving campaign which kicks off on September 23 (Dedication Sunday is October 21) we are mindful of the many blessings God has bestowed on all of us, including our church home at First Pres. God's grace and gifts are without end. How can we adequately express our gratitude in return? By living God's love every day, we grow in our faith and share our gifts with the world. Lessons and actions at 1432 Washtenaw spread through our homes, our communities, and beyond. Each of us plays a vital role at First Pres. Our gifts of time, talent, and treasure are essential for First Pres to respond to God's call through worship, Christian education, congregational life, and mission outreach. Our active engagement and ongoing financial support ensure a vibrant future for the church we love. Thank you for all you do for First Pres, and thanks be to God!



Transitions

We Celebrate the Birth of:

William Becker Carlisle, born May 26, 2018, son of Amanda and Ben Carlisle, and brother of Addie and Georgia Carlisle.

Collins Marie Lynn Colligan, born May 10, 2018, daughter of Dallas Colligan and Nick Cooke.

Elizabeth Carolyn Pipe, born April 9, 2018, daughter of Kathleen Sienko and Kevin Pipe, and sister of Henry Pipe.

We Celebrate the Marriage of:

Cassandra Webster & Kevin Wieczerza, May 26

Pam Vienna & Bill Boggs, July 11

Katherine Voorhorst & Justin Brown, July 28

We Grieve the Death of:

Jean Dickinson, April 30

Warren Bovenkerk, June 1

Jean Dotson, June 15

Sally Carpenter, July 21



Tutoring Opportunity!

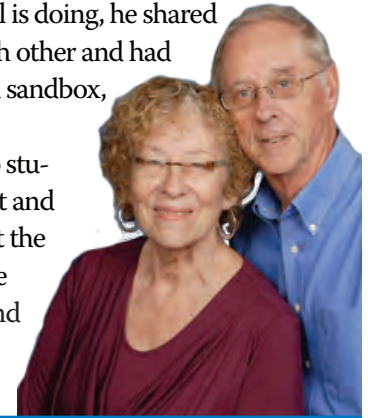
The mission of the PEACE Neighborhood Center, located on the west-side of Ann Arbor, is to provide programs for children, families, and individuals who are affected by social and economic problems. As First Pres seeks to grow and strengthen our relationship with this mission partner we are looking for volunteers to assist with the Academic Bridge Camp that runs August 13-16, and 20-23. This academics-focused instructional camp is designed to provide a bridge between grades for students. Youth receive one-on-one attention from staff and volunteers to refresh their math, reading and writing skills prior to the beginning of the school year. If you are interested in volunteering, tutoring, or just meeting kids, contact Rev. Eric Koenig-Reinke at ekoenig-reinke@firstpresbyterian.org

Don and Gale Redding Speak at GA 2018

Don and Gale Redding received a special invitation to address the Presbyterians for Middle East Peace (PMEP) at General Assembly. They were invited to share their experiences in forming the Ann Arbor ecumenical group, Michigan Friends of Hand In Hand Schools (HIH) in Israel. Hand In Hand Schools have a mission to create a strong, inclusive, shared society in Israel through a network of Jewish-Arab integrated bilingual schools and organized communities.

Don described how First Pres' Israel Palestine Mission Team formed the group by reaching out to local Jewish and Protestant congregations. The purpose of the Michigan Friends of HIH is to spread the HIH message and gain support for sponsoring scholarships for Jewish and Palestinian students. To highlight the work that HIH Schools in Israel is doing, he shared the stories of two students, an Arab and a Jewish young woman, who had learned to listen to each other and had become best friends during their twelve years at school together. The two went from playing in a sandbox, unable to understand each other to sharing their lives in a strong friendship.

Hand In Hand Schools are a unique school network in Israel that integrates Jewish and Arab students in the same classroom with Arab and Jewish teachers. There is active parental involvement and often the school serves as a community center. This approach has had such a positive impact that the Mayor of Haifa, previously opposed to the schools, asked the local Hand In Hand School to share its strategy with all local schools. Hand In Hand Schools are making a difference in turning around the attitudes and creating understanding between Arabs and Jews which will, hopefully, lead to a shared society.

