

Candidates & Credentials Committee
 Great Lakes/Gulf Presbytery
 Spring 2020 Report

Recommendations

1. That student exams be conducted according to the schedule outlined below.
2. That Rich Holdeman and Jared Olivetti be nominated to continue serving on our committee.
3. That Joel Hart be nominated to serve on the committee.
4. That Mark Brown be received under care of presbytery and that his exams completed under Allegheny Presbytery be received.
5. That our report be received.

Serving for Christ,

James Faris (2020)

Adam Niess (2021)

Jon Hughes (2022)

Jonathan Schaefer (2021)

Rich Holdeman (2020)

Michael LeFebvre (2022)

Jared Olivetti (2020)

| Student | Exam | Time* | Examiner / text |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Joe Smith | Personal Godliness | 20/10/5 | Philip McCollum |
| Tre Cranford | Systematic Theology & Distinctives, 1 | 20/10/5 | Ian Wise |
| | Evidence of Progress Sermon | 25/-/5 | Haggai 2 |
| | Personal Godliness | 20/10/5 | Jared Olivetti |
| Allen Blackwood | Evidence of Progress Sermon | 25/-/5 | --- |
| | Personal Godliness | 20/10/5 | Gary McNamee |
| Aaron Murray | Personal Godliness | 20/10/5 | Jason Camery |
| | Evidence of Progress Sermon | 25/-/5 | Mark 10:17-45 |
| Zachary Blackwood | Personal Godliness | 20/10/5 | Kent Butterfield |

*Duration - The first number is the allotted time for the examiner's question, the second is for questions from the presbytery and the third is for discussion by the presbytery about the exam prior to voting.

Student Aid

The following students are receiving aid from presbytery:

- Allen Blackwood - began in fall of 2019
- Joe Smith - beginning in March 2020 (anticipating graduating in spring of 2022)

Seminary-Level Classes

- Dr. Mark Garcia, an adjunct professor from RPTS, taught a seminary-level class on *Patristic and Medieval History* at Second RP last spring. The course drew four students.
- Andrew Gilhooley, a PhD candidate and now a member of Second RP, taught a one credit hour biblical studies course on the book of Ruth at Second RP in January 2020 to about 20 students including seven ruling elders. The course was well received. We hope to have Andrew teach a course on covenant theology in the spring of 2020.

Credential & Status Changes in 2019

Licentiates

Andrew Battiatto and Gary McNamee were licensed to receive calls.

Students taken under care or removed from under care

Jon Sturm was taken under care in September, 2019.

Aaron Murray was taken under care in September, 2019.

Licensures, ordinations & installations

Zach Smith was ordained *sine titula* to the mission field on September 27, 2019

Frank Smith was installed as pastor of Atlanta RPC

David Whitla was installed at RPTS as professor on October 18, 2019

Ian Wise was installed as associate pastor at Southside RPC on September 26, 2019

Steven Rhoda was installed as pastor of Terre Haute RPC on September 27, 2019

Resignations & Transfers

Bill Roberts' credentials were transferred to the Midwest Presbytery by the AIC.

Deaths

Dr. Roy Blackwood died on February 24, 2019

N.B. - GL/G presbytery had previously agreed to conduct Jay Dharan's exams for the South Asia Commission. They have removed him from under care, so we will not be doing any more exams.

Men Under Care

Allen Blackwood - From Allen: "Our family had a busy summer (2019), with many changes taking place. First, my job with Tippecanoe School Corporation in Lafayette really ramped up starting in April. Then, Marian Emily Marie was born on May 21 - Eleni and I are very thankful for her, and Henry really loves her and is a great big brother to her. We also worked on packing up

our house and doing lots of improvements before putting it on the market. By God's grace, we had an accepted offer the same day we we put it on the market (late August). We moved in to our seminary apartment a few days before RPTS's September 9th orientation. In some ways it was a challenging transition, but it has also been a blessed time here at RPTS - learning much, building relationships, and being a part of the community here. I have benefitted from all of my classes here - it is a lot of work but it is very profitable! We are attending Covenant Fellowship in the morning, and since they don't have an evening service, we go to North Hills in the evening. The elders at Covenant Fellowship have given me opportunities to lead in different ways during the worship service, including preaching, as well as allowing me to sit in on session meetings, which has been valuable."

