

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**CASE 2019-05  
APPEAL OF MR. JAMES GOGGAN  
vs.  
MISSOURI PRESBYTERY**

**DECISION ON APPEAL  
October 15, 2020**

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

- 05/31/15 Mr. James Goggan sent a “Letter to the Assumed Membership” of New Port Presbyterian Church (NPPC) expressing various concerns with the leadership of the church.
- 05/17/18 A “Group of Ten” sent a “Letter of Concern” to the Session of NPPC. The letter was signed by Mr. Goggan and nine other members of the church.
- 05/28/18 Mr. Goggan sent an email and a letter entitled “Experiences of a NPC/PCA Church Member” to the Session and other members of the church. In this correspondence, he identified himself as a “Watchman” of the church and made numerous allegations against the Pastor (TE Darrell Jung) and Session of NPPC, challenging the legitimacy of the Pastor’s election, accusing the Pastor of doctrinal errors and authoritarianism, and calling for re-election of all NPPC officers after the creation of a verified list of members.
- 06/10/18 The NPPC Session drafted a 2-page letter addressing the allegations made in the “Group of Ten” and “Experiences” correspondence and delivered it to the congregation of NPPC.
- 6/10/18 Mr. Goggan created a document entitled “Sins of NPC,” ostensibly capturing 36 sins leveled against Mr. Goggan and “several” other members by TE Jung in his sermon of 06/03/18.
- 06/18/18 Mr. Goggan sent an “Open” letter to NPPC’s two Ruling Elders and “...to anyone who loves and is concerned with this particular New Port PCA,” reiterating some of the allegations of previous correspondence, but focusing primarily on the “Sins of NPC” issue.

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- 07/11/18 Mr. Goggan wrote to TE Chris Smith, Chairman of the Care of Churches Committee (CCC) for Missouri Presbytery, communicating his allegations against TE Jung in a commented version of the “Sins of NPC” material (referred to therein as undated “previous correspondence”) and requesting Presbytery review the situation at NPPC.
- 08/28/18 At a called meeting, the NPPC Session passed the following motion: “That the Session of New Port Presbyterian Church admonish James Goggan for his failure to fulfill the fifth vow of membership and of committing the sins of bearing false witness; perpetuating a faction; being deceitful; and failing to first go to a person with whom you have a disagreement/believe him to have sinned. Furthermore, that the Session call upon James to repent and stop any and all such behavior.”
- 08/30/18 The Session met with Mr. Goggan, who produced a document entitled “New Port Session Meeting Items,” in which he reiterated the claim that TE Jung had accused him and other members of 36 sins during the 06/03/18 sermon. He demanded that TE Jung place individual names adjacent to specific sins on a provided list, and that TE Jung sign the document.
- 09/09/18 The NPPC Session issued a written admonition to Mr. Goggan, citing *BCO* 27-5.c and Matthew 18:16.
- 10/04/18 Mr. Goggan made further allegations against the Session of NPPC in correspondence entitled “to Communing and Voting Members of New Port Church (PCA) (and others).”
- 10/10/18 The NPPC session began a series of communications with Mr. Goggan requesting a meeting, which he declined to do
- 10/16/18 Missouri Presbytery moved and passed a motion from its Care of Churches Committee “...to create a judicial commission to assist the Session of New Port Presbyterian Church if a particular church discipline matter ends up arising.”
- 11/10/18 The Session of NPPC wrote Mr. Goggan, informing him that he could resign his membership at NPPC and be “...dismissed without censure...” on the condition he respond by 11/24/18.

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- 11/18/18 Mr. Goggan declined to resign his membership at NPPC.
- 05/03/19 Mr. Goggan was cited by the Session of NPPC to appear before a Judicial Commission of Missouri Presbytery on 05/13/19.
- 05/13/19 A plea hearing was conducted by and before the Judicial Commission of Missouri Presbytery. Mr. Goggan pled “not guilty” to all charges. The trial was set for 06/17/19.
- 06/11/19 Mr. Goggan published a flyer entitled “The Church Trial to Excommunicate James Goggan,” encouraging the public to attend the hearing.
- 06/17/19 The hearing was conducted with TE Smith of the CCC as Chairman. The court delivered a verdict of “guilty” on all charges but did not impose a censure, reserving time for further debate between members of the court and stating that they would arrive at a decision on censure “...within a few days.”
- 07/05/19 The commission voted by email to impose the censure of excommunication.
- 07/06/19 The Judicial Commission convened with Mr. Goggan to pronounce the sentence.
- 07/07/19 The trial and censure were communicated to the congregation of NPPC.
- 07/07/19 Mr. Goggan gave notice of Appeal.
- 07/16/19 At the stated meeting of Missouri Presbytery, “TE Chris Smith reported on the work of the commission to New Port Presbyterian Church that had been formed at the October 2018 Stated Meeting (Motion 1810-24) and modified at the January 2019 Stated Meeting (Motion 1901-32). TE Smith reported that the judicial commission conducted a trial of a member of New Port and, in conclusion, inflicted the discipline of excommunication against the member. 1907-15 MOVED, SECONDED, and PASSED to dismiss the judicial commission with thanks.” No vote was taken by Presbytery to approve or disapprove the Commission Report, as required by *BCO* 15-3.

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- 07/17/19 Mr. Goggan brought his Appeal to the General Assembly.
- 06/25/20 SJC Panel conducted the hearing by conference call. The Panel included RE John White (Chairman), TE Guy Waters, and RE Steve Dowling (Secretary). Also present were Appellant Goggan and TE Chris Smith (Presbytery's representative). The Panel decision was drafted by RE Dowling and, after some revisions, was adopted unanimously by the Panel.

### **II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE**

Shall the specifications of error be sustained?

### **III. JUDGMENT**

No.

### **IV. REASONING AND OPINION**

The Appellant failed to demonstrate sufficient reason to sustain any of the errors he alleged in his Appeal.

The Panel Decision was not approved by the SJC, and the Final Decision was approved by the SJC as a whole on the following roll call vote:

Bankson, <i>Concur</i>	Duncan, M., <i>Dissent</i>	Neikirk, <i>Abdsent</i>
Bise, <i>Concur</i>	Duncan, S., <i>Concur</i>	Nusbaum, <i>Concur</i>
Cannata, <i>Concur</i>	Ellis, <i>Absent</i>	Pickering, <i>Concur</i>
Carrell, <i>Dissent</i>	Greco, <i>Concur</i>	Ross, <i>Concur</i>
Chapell, <i>Concur</i>	Kooistra, <i>Concur</i>	Terrell, <i>Concur</i>
Coffin, <i>Concur</i>	Lee, <i>Concur</i>	Waters, <i>Concur</i>
Donahoe, <i>Concur</i>	Lucas, <i>Concur</i>	White, <i>Dissent</i>
Dowling, <i>Concur</i>	McGowan, <i>Concur</i>	Wilson, <i>Concur</i>
(19-3-0)		