

PRESBYTERY OF SAN DIEGO STATED MEETING –February 18, 2020

The Stated meeting of the Presbytery of San Diego at Palisades Presbyterian Church was convened by Teaching Elder Fairlight Collins Lower, the outgoing Moderator, at 4:15 p.m. She led the Presbytery in prayer. She also gave the Executive Committee report and presented on behalf of the Presbytery a gift to the outgoing Executive Committee Chair, Sue Skala, for her service to the Presbytery over the last three years. Teaching Elder and Interim Pastor of Palisades Presbyterian Church, Gary Ziccardi, welcomed the Presbytery as the host. Ruling Elder Wells Lyman was installed as the Moderator and Teaching Elder Mike Wallmam was installed the Vice Moderator of the Presbytery for 2020. Teaching Elder Michael Mudgett, Executive Presbyter, gave a report that shared his experience worshipping with Ebenezer, a new worshipping community of Cyclical San Diego. He encouraged the members of Presbytery to worship with them. Cyclical San Diego Director, Teaching Elder Daniel So, gave a report. He also invited the pastors of Anchor City and Mount Soledad Presbyterian Church to share about their journey and partnership together as a new worshipping community and a host church.

ROLL: It was VOTED that the roll would be taken by card, and that those registering during the meeting, together with corresponding members, and those requesting leaves of absence (when granted) constitute the roll. A quorum was present.

	<u>CONGREGATION</u>	<u>TEACHING ELDERS</u>	<u>ECCLESIASTICAL DESIGNATION</u>	<u>RULING ELDERS</u>
1-1	Brawley, First			Carl Stills
2-1	Carlsbad, Christ Church of La Costa	G. Bostrom E. VanGieson	101 103	Joe Miner (A) Cathy Love
3-1	Chula Vista, Chula Vista	T. Davenport (e)	105	Joan Stroh Cora Gregory (A)
4-1	Coronado, Graham Memorial	D. McElrath (e) J. Joseph	101 103	Ralph West
5-1	El Cajon, First	K. Dawsey-Richardson	101	Nancy Williams Doug Flick (A)
6-1	El Cajon, Fletcher Hills	K. Womack	101	Tom Guest Tom DiFiore (A)
7-1	Escondido, Westminster	M. Sedgwick	101	Nancy Scholder Carole Ostrander (A)
8-5	La Jolla, La Jolla	P. Cunningham (e) S. Mitchell	101 103	Mary Kinyon (e) Lynn Lansing Deanne Rohde Pam Taunton Christy Zarkin Jen Marchesini (A) Jim Sedgwick (A) Steve Vincent (A)(e)
9-1	La Jolla, Mt. Soledad	J. Moser	101	William Green (e) Cindy Green (A) (e)

10-1	Lakeside, Community	R. Yenter	105	Gerie Morrin Linda Sunkel (A)
11-2	Oceanside, First	M. Killeen E. Wilson-Manahan D. A. Walker	101 103 109	David McNulla Steven McConnell John Dowling (A)
12-4	Rancho Santa Fe, Village Community	J. Baca J. K. Farley (e) N. Presa D. R. Caughey	101 103 103 109	Lyn Lloyd-Smith Laura Metzger (e) Patrick Singer
13-1	San Diego, Christ United	N. Byrd (e) G. W. Smith	101 109	Harriet Thompson
14-1	San Diego, Faith	S. Codington	101	Nancy Harber Joe Huffaker (A)
15-2	San Diego, First	J. Andrews (e) J. Myers	101 103	Cheryl Kosits Maurice Caskey
16-1	San Diego, Iglesia Emmanuel			Hugo Carbajal
17-2	San Diego, Korean	Y. H. Kang	101	
18-1	San Diego, Linda Vista	R. Roth	108	Stephen Awe
19-1	San Diego, Mira Mesa	D. McColl	105	Gary Huber
20-1	San Diego, Northminster	J. Shirley N. Landis	101 301	Rom Sarno
21-1	San Diego, Orange Ave			Kathy Pham
22-1	San Diego, Pacific Beach	S. Locke	105	Steve Ritz
23-2	San Diego, Palisades	G. Ziccardi R. Ziccardi	105 105	Susan Pelloth Barbara Van Meter
24-4	San Diego, Point Loma Community	K. Shaw A. Wirth	101 103	Gresham Bayne Em Cummins Art Michalek Barbett Wood
25-4	San Diego, Rancho Bernardo Community	B. Stamper (e) M. Wasef	101 103	Mady Cheng Harold Dokmo Richard Fowler Craig Riddle Jim Dunny (A) Joyce Schroeder(A)
26-1	San Diego, Southeast	R. Sparling	106	D Lund Phil Bazier (A)
27-1	San Diego, Taiwanese	Shang Nan Tsai	101	Winnie Davis Nick Tsai (A)

