

**PRESBYTERY OF
WESTERN
NORTH CAROLINA**



**MINUTES
ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SEVENTH
STATED MEETING
October 24, 2023**

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**The Presbytery of Western North Carolina
137th Stated Meeting
October 24, 2023
Southminster Presbyterian Church, Gastonia, NC**

CALL TO ORDER

Teaching Elder Mark Stanley, Moderator, convened the 137th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina at 9:06 a.m. with an Iona prayer.

CONSTITUTION

The Moderator, Rev. Dr. Mark Stanley opened the One-Hundred Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina with prayer.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Moderator Rev. Dr. Mark Stanley continued our land acknowledgement today by specifically remembering that we live, worship, and serve in the region of the Native lands of the Catawba, Sugaree, and Cherokee peoples among others; paying our respects to elders of the past and present, known and unknown.

APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees:

Resolution of Thanks:

Mr. John Pea, Commissioned Pastor, Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church
Mr. Larry Smith, Ruling Elder, Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church

Presbytery in Brief:

Mr. Rick Leissner, Elder, First Presbyterian Church, Morganton

Bills and Overtures:

Rev. Allan Purtill, Teaching Elder, Tryon Presbyterian Church
Ms. Sue Johnson, Ruling Elder, First Presbyterian Church, Belmont

ATTENDANCE

The Stated Clerk declared that a quorum was present by referencing our registration data and observing those in attendance.

The following MINISTERS WERE ENROLLED (P = Present; E = Excused; A = Absent without excuse):

Robert M. Abel	E	Kat Achtemeier	E	Mark Achtemeier	P
Jefferson Aiken, Jr.	E	Wyatt Aiken, Jr.	E	Merriam Alexander	P
Terry Alexander	E	Stephen Aschmann	P	James Aydelotte	E
Patricia Bacon	E	Tony Baker	E	Edna Banes	E
Ashley Beavers	E	Joseph Bennett	E	Cynthia M. Benz	E
Lynn Bledsoe	E	Randall Boggs	E	David Bonnema	P

Ronald Botsford	E	Lee Bowman	E	Richard Boyce	P
Grace Boyer	E	David Bradley	E	Ryan Brakemeyer	A
Troy Braswell	A	Ronald Brauer	E	Sandra Brown	E
Thomas Brown	P	William Buchanan	A	Monty Burnham	E
Constance Button	P	Joey T. Byrd	A	David Cameron	E
Kathryn J. Cameron	E	John T. Campbell	E	Kathy Campbell	E
Amy Cantrell	A	Rebekah Carpenter	A	H. Pride Carson	E
Dwight Christenbury	P	William Christian	E	Sarah Coburn	A
James Cockerham	E	Jeffrey R. Coffey	E	Evelyn Coleman	A
J. Hunter Coleman	E	Daniel Commerford	P	Kelley Connelly	P
Monty Cook	E	Thomas C. Cook, Jr.	E	Donald L. Cooper	E
W. Riley Covin	E	Robert Bruce Cumming	E	James Dale	A
Blake J. Daniel	E	Dent C. Davis	E	Heather Wood Davis	A
Holly K. Davis	P	Arthur DeJong	E	Susan Denne	E
Janet DeWater	E	Edward D. Donnell	E	Ellen H. Dozier	E
Steven Eason	E	Robert Edmunds	E	Leah E. Epps	P
Lee S. Feero, Jr.	E	David Carter Florence	E	Richard Floyd	P
Edward Forsyth	P	Clarence D. Fouse, III	A	Kevin E. Frederick	E
Keith B. Freeman	E	Alice Schaap Freeman	E	John L. Frye, Jr.	E
Laurie Furr-Vancini	A	R. Curtis Fussell, III	E	Tempe Fussell	E
Willis Gaines	E	Paul Galbreath	E	Lewis F. Galloway	E
Robert D. Gamble	E	David Garnett	E	Lisle Garrity	A
Tee G. Gatewood	P	Denise Geiger	E	David Germer	P
Samantha Gonzalez-Block	A	Gregory Grana	E	Theodore Grant	E
Keith Grogg	A	Decherd Guess	E	Rebecca Gurney	A
John Hagmann	P	Samuel W. Hale	E	Michal H. Hall	E
Terry L. Hanna	E	Patrick Hardy	A	Randall A. Hardy	E
Martin L. Harkey, III	E	Laurey Harrell	P	William G. Heck	E
Julie Hester	E	J. Robert Hewett	E	J. Richard Hobson	E
J. Samuel Hobson, Jr.	E	James J. Holeman	A	David Holloway	A
Matthew Horne	A	James S. Hornsby	E	David Hosick	E
Carol Hovis	A	William R. Hoyt, III	E	George B. Hutchins	E
Dennis Eugene Hysom	A	Jill V. Isola	A	Lindsay Jacaruso	E
Donald Jafvert	E	William M. Janes	E	Esta M. Jarrett	A
Cecil M. Jividen	E	Caitlin Johnson	A	G. Wallace Johnson	E
Katherine B. Johnson	E	Patrick Johnson	P	Franklin Jones	A
Lucas Jones	A	Rebecca S. Jones	A	Shannon D. Jordan	P
Kimberly L. Justice	A	Joseph Kang	A	Lynne Keel	A
David Kennedy	E	Ira K. Kennerly	E	R. Paul Kercher	E
William L. Kirk	E	Albert D. Kissling	E	Janice Krouskop	A
Lee Kruse	A	Michael Lamm	E	John H. LaMotte	E
John C. Laughlin	E	Margaret P. Lauterer	E	James E. Layman	E
Thomas G. Lewis	E	J. William Lindeman	E	John P. Lindsay	E
Gene Linton, Jr.	E	Deneise Deter Liss	A	Jamie Bibee Lloyd	E
Neal Lloyd	E	Laura Long	E	Billy T. Lowe	A

William Lowery	E	Robert L. Lowry	E	Alexandra Lusak	P
David R. Lytle	A	Kathleen Madigan	E	J. Whit Malone	P
Andrew Mangione	P	Marjorie Marsh	E	Joan C. Martin	P
Roberta Martin	E	W. Tyler Martin	E	John S. McCall	A
Sandra McClinton	A	Robert A. McCully, Jr.	A	David W. McKee	E
Michael T. McKee	P	Megan McMillan	P	Alex P. McNeill	A
Kenyon Meeks, Jr.	E	C. Lynn Michie	A	Beth Ann Miller	P
Robert L. Montgomery	E	Sarah Grace Montgomery	E	Anne Morgan	E
S. Keith Morrison	E	David E. Mulford	E	D. Cameron Murchison	P
David Nash	E	Wanda Neely	E	William K. Neely	E
Thomas G. Nelson	E	Elizabeth D. Newman	E	Richard Nygren	E
Daniel J. Oedy	P	O'Hyun Park	E	Albert G. Peery, Jr.	E
Margaret B. Peery	E	Lance Perry	E	Martha Jane Petersen	E
J. Thomas Phillips	P	James N. Poling	E	Michael J. Poulos	P
Donald G. Price	E	Caroline Proctor	E	E. Allen Proctor, Jr.	E
Edyth P. Pruitt	A	Tamara Puffer	E	Allan Purtill	P
Jay K. Rabuck	E	Daria L. Ragan	P	Earl M. Rash	E
Mary Elizabeth Ray	E	Patricia Reid	P	Calvin Rice	E
G. Harriss Ricks	E	Mary Katherine Robinson	P	William (Billy) Robinson	A
David Roquemore	P	Steven Runholt	A	T. Feild Russell	P
Donald Scofield	P	Henry D. Scoggins	E	Carol N. Seaman	E
Dana V. Seiler	P	Caroline Sell	A	Nathan Sell	A
William Serjak	E	Michael Shepard	E	Rachel Shepherd	A
Marcia Mount Shoop	P	Mary Elizabeth Sigmon	A	Brad Simpson	P
Lance Smith	P	Allen Smith	P	David B. Smith	P
J. Mark Stanley	P	Paul S. Smith	A	Becky B. Stanley	E
Daniel G. Stitt	E	Margie B. Stansell	E	Carol Steele	A
William B. Sweetser, Jr.	E	Cynthia R. P. Strickler	E	Dana Sutton	P
George Thompson, Jr.	P	Christopher Taylor	A	Beverly Thompson	A
Yvonne M. Thurmond	A	Keith J. Thompson	P	Denise Thorpe	A
Kathleen Rankin Tompkins	P	Russell D. Tillotson, Sr.	E	Daniel Tipton	E
Christina B. Tutterow	A	Margaret Torrence	E	Lynn Turnage	E
William Upchurch, Jr.	P	Robert J. Tuttle	E	Melissa Anne Upchurch	A
Susan Verbrugge	E	Gary Van Brocklin	E	Lauren S. Vanacore	P
Byron A. Wade	P	Rockwell P. Ward	P	Samuel P. Warner	P
Robert M. Warren	E	Lynn Webber	A	Judith Weger	E
Kimberleigh E. Wells	P	Joseph Welker, Jr.	E	Barbara R. White	E
Parker T. Williamson	E	Emily L. Wilmarth	P	V. Otis Wilson, Jr.	E
Victor M. Wilson	E	Chris Wingard	A	W. Graham Wood, Jr.	E
Donaldson Woods	E	Rebecca Young	A		

The following COMMISSIONED PASTORS WERE ENROLLED at this meeting of Presbytery:

Linda Abel	E	Philip Adams	A	Phillip Ashley	A
Robert Ayala	P	John Bates	A	Sally Beghtol	E
Kerry Border	P	Mildred Bruns	A	Vickie Burgess	P
John Hall	P	Beth Hall	A	Lynn Honeycutt	A

Robin Honeycutt	P	Linda Johnson	A	James Koone	A
Peggy Koone	A	James Millsaps	A	Marla Patchel	A
Randy Patterson	A	John Pea	P	Marcia Reighley	A
Russell Reighley	A	James Tate	A	James Taylor	P
Sheila Renee Warthen	A	Roger Wise	E	Reed Conley	P
Leslie Peterson	P				

The following MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL, COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY, ADVOCATES and COMMITTEE CHAIRS WERE ENROLLED at this meeting of Presbytery:

John Auten	A	Royce Browder	A	Bill Carpenter	A
Ellen Cinq-Mars	P	Don Coleman	A	Dorothy Descieux	E
Peggy Ferguson	P	Betsy Fonvielle	A	Bob Forsythe	E
Corise Gambrell	P	Rob Groves	A	Dennis Howell	A
Dick Larson	A	Tom Karvonen	A	Melvin Meares	P
Katherine Mull	A	Roger Rizk	A	Julia Rush	A
Laura Carringer Russell	A	Katrina Shambaugh	A	Laura Sigmon	A
Becky Stevens	A	Sarah Thornburg	P	Ron Tingle	A
Paula Wallace	A				

The following CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS WERE ENROLLED for this meeting of Presbytery:

Melinda Christian	A	Betty Davenport	A	Angela Drummond	A
Vivian Hare	A	Margarette Kennerly	E	Leslie McLeod	P
Mary Lou Nash	A	Heath Rada	A	Lynn Thomas	A
Patricia Tuttle	A	Jane Vann	A		

The following CHURCHES WERE ENROLLED by the attendance of their elder commissioners:

Arbor Dale (1)	A		
Asheville, First (3)	Donna Ensley	Mary Jane Shumate	
Banner Elk (1)	A		
Belmont, First (3)	Ashley Bruce	Sue Johnson	Deborah Walker
Bessemer City, First (1)	A		
Black Mountain (2)	Tommy Wilkinson	Alan Belsches	
Brevard-Davidson River (2)	Mike Stewart	Ralph Warren	
Bridgewater (1)	A		
Brittain (1)	Leonard Hutchins		
Brittain's Cove (1)	A		
Bryson City (1)	A		
Buladean (1)	A		
Burnsville, First (1)	Jon Ward		
Calvary (2)	E		
Canton (1)	A		
Cherryville, First (1)	A		
Columbus (1)	A		
Crossnore (1)	A		
Dallas, First (1)	Nina Green		

Dixon (1)	A		
Dorland Memorial (1)	E		
Dulatown (2)	A		
Etowah (1)	A		
Fletcher (1)	E		
Forest City, First (1)	A		
Franklin, First (1)	A		
Gastonia, First (4)	Jim Ratchford Sylvia Seawell	Rusty Harris	Coleman Effird
Good Hope (3)	E		
Grace Covenant (3)	A		
Grassy Creek (2)	A		
Green Mountain (2)	A		
Green Street (3)	A		
Greenway (2)	E		
Hayesville (2)	E		
Hendersonville, First (2)	E		
Hickory, First (4)	Knox Tate	Nat Auten	
Highlands, First (2)	Marty Boone	Scott McDuff	
Ironton (2)	E		
Jack's Creek (2)	A		
Kenilworth (2)	A		
Korean Church of Asheville (3)	A		
Lenoir First (2)	A		
Long Creek (2)	A		
Love's Chapel (3)	A		
Lowell (2)	A		
Marion, First (2)	A		
Marshall (2)	Carolyn Ogburn		
Micaville (2)	A		
Mills River (2)	Jeannie Hudson		
Montreat (2)	Lisa Rome	William Brown	
Morganton, First (3)	Rick Leissner	Marny Pritchard	
Morrison (2)	A		
Mount Holly, First (2)	Nan Kayla		
New Hope (Asheville) (2)	Margaret Marsh		
New Hope (Gastonia) (2)	Edwin Lewis		
Newdale (2)	Roger Burns		
Newland (2)	A		
Newton First (2)	Brenda Eckard		
Northminster (2)	A		
Oakwood (1)	A		
Old Fort (1)	A		
Olney (1)	A		
Pine Street (2)	A		

Pineola (1)	E		
Quaker Meadows (1)	A		
Reems Creek-Beech (1)	Karen Border		
Ridgeview (1)	A		
Robinson Memorial (1)	Larry Smith		
Rutherfordton (2)	Stewart Powell	Karen Anderson	
Ryburn Memorial (2)	A		
Saluda (1)	A		
Shelby (2)	Larry Wilson	John Schweepe	
Sherrill's Ford (1)	A		
Shiloh, Grover (1)	A		
Siloam (1)	A		
Southminster (2)	Margaret Mason	Steve Kahn	Lynn Bowers
Spruce Pine, First (1)	A		
Sweetwater (1)	A		
Sylva, First (1)	E		
Third Street (2)	Carolyn Werts	Allen Lowery	
Trinity (2)	Angela Kuykendoll		
Tryon (2)	Catherine Lynch		
Union (1)	A		
Union Mills (1)	A		
Unity (2)	A		
Vians Valley (1)	A		
Waldensian (2)	Wes Garrou	Wes Cannon	
Walnut (1)	A		
Warren Wilson (1)	Ken Murchison		
Waynesville, First (1)	A		

Ministers	64
Elders	47
Council/Committees	4
DCE	1
Visitors	21
TOTAL	137

CORRESPONDING MEMBER IN ATTENDANCE:

Salvador de la Torre, PCUSA Mission Co-Worker & Director of Nkhoma Synod Hospital

APPROVAL OF DOCKET

Rev. Dr. Cam Murchison, the Stated Clerk, presented the docket and moved the approval of the docket as presented on pages 3-4 in the Presbytery Packet. The motion was approved by common consent.

