

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

July 22, 2025



Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church
7506 Falls of Neuse
Raleigh, NC 27615
(919) 847-1913
<https://sapc.com>

Co-hosted by
Trinity Presbyterian Church
<https://trinityraleigh.wixsite.com/nhpnc>

Jubilee International Fellowship
919-749-7339

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ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH STATED GATHERING OF PRESBYTERY

Registration

Please register on the presbytery website at the following link: <https://nhpresbytery.org/125th-stated-gathering-registration-form/> . **The deadline for registration is Wednesday, July 16 by noon.**

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/125th-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 North Raleigh Ministries. Most urgent needs are pasta, canned fruit, peanut butter, jelly, breakfast cereal or oatmeal. Please see page 5 for more details.

Worship Offering

Today's offering goes to Refugee Hope Partners (please see page 5 for more details).

Lunch

Please register your attendance online by the July 16 deadline if you would like lunch, including the vegetarian and gluten-sensitive options. This is helpful to the host church for planning purposes. Lunch tickets should be purchased on the day of the meeting in the registration area and are \$15.00 per person, payable by cash, card, or check made out to SAPC with a note in the memo line “Presbyterian Lunch.” **Please bring your own refillable water bottle if possible.**

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 Monday, July 21 by 1:00 p.m. if you reserve childcare, but then do not require it. Contact Anne Stark at astark@sapc.com.

Wi-Fi Network

Network name: SAPC_Guest

Password: sapc7506

The livestream and recording can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/cVctdvd2dUc>

This is a viewing service only and your attendance at the meeting will not be counted through 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 86 and 88 of the handbook. Motion forms will be at the stated clerk’s table if you need to use one.

Next Stated Gathering

Saturday, October 25, 2025: First Presbyterian Church, Kinston.

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

North Raleigh Ministries

(non-perishable food items)

“God Desires for Everyone to Thrive”

Mission

We equip families and individuals in crisis with the resources and skills they need to achieve stability.

Vision

We envision a society in which people realize their inherent value, worth, and dignity and leverage each to create vibrant and healthy communities.

Values

Our values show that we CARE for our people and our community.

Compassion: Showing kindness, care, and empathy for all persons. Ephesians 4:32

Accountability: Maintaining the highest standards of personal and organizational integrity in an environment where one takes responsibility for their own actions. Jeremiah 17:10

Respect: Fair and equitable treatment of all people by virtue of the inherent dignity, worth and value each possesses. Matthew 7:12

Empowerment: Leveraging personal capability, autonomy, and self-determination to foster fulfilling lives. Isaiah 40:31; Jeremiah 16:19; Isaiah 41:10; Philippians 4:13

Most urgent needs: pasta, canned fruit, peanut butter, jelly, breakfast cereal or oatmeal.

Refugee Hope Partners

(monetary offering during worship)

Refugee Hope Partners (RHP) is committed to walking alongside resettled refugees as neighbors and friends – from arriving to thriving. We stand as a beacon of compassion and faith, driven by our Christian values and a deep commitment to loving our refugee neighbors with the hope of the gospel. We believe in the transformative power of love, grace, and resilience, and we are dedicated to empowering refugees to thrive in their new communities. Through our holistic care, unwavering support, and collaborative partnerships, we strive to inspire hope, restore dignity, and ignite dreams for a brighter future in the lives of the refugee neighbors in our city.

RHP serves refugee families in the Triangle through more than 100 hours of weekly programming and services across multiple locations, providing encouragement and resources to families as they move from arriving to thriving!

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 link to the handbook will be sent to your clerk of session prior to the meeting, who will then share it with you so that you may download it from the presbytery website. 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 Near Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church

Comfort Inn Raleigh – Midtown

1001 Wake Town Dr., 27609

919-828-1813

<https://www.choicehotels.com/north-carolina/raleigh/comfort-inn-hotels/nc878?mc=llgoxxpx>

Hilton Garden Inn

6412 Capital Blvd., 27616

919-876-5650

https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/rooms/?ctyhocn=RDUNEGI&arrivalDate=2025-04-01&departureDate=2025-04-02&room1NumAdults=2&inputModule=HOTEL_SEARCH&viewPackagesAndPromotionsRate=true&WT.mc_id=zLADA0US1GI2OLX3GGL4ADVMETA5LF6_RDUNEGI7_129231037_&adType=PD&gclid=Cj0KCQjwna6_BhCbARIsALId2Z2auJSE_Vjogp8l20iQIfJ8HV1m1779IPECn4OzRKIbMQwwiTYtuZoaAiRJEALw_wcB&dsclid=69036975598096384&dclid=CLaEp5qUt4wDFU6mywEdfQMeLA&hmGUID=77974edf-e777-4ab4-9a23-a184b855a5fa

Courtyard by Marriot Raleigh North/Triangle Town Center

3401 Sumner Blvd., 27616

919-645-0088

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/rdunt-courtyard-raleigh-north-triangle-town-center/overview/?scid=f2ae0541-1279-4f24-b197-a979c79310b0&sa=X&ved=0CLAHEMiuA2oYChMI4Pai4ZW3jAMVAAAAAB0AAAAAEPQB>

Parking for New Hope Presbytery Meeting
7506 Falls of Neuse Road, Raleigh, NC 27615



A History of Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church

The idea for a Presbyterian Church in North Raleigh, (Wake County, NC), later named Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church, was conceived on June 19, 1971, when the Orange Presbytery bought the land on which the church still resides today. Through many meetings and discussions, the church's identity continued to develop throughout the mid-to-late 1970's. On October 1, 1974, Reverend Hal Clark was installed as Organizing Pastor, a role for which he was well suited. After initially meeting in the home of Trenna and Jerry Perkins, the first "formal" church service was held at Hunting Ridge Apartments Club House on February 6, 1975. Five families met that morning, along with the Rev. Clark which included the Brueggemans, Jenkins, Pates, Perkins and Rogersons. The early meetings focused on goals and a purpose for the church, as well as the concerns of the congregation. During the spring and summer of 1975, growth was seen as the number of members of the congregation increased. Another defining characteristic of this new-born church appeared as members volunteered to teach the children - and later adopted a teaching rotation in order to fulfill the pledge made upon baptism. That pledge...to teach, pray, and care for each child.

In March of 1976, the Building Committee began its work. A passion for mission brought together 'congregational care and volunteerism' as defining traits of a young Saint Andrews church. March 13, 1977 was officially designated as "Organizational Sunday", following the acceptance of the petition for new church status by the Orange Presbytery. A choir was established, and the first communicants' class was held. In addition, the first class of Session elders and trustees were elected. On July 23, 1978, ground was broken for a church building. On August 5, 1979, the Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church facility was completed, and a formal dedication took place in October of that year. At the end of 1979, Reverend Hal Clark resigned as Pastor. Rev. William (Bill) Smith, III then served for a few months until Dr. Bill McCorkle became Interim Pastor. In 1980 Rev. Jim Tubbs became Pastor and conducted the first wedding in the new building on September 30, 1980. After serving the church with dedication for six years while overseeing many changes, Rev. Jim Tubbs resigned in 1986. In 1987 Rev. Bob Walkup became the third pastor at Saint Andrews. He was soon joined by the Rev. Craig Holliday and Ann Laird Jones in 1988. During 1989, membership increased significantly with more than 300+ members joining Saint Andrews. In 1990, a new sanctuary (where worship is now held), meeting spaces, classrooms, a kitchen, the choir room, and fellowship hall were all added and dedicated to accommodate the needs of the quickly growing church family.

On August 4, 1999 Rev. Walkup announced his resignation for various health reasons. In February of 2000, Saint Andrews also welcomed the Rev. Art King as Parish Associate. In April of 2000, the remaining pastoral staff, except for Rev. King, resigned to begin a non-denominational church. Encouraged by the scripture, "*As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.*", the remaining leadership and volunteers, staff, and members responded by faithfully listening to the Holy Spirit and leaning on each other, first under the guidance of the Rev. Stacy Ikard as Stated Supply and then the Rev. Dan Hale, Interim Pastor. Assistance of the Presbytery and churches throughout the Presbytery were provided as well as all who worked together to begin the steps for a successful transition to the church Saint Andrews was to become.

The May of 2003, the Rev. Dr. Mike Nevling was called as the church's fourth pastor. Rev. Art King served as Parish Associate, as well as led the Stephen Ministry program and served as the Facility Manager. In 2005 a Contemporary *Reformed* Worship Service was offered in addition to the existing Traditional Reformed Worship Service. In the winter of 2007, Rev. Diane Knauf was called as Associate Pastor with a focus on Family Ministries. In the fall of 2010, Rev. Mike Nevling announced his call to another church and Saint Andrews began an orderly process of calling a new senior pastor. Rev. Larry Duncan served as Interim Senior Pastor during this time. On August 19, 2012, the congregation of Saint Andrews met to hear a report from the Pastor Nominating Committee and approved the call of the Rev. Dr. Thomas (Tom) N. Harris as senior pastor. Rev. Harris and Rev. Diane Knauf, working together, began preparing and worked with the Session leadership and the congregation to move forward to meet the spiritual and educational needs of Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church into the future. Rev. Harris resigned at the end of July in 2019. The Rev. John Semmes served as Interim Senior Pastor; seeing the church through the COVID-19 pandemic. Rev. Diane Knauf resigned in February 2021. In December of 2021 Dr. Rev. Thomas Watkins accepted the Call of the Congregation as Senior Pastor and Head of Staff.

A History of Trinity Presbyterian Church

Informal worship services began on January 15, 1967 at Brentwood Elementary School. On May 7, 1967, a Commission of Granville Presbytery formally organized the "North Raleigh Presbyterian Chapel" as Trinity Presbyterian Church with a charter roll of 53 members. Several charter members came from Milner Memorial Presbyterian Church, with the intention of starting a new congregation. Early members were former Catholics, Baptists, Mennonites, and others. As Ed Jennings wrote in 1985, Trinity was "A product of different ideas and ideologies, yet founded upon the universal truth of the saving grace of Jesus Christ."

On January 16, 1972, Trinity's first permanent building was consecrated, and an addition was constructed on February 7, 1974. Reflecting the dynamic growth of young families joining, the current sanctuary, offices, small kitchen, parlor and Sunday school rooms were added in January 13, 1991. As every Presbyterian knows, a good potluck gathering is a given in the life of the church. So happily, a large fellowship hall and modern kitchen were added to the church's footprint in 2005, thanks to Trinity's generous members. Much of Trinity's growth occurred under the leadership of the Rev. David C. Huffman, an exemplary teacher who modeled Christ's love and care. David retired in the spring of 2022.

Rev. Amy Simes, the church's first lead female pastor, was ordained at Trinity on August 18, 2024. Under Amy's leadership, the officers and members are taking steps to prepare for a more sustainable future. The staff, members, and officers of Trinity fully embrace the church's mission statement, "*By the power of the Holy Spirit, Trinity's mission is to: Seek God, Grow in Christ, Serve Each Other, Serve the World...*" The church provides a home for the Emmanuel Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, which offers each congregation shared opportunities for worship, fellowship, and work at times throughout the year. As with many local churches, Trinity hosts a Scout Pack and Scout Troops.

The Friday Night Friends program was added to Trinity in 2017; it's a twice a month gathering for individuals who have special needs and their families. The meetings feature a meal and either a movie or a craft project. Post-Covid, Trinity expanded the purpose and reach of its Food Pantry. The pantry is supported by Trinity's members, the Men of the Church, the Scouts, participants from Friday Night Friends, anonymous donors, and Presbytery's Hunger Grant. Last year, 643 bags of food were shared, with a good many of that amount supporting the families of nearby Wilburn Elementary.

Throughout the church's history, Trinity Presbyterian has been a warm, friendly smaller church which loves to do big things to glorify God. All are welcome to join us in worship, study, service, and fellowship.

A Brief History of Jubilee International Fellowship

Jubilee International Fellowship is a multiethnic, multicultural church plant in Wake Forest, North Carolina that started in May 2010, with a mission to reach, disciple, and equip international students and people of all nations to do the work of ministry in Wake Forest and beyond. Jubilee membership averages between 18 to 24 people in attendance on Sunday. We're grateful to Greenville Korean Presbyterian Church under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Gun Ho Lee, friends, and family partners who believed in the vision of Jubilee and provided financial support and prayers at a critical stage in our ministry, was an invaluable resource that benefited both congregations.

As a church plant, there are three distinctive practices that have shaped our identity at Jubilee namely, evangelism, discipleship, and prayer. Since the inception, we have espoused the following practices as our core values: Evangelism, Discipleship/Equipping, and Prayer. These are the characteristics of our fellowship that have shaped and informed who we are.

Furthermore, we are intentional about doing evangelism and have used various methods to engage with the people around us. We encourage members to participate in community activities such as the annual return to school giveaway school bookbags, door-to-door evangelism, and delivering meals to seniors. We also hold an annual church picnic that is an outreach event for all people and encourage our church members to invite their friends, neighbors, unchurched friends and families to this event. While we do value the wisdom of meeting people where they are and providing for their physical needs, when necessary, we have learned that it is not enough to feed people and to provide for the physical needs, people must be exposed to the gospel of hope to find peace with self, peace with others, and peace with God. We also believe that evangelism efforts lead to discipleship and a transformed prayer life that occurs in small groups such as the young adult/college bible student that meets every Thursday evening, and the Friday and Sunday afternoon Bible study. Our vision to make disciples of all nations has encouraged the new believers to channel their energy outward towards winning the unbelievers to Christ.

Consequently, when they do share their faith, they are enthralled when they see new faces of people joining our fellowship. Making disciples has created an excitement in our community and propelled us to share the gospel more often. For example, recently our young adult ministry leader who also works as a high school teacher had an encounter with one of his students at school who told him that he wanted to have a relationship with Christ and asked if he could be baptized before he joins the Marine this fall. The young man was welcomed to church and he and another female seeker were baptized this past Easter Sunday. These are the stories that excite us at Jubilee.

Finally, we believe that evangelism, discipleship/equipping members for ministry are anchored on the prayer life of our church members that have shaped the culture of our ministry that has fueled the passion within us to share the story of Jesus with others, to participate in discipleship, and to pray for those whom we intend to invite to church. Also, we have discovered the power of cheering up loudly for the volunteers and other church workers when they achieve small goals, so they know they are appropriated by their pastor and other leaders in the congregation.