Andrew Battiato - Andrew graduated from RPTS in the spring of 2019. He is licensed to receive a call. As he seeks the Lord's leading to serve on the mission field, he is serving the Shawnee RP church for one year (July 2019-June 2020). There, he is supporting Greg Stiner in pastoral work and is studying under and working with Pastor EM. He and Laura have traveled internationally this year and are working with RPGM on various options.

Tre Cranford - Tre has begun online classes with RPTS (so far, studying doctrine of the church, minor prophets, and Greek 1). He also attended in person a church planting class at RPTS. He hopes to take Greek 2 and research/writing next semester. He is excited to start the exam process in earnest and continues serving the Louisville church plant faithfully. We can pray for his health, as some complications from diabetes have prevented him from doing as much studying as he would have liked.

Gary McNamee - Gary was licensed to receive a call from the GLGP in the summer of 2019. At present he is serving as a ruling elder in the Columbus congregation and also as the HMB Resident in Training for the church planting effort in Louisville, KY. He preaches twice a month in Louisville and organizes the preaching that occurs there on the other weeks. In January Gary went through the initial steps as a candidate in Columbus. This included preaching and a congregational Q&A session. He is scheduled to go to Casper, WY to preach, teach, participate in a Q&A session, and get to know the congregation there. This is not an official candidate visit but might lead to further opportunity. Gary is also scheduled to preach in Lisbon, NY on two, successive weeks in March (3/15 and 3/22) as pulpit supply. Lisbon is currently without a pastor, but they have a call outstanding to Garrett Mann so it is not clear that I would be considered a candidate there. In addition to his ministry in Columbus and Louisville, Gary has found time to preach in other congregations in our presbytery as his schedule allows.

Aaron Murray - Aaron continues his pre-seminary internship at Second RP while working as the facilities manager at Second RP. He is also taking several distance classes at RPTS. He has preached some at Second as well as in other congregations under the oversight of his home session and the receiving congregation. He anticipates moving to Pittsburgh to begin on-site classes in the fall of 2021.

Joe Smith - Joe Smith has taken several classes and has had various opportunities for preaching this past year. However, he just recently left his day job in order to begin full-time studies through RPTS, starting in March. He will be taking a full-time load through distance learning for the spring 2020 term; then he and his wife Ally (with their three children, Alexis, Gavin, and Ophelia) plan to move to Pittsburgh to begin on-campus studies there this autumn. Joe anticipates graduating in the spring of 2022. Please pray for the Smith family as they manage their finances during this time of significantly reduced income (Ally has a part-time job), and as Joe ramps up his theological studies.

Jon Sturm - Jonathan is involved in an internship with Second RP which will conclude in August of this year. In discussions with his Session they have indicated that March would be a time when they would recommend next steps. Jonathan and Elsa have begun to look for housing in Pittsburgh and certainly seem committed to proceeding this Fall.

Ministers Without Pastorates Active

Keith Evans - Keith is continuing to serve the Lord as professor of Biblical counseling at RPTS. He is maintaining active involvement with the church.

David Whitla - From David: "there has been a rather significant transition in ministry from last year's report. I am most humbled and thankful to have successfully graduated PhD from Queens University Belfast last summer and to be installed as Professor of Church History at RPTS in the fall. I am now teaching the full slate of Church History at RPTS and most of my assigned Pastoral Theology courses, plus the attendant administrative load. I maintained the former regular preaching and teaching as pulpit supply and visiting lecturer at Trinity RPC in Ireland until I moved back to the States in May (see my previous reports). But given the pressing load of work as a new first-year professor (preparing and delivering on average six to nine hours of lecture each week), I have since had to understandably decline some preaching, conference and presbytery committee requests in order to prioritize this preliminary burden of work in a new calling. I have nonetheless been able preach and teach on several occasions (including performing one baptism), and anticipate greater availability next year, Lord-willing..I would appreciate presbytery's prayers as I adjust to a new sphere of ministry to the broader church serving at RPTS, especially in the challenging first year with its heavy load of lecture preparation."