28-1	San Diego, Westminster	M. Cochran M. Taxer	101 109	William Hodgkiss
29-4	Solana Beach, Solana Beach	M. McClenahan J. D. Espitia P. Taylor	101 103 107	Barry Billingsley Cathy Tyre Commissioner 3 Commissioner 4
30-1	Spring Valley, Trinity	J. Rauch (e)	105	Don Axe
31-1	Vista, Grace	M. Wallman	105	Marian Reed Patrick Ryan (A)
32-1	Westmorland, Community	M. Watson	105	Cari Augusta Anne Mallory (A)

<u>OTHER PRESBYTERY MEMBERS and STAFF</u>		ECC DESIGNATION
Executive Presbyter	TE Michael Mudgett	302
Stated Clerk	RE Frances Lin	303
*Chair, Nominating Committee	* RE Sue Skala	
*At-large member Executive Committee	* RE Lloyd Tooks	
*At-large member Executive Committee	* RE Jpetul J'ernantes	
*Presbytery Moderator	*Wells Lyman	
Office Manager	Jennifer Sedgwick	
Director, New Day Urban Ministries	Raul Palomino	

OTHER MINISTERS:

R. K. Adams	299	R. Humphries	299	E. Piper	797
R. E. Anderson	299	W.L. James	299	B. Reed	299
R.C. Betters	299	K Johnson	761	E. Reynolds	645
J.H. Boller, Jr.	299	T. F. Johnson	299	L. Rice	701
W. Bynagte	299	J. Kerkhoff	797	J. Robertson	299
J. Chambers	299	J. Kim	797	D. Satre	791
C. Cowden	797	C. Kohlbray	171	T. Simpson	797
S.W. DeLong	299	T. C. Lai	299	M. W. Smith	761
A.F. Desterhaft	299	C. S. Lee	503	D. So	171
A. Deuel	299	C. M. Lenocker	299	J. So	171
D.F. Edic	299	L. S. León	501	W. A. Soldwisch	299
V. Ford	299	A. Lin	501	G. Spearman	299
B. Franco	701	A. Y. Lin	791	G. L. Stewart	299

R. Garton	299	F. Lower	797	T. Theriault	299
E. Girod	299	P. Lual	299	H. S. Vigeveno	299
J. Hagelganz	299	R. Mentze	299	M. Walls	299
C. Hammond	299	J. Messervè	797	P. Weiler	299
W.W. Hoffman	299	B. Moller	299	M. F. Willard, Jr.	299
C.M. Hong	299	K. Pazan	797	M. Williams	751
G Horn	797	D. Pierson	797	T. Wolfe	299

Commissioned Ruling Elders:

Sudanese American	William Tut*
Solana Beach	Paula Taylor*
Southeast	Steve Peters*

BOLD = Attended Meeting e = excused A = Alternate
 * - Voting Member of Presbytery

Corresponding:

Kristin Leucht – Board of Pensions

Mark Hong – Executive and Stated Clerk of Synod of Southern CA and HI

Mickie Choi – Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program

Guests Present:

Karen Mudgett

Ruth Anne Christ

Patsy Battenfield

Rudy Kosits – First, San Diego

Bob Miller – Palisades

Sandi Miller – Palisades

Sarah Dawson – Palisades

Bonnie Hill – Christ United

Attendance:

Teaching Elders	39
Ruling Elders	36
Corresponding	3
Inquirers/Candidates	
Visitors/Others	10
Total	88

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Section 1: Reports

A. Report of the Stated Clerk

The Stated Clerk reports the following:

1. The Rev. George Walker Smith passed away on February 15, 2020, at age 91. He and his wife, Elizabeth Irene, started a Presbyterian Church in Golden Hill which later became Christ United Presbyterian Church. He was the first African-American elected to office in the City of San Diego, where he served as the board member of San Diego Board of Education for 16 years. The service of remembrance will take place on March 6th at Christ United Presbyterian Church at 11 a.m.
2. That pursuant to the *Presbytery Manual of Administrative Operations* Part I, the following will be the corporate officers of the Presbytery in 2020:

President – Executive Committee Chair –Fairlight Collins Lower
Vice-President – Executive Committee Vice-chair – Eileen VanGieson
Secretary – Stated Clerk of the Presbytery – Frances Lin
Treasurer – Chair of the Budget Property & Finance Committee –Jim Rauch

3. That the following is the imbalance report for 2020 (based on 12/31/18 totals):

Teaching elder (minister) members eligible to participate in Presbytery	113
Less teaching elders not participating in Presbytery	53
Net teaching elders participating	60
Ruling elder commissioners determined by church membership	52
Ruling elder members by office or CRE status with vote**	8
Net ruling elder participants	60
Net imbalance (ruling elders over teaching elders)	0

There are currently 113 teaching elder (Minster of Word and Sacrament) members of Presbytery; but 53 have been deemed to have “not participated” by virtue of not attending any of the meetings in 2019. They are subtracted from the number of those participating for the purpose of determining the imbalance. This calculation leaves 60 teaching elders active in the Presbytery.

Based on 2018 statistics (the last full year with official reporting), each congregation of San Diego Presbytery is entitled to one (1) elder commissioner with the following exceptions:

La Jolla	5
Oceanside	2
Village	4

First San Diego	2
San Diego Korean	2
Palisades	2
Point Loma Community	4
Rancho Bernardo Community	4
Solana Beach	4

** In addition to the ruling elders representing each congregation, the following ruling elders are enrolled as members of Presbytery based upon their election to office for 2020. They are:

Presbytery Moderator – Wells Lyman (Palisades)
 Human Resources Committee Chair – Rom Sarno (Northminster)
 Nominating Committee Chair -- Sue Skala (Point Loma Community)
 At-Large to Executive Committee – Lloyd Tookes (First San Diego)
 At-Large to Executive Committee – Jpetul J’ernantes (Solana Beach)

Commissioned ruling elders (CREs) with Presbytery membership and vote are:

Paula Taylor (Solana Beach)
 William Tut (Sudanese)
 Steve Peters (Southeast)

4. The following is the necrology report for members of San Diego Presbytery in 2019:

1. The Rev. Dr. Donald Davis on passed away on April 23 2019.
2. The Rev. Robert Trent passed away on May 11, 2019. He was a retired US Navy Chaplain.
3. The Rev. Paul Pulliam passed away on August 25, 2019. Paul had served as the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church San Diego from 1970 to 1991.
4. The Rev. Don Newhouse passed away on August 30, 2019. Don served as Parish Associate at Lakeside Community Presbyterian Church for many years.
5. The Rev. Tina Thompson passed away on November 21, 2019. Tina was ordained on March 11, 2011, at First Presbyterian Church San Diego.
6. The Rev. Harold Heath Jr. passed away on December 14, 2019. He served in Linda Vista Presbyterian Church for 17 years. In his final years, Hal enjoyed the loving fellowship of the Mira Mesa Presbyterian Church.

5 The offering collected at the Presbytery meeting Nov. 19, 2019, was \$544 .The fund was sent to Oasis Center.

6. All official correspondence and communications received since the last meeting have been referred to the appropriate governing body, committee, commission or staff in accordance with the *Manual of Administrative Operations* Part I.

Frances Lin, Stated Clerk

Section 2. Consent Agenda

The Stated Clerk recommends, and **the PRESBYTERY VOTED:**

That the proposed minutes of the Presbytery Stated meeting on September 17, 2019, be approved.