9:00 Call to Order

Mark Stanley, Moderator

Convene with Prayer of Invocation

Mark Stanley, Moderator

Land Acknowledgement

Mark Stanley, Moderator

Recognition of Elders Attending for First Time and Corresponding Members

**Certification of Quorum
Approval of Docket**

Cam Murchison, Stated Clerk

Consent Agenda

A

(Consent Agenda is a consent motion. Any commissioner may pull any item from the Consent Agenda for any reason. Simply state the item to be removed from the Consent Agenda and it will be dealt with as part of the committee report from which it was drawn.)

Stated Clerk's Report

Cam Murchison

B

Reports Submitted for Information and/or Included in the Consent Agenda

Malawi Leadership Team

P

Finance Committee

BB

Building Hope

BH

Report from Presbyterian Women

LL

9:30 Service of Worship, including Celebration of the Lord's Supper

(Worship leader: Rev. Dan Oedy)

10:15 Speak Out (10 minutes)

10:25 Salvador de la Torre, PCUSA Misson Co-Worker & Director of Nkhoma Synod Hospital

10:30 General Council (10 minutes)

Sarah Thornburg

C

(Work of the committee)

Committee on Ministry (30 minutes)

Jim Taylor

D

(Introduce new ministers and recommendations for Presbytery approval)

- Presentation of Kelley Connelly, Associate Pastor at Highlands, First
- Presentation of Laurey Harrell, Retired

25 Years Service

P. Edward Forsyth
Rebecca Young

50 Years Service

J. Samuel Hobson
Kenyon G. Meeks, Jr.

60 Years Service

R. Paul Kercher
David Nash

70 Years Service

Lee S. Feero, Jr.

Retired

Curtis Fussell
Tempe Fussell
Richard Boyce
Laura Long
Joan Martin
Kitty Tompkins
Melissa Upchurch

Committee on Preparation for Ministry <i>(5 minutes)</i> <i>(Work of the committee)</i>	Merri Alexander	K
Peace and Justice Committee <i>(10 minutes)</i>	Mary Jo Clark Tommy Brown	T
Nominating/Representation Committee <i>(5 minutes)</i> <i>(Work of the committee and General Assembly Commissioners and Synod Commissioner)</i>	Peggy Ferguson	I
Christian Education Committee <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Jill Kimbirl/Gayla Woody	W
Youth Committee <i>(5 minutes)</i>	David Germer	Y
Guatemala Mission Team <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Sarah Robinson	Q
Report of the General Presbyter <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Byron Wade	GP
Prayers of Intercession		
Benediction and Adjournment	Mark Stanley	

CONSENT AGENDA

The Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Cam Murchison, explained the rules for the Consent Agenda.

From the General Council report, item #4 was removed from the Consent Agenda.

The Stated Clerk then moved the remainder of the Consent Agenda as presented on pages 9 through 12 of the packet for the meeting. The Consent Agenda and committee reports were approved by common consent. (Appendix A)

Reports submitted for information and/or included in the Consent Agenda

Malawi Leadership Team (Appendix B)
Finance Committee (Appendix C)
Building Hope (Appendix D)
Report from Presbyterian Women (Appendix E)

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Rev. Dr. Cam Murchison, the Stated Clerk, presented recommendations 1 through 5 included in the Stated Clerk's report, stating that these recommendations had previously been approved in the Consent Agenda.

The Stated Clerk then presented items 6 through 10 for information that required no action.

- CA 1. THAT Mark Stanley, Cam Murchison, and Robbin Buchanan be requested to prepare the minutes of this Presbytery meeting for approval at the January 27, 2024 Presbytery meeting.**

CA 2. **THAT the minutes of the July 29, 2023 Stated Meeting of Presbytery be approved as submitted.**

CA 3. **THAT the October 2023 report of the following Administrative Commissions be received and entered into the permanent record of Presbytery. (Appendix F)**
Administrative Commission for West Asheville
Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Ministry
Administrative Commission for Oak Forest

CA 4. **THAT the minutes of the ordination of the following be placed into the record of Presbytery:**
Erin Tolar (Appendix G)

CA 5. **THAT the minutes of the installation of the following be placed into the record of Presbytery:**
Lance Smith (Appendix H)

FOR INFORMATION:

6. **THAT the 138th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024, virtually. *THAT the deadline for written reports for this meeting is Thursday, January 4, 2024. THAT the deadline for an overture is Friday, December 29, 2023.***
7. **THAT ONLINE OPTIONS FOR BOUNDARY TRAINING have been sent to Ministers and Commissioned Pastors who are due for training this year. Members are reminded to sign up for one of the two options as soon as possible.**
8. **THAT in addition to those reported at the July 2023 meeting of presbytery, the following Session Records for 2022 have been received, reviewed, and approved by the Stated Clerk, having been submitted by Clerks of Session who elected the option to complete a records review checklist with documentation and return it to Presbytery by September 15, 2023:**
- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Asheville, First | Mount Holly First |
| Belmont, First | Newton, First |
| Brevard-Davidson River | Pineola |
| Brittain | Saluda |
| Buladean | Shelby |
| Cherryville, First | Sweetwater |
| Fletcher | Third Street |
| Franklin, First | Tryon |
| Greenway | Unity |
| Hendersonville, First | Waldensian |
| Ironton | Warren Wilson |
| Mills River | |

9. **THAT the following Session Records for 2022 have not been reviewed and have not yet met the requirements of the 2023-2025 Book of Order (G-3.0108 a). For churches to meet the requirements of the Book of Order and be in compliance, please contact Stated Clerk, Cam Murchison, for further instructions.**

Bridgewater
Bryson City
Burnsville, First
Calvary
Canton
Columbus
Crossnore
Dixon
Dulatown
Etowah
Gastonia, First
Grace Covenant
Green Mountain
Green Street
Hayesville
Hickory, First
Jack's Creek
Korean Church
Long Creek
Love's Chapel
Lowell
Marion, First

Micaville
Morganton, First
Morrison
New Hope, Asheville
New Hope, Gastonia
Newdale
Northminster
Oakwood
Old Fort
Pine Street
Ridgeview
Robinson Memorial
Ryburn Memorial
Sherrill's Ford
Shiloh, Grover
Siloam
Southminster
Sylva, First
Trinity
Union Mills
Walnut

10. **THAT the 2022 Minutes of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina have been submitted to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic for review, but no report has yet been received indicating that they have been reviewed and found to be in order.**

SERVICE OF WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Dan Oedy, Pastor at Southminster Presbyterian Church, led us in worship. The sermon was entitled "Keep Walking..." with scripture taken from Matthew 14:22-23. Worship concluded with a celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, led by the Revs. Dan Oedy and Lauren Vanacore. Janet Layne was the pianist.

PCUSA MISSION CO-WORKER

Rev. Dr. Byron Wade introduced Dr. Salvador de la Torre, PCUSA Mission Co-Worker & Director of Nkhoma Synod Hospital. He gave a powerful, heartfelt talk on the history of the situation at the Nkhoma Hospital. His report was filled with hope, challenges, and successes.

GENERAL COUNCIL

On behalf of the General Council, Ruling Elder Sarah Thornburg presented recommendations 1, 2, and 3 included in the General Council's report. Following discussion, all recommendations/motions passed by common consent.

Ruling Elder Sarah Thornburg presented recommendation 4 included in the report, which had been pulled from the Consent Agenda. Following a discussion, an expression of gratitude was shared for the life of the Clinchfield Presbyterian Church. The motion passed by common consent.

Ruling Elder Sarah Thornburg presented items 5 through 8 for information.

- 1. THAT the Presbytery elect Ruling Elder Ken Murchison as Moderator of the Presbytery for 2025, serving as Vice-Moderator in 2024.**
- 2. THAT the Presbytery concur with the General Council and the Personnel Committee that a search committee be formed immediately to begin a search for the position of Stated Clerk for election no later than at the July 27, 2024 meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.**
- 3. THAT the Presbytery extend the terms of the current Stated Clerk, Rev. Cameron D. "Cam" Murchison, from July 27, 2024 through January 25, 2025, at which point the term of the newly elected Stated Clerk will begin.** (NOTE: The Personnel Committee plans a period of part-time stipended service by the newly elected Stated Clerk from September 2024 through January 2025 as the new clerk prepares to take over the role of Stated Clerk).
- CA 4. THAT the General Council, acting on behalf of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina (per Standing Rules IV.D.17) approved unanimously the request of the Session of Clinchfield Presbyterian Church, following a consultation with the congregation by Presbytery Associate Schaap Freeman, that the congregations's ministry conclude and that it be dissolved following a final worship service on October 15, 2023 and final work day on October 21, 2023. In taking this action the General Council assigned oversight to the previously established Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding their Ministry, with the following responsibilities and authority:**
 - To work pastorally with the members of churches wishing to conclude their ministry, supporting them in their closing worship, their transition to other congregations, and giving thanks for the ministry of the Church.
 - To hold members on the roll of Presbytery and transfer their membership to congregations of their choosing.
 - To dissolve the congregation, close the church (G-3.0301a), and take possession of their records (G-3.107).
 - To administer the funds in the church's accounts, pay any outstanding bills and debts, and to make payments on behalf of the Church and the Presbytery.
 - To determine the disposition of all the property, including the authority to sell the property and dispose of any contents (G 4.0205)
 - Members of the Commission:
Rev. Don Scofield (Rutherfordton)

Mr. Steve Brittain, Chair (Gastonia, First)
John Auten (Shelby)
Rev. Bobbi White (Retired)
John Pea (Robinson Memorial)
Joe Wanamaker (Marion, First)
Ex Officio: Byron Wade, Cam Murchison, Schaap Freeman, and Tom Phillips

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

5. THAT a list of upcoming events of the Presbytery can be found on the back of the Presbytery Docket.

6. THAT the following dates have been set for 2024 and 2025 Presbytery Meetings:

2024

Saturday, January 27, 2024 – Virtual
Tuesday, April 30, 2024 – Montreat Conference Center
Saturday, July 27, 2024 – Virtual
Tuesday, October 29, 2024 – Brevard-Davidson River Presbyterian Church

2025

Saturday, January 25, 2025 – Virtual
Tuesday, April 29, 2025 –
Saturday, July 26, 2025 – Virtual
Tuesday, October 28, 2025 -

7. THAT the following Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Visionary Grant Application was approved by the General Council and was forwarded to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic:

Young Adult Transformation Collective - \$5,000
(Presbyteries of Western North Carolina & National Capital)

8. THAT the following Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Small Church Grant Application was approved by the General Council and was forwarded to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

Good Hope Presbyterian Church - \$5,000

**CHURCHES AND PASTORS
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
I. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

Ruling Elder James Taylor reported on the actions taken by the Committee on Ministry on behalf of the Presbytery. (Appendix I)

James Taylor, chair of the committee, recognized all members who have been in the ministry for 25, 50, 60 and 70 years. Also recognized at this time were ministers who have retired during the past year. Certificates were presented to those being recognized for honorable retirement and faithful service to the church.

25 Years Service
P. Edward Forsyth

50 Years Service
J. Samuel Hobson

60 Years Service
R. Paul Kercher

Rebecca Young

Kenyon G. Meeks, Jr. David Nash

70 Years Service
Lee S. Feero, Jr.

Retired
Curtis Fussell
Tempe Fussell
Richard Boyce
Laura Long
Joan Martin
Kitty Tompkins
Melissa Upchurch

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

II. VALIDATION OF MINISTRIES

On behalf of the Committee on Ministry, Ruling Elder James Taylor moved that the Presbytery validate the ministries of the following: (Appendix I)

- Bill Buchanan, Executive Director, Youth Mission Co. through October 24, 2024.
- Robert Gamble, Executive Director, This Child Here through October 24, 2024.
- Bob McCully, Treatment Director, Cherokee County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse through October 24, 2024.
- Tommy Brown, Director, William Black Lodge in Montreat through October 24, 2024.
- Daniel Tipton, Chaplain, Four Seasons Hospice, Bereavement Department through October 24, 2024.
- Lisle Garrity, Leader for Sanctified Art through October 24, 2024.
- Dennis Hysom, Executive Director of Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies through October 24, 2024.
- Sarah Grace Montgomery, Pastor for Youth and Faith Formation at Brevard First United Methodist through October 24, 2024.

The recommendation was approved by common consent without objection.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MINISTERS

On behalf of the Examinations Sub-Committee and Committee on Ministry, Elder James Taylor introduced Kelley Connelly, Laurey Harrell, Brad Simpson, and Lucas Jones as new ministers in the Presbytery. With the exception of Lucas Jones, they spoke briefly. Their Statements of Faith and Biographical Statements were included in the report of the Committee on Ministry. (Appendix I)

- Kelley Connelly, from the Presbytery of the James to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Highlands, effective September 26, 2023.
- Laurey Harrell, from the Charleston Atlantic Presbytery to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as Retired, effective August 1, 2023.
- Lucas Jones, from the Trinity Presbytery to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as Member-at-Large, effective October 3, 2023. (not present at this meeting)
- Brad Simpson, from Coastal Carolina Presbytery to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia, effective October 22, 2023.

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

On behalf of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Rev. Merri Alexander referred to the following recommendation to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. (Appendix J)

- **THAT** Ellen Settlemyer, an inquirer from First Presbyterian Church in Morganton, be removed from the Preparation for Ministry process, per her request, effective August 16, 2023.

The motion was approved earlier in the Consent Agenda.

The following was presented for information:

- Erin Tolar, a member of the Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, accepted a call to serve as Pastor in Residence at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. She was ordained on October 8, 2023.
- Janice Kominski, a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, was certified ready to receive a call on September 20, 2023.
- Linzi Anderson, a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, was enrolled as an Inquirer on September 20, 2023.
- Emily Beaver, a member of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, was certified ready to receive a call on October 18, 2023.

PEACE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Peace and Justice Committee, Mary Jo Clark and Tommy Brown gave a scary report on the horrors of gun violence. (Appendix K)

NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE

Peggy Ferguson, chair of the Nominating/Representation Committee, presented the work of the committee and their recommendations for commissioner representatives to the 226th (2024) General Assembly in Salt Lake City, Utah. All were duly elected. Commissioners to the 226th (2024) General Assembly will be Teaching Elders Megan McMillan and Mark Stanley and; Ruling Elder Kerry Border and Martha Campbell; YAD Mairead “Maggie” Brock.

