



First
Presbyterian
Church
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns *Online*

June 29, 2022 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement*

GA Committee approves resolution on race as a public health crisis

By Fred Tangeman

General Assembly News/June 25, 2022. The Committee on Race and Gender Justice finished its work on Saturday, approving three resolutions that reflected the committee's intersecting focuses: disparities experienced by Black women and girls, racism as a public health crisis, and violence and hate against Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AA, NH, PI).

The morning's work began with [RGJ-13] Report from the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force. The lightly amended report directs the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation to create "education resources for congregations to identify and interrupt practices and policies that perpetuate the adultification of Black girls and criminalization of adolescent behavior."

It also calls on other national agencies, including the Office of the General Assembly, Board of Pensions and Presbyterian Foundation, to identify and invest in antiracist and gender justice trainings "and/or to hire facilitators that center Black women and girls in diversity and inclusion training and that provide a geographically accessible and affordable network for congregations and mid councils."

continued

Race resolution, continued

Developing theology and worship resources that educate congregations in Rites of Passage and a primer/introduction to Black women and other women of color, as well as providing resources for awareness and sensitivity around intersections of race/gender/sexual orientation, are some of the recommendations addressed.

The committee moved to [RGJ-11] A Resolution on Race as a Public Health Crisis. Flora Wilson Bridges, from the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee, introduced the resolution, citing a “need for the PC(USA) to claim and reclaim the ministry of health and healing.”

“Racial discrimination continues to persist in medicine,” Bridges said, going on to discuss the connection between racism and agism, which has been especially harmful in Black and Native communities during the pandemic. Like Allen, Bridges spoke about Roe v. Wade and its wide and disproportionate impact on the public health of communities of color. RGJ-11 directs PMA to raise the church’s consciousness about racism as a public health crisis. It also directs investment in healthy public policies and divestment in unhealthy ones. After one minor amendment, the committee voted unanimously to approve the main motion, with 33 yes votes.

Later in the morning it was time for [RGJ-14] On Violence and Hate Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, the last item of business. Wilhelmina C. Heceta, from Central Florida Presbytery, spoke for the commissioner’s resolution, citing how increased acts of violence against the Asian community and Pacific Islanders in recent years had motivated the motion.

“Each of these acts of violence should be denounced, just like any acts of violence against other communities,” she said.

She continued, “We are considered the model minority. So much of what happens to us gets swept under the rug.” Heceta said the PC(USA)’s response to acts of violence against the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AA, NH, PI) community is quiet compared to its stances following acts against other groups.

Donald Hammond, co-sponsor of the commissioner’s resolution from San Francisco Presbytery, talked about the church he serves in San Francisco’s Chinatown, and also of the “model minority myth,” which he said contributes to the violence perpetuated against Asian American community members.

A commissioner spoke about the increase of Asian hate since the pandemic, and asked for a “clear call of honesty” regarding the resolution, which connects to the other work the committee had approved to address the sin of racism. Another committee member spoke about his fear traveling to Louisville — not because of the pandemic but because of his being Asian.

The Rev. Dr. Neal Presa, moderator of the 220th General Assembly, addressed the group during the amendment process, asking it to tell the full assembly during plenary that different communities named in the resolution, while distinct, have suffered a shared history of violence. When the time came to vote on the amended RGJ-14, the committee approved it with 31 yes votes. The final motion before the committee carried unanimously.

Music Notes.

Happy birthday, America! The month of July opens with a celebration of our nation's 246th birthday. Much of the music will reflect our nation's annual commemoration of our independence.



Foote.

The prelude, *Opus 50, Np. 5*, was composed by Arthur Foote (1853-1937), a Massachusetts native who studied at the New England Conservatory of Music and what was then Harvard College. Foote also received a Master of Arts degree in music from Harvard, the first such degree conferred in America. He was the first noteworthy American composer to be trained entirely in the United States. Foote was one of the founders of the American Guild of Organists, which he served as president for three years.

The Introit, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, was composed by two brothers: James Weldon Johnson, who wrote the text in 1900, and his brother, John Rosamond Johnson, who, five years later, composed the music for the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. Both brothers were active in the civil rights movement, in particular the foundation of the N.A.A.C.P. Other pieces celebrating Independence Day will be *America* (My Country, 'Tis of Thee) and *Materna* (O Beautiful for Spacious Skies).