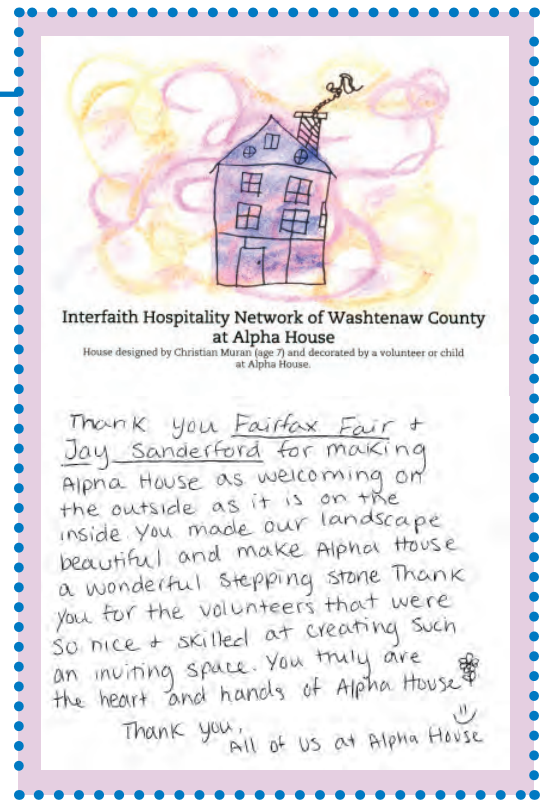


First Pres Award to Community Action Network

Through the local mission grant program, First Presbyterian recently awarded \$4,000 to CAN (Community Action Network). CAN partners with families to offer an extensive variety of programs to under-resourced communities in

Washtenaw County. CAN provides academic support and enrichment to children and teens, serves healthy snacks and dinner (19,000 meals a year!) and partners with parents to make sure families stay housed. The children who attend CAN's programs experience a 97% high school graduation rate and, since 2002, not a single family has been evicted because of non-payment of rent.

Housing stabilization and food security are critical to students' success. With your support, CAN is able to serve healthy meals to families in its communities. Ultimately, our First Pres contribution ensures that CAN will be able to help children and youth fulfill their basic needs so they can focus on the work it takes to create better futures for themselves and their communities.





Children & Families



Celebrating Deborah MacVey: A Beloved Church Educator

On June 24, we said thanks and “Happy Retirement” to our beloved Christian Educator, Debbie MacVey. Gifts were given and loving words of thanks shared at the Coffee Hour. We “gave her a hand” using blown up rubber gloves decorated by members. The staff celebrated her on June 13 at a luncheon at Paesano’s where staff member Cindy King and others presented a “worship center story” about Miss Debbie using a parable box, a take-off on the kinds of stories told to our children in the Sunday School program, called Worship Centers. “Well done, thou good and faithful servant!” How blessed we have been to have Debbie for 27 years. She leaves with our gratitude and prayers.



UKirk@UMich



Campus Ministry and University Sunday, September 16

University Sunday is September 16. We look forward to hosting Dr. Gerald McKenny, a biotechnology ethicist from Notre Dame and a Princeton Theological Seminary graduate, who will preach at the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship services. Afterwards, Dr. McKenny will join a gathering of UM students and staff for a luncheon in the Social Hall, connecting First Pres with current campus life. Invited are Michigan students, faculty and staff for the chance to explore connections and relationship in University life. If you are interested in more details or helping to host the luncheon, please contact Revs. Evans McGowan or Eric Koenig-Reinke at campus@firstpresbyterian.org.

