

COMMISSIONER HANDBOOK
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH GATHERING
OF
THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW HOPE

October 25, 2025



First Presbyterian Church
2101 N. Herritage Street
Kinston, NC 28501
252-522-1921
<http://fpckinston.org>

Co-hosted by
White Rock Presbyterian Church
514 Thompson Street
Kinston, NC 28502
252-523-4907

TABLE OF CONTENTS

One Hundred and Twenty-Sixth Stated Gathering of Presbytery	3
Newcomer’s Guide to Presbytery Meetings.....	5
Hotels/Accommodation.....	7
Campus Map	8
History of First Presbyterian Church, Kinston.....	9
History of White Rock Presbyterian Church	10
Letter of Welcome.....	11
Proposed Docket.....	12
Consent Agenda	14
Report of Executive Presbyter	15
Report of Temporary Associate Presbyter	24
Report of Temporary Stated Clerk	26
Sessional Records	28
Elders Celebrating 25 Years of Service to the PC(USA)	29
Report of Coordinating Body	30
Finance and Property	31
Commission on Preparation for Ministry.....	36
Letter of Endorsement for Candidacy	
Joye Hodges Douthart.....	37
Report of Commission on Ministry and Examinations and Transfers Sub-Commission	38
Statements of Faith and Biographical Sketches	
Rev. Katherine Hester Doehring	41, 42
Rev. Ron Gilmer.....	43, 44
Rev. Jacob Kennedy.....	45, 46
Rev. Ally Pexa.....	47, 48
In Memoriam	
Rev. Marilyn Turner Hedgpeth	49
Rev. Mitzi Lynne Leshner-Thomas	51
Nominations and Representation	53
Nominations Form	54
Bills and Overtures/Resolutions: How to Submit to Presbytery	55
Overture/Concurrence: How to Submit to General Assembly	56
Parliamentary Procedures for Presbytery of New Hope.....	60
Parliamentary Procedures for Motions Chart	62
Presbytery of New Hope Guide to Acronyms.....	63
Presbytery of New Hope Staff Contact Sheet.....	64
Presbytery of New Hope Publications, Publicity, and Table Display Policy	65

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH STATED GATHERING OF PRESBYTERY

Registration

Please register on the presbytery website at the following link: <https://nhpresbytery.org/registration-126th/> . **The deadline for registration is Monday, October 20 by 5:00 p.m.**

Non-Attendance

Minister members (except those who are retired) are expected to present a reason for absence from the meeting, (Presbytery Bylaws Ref. 3.13c). Churches unable to be represented by an elected elder commissioner from the congregation should also submit a request to be excused.

All requests for excused absences should be submitted to the stated clerk through Christine Kelson using the appropriate link on the presbytery website:

ministers: <https://nhpresbytery.org/excused-absence-minister-2/>

churches: <https://nhpresbytery.org/excused-absence-church-2/>

You may also send an email to Christine at ckelson@nhpresbytery.org. Requests for excused absences must be received in advance of the meeting.

Commissioner Handbook/Meeting Materials

The handbook can be downloaded at the following link: <https://nhpresbytery.org/events/126th-stated-gathering-of-presbytery/> . **Please bring a copy of the handbook with you to the gathering.**

If you are planning to download the handbook to a device, please do this before the meeting to enhance Wi-Fi reception at the church.

Check-In

Check-in opens at 8:00 a.m. Upon arrival, please go directly to the check-in area.

Minister Members of New Hope

There will be a dedicated table for minister members of New Hope – **please check in here.**

Ruling Elder Commissioners and All Other Visitors

Please check in at the appropriate table (set up alphabetically by last name). If you did not pre-register, please sign in at the specially designated registration table.

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DONATIONS

Attendees are asked to bring non-perishable food items, which will be donated to Mary's Kitchen. Mary's Kitchen is located at 110 N. Independence Street in downtown Kinston and provides a lunchtime meal 7 days a week, all year long.

Worship Offering

Today's offering goes to Backpack Buddies of Lenoir County, which strives to alleviate weekend hunger and food insecurity experienced by K-12 students in Lenoir County.

Lunch

Please register your attendance online by the October 20 deadline if you would like lunch, including the vegetarian option. This is helpful to the host church for planning purposes. Lunch tickets may be purchased on the day of the meeting in the registration area and are \$15.00 per person, payable by cash, check, or card. Checks should be made out to First Presbyterian Church with “presbytery lunch” on the memo line. There will be a small additional fee for credit card transactions.

Child Care

Childcare reservations may be made when you register online for the gathering. Please prepare lunch for your child. Contact the host church directly if your child has allergies and provide an appropriate lunch/snack. Please inform the host church no later than Thursday, October 23 if you reserve childcare, but then do not require it. Contact Gina Mackey at ginajmackey@gmail.com.

Wi-Fi Network

Network name: First Presbyterian Guest
Password: 2525221921

The livestream and recording can be found here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_82pth3dlo

This is a viewing service only and your attendance at the meeting will not be counted by viewing the broadcast. Voting and participating in the meeting is unavailable through this platform.

Cell Phones

Out of respect for others attending the meeting, all cell phones should be turned off or set to vibrate.

Parliamentary Procedures

Guidelines and a summary to parliamentary procedures of the Presbyterian Church (USA) can be found on pages 60 and 62 of the handbook. Motion forms will be at the stated clerk’s table if you need to use one.

Next Stated Gathering

Saturday, February 28, 2026: Peace Presbyterian Church, Winterville.

Disclaimer: The displays you see at any given presbytery meeting may or may not be endorsed by the Presbytery of New Hope.

A NEWCOMER'S GUIDE TO PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

WELCOME FIRST-TIME COMMISSIONERS

Despite rumors to the contrary, many really do enjoy the time of fellowship and sharing when our presbytery meets. However, if you have not been to such a meeting before, it may seem a little confusing at first. The goal of this guide is to make your participation more meaningful, for at presbytery meetings we have good news to share, successes to celebrate, helpful resources to publicize, important (and some not so important) decisions to make, plans to approve, and a wonderful family of 111 congregations to get to know better.

WHAT IS A PRESBYTERY?

A presbytery is the key governing body (council) in our denomination. There are 172 presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Our presbytery includes 111 churches with 22,544 members through the North Carolina Piedmont and coast. The commissioners of a presbytery gathering consist of all the active and retired teaching elders and at least one ruling elder from each congregation. The stated clerk ensures there is an equal number of teaching and ruling elders who gather as commissioners at least three times a year.

WHAT DOES A PRESBYTERY DO?

A presbytery is responsible for the mission and government of the church throughout its area. "In partnership with sessions, the mission of our presbytery is to foster vital and faithful congregations to be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ." By combining resources, a presbytery can help each church enhance its ministry by assisting with the calling of pastors, teacher training, grants and loans, officer development, camping programs, conference retreats, mission trips, and many other support ministries.

WHEN DOES PRESBYTERY MEET?

There are three full-day stated (regular) meetings; the February and October meetings are on the 4th Saturday of the month, and the July meeting is on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Special meetings can be called as necessary, and presbytery committees and commissions meet throughout the year.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THIS MEETING?

In advance of the meeting, all commissioners will have access to an electronic handbook of reports, proposed actions, and background information; this is called the *Commissioner Handbook*. The handbook will be emailed to your clerk of session prior to the meeting, who will then share it with you. Please read these documents carefully, and be prepared to discuss and vote if necessary.

In general, you will experience the following:

- **Celebration**: Our day begins with worship. Ordinarily worship is led by the host church though there are exceptions at times. We will also welcome new ministers and give thanks for special achievements and for retirements, and pledge ourselves to better mission and witness as we join in the fellowship of committed Christians who represent our 111 congregations.

- **Information**: You will learn about lots of events and opportunities to share with your session and congregation: new programs, mission plans, available resources, etc. Be a good communicator when you are back home; make sure your session and congregation are kept informed.
- **Presbytery Procedures**: Much is fairly routine: adoption of the docket (order of consideration), approval of minutes, receiving reports, etc. Several routine housekeeping matters are put together in an omnibus motion, which is voted on as a unit (but you can remove any item for later discussion). Though rather unexciting, these matters are necessary.
- **Debate and Action**: At most meetings, there will be a few items that deserve extensive discussion. Though a committee or the Coordinating Body has reviewed each recommendation, it should nevertheless be carefully considered before you decide how to vote. If you do not understand what is happening, please ask the moderator to explain the matter currently before the presbytery. If you want to offer a motion, the stated clerk would be glad to help you draft it. Your role is to listen carefully, share in the debate if you feel led to do so, and then vote as the Holy Spirit leads you to understand what is best for Christ's Church.

As a commissioner, it is a privilege and responsibility to help guide this part of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Be prepared/ listen / pray / take notes / report back home.

Remember that you are helping our presbytery in a much valued and vital way to build up the Body of Christ, here in this part of North Carolina, to the greater glory of our Lord.

Hotels/Accommodation

Mother Earth Motor Lodge

<http://motherearthmotorlodge.com/>

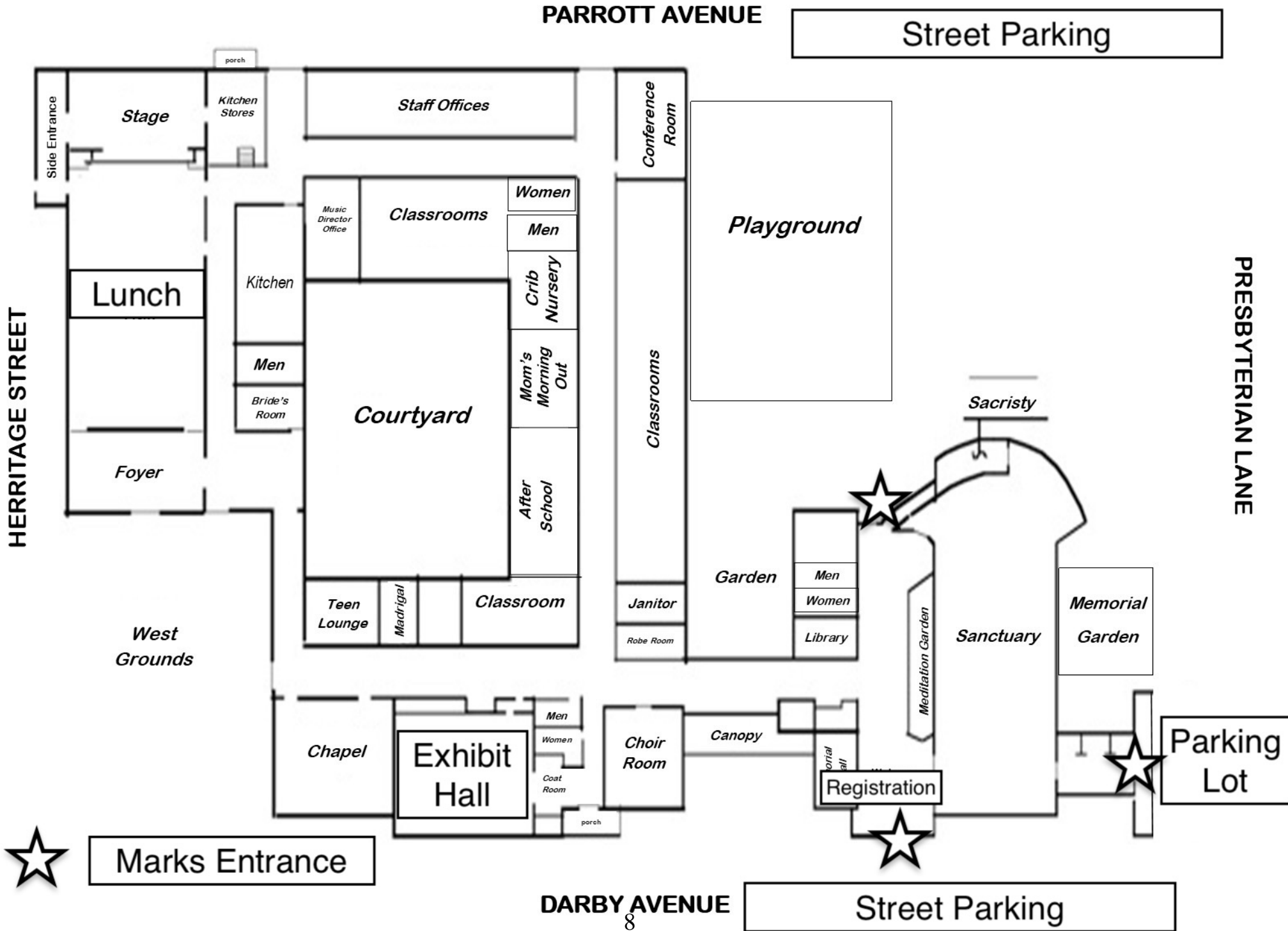
Holiday Inn Express

<https://www.ihg.com/holidayinnexpress/hotels/us/en/kinston/isonn/hoteldetail>

Fairfield Inn

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/pgvks-fairfield-inn-and-suites-kinston/overview/>

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 2101 N. HERRITAGE ST., KINSTON, NC



Marks Entrance

A Brief History of First Presbyterian Church, Kinston

Presbyterian roots in Kinston date back at least to the 1860's. From that time through the 1880's, the Presbyterians in town were served by traveling evangelists or by the neighboring pastors in New Bern, NC and surrounding communities. On October 18, 1891 a Presbyterian congregation was organized with eight charter members and named the Atkinson Memorial Presbyterian Church in honor of the Reverend J.M. Atkinson, then pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Raleigh. In 1915, the name was changed to the First Presbyterian Church, Kinston, North Carolina.

