

Louisville Commission Report

Spring 2020

The Louisville Commission was appointed September 13, 2019. Since that time, we have met in constituted court twice, and our primary activity has been getting up to speed on the status of the group and situation in Louisville. The leadership and faith that the Columbus session demonstrated in pioneering the effort to this point is commendable and has led to a smooth transition in oversight.

Our group of approximately 25 currently has Lord's Day evening worship as well as Wednesday evening Bible Study and Prayer Meeting. In addition, at the core of the work is a very active discipleship ministry which is primarily focused on a variety of folks who have struggled or are struggling with a variety of addiction issues.

The ordinary preaching rotation has consisted of Gary McNamee twice a month, Andy McCracken once a month, and Tre' Cranford once a month. With Andy's departure for Australia, Philip McCollum and David Hanson intend to preach once every other month in the year ahead.

The crucial questions that will shape the next phase of ministry are:

- 1) What is the timeline and path for Tre's ordination in the RPCNA?
- 2) How do we organically tie this group into the RPCNA?
- 3) How do we best utilize Gary's gifts as a resident-in-training at Columbus with significant focus on Louisville?
- 4) While not traditional, is there a path that allows the parallel growth of a preaching station/mission church and a ministerial candidate, Tre', who at the same time as pioneering a work is taking some classes and being examined by the presbytery? (The traditional route would be that first the man is prepared & ordained and then second begins the work of planting.)
- 5) While the financial resources generated locally probably won't be significant by traditional measures, is there sufficient financial health to move forward?

Motion:

- 1) That the Louisville Commission Report be received and that the minutes of the commission be spread on the minutes of presbytery.

Respectfully,
Andy McCracken
Gary McNamee
Jeff Platt
Philip McCollum
David Hanson, Moderator

Minutes of the Louisville Commission
At Southside Reformed Presbyterian Church
Southport Road
December 3, 2019

Attendance: David Hanson, Philip McCollum, Andy McCracken, Gary McNamee, Jeffrey Platt

1. Philip McCollum offered prayer, calling upon God to guide the work of the commission and constituted the court at 6:07 pm.
2. David Hanson read from II Tim 3:10-17, reminding us that our work of sending the Word of God into the world is sending it into enemy territory and that persecutions, trials and struggles will occur.
3. Election of officers:
 - a. Moderator of the Commission: David Hanson
 - b. Clerk of the Commission: Jeff Platt
4. The agenda as proposed by David Hanson was accepted by unanimous consent.
5. An discussion of the current status of the work in Louisville occurred including the following significant points:
 - a. 20-25 regular and committed individuals gather for weekly worship on Lord's Day evenings
 - b. 4 families are members of the Columbus congregation
 - c. Others attend sporadically, mostly from a large community of recovering drug users
 - d. A regular Wednesday Bible Study has 10-12 regular attendees
 - e. Current local leadership is provided by Gary McNamee and Tre Cranford. Sam Stearns is active and serves as presentor. Others looking to serve include Gino Mudd and Brian Anthony.
 - f. The Louisville group is financially dependent and heavily subsidized by the Columbus congregation at about 50% of expenses, including the majority of the support Gary receives.
 - g. The current vision of the work is to plant a church, worship God in truth, and minister to the community of Louisville.
6. Next steps in Louisville:
 - a. It was noted with gratefulness that the Columbus Session is providing shepherding oversight of the people in Louisville.
 - b. Significant discussion occurred surrounding the roles of Tre Cranford and Gary McNamee. Tre has significant influence in the recovering community and is seen as a pastor by them. He desires to be a pastor and is in a period of delay through the Candidates & Credentials examinations. He is enrolled in seminary classes. Gary desires to see the work grow and envisions playing the role of church planter during a time of transition.
 - c. Gary McNamee will continue to be responsible for the preaching schedule. Andy McCracken anticipates leaving the commission and not being

available to preach. A regular need of once per month will begin in February 2020. David Hanson and Philip McCollum expressed willingness to approach their sessions for release to temporarily provide regular evening preaching in Louisville. Others in the Presbytery will be approached.

- d. Council was provided to Gary McNamee concerning candidating with other churches. The commission cries out to the Lord for guidance in this matter.
7. The following action items were noted in summary of the meeting:
- a. Andy McCracken will pursue clarity on the mechanics, expectations, and role of this commission and the pursuit of Mission Church status for Louisville.
 - b. David Hanson and either Philip McCollum or Jeff Platt, depending on scheduling availability, will meet with Tre Cranford and his wife, Caitlyn. This is to occur before the commission meets in Louisville to meet with the committed individuals.
 - c. Regular meetings of the commission will occur approximately every 6 weeks.
 - d. Tre Cranford will periodically be invited to attend commission meetings.
 - e. David Hanson will work to develop a clearer documented understanding of the financial mechanism to track the Lord's provision for this work.
 - f. The commission will need the Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery to appoint a replacement for Andy McCracken.
8. Gary McNamee and Jeff Platt prayed that the Lord's salvation would be known through this work, as He gives guidance and provision. Jeff adjourned the court in prayer at 8:14 pm.