

## Church Leadership School

July 28, 2021

The Church Leadership School of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina is pleased to announce the graduation of two individuals in 2021:

Ms. Elizabeth Barbee  
Reems Creek-Beech Presbyterian

Ms. Janeen Duncan  
Lincoln First Presbyterian

They join over 120 other graduates of our program since its inception 20 years ago, many of whom continue to serve the Lord throughout our Presbytery as Commissioned Lay Pastors and Church Leaders.

The Church Leadership School is directed by the Commissioned Lay Pastors Sub-committee of the Presbytery Committee on Ministry to educate, train, and commission leaders for the churches in our Presbytery.

Through the efforts of the committee and those who selflessly serve it, we continue to improve the content and delivery of this educational opportunity. We are amazed at the diversity of talents and life experiences our students bring to our school. Realizing that learning is a process that takes place on many levels and many ways, we are striving to add different approaches to our classroom experience.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we conducted all of our 2020-2021 classes using on-line meetings via Zoom technology. We found this convenient for distant students and teachers and are currently exploring the possibility of using it in future courses to complement our in-person training held at First Presbyterian Morganton.

Following our success of offering a Summer Continuing Education Events open to all former CLS students, this year we held an on-line seminar featuring the Biblical Apocrypha led by Dr. John Bates. We have also added courses to our curriculum which amplify our mission of developing leadership in the churches we serve.

Our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and life experiences. Men, women, young people, and those more “seasoned” in their faith journey all come together at our school to learn not only from our faculty, but also from each other.

To keep tuition costs low (currently just \$75/term, books included) we depend on an all-volunteer staff to manage and teach our students. Our faculty draws from a rich pool of knowledge from within our Presbytery – retired seminary professors, pastors of local congregations, and former graduates who have served our Presbytery in many capacities.

Unlike many similar programs in other Presbyteries, we do not require a minimum level of education or church leadership to participate in our program. We feel that the Holy Spirit will guide people to us who have been called to use their spiritual gifts. The mission of our school is to add skills and depth of knowledge to those gifts so that the churches they lead are enriched and strengthened in their service.

We do ask that our students' home churches express support of their commitment by providing endorsement by their Session. There is no better forum for developing leaders than a nurturing environment where it's OK to “fail your way to success”. For that reason, we ask that each church in our Presbytery help identify people in their church who would enjoy and benefit from our program, realizing that the church itself is also a benefactor in the process.

Kerry Border, Dean