

Report of the CANDIDATES & CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE
SUNCOAST FLORIDA PRESBYTERY (SFP)
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Tuesday, September 11, 2018 at 10:00 AM

I. Business Referred from last Presbytery: NONE

II. Statement of Major Issues Addressed

- A.** Examination of TE John Maas for transfer from Missouri Presbytery
1. Approve John's testimony of his Christian experience.
 2. Sustain John's full approval of the Westminster Standards.
 3. Approve John's exam with regard to his theological views.
 4. Approve John's exam with regard to his views on the sacraments.
 5. Approve John's exam with regard to his views on church government.
 6. Sustain John's exam in its entirety.
 7. **MSP** to approve John's transfer into the Suncoast Florida Presbytery from Missouri Presbytery, pending his dismissal. The Committee acted as a Commission to approve this transfer (Suncoast FL Presbytery took action at its May 10, 2016 meeting to grant this power).
- B.** **MSP** to transfer TE Doug Warren to the Northern New England Presbytery. The Committee acted as a Commission to approve this transfer (Suncoast FL Presbytery took action at its May 10, 2016 meeting to grant this power).

III. Recommendations:

- A.** Examination of Zach Tarter
1. Approve Zach's Christian experience and call to ministry.
 2. Approve Zach's coming under care of presbytery.
 3. Approve Zach's exam with regard to basic knowledge of biblical doctrine.
 4. Approve Zach's exam with regard to his practical knowledge of bible content.
 5. Approve Zach's exam with regard to his basic knowledge of our form of government as defined by the Book of Church Order.
 6. Approve Zach's written sermon as satisfying the requirements of BCO 19-2 d.
 7. Approve Zach's exceptions to the Westminster Standards as *more than semantic, but not striking at the vitals of the system of doctrine set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.*

1) The Sabbath (WCF 21.8, WLC 117, and WSC 60)

In general, I agree with the Westminster Standards that the Sabbath should be honored as holy to the LORD. We ought to *rest* from our normal labor—if at all possible—and we ought to devote the day to *worship*. As such, I do not think our kids should be involved in sports leagues on Sunday, and we should try to make our free-time more oriented on God than other days.

However, I take exception to certain elements of WCF 21.8, WLC 117, and WSC 60 that seem contrary to our Lord's statement, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man or the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). The specific call in WCF 21.8 to devote, "*the whole time*, in public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy," places undue demands on the believer that Scripture does not. The command in OT and NT emphasizes *rest* from weekly

concerns and *worship* of the LORD, but seems to allow for more flexibility in how that rest and worship looks than do the Westminster Standards.

2) Images in Worship (WLC 109)

Though my convictions on this topic are still formulating, it seems best to lay out a possible exception for the sake of conscience. I take exception to the prohibition in WLC 109 against making “any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons...in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever.” Strictly speaking, Scripture is not opposed to making images or representations—as seen in the artwork of the tabernacle/temple—so long as those images are not worshipped (the emphasis of Ex. 20:4-5). Moreover, God often represents himself in images, such as a dove or the glory cloud, that can be captured in a picture without being seen as an ontological picture of God. Likewise, I do not at this point see a representation of Jesus in a kids’ Bible, or a nativity scene, as a breach of the second commandment, insofar as they are understood as representations and not actual depictions of the God-man.

8. Approve Zach's exam in its entirety.

C. Examination of Aleksey Zhuravlev

1. Approve Aleksey's testimony of Christian experience and his call to preach the gospel.
2. Receive Aleksey's previous ministry experience in lieu of an internship in our presbytery.
3. Approve Aleksey's exam with regard to his knowledge of biblical doctrine.
4. Approve Aleksey's exam with regard to his knowledge of bible content.
5. Approve Aleksey's exam with regard to his basic knowledge of our form of government as defined by the Book of Church Order.
6. Approve Aleksey's written sermon as satisfying the requirements of BCO 19-2 d.
7. Approve Aleksey's exceptions to the Westminster Standards as more than semantic, but not striking at the vitals of the system of doctrine set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

1) The Sabbath (WCF 21.8, WLC 117, and WSC 60)

I do believe that Sunday is a Christian Sabbath and should be appropriately observed, but “taken up, the whole time, in the public and private exercise of his worship” seems to be a little more than the Scriptures require. That is the reason why I would like to take an exception on some elements of WCF 21.8 WLC 117, and WSC60.

2) Images in Worship (WLC 109)

I take exception to the prohibition in WLC 109 “the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever.” I do believe that it is prohibited to use images of God, Christ or any saints for worship, and I do think that the Second Commandment requires us to worship God only as he commands in scripture (Regulative Principle of Worship), but I do not believe that representations of Christ in the art, for instance, are sinful.

8. Approve Aleksey's ordination exam with regard to sacraments.
9. Approve Aleksey's exam with regard to church history.
10. Approve Aleksey's exam with regard to the history of the PCA.
11. Approve Aleksey's exegetical paper on 1 Peter 4.
12. Approve Aleksey's theological paper on the covenant of works.
13. Approve Aleksey's seminary transcript in lieu of an examination in Greek and forego an examination in Hebrew with the understanding that he will continue his study in this area. (21-4a.)
14. Approve Aleksey's exam in its entirety.

E. MSP to transfer the internship of Randy Lozano to Gulfstream Presbytery.

F. MSP to request Presbytery appoint a commission consisting of TE Dann Cecil, TE Jeff Krause, TE David Stewart, TE Dwight Dolby, RE Jim Robinson, and RE Frank Simms to examine Emilio Fernandez for coming under care of presbytery.

IV. Committee Members Present

| Church | Member |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| North Ft. Myers | TE Dann Cecil |
| North Ft. Myers | RE Frank Simms |
| Cornerstone Auburn Road | TE Phil Woods |
| Auburn Road | TE Jeff Krause |
| Auburn Road | RE Jim Robinson |
| Covenant (Naples) | TE Todd Augustine |

Respectfully submitted,
TE Dann Cecil