The first church building was erected between the years of 1895-1897 on the east side of Independence Street in downtown Kinston. In the 1930's, Dr. Harold J. Dudley became the pastor of First Presbyterian and led the effort to build a new church at the corner of Lenoir and College streets. The new building was dedicated in 1937 and served First Presbyterian Church for the next twenty years.

In 1940, Dr. Thomas H. Hamilton was called to the pastorate of First Presbyterian Church in Kinston. It would be a ministry that would last for the next 37 years! In 1953, the congregation voted to purchase land and begin the financial campaign to construct a new church. Ground was broken in 1956, and the Education wing was opened in 1957. A new sanctuary was commissioned in 1962, and was built according to the plans of famed church architect Harold E. Wagoner. The first service was held in our new sanctuary in 1968. The congregation continues to worship in this grand space today, enjoying the meaningful architecture and the magnificent Aeolian Skinner pipe organ.

The following ministers have served as Pastor to the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church:

J.E.L. Winecoff	1892-1894	Thomas Hamilton	1940-1977
Charles Vardell	1894-1895	Huw Christopher	1977-1986
Edward Brown	1896-1900	Robert Rachford	1987-1998
Ralph Deal	1907-1910	Todd Wright Asso. Pastor	1992-1997
George Hanrahan	1914-1919	Jonathan Wallace	2000-2008
Hector McDiarmid	1920-1925	Mary Gale Asso. Pastor	2006-2009
Irvy Terrell	1927-1928	Wanda Neely	2010-2016
George Mauze	1929-1932	Travis Allen	2019-Present
Harold Dudley	1932-1939		

Under the guidance of Pastor Travis Allen, First Presbyterian Church has renewed its energy in mission and ministry to the larger community following the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to continuing local partnerships with Kinston-Lenoir Community Chorus, Mary's Soup Kitchen, and RADD (Raising Awareness for the Developmentally Disabled), FPC took a leap of faith in 2023, and founded Backpack Buddies of Lenoir County. The Backpack Buddies of Lenoir County program strives to alleviate weekend hunger and food insecurity experienced by K-12 students in Lenoir County. Additionally, FPC also partnered with the local Boys and Girls Club in 2025, opening up our campus to provide a safe space for children and youth to go for afterschool programming. It is our prayer that each child impacted by these ministries thrives in their daily living and learns who they are and Whose they are.

A Brief History of White Rock Presbyterian Church

The church that we have come to know as White Rock Presbyterian Church USA, initially began as Harriet's Chapel and from there it became First Baptist Church and finally to White Rock. In 1844, some of the members from the Southwest community organized a church named Harriet's Chapel about two miles southeast of Kinston, near the Neuse River. The church was named in honor of Harriet Jones, whose father, Jesse Jones, donated the land for where the building would be erected. W.B. Biddle was the leading spirit in establishing this new church and became its first pastor.

What is interesting to note is that the congregation of Harriet's Chapel were members of the Baptist denomination. In 1857, members of the church decided to abandon their old building known as Harriet's Chapel and move the organization into the city of Kinston where they would build a new church on the corner of Bright and McLewean Streets and call it First Baptist. A lot was purchased and plans were made to build the church in the Greek Revival style.

On January 28, 1858, an article appeared in the newspaper of that day telling of the service and the appearance of the new church, "The new, neat and elegant church was crowded to overflowing, most of the seats being occupied by the ladies. It is well and tastefully arranged with a view to comfort and convenience. It is a work that does credit to those who have been prominent in getting it up." By the late 1880's, First Baptist decided it needed to have a more centralized location, so the building was moved to Gordon and McLewean Streets in October of 1891. Despite its move, the church maintained its Greek Victorian features.

When First Baptist Church constructed a new brick building in 1900, it sold the old building to the White Rock congregation. White Rock had been formed in May of 1898, when a Sunday School Missionary named Samuel H. Vick came to Kinston, from Wilson, NC, to organize a Sunday School with a small group of children and six adults in the home of Mrs. L.C. Phillips on Heritage Street. The Rev. J. H. Sampson would serve as White Rock's first Pastor, from 1899-1906. The cornerstone was laid on November 20, 1899. With this purchase, the church was on the move again to the corner of Thompson and Dennis Streets. The name of Dennis Street would be changed to Tiffany and then subsequently to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

In addition to Rev. Sanders, the following ministers have served as Pastor to the members of the White Rock congregation:

Dr. R. L. Farley—1906-1911	Rev. J. H. Sampson—1911-1915
Rev. R. F. Jamerson—1915-1916	Rev. W. D. Burgess—1916-1919
Rev. Rev. J. B. Harper—1919-1922	Rev. J. H. Sampson—1922-1929
Rev. R. N. Cowan—1929-1932	Rev. M. S. Branch—1932-1945
Rev. O. E. Sanders—1945-1965	Rev. E. M James—1966-1969
Rev. A. R. Taylor—1970-1972	Rev. D. C. Woods—1973-1976
Rev. Hubert Reaves—1976-1981	Rev. St. Paul Epps—1981-1988
Rev. Joseph Steele—1989-1994	Rev. H. Maurice Barnes—1997-present

The church has generally maintained its original appearance even adding a cupola that serves as a type of steeple. Additionally, a portion of each side of the porch was removed to recreate restrooms. Inside the church, no major changes have taken place other than replacing the windows and upgrading the lighting. Listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, we, the members of the White Rock congregation, are proud of the recognition we have received for maintaining the *oldest church building in the City of Kinston*. By the grace of God, we plan to continue building upon the rich heritage set forth many years ago.

Dear Presbytery Commissioners and Honored Guests,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

On behalf of First Presbyterian Church Kinston, it is a joy to welcome you to the 126th Stated Gathering of New Hope Presbytery. Presbytery meetings are more than just church work and business decisions—they are like family reunions. They are times when we come together to experience warm hospitality, renew friendships, and share in the joy of being the body of Christ.

Throughout our time together, we will worship, tend to the business entrusted to us, enjoy one another's company, and continue to discern God's will for our call. As we gather, it is our prayer that you will feel at home, knowing that there is a place for you within the Church.

May this Stated Gathering strengthen our fellowship, deepen our faith, and renew our shared commitment to God's mission in the world. Together, let us listen for God's direction as we seek to do God's work with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

Welcome, friends—may you be blessed in this time of worship, work, and fellowship.

Joyfully,

Rev. Travis Allen

Pastor

First Presbyterian Church, Kinston, North Carolina

- 12:15 a.m. PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH COUNCIL Rev. Alli Buikema-Cooper**
- 12:30 p.m. BREAK FOR LUNCH**
- 1:30 p.m. RECONVENE TO SANCTUARY**
- 1:35 p.m. AFTER LUNCH ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 1:40 p.m. CAMP ALBEMARLE UPDATE Exec Dir. Tom Hussmann**
- 1:55 p.m. COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (Page 36)
Rev. Anne Galliher**
- 2:10 p.m. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (Page 38) Elder Jerry Slaymaker
• Examinations and Transfers Sub-Commission Rev. Becca Gillespie**
- 2:25 p.m. NOMINATIONS AND REPRESENTATION (Page 53) Elder Ray Watson**
- 2:40 p.m. BLACK CAUCUS REPORT Rev. Antonio Lawrence**
- 2:55 p.m. CD&E COMMITTEE REPORT Rev. Hannah Trawick**
- 3:10 p.m. OTHER BUSINESS Moderator Rev. Jordan Davis**
- Unfinished Business
 - Stated Clerk's Stated Gathering Report
 - A Word of Gratitude to Our Worship Leaders and Hosts
- GOD SENDS US OUT**
- 3:20 p.m. ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER**

**Please complete your stated gathering questionnaire online
at the following link by November 7, 5:00 p.m.
<https://forms.office.com/r/nPGfdqvDBY>
The next stated gathering is February 28, 2026 at
Peace Presbyterian Church, Winterville.**

ITEMS FOR CONSENT AGENDA

October 25, 2025

The presbytery will vote in a single action on everything in the consent agenda (**all items contained within boxes on designated pages**). However, any member of presbytery may request to have any item lifted from the consent agenda for explanation, debate, or a separate vote.

The following communications will be voted on with this consent agenda:

- Report of Stated Clerk Page 26
- Report of Coordinating Body Page 30
- Report of Nominations and Representation Page 53

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER
126TH STATED GATHERING OF NEW HOPE PRESBYTERY
OCTOBER 25, 2025

AT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2101 N HERRITAGE ST, KINSTON, NC 28501

REV. DR. BRUCE. T. GRADY

Together in Hope... Together for Christ.



The Presbytery of New Hope

October 25, 2025

Dear Siblings in Christ,

I bring you grace and peace from our loving, liberating, life-giving God-Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Once again, it is a pleasure and an honor to participate in God's mission with you. I am excited to inform you that we have just initiated the implementation phase of NHP's 2025 – 2028 Plan-***Together in Hope... Together for Christ***. The Steering Committee and Implementation Task Force are helping us chart our pathway forward. Thank you for your enduring commitment to the transformative ministry of New Hope Presbytery!

While we are energized by a bold, new vision, we are also grappling with present-day realities that can feel quite taxing. I am taking this opportunity to encourage those who have become somewhat weary on this journey and to recommend resourceful best practices based upon the Christian abolitionist movement and the Black Church tradition. The struggle is real, but we are not alone. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in the time of trouble.* (Psalm 46:1) Like so many of you, I have observed the unfolding of news, social media feeds, conversations or community forums only to be reminded that we are facing difficult days. In the midst of sadness, frustration and exhaustion from the looming climate of Christian nationalism and white supremacy masquerading as patriotism, I have experienced consolation through the prayers, songs and psalms of lament. Since their inception, the Christian abolitionist movement and the Black Church have exercised the practice of lament and hope to help keep their faith vibrant and to dissuade others from becoming prisoners of despair. Our generation is not the first to experience social, moral, and political trauma. Therefore, we can learn from this great cloud of witnesses.

Lament is a distinguished Christian practice to address emotional trauma. The lament expressed throughout African American spirituals, gospel songs, rhythm and blues (R&B) and Black literature is an anchor that can help us find our bearings on how to live as people of faith. Songs of lament press us to resist systemic and structural evil, to tell the truth about our pain and to name what is wrong. Marvin Gaye's billboard 1971 hit "What's Going On?" is a soul-stirring lament and social critique of America's racism, nationalism, war, hate and violence.

Mother, mother
There's too many of you crying
Brother, brother, brother
There's far too many of you dying
You know we've got to find a way
To bring some lovin' here today, yeah

Father, father
We don't need to escalate
You see, war is not the answer
For only love can conquer hate
You know we've got to find a way
To bring some lovin' here today

These words are as true today as they were over fifty years ago. I encourage anyone who finds themselves overwhelmed with the anger and grief of xenophobia, militarism and misogyny to visit YouTube and to listen to the lyrical genius of Stevie Wonder's work Village Ghetto Land on his 1976 album- *Songs in the Key of Life*.