The Nominating Committee presented the following recommendation as alternate commissioners to the 226th (2024) General Assembly: Teaching Elders Leah Epps and Michael Poulos. All were duly approved. (Appendix L)

The Presbytery approved the recommendation that the Nominating Committee, along with the Moderator of Presbytery and the chair of the Committee on Ministry, be given the authority to replace a commissioner to the General Assembly in the event that the elected commissioner(s) and/or alternate commissioner(s) are unable to attend. (Appendix L)

The Presbytery approved the recommendation that the Nominating Committee, along with the Moderator of Presbytery and the chair of the Committee on Ministry, be given the authority to identify a delegate for a three-year term (2024-2026) for Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Stated Meetings.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Christian Education Committee, Jill Kimbirl optimistically reported on the work of the committee, and emphasized the APCE Conference Scholarships. The 2024 APCE Annual Event, “Come all who are Thirsty,” will be held in St. Louis, MS, January 24-27, 2024. (Appendix M)

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Beth Gunn and David Germer of the Youth Committee reported on the work of the committee and shared upcoming events. (Appendix N)

- November 4-5 – Middle School Retreat at Camp Grier
- February 10, 2024 – Faith and Sexuality Retreat, First Presbyterian Church, Morganton
- March 8-9, 2024 – High School Mission Retreat
- May 4, 2024 – Adventure Day at Camp Grier
- Summer 2024 – Guatemala Youth Delegation Trip

GUATEMALA MISSION TEAM

Sarah Robinson reported on the October Guatemala Mission Team and Partnership trip. She explained and lamented on the limited visiting and networking during the October visit, sharing the history leading to the volatile and dangerous current political climate.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER

Byron Wade, General Presbyter gave his report, reflecting on his first 3 years in the Presbytery. He highlighted mission, worship, and relationships. He challenged the Presbytery to seek and celebrate the possibilities and opportunities, sharing what he believes God is providing our Presbytery. (Appendix O)

- Establishing more new worshipping communities.
- Providing funds for pastors who want to come together to form clergy groups.
- A greater focus on becoming disciples of Christ.
- A greater emphasis on stewardship for congregations and the Presbytery.
- Developing personal and congregational evangelism.

The Revisioning Task Force continues to be very active with their work.

RESOLUTION OF THANKS

Commissioned Pastor, John Pea, and ruling elder, Larry Smith, of Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church shared the following Resolution of Thanks:

Grace and peace to all in the name of Jesus Christ.

ON BEHALF OF the Committee appointed by the Moderator of our Presbytery, John Pea, commissioned pastor of Robinson Memorial, and Larry Smith, ruling elder of Robinson Memorial, we present for your consideration this Resolution of Thanks.

WE GIVE THANKS first to God for calling us into His service in fellowship with one another, bringing us to the expanded campus of Southminster Presbyterian Church in Gastonia.

WE GIVE THANKS for the display of continuity of the church at large through the stained glass windows lovingly installed and lit within the new Southminster sanctuary, honoring the legacy of the long-time dissolved Armstrong Memorial Church in Gastonia.

WE GIVE THANKS for the many volunteers from the congregation of Southminster for being gracious hosts to the Presbytery, offering smiles and friendly help to all.

WE GIVE THANKS for Jeff Hurley and Richard Dyer of Southminster for giving their time on a Tuesday to run the AV operation for us and their quick work providing a new microphone when a battery went out on our speaker.

WE GIVE THANKS for our worship leaders, pianist Janet Layne, the Rev. Lauren Vanacore and the Rev. Dan Oedy.

WE GIVE THANKS and find inspiration in the message based on Matthew 14:22-33 delivered by the Rev. Oedy, reminding us that even in uncommon and unexpected times we ought to embrace uncommon faith, step out of the boat and keep on walking toward Jesus despite the storms.

WE GIVE THANKS for the report of Salvador de la Torre, PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker and Director of Nkhoma Synod Hospital in Malawi, which is near and dear to this Presbytery. We are grateful for residency programs and teaching to bolster the mission of the hospital and church.

WE GIVE THANKS for the safe return from Guatemala of our mission leadership team and our partnership coordinator, Sarah Robinson, who provided an update on the unrest and uncertainty in the country.

WE GIVE THANKS for new members of our Presbytery, the Rev. Kelley Connelly, the Rev. Laurey Harrell and the Rev. Brad Simpson.

WE GIVE THANKS for those honored at the meeting for milestones of faithful service to the church and for those who this year entered into honorable retirement.

WE GIVE THANKS for the reports of committees and activities in our Presbytery and thanks for the hands and hearts of those presenting the reports.

WE GIVE THANKS for the three years of labor to the Presbytery and General Council by Sarah Thornburg, and for the leadership of Moderator the Rev. Mark Stanley, who helmed his last meeting of the Presbytery.

And lastly, WE GIVE THANKS to all who made the journey and joined us in person to share hugs, handshakes, smiles and the Peace of Christ with each other. "If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." 1 John 1:7.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Rev. Tee Gatewood, pastor at Arbor Dale Presbyterian Church, led the Presbytery in prayers of intercession.

BENEDICTION AND ADJOURNMENT

With the business of the 137th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina completed and adjournment voted, Vice-Moderator Dana Seiler adjourned the meeting at 12:18 p.m. with prayer.

NEXT MEETING

The 138th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024, virtually.

These minutes were prepared by the following:

Mark Stanley, Moderator

D. Cameron Murchison, Stated Clerk

Robbin Buchanan, Assistant Stated Clerk

These minutes are to be approved by Presbytery on January 27, 2024, at the 138th Stated Meeting to be held virtually.

APPENDICES

- A. Consent Agenda**
- B. Malawi Mission Team Report**
- C. Finance Committee Report**
- D. Building Hope Committee Report**
- E. Report from Presbyterian Women**
- F. Administrative Commission Report for West Asheville Presbyterian Church, and Churches
Concluding Their Ministry**
- G. Minutes of Ordination for Erin Tolar**
- H. Minutes of Installation for Lance Smith**
- I. Committee on Ministry Report**
- J. Committee on Preparation Ministry Report**
- K. Peace and Justice Committee Report**
- L. Nominating/Representation Committee Report**
- M. Christian Education Committee Report**
- N. Youth Committee Report**
- O. Report of the General Presbyter**

Appendix A

CONSENT AGENDA

For the purpose of expediting some of Presbytery's decisions which are routine and non-controversial, a Consent Agenda will be used. These motions are included throughout the packet.

PLEASE READ THESE MOTIONS BEFORE PRESBYTERY!

Matters may be removed from the Consent Agenda when:

- A. Any member of the governing body requests removal of an item included in the CA whereupon that item shall be removed and presented to the governing body as part of the report from which it originated.*
- B. When the Consent Agenda is presented on the floor, opportunity shall be given for members of the governing body to request, without comment or debate, for removal of specific items from the CA.*

A FAVORABLE VOTE ON THE CA SHALL BE RECORDED AS A FAVORABLE VOTE ON ALL MATTERS INCLUDED IN THE MOTION. THEREFORE, PLEASE READ AND PRAYERFULLY CONSIDER ALL MOTIONS BEFORE PRESBYTERY.

THAT THE CONSENT AGENDA, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS, BE ADOPTED:

RECOMMENDATIONS 1 thru 5 FROM THE STATED CLERK'S REPORT

(See Stated Clerk's Report (B) for contents of recommendations.)

- CA 1. THAT Mark Stanley, Cam Murchison, and Robbin Buchanan be requested to prepare the minutes of this Presbytery meeting for approval at the January 27, 2024 Presbytery meeting.**
- CA 2. THAT the minutes of the July 29, 2023 Stated Meeting of Presbytery be approved as submitted.**
- CA 3. THAT the October 2023 report of the following Administrative Commissions be received and entered into the permanent record of Presbytery. (Stated Clerk Attachment 1)**

Administrative Commission for West Asheville
Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Ministry
Administrative Commission for Oak Forest

- CA 4. **THAT the minutes of the ordination of the following be placed into the record of Presbytery:**

Erin Tolar

- CA 5. **THAT the minutes of the installation of the following be placed into the record of Presbytery:**

Lance Smith

RECOMMENDATION 4 FROM THE GENERAL COUNCIL REPORT

(See General Council Report (C) for contents of recommendation.)

- CA 4. **THAT the General Council, acting on behalf of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina (per Standing Rules IV.D.17) approved unanimously the request of the Session of Clinchfield Presbyterian Church, following a consultation with the congregation by Presbytery Associate Schaap Freeman, that the congregations' ministry conclude and that it be dissolved following a final worship service on October 15, 2023 and final work day on October 21, 2023. In taking this action the General Council assigned oversight to the previously established Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding their Ministry, with the following responsibilities and authority:**

- To work pastorally with the members of churches wishing to conclude their ministry, supporting them in their closing worship, their transition to other congregations, and giving thanks for the ministry of the Church.
- To hold members on the roll of Presbytery and transfer their membership to congregations of their choosing.
- To dissolve the congregation, close the church (G-3.0301a), and take possession of their records (G-3.107).
- To administer the funds in the church's accounts, pay any outstanding bills and debts, and to make payments on behalf of the Church and the Presbytery.
- To determine the disposition of all the property, including the authority to sell the property and dispose of any contents (G 4.0205)
- Members of the Commission:
 - Rev. Don Scofield (Rutherfordton)
 - Mr. Steve Brittain, Chair (Gastonia, First)
 - John Auten (Shelby)
 - Rev. Bobbi White (Retired)
 - John Pea (Robinson Memorial)
 - Joe Wanamaker (Marion, First)
 - Ex Officio: Byron Wade, Cam Murchison, Schaap Freeman, and Tom Phillips

RECOMMENDATIONS 1 thru 14 FROM THE NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION REPORT

(See Nominating/Representation Committee (I) for contents of
recommendations.)

- | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-------|---------------|----------------|
| CA | 1. | <u>General Council</u> | | | |
| | | Mr. Ron Tingle (Waynesville, First) | (A) | Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 2. | <u>Committee on Ministry</u> | | | |
| | | Mr. James Taylor (Grassy Creek/Newdale) | (F) | Class of 2024 | Chair for 2024 |
| | | Mr. John Auten (Shelby) | (C) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Keith Grogg (Montreat) | (B) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Dr. Gary Oakley (Hickory, First) | (E) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Beth Newman (Bryson City) | (A/B) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Jody Welker (Retired) | (B) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Emily Wilmarth (Highlands, First) | (A) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Dr. Keith Thompson
(Brevard-Davidson River) | (C) | Class of 2025 | |
| CA | 3. | <u>Examinations Committee</u> | | | |
| | | Rev. Margaret Torrence (Member-at-Large) | (B) | Class of 2025 | Chair for 2024 |
| | | Rev. Dr. Richard Floyd (Hickory, First) | (E) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Kathy Madigan (Member-at-Large) | (C) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Mr. Stan Briggs (Waynesville, First) | (A) | Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 4. | <u>Preparation for Ministry</u> | | | |
| | | Rev. Merri Alexander (Retired) | (B) | Class of 2025 | Chair for 2024 |
| | | Rev. Barbara "Bobbi" White (Retired) | (E) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Mr. Dennis Stamper (Hickory, First) | (E) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Rev. Dana Sutton (Retired) | (A) | Class of 2025 | |
| CA | 5. | <u>Peace & Justice Committee</u> | | | |
| | | Ms. Wanda Woodby | (F) | Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 6. | <u>Hunger Committee</u> | | | |
| | | Rev. Tempe Fussell (Franklin, First) | (A) | Class of 2025 | Chair for 2024 |
| | | Dr. Richard Larson (Banner Elk) | (F) | Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 7. | <u>Mission Committee</u> | | | |
| | | Rev. Rachel Shepherd (Member-at-Large) | (B) | Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 8. | <u>Campus Ministry</u> | | | |
| | | Rev. Dr. Richard Boyce (Retired) | (D) | Class of 2025 | Chair for 2024 |
| | | Rev. Tommy Brown (Member-at-Large) | (B) | Class of 2026 | |
| | | Ms. Diana Sanderson (Warren Wilson) | (B) | Class of 2026 | |

- | | | | | |
|----|-----|--|-----|---------------|
| CA | 9. | <u>Youth Committee</u> | | |
| | | Ms. Carol Ann Hoard (Shelby) | (C) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Mr. Collin Caldwell (Bryson City) | (A) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Rev. William Buchanan (Member-at-Large) | (B) | Class of 2026 |
| CA | 10. | <u>Christian Education</u> | | |
| | | Ms. Vivian Hare (Montreat) | (B) | Class of 2025 |
| | | Ms. Gayla Woody (Southminster) | (D) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Ms. Barbara Arnold (Third Street) | (D) | Class of 2026 |
| CA | 11. | <u>Church Vibrancy Committee</u> | | |
| | | Rev. David Bonnema (Unity) | (E) | Class of 2024 |
| | | Ms. Renee Warthen (Ryburn Memorial) | (C) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Rev. David Holloway (Lowell) | (D) | Class of 2026 |
| CA | 12. | <u>Personnel Committee</u> | | |
| | | Rev. Connie Button (Retired) | (B) | Class of 2025 |
| | | Rev. Feild Russell (Retired) | (F) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Ms. Peg Shafer (Sylva, First) | (A) | Class of 2026 |
| CA | 13. | <u>Guatemala Partnership Leadership Team</u> | | |
| | | Mrs. Linda Abel (Hayesville) | (A) | Class of 2025 |
| | | Dr. Doug Michael (Newton, First) | (E) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Mr. Bill Glover (Southminster) | (D) | Class of 2026 |
| CA | 14. | <u>Malawi Leadership & Education Team</u> | | |
| | | Rev. Michael McKee (Newland) | (F) | Class of 2025 |
| | | Mr. Reed Conley (Artisan NWC) | (E) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Mrs. Terri Forsythe (Belmont, First) | (D) | Class of 2026 |
| | | Mrs. Ann Drummond (Black Mountain) | (B) | Class of 2026 |

**RECOMMENDATION I FROM THE
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT**
(See Committee on Preparation for Ministry (K) for contents of
recommendation.)

- CA I. THAT Ellen Settlemyer, an inquirer from First Presbyterian Church in Morganton, be removed from the Preparation for Ministry process, per her request, effective August 16, 2023.

APPENDIX B

October 2023 Malawi Leadership Committee Report

Exciting things are happening in Nkhoma, Malawi

- We are celebrating a 15-year anniversary in partnership with the Ebenezer School, which now has more than 400 students. See more below.
- Ebenezer School has identified two volunteer opportunities. One is a virtual helper with skills in communication and technology. Another is for a person to work with teachers in early childhood education and to be in residence in Nkhoma for a month, or could be more. (See attached A and B)
- Men in the Mirror has been received well and is making a difference. More than 200 men in 20 congregations have been trained thus far. During a recent Nkhoma Synod meeting, the Synod affirmed that Men in the Mirror should be introduced to men in all 800 congregations within the Synod. The Synod has more than one million Presbyterians. (See Men in the Mirror report.)
- In 2023, we gave 24 Seminary graduates wonderful Study Bibles, bicycles, and clerical shirts, and special dresses for their spouses. This has become a tradition. About 17 Seminary scholarships were also given.
- In September, three Malawian pastors have been invited to attend a PWNC conference in Montreat to join John McCall and about 20 Taiwanese pastors, and potentially some pastors from Guatemala. They will be joined for several days by PWNC pastors. These Malawian pastors will visit churches and friends in this Presbytery while they are here.
- In 2023, many in this Presbytery supported a project to sew hygiene pads to keep girls in Malawi in school. This project will continue this coming year.



Exciting things to come

In 2024 a Mission Team will travel to Nkhoma, Malawi between mid-April and the end of May. The details are being worked on and the exact date will be announced soon. (Applications are attached without the full-date, for your information.) If you may be interested, let the Presbytery office, Bobbi White (828-674-5009), or Michael McKee know.