Stan McKenzie - Stan's ministerial status is active. He and Juliet have their church membership with Christ Church (Indianapolis) as they seek a church home in the Seattle area.

Inactive

Godfrey Franklin - We were unable to contact Godfrey for this report.

Retired

Rich Johnston - Having retired in 2017, Rich continues an active ministry, expressing a willingness to preach when needed (he preached nine times in 2019). As many are aware, Rich is continuing to give much attention and energy to mission work in Liberia. He also serves on the disabilities ministry committee of RPWA. He continues active in the life of Second Reformed Presbyterian Church where he serves on several committees and he leads the weekly Friendship Bible Study. Rich has asked that we pray for the disabilities ministries programs at the RP international conference. Adults with special needs will be invited to attend a daily Friendship Bible Study to demonstrate this ministry to other churches. There will also be several workshops taught during the conference on how to better minister to disabled adults.

Gordon Keddie - Gordon's health has prevented him from enjoying as much public ministry in the past, but he is content and happy to serve the Lord in encouraging the pastors at SSRPC and completing some writing projects.

Ray Lanning - Ray hopes to attend presbytery this Spring. He is good health and spirits, and is glad to be called on to preach in various places, including the Free Reformed Church, the OPC and the Christian Rest Home in Grand Rapids. Linda continues her labors as an RN.

Keith Magill - Keith continues to serve IRPC as a ruling elder and also as their Coordinator for Facilities Management & Expansion. He's also served this past year as moderator of the Sparta session.

R. Paul Mathews - We were unable to contact Paul for this report.

Bob McCracken - Bob continues to be active in serving the Columbus RP congregation.

Glenn McFarland - We were unable to contact Glenn for this report.

Jim McMahan - We were unable to contact Jim for this report.

Bob Morrow - Bob is glad for a clear mind and the opportunity to serve on the Sparta session. He would like us to pray for his ability to care for himself and his home.

Jim Pennington - Jim is active as a ruling elder in the Orlando congregation. He and Ruth have been forced to move twice in the past year and are praying for God's guidance on their adjustments and plans for the future.

Dennis Prutow - Dr. Prutow continues to serve the 2nd RP congregation. He has preached much less this year than in previous years.

Frank Schutz - Phil Pockras reports that Frank's health continues to suffer, as he is on short-term disability due to fatigue and breathing problems. He plans to take early retirement from his job in IT. He and Leslie are rejoicing in a new grandchild.

Steven Work - In 2019, Steven continued serving on the session of the Southwest Ohio RPC as well as leading the Atlanta RPC TGB. He preached 19 times in four congregations.

Jim Wright - Jim transferred his membership from Orlando RPC to membership at Covenant Fellowship in Pittsburgh. He turned 80 on June 9 and was pleasantly surprised by his family traveling to celebrate with him. He remains in the preaching rotation at the RP home and enjoys deep fellowship with his friends there.

Appendix A: Student Recommendations



Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary

RPTS faculty Evaluation of Student E. Allen Blackwood, II Winter 2020

To the Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery:

The Faculty of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary is pleased to report to your committee the progress of Allen Blackwood as he continues his training for gospel ministry. He is in his first year of full-time studies at RPTS as he is on target to graduate in 2022.

We are well pleased with Allen's godliness and academic progress thus far. He presently maintains a high GPA of 3.94 in his M.Div. with Counseling Concentration degree program and is a blessing to the student body here at RPTS.

Allen is a man who is eager to learn, peaceable in demeanor, and Christ-like in his interactions with classmates, faculty, and staff alike.

Additionally, Allen has already begun availing himself of multiple avenues of growth: whether pursuing course work not required for graduation, seeking a variety of electives so as to be more broadly prepared, or extracurricular elements which contribute to his preparations (e.g. ACBC Certification). It is already becoming clear that Allen is intent on being found faithful to the Lord Jesus, as one prepared to be used as Christ sovereignly sees fit.