Our Campus Ministry Team, Rev. Evans McGowan and Resident Ministers Blair Buckley, Eric Koenig-Reinke and Dorothy Parks-Piatt, is working to ensure that UKirk@UMich will continue to grow in 2018-19 after a healthy relaunch in the past months. In June a team of college students and congregants reviewed and endorsed the Campus Ministry Plan (the strategic framework for current and future campus ministry) and made plans to involve more people in the lives of students and staff on campus. Contact Rev. Evans McGowan (campus@firstpresbyterian.org) to see a copy of the plan, for more information about the plan and for how you can support this ministry.



General Assembly 2018

Highlights of actions of the 223rd General Assembly (2018) in 1,500 words or less

Jerry Van Marter | Office of the General Assembly Communications - June 29, 2018

Church Leadership

In one of closest elections in years, Ruling Elder Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri (Presbytery of Tropical Florida) and the Reverend Cindy Kohlmann (Presbyteries of Boston and Northern New England) were elected Co-Moderators of the 223rd General Assembly (2018) on Saturday evening, June 16. On a fourth ballot vote of 266-253, they prevailed over another Co-Moderator team—the Reverend Eliana Maxim (Presbytery of Seattle) and the Reverend Bertram Johnson (Presbytery of New York City). A Moderator/Vice-Moderator pair—Ruling Elder Chan-tal D. Atnip (Presbytery of Carlisle), and the Reverend Ken Hockenberry (Presbytery of Chicago)—trailed. In other actions involving Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) leadership, the assembly:

- Confirmed the election of the Reverend Diane Moffett as president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

- Confirmed the reelection of the Reverend Tom Taylor as president of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.
- Confirmed the election of Alton B. Pollard III as president of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Fossil Fuel Divestment

By a vote of 332-178, the assembly voted in favor of a minority report that called for the PC(USA) to continue its corporate engagement with fossil fuel companies—through its Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee—rather than divest from those companies. The Assembly Committee on Environmental Issues had voted 35-20 for the divestment proposal offered by the Presbytery of Hudson River. After the minority report became the main motion, it was approved by the assembly 409-106.

Israel-Palestine/Middle East

After spirited debate in the Assembly Committee on Middle East Issues that spilled out into the hallways of America's Center (St. Louis' convention center), the assembly raced through the committee's report in just thirty-five minutes on June 22. Among its actions, the assembly:

- Asked RE/MAX, LLC, to end its sale and rental of property on occupied, disputed land in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The vote was 393-55.
- Voiced support for all efforts to bring Palestinians and Israelis together peacefully.
- Asked the state of Israel to fully comply with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to stop discriminatory practices and called on the U.S. government to rejoin the United Nations Human Rights Council.
- Condemned the recent violence along the border between Israel and Gaza.

Per Capita

The assembly approved a 2019 General Assembly per capita apportionment of \$8.95 per member—an increase of \$1.25 (or 15.8 percent) per member over 2018. The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly had originally proposed a 39 percent increase in 2019 to \$10.71 per member. At the assembly, General Assembly Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson, II revised that request down to a 10 percent increase in 2019 (to \$8.50) and 2020. The Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures approved the 2019 request, but not the 2020 increase. The assembly added \$643,000 (or 45 cents per member) to the per capita budget by the actions it took, raising the final per capita apportionment to \$8.95. In other per capita-related actions, the assembly:

- Approved, in a slightly amended form, an overture from the Presbytery of Newton to establish a team of twelve to fifteen persons to “review the current per capita-based system of funding the ministry of councils higher than the session, for financial sustainability into the next ten years.”
- Asked the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of the General Assembly to explore ways of reducing the cost of future General Assemblies.