- There are new Alternative Gift Opportunities (in your honor) for Malawi this year to include support for the Ebenezer School, Ebenezer Scholarships, Nkhoma Hospital, and the Nkhoma Seminary Graduates and Students. Please, consider giving friends and family Alternative Gifts for Malawi for Christmas and for other special occasions. A copy of some of the inserts are included below. They will be on the presbyterywnc.org and a person can download them when they use Alternative Giving. (See attached C)

Celebrating the Partnership with Ebenezer School for 15 Years is Exciting



Ebenezer School (Ebenezer Educational Institution of Learning) started with the first class of pre-kindergarten with the help of First Gastonia and now is pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. It is a private Christian School recognized by the Malawi Educational Board. There are more than 400 students attending. The class size is 30 students. Other schools in the area can have more than one hundred students with no books or resources. Some are outside, many have no desks or windows.

Last year, almost all of Ebenezer students passed the exams needed to go to high school, which is outstanding, and some are now at the university and various higher education opportunities. The school is known for its English language teaching. In fact, Chrissie Mbewe, the principal, said the graduates are doing well in their studies because of

their proficiency in English. The school is excellent. We are celebrating with them on their accomplishments.

The School is dependent on us, the Netherlands, and South Africa for scholarship help, as many economically poor students attend from the villages. There are people and churches in this Presbytery, who support one or more full scholarships of \$300 and there are others that give smaller amounts as they can. We encourage everyone to contribute to this as an Alternative gift. We thank all who are supporting Ebenezer scholarships.

In your honor, a gift has been given to support the Nkhoma Seminary and its graduates!

The Nkhoma Synod in Malawi has more than a million Presbyterians. The Nkhoma Seminary (JM Theological Institute) trains pastors who will pastor several churches and additional prayer houses when they graduate. This Presbytery supports the graduates by giving them a good study Bible, a bicycle for transportation to their churches, and a clerical shirt. The Presbytery also supports scholarships for students at the Seminary. Your gift will help support the graduates and their gifts and additional funds will help the scholarship for students. May God bless those who help to support the Nkhoma pastors.



PWNC DELEGATION TO MALAWI APPLICATION FOR APRIL 2024 TRIP

It is exciting that you are considering going on the Malawi Mission Trip! The Presbytery had not been able to visit our partners in Nkhoma, Malawi since 2019, until our team went last year. We used to visit every year. A lot of the early feedback from our partners was the statement, “You care. You come back.”

An important vision for this trip will be to continue to build/rebuild relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ at the Nkhoma Hospital, Ebenezer School, the Synod, the Seminary, Men in the Mirror, and people working with hygiene pads. We hope to take and receive Christ’s love, and bring it back home with us! We will worship, pray, laugh, and share with our friends in Christ.

We will learn about the changes since last year; experience and review the work of our Presbytery; learn about Malawi and from the people there. If team members have the expertise, we may evaluate and/or do maintenance work and share other skills to support our partners.

We will also have the opportunity to travel with the Mobile Health Unit which will allow us to see the many people who have walked miles to receive health care for themselves and their children, and spend a day visiting one or more of the Health Centers/Rural Clinics. We will spend time at the Ebenezer School and meet with people from the Seminary and Synod. PWNC also supports the students at the Seminary and other ministries. Our Building H.O.P.E. funds support both the Mobile Health Unit, the Health Centers/Rural Clinics, the Hospital, and Ebenezer School. Before we return, we will also visit a game park.

CURRENT PLANS AND DATES FOR THE MISSION TRIP:

Plans are being finalized. We currently anticipate going between mid-April 10 and the end of May. We are checking on accommodations and activities in Nkhoma. We will let you know as soon as we finalize dates. If you are interested in going, please let us know, and if you have a conflict during that time, let us know that as well. (Contact the Presbytery office or Bobbi White, bobbwhite02@gmail.com).

COST:

The cost for the trip is \$3,000, excluding personal preparation expenses (passport, visa, immunizations, medicines, etc.). Some scholarship/financial aid is available. Often, your home congregation will help. Bobbi White will work with you on finances. Please make checks payable to PWNC. Once plane reservations are booked in your name, it is considered a commitment to pay and participate in the trip. \$1,500 is due January 15, with the second payment of \$1,500 due March 1.

In Malawi we plan to stay at a lodge.

WORK BEFORE LEAVING:

An information notebook will be supplied and there will be two meetings for orientation, planning, and getting acquainted. Getting to know each other in advance is good preparation for a 24-plus hour trip together and the teamwork needed in Malawi. As a group, we will look at the gifts we are bringing for

ministry and teamwork. Some duties will be split up (like appointing a finance person), while other tasks like devotions, photography, etc. can be shared. We will also talk about ways to get our congregations involved.

In the two meetings, an important part of what is covered is looking at the culture, current ministry, plans for the trip, facilities, weather, clothing, etc. The history of our relationship with Malawi will be discussed, as well as specific ministries of WNC, and future ministry possibilities. Kevin Frederick will share about his new ministry, “Men in the Mirror,” and how you may participate if desired. We will look at the logistics of taking “washable, reusable sanitary pads” for girls, as a way of keeping girls in school.

The Malawi Committee encourages you to get your church involved in supporting you and our mission so they too can see God at work and grow in faith. The committee hopes you will be willing to share your experiences about our mission in Malawi and support those raising money for the ministry.

2024 PWNC Malawi Mission Trip Application April 10, 2024 - April 22, 2024 (TBC)

APPLICATION INFORMATION:

EXACT NAME ON PASSPORT: _____

(The expiration date must be more than 6 months before you travel).

WHAT NAME DO YOU PREFER TO BE CALLED? _____

PASSPORT NUMBER: _____ PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATE: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: (Needed for plane reservation.) mm/dd/yyyy _____

An online Visa (\$75) is also needed for the plane reservation. More information to follow.

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ (Home) _____ (Cell)

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

CONGREGATION _____ (If First Presbyterian, please list city.)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND TEAM BUILDING (You may send separately.)

1. Why do you think this would be a good trip for you or that God might be calling you to go?

2. What are your hopes? Do you have special interests?

3. What gifts or experiences do you bring? (Examples: Music, IT, accounting, video expertise, teaching experience, construction, mission trip work, medical or school background, encouragement, cooking, joy, good organization, problem-solving, first-aid skills, others, etc.)

MEDICAL:

Shots and Vaccinations Needed two weeks before flying to Malawi: Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid, Booster for Tetanus-Diphtheria, Measles, Polio, (Rabies, if in the countryside near dogs or wild animals.) Malaria prevention medicine will need to be taken during the trip.

We will continue to monitor any special Covid requirements from the government of Malawi or USA. The capability of hospitals in Malawi is less than hospitals in the USA. In the past, to enter Malawi, proof of Covid vaccinations was required. Please plan to take your Covid Vaccination Card as verification.

Covid Vaccination: Yes _____ No _____ Booster _____

Have you had Covid? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, approximate date of occurrence: _____

Any health problems, dietary restrictions, or other special considerations?

OTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS:

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Men in the Mirror Report October 2023 Presbytery Meeting

Progress since July

In Guatemala, CHAPLAINS IN THE MIRROR and the National Police Force

Men in the Mirror's companion devotional series for Police Chaplains utilizing scripture-based devotionals and case studies called, Chaplains in the Mirror targeting issues that Police Chaplains face in their line of duty across the nation of Guatemala, was introduced by Rev. Mateo Gonzalez on August 29th for daily use to a gathering of 50 chaplains in Guatemala City. The resource was well received and a second event for another fifty chaplains and agents is planned for implementation later this fall. A follow-up with both groups by Christmas will measure the impact of the devotionals and case studies on the effectiveness of the chaplains to respond to a variety of crisis events.

MORELIA and the Arca de Noe Church

Men in the Mirror's Partnership with the Presbyterian Women of Western NC and their microloan program in Sur Occidente Presbytery administered by the NGO- ADEHGUA. We are funding a Social worker who will work with the congregation at Morelia and the Arca de Noe congregation (the sister church of Banner Elk) to deepen the impact of both the efforts to empower women and the integration of Men in the Mirror in the families of the congregation. Funding is being secured for a six-month trial of this comprehensive and in-depth approach. This serves as a pilot project for measuring a deeper impact of Men in the Mirror and will utilize a new couples resource called Couples in the Mirror which is similar to the Chaplains but written for husbands and wives to work on together, thereby strengthening their spiritual partnership as well as their relationships skills as a couple and as parents.

This broader and deeper approach of impacting families will be studied for possible replication in other Presbyterian Churches and their surrounding communities.

In Malawi, the first groups of a total of more than 200 men taking the course have been completed in 20 congregations, and evaluations of the program in those congregations are being compiled. Those pastors and the Synod leadership lobbied the Nkhoma Synod for all congregations to use this course. The Synod voted to do so in its August meeting. We will expand this course slowly through a series of training workshops by Synod staff and Seminary leadership over the next decade. The resource Couples in the Mirror was used by the families of the 20 pastors and the 24 seminary graduates this summer and an evaluation of its effectiveness will be shared using a Zoom conference later this month. Rev. Kapanda and Rev. Maxwell Chiwoko translated the materials into Chichewa for use with all the men's families who have completed the course. The impact of Men in the Mirror in Malawi has far exceeded my hopes and has had a greater impact than our efforts in Central America. The results there when measured will be shared with the Presbytery leaders in Guatemala.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev Dr. Kevin Frederick

P Attachment A

VIRTUAL VOLUNTEER IN COMMUNICATIONS EBENEZER SCHOOL IN NKHOMA, MALAWI

The Ebenezer Institute for Learning (Ebenezer School) in Malawi and the Ebenezer Support Committee in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina (PWNC) are searching for a **virtual volunteer**, who will work from home, and who will help with **communications** about the School to scholarship donors, interested persons, and the Presbytery.

The first priority need is for someone who can construct and format a newsletter for smart phones and computers. Chrissie Mbewe, the School's principal, will provide the content, but cannot format them in a way that people in US can receive it. Other material is also available from their website and Facebook. Good communications through quarterly newsletters and other updates are critical for supporting the School. The newsletter would be sent by email and included in the Presbytery's weekly newsletters. The volunteer needs to be able to use programs that manipulate material and pictures and use "What's App," which now allows easy communication with Malawi. He/she needs to be a team player, flexible, and positive.



The Ebenezer School is an excellent school with more than 400 students from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The School was started in 2008 with the help of PWNC by the parents of Nkhoma Hospital's staff for their children and children from the villages. The class size is limited to thirty students and the teaching is in English. Most of the students need scholarships, which come from donors from PWNC, South Africa, and the Netherlands. Scholarship support decreased during Covid, partially due to lack of communication.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. Ebenezer School is located in Nkhoma, a village about an hour from Lilongwe, the capital city. Nkhoma is the home of a large mission hospital and the headquarters for the Nkhoma Synod of the Church Central Africa Presbyterian with about one million Presbyterians. PWNC works with the Hospital, School, Synod, and the Synod's seminary. Mission trips have gone annually except during Covid and Chrissie Mbewe, plus others from Nkhoma have visited PWNC.



<https://www.ebenezernkhoma.com/>

For more information, contact Bobbi White, bobbwhite02@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT EBENEZER SCHOOL IN MALAWI



The Ebenezer Institute for Learning (Ebenezer School) in Malawi along with the Presbytery of Western North Carolina (PWNC) is searching for a **volunteer to travel to Malawi**, who can **coach teachers** at the Ebenezer School for **prekindergarten and kindergarten in creative early childhood education, including play**. Chrissie Mbewe, the School's excellent principal, has long identified early childhood education as one of her top priorities.

The volunteer will work closely with Chrissie, in evaluating the current teaching methods to produce a plan to work with the teachers for their learning, practicing, and implementing good early childhood education. The volunteer needs to be gifted in

knowledge and practice of teaching young children and be an encourager, a team player, and sensitive to the culture.

The Ebenezer School is an excellent Christian school with more than 400 students from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.



The School was started in 2008 with the financial help of PWNC by the health professional and parents of Nkhoma Hospital's staff for their children and children from the villages. The class size is limited to thirty students and the teaching is in English. Most of the students are on scholarships. The school schedule begins in September and ends in mid-July. The classroom hours are from 7:30 to noon. The volunteer could work with teachers in the classrooms and in the afternoon.

In the two prekindergarten classes and two kindergarten classes, each classroom has a teacher and an assistant. The teachers often plan their classes together. There is no set curriculum for those classes, although the teachers have some educational material, but need more resources and a more structured plan. Giving the students an excellent start in these classes, including beginning to learn English, is critical for their future education.

The volunteer will need to travel to Malawi for one to two months. He/she would most likely be housed at the Mbawa Lodge in Nkhoma, a short walk from the school. The Presbytery is willing to help financially with tickets to Malawi and with housing and meals.

www.ebenezernkhoma.com

For more information, contact **Bobbi White** at bobbwhite02@gmail.com.

In your honor, a gift has been given
to provide scholarships for the
Ebenezer School
in Malawi, Africa

In Malawi, it is customary for a primary school classroom to have over 300 students, but no desks, no books, and no supplies. The Ebenezer School was founded to offer quality education to children in the Nkhoma community, and the children of the Nkhoma Hospital staff. Ebenezer began with pre-K and is now pre-K through 8th grade. There are over 400 students attending. The class size is 30 students. Your gift will provide scholarships for children in Malawi to receive an excellent education at Ebenezer School.



In your honor, a gift has been given
to provide support for the
Nkhoma Hospital
and its rural health clinics

Nkhoma Hospital is a large regional hospital of the Presbyterian Church in Malawi, Africa. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. The hospital provides services in pediatrics, maternity, general medicine, and surgery. The hospital also provides needed care through 9 rural health clinics and a mobile health unit. Your gift will help the hospital continue its much needed ministry both in the hospital itself and out in the rural areas of Malawi.



In your honor, a gift has been
given to support the
Nkhoma Seminary and its graduates
in Malawi, Africa

The Nkhoma Seminary (JM Theological Institute) trains pastors who will serve several churches and additional prayer houses when they graduate. This Presbytery supports the graduates by giving them a good study Bible, a bicycle for transportation to their churches, and a clerical shirt. PWNC also provides scholarships for students at the seminary. Your gift will help support the graduates and their gifts, and additional funds will help with scholarships for students. May God bless those who help support the Nkhoma pastors.



In your honor, a gift has been given
to provide support for the
Ebenezer School
in Malawi, Africa

In Malawi, it is customary for a primary school classroom to have over 300 students, but no desks, no books, and no supplies. The Ebenezer School was founded to offer quality education to children in the Nkhoma community, and the children of the Nkhoma Hospital staff. Ebenezer began with pre-K and has been adding grades yearly. Your gift to the Ebenezer School will provide a reliable revenue stream for annual school operations and improvements.



APPENDIX C

Finance Committee
Tom Karvonen & Feild Russell – Co-Chairs
October 24, 2023

For information only the Finance Committee presents:

- ◆ The ‘Operating Budget Summary’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of September 30, 2023, BB-2.