African American literature is a bountiful reservoir of best practices of lament and hope. Recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom 2010 and former professor at Wake Forest University, the late Dr. Maya Angelou was a multifaceted American author, poet, performer, and civil rights activist. Her works explore themes of oppression. In her epic poem, *And Still I Rise*, Dr. Angelou utilizes resurrection imagery as a tool of resistance against cultural erasure, misinformation, disinformation and dehumanizing lies against people of color.

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

In his book *Race Matters*, Cornel West sheds light on this topic (lament and hope) when he defines nihilism as the "lived experience of coping with a life of horrifying meaninglessness, hopelessness, and lovelessness". The major enemy to the survival of African Americans (and other marginalized groups) is not oppression, but nihilism. In the chapter "Nihilism in Black America," West argues that

for as long as hope and meaning are preserved, the possibility of overcoming oppression stays alive. Without them, struggle becomes impossible.

Finally, the ancestors meditated on the Psalms of lament. These poetic pieces are prayers of petition and pain to God, often from individuals or groups experiencing suffering, injustice, or crisis, that move from complaint and sorrow to expressions of trust in God's justice and hope for deliverance. They provide a framework for expressing the truth of the dehumanizing suffering that still persists today.

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

² Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

³ If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

Psalm 130:1-4 (NRSV)

To combat the reckless hijacking of the gospel and the common good, we must embrace the challenge of lament and hope as a rallying cry for those of us who are focused on being partners with God for doing justice and loving mercy. The Presbytery of New Hope must lean into the teachings of Jesus Christ. We must confess that we cannot bring healing and repair into this broken world without leaning strong and hard into our faith for the sustenance to stand up, dig in, and do the work our souls must have. We face the challenges of this present age with intelligence, energy, imagination and urgency that remind us that we stand on the frontlines of hope. Jesus teaches us in Matthew 25 and throughout scripture that we should be able to see, understand and love “the least of these” by connecting and being in relationship.

Hence, NHP has discerned that the Holy Spirit is leading us to take courageous steps to live into the gospel and to enter into the very communities where our congregations and neighbors reside. In the coming months, look for announcements in the e-newsletter and the NHP website about ways to strengthen our connection. Let's continue to pray and to trust God. May the Lord bless, guide and keep us!

Together in Hope... Together for Christ,

Bruce T. Grady

Rev. Dr. Bruce T. Grady, EdD

Executive Presbyter of New Hope Presbytery
2022 McDonald Lane Raleigh, NC 27604
919-348-2918
bgrady@nhpresbytery.org

Postscript:

The following section highlights my recent journey.

July 27, 2025 Pastor Justin Chedlin Justinvill at Western Boulevard Presbyterian Church (Raleigh)



(Left to Right, Frank Mansell, Justin Chedlin Justinvill, Ed Johnson, Kathy Johnson and Bruce Grady)

Elder Chris Martin and Dr. Grady at First Presbyterian Church (Goldsboro) on August 3, 2025.



Associate Ellen VanTongerren and Dr. Grady at Iglesia Presbiteriana Emanuel (Durham) on August 10, 2025.



NHP Summer Feeding Initiative with Convoy of Hope, Part 2, August 16, 2025, at Western Boulevard Presbyterian Church (Raleigh, NC).



Retiree Luncheon with Elizabeth Little, Church Consultant (NC & SC) The Board of Pensions for The Presbyterian Church (USA) September 22, 2025 at Glenaire Retirement Community (Cary, NC).



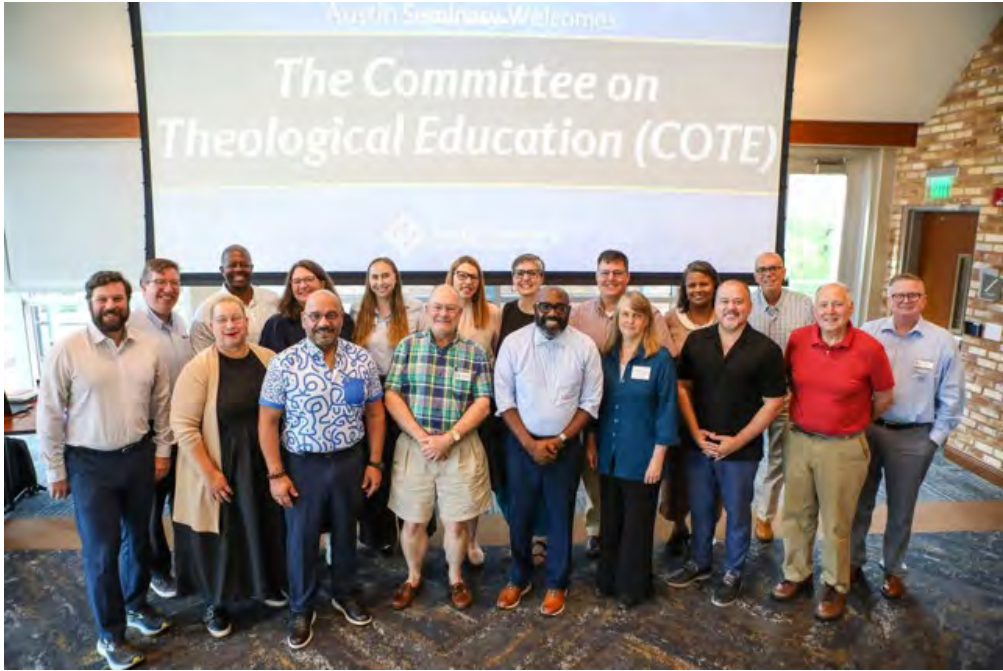
Synod of the Mid Atlantic (SMA) Gathering (Richmond, VA) September 8-9, 2025.



EP, CREs Cassandra Thomas and James Harley at the Next Generation Initiative Committee (Richmond, VA) September 9 -10, 2025.



Committee On Theological Education (COTE) at Austun Theological Seminary (Austin, TX) September 22 – 24, 2025.



Installation of Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger as Senior Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, September 28, 2025



REPORT OF TEMPORARY ASSOCIATE PRESBYTER REV. KATIE CASHWELL

Grace and Peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

The Presbytery of New Hope is beginning to live into its bold vision—*Together in Hope, Together for Christ*. Our strategic plan is more than words on a page; it is beginning to take shape in the life of our presbytery. What excites me most is that this plan allows us to celebrate what we already do faithfully while also imagining new and creative ways the Spirit might be calling us forward.

We currently host gatherings for small church pastors, and we plan presbytery-wide small church gatherings. These are vital spaces of encouragement and learning. Now imagine if every congregation in New Hope were organized into parish clusters, each supported by a staff person who regularly convened, trained, and resourced them. These clusters could provide deep relational and geographical connection and shared ministry and mission opportunities across our 34 counties.

We presently offer an Orientation and Welcome to New Hope for new pastors, helping them find their place in our presbytery. What if each newly ordained pastor were paired with a professional coach and mentor for their first year of ministry? Such support could strengthen pastoral resilience and leadership for years to come. What if New Hope called a presbytery chaplain—someone devoted to providing pastoral support and care to our minister members in times of both crisis and everyday ministry?

We gather as a whole presbytery three times a year for our Stated Gatherings, where we worship, deliberate, and learn together. What if in the near future big steeple churches and smaller congregations intentionally partnered—sharing an associate pastor between them? This could create innovative staffing models while deepening bonds across our presbytery.

We watch too many of our pulpits go unfilled and congregations wait too long to make hard decisions. Let us enter into bold, legacy conversations with small churches—proactively offering them opportunities to bequeath their assets to meaningful mission. Imagine what could grow from a reparations fund for our historically Black congregations, a small church assistance grant, or a scholarship for seminarians.

Our call as a presbytery is to faithfully steward what we have while dreaming of what God is yet bringing to life among us. This is the heart of our plan: honoring what is, while boldly stepping toward what can be.

Together in Hope, Together for Christ,
Katie

Ongoing

- Staff support to Church Development & Evangelism Committee
- Staff support to Small Church Gathering Planning Team
- Staff support to New Worshipping Communities
- Staff support to Commissioned Ruling Elder Team
- Staff support to Coordinating Body
- Staff support to Commission on Ministry
- Holy Cow Administrator for the presbytery
- Supervision of pulpit supply coordinator
- Facilitating conversations among churches regarding shared ministry, yoking
- Website manager for presbytery's website
- Editor of the presbytery's digital communications
- Strategic planning meetings with the Coordinating Body and executive team

Since the last Stated Gathering

- Greetings and visit to Calvary Presbyterian Church in Wilson
- Preaching for Women's Sunday at Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
- Preaching at Stanly White Presbyterian Church
- Preaching at Calvary Presbyterian Church in Swan Quarter
- "Out East" tour for congregational visits to Cann, FPC Edenton, Outer Banks Presbyterian, Roanoke Island Presbyterian, and Williamston
- Hosting Commissioned Ruling Elder Retreat at White Memorial Presbyterian, Willow Springs
- Visit and Congregational lunch with Williamston Presbyterian Church
- Brought greetings to St. Paul Presbyterian Church

Looking Ahead

- Visit to Trinity Presbyterian, Raleigh November 2
- Small Church Gathering November 8
- Mid-Council Leaders Gathering In Louisville November 9-12
- Small Church Pastors Gathering November 17-18

Report of Temporary Stated Clerk Rev. Ed Johnson

It is recommended that the following be received and become a part of the permanent record of this one hundred and twenty-sixth stated gathering.

INFORMATION

1. Received the minutes of the commission to commission Gerald A. (“Jeb”) Jeutter, Jr. as commissioned ruling elder for the Presbytery of New Hope pulpit supply validated ministry at White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 7, 2025.
2. Received the minutes of the commission to install Rev. Tara Bulger as senior pastor/head of staff at First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 28, 2025.
3. Received the minutes of the commission to ordain Meredith Rawls into validated ministry as North East regional coordinator for the Partners in Health and Wholeness Initiative, North Carolina Council of Churches, at White Memorial Presbyterian Church on September 28, 2025.
4. Received the minutes of the commission to ordain Langley Hoyt into validated ministry as chaplain serving WakeMed Health and Hospitals at West Raleigh Presbyterian Church on October 4, 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Received the sessional records report for the following churches (attachment #1, page 28)

CONGRATULATIONS TO

1. Ruling elders celebrating their 25-year anniversary of service to the PC(USA) (attachment #2, page 29)
2. Rev. Meredith Rawls, ordained at White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 28, 2025.
3. Rev. Tara Bulger, installed as senior pastor/head of staff at First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 28, 2025.
4. Rev. Langley Hoyt, ordained at West Raleigh Presbyterian Church on October 4, 2025.
5. Commissioned ruling elder, Jeb Jeutter, commissioned at White Memorial Presbyterian Church on September 7, 2025.

6. Rev. John Fawcett (Smithfield, First) and his wife, Madeline Burgess, on the birth of Grady Burgess on August 21.

PRAYERS FOR

1. All those impacted by the shooting at Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis on August 27, 2025.
2. Rev. Jerrod Lowry, general presbyter/stated clerk for the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, on medical leave after being diagnosed with cancer.
3. Rev. Bob Clark (HR), recovering from a stroke.