Prepared by Pastor Fred Mangeni

PROPOSED DOCKET
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH STATED GATHERING
THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW HOPE
JULY 22, 2025

8:00 a.m. REGISTRATION AND FELLOWSHIP TIME

- Non-Perishable Food Collection
- Displays

8:00 a.m. SESSIONAL RECORDS CHECK

Youth Room 1

8:15-8:45 a.m. ORIENTATION FOR FIRST-TIME ELDER COMMISSIONERS

Youth Room 2

9:00 a.m. CALL TO ORDER

Rev. Jordan Davis, Moderator

- Opening Prayer
- Declaration of Quorum
- Adoption of Docket
- Land Acknowledgment
- Seating of Corresponding Members
- Approval of Consent Agenda (Page 16)
- Welcome by Host Church
- Welcome to Elder Commissioners Attending Presbytery for the First Time

9:15 a.m.

WE APPROACH GOD IN WORSHIP

The offering received during worship will go to Refugee Hope Partners

10:00 a.m. FELLOWSHIP AND STRETCH TIME

10:15 a.m. RECONVENE

GOD’S WORK IN THE LARGER CHURCH

10:15 a.m. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER (Page 17)

Rev. Bruce Grady

10:30 a.m. REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PRESBYTER (Page 26)

Rev. Katie Cashwell

10:45 a.m. STATED CLERK’S REPORT (Page 28)

Rev. Ed Johnson

11:00 a.m. REPORT OF COORDINATING BODY (Page 30)

- Finance and Property Committee (Page 32)

Rev. Katie Crowe
Elder Sue Regier

11:20 a.m. BLACK CAUCUS REPORT

Rev. Tolokun Omokunde

11:35 a.m. BOARD OF PENSIONS (Page 42)

Elder Elizabeth Little

11:50 p.m. LUNCH INSTRUCTIONS AND PRAYER

- 1:00 p.m. RECONVENE IN SANCTUARY**
- 1:05 p.m. AFTER LUNCH ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- September Clergy Retreat Rev. Esther Hethcox
- 1:10 p.m. CAMPUS MINISTRIES REPORT (Page 43)** Rev. Carol Gregg
- 1:40 p.m. NOMINATIONS AND REPRESENTATION (Page 45)** Elder Ray Watson
- 1:55 p.m. COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (Page 47)** Rev. Meg Perry-McLaughlin
- 2:10 p.m. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (Page 49)** Elder Jerry Slaymaker
- Healthy Boundaries Rev. Kerri Hefner
 - Examinations and Transfers Sub-Commission Rev. Rebecca Gillespie
 - For Ordination
 - For Transfer
- 2:30 p.m. OTHER BUSINESS**
- Unfinished Business
 - Stated Clerk's Gathering Report
 - A Word of Gratitude to Our Worship Hosts Rev. Jordan Davis, Moderator

GOD SENDS US OUT

- 2:45 p.m. ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER**

**Please complete your stated gathering questionnaire online
at the following link:**

<https://forms.office.com/r/KUmLbTDxg8>

**The next stated gathering is October 25, 2025
at First Presbyterian Church, Kinston**

ITEMS FOR CONSENT AGENDA

July 22, 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 28
- Report of Nominations and Representation Page 45
- Report of Commission on Ministry Page 51

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER

**126TH STATED GATHERING OF NEW HOPE PRESBYTERY
JULY 22, 2025**

AT

**ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
7506 FALLS OF NEUSE RD, RALEIGH, NC 27615**

REV. DR. BRUCE T. GRADY

Together in Hope... Together for Christ



July 22, 2025

Greetings in the merciful name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

It is a joy and pleasure to serve our loving, liberating, life-giving God and the beautiful people of New Hope Presbytery. Thank you for your courage, support, prayers, service and enduring commitment to this transformative ministry!

In a bold step toward long-term sustainability and renewed mission focus, we have recently announced the approval of **NHP's 2025 – 2028 Strategic Plan- *Together in Hope... Together for Christ***. NHP's Coordinating Body and the Steering Committee are helping us chart our pathway forward. This Committee includes the following members: Lydia Rodriguez Menzel- Chair, Katie Cashwell- Temporary Associate Presbyter for Small Churches & Technology, Ed Johnson- Temporary Stated Clerk, Amber Zapffel- Temporary Financial Administrator, Jay Cummins- Member of Finance and Property Committee, Jerry Slaymaker- Chair of COM and me- the Executive Presbyter.

For such a time as this, the Lord has called us to be agents of God's love, justice, peace, hope and repair. Inspired by God's sustaining presence with the Israelites in the wilderness, I am leading New Hope Presbytery through a paradigm shift from a mindset of scarcity to one of trust in the abundance of the Triune God... to move beyond our comfort zone and enter the world of the vulnerable, the poor, the oppressed, the imprisoned and the broken-hearted.

The Steering Committee and Coordinating Body are offering us opportunities to faithfully reshape our structure and kin-dom capacity for the mission field that is before us.

Our world and NHP are no longer operating in the same environment we were ten years ago. It is easy to become discouraged in these dark days. The recent building of Alligator Alcatraz deep into the marshy wetlands of the Florida Everglades; the cruel and dehumanizing language regarding the pythons and alligators that await immigrant detainees who attempt to escape; the passing of the "big beautiful bill" and sacrificing the interests of babies for those of billionaires; the slashing of foundational programs that provide healthcare and food to more than two-fifths of American children; cuts to Medicaid, the reduction of Snap food assistance benefits; the looming forced closure of many rural hospitals and nursing homes; the vile display of hatred; the increasing violence and xenophobia

exhibited with ICE raids in schools, hospitals, shelters and throughout the public square; the mass deportation's targeting mostly brown people and sending the National Guards and even Marines in response to protests (when local officials didn't ask for it); the arrest and deportation of student activists and the assault of a wide range of civic institutions – non-profits, law firms, universities, news outlets, the arts, the civil service, scientists- targeted and penalized by the federal government, it's hard to avoid the conclusion that our core freedoms are disappearing before our eyes – and democracy itself is slipping away. It can be quite overwhelming. These are indeed difficult and horrible times. But we also know something that can change everything. We remember that God is with us and that God has given us a vision of what we could be. It is a vision of a world where love overcomes hate; where unity overcomes division; where hope overcomes despair; where truth overcomes lies; where light shatters darkness. This better world is possible if we just believe it to be and we work together.

According to the late Dr. Walter Brueggemann in his classic text, *The Prophetic Imagination*, he wrote:

"Imagination is a danger, thus every totalitarian regime is frightened of the artist. It is the vocation of the prophet to keep alive the ministry of imagination, to keep on conjuring and proposing alternative futures to the single one the king wants to urge as the only thinkable one."

I concur with Dr. Rodney Saddler (Director of the Center for Social Justice and Reconciliation at Union Presbyterian Seminary) and paraphrase one of his recent social media posts:

We must remember the power of imagination. If we imagine the better world, conceptualize God's vision, and work with the Lord and one another to make it so, then it will come to pass. The only thing that is preventing it from happening now is the limits on our imagination and our refusal to acknowledge that our true power is in the Triune God. By the power of the grace of God, we have the agency, we can make it happen, if we do justice, love mercy and walk humbly before the Lord (Micah 6:8).

I invite you to believe with me, to imagine with me, to trust in God's vision for us with me. Then labor with me for this better world. Our immigrant siblings are not a threat; our black and brown siblings are not the cause of our economic woes; our LGBTQIA+ siblings have not destroyed our families; our siblings of other faiths have not undermined our morality. We are not our enemies. Put the fiction of the monstrous divisive agenda out of your mind, and conceive of what can be, what should be, what must be. In Christ, we have the power and if we act on it, we will have justice, equality, opportunity, and shared prosperity (commonwealth). These dark days will soon come to an end when we allow the light within us to shine!

The following section of this report highlights various ways that I have recently engaged our ever-unfolding ministry in Jesus Christ.

April 12- 18, I met with residents of poor communities, led vacation bible school for children (in Spanish), and participated in programs to rehabilitate juveniles incarcerated and/or recovering addicts of substance abuse via M25:35 Missions with the Dominican Republic.



May 28, 2025, I listened to the conversations around planning a combined Coastal Carolina Presbytery and New Hope Presbytery Matthew 25 Conference. Since March 2025, Rev. Jerrod Lowery (General Presbyter of CCP) and I have invested time, energy and representatives from our respective presbyteries towards living into our Matthew 25 identity. The combined conference will provide skillsets, toolsets and mindsets across our judicatories.

Jesus said, “When you welcome the stranger, you welcome me...” Matthew 25:35

At no time has the church in the US had a greater opportunity to welcome Jesus among us as he journeys with migrants, immigrants, and refugees than today. The Presbyterian Church (USA) is clear that the situation these beloved of God face under the current administration comes to threatens their humanity, livelihood, and basic human rights.

Please read “We stand with our immigrant brothers and sister”, an article published from the Office of Public Witness, Washinton D.C.

Click the following link to read the entire article.

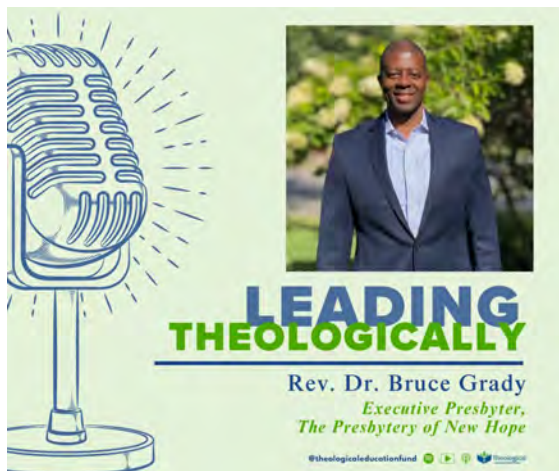
https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/news/2025/6/23/we-stand-with-our-immigrant-brothers-and-sisters?fbclid=IwY2xjawLV7sJleHRuA2FlbQlXMQBicmlkETFGNTJEU1VBcm5mU3g0aWZCAR7rLbvipFM7kH5vGIFDtEjn6yBmeh8pszRyJFawOyZCh9YRcpgsbO6NH5v-PQ_aem_fmdd1xW1110sjYLsXPLSdA



May 4 -9, I participated in the Spring 2025 Presbytery Leaders Formation (PLF) weeklong in-residency at The Archbishop Brunett Retreat & Faith Formation Center at the Palisades (Federal Way, WA). It is a gathering with fellow presbytery executives from around the country for worship, fellowship, learning, collaborating, feasting, watching sunrises/sunsets, listening, laughing, and discerning. We were awed by the majesty of creation, playfulness, prayer, the font, the table and blessings upon blessings for the body, mind, and spirit.



June 4, 2025, Bill Davis (Senior Director Theological Education Funds Development at Presbyterian Foundation) closed out the season of “Leading Theologically” with a recap conversation on reconciliation, reparations, and repair. I shared real-life experiences and reflected on why these topics are essential for congregations. Watch the full episode on the Theological Education Fund's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/5V9kyHPxbWs> or listen wherever you find your podcasts.



June 11, 2025, I participated in a prayer walk in Washington, D.C., with the PCUSA Office of Public Witness, Rev. Jimmie Hawkins (Director of Office of Public Witness, Presbyterian Church USA, Washington D.C.), Rev. Tony Larson, (Co-Moderator of the 226th General Assembly) and the 2025 Summer Fellows. We prayed for moral courage of the nation and justice for all people.



PC(USA) Office of Public Witness 2025 Summer Fellows.

June 28, 2025, New Hope Presbytery partnered with Convoy of Hope and gave 750 bags of food to children in central North Carolina whose families may be experiencing food insecurity. I am grateful for Shauna Villela, Office Administrator with the Office of NHP; Bert Pizzaro, Church Engagement Outreach Director of Convoy of Hope; Western Boulevard Presbyterian Church (Raleigh) with Larry Shelton and Andrew Sowell; Epicenter Church (Fayetteville) with Nealey Malham; Generations Church (Goldsboro) with Josh Clark; Wake Chapel Church (Raleigh) with Zeal Washington; Bethel Assembly (Windsor) with Pastor Webb Hoggard; Victorious Praise (Durham) with Marshetta Parker; Iglesia Santuario Presbyterian Church (Raleigh) with Mirella Cisneros and Iglesia Cristiana de Cary (Cary) with Neftali Santos and Pastor Eli Hernandez.



July 1, 2025, I communicated with the Human Rights Interfaith Initiative and signed a letter addressing the recent Disability Rights NC Report published about Mental Health Human Rights Abuses in NC.

Team of Faith Leaders in North Carolina Submit letter of concern about Mental Health Human Rights Abuses in North Carolina.

Episcopal

Bishop Sam Rodman, Raleigh
Bishop Jose McLoughlin, Asheville
Bishop Robert Skirving, Kinston

Catholic

Bishop Luis Rafael Zarama, Raleigh
Bishop Michael Martin, Charlotte

United Methodist Church

Bishop Connie Mitchell Shelton, Raleigh
Bishop Ken Carter, Asheville

African Methodist Episcopal

Bishop Reginald Thomas Jackson, Second District, Washington, DC, includes NC

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Bishop Tim Smith

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev Dr, Bruce Grady, Executive Presbyter, New Hope Presbytery, Raleigh
Rev Jan Edmiston, General Presbyter, Charlotte Presbytery, Charlotte

Alliance of Baptists

Rev Carole Collins, Co-Director, Raleigh

Rev Elijah Zehyoue, Co-Director, Raleigh

General Baptist State Convention

Rev Ricky Banks, President, Raleigh

Greek Orthodox

Fr Jonathan Resmini, Cathedral Dean, Charlotte

Muslim

Imam Muamar Dahnoun, Islamic Center of Raleigh

Jewish

NC Jewish Clergy Association

Rabbi Eric Solomon, Raleigh, Co-Founder

Rabbi Judy Schindler, Charlotte, Co-Founder

At the request of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Rev. Dr. Floretta Barbee Watkins and I are co-chairs of the Next Generation Initiative Committee. This ministry is a critical and timely effort to revitalize and support Black Presbyterian churches. By committing to the Presbytery Covenant, presbyteries can play a vital role in providing spiritual, emotional, and financial support, as well as fostering leadership development. Through this collaborative approach, the Initiative aims to address the pressing challenges faced by Black congregations and cultivate a future of renewed vitality and growth.

NGI will analyze the current state of the Black Church in the 14 presbyteries throughout the Synod, identify available and needed resources, develop a strategic plan to support their repair, vitality and growth, and create a vision for planting new Black churches and leaders.

The Next Generation Initiative embraces a Cultivation approach as the foundation for repairing and revitalizing Black Presbyterian churches. This approach focuses on nurturing growth, fostering resilience, and cultivating holistic transformation.