For the complete financial statements contact the Presbytery office at 828/438-4217 or lpresley@presbyterywnc.org

**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY
AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2023**

ACCOUNT	2023 ANNUAL BUDGET	2023 YTD BUDGET	2023 YTD ACTUAL	% OF Annual Budget	2022 YTD ACTUAL	2021 YTD ACTUAL	2020 YTD ACTUAL	2019 YTD ACTUAL	2018 YTD ACTUAL
INCOME:									
Unified Giving from churches	\$695,431	\$521,573	445,492	64.1%	477,497	521,081	522,516	586,683	\$549,874
Work of Presbytery only-churches	2,750	2,063	625	22.7%	1,250	3,000	2,250	1,500	\$3,000
Other income	23,000	17,250	16,625	72.3%	19,095	19,805	17,800	26,322	\$11,500
Anticipated Grants/Income	5,000	3,750	5,000	100.0%	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	\$0
Designated Proceeds for NWC	45,000	33,750	33,750	75.0%	46,513	20,419	0	11,103	\$21,965
Income from Investment(5%)	185,061	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0
Recovery-Admin Commission/Legal	10,000	7,500	0	0.0%	195	9,464	13,496	5,771	\$18,851
TOTAL INCOME	\$966,241	\$585,886	\$501,492	51.9%	\$549,550	\$578,769	\$561,062	\$631,378	\$605,190
EXPENSES:									
General Assembly Per Capita/Unified Giving	\$165,000	\$123,750	105,699	64.1%	110,237	116,454	114,942	127,137	\$120,402
Synod Per Capita	14,944	11,208	9,573	64.1%	10,398	11,347	11,136	9,165	\$8,607
Institutions & Agencies	4,000	3,000	2,562	64.1%	3,341	3,529	3,483	3,853	\$3,541
Outreach/Mission Development	\$45,900	34,425	19,095	41.6%	12,142	10,695	14,575	11,142	9,095
Congregational Development	25,829	19,372	14,225	55.1%	14,226	14,600	16,334	28,441	44,360
Artisan NWC	45,000	33,750	33,750	75.0%	46,513	20,419	0	0	0
Leadership Development	5,800	4,350	1,950	33.6%	(13)	99	(937)	942	(953)
Youth Ministries	16,950	12,713	4,877	28.8%	4,895	3,333	(4,947)	7,011	11,693
Committee on Ministry	3,600	2,700	660	18.3%	1,864	784	1,100	2,880	3,075
Preparation for Ministry	3,400	2,550	1,352	39.8%	212	1,266	944	1,917	1,689
General Council	3,500	2,625	2,250	64.3%	2,250	2,250	2,374	6,265	4,610
Nominating/Representation	525	394	21	4.1%	14	0	17	257	400
Finance	52,589	39,442	33,308	63.3%	37,499	37,193	37,596	37,580	39,795
Personnel	504,504	378,378	307,090	60.9%	346,280	340,205	277,401	330,083	347,358
Joint Outdoor Ministries	16,000	12,000	16,000	100.0%	8,000	8,500	8,500	15,000	17,250
Permanent Judicial	250	188	0	0.0%	0	0	3	0	3
Supplies, Equip, Serv/Comm	34,450	25,838	20,575	59.7%	21,329	22,804	33,770	27,175	26,155
Stated Clerk	12,000	9,000	4,180	34.8%	3,662	3,823	6,013	5,782	4,787
Administrative Commissions	2,000	1,500	219	10.9%	1,081	693	280	12,166	1,703
Legal Fees	10,000	7,500	0	0.0%	195	9,464	13,496	5,771	18,891
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$966,241	\$724,681	\$577,387	59.8%	\$624,124	\$607,457	\$536,081	\$632,567	\$662,459
NET INCOME/(LOSS)		(\$138,795)	(75,894)		(\$74,574)	(\$28,688)	\$24,982	(\$1,189)	(\$57,269)

APPENDIX D

Building H.O.P.E. Financial Statement

Health Care (Malawi) - Outdoor Adventures (Camp Grier) - Partnered Growth (Vital Churches) - Education (Guatemala)

As of 9/30/23

Campaign Totals		Ministry details			
		Malawi	Camp Grier	Vital Churches	Guatemala
Collected	\$1,961,388.10	\$891,500.67	\$373,788.92	\$382,115.81	\$313,982.70
Gain/Loss (subject to market fluctuations)	\$335,122.64	\$153,477.28	\$77.47	\$78,943.75	\$102,624.14
Campaign Expenses	\$107,280.01	\$48,761.50	\$20,444.74	\$20,900.19	\$17,173.58
Utilized	\$799,862.97	\$284,209.32	\$352,011.84	\$56,535.81	\$107,106.00
Available for Requests	\$1,389,367.76	\$712,007.13	\$1,409.81	\$383,623.56	\$292,327.26

Malawi (Health Care & Education)	
Projects	Utilized
Rural Health Clinics	\$64,587.54
Rural Health Clinic Housing	\$39,019.78
Research Accountability	\$0.00
Mobile Health Unit	\$61,786.00
Medicines Fund	\$102,200.00
Ebenezer Institute Endowment Fund	\$16,616.00

Camp Grier (Outdoor Adventures)	
Projects	Utilized
Adventure Program Equipment *	\$93,500.00
Lake Front Upgrades *	\$0.00
Trail Development	\$70,000.00
Lodge Renovations	\$188,511.84
* The camp received funds from other sources to help with these projects, Building HOPE funds reallocated to the other project needs	

Vital Churches (Partnered Growth)	
Projects	Utilized
<i>Worship Initiatives & Congregational Development</i>	
Assessment tools	\$16,699.75
Water to Wine	\$9,200.00
New Worshipping Communities	\$0.00
<i>Leadership Development & Pastoral Revitalization</i>	
Church Leadership Workshops	\$8,636.25
Pastoral Initiatives	\$9,999.81
Supplement Leadership Support	\$0.00
Supplement Pastoral Support	\$0.00
Pastoral Education	\$0.00
<i>Consultants, Seminars & Upgrades in Technology</i>	
Hardware & Software	\$12,000.00
Websites	\$0.00
Consultants & Seminars	\$0.00

Guatemala (Education)	
Projects	Utilized
Higher Education Endowment	\$40,000.00
Fund for Theological Education of Pastors	\$47,500.00
Libraries/Teacher/Parent Formation Programs	\$14,656.00
Dream Goals	\$4,950.00

Building HOPE Campaign website:

<http://buildinghope.wncpresby.org/>

APPENDIX E

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA 2023 FALL GATHERING AND SPRING GATHERING PLANS

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina held their Fall Gathering on Saturday, October 7, 2023 at Brevard-Davidson River Presbyterian Church in Brevard, North Carolina. Sixty women attended. The Presbyterian Women from Mills River joined in hosting the event.

Second Vice Moderator Sue Hyde planned a program addressing opportunities for study, mission, and service. The Reverend Sally Woodard led an introduction to the *Horizon's* Bible Study, *Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*. Dr. Barbara Nagy talked about new projects in Malawi. Leaders of our Guatemalan Microloan project updated us on progress there. There was also a greeting card workshop led by women who recycle, re-create, and sell greeting cards as a fundraiser for a local nonprofit.

The offering at the Fall Gathering went to the Transylvania County Habitat for Humanity program, enabling Habitat to repair homes.

The PW Spring Gathering will be April 20, 2024 in Upper Anderson, Montreat. Hosts will be the Asheville area churches.

Corise H. Gambrell

Moderator, PW/PWNC

APPENDIX F

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION REPORTS October 24, 2023

West Asheville Presbyterian Church: As reported to the previous meeting of presbytery, the AC has continued to prepare for the eventual replacement of the facility, restricting any maintenance or upkeep expenses to the bare minimum required for safety and liability. Furnishings are being made available to those who were members of the church, to other churches of presbytery, and nonprofit entities. In the current phase of its work with a shared lens around racial equity, the AC is being attentive to concerns expressed by members of presbytery and is entering into conversation with potential community partners who may help in discerning the property's future use, including the Reparations Stakeholder Authority, the Asheville-Buncombe Community Land Trust, and the Tzedek Social Justice Fund. Arrangements continue with daily presence of caretaker at the building to ensure its well-being.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcia Mount Shoop, Co-chair

Churches concluding their Ministry: The AC has had oversight of the properties of the former John Knox Presbyterian Church in Shelby and the former Conley Memorial Presbyterian Church in Marion. The Conley Memorial property has been sold to another Christian body and is officially no longer part of this AC's oversight. An Option Agreement continues with Preservation North Carolina (PNC) for the disposition of the John Knox property in a manner that preserves its historical integrity. In the meantime, a leasing arrangement with a local congregation has been arranged while a buyer for the property is sought. By action of the General Council in September agreeing to the request of the session of Clinchfield Presbyterian Church in Marion to conclude its ministry and be dissolved, Clinchfield is now added to the responsibilities of this AC.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Brittain, Chair

Oak Forest Presbyterian Church: As previously reported, the Oak Forest Cemetery, Inc. has been formed, officers have been designated, and significant funding from the church's assets provided for its maintenance. With the completion of a survey separating the cemetery from the remainder of the church property, it is anticipated that the cemetery property will have been conveyed to the cemetery corporation by the time of the October 24, 2023 meeting of PWNC. Also as reported in July, with permission of the General Council, the AC has placed the church property on the general real estate market with hopes for a prompt sale to another church body.

Respectfully submitted,
James Aydelotte, Chair

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY COMMISSION TO (ORDAIN AND) INSTALL
(Return immediately to Presbytery Stated Clerk)

Rev. ~~MEXX~~ Lance Smith

As Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Forest City ~~Church(es)~~

The Commission, according to the appointment of Western North Carolina Presbytery met at the First Presbyterian Church at 1:30 ~~xxx~~ PM on August 20, 20 23.

Present were: Ministers Allan Purtil, Byron Wade, Cam Murchison

Elders Sally Leshner, Mary Sandra Sparrow, James Koone

Ministers/Elders invited by Presbytery to serve on the Commission:

Rob Parsons

A quorum was present, and the meeting was opened with prayer, led by the Presbytery appointed Moderator, D. Cameron Murchison, Jr. Mary Sandra Sparrow was elected/appointed to serve as Clerk.

The assigned parts and the Order of Worship were reviewed, and a motion was made and passed that the worship service be approved as carrying out the Commission's assigned responsibilities.

In the service of worship that followed, James Koone assisted in the leadership of worship; Rob Parsons preached the sermon Church Nativity from the text Luke 10:1-9, 38-42; Byron Wade reminded the congregation of the meaning of this service and proposed the Constitutional questions to the minister; Sally Leshner proposed the Constitutional questions to the congregation.

These being answered in the affirmative Lance Smith was (ordained with prayer and the laying on of hands, and) installed as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church ~~(ex)~~ agreeably to the Word of God and the Book of Order. The charge to the pastor was delivered by Allan Purtill, and to the congregation by Mary Sandra Sparrow. The newly installed pastor pronounced the benediction.

Following the service, the Confessions were read, and one approved the minutes, and adjourned with prayer, by ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ for a motion was made, and approved, to let the moderator and clerk approve the minutes and be adjourned with the benediction.

Moderator

Clerk

THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY MR. JAMES TAYLOR, CHAIR October 24, 2023

FIRST SECTION

I. RECOMMEND TO PRESBYTERY THE VALIDATION OF MINISTRY FOR:

- A. Bill Buchanan, Executive Director, Youth Mission Co. through October 24, 2024.
- B. Robert Gamble, Executive Director, This Child Here through October 24, 2024.
- C. Bob McCully, Treatment Director, Cherokee County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse through October 24, 2024.
- D. Tommy Brown, Director, William Black Lodge in Montreat through October 24, 2024.
- E. Daniel Tipton, Chaplain, Four Seasons Hospice, Bereavement Department through October 24, 2024.
- F. Lisle Garrity, Leader for Sanctified Art through October 24, 2024.
- G. Dennis Hysom, Executive Director of Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies through October 24, 2024.
- H. Sarah Grace Montgomery, Pastor for Youth and Faith Formation at Brevard First United Methodist through October 24, 2024.

SECOND SECTION

The Book of Order provides (G-3.0307) that the Committee on Ministry may be given authority by the Presbytery to find in order calls issued by churches, to approve and present calls for service of ministers, to approve the examination of ministers transferring from other Presbyteries, required by G-3.0306, to dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the Congregation and pastor concur, to dismiss ministers to other Presbyteries, and to approve administrative commissions to ordain/install with the provision that such actions be reported at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery. This permission was granted to our Committee on Ministry; therefore, the following actions are hereby reported and are to be admitted to the record.

I. APPROVED FOR TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP:

A. KELLEY CONNELLY

From: The Presbytery of the James

As: Associate, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Highlands

Effective: September 26, 2023

(See COM Attachment 1 for Bio and Statement of Faith)

APPENDIX I

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B. LAUREY HARRELL
From: Charleston Atlantic Presbytery
As: Retired
Effective: August 1, 2023
(See COM Attachment 2 for Bio and Statement of Faith)

C. LUCAS JONES
From: Trinity Presbytery
As: Member-at-Large
Effective: October 3, 2023
(See COM Attachment 3 for Bio and Statement of Faith)

II. APPROVED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP AND TERMS OF CALL:

A. Kelley Connelly, Associate Pastor, Highlands, First		
Total Effective Salary (Cash/Housing)		\$65,000
Retirement Savings Plan Matching Contribution		\$ 2,100
FICA (7.65 percent of Total Effective Salary)		\$ 5,133
Board of Pensions Benefits		\$26,169
Medical	\$19,459	
Pension	\$ 5,703.50	
Death and Disability	\$ 671	
Temporary Disability	\$ 335.50	
Professional Expenses (Travel, etc.)		\$ 3,580
Professional Development		\$ 1,250

4 weeks vacation (including 4 Sundays)

2 weeks continuing education (including 2 Sundays)

Service to the larger Church or denomination at the approval of the Senior Pastor/Head of Staff or Personnel Ministry Team.

Moving expenses covered at cost; logistics to be handled in conversation with the Church Administrator.

12 weeks of paid family medical leave for the following:

- to accommodate the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child,
- to provide care to an ill or disabled family member, and
- to heal following a loss or tragic event.

Sabbatical of 3 months after seven years of full-time, active service to the church provided the pastor remains in full-time active service of the church for 12 months following the completion of the Sabbatical Leave.

III. APPROVED COMMISSIONED PASTOR AGREEMENTS:

- A. Reed Conley, Artisan Church (agreement via Session at Unity)
Term: July 29, 2023 to July 28, 2024
- B. John Hall, Micaville Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024

APPENDIX I

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- C. Beth Hall, Micaville Presbyterian Church
Extended: August 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024

IV. APPROVED THE DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP:

- A. Melissa Upchurch and Marshall Presbyterian Church
Effective: September 17, 2023

V. APPROVED STATED PASTOR RELATIONSHIPS:

- A. Margie Stansell and Bryson City Presbyterian Church
Effective: September 15, 2023 to March 15, 2024
B. Garland Honeycutt and Buladean Presbyterian Church
Effective: November 1, 2023 to October 31, 2024
C. Bonnie Peggs and Morrison Presbyterian Church
October 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024
D. Kevyn Amos and Dulatown Presbyterian Church
October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

VI. APPROVED AS MODERATORS:

- A. Tom Phillips, First Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville (regular)
B. Christina Tutterow, First Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville (occasional)
C. Esta Jarett, Marshall Presbyterian Church, Marshall
D. Richard Boyce, New Hope Presbyterian Church (Gastonia)

VII. APPROVED THE REQUEST FOR RETIREMENT

- A. Joan Martin
Effective July 7, 2023
B. Melissa Upchurch
Effective: September 17, 2023
C. Kitty Tompkins
Effective October 1, 2023
D. Laura Long
Effective November 1, 2023

VIII. APPROVED THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF LANCE SMITH ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2023 AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FOREST CITY, NC.

