

PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



ADDENDUM

**ONE-HUNDRED THIRTEENTH
STATED MEETING
JULY 29, 2017**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MARION, NC**

ADDENDUM B-4

**THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
STATED CLERK'S REPORT -ADDENDUM
D. Cameron (Cam) Murchison, Stated Clerk
July 29, 2017**

The Stated Clerk presents the following:

RECOMMENDATION:

- 15. That the Administrative Commission for the First Presbyterian Church of Kings Mountain be given the responsibility to recommend to the General Council the dissolution of First Presbyterian Church of Kings Mountain.**
- if in its judgment such action would be the most appropriate way finally to resolve, consistent with Presbytery's fiduciary responsibilities, the law suit that First Presbyterian Church of Kings Mountain has filed against the Presbytery of Western North Carolina; and
 - if delaying such a recommendation until the next scheduled meeting of Presbytery would compromise the prospect of having the matter settled.

Rationale

As previously reported, the Administrative Commission assumed original jurisdiction of the Session of FPC KM at the end of July 2016. Since then a civil lawsuit has been filed against the Presbytery by FPC KM.

Over several months, a process of court required mediation between the Presbytery and First Presbyterian Church of Kings Mountain has been taking place to see if the civil lawsuit that FPC of Kings Mountain filed against the Presbytery might reach settlement. Hopes for a resolution of the matter that could be brought to the July 29, 2017 meeting of Presbytery have not come to fruition.

However, there is reason to believe that a way forward may be found that might include actions included in this recommendation. As a reminder, the Standing Rules of Presbytery allow for the General Council "to act on behalf of Presbytery in urgent matters by a two-thirds majority vote, provided that a full report of such action is given to Presbytery at its next meeting." Thus, this recommendation would open a path for possible resolution of the matter prior to October 2017 meeting of Presbytery.

While it is true that the Administrative Commission has sufficient authority to proceed along the lines of this recommendation, it has wanted to keep the Presbytery as fully informed of and involved in the process as possible. Thus, it seeks the support of Presbytery in the matter.

ADDENDUM D-6

THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
REV. WHIT MALONE, CHAIR
JULY 29, 2017

SECOND SECTION

The Book of Order provides that the Committee on Ministry may be given authority by the Presbytery to find in order calls issued by churches, to approve and present calls for service of ministers, to approve the examination of ministers transferring from other Presbyteries, required by G-11.0402 and G11.0502g, to dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur, to dismiss ministers to other Presbyteries, and to approve administrative commissions to ordain/install with the provision that such actions be reported at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery. (G-11.0502h) This permission was granted to our Committee on Ministry; therefore, the following actions are to be simply admitted to the record.

I. APPROVED FOR TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP:

C. CHRISTOPHER P. VOGADO

From: Charlotte Presbytery

As: Pastor, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Gastonia

Effective: September 5, 2017

(See COM Attachment 8 for Biography and Statement of Faith.)

II. APPROVED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS AND TERMS OF CALL:

B. CHRISTOPHER P. VOGADO

Salary	\$26,000
Housing Allowance	19,000
Social Security	3,443
Auto Allowance	3,000
Professional Dev.	2,154
TOTAL	\$53,597

Pension/Medical	Yes
Four Weeks Vacation	Yes
Two Weeks Study Leave	Yes

Christopher Vogado
Biography

Chris Vogado is from Maryville, Tennessee, located in the foothills of the Great Smokey Mountains, and grew up at New Providence Presbyterian Church. In 2008, he earned a degree in Religious Studies from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Aside from his interest in religion, Chris has a deep love of music and initially started his time at the University of Tennessee as a studio music/jazz major. He felt his call to ministry through a four year internship at the Presbyterian Campus Ministry.

Following college Chris further discerned his desire to serve the Church at Stony Point Conference Center while living in a PCUSA multi faith community and working as an organic gardener. He also developed an interest in social justice and peacemaking. It was during this time that Chris felt called to ordained ministry and enrolled at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA in 2010.

