

**Pastoral Transitions Commission
Report to Presbytery
For August 20, 2022**

1. The Pastoral Transitions Commission met on May 5, 2022 via Zoom; June 2, 2022 at Hunter Presbyterian Church and via Zoom; July 9, 2022 at the DoubleTree Hilton in Lexington (as part of a planning retreat); and on August 4, 2022 via Zoom.
2. The Commission has taken the following actions:
 - a. Approved the Ministry Information Form (MIF) for Walnut Hill, Lexington – Interim Pastor, full-time
 - b. Dissolved the pastoral relationship between the Walnut Hill Church, Lexington and Rev. Mike Ward effective June 30, 2022
 - c. Dissolved the pastoral relationship between Corbin Presbyterian Church and Rev. Lisa Eye effective July 31, 2022
 - d. Received notice from Rev. Rose Taul that she would not be renewing the Temporary Supply Covenant with Faith, Morehead, effective June 19, 2022
 - e. Received notice from Les Grooms of his intent to retire as Commissioned Pastor of August Presbyterian Church, effective July 17, 2022.
 - f. Conducted exit interviews with the sessions and departing pastoral leaders of the following congregations:
 - i. Georgetown
 - ii. Winchester
 - g. Approved the Commission to Install Rev. Brad Napier as Pastor of Stanford Presbyterian Church at 5:00 pm on July 10, 2022.
 - h. Validated the ministry of Rev. Roger Dermody as Executive Director of Forman Christian College, Lahore Pakistan, effective August 2022.
 - i. Reviewed terms of call from PC(USA) Mission Agency for Rev. Kathy Riley (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) and Rev. Rachel Anderson (Presbyterian Peacemaking Ministry).
 - j. Commissioned Ruling Elder Susan Bradish, (certified as ready to receive a commission by CPM) to celebrate the sacraments at the following cluster of churches without further individual authorization from the PTC, effective June 1, 2022-May 31, 2023: Ezel United Presbyterian Church; Perryville Presbyterian Church; Guerrant Memorial Presbyterian Church, Jackson; Old Paint Lick Presbyterian Church; First Presbyterian Church, Hazard; Isom Presbyterian Church; Blackey Presbyterian Church; First Presbyterian Church, Lawrenceburg; Faith Presbyterian Church, Morehead; and that this commission may be renewed annually upon review by the PTC.
 - k. Approved the call from the Walnut Hill Church, Lexington to Rev. Lisa Eye to serve as Interim Pastor (full-time) effective August 1, 2022 to July 31, 2023. Terms of Call:

Cash Salary	\$42,000.00
Housing - [manse and/or amt. of housing allowance]	\$20,000.00
Supplement for Social Security Tax	\$ 4,743.00
Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions	\$22,940.00
Other benefits:	
Deferred Compensation	\$ 3,000.00
Dental & Vision through BOP	\$ 352.00
Medical FSA through employee salary reduction agreement	
Paid vacation leave of 4 weeks annually	
Paid continuing education leave of 2 weeks annually	
Moving expenses	\$ 2,500.00
Travel expense at IRS allowable rate up to (\$0.625 per mile as of 6.1.2022)	\$ 3,000.00
Continuing Education Reimbursement allowance	\$ 3,000.00

- i. Approved the call from Hunter Presbyterian Church, Lexington to Martin Thomas Carver, a candidate under care of the Presbytery of St. Andrew, and certified ready to receive a call, to serve as Pastor (full-time), effective September 6, 2022, pending successful examination for ordination at the August 20, 2022 meeting of the Presbytery of Transylvania. Terms of call:

Cash Salary	\$30,000.00
Housing - [manse and/or amt. of housing allowance]	\$21,840.00
Supplement for Social Security Tax	\$ 3,978.00
Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions	
Other benefits:	
Family Dental plan through BOP	\$ 1,288.00
Paid vacation leave of 4 weeks annually	
Paid continuing education leave of 2 weeks annually (cumulative up to 6 weeks)	
Consideration of 6 weeks of sabbatical leave after 6 years of service.	
Moving expenses TBD and pre-approved	
Travel expense at IRS allowable rate of \$0.625 per mile	
Continuing Education Reimbursement allowance	\$ 750.00
Sick leave/personal leave 1 day/month; can accumulate to 60 days	
3-week paternity leave after each new birth or adoption	
Contract clause regarding right to creative material: Upon dissolution of this call, the pastor retains the right to use, publish, and sell or otherwise distribute his creative property produced while at Hunter Presbyterian Church, and grants Hunter the right to continue to use such property produced for Hunter in Hunter-specific, non-commercial contexts.	