Name	Responsibility on Commission	Min/Eld.	Church
Cam Murchison	Moderator/Preside	Minister	PWNC Stated Clerk
Byron Wade	Propound Constitutional Questions	Minister	PWNC GP
Sally Leshner	Propound Questions to Congregation	Elder	Rutherfordton
Allan Purtill	Charge the Minister	Minister	Tryon
Mary Sandra Sparrow	Charge the Congregation	Elder	Forest City
James Koone	Lead in Worship	CRE/CP	Union Mills
Guest			
Rob Parsons	Preach the Sermon	Minister	Saluda UMC

APPENDIX I

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X. APPROVED THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE ORDINATION OF ERIN TOLAR TO VALIDATED MINISTRY AS RESIDENT PASTOR AT MYERS PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (CHARLOTTE, NC), OCTOBER 8, 2033 AT GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Name	Responsibility on Commission	Min/Eld.	Church
Byron Wade	Moderator/Preside	Minister	PWNC GP
Mark Stanley	Propound Constitutional Questions	Minister	PWNC Moderator
Marcia Mount Shoop	Preach the Sermon	Minister	Grace Covenant
Chris DeJarnett	Lead in Worship	Elder	Asheville, First
Elizabeth Barbee	Lead in Worship	Elder	Reems Creek-Beech
Mary Katherine Robinson	Prayer of Ordination	Minister	Black Mountain
Libby Kyles	Lead in Worship	Elder	Grace Covenant
Tina Joyner	Lead in Worship	Elder	Kenilworth
Guest			
Alison Messick-Watkins	Charge the Minister	Minister	Charlotte Presbytery
Robert Tolar	Lead in Worship	Minister	Scioto Valley Pby
Colleen Earp	Lead in Worship	Minister	James Presbytery

**XI. RECEIVED AND APPROVED THE ATTACHED REPORT OF TERMS OF CALL.
(See COM Attachment 4).**

APPENDIX I

COM ATTACHMENT 1

Rev. Kelley Connelly

Bio-Presbytery of Western North Carolina

It is with great joy that I seek to join the Presbytery of Western North Carolina! My name is Kelley Connelly and for the last three years I have served as the Pastor for Campus Ministry and Urban Engagement at Second Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia. I am a lifelong Virginian and feel most at home when surrounded by mountains, and all four seasons! This is just one of the many reasons why my call to be the Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church Highlands feels so right.

I grew up in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester, Virginia. I am the third of four children and you will quickly learn that I embody most middle child stereotypes. Church was always a major part of our lives; growing up both of my parents, who are now retired, were church musicians. We spent many hours at the church both during the week and on the weekends—I often like to say that I was ‘raised like a PK (pastor’s kid)’. Little did I know, this was actually a practice in career readiness. For me, the church has always represented belonging and community. When I was at our home church I loved the opportunity for connection, and the chance to challenge my theological curiosity. It’s where my love of people and relationships could perfectly marry my love of learning. But above all, the church could foster my deep love of music. Though I thought a career in ministry could be a possibility for me, I didn’t quite know what it could like.

I went on to obtain a Bachelors of Music in Voice Performance from Shenandoah University. Following college I served on the staff of First Presbyterian Church Winchester, VA in youth ministry and music ministry. It was there that I started to feel another nudge from God. And after two years of serving on the staff at First Pres, I moved to Richmond, Virginia to pursue my Masters of Divinity at Union Presbyterian Seminary. I am so grateful to the people and staff at First Pres Winchester for taking me under their care during the ordination process and for encouraging me to pursue this call to ministry. Again, a vocation that marries my deep love of people and love of learning.

In my most recent role my focus was working with students at Virginia Commonwealth University in downtown Richmond. This included fellowship meals, planning morning communion, assisting with student programs, and advocating for the most vulnerable. What I love most about ministry is that I am able to truly celebrate my extroverted spirit, while also walking alongside ‘the least of these’ (Matthew 25:40). I am very passionate about serving my neighbors in relational and meaningful ways and I especially love learning about the gifts that each person brings to Kin-dom, so that communities can thrive.

When I’m not at the church you can find me sipping French press coffee, cooking while watching reality television, or doing whatever my rescue dog Fynn wants to do! I hope you will reach out anytime you are near the Highlands area. I look forward to doing ministry with you all!

APPENDIX I

COM ATTACHMENT 1

Rev. Kelley Connelly

Statement of Faith, 2023

My faith is rooted in two ideals: belief and trust in God. I believe in God the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and the source of all life. I believe that God is the universal source for love, grace, and mercy. I believe that the Kingdom of God connects all of humankind as a holy family. I believe in God the Creator who acts with justice and redemption. I understand sin as a moral injury that separates us from God, and one another. I believe God forgives us by the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. And I trust that in Christ all things can be made new and whole again.

I affirm the three persons the trinity. I believe that Jesus Christ is an extension of God's love and I affirm the two natures of Jesus Christ, both fully human and fully divine. I believe that Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life, the vine, and the way, (The Gospel of John). I recognize the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and I trust that the Spirit acts as a vessel of the Triune God. I believe that the Holy Spirit moves within us and empowers life in all.

I believe that Sacraments are visible signs of God's invisible grace. I understand the Sacrament of Communion as the grand channel of God's grace. And by partaking in this holy meal, we are, by the Spirit, brought into communion with the crucified and risen Christ. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation. And above all, I believe that communion connects us to God, and one another. I believe that the Sacrament of Baptism symbolizes grace and incorporation. By the waters of baptism, we are signed and sealed with new life in Jesus Christ. Baptism represents God's gift of grace, God's means of grace, and God's call to respond to that grace. Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit gives the Church its identity and commissions the Church for service in the world.¹ Baptism provides incorporation into the Christian family.

I understand scripture to be a guiding lamp unto one's feet in our discipleship. I believe that the scriptures bear witness to the Word of God, revealed most fully in Jesus Christ.² I believe that we worship the living God who is revealed in the world through scripture. I believe that all scripture is God-breathed³ and I affirm that both the Old and New Testaments are essential.

I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and affirm Christ as the Head of the Church. I envision the Church as an active and faithful extension of Christ's Body. I believe that the church is called to be a foretaste of the Kingdom of God; a vibrant and worshipful community where all feel welcome. I believe and affirm the mysteries of God—knowing that trust in God comes with many unknowns. But my relationship with God is always growing and evolving. And I rejoice in knowing that God is never done working in us or walking with us. In my Christian life and service, I long to learn with others, learn from others, to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with God⁴.

¹ W-3.0402

² W-3.0301

³ 2 Timothy 3:16

⁴ Micah 6:8

APPENDIX J COM ATTACHMENT 2

Laurey Hartwell Harrell My Statement of Faith

- 1 I believe in the one triune, sovereign God
2 who was before all time and creation,
3 who is with us now, present and active in all of Life,
4 and who will be there tomorrow and beyond whatever may come.
5 **In life and in death, I belong to God!**
- 6 I believe in Jesus Christ who called God, "Abba,"
7 who was born as all are born of our mothers
8 but born like no other as God's only begotten Son;
9 who shows us in His life, death and resurrection what it is to be fully human
10 as being in relationship with God and one another;
11 who died for us all while we were yet sinners
12 that we are justified by the grace of God in Christ;
13 and whom God the Almighty raised from the dead
14 that whosoever shall believe in Him shall have Eternal Life.
15 **Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior!**
- 16 I believe in God the Holy Spirit,
17 who is the Breath of all Life;
18 who is the Comforter promised by Jesus to His disciples;
19 who is the Giver of Life in the Church;
20 who is the Sustainer of Faith dwelling within us
21 and praying for us in sighs much too deep for words;
22 who is the Illuminator of the authority, interpretation and proclamation of God's Word
23 in Jesus Christ as the Living Word and the Bible as the written Word
24 who is the Assurer that nothing in life nor in death
25 can ever separate us from the Love of God in Jesus Christ.
26 **I am a child of God! a disciple of Jesus Christ! a saint in the Spirit!**
- 27 I believe that God calls us in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit
28 to respond to God's Grace in faith;
29 to come together in the Church as "the body of Christ;"
30 to celebrate the sacrament of Baptism in belonging
31 and the sacrament of Communion in remembering;
32 to be the priesthood of all believers
33 serving with compassion,
34 witnessing to the Truth,
35 reconciling by mercy,
36 and living in joy!
37 **Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit my whole life long!**

---Laurey Hartwell Harrell
July 2023

1 BOC 1.1,2,3; 5.015,5.016; 6.011-6.013
5 BOC 4.002, 11.1

6 BOC 11.3
7,8 BOC 3.06
9,10 BOC 1.2; 9.17
12 BOC 5.106-5.110; 11.4

22,23 BOC 5.001ff; 9.27-30;
30, 31 BOC 6.154ff;6.161ff
32 BOC 5.153
33,34 BOC 11.4
35 BOC 9.06,31; 10.3,5
36, 37 BOC 7.001, 7.111, 11.6

APPENDIX I

COM ATTACHMENT 2

Laurey Hartwell Harrell

My Journey of Faith

“Remember who you are and whose you are...” have been the resounding words throughout my journey of faith! For as long as I can remember, I have known that I am a child of God, deeply loved. Being the third of four children, our family always had room at the table for one more. At one time, there were seven teenagers ‘under one roof’ as my three cousins came to live with us when I was in High School.

From the beginning, my parents decided their love would be grounded in the love of Jesus Christ. Greatly influenced by Dr. John Leith while attending Auburn University, they later joined Spring Hill Presbyterian Church (which he helped start) in Mobile, Alabama. One of my earliest memories was being lined up with my siblings on a sheet covered picnic bench in the Chancel for a very *brief* angelic moment of a Christmas Pageant. It was in this congregation that I was taught the stories of Jesus and experienced what it means for a whole church to raise a child in the faith.

On the Palm Sunday that I was twelve, I remember waiting to go in worship to be baptized and confirmed before the whole church. I had so many questions like “What if I confessed that I didn’t believe all the way in Jesus Christ? What difference did it make if I got baptized?” But, O, how grateful I am that I could raise such questions in that community of faith and be invited into a lifelong journey living into the answers. What a difference such love has made in me ---- even in my times of wandering and seeking God in other places and ways!

After college while I was teaching emotionally disturbed children, I re-chose to keep building my life upon this foundation of great love and abiding faith by being active in that same church. When no one would lead the Jr. High Youth Group, my younger brother and his friends came to ask me if I would lead. Never could I have imagined that such a naïve answer of “yes” would lead me to a call into the ordained ministry! It unfolded into being an educator and a pastor in the church for thirty-eight years in Alabama, the Carolinas and Texas.

These same words, *“remember who you are and whose you are,”* have permeated my ministry. Whether it has been in singing with children for chapel or directing a youth conference, in planning for older adults at Montreat to collaborating worship for all ages in a congregation--- my calling has been to share the Love of God in Jesus Christ and how we are called to be that reconciling Love in the world. Such words have given me great courage, amid moderating heated debates on the floor of presbytery and around many a session table, to be a reminder of God’s steadfast love in times of great change and tragedy.

It is with this Love and in this Faith, I live and serve remembering....

Laurey Hartwell Harrell
July 2023

Lucas Jones - Journey of Faith (Originally from 2020, Updated 2023)

The call that led me to here began at White Memorial Presbyterian Church with a series of folks who fulfilled their baptismal vows. It continued as I grew up in Boy Scouts, Youth Group, and College Ministry, but culminated through my work with the Appalachia Service Project. Working for three summers in college with ASP I was able to experience first-hand the ways in which real, genuine ministry is messy. The ways diversity brings discomfort, how tough questions rarely have easy answers, how all of us are works in progress, and most critically how we can witness and participate alongside God working through the chaos of relational, experiential ministry. Much of this occurred during my second summer working in Greenbrier county WV. It was there when a series of floods devastated that community, and after spending 36 hours as the impromptu director of an emergency shelter in the second floor of a rural church's sanctuary, I finally decided to listen to the external call pushing me to be a leader and facilitator in the church. Following more time of discernment, I found myself led to Columbia Theological Seminary.

I also have worked as a ropes course facilitator, whitewater canoe instructor, backpacking trip leader, ski instructor, and most recently a hospital chaplain. For the most part it is what some might consider a strange resume for one pursuing ordained ministry. I say this all this not only because I, like many experience God, the world, and my fellow creature most fully and authentically in nature, or that I believe we as the church should be leading the advocacy work for our wonderfully created planet, but also because I believe firmly that Jesus, in addition to his roles as a prophet, priest, and king, was fundamentally an experiential educator who most often utilized the wilderness as his classroom.

To me, Wilderness can be literal like Sinai, the Judean desert, or Linville Gorge, but also metaphorical like Nineveh, Samaria, the ICU at Rex Hospital, or a visit across town to eat, learn, and engage with a new neighbor. From my own lens, coupled with the lens of our tradition, I see so much of the story of our faith as one of disorientation and reorientation, and the use of wilderness as the catalyst for transformation. I continue to feel called to be a Teaching Elder who both leads and walks alongside people, parishes, and communities in both literal and metaphorical wildernesses, embracing challenges, pushing to new areas of growth, and discerning faithful, sacred meaning along the way.

I worked as an associate pastor at an amazing church in Columbia SC for three years. I got married, gained a stepson, had a son with my wife and felt God's love constantly through radically inclusive community. I was able to teach, preach, lead confirmation, start a now thriving youth group, and even take adults backpacking in the woods and kayaking on the sea. I loved this church. They loved me. We grew during COVID and I learned how hard (and necessary) it is to have church be politically diverse. I learned to not put people in boxes and I was constantly surprised at the way the Holy Spirit interrupts our lives.

The time came when our family was called away from Columbia to take leadership in a family business, leading a Christian Girls Summer camp in Brevard NC. This is our ministry now and I look forward to guest preaching where I can and being the pastor to over a thousand campers and counselors each summer.

Statement of Faith - Lucas Jones

I believe in and am loved by a God who is infinitely greater than my finite ability to understand. We use metaphors to describe God, but all our words fail to encompass God entirely. Despite God's grace and love, we are a sinful people who turn away from our God who desires relationship. God the Father created us not out of need, but out of selfless love. We betray that love every time we sin, mistreating each other and the world. I believe that our God invites us to actively take part in creation, and that we have a duty to respect and protect the marvelously created natural world.

Jesus Christ is fully God and was born into the world fully human. He is the fullest revelation of God's love for the world. His identity as a wandering immigrant refugee, and his actions of pushing back against imperial oppressive law, are a testament to the core values of Christianity. Christ challenges us to exhibit radical hospitality. We are called to stand up for the oppressed, advocate for the marginalized, and reach out to one another—forming diverse and messy communities of care and grace. The crucifixion of Christ exposed and acknowledges our world of violence and God's ability to suffer alongside us. The resurrection reveals God's gift of grace and forgiveness that breaks this cycle of hatred and violence. The life, death and resurrection of Christ give us a witness to the hopes of reconciliation and peace with humanity, creation, and God.