CONDOLENCES TO

1. Rev. Hedge Hedgpeth (HR) on the loss of his wife, Rev. Marilyn Hedgpeth (HR) on July 23, 2025.
2. Rev. Steve Lindsley on the loss of his wife, Lorie Lindsley.
3. The Morton family and the congregation of Oak Hill Presbyterian Church on the death of church matriarch, Mrs. Jane Morton.
4. The family of Rev. Mitzi Lesher-Thomas, who died on September 28, 2025

Report of Sessional Records October 25, 2025

In reviewing the procedures of the lower council, the higher body shall determine whether the proceedings have been correctly recorded, have been in accordance with this Constitution, have been prudent and equitable, and have been faithful to the mission of the whole church. It shall also determine whether lawful injunctions of a higher body have been obeyed. G-3.0108a

Sessional records (rolls and minutes) have been reviewed and approved with no exceptions for 2023 for the following churches:

Saint Andrews, Raleigh

Sessional records (rolls and minutes) have been reviewed and approved with no exceptions for 2024 for the following churches:

Blacknall Memorial
Kirk of Holly Springs
Outer Banks
Saint Andrews, Raleigh
St. Paul
Trinity
Trinity Avenue
Western Boulevard

Congratulations to the Following Ruling Elders on Their 25-Year Anniversary of Service to the PC(USA)

Cobb Memorial

Davona Parish

Durham, First

Mac McCorkle

Jane Wettach

Howard Memorial

Guy Alford

Nancy Whitehurst

Hudson Memorial

Rob Duggins

Kirk of Kildaire

Catherine Devine

Katelyn Gordon

Tom Gregory

Craig Nygard

Lawson Rankin

Jack Sparks

Lynn Sullivan

Little River

Tom Fisler

Amy McLelland

New Bern, First

Barbara Francis

Michael L. Reed

North Raleigh

John Grovenstein

Danny Heater

Outer Banks

Lisa Rhodes

Raleigh, First

Jean M. Crowe

Susan T. Dean

Elizabeth W. Fields

Kenneth B. Gwynn

Roanoke Rapids, First

William G. Graham

Rocky Mount, First

Randy Ray Adams

Linda Amerson

Richard Frederick Hunt, III

Dong Jin

Anne Boddie Mosley

Saint Andrews, Raleigh

Shelly Kane

Kent Zotter

Smithfield, First

Lisa Deans

Trinity Avenue

Phil Kearney

Chris Perry

University

Jim Herdon

Gwen Lamb

Press Millen

Gillian Rogers

West New Bern

Joan Zimmer

West Raleigh

Mary Lee Hall

Ben Meares

Western Boulevard

John Aldridge

John Bayne

Lori Grippo

Eleanor Maness

Jacob Thompson

Westminster, Durham

David Anderson

Margaret Hawkins

Betsy Mangum

Hal Safrit

White Memorial, Raleigh

Thomas J. Andrews

R. Michael Condrey

Stuart M. Frantz

Theresa W. Jeffers

Marie S. Jones

John Pace, Jr.

William and Mary Hart

Allen Lunsford

**Report of the Coordinating Body
to the 126th Stated Gathering of the Presbytery of New Hope
October 25, 2025**

Recommendation : Election of Amber Zapffel as New Hope Corporation Treasurer.

Greetings on behalf of your Coordinating Body! What a joy it is to be in service to Jesus Christ and the Presbytery of New Hope through this team. Thank you for that gift. Below please find a summary of the team's activity since our July presbytery gathering. We have...

- Rejoiced in God's movement in and through the New Hope staff in their tireless and inspired nurture, support, and development of our presbytery, and welcomed our seminary intern, Joye Douthart. Thank you, Team!;
- Gave thanks for the leadership and ministries of New Hope's Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) and small church pastors, and Vanessa Hawkins as she comes alongside them;
- Engaged the Finance & Property team's faithful work around budget preparation, church property sales, renovations, easements, and income generation. *Interested in serving on the Investment and Banking Task Force, or know someone who is? We'd love to hear from you!*
- Prayed for New Hope's churches, and the gifts of God that flow through them to our shared ministry as a connectional body. *Financial funding and people support of our campus ministries, church gatherings, presbytery staff, camps, committees & commissions, and connectional witness happens through the support of our congregations. Your church's giving to- and participation in- the presbytery is essential. Thank you for helping to spread the word around the importance of sharing your congregation's gifts of time, talent, and treasure within New Hope Presbytery. We are grateful, and together we ARE the presbytery!*
- Contracted with Ministry Architects for support in putting our newly minted strategic plan on the ground; resourcing us on project organization and management, staff development and coaching, and advancing our vision for building a future full of hope!;
- Enthusiastically endorsed the candidate recommended by the search committee for the permanent Associate Presbyter for Small Church & Technology role;
- Approved a temporary waiver to the bylaw stipulating publication of the presbytery packet 10 days in advance of a stated meeting;

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve on your Coordinating Body. Should you have any questions about the work at hand, feel free reach out to me at kcrowe@trinityave.org.

It is our joy to pray for all who live and labor within the bounds of the Presbytery of New Hope, and to celebrate the many ways that Christ's light shines through you in our world!

Respectfully Submitted,
Katie Crowe, Moderator

**PRESBYTERY OF NEW HOPE
FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE SUMMARY – October 2025**

BUDGET AND FINANCE

- We started 2025 with the budget in place. This is an improvement over the 2024 budget development process.
- Process for the development of the 2026 budget differed from the development of the 2025 budget. Commissions, committees, and programs submitted their 2026 budget requests this summer and the budget is ready for the October gathering of the Presbytery.
- **The 2026 presbytery budget is a balanced budget.** The Finance and Property Committee thanks all of the commissions and committees for their input in the development of the budget. Much discussion and hard decisions have gone into this budget.
- In 2026, the budget will be reviewed each quarter and adjusted as needed.
- All of the presbytery's investment money is in higher yielding investment instruments. These investments are not in long term products, to allow flexibility to the investment subcommittee once they are in place.
- Through September 2025, Revenue is higher than the same time last year and Expenses are lower than the same time last year. With these improvements, The Presbytery still has a deficit of \$121,825.00 through September 2025. A deficit was budget for 2025, even with \$70,000 of released funds. The Presbytery is hopeful to end the 2025 year within Budget.

PROPERTY

- Committee approved easement to NC DOT on the Peace Presbyterian Church property in Winterville.
- Committee approved the separation of the cemetery from the remainder of the church property for Spring Hill Presbyterian Church. This will allow a loan to proceed for this church to rebuild its sanctuary after the devastating fire.
- The transfer of the former Ahsokie First Presbyterian Church property to the Gathering Place is proceeding.
- The Committee approved the lease of a portion of North Raleigh Presbyterian Church for the placement of a cell tower on a portion of the property.

The Presbytery of New Hope 2026 Budget

Headings and Account	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	% of Total Revenues
Revenues			
General Fund Income			
Budgeted Benevolence Incm			
140101 - Benevolence Income	\$975,000.00	\$1,075,000.00	76.74%
140109 - Per Capita Assessment	\$265,794.32	\$275,832.92	19.69%
Total Budgeted Benevolence Incm	\$1,240,794.32	\$1,350,832.92	96.43%
Interest Income			0.00%
141601 - Interest Income	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	3.57%
Total Interest Income	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	3.57%
Non-Budgeted Benvl Income			0.00%
142600 - Other Income - NonBudgeted	\$70,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Total Non-Budgeted Benvl Income	\$70,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Total Revenues	\$1,310,794.32	\$1,400,832.92	100.00%
Expenses			
Camp Albemarle Cap Improv			
151807 - C. Albemarle Program Support	\$50,734.00	\$55,116.00	3.93%
Total Camp Albemarle Cap Improv	\$50,734.00	\$55,116.00	3.93%
Synod & PCUSA Expenses			0.00%
Synod & GA Per Capita			0.00%
155198 - Synod Per Capita Assessment	\$25,493.20	\$32,425.50	2.31%
155498 - GA Per Capita Assessment	\$240,301.12	\$243,407.42	17.38%
Total Synod & GA Per Capita	\$265,794.32	\$275,832.92	19.69%
Congregational Ministries			0.00%
Traveling Seminars			0.00%
150837 - Older Adults	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	0.07%
Total Traveling Seminars	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	0.07%
Youth Ministries			0.00%
150841 - Sr. High Spring Retreat	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Event/Retreat Funding		\$1,000.00	0.07%
150846 - Youth Council Retreat	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
150848 - Youth Ministries Committee	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	0.32%
Total Youth Ministries	\$4,500.00	\$5,500.00	0.39%
Total Congregational Ministries	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	0.39%
Div. for Leadership Dev.			0.00%
Commission On Ministry			0.00%
150501 - Calls & Vacancies	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00	0.13%
150512 - Counseling & Support Serv	\$2,340.00	\$1,000.00	0.07%

Headings and Account	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	% of Total Revenues
150520 - Pastor Support/Shared Grant	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	0.07%
150560 - Examinations Committee	\$100.00	\$100.00	0.01%
150598 - COM Other Expenses	\$200.00	\$200.00	0.01%
150599 - COM Committee Expenses	\$500.00	\$1,000.00	0.07%
Total Commission On Ministry	\$5,940.00	\$5,100.00	0.36%
Commission Prep. for Ministry			0.00%
150301 - Candidates/Inquirers	\$4,000.00	\$3,000.00	0.21%
150310 - Annual Consultation	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	0.07%
Total Commission Prep. for Ministry	\$5,000.00	\$4,000.00	0.29%
Total Div. for Leadership Dev.	\$10,940.00	\$9,100.00	0.65%
Ministries of Mission			0.00%
Campus Ministries			0.00%
Total Campus Ministries	\$214,500.00	\$195,000.00	13.92%
New Church Development (5FM)			0.00%
151199 - New Worshipping Community	\$13,000.00		0.00%
151200 - Small Church Grant	\$10,000.00	\$7,500.00	0.54%
151205 - Small Church Gathering	\$5,000.00	\$6,360.00	0.45%
151207 - Congregational Dev Training	\$5,100.00		0.00%
CD&E Discretionary Support		\$1,000.00	0.07%
Total New Church Development (5FM)	\$33,100.00	\$14,860.00	1.06%
Total Ministries of Mission	\$247,600.00	\$209,860.00	14.98%
Coordinating Body/Administr			0.00%
Salary/Benefits			0.00%
Total Salary/Benefits/Travel	\$669,579.53	\$700,000.00	49.97%
Coordinating Body Expenses			0.00%
Total Coordinating Body Expenses	\$42,050.00	\$74,124.73	5.29%
Office Administration			0.00%
Total Office Administration	\$42,700.00	\$42,349.99	3.02%
Office Technology			0.00%
Total Office Technology	\$21,202.00	\$20,949.28	1.50%
Committees of Coordinating Bod			0.00%
150127 - Presbytery Mtg. Expense	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	0.29%
150166 - Personnel Committee	\$2,800.00	\$3,000.00	0.21%
Total Committees of Coordinating Bod	\$6,800.00	\$7,000.00	0.50%
Total Coordinating Body/Administr	\$782,331.53	\$844,424.00	60.28%
Total Expenses	\$1,362,899.85	\$1,400,832.92	100.00%
			0.00%
Net Total Operating Budget	-\$52,105.53	\$0.00	0.00%

The Presbytery of New Hope
Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Detail
January to September 2025

Headings and Account	2025 Budget	2025 YTD Actual	2024 YTD Actual
Revenues			
General Fund Income			
Budgeted Benevolence Incm			
140101 - Benevolence Income	\$975,000.00	\$611,971.23	\$638,910.25
140109 - Per Capita Assessment	\$265,794.32	\$159,256.52	\$141,493.53
Total Budgeted Benevolence Incm	\$1,240,794.32	\$771,227.75	\$780,403.78
Interest Income			
141601 - Interest Income	\$0.00	\$16,883.44	\$95.51
Total Interest Income	\$0.00	\$16,883.44	\$95.51
Non-Budgeted Benvl Income			
142501 - Non-Budgeted Benev	\$0.00	\$4,849.07	\$84,302.76
142515 - Hunger Fund Income	\$0.00	\$16,473.52	\$17,640.12
142600 - Other Income - NonBudgeted	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$0.00
Total Non-Budgeted Benvl Income	\$0.00	\$21,572.59	\$101,942.88
Revenue for PCUSA			
140203 - PCUSA Budgeted Missions	\$0.00	\$12,600.00	\$0.00
140204 - PCUSA Special Offerings	\$0.00	\$92,132.13	\$0.00
Total Revenue for PCUSA	\$0.00	\$104,732.13	\$0.00
Revenue for Synod			
140301 - Synod Special Offerings	\$0.00	\$2,196.88	\$0.00
Total Revenue for Synod	\$0.00	\$2,196.88	\$0.00
Total General Fund Income	\$1,240,794.32	\$916,612.79	\$882,442.17
Current Restricted Income			
Current Restricted Income (42A)			
950000 - Other Income - Releases	\$70,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$27,000.00
Total Current Restricted Income (42A)	\$70,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$27,000.00
Total Current Restricted Income	\$70,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$27,000.00
Total Revenues	\$1,310,794.32	\$921,112.79	\$909,442.17
Expenses			
Camp Albemarle Cap Improv			
Total Camp Albemarle Cap Improv	\$50,734.00	\$50,734.00	\$66,049.83
Synod & PCUSA Expenses			
Synod & GA Per Capita			
155198 - Synod Per Capita Assessment	\$25,493.20	\$16,632.26	\$13,891.78
155498 - GA Per Capita Assessment	\$240,301.12	\$142,624.26	\$119,120.18
Total Synod & GA Per Capita	\$265,794.32	\$159,256.52	\$133,011.96
Synd of MdAtlantic Benevl			
Total Synd of MdAtlantic Benevl	\$0.00	\$2,457.12	\$1,764.28
General Assembly Benevolences			
Total General Assembly Benevolences	\$0.00	\$108,008.37	\$102,799.86
Total Synod & PCUSA Expenses	\$265,794.32	\$269,722.01	\$237,576.10