The Cultivation approach emphasizes providing spiritual and emotional support, including fostering a culture of prayer, encouragement, and pastoral care to create a supportive environment for Black congregations.

At the heart of the Cultivation approach is a commitment to holistic transformation, addressing the multifaceted challenges facing Black Presbyterian churches and empowering them to thrive in their ministry and witness.

[Click HERE](#) to view the NGI Video from the 254th Assembly of the Synod of the Mid Atlantic.



In summary, these councils, committees, task forces and partnerships are about far more than budgets or buildings. They are about mission, renewal, and hope. They reflect our deep belief that, through wise stewardship and courageous action, God will continue to provide 'every blessing in abundance' so that we may share abundantly in every good work (2 Corinthians 9:8)."

This is a day when loving our neighbor and the struggle for human rights have reached a new level of importance. It is a day when we must find ways to minister to those around us for if we do not, there is no guarantee that anyone will. This is the time for New Hope Presbytery to exercise the power of holy imagination and to live out its faith in acts of compassion, grace, justice, joy and love.

Together in Hope... Together for Christ, Amen.

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

Report of Temporary Associate Presbyter

Rev. Katie Cashwell

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

The Strategic Plan for the Presbytery of New Hope --Together for Hope, Together for Christ--has launched! It's a bold vision for our life together, a vision rooted in hope. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope." – Jeremiah 29:11. God is calling New Hope to a future and a hope. Realizing this vision will take creativity and holy imagination from every corner of the Presbytery of New Hope.

One of the key priorities of Together for Hope, Together for Christ is equipping congregations for new ministry leadership & development. Undoubtedly, the church and the world is changing. Theologian Phyllis Tickle posits that roughly every 500 years a “great emergence” occurs within Christianity during which a new form of faith emerges. Roughly stated, Tickle’s big idea is that every five hundred years the Church cleans out its attic and has a giant rummage sale. This enables the church to reevaluate, sometimes discard, and to better prepare for the new age it is about to engage. The Protestant Reformation took place about 500 years ago. Are we on the cusp of another “Great Emergence” – or if you prefer – another very thorough rummage sale?

New Hope’s strategic plan aims to provide training, tools, and support as ministry leaders rummage, reevaluate, and discern. We are in a moment that is asking church leaders to lean into innovation, flexibility, adaptability, and change. To respond to that challenge, and to respond well, we must be prepared and equipped.

The strategic plan places an emphasis on the equipping and training of leaders so that they can continue to serve with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. I’m excited to see the many ways this priority will take shape and to discover new ways to resource and support YOU, our church leaders. In fact, we’ve already begun to implement this priority.

On July 22 you will hear more from me about the 2025 Small Church Gathering, which will be held November 8 at First Presbyterian Church in Wilson. On that day attendees will hear from leaders from the Faith in Rural Communities program of the North Carolina Rural Center. Their vision is to build socially dynamic and economically vibrant rural faith communities across every town and crossroads in North Carolina. They have invested more than \$400,000 in 55 rural churches, worked directly with 450 parishioners and reached thousands more with projects that have transformed their communities. The gathering will also include time for worship, small group discussions, and presentations from New Hope folks like Ruling Elder Lesley, Rev. Maurice Barnes, Rev. Elizabeth Whitmer, and more.

Together for 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

- Worship Leader at the Spring Retreat of the Presbyterian Women of New Hope
- Synod of Mid-Atlantic Presbyterian Women Summer Gathering in June
- Attended the North Carolina Rural Center Summit in March
- Preaching at Calvary Presbyterian in Swan Quarter
- Brought greetings to Brookston Presbyterian during their 125TH anniversary
- Worship visits to Nahalah and Cobb Presbyterian Churches
- Preached at Howard Memorial Presbyterian Church
- Preached at Little River Presbyterian Church

Looking Ahead

- Greetings to Calvary Presbyterian Church in Wilson
- Preaching for Women's Sunday at Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
- Preaching at Stanley White Presbyterian Church
- Preaching at First Presbyterian Goldsboro and visiting new worshipping community
- Hosting Commissioned Ruling Elder Retreat at White Memorial Presbyterian, Willow Springs

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-fifth stated gathering.

INFORMATION

1. Received the minutes of the commission to install Rev. Esther Hethcox as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Durham on May 4, 2025.
2. Received the minutes of the commission to ordain and install Jooyoung Hong as designated pastor at Duraleigh Presbyterian Church on May 4, 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Received the sessional records report for the following churches (attachment #1 page 29).

CONGRATULATIONS TO

1. Rev. Esther Hethcox, installed as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Durham on May 4, 2025.
2. Rev. Jooyoung Hong, ordained and installed as designated pastor at Duraleigh Presbyterian Church on May 4, 2025.

PRAYERS FOR

1. All those in central Texas who were impacted and whose lives were lost in the Guadalupe River flash flooding.

CONDOLENCES TO

1. Rev. Thomas Priest (West New Bern PC) and his family. Rev. Priest's 6-year-old grandson, Jamir Willis, died in Austin, Texas over July 4.

Report of Sessional Records July 22, 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 2022 for the following churches:

White Rock

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

First – Edenton
Westminster - Lucama
White Rock

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

Bear Grass
Bethlehem - Mebane
Bethlehem – Rocky Mt.
Church of the Reconciliation
Cornerstone
Davie Street
Efland
Eno
First - Edenton
First - Raleigh
Grace Chapel
Hillsborough
Little River
Mt. Olive
Nahala
New Hope
Peace
Spring Hill
University
West Haven

West Raleigh
Westminster - Durham
Westminster – Lucama
White Rock

Report of the Coordinating Body to the 125th Stated Gathering of the Presbytery of New Hope July 22, 2025

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.

Since our last stated gathering as a presbytery, the Coordinating Body has...



- Gathered with chairpeople and representatives of the various New Hope committees and commissions to hear updates on their respective areas of ministry. ***Thank you to all who serve! Your contribution is essential to the life of the presbytery and flourishing of its mission!;***
- Received an uplifting, thorough, and clear-eyed presentation from the Strategic Planning Committee and moved approval of adoption of the Strategic Plan, remaining in discussion regarding its roll-out. ***Please encourage your Session members to review the plan and discern if they or other members of your congregation might be well-suited to support its particular goals and objectives.*** You can review the plan at: **[https://nhpresbytery.org/together/;](https://nhpresbytery.org/together/)**
- Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 124th stated gathering of presbytery. Discussed ways to deepen presbyter connections during meetings. ***Thank you for your feedback, and please keep it coming!;***
- Followed the service of our Executive Presbyter, Interim Stated Clerk, and Interim Associate Presbyter; rejoicing in their praises, praying underneath their concerns, and remaining apprised of the Spirit's work within our congregations. ***Thank you for connecting with Ed Johnson if you are in need of Session records review or Clerk of Session training;***
- Received a report from the Financial Sustainability Task Force and engaged in sustained dialogue about telling our presbytery's story, strengthening our income, and configuring our spending for sustainability. ***If you or members of your congregation have a gift for investment, financial development, or communication, we would love to hear from you!***
- Engaged in ongoing financial review and approved recommendations from the Property and Finance team regarding West New Bern's request to sell municipal cemetery plots, Falkland's request to purchase a property adjacent to their church, revised signatories and administrators for our banking and investment accounts, transfer of Ahoski property, and FPC Edenton manse sale;
- Approved a one-year suspension of the bylaw stipulating an alternation of Ruling and Teaching Elders in the presbytery Moderator role due to an off-cycle need for transition;

- Offered thanksgiving to Anna Pinckney Straight for her service to the Coordinating Body upon her transition off the team, approving Katie Crowe as Moderator;
- Approved contract employment of a support position for the Youth Council;
- Constituted two administrative committees, with gratitude and prayers for their service;
- Approved Personnel to move proceed with defining and making recommendations regarding the Interim Stated Clerk and Interim Associate Presbyterian positions;
- Offered thanksgiving for the ministry and witness of Reverend Warren Lesane upon his retirement from the position of Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid Atlantic;
- Discussed plans for a fall Coordinating Body retreat.

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 Katie Crowe at kcrowe@trinityave.org.

Know that, in addition to the efforts noted above, is vigilance around our standing commitment to pray for all who live and labor within the bounds of the Presbytery of New Hope, in their manifold ministries and manifestations of service.

Thank you for all that ***you*** do, and may God bless and keep you in all of your work and rest this season.

Respectfully Submitted,
Katie Crowe, Moderator

Coordinating Body Roster:

Class of 2025

Kathy Huffstetler
Rev. Joe Sandoval

Class of 2026

Rev. Dr. Katie Crowe, Moderator
Dr. Lydia Rodriguez Menzel
Rev. Haley Stephenson
Clifford Thomas

Class of 2027

David Kearns
Toni Parker
Rev. Elizabeth Whitmer

Leadership

Rev. Jordan Davis, Presbytery Moderator
Rev. Sydney Allen, Presbytery Vice-Moderator

THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW HOPE

FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE SUMMARY

July 2025

BUDGET AND FINANCE

- **2025 Budget:** We began the year with the budget already established, which marks an improvement compared to the 2024 budget development process.
- **2026 Budget Process:** The approach to developing the 2026 budget differs from the 2025 process. Commissions, committees, and programs are currently submitting their budget requests for 2026, with the goal of finalizing the budget by the October Presbytery gathering.
- **Investment Strategy:** All presbytery investment funds are placed in higher-yielding investment instruments. These investments are not locked into long-term products, providing flexibility to the investment subcommittee once established.
- **Investment and Banking Subcommittee:** *We are seeking volunteers to join the Investment and Banking Subcommittee—if you're interested in contributing your expertise and insight, please reach out to Sue Regier or Bruce Grady!*

PROPERTY

- **Sale of Manse:** The committee approved the sale of the manse at First Presbyterian Church in Edenton. This decision was presented at the June Coordinating Body meeting, where it was also approved.
- **NC DOT Easement:** Committee members took part in the coordination meeting for the approved NC DOT easement at 1420 Carolina Pines Road in Raleigh (Iglesia Santuaria).
- **Ahoskie Property Transfer:** The committee approved The Gathering Place's request to start the transfer of the former Ahoskie First Presbyterian Church property, which will take place later this year.
- **Other Property Matters:** The committee is currently addressing additional church property matters, with recommendations to be presented at the next presbytery gathering.

2025 FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Presbytery Of New Hope

Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - January to May 2025

Headings and Account	2025 YTD Actual	2025 Annual Budget	2024 YTD Actual
Revenues			
General Fund Income			
Budgeted Benevolence Incm			
140101 - Benevolence Income	\$288,177.77	\$975,000.00	\$331,845.49
140109 - Per Capita Assessment	\$83,197.65	\$265,794.32	\$87,029.08
Total Budgeted Benevolence Incm	\$371,375.42	\$1,240,794.32	\$418,874.57
Interest Income			
Total Interest Income	\$5,933.06	\$0.00	\$63.32
Non-Budgeted Benvl Income			
Total Non-Budgeted Benvl Income	\$13,468.47	\$70,000.00	\$76,912.86
Revenue for PCUSA			
Total Revenue for PCUSA	\$46,597.97	\$0.00	\$0.00
Revenue for Synod			
Total Revenue for Synod	\$1,480.24	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total General Fund Income	\$438,855.16	\$1,310,794.32	\$495,850.75
Current Restricted Income			
Current Restricted Income (42A)			
950000 - Other Income - Releases	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
Total Current Restricted Income (42A)	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
Total Current Restricted Income	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
Total Revenues	\$441,355.16	\$1,310,794.32	\$515,850.75
Expenses			
Total Camp Albemarle Cap Improv	\$21,139.15	\$50,734.00	\$27,520.79
Synod & PCUSA Expenses			
Synod & GA Per Capita			
155198 - Synod Per Capita Assessment	\$9,593.33	\$25,493.20	\$8,190.35
155498 - GA Per Capita Assessment	\$73,604.32	\$240,301.12	\$70,357.16
Total Synod & GA Per Capita	\$83,197.65	\$265,794.32	\$78,547.51
Total Synd of MdAtlantic Benevl	\$1,990.47	\$0.00	\$1,656.72
Total General Assembly Benevolences	\$50,016.79	\$0.00	\$86,283.50
Total Synod & PCUSA Expenses	\$135,204.91	\$265,794.32	\$166,487.73
Total Pres of New Hope NnBud Bn	\$1,020.45	\$0.00	\$592.08
Total Hunger Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$2,000.00

Headings and Account	2025 YTD Actual	2025 Annual Budget	2024 YTD Actual
Congregational Ministries			
Total Traveling Seminars/Older Adults	\$727.41	\$1,000.00	\$1,844.49
Total Resource Centers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4.95
Total Youth Ministries	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$6,006.64
Total Congregational Ministries	\$727.41	\$5,500.00	\$7,856.08
Div. for Leadership Dev.			
Total Commission On Ministry	\$1,191.40	\$5,940.00	\$3,050.82
Total Commission Prep. for Ministry	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$937.57
Total Leadership Development	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$1,292.18
Total Div. for Leadership Dev.	\$1,791.40	\$10,940.00	\$5,280.57
Ministries of Mission			
Total Campus Ministries	\$85,542.49	\$214,500.00	\$74,036.97
Total Evangelism (5FK)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,338.55
Total New Church Development (5FM)	\$3,430.00	\$33,100.00	\$35,051.84
Total Division Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Total Ministries of Mission	\$88,972.49	\$247,600.00	\$117,427.36
Coordinating Body/Administr			
Total Salary/Benefits	\$276,269.30	\$669,579.53	\$294,763.28
Total Coordinating Body Expenses	\$4,943.61	\$42,050.00	\$16,796.32
Total Office Administration	\$16,647.18	\$42,700.00	\$21,167.64
Total Office Technology	\$7,998.72	\$21,202.00	\$15,368.18
Total Committees of Coordinating Bod	\$1,820.00	\$6,800.00	\$1,216.13
Total Coordinating Body/Administr	\$307,678.81	\$782,331.53	\$349,311.55
Total Expenses	\$556,534.62	\$1,362,899.85	\$672,476.16
Net Total	-\$115,179.46	-\$52,105.53	-\$156,625.41
Other Expenses			
100001 - Fraudulent Charges	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
Total Other Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
Net Operating Total	-\$115,179.46	-\$52,105.53	-\$156,700.41

2025 Financial Overview

2025 Revenue & Expenses Report through May

REVENUE:

- Revenue is lower this year compared to last year. That is partially due to receiving many checks in January that were dated for December.
- \$2,500 in 950000–Other Income–Releases is from the Ahoskie lease agreement. \$500 per month is adjusted from the restricted Ahoskie Building Fund.