Section 3: Business to be presented and/or VOTED on the floor

Ecclesiastical Committee

The Ecclesiastical Committee recommends, and **PRESBYTERY VOTED:**

The Ecclesiastical Committee recommends that the Presbytery adopt and forward the proposed overture received from the Rev. Dr. Neal Presa, for the 224th General Assembly. (Attachment)

The Chair of the Ecclesiastical Committee, the Rev. Bob Mentze, motioned that Dr. Presa be appointed as the overture advocate to the General Assembly 224 in Baltimore. The motion was seconded and the **PRESBYTERY VOTED** to approve.

The Ecclesiastical Committee announced that the annual review of session records will be on Saturday, May 2, at Palisades Presbyterian Church.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee recommends, and **PRESBYTERY VOTED:**

- A. General Assembly Commissioner for 224th General Assembly to be held in Baltimore, Maryland, from June 20 through June 27, 2020.

Teaching Elder Mike Wallman (Grace Vista Presbyterian Church)

Teaching Elder Fairlight Collins Lower (At Large)

Ruling Elder Wells Lyman (Palisade Presbyterian Church)

Ruling Elder Maurice Caskey (First Presbyterian Church, San Diego)

- B. Budget, Property and Finance Class of 2020 Bruce Huebner-RE.

Sue Skala, Chair

Frances Lin, Stated Clerk

- Attachment

On Promoting Human Rights in the Philippines

The Presbytery of San Diego respectfully overtures the 224th General Assembly (2020) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

1. Direct the Stated Clerk, the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the (Co-)Moderator(s) of the 224th General Assembly (2020) to call upon the President of the United States, Congressional leaders, and related executive branch agencies to promote human rights in the Philippines by:
 - a. Urging the Philippine government to cease labelling the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), humanitarian organizations and other civil society organizations as “front organizations of local communist terrorist groups”;
 - b. Calling upon the Philippine government to live up to their duty to protect civil society and non-state actors, especially church leaders and human rights defenders;
 - c. Strongly urging the Philippine government, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and related groups, to affirm the lives and human dignity of the urban poor, farmers, and Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines;
 - d. Supporting the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) and United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) in their advocacy for the peace process between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP);
 - e. Calling upon the Philippine government to uphold its obligations in agreements such as the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and international human rights standards such as the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
2. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, through its Office of Public Witness, to:
 - a. Urge Congressional leaders and relevant Congressional committees to continue their investigations of how U.S. military spending is contributing to and supportive of the misuse of the Philippine Armed Forces in committing human rights violations
 - b. Support lobby-advocacy efforts of US-based organizations, such as the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines – United States (ICHRP-US), with U.S. Congressional and Department of State offices
 - c. Support efforts between U.S. and Philippine legislators who seek to investigate human rights violations in the Philippines
3. Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency, through the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, the Asia-Pacific Office of Presbyterian World Mission, and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program:
 - a. Affirm and participate in the international ecumenical solidarity programs and plans such as the World Council of Churches
 - b. Support the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) as co-convener of the Ecumenical Voice for Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines (EcuVoice) and the Philippine Universal Periodic Review Watch (PUPRW)
 - c. Support the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to fulfill its reporting obligations and any follow-up actions from Resolution No. 41/2 at the 44th Regular

Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (June 15 – July 3, 2020). The UN HRC resolution:

- i. Urges the government of the Philippines to take all necessary measures to prevent extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, and to carry out impartial investigations to hold perpetrators accountable in accordance with due process and rule of law;
 - ii. Calls upon the Government of the Philippines to cooperate with the Office of the High Commission and mandates of the Human Rights Council, including by facilitating visits and preventing and refraining from all acts of intimidation or retaliation;
 - iii. Requests the High Commissioner to prepare a comprehensive written report on the human rights situation in the Philippines and to present it to the Human Rights Council at its forty-fourth session, to be followed by an enhanced interactive dialogue.
- d. Affirm the efforts of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the extrajudicial killings related to the war on drugs
 - e. Resource lobbying-advocacy efforts and visits of Philippine organizations in the United States which advocate for addressing the human rights situation in the Philippines.
4. Urge PC(USA) national agencies, mid-councils, congregations and individual Presbyterians to:
 - a. Pray with and for the people of the Philippines;
 - b. Learn about the history of the Philippines, as well as its contemporary realities;
 - c. Support the ministry and witness of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) and United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), as well as PC(USA) mission co-workers and volunteers through the Presbyterian World Mission Office of Asia - Pacific
 - d. Engage in advocacy with their respective legislators to support human rights in the Philippines.
 5. Direct the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to
 - a. Share this action with our partners in the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), and other related ecumenical and interreligious partners and conciliar bodies.