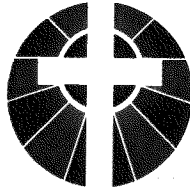
Headings and Account	2025 Budget	2025 YTD Actual	2024 YTD Actual
Pres of New Hope NnBud Bn			
Total Pres of New Hope NnBud Bn	\$0.00	\$1,020.45	\$614.08
Designated Reserves (575)			
Total Designated Reserves (575)	\$0.00	\$937.12	\$321.75
Hunger Fund			
Total Hunger Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$2,000.00
Congregational Ministries			
Traveling Seminars			
Total Traveling Seminars	\$1,000.00	\$979.46	\$1,959.79
Resource Centers			
Total Resource Centers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4.95
Youth Ministries			
Total Youth Ministries	\$4,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$6,072.71
Total Congregational Ministries	\$5,500.00	\$2,479.46	\$8,037.45
Div. for Leadership Dev.			
Commission On Ministry			
Total Commission On Ministry	\$5,940.00	\$2,668.18	\$5,029.93
Commission Prep. for Ministry			
Total Commission Prep. for Ministry	\$5,000.00	\$1,262.18	\$997.57
Leadership Development			
Total Leadership Development	\$0.00	\$3,933.82	\$1,804.66
Total Div. for Leadership Dev.	\$10,940.00	\$7,864.18	\$7,832.16
Ministries of Mission			
Campus Ministries			
Total Campus Ministries	\$214,500.00	\$155,625.94	\$188,587.01
Evangelism (5FK)			
Total Evangelism (5FK)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,963.55
New Church Development (5FM)			
Total New Church Development (5FM)	\$33,100.00	\$10,531.17	\$38,261.84
Division Expense			
Total Division Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,000.00
Total Ministries of Mission	\$247,600.00	\$166,157.11	\$241,812.40
Coordinating Body/Administr			
Salary/Benefits			
Total Salary/Benefits/Travel	\$669,579.53	\$487,641.91	\$509,163.90
Coordinating Body Expenses			
Total Coordinating Body Expenses	\$42,050.00	\$10,709.00	\$37,278.01
Office Administration			
Total Office Administration	\$42,700.00	\$29,943.66	\$34,666.39
Office Technology			
Total Office Technology	\$21,202.00	\$13,395.18	\$22,154.10
Committees of Coordinating Bod			
Total Committees of Coordinating Bod	\$6,800.00	\$2,333.71	\$2,056.09
Total Coordinating Body/Administr	\$782,331.53	\$544,023.46	\$605,318.49
Total Expenses	\$1,362,899.85	\$1,042,937.79	\$1,165,562.26
Net Total	-\$52,105.53	-\$121,825.00	-\$256,120.09

REPORT OF COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
Rev. Meg Peery McLaughlin and Rev. Anne Galliher
Co-Moderators

The commission took the following actions:

Received as a candidate

Joye Hodges Douthart (Westminster, Durham)



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Do Justice · Love Kindness · Walk Humbly

March 11, 2025

Dear Committee on Preparation for Ministry of New Hope Presbytery,

It is with great delight that I write you on behalf of the Westminster Presbyterian Church Session to recommend Joye Hodges Douthart as a Candidate for Ministry.

As our WPC Communications Director, Joye has been a critical part of the staff here at Westminster and a valued member of our congregation. She is reliable, conscientious, and faithful in her work with us, and it is obvious to us that her energy for her work is fueled by a sincere, mature (and always maturing) faith as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

We have all enjoyed learning with Joye as she has attended seminary while holding down her full-time work here at WPC. Oftentimes, her in-class learnings have been applied to the real-life situations she encounters here at Westminster. In addition, she has become a critical and caring part of our team by using her work to support ours. Joye listens well to others and asserts her own understanding with kind confidence. She responds to church members' queries and frustrations with an even hand and wise counsel.

We see the promise of many good years of ordained ministry in Joye's future because her ministry skills have been and continue to be well-forged in her work with us and the churches where she found herself before us. We can see that she is taking full advantage of all that she is learning in the classroom at Union. We are excited to watch as the Spirit leads her! It is clear to us that she is suitable in every way for this next step in ministry, and we wish her every blessing.

With courage and faith,

Rev. Cheryl Barton Henry
Pastor of Congregational Care and Missions

CC: Sally Keener, Clerk of Session
Chris Tuttle, Pastor Head of Staff

3639 Old Chapel Hill Road Durham, North Carolina 27707
919-489-4974 | wpcdurham.org

Facebook: [@wpcdurham](https://www.facebook.com/wpcdurham) Instagram: [@wpcdurham](https://www.instagram.com/wpcdurham), [@wpcdurham_youthgroup](https://www.instagram.com/wpcdurham_youthgroup) YouTube: [bit.ly/WPCyoutube](https://www.youtube.com/bit.ly/WPCyoutube)
Westminster School for Young Children: wsycdurham.com | Facebook & Instagram: [@wsycdurham](https://www.facebook.com/wsycdurham)

**REPORT OF COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
AND
EXAMINATIONS AND TRANSFERS SUB-COMMISSION**

**Elder Jerry Slaymaker, COM Coordinating Co-Moderator
Rev. Thomas Priest, COM East Co-Moderator
Elder John Winings, COM West Co-Moderator
Rev. Rebecca Gillespie, Examinations and Transfers Moderator**

I. INFORMATION

1. Members of the commission to install Rev. Tara W. Bulger at First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 28, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Jordan Davis, Rev. Ed McLeod, Rev. Bruce Grady, Rev. Jackie Rodriguez, Rev. Vanessa Hawkins. Ruling elders: Carolyn Bachl-Stewart, Jim Nichols. Guests of the commissions: Rev. Alan Dyer, Rev. David Powers.
2. Members of the commission to install Rev. Nicholas Demuynck at First Presbyterian Church, Wilson on October 26, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Jordan Davis, Rev. Bruce Grady, Rev. Anne Galliher, Rev. Savannah Demuynck, Rev. Antonio Lawrence, Rev. Claire Colcord, Rev. Ashley-Anne Masters. Ruling elders: DJ Jarman, Romonia Kornegay-Lewis.
3. Members of the commission to install Rev. Meg Lindsay Dudley at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church on November 16, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Sydne Allan, Rev. Christopher Edmonston, Rev. Howard Dudley. Ruling elders: Andrea Johnson, Kathy Dudley, Allen Amos, Emyr Edwards. Guest of the commission: Rev. Jenny Lee.
4. Members of the commission to ordain Langley Ruth Hoyt at West Raleigh Presbyterian Church on October 4, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Jordan Davis, Rev. Laura Kelley, Rev. Thankam Rangala, Rev. Katherine Kussmaul. Ruling elders: Wetonah Parker, Mark Zaineddin. Guests of the commission: Rev. Victoria Blount, Rev. Mike Hoyt, Cherie Setzler.
5. Members of the commission to commission Gerald A. (“Jeb”) Jeutter, Jr. at White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 7, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Jordan Davis, Rev. Ed Johnson, Rev. Noe Juarez, Rev. Ed McLeod. Ruling elders: Bill White, Nancy Warren.
6. Members of the commission to ordain Meredith Rawls at White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Raleigh on September 28, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Jordan Davis, Rev. Mindy Douglas, Rev. Katie Crowe, Rev. Thankam Rangala. Ruling elders: Linda Robinson. Guests of the commission: Rev. Kate Foster, Rev. Victoria Blount, Rev. Johnathan Brooks, Rev. Leslie Nambo, Rev. Troy Leshler-Thomas.

II. THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY AND THE EXAMINATIONS AND TRANSFERS SUB-COMMISSION APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ON BEHALF OF PRESBYTERY

A. Calls

1. Rev. Jacob Kennedy to serve as co-head pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Rocky Mount, effective October 1, 2025. Terms: annual cash salary \$53,500.00 housing allowance \$18,000.00; other applicable income \$2,280.00; social security offset \$5,469.75; reimbursable expenses \$3,000.00; Board of Pensions dues \$18,590.00; moving expenses \$2,500.00 Total compensation package: \$103,339.75, 4 weeks of vacation, 2 weeks of continuing education, sabbatical leave of 3 months after 5 years.
2. Rev. Ally Pexa to serve as co-head pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Rocky Mount, effective October 1, 2025. Terms: annual cash salary \$53,500.00; housing allowance \$18,000.00; other applicable income \$2,280.00; social security offset \$5,469.75; reimbursable expenses \$3,000.00; Board of Pensions dues \$18,590.00; moving expenses \$2,500.00. Total compensation package \$103,339.75, 4 weeks of vacation, 2 weeks of continuing education, sabbatical leave of 3 months after 5 years.

B. Temporary Agreements

1. Renewal of stated supply agreement between Rev. David Fuentes and First Presbyterian Church, Henderson, effective October 17, 2025 through October 16, 2026. Terms: annual cash salary \$29,500.00; housing allowance \$10,000.00; social security offset \$3,022.00; reimbursable expenses \$1,500.00; Board of Pensions dues \$10,863.00. Total compensation package \$54,885.00.
2. Renewal of stated supply agreement between Rev. Charles Coburn (LWB) and Falkland Presbyterian Church, effective October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026. Terms: housing allowance \$19,800.00; reimbursable expenses \$4,000.00. Total compensation package \$23,800.00.
3. Rev. Betty Connette (HR) to serve as stated supply pastor at Howard Memorial Presbyterian Church, effective September 7 through December 28, 2025. Terms: monthly cash salary \$3,000.00; other applicable monthly income \$500. Total monthly compensation package \$3,500.00.
4. Rev. Savannah Demuynck to serve as stated supply pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Wilson effective June 1 through November 30, 2025. Terms: annualized cash salary \$42,000.00; reimbursable expenses \$3,000.00; Board of Pensions dues \$3,570.00. Total compensation package \$48,570.00, 24 days of vacation.
5. Rev. Ron Gilmer to serve as stated supply pastor at Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Rocky Mount, effective September 9, 2025 through December 31, 2026. Terms: annual cash salary \$30,000.00; reimbursable expenses \$3,000.00. Total compensation package \$33,000.00.
6. Rev. Tolokun Omokunde to serve as stated supply pastor at Cotton Memorial Presbyterian Church, effective October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026. Terms: annual cash salary \$38,000.00.
7. Rev. Katherine Hester Doehring to serve as short-term stated supply pastor at Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Mebane, effective September 9 through December 31, 2025.

Monthly terms: cash salary \$250.00; housing allowance \$2,250.00; reimbursable expenses \$187.50. Total monthly compensation package \$2,687.50.