Throughout his time at seminary, Chris experienced many different ways to serve the Church and to witness to the transformational and awe-inspiring handiwork of God in this world. He also found ways to continue playing music with several like minded musicians. Following seminary he served in a year long internship at Waverly Road Presbyterian Church in Kingsport, Tennessee and completed a year long Clinical Pastoral Education residency at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana.

In 2016 Chris and his wife Rachel, who is also a ordained PCUSA minister, moved to Concord, NC with their cat Sherlock when she accepted a call at First Presbyterian Church, Concord. For the last year and a half Chris has happily been serving in a Temporary Pastor position at Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. In his free time Chris enjoys many hobbies, continuing to play music in several local bands and wondering at the cosmos as an amateur astronomer. He is greatly looking forward to what God is calling him to in this next area of ministry and joining in the work of the Western North Carolina Presbytery.

Chris Vogado
Statement of Faith

I believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God. Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to a young woman, Jesus overturned cultural expectations proclaiming and embodying the reign of God here and now on earth. In his ministry, he healed the sick, turned water into wine, preached to those who would listen, fed the hungry, and dined with outcasts. Jesus welcomed cultural and religious outsiders, men and women alike, and forgave those who sinned. As the Word made flesh, Jesus came to this world as Emmanuel, God with Us. He was crucified on the cross as a political enemy of Rome, and in doing so, took upon himself humanities' burdens and sins. In his resurrection, Jesus broke the power of death, and reconciled creation to God once and for all. It is by this grace that I am saved from my individual sins and the condition of sin which effects all humanity.

I believe in the Living God, made known by the Word of God, who is Creator of heaven and earth, who is active in this world and working in places seen and unseen. In the beginning of the world, God composed life out of a formless void, speaking creation into being. God made creation good and in God's own image. God acts with justice and mercy, correcting, guiding, and redeeming all of creation. I trust and believe, "That I am not my own but belong body and soul, in life and in death to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ." (Heidelberg Catechism 4.001)

I believe in the Holy Spirit, God revealed in and among us, who is the renewer and sustainer of life. It is the Holy Spirit that inspired the word of God, and that inspires us as a church to pray with courage and boldness. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to be a loving neighbor, uplifting the causes of the oppressed, calling us together in community, and claiming and sealing us in the waters of baptism.

I trust in the Sacrament of Baptism. The covenant of baptism calls us into the life of the church, making us a new creation in Christ, calling us to care for all the members of the Body. We baptize children to demonstrate God loves us before we understand or reciprocate that love back to God. I further trust in the Sacrament of Communion. When we gather at the Table, the Holy Spirit lifts us up to Christ, and we are given gifts of bread and wine. These gifts give us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in which we are reconciled to one another, creation, and to God.

I trust in the unique witness and authority of Scripture. Illuminated by the Holy Spirit, the scriptures recount the story of God's saving grace throughout history, and provide witness to how we are to live and serve as children of God. Because I believe and trust in the Triune God, the witness of Scripture, and the gifts of the Sacraments, I am called to live in a way that responds to such overwhelming grace with gratitude. God is faithful, and faith is a life-long process of growing. I take comfort in the words of the Brief Statement of Faith "Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still." (10.3)



2017 PWNC YOUTH DELEGATION

July 29th, 2017

Guatemala Times



HANNAH CLARKSON



On my previous trip to Guatemala, I spent about two weeks living with one family and only really interacting with people from my sister church, Iglesia Jerusalem. This trip, I got to meet a lot more people, and I also got to meet a lot more young people.

I loved meeting all of these new people, and it was really moving to be welcomed into a very caring community of people. When our group split up to go to different churches on Sunday for worship, the group from Grace Covenant got to go to Iglesia Jerusalem. As soon as I stepped off of the bus, the pastor, Hector yelled my name and hugged me tightly. Many other church members had similar reactions to seeing me. I didn't realize how much the partnership meant to my sister church, and being back in that community, even for just a few hours, made me realize how much this partnership means to me. I love being part of a community where everyone is supportive of each other and genuinely cares for everyone else. It was very hard to hear that my host family was dealing with a serious illness, and I have been keeping them in my prayers ever since. I can't wait to continue to build connections with the people in the Guatemala partnership, and to strengthen the ones that I currently have.