The Way Forward

By a vote of 474-47, the assembly overwhelmingly approved the report of The Way Forward Commission, which was created by the 222nd General Assembly (2016) “to discern the vision for structure and function of our denomination.” The Way Forward Commission was joined by the All-Agency Review Committee in many of its recommendations. The assembly also created a Moving Forward Implementation Team to ensure follow-through of the actions taken and to make “mid-course corrections” between now and the 224th General Assembly (2020). Among its actions on The Way Forward, the assembly:

- Restructured PC(USA) A Corp to be representative of five of the six agencies of the PC(USA)—previously the A Corp board was identical to the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The new A Corp board is composed of eleven members, representing each agency, with the exception of the Board of Pensions, plus at-large members.
- Strengthened the role of the General Assembly Stated Clerk, reaffirming that person as the “continuing ecclesial officer and Head of Communion,” naming the Stated Clerk as “constitutional and spiritual leader” for the life and witness of the church, giving the Stated Clerk ex officio membership on all agencies of the church, and giving the Stated Clerk consultative authority prior to the consideration for election of any candidate for chief executive of any of the PC(USA)'s six agencies.
- Authorized a “financial sustainability review.”
- Beefed up the denomination's translation services and efforts toward greater inclusion, equity, and reconciliation between all constituencies of the church.

- Endorsed an “administrative action issued by the commission on June 12 calling for greater transparency, particularly in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and freedom for national staff employees to speak their minds in addressing the prevailing culture without retribution or retaliation.

Racism/Poverty/Violence

The assembly engaged in various acts of public witness that sought to engage issues of racism, poverty, and violence in St. Louis under the umbrella of Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson, II’s, Hands and Feet initiative. In addition to a number of groups who came to St. Louis to engage in Hands and Feet service/learning projects during the assembly, several “mission trips” for assembly-goers engaged with various faith-based community groups to address poverty and racism in the city. The offering from the opening worship service raised more than \$54,000, which after a dramatic march by nearly 1,000 assembly-goers from America’s Center to the City Justice Center on Tuesday afternoon, was given to ArchDefenders, a faith-based group that bails low-level offenders out of jail. Nearly three dozen people, victims of St. Louis’ draconian cash bail system, were released from custody with the money. In its actions, the assembly:

- Approved “The Gospel from St. Louis,” prepared by the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.
- Initiated the arduous process of possibly including Martin Luther King Jr’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” in the Book of Confessions.
- Strongly condemned “the unjust, racist disparagement of people and entire nations” and committed the PC(USA) to “a collective effort to solve the real problems facing our nation and the world.”
- Changed the church’s nomenclature from “racial ethnic people” to “people of color” and the name of the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns to the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee.
- Called for an immediate moratorium on the imposition of the death penalty and for the commutation of all death sentences to sentences of life imprisonment.
- Authorized a five-member task group with a black women majority to raise awareness of issues adversely affecting black girls and women in society and the church, and to develop action plans to address those issues.
- Affirmed and celebrated the “full dignity and humanity” and gifts of people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

Immigration

Following statements issued by General Assembly Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson, II, the assembly called upon the federal government to end family separations at the U.S.-Mexico border, to immediately reunite parents with their children, to inform every parent where their children are being held and their condition, to stop using separation of children from their parents as a tactic to force criminal confessions; and called upon Presbyterians to support immigrant families, particularly parents and their separated children in any ways they can. The assembly also addressed war, violence, and human rights in Central America (particularly Nicaragua), South Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Madagascar, and the Korean Peninsula.

Gun Violence

The assembly reaffirmed previous General Assembly policies designed to reduce gun violence, called all Presbyterians to pray for a movement of the Spirit to engage Presbyterians in nationwide actions to prevent gun violence, and urged them to create opportunities to study the issue of gun violence, with an emphasis on resources produced by the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship.

Paid Family Leave

After long debate in both committee and plenary, the assembly referred a task force to report back to the 224th General Assembly (2020) proposed actions to develop denomination-wide standards and financial support mechanisms for paid family leave for church workers.

Congregational Leadership

The assembly rejected, by margin of 425-57, an overture from the Presbytery of Monmouth that would have allowed congregations to elect and ordain ruling elders without requiring them to serve on session. The proposal was designed to provide more lay leadership in a church that is changing—leadership, for instance, for new worshipping communities, immigrant fellowships, and other nontraditional faith communities.

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