- m. Approved the request from the session of the Harlan church to train and approve Rev. Tim Mills, Non-Presbyterian Temporary Supply, to moderate the session and celebrate the sacraments. The training was conducted by Jerry Utt and Philip Lotspeich.

- n. Appointed Moderators to the following congregations:

 - i. Georgetown - Melissa Bane Sevier
 - ii. Winchester – Curtis Christian
 - iii. Harlan – Tim Mills
 - iv. Faith, Morehead – Philip Lotspeich

- o. Approved the request from First Presbyterian Church, Winchester to elect at Pastor Nominating Committee
 - p. Authorized Rev. Rob Musick, Chaplain at University of Pikeville, to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism at Blackey Presbyterian Church.
 - q. Approved the requests from the following sessions that Ruling Elders be trained and approved to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for those congregations:
 - i. Guerrant Memorial Presbyterian Church, Jackson - Ruling Elder Eric Schonblom
 - ii. First Presbyterian, Prestonsburg - Ruling Elders Libby Radcliff, Carla Smith, and Tommy Poe
 - iii. Hopewell Presbyterian Church, Lexington - Ruling Elder Heather Ladick.
 - r. Philip Lotspeich and Lisa Eye conducted training for Ruling Elders appointed to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on June 23, 2022
3. The following churches have an active PNC or APNC and a Ministry Information Form (MIF) active in the PC(USA) Church Leadership Connection system:
 - a. Hunter, Lexington – Pastor (full-time)
 - b. Maxwell Street, Lexington – Associate Pastor (full-time)
 - c. Mt. Sterling – Pastor (full-time)
 4. The Commission held a retreat July 8-9, 2022 to review and revise its working policies and documents.
 5. Set the 2023 Minimum Terms of Call in accordance with the 4.3% Board of Pensions' Median Effective Salary for 2023.*

For full-time with manse provided – from \$31,416 in 2022 to \$32,416 for 2023; and manse escrow of \$1,000 per year paid into a 403(b) account

For full-time with housing allowance – from \$43,941 in 2022 to \$45,830 for 2023

*The Presbytery of Transylvania approved the following motion at its meeting on November 3, 2018 in Danville, KY: *that the Presbytery of Transylvania Minimum Terms of Call, beginning in 2020, be tied to the percentage increase in the Board of Pensions Churchwide Median Effective Salary.*

Here is the information from the Board of Pensions that is used to figure the 2023 percentage increase: <https://pensions.org/what-we-offer/employer-guidance/effective-salary>

Motion: That the Presbytery of Transylvania ordain Martin Thomas Carver as a minister of the Word and Sacrament and install him as Pastor of Hunter Presbyterian Church, Lexington, pending successful examination before the presbytery.

Background: Martin is a candidate under care of the Presbytery of St. Andrew and, having met all other requirements, has been certified ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. The Pastoral Transitions Commission has approved the call from Hunter (item 2.1). His Statement of Faith, Autobiographical Statement, sermon text and video link are attached.

Sermon video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoRil1ABTAc>

I was born and raised in Hernando, MS. Nestled between the hustle and bustle of Memphis, TN and the sprawling farm fields of the rest of Mississippi, Hernando is a small town with the comforts of a big city near by. I am the oldest of three children and the only son of two loving parents. Growing up in Hernando provided an idyllic childhood full of ball games, exploring through the woods, and (like many a small town childhood) “growin’ up in the church.”

I attended undergraduate school at the University of Memphis. I graduated in 2014 with my BA in English. Narratives and storytelling continue to be interests of mine. During my time in college I worked as a summer camp counselor at Camp Hopewell, a Presbyterian (U.S.A.) summer camp in Oxford, MS. It is there that I first began to consider ministry as a vocation.

Upon graduating I was hired as the Youth Ministry Director at First Presbyterian Church in Hernando. I spent four years in that position, and I got to learn the ins and outs of being a church employee, experienced a pastoral transition, and grew my skills as a ministry leader. It was my experience there as well as the relationships I made that ultimately lead to my decision to enroll in seminary.

I began my studies at Columbia Theological Seminary in the summer of 2019. There I met my wife, Marissa, who is an inquirer in the PC(USA). We were married in September of 2021, and graduated together in May of 2022. Shortly after graduation we welcomed our first child, Thomas, on July 6th.