As such, we wholeheartedly commend Allen Blackwood to the Presbytery as a man vitally walking with the Lord Jesus and displaying the expected gifts and abilities of one called to be a shepherd of Christ's flock at this stage of his preparations for pastoral ministry.

On behalf of the RPTS Faculty, and as Allen's academic advisor,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.A. Evans', written in a cursive style.

Keith A. Evans
Professor of Biblical Counseling,
and Academic Dean

Appendix B: Student Charts

GLG Presbytery Student Chart: **Allen Blackwood**

C&CC representative: Adam Niess

| | Date Completed | Examiner / Proctor | Comments |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------|
| Taken under care | 5/2018 | ----- | |
| Seminary: begun | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Evidence of progress sermon | | ----- | |
| Seminary: first year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| English Bible exam (written) | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 1 exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 1 (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Church history paper | | | |
| Licensure to preach | | ----- | |
| Seminary: second year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Pastoral & evangelistic gifts exam | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 2 exam | | | |
| Church history exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 2 (assigned topic) | | ----- | |
| Exegesis paper | | | |
| Licensure to receive a call | | ----- | |
| Seminary: MDiv awarded | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| Internships | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|

| Ordination Exams | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Expository sermon (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| Soundness in the faith & Testimony | | | |

GLG Presbytery Student Chart: **Tre Cranford**

C&CC representative: Jared Olivetti

| | Date Completed | Examiner / Proctor | Comments |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------|
| Taken under care | June 2018 | ----- | |
| Seminary: begun | | | |

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|--------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Evidence of progress sermon | | ----- | |
| Seminary: first year completed | | | |

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|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|--|
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| English Bible exam (written) | 9/13/19 | Andy Mc./Jared O. | |
| Theology & distinctives 1 exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 1 (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Church history paper | | | |
| Licensure to preach | | ----- | |
| Seminary: second year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Pastoral & evangelistic gifts exam | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 2 exam | | | |
| Church history exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 2 (assigned topic) | | ----- | |
| Exegesis paper | | | |
| Licensure to receive a call | | ----- | |
| Seminary: MDiv awarded | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| Internships | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|

| Ordination Exams | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Expository sermon (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| Soundness in the faith & Testimony | | | |

GLG Presbytery Student Chart: **Aaron Murray**

C&CC representative: James Faris

| | Date Completed | Examiner / Proctor | Comments |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------|
| Taken under care | 9/13/19 | ----- | |
| Seminary: begun | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Evidence of progress sermon | | ----- | |
| Seminary: first year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| English Bible exam (written) | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 1 exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 1 (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Church history paper | | | |
| Licensure to preach | | ----- | |
| Seminary: second year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Pastoral & evangelistic gifts exam | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 2 exam | | | |
| Church history exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 2 (assigned topic) | | ----- | |
| Exegesis paper | | | |
| Licensure to receive a call | | ----- | |
| Seminary: MDiv awarded | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| Internships | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|

| Ordination Exams | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Expository sermon (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| Soundness in the faith & Testimony | | | |

GLG Presbytery Student Chart: **Jonathan Sturm**

C&CC representative: Jonathan Schaeffer

| | Date Completed | Examiner / Proctor | Comments |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------|
| Taken under care | 9/27/19 | ----- | |
| Seminary: begun | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Evidence of progress sermon | | ----- | |
| Seminary: first year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| English Bible exam (written) | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 1 exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 1 (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Church history paper | | | |
| Licensure to preach | | ----- | |
| Seminary: second year completed | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Pastoral & evangelistic gifts exam | | | |
| Theology & distinctives 2 exam | | | |
| Church history exam | | | |
| Expository sermon 2 (assigned topic) | | ----- | |
| Exegesis paper | | | |
| Licensure to receive a call | | ----- | |
| Seminary: MDiv awarded | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| Internships | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|

| Ordination Exams | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Expository sermon (assigned text) | | ----- | |
| Personal Godliness exam | | | |
| Soundness in the faith & Testimony | | | |