JOSHUA SMITH



On July 11th, six youth and four adults set out for a nine day trip to Guatemala. We traveled over 4,000 miles, and returned from our trip physically exhausted, but spiritually refreshed and rejuvenated. We travelled through mountains and valleys, across hot plains and over a wide volcanic lake. We saw waterfalls

by the dozens, drank water from coconuts, and ate more tortillas than you can count. More importantly, we met new friends. We worshipped with Guatemalans from various churches, cities, and presbyteries. They ranged from preschoolers to grandparents, and every single one of them made us feel welcome. There's a line in the movie *Prince of Egypt* which says "When all you've got is nothing, there's a lot to go around." This line is sung while a desert tribe offers food and drink to Moses, a traveler, out of the little that they have for themselves. Throughout this trip, that line often ran through my head. Everywhere we went in Guatemala, our brothers and sisters in Christ opened their homes and kitchens, feeding us and serving us with courtesy and hospitality. Too often we are focused on taking care of those we know, feeding our own families and friends, and that's not a bad thing. But Christ asks us to go beyond that. He says to love our neighbors as ourselves, and in Guatemala I saw clearly what he meant by that. I hope that I will not forget too quickly.

The highlight of my trip was the people that I got to meet. Specifically, I enjoyed meeting the youth from Suchi Presbytery, as well as the ones in our delegation. It was such a blast talking to these youth. Suchi had such a great group of kids, consisting of younger kids as well as teenagers that were my age. They were so friendly and fun to be around! I made so many new friends and was able to experience their lives. Probably the kid I grew the closest to was a 7-year-old named Juan Pablo. We were constantly messing around and having fun (everyone in the group would agree)! Also, I never expected to grow so close with the other people in our delegation - especially the adults as well! I think it helped that the adults were so young and related to us so easily. Literally everyone got along in our group. We are planning to get together next month because we miss each other! As far as what I will take away from this trip, my eyes were opened to the conditions the people there live in, their way of life, and their amazing culture. It was my first experience with another country's culture and hope it isn't my last. It was so meaningful to connect and learn about people so different from me. I was able to experience the churches down there and talk to others in my delegation about what it was like to visit their sister church. This has inspired me to try and get a sister church for our church, First Pres Morganton.



**MASON
STREPPA**

MAXIMILIAN UNGERT



One of the most meaningful experiences I had in Guatemala was the sense of community I felt. Not only did I build stronger bonds with the members of my youth delegation but I also made new connections with the Guatemalan Presbyterians I met. I will carry these experiences in my heart for the rest of my life. The stories I heard were powerful. They were stories of personal sacrifice, searching for opportunity, lost hope in a broken system, and of finding one's voice. They all painted a picture of a country (and a church) locked in a battle between tradition and progress. Visiting the different churches, we could sense the tension between the two ideologies. Some were hostile to the thought of women pastors, recreational dancing, and questioning faith. Others were open to more modern ways of practicing faith. I enjoyed my time there learning about the issues that other Presbyterians abroad face. I enjoyed my time there. I hope that I can share the stories that I heard in order to help our Guatemalan brothers and sisters, as well as inspire and teach my church family here in Asheville.