In my free time (there seems to be significantly less of that since the arrival of Thomas), I love to play music, spend time outdoors, cook, and read. I am immensely grateful for the blessings and opportunities that God has given me and my family, and I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

Martin Carver

Faith Statement

I believe that God is the creator and author of all things. I believe God is the great storyteller that has a specific part for each individual to play in the divine story. God's almighty hand works for justice, love, and mercy in the world even when we as humans cannot see it.

God sent the Word, Jesus Christ, to show us how to live in love and to reconcile the broken relationship between creation and God. Jesus's ministry while on earth serves as a model to his followers as to how to live and love while on this earth. The central themes of peace, hospitality, living in community, and love displayed in Jesus's life should be guiding factors in the lives of Christians and are necessary in effectively displaying the love of God to creation. I believe Jesus died and rose again and now sits at the right hand of the Creator. Jesus's saving life, death, and resurrection restored the broken relationship between God and humanity that we might know intimately and have both personal and communal relationship with the Creator.

The Holy Spirit now dwells among us, revealing God's will in the world today. It is, therefore, our call to discern and respond to the Spirit's work in our lives the best way we know how. Alongside the Holy Spirit, we serve as God's hands and feet in this world working to spread God's love and peace. Knowing these things, I believe it is our responsibility as Christians to share God's love with the world and to be a beacon of hope to all creation.

Luke 8:26-39

²⁶ Then they arrived at the region of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ As he stepped out on shore, a man from the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had not worn any clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, shouting, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me," ²⁹ for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) ³⁰ Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him.

³¹ They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

³² Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding, and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd stampeded down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

³⁴ When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵ Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they became frightened. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. ³⁷ Then the whole throng of people of the surrounding region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

There are some words that are just fun to say. There's that classic, super fun word from Mary Poppins: Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. There's this fancy word, "defenestration," that's fun to say even though it means to throw someone out of a window. One of my favorites is "floccinaucinihilipilification." Anybody wanna take a stab at what that means? It's defined as "The act or habit of describing or regarding something as unimportant, of having no value or being worthless." There's this phrase used when describing this story in Luke chapter 8 that I think is super fun to say. This passage tells the story of the encounter between Jesus and the "Gerasene Demoniac." Now while the phrase "Gerasene Demoniac" is fun to say, in the story neither the demoniac nor the Gerasene people are seeming to have much fun. This is a strange

passage. One that doesn't make clear what is happening or it's implications at a casual viewing. On first glance we can look at this story and just see it as a simple story of Jesus performing a miraculous healing like many of his other miracles, but if we dig a little deeper we get a richer and fuller understanding of what is really going on here.

So we start off with Jesus and his disciples heading over to the opposite side from Galilee to the land of the Gerasenes. For the first time in Luke, Jesus is headed to Gentile territory. He's headed over to the other side of the tracks. He's headed to a place where his presence will be altogether unexpected. He's heading to a place where I'm sure if he told anyone his plans they said, "Oh no, Jesus, you don't want to go there." And when Jesus gets there, those people's reservations are seemingly confirmed. He enters a scene that is characterized by tombs and swine. A place that Luke's audience would immediately recognize as unclean and impure. A place where the unclean pigs are kept and tended. A place marked by the impure stench of death. And to top it all off, upon arrival, Jesus is immediately confronted by a man possessed by demons. I said that Jesus' presence here would be totally unexpected, but I guess it's *almost* totally unexpected.

So Jesus is confronted by this demon possessed man who Judith Jones describes as, "Naked, so overcome by violent impulses that he cannot be restrained even with chains and leg-shackles, excluded from the city, living among the tombs, he shows all the signs that the ancients used to diagnose possession by an unclean spirit." The wording of this initial encounter can throw you off on the order of events here if we're not looking closely, so let's look at verses 28 and 29 again. It says, "When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, shouting, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me,"

²⁹ for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man...” Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Jesus initiates the confrontation that leads to the miracle. This isn’t the usual order of things in Luke’s Gospel. More often than not in Luke, Jesus performs miracles in response to a request. In this case, however, Jesus shows up, unprompted and gets to work. Richard Vinson in his commentary on Luke gives some helpful insight into this inverted order of events. He says, “In fact, once you realize that Jesus initiated the contact, you connect this miracle with the only one so far where that was the case - The raising of the widow’s son at Nain, where Jesus encounters a situation and acts rather than responding to a request.”