J.W. and J.R. Johnson.

Our Worship Channels

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MAIRÉAD PETTIT'S DREAM...

UVENIRS

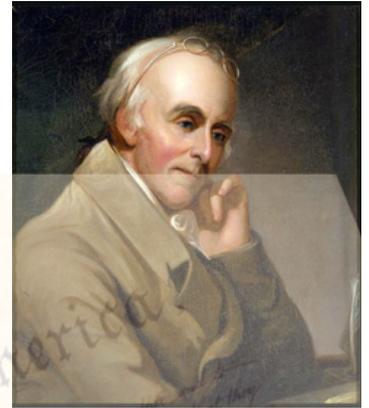


"I HAVE ALL THE FIRST-NAME KEY CHAINS THEY DON'T PUT ON THE RACK."

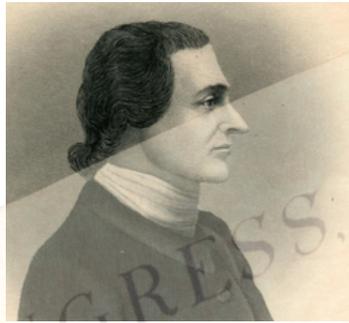
THE 11 PRESBYTERIANS WHO SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



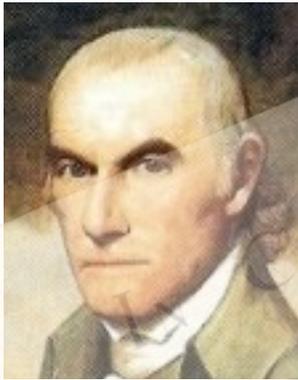
JOHN WITHERSPOON, NJ
MINISTER, PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW
JERSEY (NOW PRINCETON UNIVERSITY).



BENJAMIN RUSH, PA
EMINENT PHYSICIAN, WRITER,
EDUCATOR, HUMANITARIAN



GEORGE TAYLOR, PA
IRON MASTER



WILLIAM FLOYD, NY
FARMER, MILITIA GENERAL



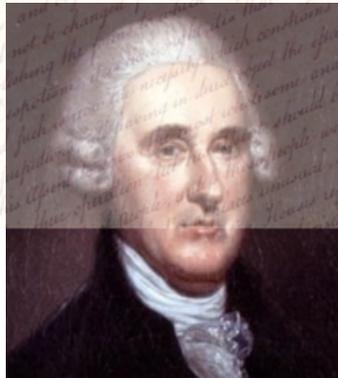
PHILIP LIVINGSTON, NY.
MERCHANT, ALDERMAN



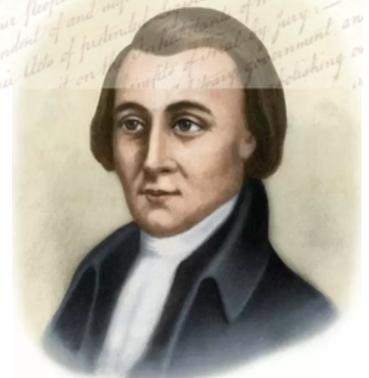
JAMES SMITH, PA.
ATTORNEY, MILITIA GENERAL



JOHN HART, NJ.
FARMER



THOMAS MCKEAN, DE.
ATTORNEY, POLITICIAN



MATTHEW THORNTON, NH.
PHYSICIAN



RICHARD STOCKTON,
NJ. ATTORNEY



ABRAHAM CLARK,
NJ. ATTORNEY

This Week in History.



The Charter of the United Nations initially signed by fifty nations.
June 26, 1945



Songwriter Mildred J. Hill born in Louisville, KY.
In 1893, she published the melody for *Good Morning to All*, later used for *Happy Birthday To You*.
June 27, 1859



Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife assassinated in Sarajevo, setting in motion the events that led to World War I
June 28, 1914



Treaty of Versailles is signed, ending World War I after 20 million deaths and 21 million injuries.
June 28, 1919



The 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was enacted, granting the right to vote in all federal, state and local elections to American citizens 18 years or older.
June 30, 1971



At midnight, the Union Jack was officially lowered in Hong Kong, marking the transfer of sovereignty back to China after 156 years of colonial rule.
June 30, 1997