BEN LOWRY



During the time that we spent in Guatemala, I noticed a similar kind of attitude that came from the people who we met. They all showed extreme kindness and respect to all of us. When I was taking my Spanish courses at my school I remember how to speak in the formal form (you would do this by adding "Usted" to some sentences when addressing someone). So, when we were visiting one of the churches I heard someone say it and it caught my attention. When I turned around to see where it was coming from I saw a little girl staring at me with her glossy black eyes waiting for a response. To make sure I didn't look like a goof by just standing there awkwardly, I started scrambling for the words I wanted to say. I'm not afraid to say that my Spanish is not the best, especially in the field. So, it took me a while to respond to her question, but when I was trying to put words together I noticed that she didn't look at me weird or try to walk away, she just kindly waited for a response. When I finally managed to get some words out of my mouth she gave a little giggle, probably because it wasn't fully correct, and then shot some more Spanish at me. This time, I didn't know what to do, so I had to grab someone to help me. Even though my conversation with the girl didn't last long, it still was enough for me to see an example of how kind and respectful the people of Guatemala are. This was only one scenario I witnessed and I'm sure others experienced lots more. There are many things that I learned from Guatemala and I am very thankful for this experience with my group.



REV. DANA VAUGHN

Our days in Guatemala were filled with so many highs and so many blessings! However, I would say the biggest highlight for me was watching the youth from our Presbytery forge genuine and authentic relationships with the people of Guatemala. It was beyond touching and heartwarming to watch our youth interact with the youth and families there.

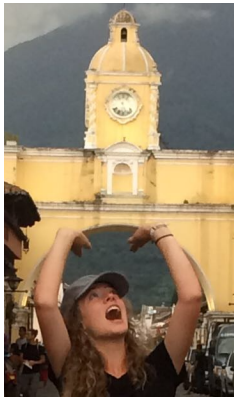


Our youth really invested themselves and made themselves vulnerable so they could connect with the Guatemalans. I watched them hone their Spanish so they could break down the language barrier. I watched them ask questions and really explore the in's and out's of the Guatemalan culture. All of this was in an effort to better understand and connect with their Guatemalan brothers and sisters in Christ. What a blessing it was to see the power of Christ unite us.

During our time in Guatemala there were many walls and barriers that were broken down. There were personal walls that were ripped down. Language barriers and cultural barriers that were overcome. However, the lingering question and take-away is, how can we continue to connect and continue to break down those barriers now that we have returned? How can we continue to reach out and help our brothers and sisters in Guatemala?

I look forward to continuing to connect with our new Guatemalan friends through Facebook and email. I look forward to sharing my stories about my times in Guatemala with folks, as well as further educating people on the struggles the Guatemalan's face and what we (as a Presbytery) can do to help. I look forward to (hopefully) leading more mission trips to Guatemala and continuing to establish more relationships with our brothers and sisters.

PAIGE KEMPER



Looking back on my trip to Guatemala, I experienced a whirlwind of new adventures and exciting discoveries, and each day I got to learn both a bit about Guatemalan culture and myself as a growing person. Choosing a favorite memory from our trip would be impossible for me, so instead I will describe a poignant memory that continues to move me. Soon after we arrived to Santo Domingo, Suchidepéquez, others arrived as well. Some people had traveled from afar while others lived nearby, some people were coming from a wealthier background while others from very modest circumstances. We gathered together in the church, creating a congregation of people who were united solely in beliefs. This church was just a single room, with three walls and a tin roof, open to nature with space for people to expand to if the church could not hold everyone. The doors were also left open, for anyone walking by to look in. Once all were seated, one by one everyone introduced themselves. Some kids announced their age with such pride that everyone would grin, because seeing their eagerness to show their own maturity reminded us of what it was like to be a kid too.

There were about sixty people gathered together in the church, and after everyone was introduced, we were all hungry for some dinner. Just as the introductions came to a close, it began raining, and the pull-out tables that were situated outside where we were to eat started collecting the water that had fallen from the sky. The only nearby place that offered shelter from the rain and could hold so many people was in the church, and so moving quickly we brought the tables and chairs inside the church, and put the food on a table up on the pulpit. Then, everyone grabbed a plate and began serving, naturally, as if eating dinner in the church sanctuary was completely normal. It was as if we were having a communion of chicken and rice to both remember Christ and to welcome in the stranger(s). It was joyful and loud, and smiles were spread across everyone's faces.