EXPENSES:

- Campus Ministry seems higher than 2024 because they have adjusted the distribution of their budget this year. They will remain within their total budget amount but will be shifting the funds to be distributed evenly throughout the year instead of issuing grants in the summer.
- The Office Technology group is lower because we have reduced our monthly phone services and have a redesigned website with less recurring expenses.

OVERALL:

- Our Revenue is about \$74,000 less than the same time in 2024 but our Expenses are about \$116,000 less than the same time in 2024. Our Total Loss is about \$41,000 less than the same time in 2024.

Investment of matured annuities

In the February meeting, Finance & Property Committee decided to temporarily invest the matured Annuities until an Investment and Banking subcommittee can be formed.

- The final annuity matured on April 1st.
- Distribution of funds with various banks to maintain FDIC Insured:
 - All annuities have matured and moved into the Money Market account or CDs as listed below.
 - \$252,981.12 transferred into the Money Market savings account which currently has an interest rate of 3.5%.
 - 6-month CD: \$50k at 4.2% interest; - 3/19/25 settle; 9/19/25 mature
 - 6-month CD: \$250k at 4.25% interest - 3/18/25 settle; 9/18/25 mature
 - 9-month CD: \$250k at 4.25% interest - 3/18/25 settle date; 12/18/25 mature date
 - 12-month callable CD: \$250k at 4.25% interest – 3/20/25 settle date; callable 9/21/25 (CD can be recalled by bank on the 21st of each month between September and March)
 - \$200k at 4.25% interest - 11/18/25 mature date
 - \$71k at 4.25% interest - 12/29/25 mature date

2026 Budget Process:

- Request for 2026 budget requests were emailed to all Committees and Commissions.
- Timeline:
 - May/June 2025 – budget requests are sent to groups and staff

- **June 30th, 2025 – completed budget requests due**
- July 8th, 2025 – initial budget requests will be reviewed at F&P meeting
- August 12th, 2025 - review of 2026 Budget at F&P meeting
- August 20th, 2025 – review of 2026 Budget at CB meeting
- September 9th, 2025 – approval of 2026 Budget at F&P meeting
- September 17th, 2025 – approval of 2026 Budget at CB meeting
- September 22-30, 2025 – communicate approved budget along with needed adjustments to groups and staff
- October 25th, 2025 – 2026 Approved Budget presented at Presbytery Meeting

2024 FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Presbytery Of New Hope

Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - January to December 2024

Headings and Account	2024 Annual Actual	2024 Annual Budget	2023 Annual Actual
Revenues			
General Fund Income			
Budgeted Benevolence Incm			
140101 - Benevolence Income	\$984,014.78	\$1,227,048.00	\$991,777.78
140109 - Per Capita Assessment	\$240,852.67	\$248,303.00	\$242,649.31
Total Budgeted Benevolence Incm	\$1,224,867.45	\$1,475,351.00	\$1,234,427.09
Interest Income			
Total Interest Income	\$14,915.28	\$0.00	\$24,416.54
Non-Budgeted Benvl Income			
Total Non-Budgeted Benvl Income	\$171,865.18	\$0.00	\$197,183.71
Revenue for PCUSA			
Total Revenue for PCUSA	\$3,891.68	\$0.00	\$0.00
Revenue for Synod			
Total Revenue for Synod	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total General Fund Income	\$1,415,639.59	\$1,475,351.00	\$1,456,027.34
Current Restricted Income			
Current Restricted Income (42A			
950000 - Other Income - Releases	\$28,500.00	\$0.00	\$131,778.80
Total Current Restricted Income (42A	\$28,500.00	\$0.00	\$131,778.80
Total Current Restricted Income	\$28,500.00	\$0.00	\$131,778.80
Total Revenues	\$1,444,139.59	\$1,475,351.00	\$1,587,806.14
Expenses			
Total Camp Albemarle Cap Improv	\$66,049.83	\$66,050.00	\$66,049.83
Total Other Committees/Task For	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Synod & PCUSA Expenses			
Synod & GA Per Capita			
155198 - Synod Per Capita Assessment	\$25,925.60	\$25,925.60	\$26,978.55
155498 - GA Per Capita Assessment	\$220,931.20	\$220,931.20	\$231,051.45
Total Synod & GA Per Capita	\$246,856.80	\$246,856.80	\$258,030.00
Total Synd of MdAtlantic Benevl	\$3,946.71	\$0.00	\$201,110.26
Total General Assembly Benevolences	\$177,809.86	\$0.00	\$161,262.57
Total Synod & PCUSA Expenses	\$428,613.37	\$246,856.80	\$620,402.83
Total Pres of New Hope NnBud Bn	\$2,304.61	\$0.00	\$5,227.30

Headings and Account	2024 Annual Actual	2024 Annual Budget	2023 Annual Actual
Total Designated Reserves (575)	\$321.75	\$500.00	\$350.00
Total Inactive Accounts (576)	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$887.11
Total Non-Budgeted Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$181.00
Total Hunger Fund	\$15,010.71	\$0.00	\$81,341.81
Congregational Ministries			
Total Traveling Seminars	\$1,909.03	\$2,500.00	\$1,904.22
Total Resource Centers	\$4.95	\$0.00	\$91.76
Total Youth Ministries	\$6,072.71	\$10,000.00	\$7,691.10
Total ConnectED	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Total Congregational Ministries	\$7,986.69	\$14,500.00	\$9,687.08
Div. for Leadership Dev.			
Total Commission On Ministry	\$5,657.64	\$9,000.00	\$5,858.48
Total Commission Prep. for Ministry	\$1,217.57	\$7,258.00	\$2,326.33
Total Leadership Development	\$4,832.76	\$4,600.00	\$9,286.92
Total Div. for Leadership Dev.	\$11,707.97	\$20,858.00	\$17,471.73
Ministries of Mission			
Total Special Outreach Programs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$103,380.32
Total Campus Ministries	\$233,999.54	\$240,000.00	\$0.00
Total Social Just/Peacemaking	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$715.60
Total Evangelism (5FK)	\$5,963.55	\$2,500.00	\$81.12
Total New Church Development (5FM)	\$40,624.53	\$36,000.00	\$125,018.24
Total Program Support (5FO)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
Total Division Expense	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
Total Ministries of Mission	\$292,587.62	\$290,500.00	\$247,195.28
Coordinating Body/Administr			
Total Salary/Benefits	\$673,751.48	\$666,484.00	\$638,616.62
Total Coordinating Body Expenses	\$42,931.23	\$78,000.00	\$115,308.62
Total Office Administration	\$45,373.24	\$49,755.00	\$86,631.45
Total Office Technology	\$28,701.72	\$23,313.00	\$29,158.41
Total Committees of Coordinating Bod	\$2,849.80	\$2,000.00	-\$116,237.78
Total Coordinating Body/Administr	\$793,607.47	\$819,552.00	\$753,477.32
N.H. Foundation Expenses			
Total Re-invested Income Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,675.54
Total N.H. Foundation Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,675.54
Total Expenses	\$1,618,190.02	\$1,460,816.80	\$1,803,946.83
Net Total	-\$174,050.43	\$14,534.20	-\$216,140.69

Headings and Account	2024 Annual Actual	2024 Annual Budget	2023 Annual Actual
Other Revenues			
PP&E Expense			
750101 - Gain/Loss on Disposal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$49,245.68
Total PP&E Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$49,245.68
Total Other Revenues	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$49,245.68
Other Expenses			
100001 - Fraudulent Charges	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$3,448.54
Total Other Expenses	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$3,448.54
Net Operating Total	-\$174,125.43	\$14,534.20	-\$170,343.55

2024 Financial Overview

2024 Revenue & Expenses Report

REVENUE:

- Total revenue in 2024 was \$143,666.55 lower than in 2023. A key factor was the reduction in released restricted funds: \$123,122.35 in 2023 versus only \$28,500 in 2024.
- Other revenues in 2024 were \$0, compared to \$49,245.68 in 2023, which reflected gains from asset disposal and church dismissals.

EXPENSES:

- Total expenses in 2024 amounted to \$1,618,190.02, exceeding the approved budget by \$157,373.22.
- Despite the overage, expenses decreased by \$185,756.81 compared to 2023.
- Coordinating Body/Administration costs rose to \$793,607.47, primarily due to staffing and operational needs, though they remained within budget.

OVERALL:

- Both Revenue and Expenses declined in 2024 compared to 2023.
- Several adjustments were made for the 2025 budget:
 - Revenue projections are now based on more realistic expectations, rather than assuming 100% collection of the annual Ask.
 - Expense estimates now reflect actual historical costs.
 - Investments are under review, with a goal of restructuring to improve interest earnings throughout the year.

APPLICATION
for
PERMISSION OF PRESBYTERY
TO SELL. MORTGAGE. ENCUMBER OR LEASE REAL PROPERTY
OR ACQUIRE REAL PROPERTY SUBJECT TO AN ENCUMBRANCE

The Presbytery of New Hope,
through the Finance and Property Committee and the Coordinating Body, hereby,

a. X Approved b. Disapproved

the selling the real property herein requested from First Presbyterian Church, at 200
Moseley Street, Edenton, NC 27932.

Sale of church manse located at **302 West Queen Street in Edenton, NC.** Estimated to be sold
as-is at **\$215,000**, which is under the \$229,957 CMA valuation. Funds will be invested and used
to support the housing allowance of ministers.

Stated Clerk:

(Name) Edward Johnson

(Signature) _____ (Date) _____

Executive Presbyter:

(Name) Bruce Grady

(Signature) _____ (Date) _____



Elizabeth Little
Church Consultant

m: 252-723-8653
elittle@pensions.org

Summer 2025

We at the Board of Pensions are working hard to serve our churches, ministers, and employees of the Presbyterian Church (USA). I am here to support you and your congregation should you have any questions about the Board's benefits and programs. I look forward to our continued partnership.

The Board of Pensions is a national agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), offering a broad range of benefits to PC(USA) churches, agencies, mid councils, and affiliated employers.

Member/Employer Services: 800-773-7752 M-F 8:30 am to 6:00 pm ET. memberservices@pensions.org

2026 Rates and Employer Agreements

Due to challenges in the healthcare industry that continue to drive up costs, the Board of Directors approved medical dues increases in June for 2026 for the Congregational Pastors Package and Transitional Pastor's Participation. Dues for the income protection benefits in the packages, including death and disability and pension, will remain at 10% of effective salary in 2026. Rates for Benefits Plan offerings provided outside of packages will be available to employers in Benefits Connect on Aug. 28, when Employer Agreement season opens. The Decision Guide for Minister Benefits tool, which helps with cost calculation and eligibility, will also be updated. See details in the [Summer Board Bulletin](#).

Mental Health

Spring Health, the new provider for the [Employee Assistance Plan \(EAP\)](#), offers eligible plan members a variety of mental well-being and EAP services, including mental health care navigation, six clinical therapy sessions at no cost to them, and **unlimited virtual coaching sessions with certified coaches at no cost**. Every Spring Health provider is in-network with Highmark BCBS, so if the member is also enrolled in medical benefits, consultations with a Spring Health mental health care provider can continue with lower copays and deductibles.

Should a minister or staff member need to take leave to focus on mental health, they can consider applying for [Temporary Disability](#) benefits. Temporary Disability may be offered by itself or as part of the [Covenant Package](#), [Congregational Pastors Package](#) and the [Transitional Pastor's Participation Package](#).

Other important information:

Assistance Program Grant Opportunities: In 2024, the Assistance Program distributed over 2,700 grants for a total of approximately \$9.5 million in funds. [Read about potential grant opportunities](#) for active and retired Benefits Plan members.

Employer Support with Benefits Connect: Quick Start Guides for Benefits Connect are found [here](#). Employer Reps may also call Employer Services for assistance. See contact info and hours above.



Campus Ministry Committee Report for Presbytery Gathering July 22, 2025

The purpose of the Campus Ministry Committee is to encourage, support, advocate for, and promote the Presbyterian campus ministries and their local boards that are located within the bounds of New Hope Presbytery. A primary means of this support is financial. In 2025, the committee will allocate \$214,500 among our five campus ministries as undesignated ministry support. This represents a \$19,500 reduction in budget from 2024. The Coordinating Body has informed the committee to expect additional budget reductions in 2026 and 2027.

The Campus Ministry Committee provides support and encouragement to the campus ministers

- Through hearing and affirming the reports of the campus ministers to the committee at the end of each semester
- Through regular contact from a committee liaison, who may also visit the campus ministry
- Through honoring the campus ministers' prayer requests.

The Campus Ministry also requests regular reporting from the campus ministers, including

- Annual reports documenting ministry activities, attendance, and including full financial statements
- Reporting on the ministry at one presbytery meeting per year
- Submitting at least one article to the presbytery newsletter per semester.

The Campus Ministry Committee invites presbyters to learn about all of the good work done by the five Presbyterian campus ministries located within the bounds of New Hope Presbytery.

Duke Presbyterian Campus Ministry: Campus Minister Jackie Rodriguez

The mission of Duke PCM+ is to provide a welcoming spiritual home for both believers and the spiritually curious in an open-minded, open-hearted, Christ-centered community. Delighting in the diversity of God's people, we welcome and serve undergraduate students of every race, ethnicity, ability, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Rooted in the Reformed tradition, we explore together what it means to follow Christ at Duke University. See [PCM+ website](#).

UKirk Presbyterian Campus Ministry of East Carolina: Campus Minister Daewon Goldenbaum Yang

Collegiate ministry is a lot of things: it is inspiring, funky, hilarious, and weird. It is high-energy, world-changing, tear jerking, life-altering. It is where students can pray, ask, respond, listen, laugh, cry, wonder, and be who God made them to be. It is for 'Jesus freaks,' skeptics,

Christians, atheists, doubters, and wanderers. It gives students a space for worship, questions, fears, anxieties, hopes, and dreams. It reminds us—whether or not we’re in college—that we are not alone, that we are not forgotten, that we are loved, that we matter. It’s where we, Christ’s body, are called to be. And so, we, the Church, will walk alongside students as they come to know and seek to understand Jesus as Lord. We will listen to the truth that they tell, which is wild, untamed, risky, and exhilarating, while also teaching and offering them our own Reformed understanding of who God is. Not only will we name God’s radical love for college students, we will encourage a way of life proclaiming that the Lord is at work in the world, for the world, for all of us. See UKirk [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Presbyterian Campus Ministry at NCCU: Campus Minister LaWonder McDowell

The PCM Campus Ministry is a group dedicated to the campus of North Carolina Central University and the Durham community. We strive to meet the service needs of students and the community in addition to the spiritual needs of the campus body. See PCM [website](#).

