

Commission on Preparation for Ministry

May 2020

Informational only

CPM met on May 12, 2020 via Zoom, with discussion and approval of the following:

- Reviewed and approved March 10, 2020 minutes.
- Discussion with approval that our annual retreat on July the 24th and 25th be held virtually, via Zoom.
- Discussion with approval of two workshops for our annual retreat. Self-Care Workshop and Online Ministry Workshop.
- Met with Scot Robinson for the purpose of completion of the Candidacy phase evaluation and to review his PIF. Approved Scot to be ready to negotiate and to post his PIF. Scot will continue under the care of CPM until he receives a call.
- Reports were given for Inquires/Candidates and CRES/CPS currently under our care.
- Several of our candidates have scheduled their Psychological Evaluations. Connie will confirm that our exams are continuing, either in person or virtually.

June 2020

Informational only

CPM met on June 9, 2020 with discussion and approval of the following:

- Reviewed and approved May 12, 2020 minutes.
- Connie will send out the agenda for Retreat, on July the 24th and 25th.
- Annual Evaluation forms will be sent out to all candidates for completion and returned before the Retreat, for CPM review.
- Ordination Exam readers for 2021 are Ruling Elder, Ginny Shanda, Teaching Elder, Scott Cervas, and an alternant reader will be Rev. Rollin Tarter.
- Reports given on Inquirers/Candidates and CRE/CP's under our care.
- The next Presbytery meeting is scheduled for August the 18th, virtually. Donna Phillips will be presented to the Presbytery for Candidacy.

July 2020

Informational only

CPM met via Zoom, on July the 24th and 25th for their annual Retreat.

- Worship Services were conducted by Rev. Stephen Fearing.
- Rev. Keith Benze and Rev. Stephen Fearing presented an On-Line Ministry Workshop and Jennifer Blair, Commonwealth Counseling Services presented a Self- Care Workshop.
- Candidates checked in for their yearly review. Approved all Inquirers/Candidates and CRES/CPS to continue on their faith journey, under the care of CPM.
- Reviewed and approved June 9, 2020 minutes.

- Approved the money left from budgeted for our retreat be given as a one-time grant to all Inquirers/Candidates and CRES/CPS under our care.
- Our next meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2020 at 12:30pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Turner

Chair CPM

Donna R. Phillips Biological Sketch and Statement of Faith

BIOLOGICAL SKETCH



I was born Donna Renae Stevenson on May 23, 1966 in Louisville, Kentucky to Brenda Sue Hayes and Donald Eugene Stevenson ages eighteen and nineteen, respectively. Although my parents were childhood sweethearts, a little over two years after I was born, they divorced, and one year after that, my mom remarried a soldier, George Phillips, and off we went to Augsburg Germany where my new stepfather (bonus dad), George, was assigned. Germany is where I spent most of my preteen years. George listed me as his dependent and my mother assigned me his last name, Phillips, a name that wouldn't be legally mine until a couple of years after returning to the United States and a trip to a Kentucky courthouse when I was fifteen. Kentucky has been my home ever since.

My faith journey began in Stuttgart Germany when I was 12 years old. I cannot remember a time when I did not know that there was a God. I prayed to God even as a small child; however, I did not really have a faith tradition because my parents did not regularly attend worship. While living in Stuttgart, my mother was introduced to the United Pentecostal Church (UPC) located on our Army base; where a few weeks later, she and I were baptized. The UPC church we attended looked like the United Nations, with members from many parts of the world. Seeing the world through such a multicultural Christian lens shaped my view of what the church could be. Less than a year after my mom and I received Christ, we returned to the United States and settled in Radcliff, KY. I was reunited with my dad, the now late Rev. Donald Eugene Stevenson, and was a young adult in my twenties when I witnessed his call to ministry. He worked primarily with youth, and outreach ministries in a small black Baptist church in Louisville, KY. Mom and I found our church home in a small African-American Apostolic Pentecostal Church in Vine Grove, KY where we attended for 18 years.