RATIONALE

I. Red-tagging of PC(USA) Partner Church and Ecumenical Council

On November 5, 2019, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) was included on the list of “front organizations of local communist terrorist groups” by the Department of National Defense (DND). The NCCP was one among a number of humanitarian and civil society organizations in the list that was presented by Major General Reuben Basiao, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence during a committee meeting at the House of Representatives for the modernization of the armed forces. The presentation of Major General Basiao was in the context of the ongoing counterinsurgency program of the Philippines Government against the Communist Party of the Philippines -New People’s Army-National Democratic Front (CCP-NPA-NDF), its history, organizational flowchart and number of attacks nationwide. The front organizations were allegedly providing funds to the “Communist Terrorist Group” (CTG) through “International Solidarity Work”. While the NCCP decried its inclusion on the list, international partners rallied and supported the NCCP through statements of support and letters directly addressed to the Philippine president and to the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

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This red tagging by the Philippine government is part of a nationwide militarized counterinsurgency campaign that is aimed against activists and progressives, under Executive Order 70. The NCCP member churches such as the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) and the United Methodist Church (UMC) are targets of this campaign. Human rights and environmental defenders, as well as the communities and individuals that they serve, are also targets. The war on drugs is worsening the plight of the poor, resulting in the killing of thousands and leaving their surviving family members with few legal options in local and national courts. Meanwhile very few members of law enforcement and the Philippine National Police (PNP) have been investigated in their roles in this war on drugs. Those who are defending the lands, sometimes the ancestral domains of Indigenous Peoples, from the development of mines and dams, are having to deal with the Philippine military which uses their might to protect the interests of international companies. Farmers, who seek to provide food for their families during their low seasons while working in feudal systems, are imprisoned or killed, while the lawyers who seek to represent them are murdered. Meanwhile the Philippine government has ordered the additional deployment of both Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to suppress the violence and terror in these agrarian communities.

In red tagging the NCCP, the Philippine government has implicated by association and membership its member churches including the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP). This is not the first red-tagging accusation for UCCP. This accusation defies the open lines of communication previously promoted through dialogues between UCCP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) leaders, under several previous Presidential administrations.

Under the current administration of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, this red tagging of churches and church leaders emboldens the government to silence dissent. Many UCCP church leaders have already experienced threat, harassment and intimidation, as well as vilification, filing of trumped up cases and unlawful arrests.

II. *Ecumenical Solidarity*

The UCCP is a 72-year-old denomination with mission heritage from the Presbyterian Church (USA). The 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adopted Commissioner Resolution 7-11 (see <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/1383>) recognized this denial of human rights in the Philippines through the crackdown and killing of UCCP church leaders. The 218th General Assembly (2008), in adopting Commissioner Resolution 11-31 (see <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/2123>), affirmed new measures of solidarity with Philippine church partners in light of numerous and well-documented human rights violations against church leaders and civil society groups. The global ecumenical community has expressed prayerful solidarity with Philippine church partners out of grave concern of human rights violations in the Philippines. The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, Switzerland on June 15-21, 2018, among several actions similar to what is being requested in this overture, adopted an action of solidarity, urging the government of the Philippines to “end the culture of impunity, order the investigation of all killings, and drop the Department of Justice’s petition to declare activists as terrorists” as well as the “resumption of formal peace talks between the Government of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).” (see document # GEN PUB 05.04 at : <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2018/situation-in-the-philippines>). The Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches adopted actions in 2012, 2013, and 2015 urging that human rights be honored and justice and peace pursued in various focus areas in the world, including the Philippines. (see Minutes of the WCRC Executive Committee: 2012, p. 164; 2013, p. 151; 2015, pp. 15, 202)