PCM Raleigh: Campus Minister Ashley-Ann Masters

PCM Raleigh is a More Light Campus Ministry for college-aged students at North Carolina State University, Meredith College, Peace College and Wake Technical College. PCM Raleigh seeks to be a welcoming and affirming beloved community for students, and a foundation for lasting relationships for our alumni. PCM Raleigh is also a member of the Well Wolfpack community. We received recognition for our commitment to taking mental health concerns seriously and assisting students with the appropriate resources during mental health crises. See PCM Raleigh [website](#).

Presbyterian Campus Ministry at UNC-Chapel Hill: Campus Minister Berry French

We are a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Christian community in Chapel Hill creating space for students to belong, believe, and become. UNC PCM strives to provide an inclusive, affirming space for students to explore their faith, ask questions, build community, and grow together. PCM is an official More Light ministry, meaning that we are “dedicated to allowing the full participation of LGBTQIA+ people in life, ministry, and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society. See PCM at UNC [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and [spring newsletter](#).

Nominations and Representation Committee

July 2025

Personnel	
Deirdre Gordon, RE, Trinity Durham	Class of 2027

227th General Assembly Commissioner Applications

The PC(USA) 227th General Assembly will be held June 22-July 2, 2026 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. New Hope Presbytery is allowed three ruling elder commissioners, three teaching elder commissioners and one young adult advisory delegate (YAAD), plus alternates. General Assembly will consist of online committee meetings, followed by an in-person plenary in Milwaukee. If you feel called to serve the church in this way, please submit the online commissioner application. Transportation to the General Assembly, and room and board are reimbursed for commissioners and YAADS in accordance with General Assembly policy. Email Ray Watson, moderator of the Nominations Committee at nominations@nhpresbytery.org with questions or for more information.

Link to Application

<https://nhpresbytery.org/227th-general-assembly-commissioner-application/>

YAAD someone who:

- Is an active member of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation, or
- Is a participant in a new worshipping community or an immigrant fellowship that has a relationship with the presbytery; and
- Is between 18 and 23 years old on the day the assembly convenes.



The Presbytery
OF NEW HOPE



Scan the QR Code below to access
the Nominations Form!



SCAN ME

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 inquirers

Jeremy Russo (West Raleigh)
received from Presbytery of Tampa Bay

Received as candidates

Jillian Marcantonio (Blacknall Memorial)

Dear New Hope Presbytery,

The Session of Blacknall Memorial Presbyterian Church fully and enthusiastically endorses Jillian Marcantonio as a candidate for ordained ministry as a Teaching Elder within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)! Jillian has been a faithful member of our congregation for several years as she works to complete her PhD at Duke Divinity School, and she has participated in the life of the church in many ways through her work leading our Young Adults ministry, volunteering with our Youth Ministry and serving on the Officer Nominating Committee. But most of all, Jillian loves the Lord and constantly looks for ways to serve Him by loving those around her. She also looks to the Word of God to know Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to learn how to serve faithfully in the church. Through her study of the Word and her participation with the body of believers, Jillian is ready to take the next step as a Candidate!

Blessings in Christ Jesus,

Michael Whisenhunt, Liaison
On behalf of the Blacknall Session

**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. Esther Hethcox as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Durham on May 4, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Jordan Davis, Rev. Thankam Rangala, Rev. Katie Crowe, Rev. Paul Burgess, Rev. Haley Stephenson, Rev. Antonio Lawrence. Ruling elders: Sue McLaurin, Spencer Reeves, Toni Parker.
2. Members of the commission to ordain and install Jooyoung Hong as designated pastor at Duraleigh Presbyterian Church on May 4, 2025. Teaching elders: Rev. Vanessa Hawkins, Rev. Sanghyun James Lee, Rev. Meg McLaughlin, Rev. Ben Acton, Ruling elders: Taesung Park, Judy Rogers.

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

A. Calls

1. Rev. Margaret Dudley to serve as head of staff/senior pastor at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church, effective July 7, 2025. Terms: annual cash salary \$55,000.00; housing allowance \$30,000.00; social security offset \$6,502.50; reimbursable expenses \$3,000.00; Board of Pensions dues \$23,790.00. Total compensation package \$118,292.50, 4 weeks of vacation, 2 weeks of continuing education, sabbatical leave after 5 to 7 years.
2. Rev. Elizabeth Troyer to serve as head of staff at Wake Forest Presbyterian Church, effective July 28, 2025. Terms: annual cash salary \$50,000.00; housing allowance \$50,000.00; social security offset \$7,650.00; reimbursable expenses \$6,500.00; Board of Pensions dues \$36,164.00. Total compensation package \$150,314.00, 4 weeks of vacation, 2 weeks of continuing education, 3 months of sabbatical leave after 5 years.

B. Temporary Agreements

1. Renewal of stated supply agreement between Rev. Raymond Privott (LWB) and Mt. Pisgah Presbyterian Church, effective April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026. Terms: annual cash salary \$19,300.00; housing allowance \$9,903.00; social security offset \$2,161.00. Total compensation package \$31,364.00.
2. Rev. John Milholland (HR) to serve as stated supply pastor at Wake Forest Presbyterian Church, effective March 17, 2025 through March 16, 2026. Terms: annual cash salary \$47,271.00; social security offset \$3,616.00; Board of Pensions dues \$5,672.52. Total compensation package \$56,559.52.00.

3. Rev. Victoria Blount (LWB) to serve as stated supply pastor at Davie Street Presbyterian Church, effective July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026. Terms: \$38,000.00; housing allowance \$24,000.00; medical supplement \$5,000.00; deferred income \$5,000.00; social security offset \$5,508.00; reimbursable expenses \$5,700.00. Total compensation package \$83,208.00.
 4. Rev. Molly Smerko to serve as stated supply pastor at White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Willow Spring, effective September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026. Terms: annual cash salary \$30,000.00; social security offset \$2,295.00; reimbursable expenses \$1,200.00; Board of Pensions dues \$9,357.12. Total compensation package \$42,852.12, 4 weeks of vacation, 2 weeks of continuing education.
 5. Renewal of interim pastor agreement between Rev. Deborah Osterhoudt and Oakland Presbyterian Church, effective July 1 through December 30, 2025. Terms: annual cash salary \$30,000.00; housing allowance \$30,000.00; social security offset \$4,590.00; reimbursable expenses \$3,000.00; Board of Pensions dues \$7,200.00. Total compensation package \$74,790.00.
- C. **Commissioned Ruling Elders**
1. Renewal of commissioned ruling elder agreement between Dr. Paul Rowland and Berea Presbyterian Church, effective July 7, 2025 through July 6, 2028. Terms: annual cash salary \$16,240.00; reimbursable expenses \$2,000.00. Total compensation package \$18,240.00.
 2. Renewal of commissioned ruling elder agreement between Nancy Warren and White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Willow Spring, effective August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2028. Terms: reimbursable expenses \$2,000.00.
- D. **Validated Ministries**
1. Langley Hoyt to serve as chaplain resident at WakeMed Health and Hospital (pending examination for ordination.)
 2. Meredith Rawls to serve as North East regional coordinator for the Partners in Health and Wholeness Initiative, North Carolina Council of Churches (pending examination for ordination).
 3. Rev. Kathryn Lester-Bacon to serve as staff chaplain at Glenaire Continuing Care Retirement Community.
- E. **Labor Outside Bounds**
1. Rev. Kim Rubish for the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, effective April 22, 2025.
- F. **Dismissals**
1. Rev. Kim Rubish to Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, effective May 14, 2025.
 2. Rev. Stephanie Workman to Indian Nations Presbytery, effective July 9, 2025.
- G. **Retirement**
1. Rev. Claire Colcord, effective May 31, 2025.
- H. **Nominating Committees**
1. White Memorial Presbyterian Church, Raleigh: mission study and request to elect associate pastor nominating committee.
- I. **Study Leave**
- Rev. Joe Sandoval and First Presbyterian Church, Roanoke Rapids. Extended study leave, effective September 1 through November 30, 2025.

III. **TO BE APPROVED**

The Commission on Ministry and the Examinations and Transfers Sub-Commission recommend the following:

A. **Ordinands**

1. Pending successful examination and signing of the Ministerial Book of Obligations, that the request for Langley Hoyt to be ordained into validated ministry as chaplain resident at WakeMed Health and Hospital, be approved.
2. Pending successful examination and signing of the Ministerial Book of Obligations, that the request for Meredith Rawls to be ordained into validated ministry to serve as North East regional coordinator for the Partners in Health and Wholeness Initiative, North Carolina Council of Churches, be approved.

B. **Commissioned Ruling Elders**

1. Pending successful examination, that Jeb Jeutter serve as commissioned ruling elder for the Presbytery of New Hope pulpit supply validated ministry, effective August 3, 2025 through August 2, 2028

IV. **CHANGES IN TERMS OF CALL REPORTED IN 2025** (attachment #2, page 52)

For the following ministers: Ben Acton, Sydne Allen, Goodwyn Bell, Matt Bowman, Allen Brimer, Tara Bulger, Katie Crowe, Jordan Davis, Howard Dudley, David Dunderdale, Lakesha Bradshaw Easter, Christopher Edmonston, Alex Fischer, Berry French, Anne Galliher, Franklin Golden, Kerri Hefner, Cheryl Barton Henry, Karen Jackson, Katherine Kussmaul, Charles Link, Frank Mansell, Jarrett McLaughlin, Meg Peery McLaughlin, Nancy Myer, Cate Church Norman, Thankam Rangala, Grier Richards, Katherine Rick-Miller, Patrick Ryan, Joe Sandoval, Anna Stayer-Brewington, Anna P. Straight, Hannah Trawick, Chris Tuttle, Tom Watkins, Laurie Weicher, Emily Wilkes, Tyler Williams.

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

Rev. Tara Bulger (North Alabama Presbytery), effective April 3, 2025.

Rev. Margaret Dudley (Presbytery of Coastal Carolina), effective July 7, 2025.

Rev. Elizabeth Troyer (Salem Presbytery), effective July 28, 2025.

Church	Mem.	Pastor	Annual Cash Salary	Housing Allowance	Medical Suppl.	Taxable Soc. Sec.	Deferred Income	Bonus/ Unvouch. Allow.	Other Applicable Income	Manse	Social Security Offset	Reimb. Expenses	Board of Pensions Dues	Total Package	Position	Time
Blacknall Memorial	480	Goodwyn Bell	70,000.00	70,000.00							10,710.00	3,000.00	51,600.00	205,310.00	Pastor	Full
Blacknall Memorial	480	David Dunderdale	56,314.00	56,313.00							8,615.97	3,000.00	28,262.00	152,504.97	Assoc. Pastor	Full
Church of Reconciliation	157	Allen Brimer	52,607.34	25,750.00							5,994.56		30,881.49	115,233.39	Pastor	Full
Covenant, Durham	213	Lakesha Bradshaw Easter	35,454.00	11,817.00							3,616.00	3,169.00	12,282.00	66,338.00	Pastor	Full
Durham	48	Franklin Golden	1.00	15,757.00							1,206.00	3,169.00	16,741.00	36,874.00	Pastor	Part
Garner, First	129	Ben Acton	29,261.00	21,833.00 4,047.00 (Util.)	2,200.00		2,191.00				4,555.00	4,000.00	25,799.00	93,887.00	Pastor	Full
Greenville, First	560	Karen Jackson	59,557.00	42,942.37	42,499.92				1,609.08 dental		6,354.96	14,000.00		167,412.73	Pastor	Full
Hillsborough	121	Alex Fischer	34,927.00	34,927.00				750.00			5,401.00	3,000.00	31,528.00	110,533.00	Pastor	Full
Kirk of Kildaire	902	Howard Dudley	93,000.00	30,000.00							9,410.00	7,500.00	49,600.00	189,510.00	Pastor	Full
Kirk of Kildaire	902	Hannah Trawick	20,675.00	48,000.00							5,254.00	3,935.00	28,810.00	106,674.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
Little River	110	Charles Link	42,409.44	22,800.00	2,050.00		1,000.00				5,221.85	4,500.00	18,570.00	96,551.29	Pastor	Full
New Bern, First	811	Patrick Ryan	43,000.00	32,000.00							5,700.00	3,000.00	31,000.00	114,700.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
New Bern, First	811	Anna P. Straight	70,000.00	40,000.00							8,400.00	5,000.00	47,300.00	170,700.00	Pastor	Full
New Hope	178	Kerri Hefner	48,184.72		1,609.06				895.00	15,000.00	4,926.42	3,000.00	31,110.20	104,725.40	Pastor	Full
Peace	102	Sydne Allen	56,413.00	10,000.00							5,081.00	5,000.00	17,809.00	94,303.00	Pastor	Full
Raleigh, First	900	Tara Bulger	71,838.00	60,000.00					12,000.00		10,086.00	8,060.00	52,491.00	214,475.00	Pastor	Full
Raleigh, First	900	Laurie Weicher	52,669.00	26,000.00							6,018.00	4,850.00	25,806.00	115,342.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
Roanoke Rapids, First	81	Joe Sandoval	8,333.00	41,000.00							3,774.00	3,000.00	12,826.00	68,933.00	Pastor	Full
Roxboro	90	Matt Bowman	44,800.00	Util. 4,125.00	542.00					10,872.00	4,647.00	3,169.00	15,793.00	84,802.00	Pastor	Full
Saint Andrews, Raleigh	747	Tom Watkins	67,320.00	44,880.00	2,750.00				2,925.00		9,017.00	5,500.00	48,918.00	181,310.00	Pastor	Full
St. Giles	243	Jordan Davis	60,031.00	20,000.00							6,122.00	4,500.00	34,413.00	125,066.00	Pastor	Full
Trinity Avenue	426	Katie Crowe	29,944.16	78,569.70				2,170.28			8,533.58		35,809.57	155,027.29	Pastor	Full
Trinity Avenue	426	Emily Wilkes	30,900.00	46,350.00				1,545.00			8,533.58		25,492.50	112,821.08	Assoc. Pastor	Full
University	1,100	Berry French	50,272.00	36,000.00							7,146.00	3,900.00	36,268.00	133,587.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
University	1,100	Jarrett McLaughlin	92,604.00	30,000.00							10,156.00	4,900.00	29,260.00	166,920.00	Co-Pastor	Full
University	1,100	Meg Peery McLaughlin	92,604.00	30,000.00							10,156.00	4,900.00	38,210.00	175,870.00	Co-Pastor	Full
University	1,100	Nancy Myer	50,855.00	30,000.00							6,698.00	3,900.00	21,022.00	112,475.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
West Haven	49	Tyler Williams	36,000.00	14,000.00		3,825.00		2,000.00					13,000.00	68,825.00	Pastor	Full
West Raleigh	211	Katherine Kussmaul	35,977.40	43,200.00				200.00			6,057.08	4,000.00	19,111.40	108,545.88	Desig. Pastor	Full
West Raleigh	211	Katherine Rick-Miller	54,562.98	36,375.23				200.00			6,956.77	4,000.00	39,103.43	140,998.42	Pastor	Full
Western Blvd.	225	Frank Mansell	38,686.55	29,955.49	1,500.00		\$4,500.00				5,710.32	3,500.00	30,406.93	114,259.29	Pastor	Full
Westminster, Durham	927	Cheryl Barton Henry	57,719.00	20,000.00							5,945.00	3,000.00	32,939.00	119,603.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
Westminster, Durham	927	Thankam Rangala	1,904.00	28,526.00							2,328.00	1,000.00	9,000.00	42,758.00	Assoc. Pastor	Part
Westminster, Durham	927	Alex Stayer-Brewington	47,143.00	15,000.00							4,754.00	3,000.00	26,338.00	96,235.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
Westminster, Durham	927	Chris Tuttle	86,457.00	40,008.00							9,675.00	5,100.00	50,064.00	191,304.00	Pastor	Full