Although my dad was a Baptist and my mother raised me in the Apostolic Pentecostal church tradition, I grew up to be a Presbyterian. Neither of my parents could figure out how that happened; but, when I asked them 23 years ago what they thought about me joining a Presbyterian Church, they each gave me the same answer. "Go where God leads you." My faith journey, from my youth until now has been transformative, and God continues to shape and mold my life. I carry within me the traditions, life lessons, and memories of all three of these rich Christian traditions; so much so, that I coined a new term to define my Christian formation, "Presbycostalist". That kind of sums me up.

After I graduated from North Hardin High School in Radcliff, KY, I attended the University of Kentucky where I earned a BM in Music Education and a BA in Music Performance. I have served in church music as Children's Choir Director, and Adult Handbell Choir Director at Second Presbyterian Church in Lexington, KY since 1997. From 2000 – 2015 I was the Music Programs Coordinator for Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill in Harrodsburg Kentucky where I served as choir director, engaged in theological research, and spoke publicly about Shaker theology and worship practices. I am currently pursuing the Dual Master of Divinity and Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Degrees at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. During seminary, I have exercised my calling to advocate for the marginalized by serving as the Student Coordinator for the Center for Women and Gender Studies, as a member of the Gender and Ministry Committee, and as a marriage and family therapy intern at Boys and Girls Haven Residential Pre-Independent Living for at risk youth transitioning into adulthood. My desire to advocate for those who are pushed to the margins is

informed by Liberation and Womanist theological viewpoints that uplift a community centered Christology influenced by the African diaspora, the communal identity of the ancient Hebrews, and the ministry of Jesus Christ. In addition, I participate in church leadership by serving as a pulpit supply pastor for Henryville Community Presbyterian Church and Mt. Lebanon Community Presbyterian Church in Henryville, IN. I am also a 2019-2020 Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT) Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) Fellow and have been accepted into the MFP program for the 2020-2021 year.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

I believe in one God, creator of heaven and earth and all that dwell therein. Within the complex nature of God there are three personal distinctions, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

I believe that God offers relationship to us through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who in the ultimate act of love, suffered and died on the cross for our sins in order that we may have abundant life. Christ is head of the church, the foundation upon which the church stands, and is the primary agent of God's mission of Grace. Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully human, was born into the world as a helpless baby of a maiden named Mary. He experienced all the pangs of human existence, and yet remained sinless. To reconcile sinful humankind to God, Christ was unjustly condemned and was sentenced to die a cruel death on the cross. But God raised up Jesus from the dead, and through the resurrection of Christ, the reign of sin and death over humanity was broken.

I believe that God, knowing the sinfulness of humankind, chooses to care for us, and to forgive us. Although our fallen nature makes us deserving of death, instead of giving us what we deserve, God chooses to restore us through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We cannot earn God's grace through good works. Grace is a gift that God has freely given and nothing we are, or nothing we do can make us worthy of this gift. It is only through Christ that we are even able to acknowledge our sinfulness and to accept God's mercy.

I believe in the Holy Spirit who comforts and guides God's people, and who calls us together as faithful believers to be the church, not only in fellowship, prayer, and worship but also, in service to justice and as witnesses of God's saving Grace in the world.

I believe that the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion are communal acts of public worship that serve as signs and seals of the work that God has done in human hearts. The sacraments are external, visible signs that point us to God and remind us of God's promises. They are witnesses to God's grace that help to move our focus from our carnal realities and lift our consciousness to the heavenly.

Through baptism we share in Christ's baptism. Baptism is an outward sign of the call of God upon every believer's life. The Lord's Supper is a gift from God that is given to humanity through Jesus Christ. The elements of the table are a symbolic representation and are not literally transformed into the body and blood of Christ. However, when we partake of the elements, we are spiritually nourished, and we participate in the death burial and resurrection of Christ through them. When we worship God through the sacraments, the Word is made visible to us and God is present with us.

I believe that God is relational and longs to be in relationship with all of creation. God speaks to human hearts in the stillness of the night, in the brightness of the morning, in the extraordinary events of our lives, in the mundane routines of daily living, through the tears of the grieving, and through the laughter of a child, in life, and in death God's unconditional offer of grace and love is expressed.