The raising of the widow’s son takes place in chapter 7 just before this one, and without getting too far away from our passage today but I think this is relevant, chapter 7 verse 13 says, “When the Lord saw her, he was moved with compassion for her and said to her, ‘Do not cry.’” Jesus was “moved with compassion.” Two weeks ago, as you all know, I helped Marissa out with Creative Camp and the theme was “compassion.” And every day we worked on our “compassion chant” that we taught the kids. It’s a simple little chant, but it’s one that I think everyone needs to practice every now and then. It says: I see your hurt. I feel your hurt. I help ease your hurt. I think Jesus had practiced his compassion chant a time or two because in both of these stories Jesus sees people hurting. He feels their hurt. And then he does what Jesus does best; he helps ease their hurt. Vinson says when looking at these two unique miracles in Luke, “Perhaps the reason is the same in both cases: Jesus acts on his own because no one intercedes for the needy person.”

Jesus acts on his own because no one intercedes for the needy person. Up to this point in the passage we haven’t heard from the man. We’ve only heard from Legion. We don’t know his

name. We don't know how he came to be in this situation. We don't know how he feels about his predicament. We don't know what he thinks of Jesus. What we do know, though, is that this man with the Legion of demons is hurting and vulnerable. Jesus acts on his own because no one intercedes for the needy person. How often do we do this? How often do we look at the most vulnerable members of society and rather than seeing their hurt we bind them with chains and shackles and tell them to stay put? How often do we see those in pain and rather than feeling their hurt we drive them out and send them to live amongst the tombs? How often are we confronted with the plain naked truth that there are those around us who are poor, sick, oppressed, and marginalized and rather than help ease their hurt we'd rather turn a blind eye? Out of sight, out of mind. Luckily, we have a God and a savior that not only doesn't turn his back on those in need but will hop in a boat and ride over to the wrong side of the tracks to deliver us from our pain and suffering.

That's exactly what Jesus does here for the Gerasene Demoniac. He comes to the land of the Gerasenes and drives "Legion" out. That's an important word here in this passage that we can often gloss over. Legion. For the original audience of Luke that word "Legion" would have immediately brought to mind only one definition. A legion was a unit of about 6,000 Roman soldiers. A symbol of the oppressive regime who occupied much of the ancient near east and who made life as miserable for the people living there as this host of demons did for this Gerasene man. Suddenly, when we take a minute to explore the importance of this word "legion" in context then this story takes on a much bigger and broader societal significance. The language Luke uses in this passage of "legion" and how the man was "seized" by the demons and how "he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles" paints a picture not only of a singular man who is tormented by his own personal demons but describes the experience of

an entire people who are living under an oppressive and brutal occupying power. This cruel and tyrannical authority that effects the lives of all those who live under it, though, is shown to cower and beg at the power and authority of Jesus. Jesus has come to bring liberation from all of those forces that would oppress, distort, and destroy human life. Jesus has come with a higher authority and Legion knows there isn't anything it can do about it but beg. Jesus comes to drive the demons into the pigs, and then they are seen no more.

The swineherds see what happens. It says, “³⁴When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they became frightened.” They became frightened. Then they ask Jesus to leave. When presented with the possibility of freedom and liberation the Gerasene people are held captive by their own fear. They want no part of it. So Jesus obliges, and he sets back out across the sea. Not before telling the healed man to return to his home and to declare how much God has done for him. Because now, through the power of Jesus, this man has been restored to his place in society. Has been restored in his physical and mental faculties, and has been restored to dignity.

This story invites us to confront those forces that control our lives. Those demons that we wrestle with day in and day out both as individuals and as a society. It not only invites us to confront these factors, but it also asks us to examine what Jesus has to do with them. Will we allow the power and love of Christ to transform us and shape us into who God has made us to be, living fully into our identity as image-bearers and seeking the health, safety, and dignity of human life? Or when confronted with the transformative power of Jesus will we be held captive by our own fear? Preferring the status quo that only allows some human dignity and others are

relegated to being naked in the graveyard. Jesus comes to set us free from those things which oppress us and prevent us from living fully and abundantly as beloved children of God. And for those who have experienced this healing and love know that it is truly good news. Good news that we are called to proclaim in the cities and the towns. Good news to the nations so that we might live life and live it abundantly. Let us not be held captive by our own fear. Let us not reject what we do not and cannot fully understand. Let us take the good news of Jesus transforming power and love out into the world so that all might live. Amen.