Church	Mem.	Pastor	Annual Cash Salary	Housing Allowance	Medical Suppl.	Taxable Soc. Sec.	Deferred Income	Bonus/ Unvouch. Allow.	Other Applicable Income	Manse	Social Security Offset	Reimb. Expenses	Board of Pensions Dues	Total Package	Position	Time
White Memorial, Raleigh	4,438	Christopher Edmonston	133,348.00	79,016.00							13,532.00	8,000.00	57,236.00	291,133.00	Pastor	Full
White Memorial, Raleigh	4,438	Anne Galliher	46,928.00	27,000.00							5,655.00	3,000.00	28,832.00	111,415.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
White Memorial, Raleigh	4,438	Cate Church Norman	39,440.00	53,000.00							7,072.00	3,000.00	36,052.00	138,564.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full
White Memorial, Raleigh	4,438	Grier Richards	59,226.00	30,000.00							6,826.00	3,000.00	34,798.00	133,850.00	Assoc. Pastor	Full

Statement of Faith

Rev. Tara W. Bulger

I believe God is sovereign. I believe God is active and at work in the world and that God has power over all things. I believe God is perfect love and perfect freedom, and in God's perfect freedom, God has again and again chosen to love us. I believe God is the God of creation, making all things new. I believe God can best be described by what God does: loves, guides, forgives, saves, sustains, and renews.

I believe in Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and that in his birth, God came to live among us. I believe that the life and ministry of Jesus is the fullest revelation of who God is. As Jesus proclaimed good news, cared for the poor and oppressed, healed, and welcomed, I am called to do those things too. I believe that in response to humanity's sinfulness and brokenness, Jesus died for the sake of all. His resurrection is the surest sign that light conquers darkness, good triumphs over evil, and that death will not have the last word. I believe the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ is the definitive event of our faith and I want to give my life to proclaiming it.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. I believe Jesus when he said he would not leave us orphaned but would send his very Spirit to be with us. I believe the Holy Spirit is active and constantly working to bring about God's kingdom. I believe I am called to listen for God's Spirit and follow its guidance.

I believe the church is the body of Christ, past, present, and future, and that its purpose is to serve and love as Jesus did. I believe the sacraments are the presence of Christ for the building up of the faithful. I believe in the Bible as the authoritative Word of God and that it is a unique witness to the life of Jesus Christ. I believe the Bible speaks to all people through all times. I believe that scripture is just as relevant today as when it was written.

I believe that the truth found in Christ and this life of faith are the greatest gifts I have ever been given and I will give my life for them.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Tara W. Bulger

I grew up in Western North Carolina. I am a graduate of the University of Georgia, Columbia Theological Seminary, and McCormick Theological Seminary, and have a Certificate in Executive Leadership from Princeton Theological Seminary. Before coming to Raleigh, I served churches in Georgia and Alabama. I have written for the Presbyterian Outlook and Christian Century and am a lead facilitator in the Mary and John Zick Preaching Scholars Program. I am married to Brian and have two daughters, Hannon, age 20, and Ryann, age 18.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Meg Lindsay Dudley

I believe in the co-equal triune God, the Creator, Father and Mother, Sustainer and Redeemer. God's grace surpasses all understanding because humanity does not deserve it. While humanity strives for good, our own self-interest stands in the way of justice and peace. God responds to the imperfection of humanity through a cycle of reconciliation, as demonstrated through the story of Israel in the Hebrew Bible. Ultimately, the sin of humanity is reconciled through and in Jesus Christ.

I believe in Jesus Christ, who came to the Earth as a pauper, a teacher, a prophet, a miracle worker, and a savior. Through life, he suffered under the Roman Empire, befriended the outsiders, the oppressed, the poor, and the sinners. He preached that those who are least likely to be blessed are blessed, and he challenged the social order by eating meals with both the wealthy and poor. Christ took on death by being crucified and overcame it through resurrection. This act can be described in many ways: a sacrifice, a victory, a payment, but is ultimately beyond human understanding in displaying God's love for us. Through this reconciliation comes the ultimate completion with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who continuously works in our lives through the creation of the church and community of faith. The church is forever changing, and has flaws, but the Spirit works in the church to forgive and for the people of the church to forgive each other in peace. The Holy Spirit guides our understanding of Scripture, empowers us to spread the Good News, and gives us joy in the proclamation of Christ.

I believe in the Word of God, which is centered in the life and works of Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate. The witness of scripture is authoritative and unparalleled, and is a testament to the Grace of God in Christ Jesus through reconciliation. The scriptures are written by people and constrained to literary forms and historical places. They are, however, inspired by God to point where God works in the story of redemption. Therefore, the church must approach the scriptures in a historical and literary perspective, and remain confident that God will speak to the church through the scriptures in a diverse and changing world.

The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are testament to the mysteries of God, and are ordained by Christ and the early church. The Lord's Supper of bread and wine allows us to participate in the death and resurrection of Christ, to partake of the heavenly banquet of the Grace of God, and to prepare for the service we are called to do in the world. The sacrament of baptism allows us to enter into a new life with Christ, receive the Holy Spirit's anointing in our lives, and to enter into a family of faith, where our faith will be guided and nurtured. Baptism can be for anybody and is much more about God than it is about us, claiming us as God's children. God says, "You have always been loved. You always will be loved."

Scripture speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, one that we can wait for as the church. Jesus also mentions the kingdom of God, which seems to be both on earth and in heaven, something we can strive to pursue in the world and hope to have in heaven. As Christians, we are to actively wait by serving the world and proclaiming God's kingdom in our lives until the day of glory.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Meg Lindsay Dudley

I was confirmed at Little Falls Presbyterian Church in Arlington, VA, and by the time I graduated from high school, I knew I was going to be a pastor someday. I went to college at Furman University in Greenville, SC, where I was active in the chapel program, Tri Delta sorority, and the Presbyterian fellowship, both in the school and statewide. After graduation, I went to Edinburgh, Scotland to serve as the youth intern at Fairmilehead Parish Church. I went to Union Presbyterian Seminary, where I earned a Master of Divinity and Master of Christian Education, and while there, served in youth ministry, campus ministry, chaplaincy, and pastoral internships.

While in seminary, I met and married Howard Dudley, and we went to Tupelo, Mississippi after graduation, where I served as an associate for Youth, Christian Education, and Young Adults. We came to Dunn, NC in 2016, as Howard was called to pastor First Presbyterian Church of Dunn. Not long after, I started at Bluff Presbyterian Church in Wade, NC. After our move to Cary, where Howard now serves as the Pastor at Kirk of Kildaire, I served as an interim at Barbecue Church and Lillington Presbyterian Church. I have been moderator of Coastal Carolina Presbytery, and a member of the board for Camp Monroe for nine years, where I have also served as a chaplain each summer.

Howard and I have two daughters, Lindsay (age 10), Julia (age 7), and a dog, Rey. I am excited to begin this call at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church!

Statement of Faith

Langley Hoyt

I believe God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are three distinct persons united as one God. God communes with Godself in a pattern of mutual care that makes space for each member of the Trinity's individuality while uniting in a common purpose of love. God invites humanity to mirror this pattern in our own lives.

God created the world out of joy and desire for relationship, makes all things new, and brings life out of death with a tenderness that disarms sin. God reveals Godself to humanity in ways we can understand through scripture, creation, and the person of Jesus. God is a net of grace who provides endless invitations that free us to live into who we were created to be.

Jesus' full humanity and full divinity links us eternally with God. Jesus' life and teachings are revealed in Scripture and invite us to be more like him. Because of human fallenness, Jesus was crucified, going with humanity to depths of our mortality and despair. But he rose from death and brings us with him into new life, scars and all. Jesus gives Christians our identity as resurrection people and calls us to share the good news of new life in a suffering world.

The Holy Spirit helped the disciples find the words to share the good news on Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is the wisdom who calls in Proverbs, the connector between people, and the breath of life. She fires up our hearts with love and desire for justice, inspires and sustains us, and imbues us with unique gifts.

I encounter the Trinity in the sacraments, where all are welcomed into community with God and all the saints. The sacraments use ordinary elements to participate in the extraordinary grace of God. Baptism incorporates people into membership in the body of Christ and The Lord's Supper draws participants into the presence of God and the Church universal. The sacraments invite us into belonging and represent God's free grace extended to all of humanity, who will one day be united in the kingdom of heaven.

Calvin describes Scripture as spectacles that help humanity understand God. Scripture reveals God's self-disclosure to, neverending presence with, and love for creation. The gospel in Scripture reveals God's redeeming love and witnesses to who Jesus calls the church to be.

Jesus Christ unites the Church universal and calls us to seek reconciliation and connection over division and isolation. Our all-loving God calls us to ever-widening welcome, proclamation that God is making all things new, and participation in God's missional work of deep care and solidarity with the suffering and disenfranchised. Acknowledging our human fallibility, the Church seeks to live into our identity as members of the creation God called "good."

God's people look ahead to the second coming of Christ, anticipating God's kingdom where God will wipe every tear from our eyes. We know God's time is already breaking into our own, a belief that urges us to stay awake and cling to hope, so we might participate in the kingdom here and now.

Biographical Sketch

Langley Hoyt

I grew up in Presbyterian churches in Pittsburgh, PA, and Greenville, SC, before attending Davidson College, where I majored in psychology. I first felt God calling me to ministry when working at Crestfield, a Presbyterian summer camp in Western PA. I later served as a Young Adult Volunteer in Washington, D.C. with the Office of Public Witness PC(U.S.A.) and Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church.

Following that, I worked for faith-and-justice-centered community organizations QC Family Tree and The SpiritHouse Project in Charlotte, NC, before attending seminary. While studying at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, I completed a unit of CPE at a psychiatric hospital, interned at First Presbyterian Church of Austin, edited the seminary's student arts journal *Kairos*, and facilitated a spiritual formation group for first-year seminarians.

I am now serving as a chaplain resident at WakeMed Hospital. I find great meaning in being a part of the community's social fabric by supporting the spiritual and emotional needs of the people of Raleigh and Eastern NC. My husband Liam, our dog Avett, and I are excited to be back in North Carolina. In my free time, I enjoy camping, exploring restaurants with friends, watching *Survivor*, and reading fiction.

Statement of Faith

Gerald A. ("Jeb") Jeutter, Jr.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker and Creator of All. I believe in God's only son Jesus Christ, who lived, breathed and walked on this earth, and who was unjustly accused, tried, and crucified on a cross. I believe that God, while not making this happen, allowed this to happen so that we could live free of sin. I believe that Jesus Christ, after having died, was then risen to sit with God the Father Almighty as one equal with God. I believe that in doing so, God gave us the Holy Spirit to remain here on earth, to reside within each of us, and live and breath within us. I believe that all we have to do is to acknowledge, accept, and then cultivate that Spirit which lives within each of us in order to live, breath, and walk this earth with God, humbly.

I believe that knowing the way that we have come to have the gift of grace, we can know the unconditional love of Jesus Christ.

As a Presbyterian, we are reformed and always reforming. I love being a Presbyterian because of our belief that, so long as what we believe is supported by Scripture, it is our belief and further that we live and witness our faith in everything we do, each day. I do not, however, place it above any other denomination.

I believe that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord God with all you heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself. I know that we can do better at this, and I strive to live by this command, often failing, but always trying to do better. I believe in justice and righteousness.

I cherish and affirm the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. I believe these sacraments were "... instituted by God and commended by Christ. Sacraments are signs of the real presence and power of Christ in the Church, symbols of God's action. Through the Sacraments, God seals believers in redemption, renews their identity of people of God, and marks them for service." Book of Order, W-1.3033.2. It is important to me that we, as Presbyterians, have an open table.

I believe that God is my God, above whom there is no other, I believe that Jesus Christ is my Savior, and I believe that the Holy Spirit is alive within me and resides in each breath I take, and is a constant companion as I go about my day and life seeking to serve God. This is the path I travel. I welcome and encourage others to join this path, but acknowledge that others may travel a different path, but believe that all of us are climbing the same mountain.

I believe that we can always be (and need to be) learning through studying the Bible, by reading the books of theologians and scholars, by worshipping with others and listening to the Word proclaimed, and by watching how others have and do live their lives in glory to God. I believe that is how we come to know and are able to share our faith.

I believe in life after death, and find strength in the belief that I will be in the presence of God, and in those who have meant so much to me in this life, once again.

Biographical Sketch

Gerald A. (“Jeb”) Jeutter, Jr.

I was raised in a presbyterian family and have been influenced by so many people of faith from a young age. I have been aware of my relationship with father, son and holy ghost as long as I can remember. While choosing a profession (law) known more for conflict than collaboration, over the years I have tried to merge my faith-filled life with my business life, while I have also sensed a call to something more. White Memorial has been our community for 35 years. It is where I have been able to merge my servant heart with servant action being involved as deacon and elder, an advisor on youth mission trips, in our service ministry locally and abroad, and on multiple pastor nominating, stewardship, personnel and other committees. I have served the presbytery through PJC, a discernment task force, and recently in pulpit supply. My early retirement from law has allowed me to be even more responsive to the call to service. Through my CRE journey, I have been both grateful and humbled to serve on our pastoral care team and participate in hospital and home visitation, in home communion, and funerals, which has seared the call to service on my heart. I continue to grow and learn from faithful others, and am blessed to be able to respond to the clear call I have felt for so many years.