The Holy Spirit dwells among us, working mysteriously within all of creation to guide us. By her presence we are called to look around just as we are to look up: Looking around at the ways the Spirit is working within this world for all people. The Bible provides a witness to the ways God has worked in the world. It is a gift and a document not to be worshipped but to be studied and read accompanied by the Holy Spirit in order that we might gain wisdom. Scripture is just one way in which God reveals God's self to the world, but must be approached and treated with care.

The church is an embodiment of God's love and should work to form faithful communities of care and reconciliation. Worship is a way of gathering and reorienting our lives to service for God. Our lives can also be acts of worship. The Sacraments are Holy symbols that unite us to God and the universal church. The Sacrament of Baptism calls us into the Church community intentionally. It is a visible expression of God's grace, sealing us to God's covenant, cleansing us without any merit of our own, and calling us to a life of service. The Sacrament of Communion reminds us of the community Christ intends for us and where we meet Christ around a limitless table of grace. The Church is called to be relevant in this world, and not stand by while injustice and hatred dominate our world. The Church should remain open to continual reformation by the Holy Spirit, knowing that the church is not called to be God, but to love God and love our neighbor.

COM ATTACHMENT 4

TERMS OF CALL 2023

	Church/Org	Mbrshp	Base	Def Comp	Utilities	Housing	Manse	SS	Prof. Exp	Prof Dev	Other	Total	2022 Total
Bacon, Patricia	Calvary	59	26,520		1,200	6,600		2,665	3,146	1,097		41,228	41,228
Bonnema, David	Unity	596	59,000	2,000		38,000		8,160	2,000	1,500	1,000	111,660	108,535
Brown, Tommy	William Black Lodge		60,000			Provided						60,000	55,000
Campbell, Kathy	Crossnore	85	40,111			31,621		5,755	3,580	1,250	3,500	85,817	77,646
Christenbury, Dwight	Trinity	293	52,355			12,500		4,961				69,816	65,864
Coble, Richard	Grace Covenant	733	36,981			30,000		5,124	3,000	2,000		77,105	70,000
Commerford, Daniel	Gastonia, First	844	24,216			75,000		7,590	4,800	2,000		113,606	111,898
Connelly, Kelley	Highlands, First	137	65,000	2,100				5,134	3,580	1,250		77,064	
Daniel, Blake	Sylva, First	110	50,036			20,000		5,358	2,600	2,000		79,994	77,004
Davis, Heather Wood	Hickory, First	625	32,815			22,851		4,584		1,400		61,650	58,805
Davis, Holly	Waynesville, First	140	34,621			29,000		4,867		1,304		69,792	67,369
DeWater, Janet	Mount Holly, First	110	28,284			27,000		4,162	3,400	1,200		64,046	64,036
Epps, Leah	Greenway	100	27,454			9,600		2,835	3,677	1,283		44,849	42,998
Florence, David C.	Black Mountain	595	38,000			26,000		4,896	2,500	1,500		72,896	70,857
Floyd, Richard	Hickory, First	625	71,500			38,500		9,056		1,650	1,000	121,706	
Gatewood, Thomas	Arbor Dale	98	41,601			52,947		7,529	3,866	1,250	800	107,993	99,672
Germer, David	Asheville, First	565	39,202			25,680		4,964	2,000	2,000	2,000	75,846	69,290
Grogg, Keith	Montreat	141	49,930			35,000		6,497	4,200	6,800		102,427	85,709
Gurney, Rebecca	Reems Creek-Beech	82	18,500			31,500		3,825	3,800	1,250		58,875	56,902
Hagmann, John	Morganton, First	403	36,999			43,000		6,120		4,433		90,552	90,552
Isola, Jill	Northminster	147	34,000			20,000		4,131	1,000	3,500		62,631	62,631
Jarrett, Esta	Canton	51	29,613		2,050	8,134		3,044	3,580	1,475		47,896	47,896
Johnson, Patrick	Asheville, First	565	84,913			47,468		10,127	4,000	2,000	2,000	150,508	137,369
Jordan, Shannon	Asheville, First	565	26,362			38,520		4,964	2,000	2,000		75,846	69,290
Lowe, Billy T.	Cherryville, First	181	42,880		8,011	36,477		6,933			7,839	102,140	100,102
Mangione, Drew	Shelby	418	48,360			31,200		6,087	3,950	2,500		92,097	86,938
McKee, Michael	Newland	94	35,500			40,500		5,814	3,500	3,100	2,000	90,414	82,448
McMillan, Megan	Mills River	95	28,929	2,066		27,891		4,505	4,480	1,250		69,121	
Miller, Beth Ann	Lenoir, First	33	16,662			16,662		2,549	1,000	1,100		37,973	37,973
Oedy, Dan	Southminster	366	62,000			40,000		8,170	2,500		1,800	114,470	105,149
Poulos, Michael	Spruce Pine	88	35,130			18,000		4,064	1,800		2,000	60,994	60,094
Purtill, Allan	Tryon	260	56,753		5,500	19,276		6,390	3,600	2,500	2,000	96,019	95,062
Ragan, Daria	Belmont, First	946	37,163			32,000		5,291	309	1,916	990	77,669	72,068
Robinson, Mary K.	Black Mountain	595	65,000			30,000		7,268	5,000	1,500		108,768	108,882
Roquemore, Davic	Newton, First	295	50,700			18,300		5,280	5,200	3,000	3,000	85,480	82,480
Runholt, Steve	Warren Wilson	136	31,335		3,732	26,268		4,692	1,060	1,595		68,682	66,449
Scofield, Donald	Rutherfordton	345	68,350			35,000		7,906	3,000	1,200	5,194	120,650	116,057
Seiler, Dana V.	Unity	596	28,000	2,000		38,000		5,715	2,000	1,500	1,000	78,215	63,500
Shoop, Marcia M.	Grace Covenant	733	93,400			36,000		9,899	3,600	4,200		147,099	139,994
Smith, Allen	Kenilworth	56	21,538			20,000		3,178	3,300	1,000	3,458	52,475	52,474

TERMS OF CALL 2023

	Church/Org	Mbrshp	Base	Def Comp	Utilities	Housing	Manse	SS	Prof. Exp	Prof Dev	Other	Total	2022 Total
Smith, Lance	Forest City, First	21	50,000					3,825		1,250	3,580	58,655	
Stanley, Mark	Trinity	293	63,629			29,200		7,101	Reimb			99,930	94,274
Strickler, Cynthia	Presbyterian Reformed Min., Int.		23,973			50,027				1,000	2,250	77,250	77,249
Thompson, Keith	Brevard-Davidson River	343	48,696			34,080		7,584	5,000			95,360	95,360
Upchurch, Melissa	Marshall	34	30,779			9,234		3,061	3,580	1,250		47,904	46,318
Wade, Byron	PWNC		34,960	12,125		34,960		6,276	6,000	3,500		97,821	94,180
Warner, Samuel	Belmont, First	946	74,047			45,000	11,576	9,107	7,000	1,800	990	137,944	132,274
Warren, Rob	Marion, First	154	32,585	1,000	5,000			3,837			6,000	59,998	58,933
Wells, Kimberleigh	New Hope, Asheville	104	36,723					5,619	1,500			73,842	72,065
Wilmarth, Emily	Highlands, First	137	70,000	3,512		30,000		7,650	1,627		3,512	116,301	101,951

APPENDIX J

K-1

THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY Dwight Christenbury & Merri Alexander, Co-Chairs October 24, 2023

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry recommends the following to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina:

RECOMMENDATION:

- | | |
|----|--|
| CA | I. THAT Ellen Settlemyer, an inquirer from First Presbyterian Church in Morganton, be removed from the Preparation for Ministry process, per her request, effective August 16, 2023. |
|----|--|

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

- Erin Tolar, a member of the Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, accepted a call to serve as Pastor in Residence at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. She was ordained on October 8, 2023.
- Janice Kominski, a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, was certified ready to receive a call on September 20, 2023.
- Linzi Anderson, a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, was enrolled as an Inquirer on September 20, 2023.

PEACE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE October 24, 2023

FACTS: GUN SAFETY

Stricter gun-control laws reduce gun deaths. Given all gun deaths – homicides, suicides, and accidents – states with stronger gun laws have fewer gun fatalities.

More guns in the U.S. contribute to more gun deaths. The firearm homicide rate is far higher in the U.S. than in other high-income countries. The firearm suicide rate is also higher.

Gun homicides per 1 million people

Germany 1	Australia 2	France 3
Canada 5	U.S. 40	

The majority of U.S. citizens are in favor of:

- preventing people with mental illnesses from purchasing guns
- barring gun purchases by people on no-fly or watch lists
- requiring background checks for private sales and at gun shows
- creating a federal database to track all gun sales
- banning assault-style weapons

If you own a gun and have children, which would you prefer losing?

“My grandfather had a dream that his four little children would not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. I HAVE A DREAM THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! AND THAT THIS SHOULD BE A GUN-FREE WORLD, PERIOD.”

-Yolanda Renee King
(granddaughter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Join us activists who are standing up for the 2,700 children and teens who are shot and killed every year.

“Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.”

- PSALM 51:14

We cannot love our neighbor, brother/sister, without caring deeply about that which hurts or kills them.

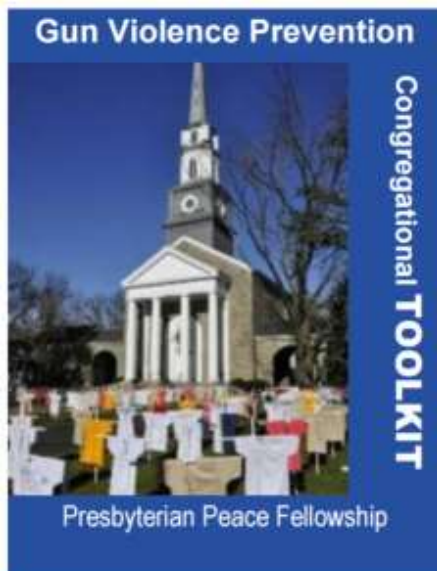
- James E. Atwood
Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

7 things you can do NOW to help prevent gun violence:

1. If you have a gun, consider turning it in to the police. If you choose to keep it in your home, secure it and lock ammunition separately.
2. Watch an anti-gun violence documentary: Requiem for the Dead: American Spring 2014; Living for 32; Shell Shocked; or Bowling for Columbine.
3. Contact your congressional representative Patrick McHenry (Tel.# (202)225-2576), or Senators Thom Tillis and Richard Burr (Tel. # (202)224-3121) to ask them to support:
 - ban on semiautomatic assault weapons & high-capacity ammunition magazines.
 - universal background checks & waiting periods for all gun purchases.
 - closing loopholes re: gun shows, possession of firearms by a stalker, or by those convicted of abusing a dating partner, sibling, parent, or extended family member.
 - repeal of the Dickey Amendment which mandated a ban on CDC funding for research on health impacts of gun violence.
 - repeal of Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which shields gun manufacturers and sellers from civil claims by victims of gun violence.
4. Write a letter to the editor of Black Mountain Journal or Asheville Citizen-Times in support of gun violence prevention legislation.
5. Wear an anti-gun violence pin to raise awareness and facilitate conversations with friends and neighbors on this issue.
6. Ask your house of worship to host an educational program on gun violence.
7. Organize or attend a peaceful demonstration or prayer service to end gun violence.

Help your congregation, group or organization explore issues of gun violence and what we can do about it. Newly updated in 2019, the Gun Violence Prevention Congregational Toolkit offers:

<https://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence/congregational-toolkit/>



- 70 pages of educational resources, pastoral resources and action tools
- Case studies on two churches and a presbytery engaged with gun violence prevention
- Three complete Small Group Study programs for congregations, campus groups and others
- Worship, biblical and pastoral care resources on issues of suicide prevention, grief and solidarity
- The Citizen's Test on Gun Violence in America
- Sample signage for "No Guns in God's House"
- Over 160 links to educational resources and action ideas, including gun violence prevention national groups and local contacts in all 50 states

APPENDIX K-3

NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

With 18 denominations representing over 6,200 congregations in North Carolina, the Council provides incarnational evidence of Christian Unity. By creating unity without expecting uniformity, member bodies collaborate on matters that contribute to the flourishing of God's creation. We are grateful to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina for their support and for the leadership on our Governing Board provided by the Rev. Jill Isola of Northminster Presbyterian Church, Hickory, N.C.

Currently, some of our priority areas include:

- **Gun Violence Prevention** advocacy focuses on telling the truth about gun violence in our country. We know the majority of gun deaths are suicides; the next highest number is homicides, usually among people who know each other or who are related to one another. Our work is to help people understand how guns end up in places that create great harm and what each of us can do to make all of us safer. For more information, contact jennifer@ncchurches.org.
- **Capital Punishment Abolition** has long been a priority for the Council. With our allies from N.C. Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty we are focused on adding North Carolina to the list of states who no longer allow this arbitrary and retributive practice. For more information, contact info@ncchurches.org.
- **Cash Bail Reform** is a part of our criminal justice system coming under the microscope for its unfair application. It is also a misunderstood piece of the justice system, making it harder to reform. The Council has assembled a team of representatives from several of our member denominations to help educate all of us about Cash Bail Reform and advocate for better practices. For more information or to join the team, contact info@ncchurches.org.
- **Confederate Monument Removal**. Related to the above, but with its own emphasis, the Council has joined the work of the N.C. Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Criminal Justice in their effort to move confederate monuments from courthouse lawns. If you live in a county currently working on such an effort or would like to begin leading such an effort, please contact: info@ncchurches.org.
- **Eco-Justice Connection (EJC)**. This multi-faith program area focuses on environmental and climate justice, with an emphasis on "advocating with compassion." A keystone initiative of EJC is NC Interfaith Power & Light. EJC's program mission is to educate, inspire, and mobilize people of faith and conscience to act on climate change as a moral imperative. For more information, contact susannah@ncchurches.org.
- **Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW)** provides tools to help faith communities form healthy habits by supporting congregation-based health ministries with resources and mini-grants. Other PHW focus areas include mental health, substance use disorder, and issues related to healthy aging. For more information, contact phwinfo@ncchurches.org.
- **The Opioid Crisis** educates faith leaders about compassionate responses to these growing health concerns and opportunities to reduce the associated stigmas. We provide avenues to engage the overdose crisis by connecting congregations to resources in their communities. If you would like to host an event or learn more about this project, contact phwinfor@ncchurches.org.

Over the course of this year, the Governing Board approved the following policy statements which can be found on our website along with other statements from previous years:

- Resolution on Reproductive Health (September 13, 2022)
- A Resolution to Change the Cash Bail Bond System (August 8, 2022)
- Tribute to the Life of the Reverend Dr. T. Anthony Spearman (July 21, 2022)
- Statement Condemning Violence Against our Jewish Neighbors (January 24, 2022)

We craft these statements in keeping with our interpretation of the prophetic witness of the Old Testament and the gospel message of the New Testament.

Currently, other areas of emphasis include living wage and paid family leave endorsement, death penalty abolition, cash bail reform, fair courts advocacy, Medicaid expansion, and redistricting reform. Resources are available online and our staff is available to help your congregation address any of the myriad concerns that arise in our contemporary setting. If you have any questions or are interested in more information, please contact us at info@ncchurches.org, or call our office at 919-828-6501.