8. Rev. Rob Jackson to serve as stated supply pastor at William and Mary Hart Presbyterian Church, effective November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2028. Terms: annual cash salary \$45,000.00; social security offset \$3,443.00; reimbursable expenses \$7,500.00; Board of Pensions dues \$4,500.00. Total compensation package \$60,443.00, 4 weeks of vacation, 3 weeks of continuing education.
9. Rev. Jeff Sockwell to serve as stated supply pastor at Cann Memorial Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church, Edenton, effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028. Terms: annual cash salary \$30,000.00; housing allowance \$30,000.00; social security offset \$4,590.00; reimbursable expenses \$18,410.00. Total compensation package \$83,000.00

C. **Commissioned Ruling Elders**

1. Renewal of commissioned ruling elder agreement between Ross Renfrow and Center Ridge/Oak Grove Presbyterian churches, effective November 1, 2024 through October 31, 2025. Terms: annual cash salary \$34,000.00; reimbursable expenses \$500.00; employer share of FICA/Medicare \$2,601.00 Total compensation package \$37,101.00.
2. Ruling elder Byung Lee certified ready to be commissioned.

D. **Dissolutions**

1. Rev. Jooyoung Hong and Duraleigh Presbyterian Church, effective November 2, 2025.

E. **Dismissals**

1. Rev. Esther Acolatse to Presbytery of Chicago, effective September 10, 2025.
2. Rev. Rob Evans (HR) to Presbytery of Western North Carolina, effective October 8, 2025.

F. **Retirement**

1. Rev. Susan Mazzara, effective September 9, 2025.

G. **Nominating Committees**

1. Outer Banks Presbyterian Church: mission study and formation of pastor nominating committee.

III. **TRANSFERS (To Be Welcomed)**

Rev. Katherine Hester Doehring (Presbytery of New Covenant), effective September 9, 2025.

Rev. Ron Gilmer (Presbytery of Arkansas), effective July 8, 2025.

Rev. Jacob Kennedy (Foothills Presbytery), effective October 1, 2025.

Rev. Ally Pexa (Foothills Presbytery), effective October 1, 2025.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Katherine Hester Doehring

I believe in one God, our compassionate Creator, who I trust with my whole *nephesh* (Deuteronomy 6:5) – my life and being! – and who I entrust with the life of the world. God is infinite and full of profound mystery, yet also loving and personal. God has bound humanity to God's self in covenant love throughout history. God's sovereign love claims us before we can claim God in return and extends to all people. Nothing can separate us from God's love, as revealed to us in Jesus Christ! (Romans 8). In response to God's love for me, I am called to worship, serve, and obey God in community and to loving service to all the world.

I believe that I belong – body and soul, in life and in death – not to myself, but to my Savior, Jesus Christ. In both joy and suffering, I am found in Christ, and am ever-raised to newness of life. Jesus is the eternal Son of God, who being fully God, humbled himself by becoming fully human, and was completely faithful and obedient to God, even to death (Philippians 2). Christ's resurrection overcame all death and evil and reconciled all of creation to God. In my baptism, I am called with others to participate in Christ's body, to daily die to sin and death and live joyfully in the freedom of life with Christ. Together we participate in Christ's body as the church, the community of covenant people, and in Christ's mission of love and reconciliation to the world as we love and serve others.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the abiding presence of God in Christ that is always with me, nearer to me than my next breath, hemming me in, behind and before (Psalm 139). The Holy Spirit intercedes in my prayers, and is with me even as I struggle, question, and long for God (Romans 8). I worship the Spirit as Lord and Life-giver, and rely completely upon the Spirit to renew and sustain me, enabling me to respond in love to God and others. The Spirit continues the creative work begun by God at creation, and is actively at work renewing the church and all creation. The Spirit unifies the church in our diversity of gifts, and is the breath of life in all aspects of our worship and work.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, and that as members of Christ's body we are elected for service – called out of the world in service to the world. The church is to be an open and inclusive community practicing the radical hospitality of Jesus, loving and welcoming all people and sharing the good news of the Gospel in work and action, always looking toward the day where every knee will bow and tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. With Christ as our Head, no one person is to “lord it over another” or take power for themselves, but we work together as ministers all called to do God's work. The church as Christ's body on earth embodies Christ's ministry of compassion to a broken and hurting world. As Christians, we work together with Christ for the healing, justice and reconciliation of all peoples, with our eyes cast upon the glory of Christ and the coming of God's kingdom, our present and future hope.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Katherine Hester Doehring

Since graduating from Duke Divinity School in 2013 and my ordination in 2014, I have served a wide variety of validated ministries. From 2013-2016, I redeveloped and revitalized a PC(USA)/UCC campus ministry at Texas A&M University. I completed a chaplaincy residency at Memorial Hermann in the Texas Medical Center (2016-2017) and subsequently served as a hospital chaplain at Memorial Hermann Medical Center, The Woodlands, TX from 2018-2022. In The Woodlands, I served COVID ICUs during the height of the pandemic, and developed a novel peer-to-peer emotional support program for interdisciplinary staff called Code Lilac. My family relocated back to Durham, NC in 2022, and I took a break from full-time ministry following the pandemic and the birth of my second child. From 2023-2025, I managed the Duke Alumni global board in Duke Alumni Engagement at Duke University.

Since our return to the Triangle in 2022, my family and I have actively attended Westminster Presbyterian in Durham, where I previously served as seminary intern while at Duke Divinity. At Westminster, I actively participate in the Pathways Sunday School class, helped plan Wild Wonder Creation Care Camp in summer 2024, and help facilitate Godly Play. I have two active, curious young disciples – Henry (8 years old) and Benjamin (3 years old) – in my household! Themes of creative program innovation, ministry redevelopment and revitalization, crisis care and management, and ecumenical and interfaith ministry have emerged throughout my pastoral career. I am excited to serve Bethlehem Presbyterian during a season of discernment and creative redevelopment for this historic faith community.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Ron Gilmer

Of all the faith statements in the PC(USA)'s Book of Confessions, I quote A Brief Statement of Faith most often. It starts with an allusion to the Heidelberg Catechism's first question and answer after changing an "I" statement into a "we" statement, which reminds us that we were created to connect and are called to love and serve one another: "In life and in death we belong to God."

A Trinitarian blessing, which flows from Christ, follows before attention turns to what each person of the Trinity does. For example, A Brief Statement of Faith calls attention to how Jesus proclaims God's reign, preaches good news to the poor, releases captives, teaches by word and deed, blesses children, heals the sick, binds up the broken hearted, eats with outcasts, forgives sinners and calls all to repent and believe the gospel.

The theology of A Brief Statement of Faith is both poetic and practical. The sentence in this statement of faith that I have quoted most often in worship is: "Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still."

I quote this faith statement as often as I do, because it so beautifully reminds me of who I am and who we are. I believe in the Holy Trinity. I trust God's providence and give thanks for God's grace in Jesus Christ, who instituted the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, both of which the church, as the body of Christ, celebrates together.

The faith that I have been given begins and ends with Christ, in whose resurrection is the promise of ours. In the name of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. The Holy Spirit abides with us now and gives us courage "to pray without ceasing." Prayer is but one of a set of spiritual practices that I hold dear -- and holding them, I remember that we are held dear by the One who said, "Let there be light," in the beginning. In Christ, the One who gives us light and life becomes flesh and dwells among us, and thanks be to God, the darkness never overcomes it.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Ron Gilmer

The Rev. Dr. Ron Gilmer is a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA). He is a graduate of Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte. He also holds degrees from Wofford College (B.A.), The University of South Carolina (M.A.) and Florida State University (Ph.D.). New Hope Presbytery recently received him for membership. He is currently searching for a part-time call and will start a full-time teaching position in the fall. He became a grandfather for the first time on Memorial Day. His daughter Lydia, her husband John and their son Estil live in Southwest Virginia. He enjoys visiting ballparks, exploring national parks and listening to Americana music. Be sure to tell him about your favorite restaurants in North Carolina, especially the ones that serve barbeque.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Jacob Kennedy

I believe in the **Triune God**, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. All persons unique in their own way, and yet, all parts working together to guide all people. In this Holy mystery, we are able to come to know who God is and how God is at work in our lives.

I believe in **God the Creator**, who created everything and everyone and saw "...that it was good." (Genesis 1:4) Creation occurred as an example of God's love. This shows us, who sin and fall short of the glory of God, that there is goodness all around us. Although we are made in God's image, we fall short and seek things that are the opposite of God's intention. However, God's love is so abundant that our chaos and imperfection is met with love and grace, bonded together from the beginning. This cannot be broken.

I believe in **God the Redeemer**. God's love is so abundant that God came into the world through the person of Jesus Christ, fully God and fully human. Christ's earthly ministry displays the revelation of God. However, Christ's ministry of love, peace, and reconciliation led him to an unjust death at the hands of imperfect people. Christ's death was a salvific act of love for all of humanity, reconciling us to God. On the third day, Jesus rose from the grave, defeating sin and death all at once, while extending grace to all those who believe and proclaim Christ as Lord. The ministry of Christ was in opposition to a world that was imperfect and evil. Christ brought a message of peace, hope, and reconciliation, so Christ's continual reign at the right hand of God reminds us that hope is found only in Christ and that we are called to enliven the reign of Christ in the world.

I believe in **God the Sustainer**. I believe that we are sustained by the Holy Spirit, who lives and is rushing among us, moving us to be the people of God for all time. God's presence as the Spirit furthers the work of creation because we, in covenant with God, continue to work so that all people might flourish. Empowered by the Spirit, we are called to share and live out all of this good news.

I believe that the **Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments** are the revelation of God's love and activity in the world and continues to speak to us today. I believe that the Spirit is present in **the Sacraments** of baptism and communion, both being the visible signs of God's invisible grace. These acts bring individuals and communities into a deeper connection with Christ's life, death, and resurrection. In these simple acts, we witness a piece of the Kingdom of Heaven where all of creation is welcomed into Christ's community and will lift us in heavenly communion with the Triune God.

Biographical Sketch Rev. Jacob Kennedy

A life-long Presbyterian, Jacob holds an undergraduate degree in Religion and Christian Education from Presbyterian College and a Masters of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary. Jacob loves to teach and share the stories of God with all people. In his spare time, Jacob loves to cheer passionately for his favorite sports teams. If he is not doing that, you might find him reading, singing, going to concerts with friends, or sneaking out to play golf at the end of the day. In the larger Church, Jacob has co-directed the Montreat Youth Conference, served on the board of the Presbyterian Youth Workers Association, been a leader at various national conferences and served on various committees at the Presbytery level.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Ally Pexa

I believe in the Triune God— Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer—uniquely distinguishable and mysteriously indistinguishable.

I believe in God the Creator who speaks order into chaos and life into dust. Creation is not an accident, but a monumental act of love, woven together with God’s glory, beauty, wonder and truth. Though made in God’s image, we grasped for wisdom not ours to hold and let rebellion unravel what was good. But God, whose mercy is from everlasting to everlasting and whose being is love, made covenant with us. Even when we turn away from God, God’s love is faithful still.

I believe in God the Redeemer, who did not stand far off, but entered human history not to condemn the world, but to save it. Conceived by the Spirit and born of Mary, Jesus Christ— fully human, fully divine—is the radiance of God’s glory. He came healing the sick, welcoming the outsider, lifting the lowly, preaching liberation to the captives, and proclaiming the Kingdom of God. For this, he was despised, rejected, and suffered a criminal’s death upon a cross. Yet, not even death could hold him. Through his death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus conquered the power of sin and death, assuring us once and for all that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

I believe in God the Sustainer, whose power and presence justifies us by grace through faith so we might live as Christ taught us. I believe the Holy Spirit is actively moving in and among us, revealing God’s presence with us and God’s will for our lives. Wherever justice is born, mercy poured out, or hope kindled, there the Spirit is at work.

I believe that the Holy Scripture is a living witness through which the Spirit still speaks, disturbs, comforts, and transforms. I believe in the mystery of the Sacraments, visible signs of invisible graces. In Baptism, we are claimed as God’s beloved, we die to that which separates us from God, we are raised with Christ to new life, and join in his ministry of love. At Christ’s table, we remember the great cloud of witnesses, we taste and see that God is good, and we receive a foretaste of the coming days when all will feast together. In these sacraments, we are claimed, nourished, and sent.

I believe that the Church—commissioned by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit—is Christ’s body in the world. Through worship, service, education, and fellowship, we accompany one another on the journey of faith, imagining and laboring for a world where it is “on earth as it is in heaven.”

I believe that the story is not yet finished. Christ will come again. Until that day, we live as those who’ve seen the resurrection light.

