

Communication 26-3 Committee of the Day  
Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery 2026

Fathers and Brothers,

Your committee had the opportunity to meet with Rev. Joshua Smith twice during the Spring meeting. We also had the opportunity to meet with his wife Brooke towards the end of our second meeting. We questioned Rev. Smith in the areas of the demographics, background, and dynamics of the group in North Alabama. We also inquired about his contact and relationship with the group. We heard from him concerning his motivations, temperament, and understanding of exploratory work. We also received a sense of his approach and administrative details, along with how he plans to support his family as a church planter. We spoke with his wife about her mutual alignment and support of these goals.

5 households are from PCA congregations, 3 in the immediate area, 2 in Huntsville. There has also been interest from those coming from a Baptist/Non-Denom background. However, Rev. Smith is adamant that beyond the core group of interest, the main motivation and desire is for evangelism in the local community. He recounted to us that he has a history of doing evangelism in this area going back to his high school years. One family is former RP from the Vegas congregation (re-located for work), and a few of the individuals from the PCA are arriving at RP convictions. Rev. Smith has also expressed a desire to focus upon the veteran community—specifically, PTSD counseling/ministry from a biblical perspective. Given the deep ties of the Huntsville area to the DoW and Defense Industry, your committee is encouraged by the potential for his background as a veteran and desire to be useful in this context. We inquired about the posture of his convictions—both his RP convictions and particular convictions on secondary matters—and how he might hold these in the context of church planting. Your committee was satisfied that his desired approach is one of charity and patience.

In light of our conversations, your committee is supportive of establishing an exploratory work in conjunction with the arrival of Rev. Joshua Smith into the area. We recommend a measured approach with oversight, counsel, and thoughtful bench marks for progressing to next steps. Our recommendations for initial steps are as follows:

- 1) That the Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery establish an Exploratory Work in the Shoals Area of Alabama to be overseen by the Church Extension Committee upon the arrival of Rev. Joshua Smith into the area.

- 2) That the Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery increase the Church Extension Committee to 4 total members (vacancies to be appointed by the Nominating Committee).
- 3) That the Church Extension Committee monitor the effort and report back to the Great Lakes Gulf Presbytery with recommendations at the Presbytery meeting of Synod 2027.

Rev. Colin Samul (Chair)

Rev. Ian Wise

Elder Jonathan Schaefer