Statement of Faith

Meredith Rawls

I believe in a Triune God who created the world and called everything in it good. I believe the Old and New Testaments reveal a continuous story of God's covenantal love with God's people since the beginning of time. While God intended for right relationship and wholeness amongst creation, this intention was broken through the Fall. With the reality of sin implicated, humanity lost its perfect relationship with God, others, oneself, and the earth. However, these relationships find restoration and redemption in Christ.

I believe that God extends free grace, that does not have to be earned or sought after, but instead is extended as a gift of love from God to God's people. I believe God elects us and extends us the grace to choose a life with God. Within this flawed world, where people throughout history have exploited and colonized God's good creation through manipulation and selfishness, I believe that God has remained perfect in love.

God entered the world, through Jesus, in order to both redeem *and* transform it. God took on human flesh, and entered into the world as a tiny miracle baby, named Jesus. God was conceived by an unwedded, poor, middle eastern, teenage girl who was a political refugee. This girl, Mary, said yes to God by being obedient in carrying the Christ child in her womb and birthing him into this world. Through the interpretation and critical reflection on the Scripture teachings of Jesus' birth, earthly life, death, and resurrection, we better understand the redeeming story of God for the people of Israel and beyond.

I believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human. Through Christ's death and resurrection, he reconciled himself to the world, and the world to God. As people that are transformed by Christ, we are to proclaim these truths of his incarnation, his earthly ministry, and his death and resurrection by seeking peace, liberation, and justice in the world. I believe that the Holy Spirit joins with God and Christ as part of the Trinity. Through the movement of the Spirit, we are able to listen to and learn from God. The Spirit is present amongst us and moves mysteriously to guide our thoughts, our actions, and how we experience God in the world.

I believe that the Triune God is missional; just as God sent Jesus into the world, the one, holy, apostolic Church is being sent into the world to participate with Christ (through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit) to live and love as Christ did. We participate in Christ's birth and resurrection by partaking in sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Every time we partake in the Lord's Supper, we share communally in an outward sign of God's redeeming grace for all people. Since Christ humbled himself, loved and sought justice to the point of death, we, as followers of Christ as the Church, are to emanate Christ's actions of love towards our neighbor and stewardship of creation, even in the face of persecution. As a Church, we are to be a community of witnesses to a future that God is creating. As co creators, we are to seek justice, reconciliation, love, and mercy for all of God's creation.

Biographical Sketch

Meredith Rawls

Meredith is a Cary, North Carolina native who was formed by her upbringing as a youth at White Memorial Presbyterian. She attended Appalachian State University (go neers!) where she studied Social Work and Spanish. After years living and working in diverse communities across the U.S. and abroad, she moved from Chicago to Durham in 2018 to pursue a dual Masters degree in Divinity and Social Work at Duke and UNC. She graduated in 2021 with a certificate in Prison Studies and MSW focused on Communities and Organizations. Meredith is passionate about the intersection of faith and justice and envisions the Church as a creative, radically inclusive force for shalom – especially at the margins. She recently served as a hospital chaplain at WakeMed in Raleigh and now works as East Regional Coordinator for the Partners in Health and Wholeness Initiative with the NC Council of Churches. A lover of community, you'll often find her on a local urban farm, painting, dancing, exploring trails with her dog Yogi, planning her next Camino de Santiago trek, or hunting for the best ice cream in town.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Elizabeth G. Troyer

Jesus is the Son of God, the light of the world. In his Incarnation, life, death and Resurrection, Jesus chose to hold humanity in his arms. As we walk through life, Jesus is actively acting on our behalf, supporting us when we need, leading us through the valleys, and celebrating with us on the mountaintops. Jesus does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Despite our fallen and sinful state, Jesus reconciles humanity with the God of love; in the process he restores our broken and hurting relationships with God and each other, making it possible for us to exist in a community of love and respect.

God is the creator and sustainer of the world. From the beginning, God has cared for and tended to the world and its inhabitants, people, animals, and the created world. Maintaining an active role in the creation, God the creator reaches out and into the world to shape and reshape the creation. In the creative power of God's providence, the world and humanity is constantly being created anew and afresh, abundant with possibilities and new paths. God has foreknowledge of the paths of time. In this knowledge, God guides and directs us.

The Holy Spirit serves to unify us with Jesus the Christ. Through the communion of the Holy Spirit in our lives, it is possible for us to participate in the work of Jesus on this Earth. The Holy Spirit is the bond which brings us into communion with the Triune God, but also in Union with each other, a gift poured out on us in our baptism. The communion of the Spirit also means communion with the body of Christ. Our church and Christian communities are called and brought into being through the Holy Spirit.

This triune God has called the church into being. Each person in the Church has been called with a reason and for a purpose. Each person is created as valued and loved, with a place in the kingdom of God on earth. The Church is a covenant community that exists to love one another as God loves us, unconditionally, and to reach out to those outside its walls who need the message of God's love. Reaching out in to the world as God's arms and legs allows me to participate in the ongoing ministry of love of Jesus Christ, but also to speak out on behalf of those in God's created world who go unnoticed or unheard.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Elizabeth G. Troyer

Born and raised in the mountains of West Virginia, Pastor Liz is an outdoor enthusiast who loves hiking, camping, and exploring. She embraces the Mountaineer spirit—believing in the possibilities just beyond the next ridge.

The second of three children, Liz grew up around church life through her mother, a Christian Educator, and her father, a repairman. Her early experiences taught her the value of storytelling, service, and a bit of creativity—like painting giant VBS caves.

She attended Davis and Elkins College, earning degrees in Music (Piano Performance) and Theater (Stage Management), where she met her husband, Jeremy. It was during college, while working at Bluestone Camp and praying with a stranger on campus, that Liz felt God’s call to ministry.

After seminary in Pittsburgh, Liz launched an after-school program for underserved youth and was later called to Waverly Road Presbyterian in Tennessee. There, she discovered a passion for mentoring youth and earned a Master’s in Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga.

Most recently, Liz served as pastor at Concord PC in NC, where she led the church through visioning and change and in the fall 2025, they will launch an arts-based outreach for local children—renewing a cherished legacy and reflecting her deep commitment to community and faith.

Journey of Faith

Rev. Claire Colcord

Growing up in Atlanta, GA, in the late 1950's through 60's felt normative but was decidedly not. Amid the racial tensions of the time, the deconstruction caused by the Vietnam War, and society's movement toward rebellion around sexual freedoms and political protests, the time was a confusing, shifting matrix of expectations and perceptions for a southern "peach" of a girl from a background of privilege.

The sheltered, first seven years of my life were cosseted in the bosom of my immediate and faith families. My mother's southern Baptist insistence on being at church every time the doors were open gave me a sure sense of community while guarding me from the reality of her desperation to escape the confines of home where she was not allowed to work to support the family. My dad was the undisputed head-of household, who insisted my friends (and many of his!) address him as Dr.; he had his DDS degree and worked as a professor of dentistry, proud of his academic success. He, too, had grown up in the southern Baptist tradition and had served as a deacon, though we rarely witnessed him darken the church door.

When my mother restarted her professional career as a nurse, the cracks began to be visible in their relationship. When I was 12, my self-centered childhood crashed and burned as my father's alcoholism ended his sobriety and our (my sister's and my) naivete. Daily life changed radically as we scrambled to keep the truth of his abuse secreted from outsiders. Flagrant in his purpose, my dad finally drank himself to death when I was 16. It was a huge relief. During those 4 years, my sister led the charge from denomination to denomination as we searched for dependable religious worldviews that didn't renounce drinking as taboo and sought faithful, comforting arms that embraced all human brokenness even when shameful.

Our family's focus on academic goals demanded college. Truthfully, I was more interested in forming my own nuclear family for security and safety. Rushing through Emory in 2 ½ years, I married my God-given (we met in the church youth choir though neither of us could sing,) high school sweetheart, love of my life, and care-taker of my psyche three days after my last final. Our early marriage was a balm to my pain as we navigated toward shared interests, friends and fun and away from our church foundations. Eight years into our marriage we welcomed our first daughter. In 1986, when our second daughter was 6 weeks old, we arrived in Tokyo for the first time and, immediately joined Tokyo Union Church; it was like coming home.

Candidly, we joined to find and build community and to expose our girls to Christian values through like-minded, though ethnically and denominationally diverse, people. God was working on a whole other level. Our homecoming was supernaturally sized as God drew us in passionately and abundantly. We learned of our need for the Lord, the specialness of hearing from God through others, the joy of being back in the text and of living and serving with our focus on the Divine. Simply, our time in Tokyo was blessed.

After Tokyo, we moved to NJ while my husband worked in NYC and we became active church members. In the wake of an unethical pastor's departure, I was asked to step into the role of Family Ministry Director for 6 months. Two and a half years later, I was still working that job when we were heading back to Tokyo. When we returned stateside, I was rehired in the same position. I loved serving in this capacity and was beyond shocked when God called me to seminary at age 50. The Almighty's loving provision has seen me through rough spots: adopting 2 teenage girls out of an alcoholic home; my husband's company going defunct; a rift in church leadership; watching the love of my life suffer and die with MSA. Still, with wonder and gratitude, after 14 years of pastoring in a custom-fit job I adored for constantly stretching my faith and love for others, I sing (albeit off-tune) the Lord's praise!

In Memoriam
Rev. Frances Olson
September 20, 1929 ~ January 14, 2025

Frances Fulcher Olson, 95, died January 14 in Durham, NC after a brief period of declining health. Fran lived a life of service, faith, adventure and deep devotion to family.

Born on September 20, 1929, Fran grew up near the campus of Davidson College where her father, Henry Emmett Fulcher, taught physics for nearly three decades. Her mother, Stuart Snead, "Miss Rosie," oversaw a household known for gracious gatherings and extraordinary Southern cooking. Fran's early ambitions pointed toward aerospace and engineering, but following summers on staff at the Montreat Conference Center, she dreamed of becoming a Presbyterian minister.

After earning a degree from the Women's College of UNC, she married Dr. Robert D. Phillips, and they spent several years in Korea as medical missionaries. They raised their family of seven children in Chapel Hill, where Fran and Bob took active roles in civil rights work, serving as charter members of the Church of Reconciliation, one of the first racially integrated Presbyterian congregations in the Southeast.

With four school-aged children still at home, Fran earned her Master of Divinity at Duke in 1978. Over the years, she served in positions at UNC-Charlotte, the Southern Louisiana Presbytery in Baton Rouge, and associate minister at Brownson Presbyterian in Southern Pines. As a trailblazer among women in the ministry, Fran loved mentoring women who chose to pursue similar paths.

Even after her "official" retirement, Fran stayed busy with supply preaching and committee work, but especially building a life with Jay Olson, to whom she was married for 28 years. They traveled widely with friends and family and took great joy in spending time with their many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She is survived by her seven children: Bo (Susan), Stuart (Jay), Helen (Billy), Jane (Tod), Anna (Greg), Fran and Betsy, 16 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, as well as her sister Martha Montgomery, many nieces and nephews, step-children and step-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Jay Olson.

In Memoriam
Rev. Dr. Samuel Marion Stone
July 21, 1941 ~ June 6, 2025

Born July 21, 1941, in Charleston, WV to Samuel Marion Stone, III and Harriett Campbell Peters Stone, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Marion Stone, IV died on June 6th, 2025, after enduring a lengthy Alzheimer's and vascular dementia diagnosis.

As a child, Sam enjoyed learning about gardening and farming, working alongside his many cousins on both the Stone and the Peters' sides. His grandfather, Sam II, descended from English immigrants who valued education. He grew up on large farms in south-central Virginia, graduated from medical school at UVA, served as a physician for coal miners and their families, and helped establish Charleston General Hospital.

His mother Harriett's Scotch-Irish family settled on the edge of Peters Mountain in Union, West Virginia where her father, Samuel Clark Peters, owned and managed a large cattle farm, raising a family of seven children with Roberta Grace (Bertie) Campbell Peters.

With this heritage, Sam was always focused on education, starting with his choice to attend Greenbrier Military School (1956-1959), where he graduated as the valedictorian and recipient of the leadership medal. He earned his BA and MDiv at Duke University and his Doctor of Ministry at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1967 and served as a minister in the Presbyteries where he lived, preaching, teaching and serving on committees and boards of the Presbytery.

He had a varied and challenging career, starting as a chaplain at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY then as the first director of development at the UNC School of the Arts where he served for 20 years, at the NC Museum of Art, and finally dedicating 18 years to start and serve as executive director of Glenaire, the Presbyterian retirement community in Cary, NC where he retired in 2007.

Sam married his high school sweetheart and fellow Duke alumna, Bonnie Gray Vick in 1963 in Old Stone Church in Lewisburg, WV. They were married for 45 years before her death in 2008. Later, Sam reconnected with Virginia Lockamy, friends from Duke chapel project in the Edgemont community of Durham in 1966, and they were married in 2010. They moved to Wilmington in 2016 where they enjoyed a view overlooking the Intercoastal Waterway, local outings, bike rides, kayaking and travels across the U.S. and Europe.

Sam always saw himself as a student, focused largely on theology and history. He especially loved reminiscing about his West Virginia ancestry. He was an active and committed Rotarian in Winston-Salem and in Downtown Raleigh where he was Rotarian of the year in 2014, in addition to contributing roles on many boards, volunteering and serving in church activities in every stage

of life. Some favorites were cooking breakfast for the First Presbyterian Church Early Birds, ringing bells at Christmas for the Salvation Army, writing the 100-year history of the Downtown Raleigh Rotary Club, volunteering on numerous Habitat worksites and various mission trips to Central America, contributing his skills on the board of Capital Towers in downtown Raleigh, and at Poplar Grove Plantation in Wilmington. For all of his life, Sam Stone was known to dutifully and humbly put his faith in action through service.

Sam is predeceased by his parents and first wife, Bonnie Vick Stone. He leaves behind his devoted wife, Virginia Lockamy Stone, and a loving sister, Alix Stone Berlien. In addition, he is survived by his two daughters: Clare Jordan (Fred), Sarah Reeves (Terry) and four grandchildren: Katie Gray Jackson (Austin), Hattie Altmann, Sarah Altmann and Jack Jordan.

He is also lovingly remembered by Virginia's children: Shelly Booth (Joe), Troy Lockamy (Beth), and grandchildren: Tristan, Michael, Jack and Bella.