Amen.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Ally Pexa

Rev. Ally Pexa is originally from California and holds degrees from Seattle Pacific University, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Rutgers University. She has cultivated a background in social work, chaplaincy, and congregational leadership. She has served congregations in California, Washington, New Jersey, and South Carolina. Ally is passionate about helping congregations connect faith to action and creating spaces where people feel seen, heard, and empowered. She believes it is one of life's greatest joys to walk alongside people on their journey of faith.

In Memoriam
Rev. Marilyn Turner Hedgpeth
December 24, 1953 ~ July 23, 2025

Marilyn Turner Hedgpeth, 71, had her baptism made complete on July 23, 2025. With deep love and sadness, we celebrate the extraordinary life of Marilyn, who died due to a tragic bicycle accident.

She was born December 24, 1953 in Charlotte, NC to the late Clifton Spencer Turner and Carolyn Cly Reid, the eldest of three siblings. She graduated from Myers Park High School in 1972 and Salem College in 1976, majoring in English. Marilyn and her husband Hedge met as sophomores in college in 1973 and were married at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Charlotte in 1978.

Marilyn worked two years for J. A. Jones as a copywriter in the graphics department, and four years as a public relations specialist for the Carolinas Medical Center. Following the birth of their first child in 1983, she worked as a part-time receptionist for pediatrician and family friend, Dr. Thomas E. Walker. Marilyn also taught aerobics, choreographing music for 17 years.

In 1985, the family moved to Raleigh, joining White Memorial Presbyterian Church, where Marilyn taught and coordinated Sunday School. She introduced liturgical dance, coaxing her friends to follow her lead. Marilyn enrolled in countless biblical interpretation courses, taught by Duke Divinity Professor James “Mickey” Efird. Her time at White Memorial and the relationships she nurtured among staff and friends became the genesis and incubator of Marilyn’s sense of call to ordained ministry.

In 1992, Marilyn and family moved to Decatur, GA to attend Columbia Theological Seminary, where she and Hedge earned Master of Divinity degrees in 1995. She served six years at First Presbyterian Church, South Charleston, WV. In 2002 the family returned home to North Carolina. Marilyn spent the next seventeen years at First Presbyterian Church in Durham, NC, serving primarily as associate pastor, but also interim pastor and senior pastor. Marilyn often shared that her years in ministry in Durham were some of her happiest, learning so much about loving immediate neighbors, serving the poor, and being responsive to the needs around us.

Retiring in 2020 and drawn by Marilyn’s Moravian heritage and their time together in college, Marilyn and Hedge relocated to Winston-Salem. They found a new home and spiritual family in Trinity Presbyterian Church. Marilyn served as a pastoral care minister at Clemmons Presbyterian Church and interim pastor at St. Giles Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, NC. Marilyn helped initiate the spiritual care volunteer program at the SECU Family House. Each week she provided pastoral care while regularly furnishing meals and serving as a dinner host. She tutored students in math at Bolton Elementary School, helped lead two book clubs, and played in three handbell ensembles.

Marilyn was a lifelong advocate for justice and equality. One thread coursing through Marilyn's ministry into retirement was her deep and abiding concern and care for those whom Christ called "the least of these." She believed that acts of love and service towards those in need, especially those who are vulnerable and marginalized, are acts of love and service towards Christ himself.

Her creative spirit, compassion, and purpose shone brightly in everything that she did. During Marilyn's life, she was a daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother "Mari," eloquent and imaginative preacher, spiritual care coordinator, published poet, accomplished writer, handbell aficionado, culinary artist, amateur meteorologist, voracious reader, Scrabble wizard, and a fitness enthusiast. Marilyn's passion for writing was prevalent in her prolific poetry, authoring books, sermons, prayers, and prose.

Marilyn is survived by her husband, Ingram "Hedge" Hedgpeth; daughter, Emily Schauer; son-in-law, Adam Schauer; grandsons, Spencer and Parker Schauer; son, Andrew Hedgpeth; son, Stuart Hedgpeth; daughter-in-law, Senmiao Zhan; brother, Stephen Turner; brother, David Turner, and stepmother, Miriam Turner.

Memorial gifts may be made to Salem College for the Marilyn Turner Hedgpeth C'76 Scholarship Fund (Office of Institutional Advancement, 601 S. Church Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101). Gifts may also be made online at saalem.edu/give/#form. In the "notes about my gift" box, please type Marilyn Turner Hedgpeth Scholarship. Condolences may be shared at www.salemfh.com.

In Memoriam
Rev. Mitzi Lynne Lesher-Thomas
January 29, 1973 ~ September 28, 2025

“Stay where your feet are.” This became her signature phrase in the last 20 years of her life, ministry, play, and friendships. Mitzi, ever the curator of words, used them precisely and with purpose. Staying where her feet were was simply the logical consequence of speaking, and living, deliberately.

Mitzi held many accomplishments in her lifetime: academically, socially, professionally, and through her service to her community. While each of these held meaning for her, it was her accomplishments with others that gave her life meaning and purpose. Her running with peers, her work among celebrated staff and colleagues, her volunteer hours standing with those called to the same service, and her time with her family. It is often said that the greatest things in life are like holding sand in your hand - the more you try to hold on the more you end up losing. Mitzi held with just the right amount of effort. There was always enough to know you were held and loved, but never so much that the moment suffered under the strain.

Though she moved around a bit as a child, Mitzi was glad to call Pittsboro, NC, home for 20 years of her marriage to Troy. It was the right size of community to blend the family and personal experiences she wanted and looked for. Mitzi found meaningful service at Edgewood Presbyterian Church in Sanford, Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church in Chapel Hill, Cary Presbyterian Church in Cary, and lastly at First Presbyterian Church in Durham. She always brought a love of the arts and creative expression to her work and ministry. Each congregation was one she fell in love with easily and departed only with great difficulty. She would often say, “Serving in the church just means our family is always getting bigger.”

Mitzi loved the outdoors and mountains. She was able to nurture and support the cultivation of this love in her two children, Mackenzie and Andrew. Both were a constant focus and love in her life. From picking fresh fruit to baking cookies, Mitzi sought ways to include them in her first loves. And, while her children were trying on new paths Mitzi would sojourn with them even if it was not her path of choice. This meant she drove a tractor Andrew got running at the age of 7. She worked on music with Mac from her elementary school years. And, she watched the mini-metal foundry go through hundreds of aluminum cans as Andrew and Troy made aluminum ingots. Mitzi made sure to make family a priority in all that she did - work and play - her family will be forever enlarged because of her.

Mitzi is survived by her husband, Troy; her children, Mackenzie and Andrew; her father, Jim and mother, Jean; and her brother Steve. Though lost to cancer, her stepmother Shelley held a special place in Mitzi’s heart as does Shelley’s daughter, Christine, and son, Paul. In addition to those

named, there are spouses of family, cousins, nieces/nephews, and the like which all hold a special place in Mitzi's life and story.

For those wishing to give a gift in memory of Mitzi several ideas came to mind for her. Those wishing to gift a church might consider First Presbyterian Church, Durham or Clemmons Presbyterian Church, Clemmons, where Troy currently serves. For those with a love of trails and running, consider a gift to your favorite park to train or run in. Lastly, since everyone knows someone who has fought or is fighting cancer, you might consider a gift to the cancer charity or hospice of your choice. Mitzi would want each gift to make a difference in the life of someone with the hope that the gift once planted might blossom and grow.

Nominations and Representation Committee

October 2025

The following nominations are submitted for approval

Commission on Ministry	
Judy Rogers, RE, Raleigh 1st	Class of 2026
Rev. Betty Berghaus, TE, HR	Class of 2027
Rev. Matt Bowman, TE, Roxboro	Class of 2027
Rev. Jonathan Sherrod, TE, Kirk of Holly Springs	Class of 2027
Rev. Rocky Stone, TE, Farmville	Class of 2027
Dana Jenkins, RE, Henderson 1 st	Class of 2027
Lori Jones, RE, Calvery Wilson	Class of 2027
Church Development & Evangelism	
Rev. Savannah Demuynck, TE, Wilson 1st	Class of 2027
Preparation for Ministry	
Rev. John Kidd, TE, HR	Class of 2028
Exams and Transfers	
Rev. Roberta Kidd, TE, HR	Class of 2028
Personnel	
Diedre Gordon, RE, Trinity Avenue	Class of 2027
General Assembly Commissioners	
Ruling Elder	
Madeline Lee, Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church	
John Etheredge, First ,Rocky Mount	
Alec Peters, West Raleigh	
Lisa Lewis Jenkins, Saint Andrews	
Teaching Elder	
Rev. Jordan Davis, Saint Giles Presbyterian	
Rev. Jackie Rodriguez, Duke Presbyterian Campus Ministry	
Rev. Gun Ho Lee, Shalom Ministry	
Rev. Vanessa Hawkins, HR	
Young Adult Advisory delegate	
Carolina Garcia, White Memorial Presbyterian Church, student Virginia Tech	
alternate	
Rev. Betty Berghaus, HR	



The Presbytery
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the Nominations Form!



SCAN ME

Bills and Overtures/Resolutions

Process for Submitting Overtures and Resolutions for Presbytery's Consideration

Overtures: Overtures come from one council (session, presbytery, synod) requesting that a higher council takes an action or approves/endorse a particular statement or resolution.

Resolutions: A resolution for new business comes from a member or committee of a council, asking that the council takes a particular action or approves/endorse a particular statement.

Timetable: Session overtures/resolutions to presbytery for consideration should ordinarily be submitted to the stated clerk at least 60 days prior to a presbytery meeting day. The stated clerk shall forward the overtures/resolutions to the Bills and Overtures Committee for its action. If needed, the Bills and Overtures Committee has the right to meet with the session or presbytery committee to discuss the rationale for the overtures/resolutions prior to the presbytery gathering for consideration.

If at least two members of the Bills and Overtures Committee are not available at the presbytery gathering when overtures/resolutions are to be presented, the moderator may provide for a temporary Bills and Overtures Committee of at least three persons for the duration of the meeting. If any members of the standing Bills and Overtures Committee are present, they shall be included along with the temporary committee.

Coordinating Body shall include overtures and prepared responses of the Bills and Overtures/Resolutions Committee in the presbytery handbook for commissioners.

Concurrences: A concurrence is itself an overture and shall follow all the guidelines mentioned above for the consideration of overtures to presbytery. A concurrence may also happen unintentionally, when the content of an original overture essentially matches that of another presbytery. In that case the stated clerk of the General Assembly may group the similar overtures together as “concurring overtures.”

How to Submit an Overture/Concurrence to General Assembly

A. Overview

The guidelines for presenting overtures are found in the Manual of the General Assembly, Standing Rule A.3. The key provisions are:

- Overtures must be approved by a presbytery or a synod and shall request the General Assembly to take a particular action or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution.
- Overtures must be timely submitted to the Office of the General Assembly (see G. below).
- The originating presbytery or synod may appoint an overture advocate (see section E. below).

B. Researching the Overture

Standing Rule A.3.b. and A.3.c.(5) require that the stated clerk of a presbytery or synod considering an overture to the General Assembly shall:

- Examine the most recently published *Minutes* of the General Assembly to determine if a similar overture has already been passed;
- Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether the desired action has been voted on by any previous General Assembly;
- Consult with the Office of the General Assembly to determine whether a similar overture has already been proposed for the current year. If so, the presbytery or synod will be encouraged to concur with that overture.
- Presbyteries or synods submitting overtures with a recommendation(s) that affects the work or budget of a General Assembly entity(ies) shall submit evidence that the affected entity(ies) has (have) been consulted. If such evidence is not submitted, the stated clerk shall recommend that the overture be received and referred to a future session of the General Assembly so that consultation may take place.

These procedures are designed to ensure better communication in conceiving and writing recommendations considered at the assembly. The consultation may take place by fax, phone, mail, or personal conversation.

C. Format of the Overture

Recommendation Section

“The Presbytery [or Synod] of _____ overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) to”

The recommendation section should be worded with specific, concise directives so that the General Assembly can make a clear, informed decision, and so that financial implications, if any, can be accurately assessed.

