

**Pageland Reformed Presbyterian Preaching Station**  
*2019 Year-End Report*

*“The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” – Job 1:21*

2019 proved to be a year of giving and taking for the Pageland RP Preaching Station. The year began with the continued ministry of Ian Wise as stated supply. In early 2019, Cole and Angel Gaskins and their daughter Gracie joined the church, bringing the group to seven active member households (Cooksey, Gaskins, Chris Mangum, Posvar, Rhyne, Gary Wise, and Ian Wise). Two other family units continued on the rolls but were quite irregular in church participation. The Joe Mangum family continued to attend the church as adherents.

In July, Pastor Ian Wise accepted a call to serve as associate pastor of Southside RP (Indianapolis); he began ministry in Indianapolis in early August. We are incredibly grateful for the ministry of Ian Wise at Pageland RP over the years. He served the congregation well as a preacher and a shepherd. With Ian’s departure, Gary and Patrice Wise also indicated their plans to move away from Pageland to be with their son Josh in Myrtle Beach, SC.

In late August, TGB members Jared Olivetti and Joel Hart visited Pageland to meet with the members and discuss the preaching station’s future. During this visit, it was clear that simply continuing with pulpit supply from local pastors or seminaries was not a sustainable model for the church. For the church to continue, the body would need to actively repurpose itself as a true church plant. That would include commitment to evangelism, body life, sacrificial giving, and church fellowship. The majority of members saw these matters as quite lacking in the congregation. Without these ingredients, a plan for church organization would be hard to formulate.

After pastoral visitation with most of the member families, an informal congregational meeting was held to discuss the future of the church. The remaining families in the church were called to spend a month in prayer together before individually communicating with the TGB about their thoughts on the future of the church. They would be asked to communicate about their desire to continue, their commitment to the ministry of the church, and their goals or hopes for growth in the church.

Unfortunately, this process immediately brought to the surface significant opposition from Joe and Chris Magnum. It seems that this time of transition for Pageland RP reinitiated some of the Mangum brothers’ previous patterns of disruption in the life of the church. At the meeting, Joe strongly opposed the direction laid out by the TGB. After the meeting, Chris sent emails to the congregation indicating opposition to the plan laid out by the TGB and a desire to lead the congregation out of the RPCNA. The Magnum families attended only one worship service after the informal congregational meeting. Their departures effectively cut the size of the church in half and brought great discouragement to the flock.

Of the remaining families, their desire and motivation to continue varied. The more inactive families in the church did not communicate with the TGB, which seemed reflective of their commitment to the church. Of those who responded, all loved the church and would hope it would continue, but only a few really thought continuing was feasible. It was clear that the vision, plan, and resources to continue as a church simply did not exist. Thus, on October 31, the Pageland TGB made the difficult decision to move toward the dissolution of the church. The following reasons were communicated to the church in a letter:

- *“First, it is clear to us that, despite the great love you all have for each other, the resources and energy required to move forward and to grow are simply not present. Although every one of you wants the congregation to continue, some have agreed that God’s providence is pointing us toward closing this work.*
- *Second, none of you are receiving the shepherding care you need and, were we to keep the status quo, you likely wouldn’t receive such care for quite some time. We would be unfaithful shepherds to not guide you soon into faithful congregations where your souls can receive the care and community they need.*
- *Finally, we believe there are faithful congregations close enough to each of you that would be glad and willing to receive you and care for you.”*

The members were informed that they could write to either the TGB or the AIC of any concerns about this decision. None have pursued that option.

January 5, 2020 was determined to be the final day of worship for Pageland RP. We are grateful that Ian Wise was able to preach at that service.

Remaining ministry of the TGB has been to seek to shepherd families into good, local congregations. The Gaskins and Chris Magnum families have made clear their intention not to attend another church. They have refused the shepherding attempts of the TGB. They were dismissed from the rolls with stern warning about their separation from the visible church.

The Rhyne, Posvar, Cooksey, Gary Wise, Usher, and Whaley families are all in the process of seeking membership in other churches. Most of them are finding places for worship in NAPARC congregations.

In the end, we are saddened at the ending of worship at the Pageland Preaching Station. It is the Lord’s providence, and it is a hard one for us and the families there. But we are thankful for the years of ministry there, and we trust His grace at all times.

**Recommendations:**

1. That the Pageland Preaching Station be formally dissolved by the Great-Lakes Gulf Presbytery.
2. That the remaining members of the Pageland Preaching Station, (Posvars, Rhynnes, Cooksey, Whaleys, Gary and Patrice Wise, and David Usher) be moved to the rolls of presbytery until the AIC can transfer their membership to a different congregation.
3. That the remaining funds of the Pageland Preaching Station be distributed to the Atlanta RPC building fund.
4. That the Temporary Governing Body of the Pageland Preaching Station be formally dismissed.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Sean Bird  
 Joel Hart  
 Jeff Kessler  
 Jared Olivetti (chair)  
 Ron Posvar