The family is grateful to the attentive care Sam received while living at Bradley Creek Health Center, especially the Memory Care Staff, with a special thanks to Chandler Thigpen, RN, Unit Manager, who was always there for Sam and the family, as well as appreciation to Lower Cape Fear LifeCare for their compassion and care.

The family welcomes gifts in memory of Samuel M. Stone IV to First Presbyterian Church (125 S 3rd St Wilmington, NC), First Presbyterian Church (112 S Salisbury St Raleigh, NC), or the Downtown Raleigh Rotary (135 S Wilmington St Raleigh, NC).



**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 255TH
Stated Meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (PCUSA)
March 10-11, 2025, | Drury Plaza Hotel, Glen Allen, VA**

The 255th Stated Meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (PCUSA) unfolded over two powerful days of spirit-led worship, prophetic teaching, justice-centered dialogue, administrative diligence, and heartfelt celebration. Held at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Glen Allen, Virginia, the Assembly brought together commissioners from all fourteen presbyteries, corresponding members, PCUSA agencies staff, volunteers, and guests to engage deeply with the pressing challenges and sacred opportunities before the church today. How will the PCUSA (SMA) Speak Truth to Power?

Grounding in Spirit and Land - Moderator Barry Parks commenced the Assembly with a heartfelt prayer, warmly welcoming everyone into the sacred space we were about to share. Afterwards, Valerie Luna Serrels, drawing from the Celtic Tradition engaged the Assembly in a deeply moving land acknowledgment. Through a powerful call-and-response prayer, we honored the Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Nansemond, and Rappahannock tribes. It was more than a ritual—it was a moment of grounding. Together, we paused to remember the truths of the land we stood on, to feel the weight of history, and to commit ourselves to justice, healing, and compassion.



Worship as Witness: Justice, Mercy, and Communion - Vice Moderator Leah



Epps gently guided us into a time of worship, setting the tone with grace and intention. She introduced Dr. Jacqueline Lapsley, President of Union Presbyterian Seminary, who brought a powerful word to the Assembly. Drawing wisdom from Isaiah, Jonah, and the teachings of Bishop Mariann Budde, Dr. Lapsley reminded us that justice and mercy go hand in hand—they are not optional; they are at the heart of who we are called to be as

the Church. Hymn singing during worship was at its absolute best as we were led in song by West Moore who engaged full participation. “I the Lord of Sea and Sky” and for “Everyone Born” echoed throughout the hotel as they complimented the piercing message of the sermon. Praise be to God!

The service concluded with the Lord’s Supper, administered by Vice Moderator



Leah Epps assisted by Rev. Warren Lesane. In that sacred moment, as bread was broken and the cup was shared with all in attendance, we were reminded of our unity in Christ—one body, many stories, bound together by grace.

Virtual Prophetic Witness: A Challenge from the Co-Moderator - Joining us via Zoom, Co-Moderators Tony Larson and Cece Armstrong brought a commanding message from afar—Tony from San Antonio and Cece from Charleston. They spoke candidly and with conviction about the path of



denominational recovery, grounded in what they called “CAR”: Communication, Alignment, and Relationships. Their reflections reminded all that following Jesus dictates staying aligned with God’s justice, love, and mercy—especially in a time when those values are being tested. Tony encouraged us to live in relationship with those experiencing disadvantages, pointing to the parable of the Good Samaritan as a model for

modern discipleship. Cece built on that message with a poetic benediction, urging us to be people of love and compassion in a world that desperately

needs both. After their remarks, Moderator Barry Parks led the Assembly in prayer, grounding us once more in the Spirit.

Setting the Stage: Purpose, Presence, and Participation - Before diving into the work ahead, Moderator Parks laid out the theme, the purpose, and the flow of the Assembly. We are gathered for more than just business—we were here to discern God’s will together, in a spirit of love, truth, and accountability. He encouraged everyone to practice self-care during hard conversations and to stay open to what the Spirit might be saying. As Christians, we know that God sent his only Son to us, to bring us all into loving relationships. To love God and love each other - God's children, everyone. And Jesus was very particular about what he expected all of us to do. We are supposed to feed the hungry, give drinks to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the poor, care for the sick and visit the prisoners. Today, we are faced with those in power who do not share these values. Those who hate, those who do not share God’s love. Those who deny food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, who oppress the stranger. Our friends are crying out for help. How do we respond? How do we, members of the body of Christ, bring people back into loving relationships? Loving relationships with God, and with each other, all of God’s children? With a quorum confirmed, the Synod Administrator was appointed as temporary clerk, and the docket was adopted with ease. Corresponding members were enrolled, and volunteers were acknowledged.

“The Sin of Hostility” – Plenary one began with an intense keynote from Rev. Dr. James Taneti, founding director of the Syngman Rhee Global Mission Center and teaches World Christianity at UPS. Taneti invited us to step outside of our comfort zones and stand in true solidarity with the marginalized. He drew from Hebrews and Exodus, naming the harsh realities faced by undocumented immigrants—particularly from India—and the hypocrisy of relying on their labor while criminalizing their presence. Dr. Taneti called us to practice “xenophilia”—a love for the stranger—rather than fear. His message was a clear call to walk with Christ by walking with those at the margins.



Following his address, a panel discussion brought the message to life.



Facilitated by Ruling Elder Patricia Morse, the panel featured Rev. Dr. LaKeisha Cook, Ruling Elder Amanda Pine, and Ruling Elder Tony De La Rosa, each offering wisdom rooted in experience:

- Amanda called churches to move beyond vague welcomes and step into the work of prophetic hospitality.
- Tony lifted the importance of naming and resisting the toxic patterns of white heteropatriarchy and emphasized the need for spaces where men can express emotion without turning to violence.
- LaKeisha introduced us to the Zulu greeting “I see you, (Ngiyakubona)” and connected it to advocacy work—including a bipartisan win that ended the shackling of minors in courtrooms.

Additional Commissioners shared concerns, ideas, and hopes for how presbyteries can support bold pastors and prophetic congregations. Resources like Just Faith Ministries and Shaping Sanctuary were named as practical tools for transformation.



A Prophetic Word from Esther - Rev. Dr. Rodney Sadler keynoted Plenary Two boldly ‘For Such a Time as This.’ With fire, brilliancy and clarity, he spoke about the moral crossroads at which the church and nation stand. He named the dangers of remaining silent when injustice is

on the rise, reminding us that silence is not neutral - it is consent. Sadler provoked us with three statements, (1) Do not think that in the Kings house you will be immune; (2) If the church keeps silent, silence has a high cost; (3) Silence is not an option with Justice at stake. He explored the weight of privilege, especially white privilege, and challenged everyone to consider what they are willing to risk protecting the most vulnerable.

Following his keynote RE Flo Barbee-Watkins moderated a second panel bring to bear focusing on critical questions about the message in the sermon. Panelists Jonathan Barton, Kim Priddy, and Susan Krehbiel shared deeply personal stories of courage, struggle, and growth. From accompanying migrants in detention centers to comforting grieving families and stepping into hard conversations about sexuality and race, each story reminded us that courage is not solitary, it is communal. The panel wrapped with a powerful question: How do we cultivate the kind of courage Esther had? Their answer: through community, prayer, and a willingness to show up even when we are afraid.



Reflections to Action - The Rev. Dr. David Cho brought a combined perspective in the final plenary. Building on the themes of Esther and previous messages, he introduced the “Five A’s of Social Action”: Awareness, Assessment, Action, Alliance, and Advocacy to enable everyone to process what they heard today. He then invited commissioners into small group conversations around three deeply personal questions:

1. What is breaking your heart?
2. What can/will you do about it?
3. What is your next faithful step?



The responses were as varied as the people in the room, but all shared a common thread: a



desire to build something better. Groups talked about everything from building ministries of welcome and hosting interfaith potlucks to addressing job insecurity and reclaiming the prophetic role of the church. Several small

groups, according to their presbytery developed action plans that will guide their work upon returning home.

Day Two: Looking Forward Together - The second day began with prayer and a compelling presentation from PCUSA Stated Clerk Jihyun Oh. Speaking candidly about inclusion, sanctuary, and international partnerships, she reminded all that PCUSA is still on the move—still answering the call of Matthew 25, still working for peace and justice in a divided world.



State of the Synod Address: Warren delivered his final State of the Synod Address. With humility and vision, he shared the story of how the Synod moved from uncertainty to strength—from contemplating closure to becoming a leader in justice and innovation. He lifted moments like the response to Charlottesville, the Montgomery Immersion, and the powerful shift sparked by Matthew 25. His message: stay rooted, stay connected, and keep going.

Business Rooted in Mission - The business session was full of activity—it was a clear reflection of a Synod deeply engaged in justice, equity, and transformation. Committees reported vital work across the board and recommendations were adopted: The full commissioners Resolution can be found [here](#).

- The Assembly approved Wells Fargo Bank be authorized on 12/10/2024 to distribute \$650,557.62. This figure represents one-half of four percent of a three- year rolling average of the Kate Bitting Reynolds Fund market value, minus administrative fees of the Synod/Presbyteries. The distribution should be made in equal shares of \$1,465.22 to the certified ministers, the odd cents guaranteeing that the entire \$650,557.62 is disbursed.
- **Stated Clerk** reminded Synod Commissioners that they represent the presbyteries for which they have been elected. Synod Assembly meets twice annually, and the dates are provided far in advance. The Synod expects commissioners to make every effort to represent your presbytery

during Assemblies and to make a report to the appropriate council or presbytery meeting following the Assembly. If you are unable to attend an Assembly, you are required to request excuse from the Synod Stated Clerk. A Commissioners Resolution has been filed with the Synod Stated Clerk that seeks actions from the 255th Synod Assembly related to supporting a compassionate comprehensive missional mandated in keeping with the PCUSA. The Administration Committee reviewed and supported the resolution to be presented.

- **Emerging Ideas** wrapped up the Wild Church project and launched a new partnership with NEXT Church. It continues to seek new ministry opportunities that may need initial grant support. It is looking for ministries that are creative, innovative, and energizing.
- **Grants** distributed over \$25,000 in scholarships and support for small congregations. They included:
 - Cellonia Ndede (new applicant) \$6,000 – Westminster PC (JAM)
 - Joshua Gilhart (renewal) \$3,275.00 – Cumberland MD (BAL)
 - Nenio Pfuzeh (renewal) \$3,275.00 – Ginter Park PC (JAM)
 - Praveen Pulukuri (renewal) \$3,275.00 – Ginter PC (JAM)
 - White Memorial \$5,000 for senior lunch program (NHO)
 - Freedom Presbyterian \$4,521 for tech for virtual services (PCC)
- **Finance** approved disaster relief funds for Western North Carolina Presbytery in the amount of \$25,000 to assist in hurricane/flood recovery and Salem Presbytery in the amount of \$7,500 for the disaster recovery. 2026 per capita increases and updated financial policies for staff.
- **The Administration Committee** shared ways to enhance staff benefits through synod personnel policies and updates. It presented a Commissioners Resolution which Commissioner Cassandra Thomas brought to the Assembly. The committee adopted it. Commissioners Tim Bird and Cassandra Thomas drafted the Resolution. The committee announced that there will be a called Synod Assembly to receive the candidate for the next Synod Leader. It approved a powerful resolution to



protect global mission funding, and reviewed leadership structures with the Unified Mission Agency.

- **The Next Generation Initiative** expanded its mission to empower Black congregations and develop new leaders. Its work is subdivided into four work groups, namely, Research, Funding, Marketing and Recruitment. The committee meets four times a year and working groups meet in between time.
- **The Executive Committee** reaffirmed names of the Synod Executive/ Stated Clerk Search Committee to be ratified by the Assembly. Those individual approved were Bill Rienhold, Steve Scott, Cherry Peters, Addie Peterson, Susanne Hooker Taylor, Kate Rascoe.
- **Partner Reports** from Massanetta Springs, the Board of Pensions, and Mission Engagement Services showed creative adaptations and meaningful ministry continuing throughout the region.
- **The Nominations Committee** elected RE John Barker (ABI) as its co-moderator. The committee worked through collaboration with the Executive and Administration Committees to develop a list of nominees to serve on the Synod Executive and Stated Clerk Search Committee. Vacancies exist in NHO, JAM, and SHE presbyteries on Representation; Vacancies exist from NEW and PEA presbyteries on Jubilee Fund; Vacancies exist from EVA, JAM, NAT, and PEA presbyteries on the Nomination Committee. Presbyteries are urged to fill these vacancies as soon as possible. It is critical that every presbytery is represented on synod committees.

Honoring a Legacy: Celebrating Rev. Warren Lesane



Monday evening closed with joy, laughter, and a few tears as the Synod celebrated the leadership and legacy of Rev. Warren Lesane. Through photos, music, video tributes, and warm words, the community honored his 11 years of service. A plaque was presented, officially naming the “Warren J. Lesane Jr. Next Generation Initiative Fund”—a lasting tribute to his commitment to the future of the church.

Shortly, communications describing the fund will be shared very soon as to how the public might contribute to the Next Generation Initiative Fund established in Warren’s name. For the moment, one can visit the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic website at www.synatlantic.org and click the donate button. Then click in Next Generation Initiative.



Warren closed the evening with heartfelt thanks and a full heart. The video he was presented can be viewed [here](#).



- Thank you, Rev. Warren Lesane, Jr., for eleven amazing years of service to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

Worship in the Wild - Before the 255th Synod Assembly concluded, the Assembly stepped outside for a Wild Church worship service, led by Valerie Luna Serrels. Under a canopy of trees, the Assembly was led in a seven-point prayer that invited them to listen, breathe, and remember that God's presence is as near as the breeze.

Going Forth with Prayer: Moderator Barry Parks adjourned the 255th Synod Assembly at 12:30 p.m. on March 11, 2025. "Go back to your presbyteries," he encouraged, "renewed, equipped, and ready to serve."

Next Synod Assembly: September 9-10, 2025, at the Drury Plaza Hotel, Richmond VA.

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. FIVE PRIVILEGED MOTIONS							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.						
		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***	Yes	No	No	Maj	No
* only re. desirability of referral or details of referral. The merits of the question cannot be debated.								Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	* Yes	Neg
								# 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
APCE	Association for Presbyterian Christian Education
APNC	Associate Pastor Nominating Committee
BOC	Book of Confessions
BOO	Book of Order
BPC	Black Presbyterian Caucus
CD&E	Church Development and Evangelism
CHAPL	Chaplain
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
SDOP	Self-Development of People
SS	Stated Supply

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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."



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