Rationale Section

The rationale section should be as concise as possible, and provide insight into the reasons for the recommendation. Material included in the rationale is for information only and is not a part of the action of the assembly. Tell the reader, in short paragraphs, what is the problem, what is the harm, why the current rule or program is not adequate, what is needed.

D. Submitting the Overture

The overture may be submitted electronically, preferably in Word, to kay.moore@pcusa.org. Please do not submit PDFs as OGA staff must edit and format the overture. Submitting the overture electronically eliminates the necessity of OGA staff rekeying the overture. If electronic submission is not feasible, a fax copy is acceptable. Please fax to 502-569-8642. Remember that the receipt of all overtures in OGA will be acknowledged by letter. If an acknowledging letter is not received within a few weeks after submission, please check with Kay Moore at kay.moore@pcusa.org or 888-728-7228, extension 5418, to ensure that the overture has been received.

E. Overture Advocate

Each presbytery or synod submitting an overture may name one overture advocate. The overture advocate must be able to be available at the General Assembly to provide information on the background and intent of the overture to the assembly committee to which the overture is referred (Standing Rule A.3.e.; see also Standing Rule E.2.e. “Privilege of the Floor”). Be aware that naming a commissioner as an overture advocate will most certainly require that the commissioner will be taken away from their assigned assembly committee business to go to another assembly committee to advocate for the overture. In the letter acknowledging receipt of the overture, the OGA will request overture advocate information. Please provide the name of an overture advocate as soon as possible. Several weeks before the convening of the General Assembly, the OGA will correspond with all overture advocates. The overture advocates receive information identifying the item number and title of the overture they will be advocating, the assembly committee to which the overture is referred and the location of the meeting room in the convention center, and the names of the leadership of the assembly committee. The OGA provides orientation for overture advocates at the General Assembly before the assembly committees meet.

F. Concurrences

The 220th General Assembly (2012) approved a recommendation from the Committee to Review Biennial Committees (*Minutes*, 2012, 72, 241) that requested amendment to the *Book of Order* (G-3.0302). The amendment required that overtures referred to the General Assembly have a concurrence from at least one other presbytery. Overtures not receiving a timely concurrence will not be referred to the General Assembly.

G. FAQs on Overtures/Concurrences

What do the *Standing Rules* say about concurrences?

Section A.3.c.(6) of the *Standing Rules* defines a concurring overture as one “similar to one already proposed (excluding rationale),” and gives instructions for how the stated clerk is to respond. This section also makes it clear that concurrences must meet **the same deadlines for submission** (120 days before the assembly for constitutional matters, 45 days before the assembly for all other business) that all overtures must meet.

What has changed about concurrences?

The 220th General Assembly (2012) added a requirement that all overtures from presbyteries will require at least one concurrence in order to be considered. The following language was added to the responsibilities of presbyteries in the *Book of Order* “... proposing to General Assembly overtures that have received a concurrence from at least one other presbytery ...” (G-3.0302d).

Must a concurrence have exactly the same words?

For constitutional amendments it is expected that the effected constitutional language be exactly the same. For other business it is encouraged that the language be the same or analogous enough to be judged “similar” by the stated clerk.

Do the rationales have to be the same?

The rationale does not need to be the same, and many presbyteries use a concurrence to offer additional rationale for an item of business. The rationales for all concurrences are included with the overture when presented to the assembly.

Who is responsible for ensuring that an overture has concurrences?

The Office of the General Assembly will not solicit concurrences. Presbyteries are encouraged to contact other presbyteries to consider concurring with their overtures. Also upon receipt of the regular update of overtures from the Office of the General Assembly, presbyteries may identify overtures for possible concurrence.

Why don't overtures from synods need a concurrence?

The rationale for the original action requiring concurrences explained that an overture from a synod contains, by definition, the support of several presbyteries whose commissioners to the synod adopted the overture.

Who brings an overture to a presbytery for concurrence?

Every presbytery has a different process for bringing business before the council. Concurrences would be treated as a normal item of business.

May a presbytery simply vote “to concur” with a particular overture, or must they vote on the overture itself?

A vote to concur is an acceptable way for a presbytery to offer a concurrence and is reported to the stated clerk as “At its (date of meeting) the Presbytery of (blank) voted to concur with overture (number and name of overture).” Any additional rationale may be attached.

If our presbytery concurs with another presbytery's overture, do we name an overture advocate?

A presbytery or synod that concurs with an overture from another presbytery or synod may send one overture advocate to assist in presenting the matter to the assembly committee.

H. Deadlines for General Assemblies

180-day deadline: Names of commissioners and young adult advisory delegates from presbyteries.

120-day deadline: Overtures requesting amendment to or interpretation of the *Book of Order*. These overtures are then automatically referred to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution for advice to the General Assembly (see G-6.04).

60-day deadline: Overtures having financial implications for current or future budgets.

45-day deadline: All other overtures.

Overtures not timely received will be returned to the originating council.

227th General Assembly

The PC(USA) 227th General Assembly will be held June 22 - July 2, 2026 in Milwaukee.

<https://pcusa.org/about-pcusa/church-structure/general-assembly>

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW HOPE

(This page is intended to provide a common understanding of parliamentary procedures for our presbytery meetings. The same procedures apply to session or congregational meetings.)

Protocol in our presbytery meetings requires that each time a person desires to speak:

- the speaker obtains recognition by the moderator prior to speaking.
- the speaker moves to a microphone to be heard.
- the speaker identifies him/herself by giving his/her name and congregation.
- then, the speaker is able to do one of the following:

Motion:

“Mr./Madam Moderator, I move that...” A motion requires a second unless it comes from a presbytery board or committee.

Amend a Motion:

“Mr./Madam Moderator, I move to amend the main motion by adding (state place in motion); **or** by striking these words in the main motion.”

Table a Motion:

“Mr./Madam Moderator, I move to table the motion under consideration.” The motion requires a second. There can be no debate. The body votes to stop debate on the particular motion. The motion to table may include a date for reconsideration of the motion again.

Refer a Motion:

“Mr./Madam Moderator, I move that the motion be referred to _____ committee.” The motion requires a second. The motion may be debated. The motion is always in order.

Call the Previous Question:

Mr./Madam Moderator, ‘I move the previous question’ **or** ‘I call for the question.’”
Requires a second. Requires moderator’s recognition before it is valid. Is not debatable. It is a way for the body to see whether or not enough debate has occurred and the body is ready to vote. If the motion is approved, then the body votes on the previous motion under discussion. If the motion is defeated, the body returns to continue the debate.

Division of the House:

“Mr./Madam Moderator, I call for a division of the house.” This request does not require a second and is done as a courtesy to ensure that the moderator has heard the voice vote accurately. The moderator may test by show of hands or rising the support for each side of the question. In light of that test, the vote may be counted.

Motion to Reconsider:

“Mr./Madam Moderator: I move that we re-consider the motion about _____.” The motion must be made by a person on the prevailing side. The motion requires a second. It is debatable. If approved, then the body will re-consider a motion which has already been considered and voted on at that meeting.

Desire to Withdraw a Motion:

“Mr./Madam Moderator: I request that my motion be withdrawn.” If the motion has been placed on the floor for consideration and debate, the body must decide whether or not the motion can be withdrawn. A consensus or a vote is required to have the motion withdrawn; it cannot just occur because the maker of the motion desires to withdraw it.

Order of the Day:

An item of business scheduled for a particular time during the meeting. When the appropriate time arrives, the body proceeds to consider the order of the day, returning to the normal business after having had the order of the day.

Nominations:

Nominations may be made from the floor and are always in order for positions within the presbytery. Before a person’s name can be considered, he/she must have given consent.

Point of Order:

“Mr./Madam Moderator, point of order.” Then, ask your question for clarification. Point of order does not debate a motion, but is for clarification.

CHART #1						CHART #2						
RANKING MOTIONS and their five salient parliamentary points. The order in which the thirteen motions are listed.						NON-RANKING MOTIONS- and their five salient parliamentary points. These motions (incidental motions have no rank among themselves) Their being in order depends upon their necessity at the time.						
FIVE PRIVILEGED MOTIONS												
	Must be seconded	May be debated	May be amended	Vote	May be reconsidered		Must be seconded	May be debated	May be amended	Vote	May be reconsidered	
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	
13.	To Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	Yes	Appeal	Yes	** Yes	No	Maj	Yes
12.	To Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Maj	No	Suspend Rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
11.	To Take a Recess	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	No	Point of Order, Call to Order	No	No	No	Mod	No
10.	Question of Privilege	No	No	No	-	No	Objection to Consideration of a Question	No	No	No	2/3	Yes No Vote
9.	Call for Orders of the Day	No	No	No	-	No	Requests	No	No	No	Maj	No
SEVEN SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS												
8.	Lay on Table	Yes	No	No	Maj	No	Division of Assembly	No	No	No	-	No
7.	Previous Questions	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes	To Read a Paper	Yes	No	No	Maj	Yes
6.	Modify Debate	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes	To Withdraw a Motion (to be used only before debate)	No	No	No	Maj	Yes No Vote
5.	To Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	Yes	To Divide the Question	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	No
4.	To Commit or Recommit	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Maj	Yes	To Close Nominations or Polls	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	No
3.	To Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	Yes	To Consider Seriatim	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	No
2.	Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Maj	Yes Affirmative only	TO UNCLASSIFIED MOTIONS					
1.	MAIN MOTION	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	Yes	Reconsider	Yes	** Yes	No	# Maj	No
Example of Incidental Main Motions; rescind, ratify, amend by-laws						To Take from the Table***						
* only re. desirability of referral or details of referral. The merits of the question cannot be debated.						Rescind						
						# same Presbytery meeting						
Neither the chart nor references are inclusive but are to be used as an abridgement of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.						* with previous notice						
						*** before the end of the next regular Presbytery meeting						
						** if main motion is debatable						

Presbytery of New Hope Guide to Acronyms

AC	Administrative Commission
AOP	Associate Pastor
APNC	Associate Pastor Nominating Committee
BOC	Book of Confessions
BOO	Book of Order
BPC	Black Presbyterian Caucus
CD&E	Church Development and Evangelism
COM	Commission on Ministry
CM	Campus Minister
COR	Committee on Representation
CPM	Committee on Preparation for Ministry
CRE	Commissioned Ruling Elder (formerly CLP, Commissioned Lay Pastor)
DP	Designated Pastor
E&T	Examinations and Transfers Sub-Commission
EP	Executive Presbyter
F&P	Finance and Property
FOG	Form of Government
GA	General Assembly
HR (Up to July 6, 2023)	Honorably Retired
I	Interim
LOB	Laboring Outside Bounds
LWB	Laboring Within Bounds
MAL	Member at Large
MDP	Ministry Discernment Profile
MOM	Ministries of Mission
NCD	New Church Development
NHP	New Hope Presbytery
OA	Older Adults
OGA	Office of the General Assembly
P	Pastor
PA	Parish Associate
PC(USA)	Presbyterian Church (USA)
PDA	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
PDP	Personal Discernment Profile
PJC	Permanent Judicial Commission
PMA	Presbyterian Mission Agency
PNC	Pastor Nominating Committee
PW	Presbyterian Women
R (as of July 7, 2023)	Retired
RE	Ruling Elder
SDOP	Self-Development of People
SS	Stated Supply
TE	Teaching Elder

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PRESBYTERY OF NEW HOPE

Publications, Publicity, and Table Display Policy

Only the following entities and organizations shall be entitled to request

- (a) the inclusion of written announcements or communications on the official Presbytery of New Hope website (www.nhpresbytery.org), in e-mail notifications, or e-newsletters distributed by presbytery staff, or in other publications prepared and distributed by presbytery staff, or
- (b) announcements to be made orally at meetings of the presbytery, table displays at presbytery meetings, and other events sponsored by the presbytery.
 - 1. Agencies, committees, and commissions which report directly to the Presbytery of New Hope or a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) above the Presbytery of New Hope.
 - 2. Organizations and projects which relate to an agency, committee, or commission described in item 1 above and whose staff and funding are provided for by the Presbytery of New Hope or a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) above the Presbytery of New Hope.
 - 3. The docket for each meeting of the Presbytery of New Hope shall include this statement: "The displays you see at any given presbytery meeting may or may not be endorsed by the Presbytery of New Hope."