In addition to the solidarity through PC(USA) General Assembly actions, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (PMUN) can provide support by including the Philippines in its reporting mechanisms and facilitating Philippine delegations. At the upcoming 44th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council meeting in June 2020, for Resolution No. 41/2, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will prepare a report based on data submitted by various organizations. Starting with this overture, the PMUN draws attention to the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) report that was already submitted to the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. The NCCP report included examples about these UCCP church leaders:

III. *Real-Life Examples of Christian Leaders Experiencing Violence and Harassment*

Bishop Modesto Villasanta, Bishop Emeritus of the UCCP, has been harassed by the military on various instances for his ministry and advocacy for the Lumad (collective term for indigenous people of the island of Mindanao). In November 2017, Bp. Villasanta along with Fr. Raymond Ambray and other members of the Friends of the Lumad in Caraga were subjected to threat, harassment, and intimidation by Col. Andres Centino, Brigade Commander of the 401st Brigade of the Philippine Army during a meeting of the Municipal Peace and Order Council (MPOC). In November 2017, Perfecto Hoyle, a lay pastor for the UCCP, was shot by two masked men in his front yard. This incident occurred in a village in Kicharao, Agusan del Norte, where the 29th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army was encamped at the time of the shooting. Hoyle was known to be a staunch advocate of peasant rights, advancing the interests of the farmers in their area. He was a member of a peasant organization, UMAN (Peasant Union of Agusan Del Norte).

In September 2018, Rachel Mariano, wife of UCCP Pastor Bill Mariano, handed herself over to the court to prove her innocence of the charges levelled against her. Rachel was charged with different counts of murder related to an encounter between the AFP and NPA in Quirino, Ilocos Sur in October 2017. The trumped-up charges were filed by the 81st Infantry Battalion of the 7th Infantry Division of the AFP based in Ilocos Sur. Since the fabricated charges were non-bailable, she was incarcerated in the provincial jail for close to a year and was only freed after a year had passed. Rachel is a human rights defender working as the health program desk coordinator of Community Health, Education, Services and Training in the Cordillera Region (CHESTCORE).

There was also the unlawful arrest in June 2019 of seven civilians some of whom are members of the UCCP and IFI in the remote area of Buenavista Himamaylan, Negros. Included was Pastor Jimmy Teves, UCCP Licentiate Pastor who together with a co-pastor has been serving 17 UCCP local churches. According to verified reports from the UCCP Office of the Bishop of West Visayas Jurisdiction, the seven were arrested on trumped-up charges of murder and frustrated murder. They were arrested without the benefit of a genuine preliminary investigation which is required by law. Their arrest happened within months of the killings of other activists, including 14 killings on one day and 17 killings over 6 days. The Negros Occidental and Oriental regions are included in a memorandum order that supports the “immediate deployment of additional forces of both PNP and AFP, to suppress violence and acts of terror.”

In addition to those situations, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) is aware of and responding to these specific cases:

Although Rachel Mariano was released from prison, her family continues to fear for their lives because of red tagging. Members of the 2nd Civil – Military Operations Company under the 7th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army made regular unannounced visits to Rev. Mariano. A soldier claiming to serve with the 81st Infantry Battalion has asked for his home address. This same individual has accused him of being a member of the New People’s Army. Rev. Mariano is very involved in a community organization called Defend Ilocos, known for its campaigns against destructive mining. Their daughter Jennybeth has also experienced red tagging on social media. She is the secretary-general of Anakbayan Ilocos, a regional student-led progressive organization.

In September 2019, UCCP Bishop Hamuel Tequis of the Southeast Mindanao Jurisdictional Area received a charge of human trafficking of Lumad children, based on a complaint issued by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Along with two colleagues from Save our Schools Network, they accompanied the children from UCCP Haran to the General Santos City Airport. Under the custody

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of the DSWD, the children were subject to intimidation and harassment by police authorities for three days. Authorities also prevented their parents from securing their children and subjected these parents to harassment. Save our Schools Network provides an alternative school environment for Lumad (a collective word for Indigenous Peoples in Mindanao) students who have been forcibly displaced from their communities because of militarized violence. For many years now, UCCP Haran provided a venue for the schooling of some hundreds of Lumad children and a home for displaced Lumads.