Denominational members include Alliance of Baptists · African Methodist Episcopal Church · African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church · Christian Methodist Episcopal · Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) · Episcopal Church · Evangelical Lutheran Church in America · General Baptist State Convention · Metropolitan Community Churches · Mennonite Church USA · Moravian Church in America · Presbyterian Church (USA) · Reformed Church in America · Reformed Churches of God in Christ, International · Religious Society of Friends · United Church of Christ · Unity Fellowship Church Movement · United Methodist Church.

Jennifer E. Copeland, Executive Director
www.ncchurches.org

NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE

Peggy Ferguson, Chair

October 24, 2023

The Nominating/Representation Committee presents the following nominations to fill the class of 2026 and other class vacancies. The next meeting of the committee will be November 4, 2023.

The Nominating/Representation Committee is responsible for filling the slate for each committee throughout the year and for creating the new Class of 2026, to begin serving a three-year term in January of 2024. To this end, we ask you to discern your wishes regarding a Presbytery committee on which you would like to serve, or suggest someone for a committee of Presbytery.

It is important to note Presbytery by-laws which state, “Terms of committee members shall be for three (3) years, in equal classes, and no committee member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Ordinarily, a person may serve on only one Presbytery committee at any time.”

To all of you, we give praise to God and our heartfelt thanks for your faithful service.

CA 1. General Council

Mr. Ron Tingle (Waynesville, First) (A) Class of 2026

CA 2. Committee on Ministry

Mr. James Taylor (Grassy Creek/Newdale) (F) Class of 2024 Chair for 2024

Mr. John Auten (Shelby) (C) Class of 2026

Rev. Keith Grogg (Montreat) (B) Class of 2026

Dr. Gary Oakley (Hickory, First) (E) Class of 2026

Rev. Beth Newman (Bryson City) (A/B) Class of 2026

Rev. Jody Welker (Retired) (B) Class of 2026

Rev. Emily Wilmarth (Highlands, First) (A) Class of 2026

Rev. Dr. Keith Thompson (C) Class of 2025

(Brevard-Davidson River)

CA 3. Examinations Committee

Rev. Margaret Torrence (Member-at-Large) (B) Class of 2025 Chair for 2024

Rev. Dr. Richard Floyd (Hickory, First) (E) Class of 2026

Rev. Kathy Madigan (Member-at-Large) (C) Class of 2026

Mr. Stan Briggs (Waynesville, First) (A) Class of 2026

CA 4. Preparation for Ministry

Rev. Merri Alexander (Retired) (B) Class of 2025 Chair for 2024

Rev. Barbara “Bobbi” White (Retired) (E) Class of 2026

Mr. Dennis Stamper (Hickory, First) (E) Class of 2026

Rev. Dana Sutton (Retired) (A) Class of 2025

CA 5. Peace & Justice Committee

Ms. Wanda Woodby (F) Class of 2026

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| CA | 6. | <u>Hunger Committee</u>
Rev. Tempe Fussell (Franklin, First) (A) Class of 2025
Dr. Richard Larson (Banner Elk) (F) Class of 2026 | Chair for 2024 |
| CA | 7. | <u>Mission Committee</u>
Rev. Rachel Shepherd (Member-at-Large) (B) Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 8. | <u>Campus Ministry</u>
Rev. Dr. Richard Boyce (Retired) (D) Class of 2025
Rev. Tommy Brown (Member-at-Large) (B) Class of 2026
Ms. Diana Sanderson (Warren Wilson) (B) Class of 2026 | Chair for 2024 |
| CA | 9. | <u>Youth Committee</u>
Ms. Carol Ann Hoard (Shelby) (C) Class of 2026
Mr. Collin Caldwell (Bryson City) (A) Class of 2026
Rev. William Buchanan (Member-at-Large) (B) Class of 2026 | |
| CA | 10. | <u>Christian Education</u>
Ms. Vivian Hare (Montreat) (B) Class of 2025
Ms. Gayla Woody (Southminster) (D) Class of 2026
Ms. Barbara Arnold (Third Street) (D) Class of 2026 | Chair for 2024 |
| CA | 11. | <u>Church Vibrancy Committee</u>
Rev. David Bonnema (Unity) (E) Class of 2024
Ms. Renee Warthen (Ryburn Memorial) (C) Class of 2026
Rev. David Holloway (Lowell) (D) Class of 2026 | Chair for 2024 |
| CA | 12. | <u>Personnel Committee</u>
Rev. Connie Button (Retired) (B) Class of 2025
Rev. Feild Russell (Retired) (F) Class of 2026
Ms. Peg Shafer (Sylva, First) (A) Class of 2026 | Chair for 2024 |
| CA | 13. | <u>Guatemala Partnership Leadership Team</u>
Mrs. Linda Abel (Hayesville) (A) Class of 2025
Dr. Doug Michael (Newton, First) (E) Class of 2026
Mr. Bill Glover (Southminster) (D) Class of 2026 | Co-Chair for 2024
Co-Chair for 2024 |
| CA | 14. | <u>Malawi Leadership & Education Team</u>
Rev. Michael McKee (Newland) (F) Class of 2025
Mr. Reed Conley (Artisan NWC) (E) Class of 2026
Mrs. Terri Forsythe (Belmont, First) (D) Class of 2026
Mrs. Ann Drummond (Black Mountain) (B) Class of 2026 | Chair for 2024 |
| | 15. | The Nominating Committee places the following minister nomination recommendations to serve as teaching elder (minister) commissioners for 2024 at the 226th General Assembly, to be held June 25-27, 2024 (online); July 29-July 4, 2024, 2024, in Salt Lake City, Utah. | |

A. Rev. Megan McMillan (C)

Mills River Presbyterian Church

- B. Rev. Dr. Mark Stanley (C)** **Trinity Presbyterian Church**
- 16. The Nominating Committee places the following elder nomination recommendations to serve as ruling elder commissioners for 2024 at the 226th General Assembly, to be held June 25-27, 2024 (online); July 29-July 4, 2024, 2024, in Salt Lake City, Utah.**
- A. Mr. Kerry Border (B)** **Reems Creek-Beech Presbyterian**
B. TBA
- 17. The Nominating Committee places the following youth nomination recommendation to serve as a Young Adult Delegate for 2024 at 226th General Assembly, to be held June 25-27, 2024 (online); July 29-July 4, 2024, 2024, in Salt Lake City, Utah.**
- Mairead “Maggie” Brock (E)** **First Presbyterian, Hickory**
- 18. The Nominating Committee places the following teaching elder nomination recommendation to serve as alternate teaching elder commissioners for 226th General Assembly, to be held June 25-27, 2024 (online); July 29-July 4, 2024, 2024, in Salt Lake City, Utah.**
- A. Rev. Leah Epps (E)** **Greenway Presbyterian Church, Lenoir**
B. Rev. Michael Poulos (B/F) **First Presbyterian, Spruce Pine**
- 19. The Nominating Committee requests authority from the Presbytery, and with the approval of the Moderator of Presbytery and the chair of the Committee on Ministry, to replace a commissioner to the General Assembly should a commissioner(s) and/or alternate(s) be unable to attend.**
- 20. The Nominating/Representation Committee places the following teaching elder commissioner in nomination to serve as a delegate for a three-year term (2024-2026) for the Stated Meetings of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic:**
TBA

2024
APCE
Annual Event



St. Louis, Missouri
January 24-27,
2024

APCE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

The PWNC Christian Education Committee has a limited number of **\$150 scholarships** available for individuals attending the 2024 APCE Conference. You can attend the annual event in person in St. Louis or in a hybrid online format. *(Registration cost for the online APCE experience is only \$185!)* The in person experience this year includes one, two, or three day attendance options. More information about the conference can be found [here](#).

Priority will be given to new attendees who register by 11/30, which is the early registration deadline.

HOW TO APPLY?

Complete the [Christian Education Scholarship Form](#) and send it to twilliams@presbyterywnc.org by **November 30, 2023**. The committee will review submissions and award assistance by 12/20/2023.



Need more info
about APCE?
Visit apcenet.org.

Deadline to apply:
NOVEMBER 30, 2023



For more information, call the Presbytery office at
828/438-4217.

MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT

NOVEMBER 4-5, 2023

Join Middle School Youth from across our Presbytery for an overnight retreat at Camp Grier with recreation, keynote, small groups, fellowship and fun!

**COST: \$75 PER PERSON
(INCLUDES 3 MEALS,
LODGING & PROGRAM)**

**REGISTRATION OPENS
SEPT 17**

**DEADLINE:
OCTOBER
28**



KEYNOTER:

**AMY KIM KYREMES-PARKS,
SHE/HER/ELLA**



SCHEDULE:

Registration begins at 9:30 am on Saturday. The retreat concludes with Sunday morning worship. No lunch will be served Sunday.

BRING:

Sleeping bag or bed linens, pillow, towel, toiletries, mask (optional), medications, comfy shoes and clothes, Bible, flashlight, water bottle, rain gear, offering for Sunday Worship.

Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks serves as The Director of Formation for Children, Youth and Their Families at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Asheville, NC. Amy Kim loves creating space for folks to interact with the Holy through art and opportunities for disruption. Amy Kim leads workshops and conferences nationally for the PCUSA and has been published in ministry periodicals about Spiritual Formation and disrupting Racism. Her life is shared with her amazing spouse, Justin, children, Natalily & Isaiah along with Obed the poodle.

**QUESTIONS?
CONTACT BETH GUNN**
beth.gunn@gmail.com

FAITH & SEXUALITY

Exploring healthy relationships & sexuality as you and your youth enter adolescence.

A Presbytery of Western NC Event for Parents, Fifth-Eighth Grade Youth & Youth Leaders.

When? Saturday, February 10, 2024 from 9:00AM-5:00PM

Where? First Presbyterian Church - Morganton, NC



KEY LEADERS



Rev. Heather Wood Davis serves as the Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Hickory. She and her husband have two daughters and two dogs. Heather has previously served on the PWNC Youth Ministry Committee and has helped lead the youth and adult portion of this sexuality retreat for the presbytery. Though just a step above beginner, she enjoys rec league tennis and good episode of Rick Steves' travels.

Rev. Lynn Turnage has been in youth, and children and family ministries for....a long time. Sexuality education and retreats have cycled through her ministries at least every three years. She loves the awe and wonder, energy, intelligence, imagination, and love that children and youth model for the world. Lynn advocates for good communication and healthy connections and community building in all her ministries. Lynn has daughters - 22 and 17 - a cat-dog named Daisy, loves chocolate, being outdoors, laughing and playing!

FAITH & SEXUALITY TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- 9:00 Registration
- 9:30 Community Building & Recreation
- 10:00 First Session (Youth & Parents in Separate Groups*)
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 Second Session (Youth & Parents in Separate Groups*)
- 3:00 Break
- 3:15 Joint Session (Youth & Parents Together)
- 4:30 Closing
- 5:00 Adjourn

*Youth will be divided into groups by grade for age-appropriate discussion - 5th/6th grades and 7th/8th grades.



**USE QR CODE TO
REGISTER ONLINE BY
FEBRUARY 4, 2024**



YOUTH DELEGATION TRIP

June 19-27, 2023

Celebrating 30 years of partnership



What: Mission Trip to build relationships with Guatemalan youth. We will be having time with youth from both Suchi and Sur Presbytery Delegations at a Youth Retreat.

Who: For rising 9th through graduated 12th grade youth

Cost: \$1700 (less \$300 credit from the PWNC Youth Ministry budget)

How: Applications will be available after November 1st on line at www.presbyterywnc.org

Details: Space is limited to 12 youth and 4-6 adult trip leaders. Apply EARLY

More ?s: Contact Beth Gunn at beth.gunn@gmail.com

Youth Leaders

Save These Dates!

September

24

Pathways Event
@ Montreat, NC

November

4-5

Middle School Retreat
@ Camp Grier

March

8-9

High School
Mission Retreat

February

10

Faith and Sexuality
Retreat
FPC Morganton

May 4

Adventure Day
@ Camp Grier

Plus! Summer 2024 - Guatemala Youth Delegation Trip

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REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER 137TH STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA October 24, 2023

“Be open to possibilities”

This morning I reflected on an article I had read. The article “4 Steps to Help You Celebrate What is Right in the World” by Elizabeth Trollinger explains the four techniques of DeWitt Jones, a professional photographer and freelance photojournalist for National Geographic, uses to gain a fresh perspective to discover the extraordinary out of the ordinary in his work. One of the four steps is allowing yourself to be open to possibilities. The excerpt below really stuck with me –

“When the great photographer Minor White would go out to photograph, he would never say, ‘What will I take today?’” Jones recalled. “Rather, he would ask, ‘What will I be given today?’ And I would add: Will I be open enough to see it?”

In the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, our ministry and mission continue as we serve God’s people in our congregations and our local communities. Many times, we have the tendency to focus on what is right in front of us – and sometimes for good reason. At the same time, God is providing us ways of seeing new possibilities in these anxious and strange times.

The Revisioning Task Force continues to discern God’s direction for new possibilities of how we can structure ministry and mission. We are currently composing questions to ask Presbytery committee leaders about their work and mission. This will help the Task Force gain clarity about how our committees operate and how this may fit into a new ministry design. We have set a goal to complete our work by January 2024. Please keep us in your prayers.

We are also opening ourselves for new possibilities with the UKirk campus ministry at Western Carolina University. Since the previous campus minister left for another call last year, the ministry is in a period of transition. Along with myself, there are two UKirk board members who are discerning God’s guidance for the next steps to revitalize the ministry. It will entail some hard work, but we are all committed to having a PCUSA ministry presence for students on campus. If you are interested in this, please feel free to contact me.

Recently I was part of a delegation from our Presbytery who traveled to the 252nd Synod of Mid-Atlantic meeting at Massanetta Springs Conference Center in Harrisonburg, VA. The entire focus of this gathering was centered on the theme “The Next Generation Initiative,” which examined the state of African-American congregations and pastoral leadership. The majority of the 120+ predominately African-American Presbyterian congregations in the Synod have no installed pastoral leadership. To give you a larger picture – out of the 430 predominately African-American congregations in the PCUSA, 80% do not have an installed pastor. This is a bleak forecast for the future of African-American Presbyterian congregations who have made great contributions to the life and welfare of this

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denomination. During the assembly, we heard presentations about the former Catawba Synod/Unit, an all African-American governing body that existed from the end of the Civil War until 1988, statistics on African-American Presbyterian churches, and the beginning of possible ways to address this issue. We worshipped, celebrated, and discussed initial steps as well as envisioned new possibilities. Our delegation left encouraged. However, we know that the work will be long and hard. But we know that God is faithful! This initiative is just beginning and future plans are in the works to continue this discussion with some plans of action.

There are many new possibilities that I believe God is providing our Presbytery. Here are a few that come to mind in my continuing discernment:

- 1) Establishing more new worshipping communities.
- 2) Providing funds for pastors who want to come together to form clergy groups.
- 3) A greater emphasis on stewardship for congregations and the Presbytery.
- 4) A greater focus on becoming disciples of Christ
- 5) Developing personal and congregational evangelism.

There are many other dreams and possibilities God has given us. My prayer is that we will be open enough to see it. May God bless you.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Byron".

Byron