

Commission on Preparation for Ministry
2019 Yearly Report

Informational Only

CPM'S yearly activities:

- Met monthly except for June and December. Reviewed and approved monthly minutes.
- Liaisons gave monthly updates of Inquires/Candidates and CRES/CPS under our care.
- Gave a onetime grant of \$500.00 to each of our Inquires/Candidates and CRES/CPS.
- Philip Lotspeich, General Presbyterian met with CPM and presented an overview of the CRE/CP program and the CPM'S role in the program. He suggested that representatives from CPM, PTC and LDC to form a task force to work on the CRE/CP program. Formed a Task Force, in October with CPM, PTC, and LDC to develop guidelines for the CRE/CP program.
- Moved Scot Robinson from inquirer to candidate. He was confirmed at the May Presbytery meeting.
- Approved Saint Luke Center, Louisville Kentucky as our provider for psychological evaluations for Inquirers/Candidates and CRES/CPS under our care. We have received two evaluations from the Center and had positive feedback from both candidates.
- Interviewed and approved, Paul Miller (PJ) for the CRE/CP program. He was assigned a liaison.
- Approved Julia McCovey's withdrawal from the Ordination process and affirmed her discernment. She is continuing in the Divinity program at Vanderbilt.
- Held our annual retreat at Cliffview Retreat Center on August the 9th and 10th. Annual evaluations for Inquirers/Candidates and CRES/CPS were completed. We had worship time, attended workshops, and meditation time. Approved that all Inquirers/Candidates and CLPS/CPS to continue with their respective programs. Received positive feedback from attendees and looking forward to next year's retreat.
- Met with four CRES/CPS that were unable to attend the retreat, for their yearly evaluations.
- Keith Adams presented a worship service and a sermon to CPM for our evaluation of his skills. A written evaluation was completed by CPM and results shared with Keith. He passed the evaluation with a consensus from CPM.
- Chose ordination exam readers for February 2020. Readers are: Steven Pace (Teaching Elder), Ginny Shanda (CRE), and alternant, Stephen Fearing (Teaching Elder).
- Did a final assessment of Candidate, Heather McIntyre and approved for her to circulate her PIFF. Heather accepted a call to First Wadesboro, North Carolina in September. We wish her well.
- Met with inquirer, Jeff Shaver on November the 12th, to review his Statement of Faith and Bio, in order to move him to Candidacy. CPM suggested revisions of Bio. and Statement of Faith. Motion to move Jeff Shaver to Candidacy with revisions of Statement of Faith and Bio, pending the Presbytery's approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Turner, CPM Chair

Short Biography

Jeff Shaver

Growing up near Albuquerque, New Mexico, I was first introduced to the church through my mother who took my brother and me to a small United Methodist church every Sunday. In 4th grade until my high school graduation, my parents enrolled me in a private Christian school affiliated with the Assemblies of God. Though I have many fond memories from my school days, I was exposed regularly to a kind of “fire and brimstone” Christianity that placed a heavy emphasis on rules and moral performance. Over the years, I distinctly remember listening to countless sermons/Bible lessons emphasizing the “do’s” and “don’ts” of Christianity, with the warning that God doesn’t tolerate backsliding or “lukewarm” Christians. In turn, this caused me to feel a constant guilt concerning my own Christian life. If God’s love for me was based on my own performance, then I knew deep down that I didn’t make the grade.

Yet I tried anyway.

During high school, I helped lead worship several different youth groups, and during my first year of college, I became a youth director at a United Methodist Church near New Mexico State University. Though I enjoyed the Methodist Church, it really didn’t do much for me in regards to the guilt I still carried from my school days.

However, one day a friend of mine asked if I wanted to come to his Christian college group on campus. Although I thought the name was a little weird (Reformed University Fellowship), I decided to try it out for a few weeks. At first, I really didn’t like it all that much—the songs they sang were old hymns, the campus minister (Shaynor Newsome) seemed pretty strange to me, and I really didn’t know much about this “being Reformed” thing. However, I’ll never forget what happened: one night, during Shaynor’s sermon, something really clicked for me.

It was grace!

In all my years growing up in the church, I never once heard grace preached like I did that night. Immediately, the weight of guilt placed on me by that small Christian school was off my shoulders. I distinctly remember thinking, “Oh, I get it! The ‘good news’ *really is* good news!” That night changed my life forever.

Though I originally planned to be a high school teacher, I eventually knew I wanted to go into ministry to become a pastor. After graduating from college and joining the Presbyterian church (PCA), I moved to Dallas, TX in order to get my M.Div from Reformed Theological Seminary.

Four years later, I called Shaynor and asked if he needed help with a church plant/revitalization he was taking in Eugene, Oregon. As Shaynor affirmed the difficulty of taking on a project like this alone, I raised money and made a 3-year commitment to both Shaynor and Cascade Presbyterian Church.

While in Oregon, however, I found some serious limitations being in the PCA. While Shaynor (and myself) loved the idea of ordaining women to places of authority in the church, as well as welcoming LGTBQ folks into the congregation, the bigger structures of the PCA simply do not allow for either of these things. My heart broke as I realized that, ironically, the same denomination where I first heard God’s grace preached was now the denomination holding me back from extending it to others. And though I was only a couple of exams away from being fully ordained in the PCA, I felt God was pulling me toward a new direction.

After I completed my 3-year commitment to Shaynor and Cascade Presbyterian Church, I decided to move closer to my mom, step dad, and brother in Lexington. After much thought, research, and prayer, I also decided to pursue ordination in the PC(USA). As scary as it’s been to leave my friends (and all my job connections!) in the PCA, I have felt extremely loved and welcomed thus far into the PC(USA).

While my church home is Maxwell Street, I’ve been blessed to be the youth director at Beaumont Presbyterian Church for over a year now.

Statement of Faith
Jeff Shaver

First and foremost, I believe in a triune God. I believe that there are three persons in the Godhead consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Though these three are separate and distinct persons, they are the same substance, equal in power and glory. I believe that the God of whom we read in the Scriptures is the God who exists eternally and who has acted in history, entering into a relationship with the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, being revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, and continuing to be present with the church through the Holy Spirit.

Though humankind was created to bear the image of God, I believe we have fallen from our original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and totally defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. Because of this, salvation and redemption for humanity was/is needed. I believe that God, in patience, love, and tender care, set out the long road to redemption to reclaim the lost as his people and the world as his kingdom.

Remembering the promise to reconcile the world to himself, God joined our humanity in Jesus Christ—the eternal Word made flesh. He is the long awaited Messiah, fully human and fully divine—conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. As the second Adam, Jesus lived out his divine mission on our behalf. In his baptism and temptations, teaching and miracles, battles with demons and friendship with sinners, Jesus made present in deed and word the coming rule of God. Standing in our place, Jesus suffered during his years on earth, especially in the tortures of the cross. Offering himself up as a sacrifice, the death of Jesus removed our guilt and set us right with God. He alone paid our debt of sin. Furthermore, the cross of Jesus purchased not only our reconciliation to God, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.

Though humiliated in his life, crucifixion, and death, I believe God made his power and love known in the exaltation of Christ. Though the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was physically resurrected in the body, putting on display God's grace and love for the world to see. Upon his ascension to heaven, Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father where he reigns and rules until his return.

Awaiting this return, I believe in the mission of the church. Being the fellowship of those who confess Jesus as Lord, our new life in Christ is celebrated and nourished in our praise to God, the confession of our sins, the proclamation of God's Word, the offering of our prayers and gifts and celebration of the sacraments—where God meets us and communicates His grace to us by means of water, bread, and wine.

In our baptism, whether of the newly born, or newly converted, we are reminded and assured of our union with Christ, the washing away of our sin, and the gift of the Holy Spirit—expecting our trust and allegiance in return.

In the Lord's Supper, Christ offers us his body broken and his blood spilled, assuring us that we share in the his life, death, and resurrection. By the Holy Spirit, we are indelibly bound to Christ and to each other as we eat and drink together, believing that he will come again to call us to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

I believe the church is a gathering of forgiven sinners saved by the patient grace of God, and likewise, the church is called to be an instrument of God's grace amidst a broken and hurting world. Joining the mission of God, the church is sent with the gospel of the kingdom to call everyone to know and follow Christ, and to proclaim to all the assurance that in the name of Jesus there is forgiveness of sin and new life for all who repent and believe. Furthermore, we are called to embrace God's mission to our neighbors and to our world. The mission of the church is to feed the hungry, bring water to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick and free the oppressed.