There was such a strong sense of community and focus on communication between everyone, and as we ate we could feel the barriers between us falling. I myself do not know much Spanish, but the difference in languages didn't stop anyone from communicating and laughing. This openness, kindness, thoughtfulness and laughter formed a bond of friendship despite the differences between everyone. This memory is something that I will deeply cherish, and in coming home I hope to expand the sense of community that I was able to witness with our brothers and sisters in Guatemala.



SERGIO FERNANDEZ



Before the trip, I wasn't sure what to expect, I didn't know much about Guatemala, except that I couldn't drink the water and eat some of the food there. That's it! Fortunately, to my surprise, I found a wonderful country, filled with beautiful

"postcard" views and volcanos everywhere. Some volcanos, welcomed us with an "eruption show", others just stood there, majestic, like an old Mayan chief calmly watching his tribe.

Then...the people we visited, what a wonderful experience! It is rare to find in one place so many sweet, good hearted, strong, humble, thoughtful individuals. They were very happy to meet us, they opened their arms and hearts to receive us, always with a smile, as if we had been friends our entire lives (although most of us were visiting this country for the first time). They warmed our hearts with kindness and love. It was beautiful to be part of that.

Finally, our team. I can really go on and on complementing our youth. They were fantastic! They never caused a problem, they never complained about anything - even when they were exhausted. As part of the church and as an adult on this trip, I could not be more proud of them. And the chaperones... a phenomenal team of leaders: supporting and encouraging, understanding and kind. I will always treasure the people who I met and the moments that we spent together. Thank you, God for a life changing experience.



REV. SAMANTHA GONZALEZ-BLOCK



“¡Hola, mis hermanos y hermanas en Cristo!”

We said with bright smiles as we stood before a new crowd of Guatemalan sisters and brothers in Christ. This meaningful visit was a time to step outside of our comfort zones in

order to build relationships and experience Jesus Christ at work in a place ‘near and dear’ to our presbytery’s heart.

Before coming to Grace Covenant, I had never before served a church or presbytery that has had such a longstanding partnership with specific churches abroad. It was moving to think that that there are people of faith in Guatemala who have been consistently loving and praying for us here in North Carolina for over two decades. It was a blessing to visit and connect with so many lovely people from our sister churches and sister presbyteries!

I was touched by the warmth and kindness that was shown to us at every turn. Margoth, who is finishing seminary, gave us her entire home to stay in for a few days. She apologized for its simplicity – no hot running water, hardly any furniture – but it was truly the most generous gift that I had ever received. I was left speechless by our delegation, no matter how well anyone knew the language, our youth and adults welcomed the chance to connect with others through soccer, dance, food, worship and fellowship.

I look forward to continuing to be prayerful about how our presbytery can further strengthen its ties with our sisters and brothers in Guatemala. Everyone on this trip taught me so much and I am thrilled to continue to journey in faith and in friendship. Thank you for the opportunity! ¡Gracias!

CONNOR LEIDNER



This year, I have gone to Guatemala two times, both times experiencing ailments: times of laughter, solemn times, and times of appreciation. On both trips, I met all kinds of Guatemalans, ranging in religious beliefs, political beliefs, and financial status. I learned from these experiences that I have so much in my life, yet the

Guatemalans I encountered seemed happier. I kept asking myself, “Why?” Take Eder, the only blue-eyed Guatemalan I have ever seen. He wants to become a pastor, to lead his fellow Presbyterians in worship. He tried to get a visa to go visit the United States (which is a very expensive endeavor), but his visa was denied. When I inquired why, he said he had no idea why. After hearing this story, I pitied him. But he did not want my pity, because this was “the way things are here.” Once I heard that, I did not pity him; I pitied myself. My heart had sunk and I had felt defeated, unable to do anything for Eder; I can’t get Eder a visa or a good education to become a pastor. Today, I know that I will probably never be able to do anything to change the situation for Eder or his family, but I know that if I can help anyone, no matter their status, it will be like I am helping Eder. I thank the Western North Carolina Presbytery for this experience, for an experience that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