Both Rev. Rosing Doydora and her husband Reynaldo are facing separate charges of murder, and her husband is in jail. She is a UCCP church worker from the Bukidnon Area Conference. Since 2010, they have been active with a farmer's organization NAMAKA, with anti-illegal logging and anti-quarry campaigns focused on protecting human rights and the environment. Due to military operations in the same region as NAMAKA, the couple has been implicated for supporting the New People's Army (NPA).

In eastern Visayas, UCCP church workers and their ecumenical colleagues are investigating the impact of climate change on their human rights. El Niño has replaced harvests of rice, abaca, corn and coconut, with drought, disease and displacement. Las Navas located in Northern Samar now suffers from zero abaca production. Farmers who only knew this livelihood, are left with little or no government assistance in seeking alternative sources of income. In November 2019, there were reports of a bomb in Las Navas, as well as forced entry and strafing of homes. School has also been suspended. The military claims that one specific farmer was a commander of the New People's Army, the armed counterpart of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

In the UCCP South Luzon Jurisdictional Area, several church workers who are actively serving as pastors of local churches, face trumped-up charges. The Rev. Dan P. San Andres currently serves as an administrative pastor and chairperson of the Christian Witness and Service of the UCCP North Bicol conference. He has been accused of double murder charges in Ragay, Camarines Sur. The Rev. Elena Del Valle serves as an administrative pastor in Palawan. She has been tagged as a supporter of the CPP-NPA-NDF. The Rev. Luisito Saliendra is an administrative pastor and chairperson of the Evangelism and Church Development Committee, of the Southern Tagalog Conference. He was charged with attempted murder. The Rev. Edwin Egar is an administrative pastor and chairperson of the Christian Witness and Service committee of the Batangas Associate Conference. He was charged with attempted murder.

The common denominator for these UCCP church leaders is their commitment to serving vulnerable communities, such as farmers and Lumads, in their vision for a society that is centered on human rights, peace and justice. Such acts are not only out of their sense of welfare and patriotism but are deeds inspired by and integral to their Christian faith. They are expressions of their faithfulness to the UCCP's Statement of Faith. And these very communities are the ones who stand to benefit from sustainable livelihoods and adequate social services such as health care and education. These concerns are the core of the ongoing peace process between the Philippine government and the Communist Party of the Philippines. Both UCCP and NCCP leaders also actively support these peace talks.

IV. International Response

International governments, non-governmental organizations, and faith institutions alike have called attention to the human rights violations occurring in the Philippines. On February 28, 2019, members of the House Foreign

Affairs committee called on the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, to raise human rights concerns with the Government of President Duterte around the Philippine government's assault on civil society, media freedom and human rights. The letter concluded, "the United States must not be silent in the face of democratic regression in the Philippines." Later that year, US Senators brought to light a portion of the Philippines government's injustices through proposing Senate resolution 142 to employ the Global Magnitsky Act in order to place sanctions on those in the Philippine government and security forces responsible for the arrest and continued detention of Philippine Senator Leila De Lima. De Lima, an internationally recognized human rights defender and vocal critic against the extrajudicial killings of Duterte's War on Drugs, was arrested in 2017 on trumped-up drug-trafficking charges. However, these sanctions would barely scratch the surface of the government-sponsored injustices occurring throughout the nation.

The Philippine military and state forces insist on cracking down on church leaders and human rights defenders for their work. Backing up those who support this crackdown is the United States military who also provides the training and ammunition. Since 2016 the US Department of State and Department of Defense have provided close to \$550 million in defense funding to the Philippines and have increased joint military exercises with the nation's armed forces. When this information is viewed in tandem with the reality that many of these extrajudicial killings, including those cited above, occur by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the US is condoning and even supporting these actions.

V. Final Word

Previous General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have acknowledged and resolved to take action regarding the human rights violations in the Philippines. These critical issues cannot be meaningfully resolved in a mere decade or two. The PC(USA) must continue what it started by advocating for the US Government to cease funding the violent actions of the Philippine Armed Forces and by standing alongside the Church's siblings of faith in the Philippines as they fight for the rights and dignity of themselves and the people of their country.

Presbyteries concurring: